

PUBLIC PAPERS OF THE PRESIDENTS
OF THE
UNITED STATES

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Published by the
Office of the Federal Register
National Archives and Records Administration

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Foreword

I began the last six months of my term optimistic about the future of our country and grateful for the good fortune of this productive and historic time.

Never before had our nation enjoyed so much prosperity and social progress with no deep domestic crisis or overwhelming foreign threat to darken the prospect of progress. A spirit of possibility pervaded the Washington atmosphere and brought significant legislative accomplishments, which was remarkable in an election season.

The Congress passed our Lands Legacy initiative to provide long term funding to purchase precious lands from wilderness areas to urban greenspaces; increased funding for childcare and breast and cervical cancer treatment; doubled support for after-school programs, enough to serve 1.6 million children; enacted the largest increase in Head Start ever and the funds necessary to hire 35,000 new teachers; and passed the New Markets legislation, the last major bill I signed, designed to give Americans the same financial incentives to invest in poor neighborhoods and rural and Native American communities as they have to invest in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.

Congress also passed our plans to increase trade with Africa and our Caribbean neighbors; extended normal trade relations with China, paving the way for its entry into the World Trade Organization; enacted the historic Debt Relief Initiative, to forgive the foreign debts of the world's poorest nations, but only if they invest all the savings in education, health care, and economic development; and provided funding for Plan Colombia, to help Latin America's oldest democracy and her neighbors fight drug trafficking.

The Administration took a number of groundbreaking executive actions, including setting aside over 40 million roadless acres in our national forests, a decision characterized by the Audubon Society as the most important conservation move in forty years; establishing several more national monuments in environmentally sensitive areas; raising the standards for arsenic in water; providing \$300 million to feed 9 million poor children in the poorest nations if they come to school to get the meal; concluding trade agreements with Vietnam and Jordan, with the Jordanian agreement being the first ever to include environmental and labor standards; and laying the foundation for ending North Korea's dangerous missile program.

Of course, there were disappointments. I was unsuccessful in persuading Congress to pass a meaningful Patient's Bill of Rights; prescription drug coverage under the Medicare program for senior citizens; and a Hate Crimes bill, making a federal offense of violent crimes motivated by the victim's gender, disability, or sexual orientation. I am optimistic that all these bills will eventually pass.

My greatest disappointment was our failure to make a comprehensive peace agreement in the Middle East, notwithstanding arduous talks at Camp David and afterward in the region. I believe if a peace agreement is ever reached it will have to include the essential elements in the last American proposal, which brought the parties so close to peace at Taba.

I was honored to be the first President in forty years to visit Okinawa for the G-8 Summit and to make a second trip to Africa, this time to Tanzania, to work with President Mandela on the Burundi Peace Talks, and to Nigeria to support President Obasanjo's effort to reform Africa's largest nation and to intensify the struggle against AIDS.

In September I joined more than 160 heads of government at the United Nations Millennium Summit to discuss the great challenges facing us at the dawn of the new century: the fights against poverty, infectious diseases, lack of education, global warming, terrorism, and weapons of mass destruction. I addressed the General Assembly for the last time as President, using this opportunity to urge the other leaders present to foster a greater respect for our common humanity and to embrace the diverse political, cultural, and religious beliefs and histories that make our world so rich and wonderful.

Bin Clinton

Preface

This book contains the papers and speeches of the 42d President of the United States that were issued by the Office of the Press Secretary during the period June 27–October 11, 2000. The material has been compiled and published by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration.

The material is presented in chronological order, and the dates shown in the headings are the dates of the documents or events. In instances when the release date differs from the date of the document itself, that fact is shown in the textnote. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy: Remarks are checked against a tape recording, and signed documents are checked against the original. Textnotes and cross references have been provided by the editors for purposes of identification or clarity. Speeches were delivered in Washington, DC, unless indicated. The times noted are local times. All materials that are printed full-text in the book have been indexed in the subject and name indexes, and listed in the document categories list.

The Public Papers of the Presidents series was begun in 1957 in response to a recommendation of the National Historical Publications Commission. An extensive compilation of messages and papers of the Presidents covering the period 1789 to 1897 was assembled by James D. Richardson and published under congressional authority between 1896 and 1899. Since then, various private compilations have been issued, but there was no uniform publication comparable to the Congressional Record or the United States Supreme Court Reports. Many Presidential papers could be found only in the form of mimeographed White House releases or as reported in the press. The Commission therefore recommended the establishment of an official series in which Presidential writings, addresses, and remarks of a public nature could be made available.

The Commission's recommendation was incorporated in regulations of the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, issued under section 6 of the Federal Register Act (44 U.S.C. 1506), which may be found in title 1, part 10, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

A companion publication to the Public Papers series, the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, was begun in 1965 to provide a broader range of Presidential materials on a more timely basis to meet the needs of the contemporary reader. Beginning with the administration of Jimmy Carter, the Public Papers series expanded its coverage to include additional material as printed in the Weekly Compilation. That coverage provides a listing of the President's daily schedule and meetings, when announced, and other items of general interest issued by the Office of the Press Secretary. Also included are lists of the President's nominations submitted to the Senate, materials released by the Office of the Press Secretary that are not printed full-text in the book, and proclamations, Executive orders, and other Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the *Federal Register*. This information appears in the appendixes at the end of the book.

Volumes covering the administrations of Presidents Hoover, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and Bush are also included in the Public Papers series.

The Public Papers of the Presidents publication program is under the direction of Frances D. McDonald, Managing Editor, Office of the Federal Register. The series is produced by the Presidential and Legislative Publications Unit, Gwen H. Estep, Chief. The Chief Editors of this book were Karen Howard Ashlin and Brad Brooks, assisted by Anna N. Glover, Christopher Gushman, Margaret A. Hemmig, Maxine Hill, Alfred Jones, Jennifer S. Mangum, Lisa N. Morris, Michael J. Sullivan, and Karen A. Thornton.

The frontispiece and photographs used in the portfolio were supplied by the White House Photo Office. The typography and design of the book were developed by the Government Printing Office under the direction of Michael F. DiMario, Public Printer.

Raymond A. Mosley
Director of the Federal Register

John W. Carlin
Archivist of the United States

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Secretary of Transportation	Rodney E. Slater
Secretary of Energy	Bill Richardson
Secretary of Education	Richard W. Riley
Secretary of Veterans Affairs	Togo D. West, Jr. Hershel W. Gober (acting, effective July 24)
United States Representative to the United Nations	Richard C. Holbrooke
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency	Carol M. Browner
United States Trade Representative	Charlene Barshefsky

Director of the Office of Management and Budget	Jacob J. Lew
Chief of Staff	John D. Podesta
Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers	Martin N. Baily
Director of National Drug Control Policy .	Barry R. McCaffrey
Administrator of the Small Business Administration	Aida Alvarez
Director of Central Intelligence	George J. Tenet
Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency	James Lee Witt

Administration of William J. Clinton

2000–2001

Remarks on the Unveiling of a Portrait of Former Secretary of the
Treasury Robert E. Rubin
June 27, 2000

The President. Secretary Summers, you pulled that off without a hitch. [Laughter] If that won't keep interest rates down, I don't know what will. [Laughter] In 7½ years, that's the first public comment I ever made—[laughter]—and I only did it to see which one of them would faint first. [Laughter]

Let me say—if I can't have a little fun now, when can I, right? [Laughter] Judy and Gretchen, thank you for being here today. Secretary Daley, Jack Lew, Gene Sperling, all the members of the economic team in the White House, and all of our former administration members who are here, including Mickey Kantor and your old buddy Ken Brody back there, Mr. Strauss, we're delighted to see you here today. We thank you for coming.

I'd like to acknowledge one person who can't be here today, who had a lot to do with our early days together, Bob, and that is your predecessor, Lloyd Bentsen. I'm glad that your portraits will hang together, because you certainly hung together in the early years of this administration and helped us get off to a good start.

I thought it was kind of cruel the way Larry made fun of Bob not knowing about "The X Files." [Laughter] "The X Files"—Bob Rubin didn't know who B.B. King was. [Laughter] He thought he made air guns. [Laughter] He thought Jimmy Buffett was a caterer. [Laughter] Really, this man did not know who B.B. King and Jimmy Buffett were when he came to work for us. [Laughter] And so, yes, he gave us a good economy, but we've broadened his horizons in return. [Laughter]

Unlike me, Rubin got mostly good press here. [Laughter] But he did get the occasional dire assessment. Listen to this headline by one prescient pundit—no offense, Andrea. Listen to this: "Rubin is fading from power and will resign from fatigue. He won't be around past March of next year." That was written in December of 1993. [Laughter]

Well—

Robert E. Rubin. I think Judy wrote that. [Laughter]

The President. Yes. [Laughter] Actually, Judy didn't write it, but she does wish it had been true. [Laughter] Well, anyway, you outlasted that prediction by more than 5 years, through impossibly long hours, a terribly tough commute, almost 7 years without a house and only a hotel room. We probably should hang a second portrait of you in the lobby of the Jefferson Hotel. [Laughter] You certainly did a lot to make sure their cash flow was steady. [Laughter]

You know, Bob joined our team in 1992, and I never will forget the first conversation I had with him in early '92, and the conversations since. And I want to say just a few serious words. Here was a guy who had done reasonably well on Wall Street. [Laughter] I used to joke that Bob Rubin came to Washington to help me save the middle class, and by the time he left, he'd be one of them. [Laughter] But he didn't think it was very funny. [Laughter] The longer he stayed, the less money he got. [Laughter]

But I wanted him because I knew he was committed at turning the economy around; I knew he wanted the economy to work for ordinary Americans; and I knew he cared very much about poor people in poor places that are too often forgotten here in Washington. You all know that he played a pivotal role in developing our initial economic strategy of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and investment in our people and our future. Perhaps equally important, he made it possible to implement that strategy by putting together the National Economic Council, which we modeled on the National Security Council, and by being its first leader.

He had the skills to build a genuine team, to be an honest broker, to give every good idea and not so good idea a fair hearing, to bring out the best in other people and make them feel secure in stating their own opinions, and

in every instance, to work for what was best for all the American people.

One measure of his success, I think, is it's so easy to forget now the feuds that divided previous administrations, the pitched, public battles that were once an inescapable part of making economic policy in Washington. But Bob changed all that. And that team produced the 1993 economic plan which was highly contentious but, clearly, struck a major blow in bringing the deficit down and reversing the budgetary and fiscal fortunes of this Government.

Five and a half years ago I asked him to be Secretary of the Treasury, not only because he would be a worthy successor to Lloyd Bentsen but because he would also be a worthy successor to Alexander Hamilton. I might say, his portrait is right back here. We walked out, and I said, "Bob, look at Hamilton. He was a fine looking fellow, wasn't he?" He said, "Yes, but they wouldn't let me wear that outfit for my portrait." [Laughter]

Hamilton also insisted that the United States pay its debts and practice prudence. Bob Rubin has established, both as our National Economic Adviser and as a Secretary of Treasury, a standard of public service that is the envy of every American who loves his or her country and would like to serve.

I thank Larry Summers for carrying it on today and for the work that he did. Bob used to say that Larry thought up what they were going to do, and Bob presented it better. But they were a great team. [Laughter] And Larry does a pretty good job of presenting himself now.

We've had a wonderful run here because of your service. You know, yesterday we announced that the budget surplus this year was going to be \$211 billion. When we leave office, we will have paid down nearly \$400 billion of national debt. Over the next 10 years, we think the on-budget surplus will be \$1.9 trillion and that we'll be debt-free by 2012, giving America, for a generation, lower interest rates, mortgage rates, college loan rates, more businesses, and more jobs. It's a pretty good legacy, Mr. Secretary, and we thank you.

Now, before you come up, I just want to say one other thing. Larry said this, but it is true. We were having this meeting about the Mexican debt crisis on your first night. And we had already checked Chairman Greenspan's temperature about this. [Laughter] And so in

comes Rubin with this, you know, "Gee, shucks, golly. I mean, what do I know? I just made a gazillion dollars on Wall Street, and you were some Governor of a small southern State. I mean, what do I know?" [Laughter] "And I mean, so what if it's 81-15 against us. You know, every now and then you've just got to step up."

Actually, it was a no-brainer. We made the decision collectively in about 5 minutes. And then we talked for another half hour to make it look good, so it would be respectable when we had to write about it later on in our memoirs. [Laughter] But it worked out okay. And then we had, in a way, a more complex job when the financial contagion struck in Asia in '97 and '98. But you worked really hard to make that work right. And it did. So I'm very grateful for that, as well.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I think the important way we can honor you is not to squander but to make the most of this moment. We didn't get here by accident. We got here, in no small measure, because of the strategy you devised. And I hope we can continue to honor it. I think we ought to take the Medicare taxes off budget. I think we ought to keep paying down the debt. I hope that we can make an agreement with the Congress now for a good prescription drug program and appropriate tax relief that leaves plenty of money left so they can debate it in this campaign but nothing that will in any way affect our overall commitment to fiscal discipline and paying down the debt.

And you have left us a legacy, Bob, that keeps on giving, just like you keep on giving. We all love you, and we thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 a.m. at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. In his remarks, he referred to Judy and Gretchen Rubin, wife and daughter-in-law, respectively, of Mr. Rubin; former U.S. Trade Representative and former Secretary of Commerce Michael (Mickey) Kantor; former President and Chairman of the Export-Import Bank Kenneth D. Brody; former U.S. Ambassador to Russia Robert Strauss; former Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen; and musicians B.B. King and Jimmy Buffett. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Rubin.

Statement on Expanding Access to Smoking Cessation Programs June 27, 2000

Today the Surgeon General is releasing updated guidelines, compiled by top public and private sector experts, to help more people overcome their tobacco addiction and to give health care professionals an important tool to help their patients quit using tobacco products. Tobacco addiction and related health disorders pose one of the greatest public health threats facing our Nation today. Over 400,000 Americans die every year from tobacco related diseases—more than AIDS, illegal drugs, alcohol, fires, car accidents, murders, and suicides, combined.

While more than 25 percent of U.S. adults smoke, studies show that 70 percent of them would like to quit. To build on the new guidelines and progress we have already made to help Federal personnel stop smoking, today I am issuing an Executive memorandum directing all Federal departments and agencies to: encourage their employees to stop, or never start, smoking;

provide information on proven smoking cessation treatments and practices; and describe assistance they can provide to help their personnel quit smoking. I am also directing the agencies to review their current tobacco cessation programs using the updated guidelines, and to report on their effectiveness and opportunities for enhancement to the Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

Finally, I urge Congress to enact my budget proposal to ensure that every State Medicaid program covers both prescription and non-prescription smoking cessation drugs—helping millions of low-income Americans gain access to medical treatments that would help them break their addiction to tobacco.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 4 p.m.

Memorandum on Expanding Access to Smoking Cessation Programs June 27, 2000

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive
Departments and Agencies*

Subject: Expanding Access to Smoking Cessation Programs

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that smoking-related diseases claim more than 400,000 lives annually and cost the United States tens of billions of dollars in medical expenses and lost productivity. Smoking-related diseases devastate our families and communities by contributing to the premature deaths of our husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, siblings, and close friends. As we now know, the vast majority of adult smokers begin smoking as children, and most become addicted to nicotine. Research also shows that more than 70 percent of adult smokers would like to quit smoking.

On August 9, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13058, establishing a smoke-free environment for the more than 1.8 million civilian Federal

employees and members of the public visiting or using Federal facilities. In that order, I encouraged agencies to establish programs to help employees stop smoking. And in 1998, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducted a survey to determine what steps agencies had taken to help employees stop smoking. The results of that survey showed that a majority of those who responded had smoking cessation programs in place at the worksite or were planning to initiate them.

For example, due to our efforts, 1.4 million members of the armed forces and their families have benefited from Department of Defense initiatives that have provided them with smoke free workplaces and readily accessible smoking cessation programs. The Postal Service's more than 800,000 employees and their customers have enjoyed smoke free environments since 1993.

Today, the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Public Health Service released new tobacco cessation guidelines that reflect the

June 27 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

latest research on treating tobacco use and addiction. These guidelines will enable clinicians, employers, insurers, health benefits managers, and others to employ programs and therapies that have been proven effective, and help prevent more unnecessary tobacco-related illnesses and deaths. These new guidelines will also serve as a valuable resource for evaluating and improving current programs, including those offered by Federal agencies.

We need to build on our progress. Therefore, I direct the head of each executive department and agency (agency) to send a message to all personnel that (1) encourages them to stop smoking or never to start; (2) describes assistance the agency can provide in helping them quit smoking; (3) provides information on proven smoking cessation treatments and practices; and (4) encourages participation in the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout scheduled for November 16, 2000.

In addition, I direct all agencies to review their current tobacco cessation programs and to provide a report on their achievements and effectiveness to the Director of OPM 60 days from the date of this memorandum. In conducting these reviews, agencies should consult the new HHS guidelines to determine the key elements of an effective program and identify areas for program enhancement. Any new initiatives planned should also be a part of the report. The OPM will use this information to compile a list of best practices to be shared with all agencies, and to report to me on its findings 90 days from the date of this memorandum.

The OPM will provide assistance to agencies as needed. For example, its web-site contains information on establishing a "Model Smoking Cessation Program."

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was embargoed for release until 4 p.m.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the Expanded Threat Reduction Initiative

June 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

Enclosed is a report to the Congress on the Expanded Threat Reduction Initiative, as required by section 1309 of the National Defense

Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106-65).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 27, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Sri Lanka-United States Extradition Treaty With Documentation

June 27, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, signed at Washington September 30, 1999.

In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty. As the report states, the Treaty will not require implementing legislation. The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

Upon entry into force, this Treaty would enhance cooperation between the law enforcement authorities of both countries, and thereby make a significant contribution to international law enforcement efforts. The Treaty would supersede the 1931 United States-United Kingdom extradition treaty currently applicable to the United States and Sri Lanka.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 27, 2000.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

June 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-

month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 27, 2000.

Remarks at a Reception for California State Senator Adam Schiff

June 27, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you, Adam. I want to say, first of all, I am delighted to be here with you and your entire family. I must say, when you introduced your wife, and made that crack—you know, I just came back from California, where I was working to raise funds for our Democrats. And I had a fundraiser in Los Angeles in a place called the “Garden of Eden.” [Laughter] I don’t recommend you do that until after the election—[laughter].

But anyway, I am delighted to be here. I want to thank Representatives Waxman and Pelosi and Lofgren and Farr for being here, and of course, Congressman Kennedy, who has done such a great job as head of the Democratic campaign committee and is working me to death. [Laughter] I told him that we were just five votes short of a majority, and I would do anything I could to see that he succeeded, and he has more than taken me up on my offer. [Laughter] He acts like he thinks I’m still as young as he is. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, there’s several reasons I wanted to be here tonight. First of all, I admire this man, and I appreciate the fact that he is willing to run against an incumbent Congressman. It is not easy to beat an incumbent Congressman, especially when they have vast national networks to finance their campaign. And I also appreciate the fact that he’s established a record as a State senator and a prosecutor that, I believe, highlights the differences.

There’s Congressman Conyers, thank you for being here. Michigan has a great interest in the outcome of this election. [Laughter] John does—Adam’s election is going to make him chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. [Laughter]

He mentioned Tom Umberg—Adam was also a Federal prosecutor, as well as a State senator. He’s worked for commonsense gun legislation. He’s worked for smaller class sizes in our schools. He’s worked for a better environment and sustainable development. He’s worked for

a Patients' Bill of Rights. He supports our efforts to help seniors and disabled Americans get prescription drugs.

And the one thing that I want to say to you tonight is that there really are significant differences between the parties on the major issues. I've done everything I could for nearly 8 years now to try to turn our country around, to get things going in the right direction, not only to improve the economy but to help the social fabric and to change the nature of politics and to give our people a sense of self-confidence and a sense of greater unity. And the Members who are here have been indispensable to that effort.

The Senate finally passed hate crimes legislation a couple of days ago. Henry Waxman just won a great victory in the House against the tobacco interests, who tried to stop us from bringing litigation to recover for the taxpayers the damage caused from health-related illnesses due to smoking. And we congratulate you for your long and, originally, a lonely battle, but we thank you for that.

But basically—you know, I'm not running for anything. *[Laughter]* I do have more than a passing interest in a Senate race—*[laughter]*—in New York, and all the others, as well. And there's a fellow running for President I think ought to be elected. But what I want to see us to do is to sort of make the most of this unbelievable opportunity we have. And those of us who are not so young anymore know that it may be 50 years before America has a chance like this again. And that we dare not squander it.

So it's important to know that there are differences, honest differences. You don't have to run a real bad campaign in this election. You know, I've seen so many elections over the last 20 years that just made me sick, where both candidates looked like they were trying to convince people that their opponents were just one step above a car thief. *[Laughter]* And you don't have to do that now. You can just run on the differences. But there are real differences.

And one key to who's right is, only the Democrats want you to know what those differences are. You can just look at it—I've been telling you, and I'd just like to run through a few, just the issues I mentioned. We have a class size reduction initiative and a school construction initiative and a school repair initiative. And

the leadership of the other party is completely opposed to all of them.

In the area of law enforcement, we put 100,000 police on the street, and we passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. The leadership of the other party was against them all—even tried to undo, in the House, the 100,000 police, and now opposes our efforts to put 50,000 more police on the street in the highest crime neighborhoods, as well as the commonsense gun safety measures: closing the gun show loophole, child trigger locks, banning large capacity ammunition clips. These are important issues. It makes a big difference who is in Congress.

The Patients' Bill of Rights: We support it, and they don't. And then they all go around saying they do, because they voted for one that had no teeth in it. They got permission from the people that didn't want a Patients' Bill of Rights to vote for one that had no teeth in hopes of confusing the voters about whether there was a real difference between the two parties.

And the biggest issue now that's commanding our attention is the question of whether our seniors and disabled Americans who are on Medicare should have access to affordable prescription drugs. Now just yesterday or today, there was a big article in the press—come on in, Representative Sherman, come on in—we're going to have a quorum in California here before you know it. *[Laughter]* There was an article in the press showing that in the last year the price of prescription drugs—and the overall inflation rate was 3 percent—the price of prescription drugs went up 17.4 percent.

Now, huge numbers of seniors and disabled Americans who need these drugs to maintain their quality of life, and sometimes to maintain their very lives, cannot afford this. If we were designing a Medicare program today, no one would even think about having one without a drug benefit. But in 1965, when it was established, it was basically a doctors-and-hospital program, because that's what happened: People got sick, they went to the doctor; if they were sick enough, they went to the hospital.

Today we know prescription drugs can dramatically reduce the cost of hospitalization, whether you have to go at all, or if you have to go, how long you have to stay; and can maintain the length and quality of life far beyond anything that was imagined 35 years ago. And

we have the money to do this now. Not only that, this is a gift not just to the seniors and the disabled Americans but to their families, who will have to support them, or try to, if the rest of us don't through the Medicare program. So this is a big deal.

So what's our position? Our position is, we ought to have an affordable prescription drug program through Medicare that all seniors can afford to buy into but that is not mandatory for anybody. What's their position? Well, they hired a pollster to actually tell them what words and phrases to use to make you think they're for our position. I'm not making this up. I read it. *[Laughter]* I don't believe everything I read in the press, but since they didn't deny it, I assume it's true.

And now they've got a proposal, which is: Let everybody buy private insurance; we'll subsidize some people. And their proposal—even the insurance companies have said—with all the fights I've had with the insurance companies, I've got to take my hat to them; they've been honest on this—even the insurance companies have said this is not real. There are too many people that can't afford this insurance policy. What is the deal here?

And they're going to vote on it, I think tomorrow. And I just was told before I came in here they're not even going to allow the House to vote on our proposal. Why? Because it might pass in an election year—*[laughter]*—because there are just five seats in the majority. And they figure there might be six or seven of them that might figure out that the voters back home may not just buy the words and phrases; they might actually look at the vote.

Now, what should we do? Well, first of all, we ought to do what the Vice President recommended and set aside the Medicare taxes and not spend it for tax cuts or spending. Because that will take Medicare out to 2030, and that's good for the people on Medicare and good for their kids.

Then we ought to fund a real prescription drug benefit, the kind that we would have funded 35 years ago if medicine had been as advanced as it is today. And I offered that to the Republican leaders yesterday and said that I would work with them on their tax relief package. But we should not be under any illusion here. There is a huge difference. Our plan benefits the people who need the drugs. Their plan benefits the people who make the drugs, who

are afraid if we buy all these drugs in bulk, we might get a decent price for the seniors.

Now, I'm not against America's pharmaceutical companies. They do a great job in developing drugs. And I'm not even against our paying some sort of a premium to do that. But I am against any effort that's trying to keep our seniors from getting these prescription drugs. And if we were in the majority, this deal would have been done 4 months ago.

If we were in the majority, we wouldn't be debating here about whether we should close the gun show loophole. The people that are against it are saying it won't do any good. They used to tell me in '93 that the Brady bill wouldn't do any good, because all those people were buying their guns at gun shows. *[Laughter]*

If they were in the majority, we wouldn't be debating whether we were going to have smaller classes or whether we were going to modernize our schools or what we were going to do to make the most of this moment.

Now, they can make their case. I'm not saying anything bad about them. I'm sick and tired of all that. But there are differences. And don't you be fooled. And the whole country is looking at this, because here's this fellow who is a State senator, so he represents more people in California—a State senator represents more people than a Member of the House of Representatives. He's got a perfectly nice life, and he's putting his neck on the line to try to represent us. And we ought to help him. We ought to help him because of his background, because of his experience, because of his vision, but mostly because America needs to make a clear-headed choice here.

All I want—I've found that the American people nearly always get it right, if you give them enough time and enough information. Otherwise, we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. They nearly always get it right. Sometimes it takes us longer than we should. You mentioned Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln, when he was running the first time, had to promise not to free the slaves. Aren't we glad he didn't keep that campaign commitment? *[Laughter]* But finally, the people caught up to where they needed to be, and he just kept leading us on and leading us on.

Now, we know what the issues are, and we know where the people are. I'm convinced if the voters of his district know Adam Schiff—

if they know where he stands, if they know the honest differences between him and his opponent—this race will be victorious. And I'm convinced that will happen in two dozen other places across America where we have seats in play.

So I want you to think about that. The problem with all these fundraisers is, you're always preaching to the saved. *[Laughter]* But when you leave here, you will, between now and election day, be talking to people all over America, including a lot of people in California.

And it's important that you not just come to these fundraisers; it's important that you take every single opportunity you have between now and November to tell people that. We have the chance of a lifetime. We have great opportuni-

ties. There are real and honest differences. We don't have to have a negative election. We can have a positive election that's an honest debate. But we can't get there by pretending that there aren't differences when there are. On every difference that makes a difference, Adam is on the right side, and we've got to send him to Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:20 p.m. at the Frederick Douglass Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Schiff's wife, Eve; and Tom Umberg, committee member, California Delegation to the Democratic National Convention 2000. Adam Schiff was a candidate for California's 27th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Salute to Bruce Vento June 27, 2000

Thank you very much. I've got my "Vento" button and my "Hillary" pin. *[Laughter]* And Bruce says that "Vento" means "win" in Italian, and I think they're both winners, so I like this.

First of all, I want to thank Gerry Sikorski and Vin Weber for cochairing this event. I understand there is a slew of Members of Congress here today, so I won't attempt to call all their names, but I thank them for being here. And I know Bruce's sons are here. And I think Garrison Keillor is coming, and he'll be better than me—*[laughter]*—so that will be worth waiting for.

I also want to recognize our great Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, who is celebrating his birthday tonight with Bruce Vento. Thank you. I like to ride Bruce about his birthday because he's older than I am and looks younger, and I resent it. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank all of you for coming here to pay tribute to Bruce tonight and to support the Bruce Vento Science Educator Scholarship Fund. I think it's quite an appropriate time to be doing this, just a day after we announced the sequencing of the human genome. On the way in, Bruce was saying, "You know, that was a really exciting announcement you had yesterday. Now we've got to find a few more science

teachers to explain to people what it means." *[Laughter]* I thought that was pretty great.

He has been a scientist and an environmentalist since his boyhood in Minnesota. And I reminded him today that one of my most memorable times as President has been the time I spent with him in Minnesota and with a number of others of you here from the Minnesota congressional delegation, as well.

Since 1977, he's been an advocate for science and the environment in the Congress. Some of this will be said later, but I think it's worth—this is astonishing, and maybe even some of you don't know this—he has steered into law more than 300 bills to protect our natural resources. He has led in the preservation of hundreds of thousands of acres of wilderness from Minnesota's boundary waters to Alaska to American Samoa.

That would have been record enough, but the thing I like even more is that Bruce Vento cares about people, especially people without a voice, the homeless. He's also been a leader for health care and education. And if there is anybody who has ever listened to him perform at any of these hearings, he has never stopped being a teacher. Time and time again he's reached out to bridge the gap between researchers and lay people, to help the rest of us

understand both the majesty and the frailty of the natural world we inhabit.

And tonight, as he fights a disease which has not yet yielded all its secrets to science, he's our teacher again. He has certainly shown us a lot about courage, and we're very grateful for it.

Bruce has become a real friend to me over these last 7½ years. He's been an honest and trusted adviser, and he's always said exactly what he thought. And as a consequence, I have also been his student, and I have learned a great deal.

Bruce, Hillary and I admire you. We love you, and we're grateful. You've made me think

this being term-limited is not all bad. But let me say to all of you, I think the best thing I could say about Bruce Vento is the now very famous thing Henry Adams said nearly a century ago: "A teacher affects humanity. You can never tell where his influence stops." Bruce, your influence will never stop.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gerald E. Sikorski and John V. (Vin) Weber, salute cohorts; and Garrison Keillor, host of the radio show "Prairie Home Companion."

The President's News Conference *June 28, 2000*

The President. Good afternoon. This has been a good week for the American people: first, the landmark breakthrough in human genomic research, which promises to eradicate once incurable diseases and revolutionize health care for a very long time to come; second, the release of the midsession review, which told us that the health of our economy continues its remarkable expansion.

Our budget surplus this year will be the largest in history, \$211 billion. Over the next 10 years, after we lock away Medicare and Social Security surpluses, the remaining surplus is expected to be almost \$1.5 trillion. This progress exceeds even our own predictions just 4 months ago, another milestone in what is now the longest economic expansion in our history.

This is a tribute to the hard work of the American people and our commitment to fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and investments in our people and our future. Now is not the time to abandon the path that has brought us here. We must use this moment of prosperity to make important investments in our most pressing priorities.

Chief among them is the need to provide affordable, reliable prescription drug coverage to our seniors. There is no question that this is a critical need. Just yesterday a study released showed that prescription drugs shot up over 10 percent last year alone. That is too heavy a

burden for our older seniors to pay and for our people with disabilities to pay.

There are some who say we can't provide affordable, accessible prescription drug coverage for all our seniors. I believe that's wrong. With millions of them without coverage, the absence of prescription drug coverage is a fatal flaw in our present health care system. Think about it. Because of breakthroughs like the human genome project, in our lifetime, there may be new life-saving drug treatments for many dreaded diseases. But they won't mean anything if our seniors and people with disabilities can't afford them. That's what this debate is really all about.

Today the House is set to vote on a prescription drug plan that amounts to an empty promise for too many of our seniors. It's a private insurance plan that many seniors and people with disabilities simply won't be able to afford. Insurers, themselves, say the Republican plan won't work. The bottom line is, their plan is designed to benefit the companies who make the prescription drugs, not the older Americans who need to take them. It puts special interest above the public interest.

Let me make it specific and clear. This plan would not guarantee affordable prescription drugs to single senior citizens with incomes above \$12,600 a year or to senior couples with incomes above \$16,600 a year. And we have all heard countless, countless stories of those

with crushing medical burdens, that if they could get these prescription drugs, would have their lives lengthened and the quality of their lives improved.

An article in today's paper reveals that a group calling itself Citizens for Better Medicare is running—I give it points for chutzpa—Citizens for Better Medicare is running millions of dollars in ads to kill our prescription drug proposal. You'd think a group with this name would be in favor of affordable Medicare prescription drug coverage for all seniors and people with disabilities, but this is one of those mysterious interest groups whose financial backers are cloaked in secrecy.

Now, just last night the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to force groups like this to open their books and disclose their fundraising sources to the American people. I applaud the House for this vote and all those, Democrats and Republicans, who voted for it. With the vote on Medicare in the House, I call on Citizens for Better Medicare to respect the will of the Congress and reveal the sources of their support today. We should let the American people judge who is truly interested in better Medicare.

It is clear that this lobbying effort is part of a larger campaign to block real progress. In fact, the Republican leadership in Congress won't even allow our prescription plan to come up for a vote in the House—I suspect, because they're afraid it would pass.

I have offered a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is voluntary and affordable. My plan puts the interest of seniors first. Whether you're on a fixed income, live in a big city or a rural area, the plan is dependable, and it is affordable. This is particularly important for rural Americans. More than half of our oldest seniors in rural communities go the entire year without any prescription drug coverage at all.

Earlier this week, in an effort to break the logjam, I offered a compromise proposal to give seniors the relief they desperately need. I said we could pass a prescription drug benefit while providing real tax relief to married couples, something the majority in Congress say they want to do. And we could do both now within the framework of fiscal responsibility.

As the Vice President has proposed, the first thing we should do is to take the Medicare tax receipts we get off budget so they are saved for Medicare alone and, meanwhile, used to pay

down the debt. That will do more to protect and strengthen Medicare. It will help extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund to 2023. It will put us in a position to pay down the debt completely by 2012, a year ahead of schedule. It will enable us still to set aside \$500 billion to reserve for America's future, to be used after a full debate and after this year's elections to meet the country's key priorities.

Now, with less than 35 days left in the legislative year, time is running out for Congress to meet its obligations to the American people. They have to make the tough choices to get something done or continue to be dragged down by the weight of special interests.

So again I ask Congress, let's not waste these precious weeks. It's time to get down to business, to pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights; to raise the minimum wage by one dollar over 2 years; to pass the commonsense gun legislation; to hold tobacco companies, not taxpayers, accountable for the health care costs of tobacco; to pass hate crimes legislation; to finish the jobs of giving American businesses and farmers access to a huge new market by passing permanent normal trade relations with China; to open new markets to American investors here at home; to bring prosperity to people in places who have been left behind; and most important of all, to continue to improve our schools, to demand more of them and invest more in them, including more teachers for smaller class sizes, after-school programs for all our kids who need them, and repairing or modernizing thousands of our schools that are today literally falling apart or so overcrowded they can't contain all the kids. We can still do a lot of this if we work together in the days ahead. That's what the American people want us to do, even in an election year.

There's been some encouraging developments in this Congress. We lifted the earnings limit on Social Security; we passed the Africa/Caribbean Basin trade bill. Apparently, the bill to aid Colombia is making good progress. And I think the China legislation will pass if we can get it up to a vote in a timely fashion. So the Congress can do a lot of things, and I hope they will, and I'm looking forward to work with them.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, after 7 months, the Elian Gonzalez case is coming to a conclusion, removing a thorn from U.S.-Cuban relations. And House Republican leaders have struck a deal to ease decades-old sanctions against Cuba. Would you accept that legislation? Is it time to normalize relations with Fidel Castro's government? What would that take?

The President. Let me deal with the questions separately. First, on the question of the legislation proposed by Mr. Nethercutt: If I believe that the legislation essentially allows for the sales of American food and medicine to Cuba or to other countries, but has some protection for us for extraordinary circumstances that foreign policy might require, like Senator Lugar's bill does in the Senate, then I would be inclined to sign the bill and to support it. I've always wanted to sell more food and medicine not only to Cuba but to other countries as well.

I have some concerns about it, and I just have to analyze the bill as it passed and whatever legislation finally makes its way to my desk, because, as I understand it, they put some new restrictions on travel to Cuba, which might undermine our people-to-people contacts, which had been more and more extensive over the last several months and which, I believe, to be very important. And since no Federal programs can be used to help finance these food sales, as they can be to other countries, we need an analysis of whether there actually will be more sales under the legislation.

So I guess what I want to know—and I just haven't had time to get the analysis from our folks—is whether this will be a net plus in terms of our strategy, which is to reach out to the Cuban people without supporting the Cuban Government.

Now, the second question you ask is whether it's time to move toward normalization. Let me just do a little history here. In 1992, when I was running for President, the Congress passed the Cuban Democracy Act, and President Bush signed it, and I strongly supported the bill. The bill seemed to strengthen economic sanctions on Cuba but actually provided a specific, step-by-step way for us to move toward normalizing relations. And we were in the process of doing that. We did it in '93, '94, '95. We were moving toward sort of—we would do something; they would do something. It was working, I thought,

quite well. And I thought the law was actually quite good. And then, the Cuban Air Force shot the planes down and killed American citizens illegally and deliberately. And so, since—after that, the Helms-Burton bill passed, and it codified the embargo.

So the real answer to your question is, I don't believe that we can change that law until there is a bipartisan majority which believes that there has been some effort on the part of the Cuban Government to reach out to us, as well.

I like the old law; I thought it was working well. The killing of those innocent people in those two airplanes changed all that. And now we're in a position where until there is a bipartisan majority of Congress persuaded that there has been a fundamental change, we can't do more than what I've been doing, which is to try to aggressively expand people-to-people contacts.

That brings us back to the Nethercutt bill. If I think, on balance, it allows the President—not just me, my successor as well—to pursue our foreign policy interest and will, on balance, further that policy, then I would support it. But I want to analyze it for the reasons that I said.

Go ahead, Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters].

Middle East Peace Process

Q. There are reports that Israel and the Palestinians will be coming to Washington next week for talks. Do you think enough progress is being made to arrange a Middle East summit, or are you discouraged? And secondly, should Israel stop the sale of radar systems to China?

The President. Let me answer the second question first because that's a much clearer one. We're very concerned about that sale, and I've talked to Prime Minister Barak about it extensively. And as you know, there's a lot of concern in the Congress, so we're still working on that.

Now, in terms of their coming here for talks, there has been no date set. I do not believe that they can resolve the final, most difficult issues without having the leaders get together in some isolated setting and make the last tough decisions—or decide not to make them, as the case may be.

Of all the issues involved with regard to all the parties in the Middle East peace talks, the final status issues between the Israelis and the Palestinians are the most difficult. I do not, however, believe they're going to get any easier with the passage of time. I think that some

foreign policy problems—the answer is to kick the can down the road and wait for them to get better and hope time takes care of them. Some have to be decided sooner or later, and sooner is better than later. My own instinct is that the cluster of problems here would be better off being resolved sooner rather than later.

I've had Mr. Ross out in the Middle East, and then Secretary Albright went, and she's going to give me a report. And when she does, then I'll make a judgment about whether the time is right to ask them to come here. But I have not made that decision yet.

Go ahead, Paul [Paul Singer, United Press International].

Death Penalty

Q. A death penalty question, sir. Do you believe that Governor Bush made the wrong decision by allowing Mr. Graham to go to his death last week? And secondly, do you believe it's time for the American people to stop and reassess where we stand on implementation of the death penalty in this country?

The President. Well, on the Texas case, I didn't read the file. All I know about it is what I've read about it in the press. But let me say generally what I think. I think that those of us who support the death penalty have an extra heavy responsibility to assure both that the result is accurate and that the process was fair and constitutional. And that means, to me, at least in modern terms, the broadest possible use of DNA evidence and the strongest possible effort to guarantee adequate assistance of counsel. That's a big issue. And I think those were two of the reasons that motivated Governor Ryan in Illinois to do what he did, and have driven a lot of other things in this debate. So that's where I think it is.

Now, I don't know that the American people have changed their position that it's still an appropriate penalty under certain severe circumstances, and I haven't. But I am concerned also, at the Federal level, with the—I don't believe that adequate assistance of counsel is an issue in the Federal cases. And as far as I know, there are no cases in which the question of DNA is an issue. There may be. I don't know if there are some.

The issues at the Federal level relate more to the disturbing racial composition of those who have been convicted and the apparent fact that almost all the convictions are coming out of

just a handful of States, which raises the question of whether, even though there is a uniform law across the country, what your prosecution is may turn solely on where you committed the crime. I've got a review underway of both those issues at this time.

Yes, Bill [Bill Plante, CBS News].

1996 Campaign Finance Investigation

Q. Mr. President, as you know, for the third time, a Justice Department investigation has recommended that the Vice President's activities in fundraising during the last campaign cycle be looked into. Previously, on two occasions, the Attorney General has declined to do this. Would it be better for the Attorney General, for your administration, and for the Vice President's candidacy if he invited such an investigation?

The President. Well, first let me say, my understanding is—I know this is true in the previous cases, and I think it's true here—is that there are some people in the Justice Department that think there should be and some who think there shouldn't be. And the Attorney General, who has shown no reluctance to ask for a special counsel when she thought one was called for, didn't think one was called for in this case, and she reaffirmed that yesterday.

I think the fact that the Vice President released the transcript of his interview was a very good thing, because some Republican Senators had made some assertions about it that just weren't so—they weren't true. And now that the whole thing has been put out in the public, it seems to me that the best thing to do is for the American people to make their own judgments about it. But I don't see any reason that the Attorney General shouldn't make a decision in this case, as she has in every other one.

Claire [Claire Shipman, NBC].

Vice President Al Gore

Q. Another question about your Vice President. A year ago when people looked at his poll numbers compared to the Texas Governor's, his supporters would say, "Oh, the election is a long way off." Six months ago people were saying the election's a long way off with those same poll numbers, and today, his supporters are still saying that. And I wonder, do you think it's time to suggest that this might be a trend, that there is a reason why the Vice President

is trailing the Texas Governor in the polls? And secondly, you have said that the Vice President will not be held accountable, that the American people will not hold him accountable, for the scandals of this administration. Do you still believe that's the case or is this, in fact, part of it?

The President. Well, first of all, I said—no, let me say exactly what I said—I said that the people would not hold him responsible for anything I did that they didn't agree with or that was wrong, and that's clearly true. That's still true. There is no evidence of that in the surveys.

Secondly, let me remind you that a lot of these other so-called scandals were bogus. Mike Espy was acquitted. The Cisneros thing was a tempest in a teapot, totally overdone, and you all know that the Whitewater thing was bogus from day one. It had nothing to do with the official conduct of the administration, anyway.

Now, so the word "scandal" has been thrown around here like a clanging teapot for 7 years. And I keep waiting for somebody to say—I noticed there was one columnist in the Washington Post that had the uncommon decency to say, "Will no one ever stand up here and say that a whole bunch of this stuff was just garbage and that we had totally innocent people prosecuted because they wouldn't lie? We had totally innocent people's lives wrecked because they wouldn't go along with this alleged scandal machine." So let's be careful; let's be specific.

Now, I've already told you, my view is that the Vice President, on the only thing as far as I know that he's been in any way implicated in is this campaign finance thing. He put out the whole transcript of his interview, made himself available for questions, and, I thought, made a very compelling case and certainly demonstrated that a lot of the accusations against him with regard to that are not so.

There was also a very interesting article—I think in the National Law Journal—which basically went through all of the things and concluded that there was no basis for a lot of these criticisms of him, under these circumstances. And I think another magazine here—maybe the New Republic, the Washington Monthly—one of those other magazines had an analysis of it. So I think that we should be very careful in throwing that around.

Now, let me come back to the polls. First of all, I must say, I haven't seen any or done any lately, so I don't know. But I'm perplexed

that I can't remember a time when we had two major polls coming out within a couple of days of each other that had 13 points difference. One said there was a 13-point difference in the race; the other one said it was tied—and they came out, they were done within 2 or 3 days of each other. I don't think either one of those pollsters rigged the results, so my instinct is that people are still trying to figure out what they think about this race.

And all I can tell you is, I know three things, and I've said this over and over again. I know three things. One is, no person in the history of the Republic has ever had the positive impact on this country as Vice President that Al Gore has had. That is a historical fact. We've had a lot of Presidents who were Vice Presidents who were great Presidents. Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman were great Presidents, but not because of their service as Vice President. Nobody has ever done as much for America as Vice President as Al Gore has. Therefore, in my lifetime, he's the best qualified person to serve.

The second thing is, I believe that he's right on the issues. I think his economic policy is right. I think it's far more likely to keep the prosperity of this country going. I think it's far more likely to include people that would otherwise be left out.

And the third thing is, I think it's important that somebody be elected that understands the future. We just announced this genome project yesterday. What are we going to do to make sure there's no genetic discrimination? A lot of people will want genetic discrimination in employment, in promotion, in extension of health insurance. What are we going to do to make sure it doesn't exist? What are we going to do to make sure, in the computer revolution, that there's no violation of people's privacy rights with their health and financial records? A lot of people will want to get that private health and financial information.

So I think that what will happen is, we'll come to the conventions; we'll have these debates; and somehow—I've been amazed by an amazing volatility since the end—you know, at the end of the primary campaign, most of the polls had him up a point or two. So there's been a lot of volatility in these polls, and my best judgment is that people are still trying to figure out what they're going to do. And sooner or later they will. I don't think they

have—and I think they know those three things about Al Gore, and it's still more likely than not that he will win.

Yes.

Cuba-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, you've spoken to the congressional constraints that are attached to your ability to deal with Cuba, and yet, a hallmark of your foreign policy, sir, has been a commitment to engagement, the idea that American trade and investment, ideas and practices can be powerful engines of change—China, Russia, Vietnam, now even North Korea. Do you think, sir, that it's in the American interest not to have those tools available in dealing with Cuba? Do you think there's any prospect at all that the current policy will actually work? And after 40 years and now nine Presidents, do you think the time has come to reassess?

The President. I think the next—I like—I'll go back. I like the system that exists under the Cuban Democracy Act. I think Congress has a role to play here, but I like the Cuban Democracy Act. I think it's not wise to take away from the President all the tools of diplomacy with regard to one country that he might have, or she might have, some day with another country. So I like that.

But I will say again, there was a reason for that. All these other countries you mentioned, none of them—none of them—by order of the leader of the country, killed, murdered two airplanes' worth of people. I think there were four people involved. These people were killed illegally. It violated the Chicago convention. Even if you believe that those planes were in Cuban airspace, which we believe they were not, they could not legally be shot down. Now, let's not—that changed everything. The deliberate decision to murder those people changed everything. And it made me wonder whether Mr. Castro was hoping we never would normalize relations, so then he could use us as an excuse for the failures of his regime. But we are where we are here.

What have I done? I was aggressively moving to implement the Cuban Democracy Act before that happened. Since then, we have done everything we could—and I noticed there was one article about it last week which pointed out how Secretary Albright had dramatically increased the people-to-people contacts and the travel to Cuba. We are doing what we can.

Obviously, I think that anything we can do to engage the Cuban people, to get them involved in the process of change, to get them to look outside the world, to get them to look beyond the present system they have, is a positive thing to do. And that's why I answered in response to that very first question, to evaluate the legislation in the House on the food and medicine sales, I've got to really have an analysis of it to say, will the restrictions and personal contact, which the legislation imposes—which I think are a mistake—be outweighed by the increased sales of food and medicine, in terms of the ultimate benefit to the Cuban people? And I will look at it and see.

Yes, George [George Condon, Copley News Service].

Supreme Court Decision on Partial Birth Abortion

Q. Mr. President, does the closeness of today's abortion vote in the Supreme Court suggest to you that abortion rights are at risk in the next court? Or does it suggest that the fact that partial birth abortion can survive even a conservative court say that they aren't as threatened as some believe?

The President. Well, first, I think the court decision is clearly the only decision it could reach consistent with *Roe v. Wade*. So I think what you know there is that that's the vote for *Roe v. Wade*. You can't have a rule like the rule of *Roe* and then ignore it. So that's why—if you remember, on this late-term abortion issue a couple of years ago, I pleaded with the Congress to adopt a broad limitation on late-term abortions consistent with *Roe v. Wade*, but to make an exception for the life and health of the mother, as the Supreme Court decision required. They declined to do that, and so we've had a political impasse here, and then you've seen what's happened in all these States.

So the decision is, I think, consistent with *Roe v. Wade*. And as you pointed out, it was narrowly upheld. I think that's about what the vote for *Roe* is. And I think that in the next 4 years, there will be somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court, and depending on who those appointees are, I think the rule will either be maintained or overturned. And I think that it's very much in the balance, depending on what appointments are made in the next 4 years. That's what I believe.

Yes, go ahead, Larry [Larry McQuillan, USA Today].

Gasoline Prices and Energy Policy

Q. Mr. President, Governor Bush has been critical of you and the energy policy of the administration, saying that you've failed to adequately convince OPEC to increase oil production. He also claims that, if he became President, he'd be able to use personal diplomacy to persuade allies, like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, to, I believe he said, turn on the spigot. Do you find that kind of claim realistic? And do you have any reaction to his criticism of you?

The President. Well, first of all, I have spent an enormous amount of time on this in the last several months, and there have been two decisions by OPEC to increase production—not as much as we would like.

If you look at the allocation of the production increases against the real capacity of those countries, most countries don't have the capacity to produce much more than their latest allocation, except for the Saudis. And it's clear that they were trying to maintain some sort of harmony within the OPEC family.

Let's go back. I think that these big increases in gasoline prices in America are the result, as I said, I think, several weeks ago, first and foremost, of the unfortunate decision of OPEC several months ago to cut back production at the very time the world economy was growing. They left production out there when the world economy sunk, which is one reason we had very inexpensive gas prices for a good period of time. And these two developments grated up against each other. So that's the first thing.

Then the second thing is, we had here, as you know, in America—so we had a tight supply situation. Then we had some broken pipelines, which interrupted supplies, which caused a temporary spike. And then in the Midwest we did have, apparently, some, but I think quite a modest, impact on prices because of the intersection of the clean air rules with trying to mix the fuels in a different way, particularly ethanol.

And I think what we have to do now is to keep doing what we can to get production up, to let this FTC investigation proceed. I think the gas prices have dropped 8 cents a gallon in the Midwest and, in the blended fuels area, 12½ cents a gallon just since the investigation was announced. But the main thing I would say to you is, we need a long-term energy strat-

egy to maximize conservation and maximize the development of alternative sources of energy and also maximize domestic sources of energy.

Now, let me just mention two or three things—I've mentioned this before. The House, by the way, has reauthorized the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and I compliment them on that. That's a good thing. We also need a home heating oil reserve for the Northeast. We need to do that. That's very important. We ought to pass my proposal to provide tax credits to people who manufacture or buy energy-efficient homes, cars, and consumer products. That ought to be done. We ought to pass my appropriations to help develop alternative sources of energy and energy conservation technologies.

Since I've been President, or since '95, anyway, the Congress has approved approximately 12 percent of my requests, and the House voted to zero our participation in the Partnership for New Generation Vehicles. This kind of research is just as important as the human genome research in terms of the role of the Government in this. A lot of this basic research needs to be done by the Government. We can be driving cars that get 80 miles to the gallon through fuel cells, through electric cars, through natural gas fuel, a lot of other options, within a matter of 3 or 4 years if we'll just get after it and treat this like it's important. So I think that's very important.

Let me just mention one other thing. I think it's very important to pass a comprehensive electricity restructuring proposal, because they also, the electricity companies also—electric companies—use traditional fuels, and if we can reduce their reliance on it, obviously it will lower the price for other purposes. I think there's \$20 billion a year in savings to the American people through electricity restructuring, which is also quite important.

Yesterday the Vice President issued a number of other proposals, including what he said he felt should be done with some of the surplus, which dealt with energy efficiency in factories and power plants. And all the analyses there show that there are massive, massive savings there, again, which would not only cut their bills but by freeing up supply would lower the overall price of the fuel that we need.

So that's the system we need. We need to—it's all out there. It's not like we don't know that these technologies are there. It's not like we don't know we have options for conservation.

Some of you were with me, I think it was 3 years ago now, when I went out to San Bernardino, California, to a stop on the rail line outside Los Angeles, to a lower income housing project where they promised 40 percent lower utility bills, using elemental solar reflectors that looked like just little shingles on roofs, better windows, better insulation. And I can tell you, after 3 years, the average utility bills are 65 percent lower than they would be for that kind of floorspace for those families in other places in California.

So it's out there. All we have to do is to make up our mind that we're going to accelerate this. That's what I think we should be doing.

Q. Mr. President, does that mean that Governor Bush is oversimplifying things when he points to places like—

The President. Yes, I think that it's a—we all rate our powers of persuasion differently, you know, and our powers of persuasion sometimes work when people's interests are involved and sometimes don't. But it's not just a question of how much oil is being pumped. And obviously, I have done what I could in the way I felt was most effective to increase production. I will continue to do that. But I think it's a simple answer to a complex problem and—although I saw that story that one of you put out about his 1992 letter in which he was arguing for high energy prices. So I'm glad that he's changed his position anyway. It's amazing how a few years will do that to you. So I like that.

Yes, John [John Harris, Washington Post].

Presidential Decisionmaking

Q. Mr. President, supporters of Vice President Gore have been fairly blunt in raising questions about whether Governor Bush has the knowledge and depth to be President. On the other hand, many scholars have noted that Ronald Reagan managed to be effective by concentrating on a few big ideas and leaving the details to others. In your experience here, how important is command of facts and plain old brainpower to being President? Are there other qualities that are more important? [Laughter]

The President. That's a dead-bang loser, isn't it? [Laughter] No matter what I say, I'm in a big hole.

Well, first of all, I don't think it's so much a question of intelligence, generically. I think it's more a question of curiosity and willingness

to learn what you think is important, and learn—I guess—I think that no President can say, "Well, it should be enough for the voters if I get the best advisers in my party, and they come up with a position, and I take it."

So what the voters will have to analyze here is, how important is the fact that Al Gore spent 20 years working on arms control issues, for example, and dealing with all these things. How much of an effort—see, I ran as a Governor, although I had been a Governor a lot longer—but how important is what you know, what you've learned in the job you've got?

And I think this is a question that's more readily addressed, really, to the candidates than to me. I'm a different person. Everybody's different here. So I always felt that I needed to know as much as I could, not so I could make decisions without experts and without advisers but so I'd be in the best position to evaluate the advice I was getting.

But it's very important for a President not to try to micromanage the Presidency. So what you try to do is to find a balance between—because it's a deciding job; it's a deciding job. And a lot of our Presidents, I think, have had some problems, not because they knew too much but almost because they worked so hard that they were so tired, they maybe couldn't make really good decisions when they were tired.

But I think what you know counts, because I think the more you know, the better position you're in, not only to draw your own conclusions but to take advice. And so, I think what—the best is a balance, obviously. It's like everything else in life; the best is a balance. The best is a President that's had broad experience and that knows a lot and that is curious—I think curiosity is profoundly important—but also a President who understands what the big, important things are and then can listen to the right people. You've got to have a blend of both if you want to make the best decisions. That's my view.

Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

Supreme Court Decision on Gays in the Boy Scouts

Q. Mr. President, what do you think of the Justices' ruling this morning that allows the Boy

Scouts to bar gays as leaders? And if you disagree with it, can you justify your role as honorary president of the Boy Scouts, which discriminates against gays and atheists?

The President. Well, first of all, the Court's ruling, I noticed with interest—I haven't read it yet, but I did get a pretty good report on it—I noted with interest that they seem to go out of their way to draw the ruling quite narrowly and to limit it strictly to the question of whether the Boy Scouts could pick the people who were going to be Scout leaders.

I, generally—I have to tell you, I'm generally against discrimination against gays, and I think that the country has moved a long way. And I'm proud of the things that we've been able to do, and I'm disappointed we haven't been able to do more in some areas, but I think we're moving in the right direction. And I think that's all I should say. The Boy Scouts still are—they're a great group. They do a lot of good. And I would hope that this is just one step along the way of a movement toward greater inclusion for our society, because I think that's the direction we ought to be going in.

Go ahead, Jim [Jim Angle, Fox News].

Elian Gonzalez

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. As you know, the Supreme Court declined to intervene today either to stop Elian Gonzalez from leaving the country or to overrule other courts, all of which have deferred to your administration. As you look back on this—

The President. That's pretty rare, isn't it? [Laughter]

Q. As you look back on this, sir, do you have any sense, any regrets, at all about the way your administration handled this matter? And in light of what you've said about Cuba here today, sir, do you have any second thoughts about Elian returning to Cuba?

The President. Well, if he and his father had decided they wanted to stay here, it would be fine with me. But I think that the most important thing is that his father was adjudged by a people who made an honest effort to determine that he was a good father, a loving father, committed to the son's welfare.

And we upheld here what I think is a quite important principle, as well as what is clearly the law of the United States. Do I wish it had unfolded in a less dramatic, less traumatic way for all concerned? Of course I do. I have re-

played this in my mind many times. I don't know that we had many different options than we pursued, given how the thing developed. But I think the fundamental principle is the right one, and I'm glad we did.

I was just in Germany, having a discussion with Chancellor Schroeder about some family reunification issues where we have serious differences with the Germans, who are our great allies, on this. And as I looked and reviewed some of these cases that I've tried to bring to the attention of the German officials, it made me even more convinced that we had upheld the proper principle here.

Yes, John [John King, Cable News Network].

National Missile Defense System

Q. Mr. President, we hear increasingly from senior officials here and at the Pentagon that when it comes to national missile defense, you're inclined, essentially, to split the difference, authorize the contracting but leave the decision about whether to break from the ABM Treaty to the next President. Is that a fair reflection of your thinking?

The President. The most important thing I can say to you about that today is that I have not made a final decision and that most of this speculation that is coming in the press is coming from people who have not talked to me about it.

Let me try to at least set up the thing, because I'm working hard on it now. Remember when we put out—when Congress passed a law about this a couple years ago, you remember, and we had to sort of come up with some time-tables, I said two things that I want to repeat today.

First of all, insofar as there might be technology available which would protect us and other people around the world from missile attacks with warheads of weapons of mass destruction, obviously, anybody would have a moral obligation to explore that technology and its potential. I believe that.

Secondly, whether I would make a decision to go forward with deployment would depend upon four things: one, the nature of the threat; two, the feasibility of the technology; three, the cost and, therefore, the relative cost of doing this as compared with something else to protect the national security; and four, the overall impact on our national security, which includes our nuclear allies and our European alliance,

our relationships with Russia, our relationships with China, what the boomerang effect might be about whatever China might do in South Asia, with the Indians and then the Pakistanis, and so on.

So what I have tried to do since then is to say as little as possible, except to explore what would have to be done in our relationships with the Europeans, our allies, and with the Russians, in the first instance, to keep our options open—could we get an agreed upon modification to the ABM Treaty.

Even the Russians—keep in mind, don't minimize—everybody talked about how we didn't reach an agreement, Mr. Putin and I, when I was in Russia. And that's absolutely true; we didn't. But we did get a document out of there which I think is quite important, because the Russians acknowledged that there are new and different security threats on the horizon; that is, that it's quite possible that in the next few years, countries not part of the arms control regimes of the last three decades could develop both long-range missile delivery capability and weapons of mass destruction which they could put on warheads, and that none of this would be covered by, essentially, the mutual deterrence structure of the ABM Treaty and all the things we've done since then.

So they recognize, too, that we, in the new century, in the coming decades, are going to have to make adjustments. Now, what they don't say is, they don't want America unilaterally building a missile defense that they think someday can undermine their deterrent capacity. That's kind of where they are now, and we're still talking about all that.

But John, the truly accurate thing is that I have not yet formulated a position which I am prepared to go to the American people with, but I will do so some time over the next several weeks based on those four criteria and what I think is the right thing to do.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, last Monday the IRA allowed inspectors to come in and see caches of their weapons. Would you like to see the other terrorist organizations on the Protestant sides allow inspectors to look at their weapons? And are there any words that you could say to the people of Northern Ireland who are facing the marching season, other than Colonel Crowley's oft "peace is good" position—any per-

sonal—[laughter]—any words from the heart that you could ask as they approach this very tense time?

The President. You know, one of the hardest things I've had to learn in life is that not every cliché is wrong. [Laughter] Peace is good. Well first, I think it would be a good thing for all the paramilitary groups that have secret arms caches obviously to follow the lead of those who are doing what's been done. I think this is a great deal. I think this is a very, very hopeful development.

And it ought to inform the marching season—that is, if people are going to do their marches, ought to do it mindful of the context in which they're doing it and the diminished tension and the enhanced hope for long-term peace and the institutions working again, and all of that.

This is America. We can't say—anybody can march; anybody can talk; anybody can say whatever they want to say. But everybody ought to—what I would hope is that there will be a new sense of responsibility and a new sense of possibility in Northern Ireland because of these developments.

You know, there's been lots of work done now over the last several years on this. We've come a long way since the first talk of then Prime Minister Major and then Prime Minister Reynolds, and I think that the work, particularly the things that have been done, the commitments that have been made, and the actions that have been taken in the last few months, they ought to be cherished by the people of Northern Ireland, and we ought to have a marching season that unfolds, I would hope to the maximum extent possible, in recognition of all we have seen.

Yes, ma'am.

Vice President Al Gore

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to know how you feel Al Gore is doing at being his own man. The reason I ask that question is so many of his policies seem to be extensions of your policies, and even last week in the handling of the renewed call for a special prosecutor, the press was full of reports of how his response was very "Clintonesque." So how do you think he's doing at establishing a sense of his own identity?

The President. Oh, I think he's done that very well. Let me remind you, when I asked him to become Vice President, there were some people who criticized me, who said what a dumb

thing I did because we were the same age, we came from—although he never lets me say that; he's a year younger than I am, and looks much younger now because he has no gray hair—but anyway, that we came from the same part of the country, and we basically came from the same wing of the Democratic Party. But I thought I was getting good balance because he knew things I didn't know about arms control, energy, environment, the way Washington worked.

So it shouldn't surprise you that having worked here for 8 years, as we all have, that a lot of the new things he proposes would grow naturally out of what has been done, rather than being a departure from it. But I must say, I read quite carefully those proposals he made yesterday, and while he did incorporate a lot of what I have proposed on energy efficiency, he went way beyond anything I'd ever proposed, too. I was kind of sorry I'd never thought of one or two of the things that were in there.

So I think he's doing fine on that. I think that—if you just go back to the times when this has happened before to good effect and—if you go back to when President Nixon ran in 1960 or when Hubert Humphrey ran in '68 or when President Bush ran in '88, it's a gradual process. But then one day, it reaches, in the words of that now-famous book that everybody is reading, it reaches a tipping point and people kind of get it, and they say, "Oh, there it is. There this person is." And I think that's happening with him. And I think after the conventions, it will be crystal clear. And the main players on the stage of American political life will be the two candidates for President.

Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

Gasoline Prices

Q. Mr. President, the proposals that Vice President Gore laid out yesterday on energy and the proposals that you discussed today are all long-range solutions to the Nation's dependence on oil. In terms of the problems that drivers in the Midwest are experiencing right now, during the summer driving season, with high gas prices, what would be so bad about suspending gas taxes temporarily just to give those drivers a break?

The President. First of all—well, the Federal gas tax is not that big. Most of the gas taxes come from—are at the State level. But if it were done—and Congress debated this before—

if it were done, they would just have to decide what they were willing to pay in terms of either the deferral or the cancellation of Federal highway projects. And that's—it's a tradeoff, and they would have to make that judgment.

It would—even there, it would take some time, and there was some question, as I remember, when it was raised before, whether all those price savings would be passed along to the consumers. So I think if the Congress was going to do that, they would want to have some assurance that that would be done.

But let me say, this is not such a long-term deal. First of all, the most important thing is to let the industry know we're running a serious investigation here—and I would remind you, gas prices have dropped 8 cents in the Midwest, a gallon, since we announced it, at the pump—more, much more, at the wholesale level—and the blended gas has dropped more than 8 cents a gallon. So let's not minimize that.

The second thing we need to do is to make absolutely sure that everything that can possibly be done to make sure the pipelines are flowing properly and the refineries are working—that's done. You know, we had a small problem, you may remember, where I used the Strategic Petroleum Reserve recently because of a breakdown in supply available to a refinery in the South. So if I can find any other kind of backlogs like that where there is something I can do to get the flow going, I will do that as well.

But the most important thing I can tell you is, I think that this, as we get more production online, this present price crisis will begin to abate. But we will have fundamentally higher prices, now that the rest of the world's economy has recovered, and now that virtually all of the OPEC members but Saudi Arabia are operating virtually at full capacity—until we make up our minds that we're going to drive higher mileage vehicles and do other things that use less oil.

And we are not talking about a long, long, long-term thing. You're talking about—a lot of these cars could be on the road and available for sale within 2 years—a lot of them. And it's just a question of whether we think it's a national priority, because—we've treated the human genome like a priority every year because we all want to live forever. And that's good. I'm not minimizing that. I'm not being flippant about that. We do. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. But we only get interested

in this when the price of gasoline goes through the roof.

And this was inevitable. We were actually quite—I expected it was going to hit sooner, but the Asian financial crisis dropped it down. Now, they went up more than they should have and more than any of us anticipated, including me. And I think part of that is perhaps not justifiable, and that's what we're seeing—why we're seeing some price adjustments in the Middle West today.

But the only real answer for this is for us to develop alternative sources to oil and more efficient ways of using the energy we have. And we can do it in a hurry if we just put our minds to it.

Q. If I could just follow up on that. The Federal gas tax is 18 cents, which is not insignificant. Half of that was instituted originally for deficit reduction. Now that we don't have deficits and, in fact, we have record surpluses, what would be wrong with temporarily rolling back, say, 9 cents, or maybe even just the 4.3 cents that you instituted as part of your 1993 budget deal?

The President. Inherently, there's nothing wrong with it. But you would want to know two things: first of all, the Congress should be satisfied that whatever the financial consequences are to the highway construction and repair program are consequences they're willing to pay, and they think their constituents are willing to pay, number one. And secondly, they'd need some assurances that actually the people would benefit from it at the pump.

Deborah, go ahead [Deborah Mathis, Gannett News Service].

President's Future Plans

Q. Sir, you know we're obligated to ask you about your post-Presidential plans just in case you've made a decision since the last time we asked you. [Laughter] I recall that many years ago, you were asked about—when you were still Governor of Arkansas, you were asked about your future political plans. And interestingly, you didn't mention the Presidency, but you did say that you had always wanted to be in the United States Senate. Is that on the table for you? Have you made any other decision that we need to know about?

The President. No. But let me remind you what the context—you go back and read that interview. I think you'll see what I said was,

when I was a young man, I always wanted to be a Senator, and I never thought about being a Governor. But when I became a Governor, I found that I liked being an executive better than I liked being a legislator. And I still feel that way. I think—maybe I'll run for the school board some day. That's about the only thing I can imagine doing. I don't have any other plans. I just want to be a good citizen.

Go ahead, in the back.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. Last question.

Congressional Action on the Budget

Q. Republicans in Congress are seeking to pass the spending bills early this year, in an effort to get out of Washington and go campaign in the fall. And yet, there are significant differences between what they want to spend and what you have proposed. I'm wondering, what do you see as the major points of disagreement at this time, and do you think that we're in for the same type of prolonged budget stalemate that had been featured in the past?

The President. That's entirely up to them whether we're in for the budget stalemate. But if you just—look at the education budget. I mean, how many times do we have to go down this road? You know, it's still not supportive of the 100,000 teachers and the smaller classes; it's still not supportive of the dramatic expansion in after-school programs, which is critical to school performance; still has nothing in there for school construction; still is inadequate in terms of my plan that people ought to either identify these failing schools and either turn them around or shut them down—and lots of other problems with the school program.

If you look at the crime proposals—this is unbelievable. When they wouldn't adopt the commonsense gun safety legislation, all I heard was this constant barrage about how, if only the administration would enforce the gun laws on the books, everything would be wonderful; we wouldn't have any problems in America.

So what I said, "Look, why don't we do both? We have increased gun prosecutions under my administration, but we can do more. So please, give me some more money for people to investigate gun crimes, for people to prosecute gun crimes, to develop safe gun technology"—this whole—it was nothing but a straight enforcement measure; exactly what they said they wanted, and no money for it.

Still no support for the 50,000 new police officers in the higher crime areas. And still the constant threat of these environmental riders, and underfunding of the land's legacy initiative, and a number of other things.

So we still have some serious differences. Now, we've been doing this every year since 1995; we just sort of slightly change the script every year. And I'm more than happy to do it again, because, frankly, in the end, we normally wind up with an agreement that's pretty good for the American people.

But the timing in which we do it—it depends more on them than me. I'm not going to give up my commitment to education as our most important domestic priority and what we're doing to build the future of our children. And I think—we've got the crime rate down now to a 25-year low; we can't stop the policy that works. And here I gave them a big proposal that is exactly what they say they want and believe in, and they don't want to fund that.

So we'll just have to see what happens. I'm kind of hopeful about it, though. It's just late June, here. This drama has several more acts before it's over.

Go ahead. We'll take one more. Go ahead, sir.

National Missile Defense System/Korean Summit

Q. Mr. President, if I could return you to missile defense for a moment. The missile defense plan was based in large part on the threat from North Korea. You've now seen a first warming of relations between North and South. South Korea is not enthused about the missile defense plan. I'm wondering whether you now view it as urgent as you did—the threat as urgent as you did a few months ago. I'm also wondering whether you would be willing to meet with Kim Chong-il of North Korea?

The President. Well, first let me say, I got a report both from President Kim on the phone and from his representatives in person about the summit of the Koreans. And I thought it was a very, very important development and a great tribute to President Kim's vision and courage and persistence. And I also think it justified

the American policy, which is that we would never allow ourselves to be put in the middle between the two Koreas, that we wanted them to meet and work together.

So we, I think, contributed to it; the Chinese and others did as well. I think this is good for everybody, and I'm encouraged by it. I'm also encouraged by the moratorium that the North Koreans have on testing. But they still have a missile program, and so it's still something that the United States has to be mindful of and to prepare to deal with and to keep up with. And of course, I hope it will go away as a problem. I hope it for the people of North Korea, too.

All these countries that have a lot of people in great need that are spending vast sums of money on defense, it's one of the great tragedies of the world today. So, would I like it to go away? Of course I would. Do I think it's gone away because of this meeting? I don't. Do I think it might? It might, and I hope it will, but we don't know that yet.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 192d news conference began at 1:45 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator; Gary Graham, convicted felon executed in Texas on June 22; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Gov. George H. Ryan of Illinois; President Fidel Castro of Cuba; former Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy; former Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry G. Cisneros; Juan Miguel Gonzalez, father of Elian Gonzalez; Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; President Vladimir Putin of Russia; Assistant Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs P.J. Crowley; former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; former Prime Minister Albert Reynolds of Ireland; General Secretary Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. A portion of this new conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Ceremony Honoring Presidential Scholars

June 28, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Welcome to the White House. I'm sorry it's a little rainy, but it's a nice place to hide from the rain.

We're delighted to be joined today by Representatives Jack Kingston, Carlos Romero-Barceló, John Isakson, and Ken Bentsen. And I want to thank Deputy Education Secretary Frank Holleman for being here, as well as Chairman Tom Britton and all the members of the Commission on Presidential Scholars, and the members of the Presidential Scholars Foundation who are with us here today.

I have had the privilege of meeting with the Presidential scholars every year since I've been in office. I always enjoy meeting you and your parents, your teachers, your loved ones. I want to congratulate each of you for working hard, for believing in yourselves, for achieving something very special, and for being in a position to play such a large role in our country's future.

I am especially glad that all you young people are here this week, because this is a week which has had a very large impact on the future that you will live. Just 2 days ago some of our Nation's leading scientists came to the White House to announce they had completed mapping the entire human genome, the very book of life. It's one of the most important scientific discoveries of all time. It will launch a new era of discovery that will revolutionize the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of most, if not all, human diseases, from Alzheimer's to Parkinson's to diabetes to cancer.

Then, we also announced this week that according to the latest budget projections, our budget surplus this year will be the largest in the entire history of the United States, \$211 billion. When I leave office, we will have paid down the national debt by nearly \$400 billion—[*applause*]*—thank you; locked away the taxes the American people pay for Social Security and, I hope, for Medicare, for debt reduction over the next decade, and still leave the American people a projected surplus to be invested in the future of about \$1.5 trillion.*

If Congress works with me, we can map a course to place our Nation in a position we haven't been in since 1835, an America entirely

debt-free. We can do that by 2012. And it will change your future forever.

One thing that I've worked hard to achieve over the last 7½ years—and we've had a surprising amount of bipartisan consensus on this—is to extend the ability to go to college to more young Americans. We've established the HOPE scholarship; the \$1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college, which effectively makes community college free to most Americans; a lifetime learning tax credit, which has been very, very important for the last 2 years of college, for graduate school, for adult education. We've allowed families to save in education IRA's. We changed the nature of the student loan program to lower the cost and to provide more repayment options in a way that has saved our students \$8 billion over the last 7 years. And now I'm asking Congress to allow families to deduct the costs of up to \$10,000 of college tuition at a 28 percent rate, which could be worth \$2,800 to virtually every family in America sending a young person to college.

So this, I think, may be one of the most important things we've done in the last 7 years. College-going is higher than ever before. Two-thirds of our high school graduates are immediately going on to college. It's something for which we can all be very, very grateful.

Thirty-five years ago this month, President Johnson welcomed the second class of Presidential scholars here to the White House. And believe it or not, he talked about this very moment. Here's what he said: "In the year 2000, most of you scholars will be no older than I am today. Intricate and subtle problems will confront you along the way. It is your responsibility to bring to the solution of these problems a set of values drawn from the long wisdom of the democratic process."

Now, when he said that, President Johnson didn't know we would map the human genome. He didn't know we'd be talking about a \$1.5 trillion surplus. Before we started running these surpluses, the last time we had a surplus was in 1969, and it was just a few million dollars, and they hardly knew what to do with it.

So he didn't know about the genome; he didn't know about the surplus. But he did know

something Americans have always known: If we stay focused on the future and if we stay true to our values, there is no stopping the power and potential of the spirit of our people.

Now, 35 years from now, you Presidential scholars will be about my age. In this audience, we have students who may one day help us find a cure for AIDS, who may design cars that get hundreds of miles to the gallon, who help us unlock the mysteries of our deepest ocean depths and the dark reaches of outer space.

I think it very likely that your children will be born with a life expectancy of somewhere around 100 years. And I think it possible that you will be able to unite with others across the world, across all the lines—the racial, the ethnic, the religious lines—that divide us, not only because of the way technology and the Internet are bringing us together but because of one of the great lessons we have actually learned from the study of the human genome. Scientists have found already, in mapping the genes of people, that in genetic terms, all human beings, regardless of race, are more than 99.9 percent the same. Even more surprising, the genetic differences within people of the same race are greater than the differences of the genetic profile from group to group of people of different races.

Therefore, what we have learned, perhaps most important, from this stunning breakthrough of modern science, is something that ancient

faiths have already taught us: The most important fact of life on this Earth is our common humanity. I hope that understanding continues to guide all of you as you go out into the best days our country and, I hope, our world have ever known. I am very proud of you for your achievements. I congratulate you and your families. I wish you well.

I only hope that you will always remember this day and the fact that you came to the Nation's Capital and to the people's house at a time of great progress and prosperity. But that progress and prosperity imposes upon you, because of your gifts, a special responsibility to make the most of it.

Congratulations.

Now we're going to bring the Presidential scholars up.

Thank you.

[At this point, the Presidential scholars were introduced.]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, this concludes our program, but if they don't make you feel better about the future of America, nothing will. Let's give them another hand. [Applause]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Thomas E. Britton, Chairman, Commission on Presidential Scholars.

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Partial Birth Abortion June 28, 2000

I am pleased with the Supreme Court's decision today in *Stenberg v. Carhart* striking down a Nebraska statute that banned so-called partial birth abortions. The Court's decision is consistent with my past vetoes of similar legislation. I will continue to veto any legislation restricting late-term abortions that lacks a health exception or otherwise unduly burdens a woman's right

to choose. A woman's right to choose must include the right to choose a medical procedure that will not endanger her life or health. Today's decision recognizes this principle and marks an important victory for a woman's freedom of choice.

June 28 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

Statement on the Supreme Court Decision on Restriction of Protests Outside Health Care Facilities

June 28, 2000

I am pleased that the Supreme Court today, in *Hill v. Colorado*, upheld a Colorado statute balancing a person's right to protest certain medical procedures against another person's right to obtain medical treatment free from harassment, fear, and intimidation. The Colorado law was enacted in response to a real need to ensure safe access to medical treatment in light of increasing obstruction, harassment, and violence in front of health care facilities. To

preserve a woman's right to choose, we must protect access to reproductive health services. That is why I championed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE), a Federal statute that protects women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics.

NOTE: The statement referred to Public Law No. 103-259, approved May 26, 1994.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Private Insurance Prescription Coverage Legislation

June 28, 2000

Tonight, in a partisan vote, the Republican leadership succeeded in passing a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that provides more political cover than insurance coverage for our Nation's seniors. If this unworkable private prescription drug benefit passes the Congress, I will veto it. The legislation was designed to benefit the companies who make

prescription drugs, not the older Americans and people with disabilities who need to take them. It puts special interests above the public interests. I urge the Congress to work across party lines and develop a bipartisan bill that ensures an affordable, available, and meaningful Medicare prescription drug benefit option for all seniors.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Brian Schweitzer

June 28, 2000

Thank you. I'll tell you what, I'm glad he clarified that. [Laughter] He got into that next husband deal—I thought there were going to be three surprised people here—[laughter]—me, Hillary, and what's-her-name. [Laughter]

Anyway, let me say, first of all, I want to thank all of you for coming, and thank Beth again for her incredible generosity. She and Ron have been so wonderful to open their homes to people who share our causes. Unlike maybe most of the people in this room, I've actually been to Montana several times. In 1985 we had one of our best family vacations ever, there. And I think it may be the most beautiful place on the Earth. It is certainly one of the most

magnificent. And it deserves to have a magnificent, big, strong Senator, and we're about to get one here.

I loved the place. I felt immediately at home. It's so much like the place I grew up and the people I grew up with. But I have to tell you, this thing that Brian did with the prescription drugs and taking the people to Canada and then to Mexico, it really painted a picture of what we're up against.

And what I'd like to say is something you all know, but this is a very important election. And maybe I can say it with greater authority since I'm not on the ballot. There are profound differences between the two parties, starting

with our candidates for President, our candidates for the Senate, our candidates for the House.

And the most important thing that most voters need to know about who is probably right, is that only the Democrats want you to know what the real differences are. There was a great article in the newspaper the other day. You can't believe everything you read in the press, I know, but since our Republican friends didn't deny this, we can assume it's true. They have actually hired pollsters. They're so afraid of this prescription drug issue, they have hired pollsters to tell them what words and phrases they should use to convince you that they're for giving affordable prescription drugs to our seniors, even though they're not.

That's what was so bizarre about this. They didn't hire pollsters to convince them how to talk about something they're for; they hired pollsters to try to tell them how to talk about something they're not for. I never saw anything like it in my life.

Now, just last week, or a couple of days ago, anyway, the United States Senate voted on this issue. And on a party-line vote, they voted against the position that he and I hold. If we change Senate seats in Montana, that will be a switch of two. They'll lose one, and we'll gain one. And I could give you example after example after example.

But let me say, all over America and rural parts of the country, over half of our elderly senior citizens don't have any kind of medical coverage for medicine. If we were creating a Medicare program today, of course we'd have a prescription drug coverage. If I asked you to go in that room with a pencil and piece of paper and design a medical program to ensure all the seniors in America what would it cover, every one of you would put prescription drugs down on it.

The only reason there is no prescription drug coverage in Medicare is, in 1965 health care was about doctors and hospitals. There had not been the pharmacological revolution we had seen. Prescription drugs were not used basically to keep people out of the hospital—which saves money over the long run, I might add—and to lengthen and enhance the quality of life. And the only reason it hasn't happened since then is every year but one, until this administration, the Government was in debt, and we couldn't afford to take on new programs.

Well, now we're looking at a \$1.5 trillion surplus over the next 10 years, after we save all of your Social Security and Medicare taxes to pay the debt down and stabilize Social Security and Medicare. And for roughly 12½ percent of that—15 percent, something like that—we can provide prescription drugs at an affordable rate on a voluntary basis to all the seniors in this country. And we ought to do it.

And you know, this has been a great week for America. We announced a \$211 billion surplus in the budget this year, the biggest one we ever had. I will now have had the privilege of paying off about \$400 billion of the national debt when I leave office. And even more profoundly important, we announced the sequencing of the human genome. But this is just the beginning, mapping these 3 billion genes, looking at all the different patterns. It's just the beginning.

And what will happen is, we will discover the genetic flaws that give people Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, every different kind of cancer, the things that make some people more prone to heart disease and others more prone to strokes. And the more we discover, the more important medicine is going to be, and the more we're going to be able to lengthen life and increase the quality of life.

Anybody that lives to be 65 in America today has got a life expectancy of 82. That's stunning. I predict to you that children born within a decade will be born with a life expectancy of 85 to 90. This is stunning. Within 20 years, children will be born with a life expectancy of 100. Your body is built to last about 120 years. All of us that don't, like me—[laughter]—do things like, too much stress, or we don't eat right, or whatever—this is going to change everything.

And it is, I think, a stern test of our judgment and our character what we do with this prosperity we've got. And I think one of the things that we have to do is take care of the aging of America, the baby boom generation is getting older. And we can't do it unless we do the prescription drug program.

You know my first love is education. I've worked hard on it. There is plenty of money left to do education. Should we give some of the money back to the people in a tax cut? Absolutely, there is plenty of money left to do that. But we have no higher priority, in my judgment, than making sure that we have done

right by the seniors in this country and that we have paved the way with the prescription drug program. This man symbolizes that. There are a thousand other issues that we'll be voting on.

But you just remember this. When you talk to people about the elections, say, "Well, you know, I went to this party for this fellow, Schweitzer. He's from Montana, and he's doing these crazy things for these people to prove to them we're getting the shaft on prescription drugs for seniors. But what it says is, he wants to do something with our prosperity. He wants to do something for people who need help, not just for those of us who can afford to come to an event like this. And he wants to do some-

thing to make America a better, stronger, more united place."

If he wins, it will go like a rifle shot across America. And if we don't succeed in getting this done between now and November, because they think their phrases that the pollster gives them will substitute for deeds, you can be sure if he gets elected, it will happen, and it will be a much better country.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Beth and Ron Dozoretz. Mr. Schweitzer was a candidate for U.S. Senate in Montana.

Remarks at a New Democrat Network Dinner

June 28, 2000

Thank you very much. I have here in my hand a Mont Blanc pen left on this platform, I presume by Simon—[laughter]—who could not afford one of these when he worked for me. [Laughter] I am really proud of you—[laughter]—and I thank you. You've been great. This is really wonderful.

Now, I don't know how well the rest of you know Senator Lieberman. I think I know Senator Lieberman reasonably well—30 years worth of reasonably well. And normally he's so laid-back and so buttoned-down and so controlled. And that's the image of the whole New Democrat crowd. But when he gets in front of a New Democrat group, he becomes positively ebullient. [Laughter] I mean, you could mistake him for Chris Dodd up here, the way he was talking. [Laughter] It was amazing.

Listen, this deal he did tonight is a big deal. Getting the disclosure of these secret committees is a big deal for America, and we thank you. This is great. And this could really influence the outcome of some of the elections this year, and more importantly, it could ratify a principle that we all, in both parties, say we believe in, which is full disclosure. So now we're going to be given our chance, and it's a great thing.

Let me—I thank all the rest of you for coming. I want to say, Joe, of all the nice things

you said about me, you know, when we started in '93, we carried the economic plan by a vote—just a vote. As Al Gore says, whenever he voted, we won—in both Houses. And I want to pay special tribute to those of you who were there then and who were part of the whole idea base of the New Democratic movement. And I want to say a special word of appreciation to my friend and neighbor of many years Dave McCurdy, who was a big part of that. I thank you so much. Thank you.

We have all these people running for office today. I guess I want to say a few words about all of them. And I'll come back to that. But let me begin by saying that I hope this group will stay together after this election. And I hope that it will become a constant vehicle to merge politics and policy in the best way.

In Washington, we have too many people who do policy but don't do politics. And then we have people who do politics but don't do policy. And really it only works if you do both. There's nothing wrong with politics. I've always sort of enjoyed it. [Laughter] And I think I've embarrassed a lot of people because I'm not ashamed of it. I love politics. I love the system. If it weren't a pretty good system, we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. It's really nothing more than saying you like people. You're interested in what they have to say, and

you think everybody counts. But we need a place where people can be brought together with their ideas and their legitimate political aspirations.

And I said this when the DLC had its sort of every-decade meeting to figure out the charter for the organization up in Hyde Park the other day. But let me just remind you what the New Democrats have wrought in the last 7 years.

In addition to the dramatic turnaround in the fiscal picture of the country that Senator Lieberman mentioned, we had the family and medical leave law; welfare reform; 100,000 police; the Brady bill; doubling the earned-income tax credit; going from one to 1,700 charter schools in this country; all the trade initiatives, including now over 280 separate trade agreements; the empowerment zone program and the reinventing Government program, both of which were strongly pushed by the New Democrats, which the Vice President led; and of course, my personal favorite, national service, where now 150,000 young people have followed Alan Khazei and City Year's lead to go out across this country.

And they built a great, broad bipartisan support. Former Senator of Indiana, Republican Senator Dan Coats had a great article in the Hill newspaper yesterday talking about how he changed his mind about AmeriCorps, that we were never interested in supplanting the civic sector of our society but wanted to strengthen it and support it. And that's exactly what the national service has done. So you can be proud of that.

In this year alone, we've had the Africa/Caribbean Basin bill. We are about, I believe, to pass the China trade bill. We have the bill to help Colombia, which I strongly believe is a New Democratic measure. We took the earnings limit off Social Security. And we still have a chance, in addition to passing this campaign finance measure, to expand the earned-income tax credit again; to pass the new markets legislation, which has broad bipartisan support; to do more to close the digital divide and reduce hate crimes in our country; to pass Senator Landrieu's great initiative to permanently set aside massive funds to protect precious lands along our coasts and throughout the country forever. And we've got this possibility for paying the country out of debt, for the first time since 1835. That's pretty good. That's pretty good.

But what I want to say to you is our continued progress depends upon ideas, continuous movement, and good politics. And that means, among other things, that the people who are here tonight who are up for reelection have to be helped. And you're helping them here, but I don't want you to stop here. I'll just mention a few.

First of all, Governor Nelson from Nebraska back there—most people say we couldn't hold Bob Kerrey's Senate seat, but he's going to hold it. And I served with him for many years as Governor. I have enormous respect for him. He will be a genuine New Democrat in the Senate. He needs your help to win.

I think in some ways, the ultimate test of whether you can combine fiscal conservatism, social liberalism, and astonishing personal courage, will be whether Chuck Robb will be re-elected in Virginia. And I think you can help him.

Debbie Stabenow is going to give us a seat in Michigan. But she's in a hard race, and she needs your help. Cal Dooley has to fight in every election he ever runs in. *[Laughter]* And he spent a lot of time with this New Democratic Network. I just want to say one thing about Cal.

He spends a lot of time that he doesn't have to spend, working on getting us all together for trade, working on getting us all together for the New Democratic Network. Whenever they need any of us to get together, and all the rest of us will come when we're asked, Cal's there doing the asking. He comes from a tough district. They've been very supportive of him, and very understanding, but he needs and deserves your help. Because all the times he's been out here working to get us together—and half the time to do things we should have done on our own without his having to ask us—he could have been home getting votes. So I want you to help him. He needs it. Thank you.

I want to thank all the rest who are here. I want to mention one or two others. But I thank Adam Smith and my Congressman, Vic Snyder, who's here, and Bob Etheridge, my longtime friend from our education days, and Loretta Sanchez, who made Orange County safe for Democrats—*[laughter]*—and Jim Davis and John Larson and Ron Kind and Jim Moran and my good friend Harold Ford. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Rush Holt. Now,

Rush Holt is the first guy to represent his district in a century or more. And he's the only scientist we have—serious, serious scientist in the Congress. We also had a great science teacher, Bruce Vento, from Minnesota, but he's retiring this year.

You know, I just announced the human genome, and we're all talking about how we have to preserve privacy of medical records, and we've got a thousand decisions to make. This Congress is going to be—Joe told that joke about me organizing a DLC chapter on Mars—[laughter]—but let me just tell you, we're all laughing about this, but I believe some of the most serious decisions Congress will have to make in the next decade will relate to science and technology.

Now, we can get all the money we need from Democrats or Republicans for the National Institutes of Health, because we all want to live forever. And I say that not in a bad—that's good; that's not bad. I don't say that in a critical way. When I'm gone from here, I'll probably be writing you all letters, asking you to put more into it as I get older. [Laughter]

But there are a whole range of other issues. Should we try to find out if there was life on Mars, or should we be determining what's in the black holes in outer space, or should we be shifting another few hundred million dollars to explore the deepest depths of the ocean, because we now know there are forms of life there that we had not even discovered yet that might have all kinds of answers? Should we do them all? If so, what do we have to take money away from?

I'm telling you, this is a big deal. Rush Holt is really important to the Congress. He's a serious scientist who actually knows stuff that the rest of us just give speeches about. [Laughter] And he had the guts to run in a district where nobody else would run because they thought there wasn't any way a Democrat could get elected. So he also is a test of whether our ideas can sway people who otherwise were not reachable by us. And I want you to help him. He deserves to be reelected, and I want him to be reelected. Thank you.

And finally, of course, I want you to help the Vice President, because I want you to make Bill Daley look like a genius. [Laughter] He is, but I want him to look like one.

You know, I just want to say a word about this. First of all, there are a lot of people who,

if they had a job like Secretary of Commerce, would try to find some way to say no if they were being asked to run and do another political campaign. He could say, "Well, I've already been in the Cabinet once. What else can I do?" And he didn't say no. And that means a lot to me.

Because I can tell you, all the stuff we talked about, and a lot of other issues that you know well, including what kinds of people get appointed to major positions from the Supreme Court to the Cabinet to many other things, are hinging on the outcome of the Presidential race. And how well a lot of our friends out here run in their reelection campaign will turn in some measure on this Presidential race. And Bill Daley said yes, and I'm proud of him. And it's going to be a better campaign and a winning campaign in no small measure because he did.

I just want to remind you, very briefly, of some things. I know you know this. And I had a chance to talk about this in my press conference a little today. I worked real hard for the last 7½ years, with the help of a lot of good people in this room, in Congress, and those in my administration who'd been introduced, like Secretary Caldera, to kind of turn our country around, get it going in the right direction, give the American people a lot of self-confidence that we could move forward and we could move forward together. And now we really do have this unbelievable chance to kind of write the future of our dreams for our kids.

But I get the feeling that there are people kind of approaching this election in a less serious vein, who basically act as if—and a lot of you have done this, a lot of you in the high-tech sector have done this—but a lot people act like this economy's rocking along so good; you couldn't mess it up if you tried. You could take dynamite to the New York Stock Exchange, and it wouldn't mess it up; you could do whatever you wanted; you couldn't mess it up—and that maybe people ought to just take their tax cut and run and just kind of enter an area of good feelings and just see what happens. And I just don't believe that.

I think any of us who are at least 30 years old—I've said this 1,000 times; I'm going to say it one more time—anybody in this room at least 30 years old can remember at least one time in your life when you made a mistake, not because things were going so badly for you but because things were going so well, you

thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. And that is how we're going to be measured this time. Are we going to concentrate? Are we going to bear down? Are we going to really, really cherish the extraordinary opportunity we have here?

And I think that there are four simple arguments for Al Gore's election. First of all, his service as Vice President, from breaking the tie on the budget in '93 to breaking the tie on the commonsense gun safety legislation in 2000, to running the Rego program to the empowerment zones, to the technology partnership for the new generation vehicles, to managing big chunks of our relationships with Russia, South Africa, Egypt, and many other places.

We have had a lot of Vice Presidents who made great Presidents. Thomas Jefferson did. Theodore Roosevelt did, and Harry Truman did. But we've never had anybody serve in that job who was as great in that job as Al Gore. Never, not one person in the history of the Republic has ever done that. And that counts for something. It really matters that he's had this experience, that he knows these things.

The second argument is, now that I'm going out into private life, it's just purely selfish, but I'd kind of like to see this expansion continue for a little while. [Laughter] And I know that he will follow economic policies more likely to keep the expansion going, because we'll keep paying down the debt; we'll keep interest rates down; we'll keep investing in our future; he'll keep expanding trade, keep doing the things that have to be done.

If you take all the non-Social Security surplus and give it away—all of it right now, projected for the next decade—in a tax cut and in the partial privatization transition costs of any privatization plan and in the spending in other defense and other spending plans proposed by the Republicans, it's all gone. All the surplus is gone.

Now, if I ask all of you, what's your projected income over the next 10 years, and you tell me, and I say, "Do you have a high level of confidence?" You say, "Yes," and I say, "Good, come here and sign the contract to spend it all tomorrow," you would think I had lost my mind, wouldn't you? There's not a person in this room that would sign a contract tomorrow obligating you to spend your entire projected income over the next 10 years. We do not need to risk going back to the old days of deficits

and high interest rates and weak economic performance because of that. That's the second reason that we ought to be for Gore.

And the third reason is that he understands the future. And that's important. I'll just give you just two examples. With this incredible human genome announcement this week—it was stunning. You know, I've been reading about this stuff for a year just so I would understand it when I made the announcement yesterday. [Laughter] Now, you're laughing, but it is the most fascinating thing I have ever studied in my life. It's unbelievable. But we have serious questions here. Do you believe that as we give up more and more of our genetic information so we can find out how to stay healthier, we should be denied jobs on the basis of it—or promotions, or access to health insurance? That's a big question, isn't it? Don't you want somebody who understands how to help you work through all that?

I had a guy tell me the other day that Al Gore was talking to him about the Internet 12 or 15 years ago and saying that someday it would all be on all the—the Library of Congress would all be on computers, and we could all get it, and that's what it is—along with the Encyclopedia Britannica. Pretty soon, all of our health and financial information is going to be on somebody's computer. I think you ought to have to give permission before somebody else gets it. Wouldn't you like to have somebody who both understands that, and wants to keep the high-tech economy going and growing and keep this a fertile ground for new companies to start, being President?

Everybody now admits we're having global warming. When we started talking about it 5 years ago, we had a House subcommittee that thought it was a subversive plot to wreck the American economy. My only defense was, if I was trying to wreck the American economy, I had done a poor job of it.

You know, the first lunch I ever had with Al Gore, the very first one after we took office in the White House, he brought in his little chart showing me how there was more greenhouse gases being put in the atmosphere in the last 30 years than in the previous 500. But you know what? Eight years later it's the conventional wisdom. People made fun of him 8 years ago. It's the conventional wisdom now. He was right.

Don't you think we ought to have somebody that understands this going into a future that—somebody that can shape our children's future? If we don't do something about this, it's going to flood the sugarcane fields in Florida—I mean in Louisiana. It's going to flood the Everglades in Florida. It's going to change the whole pattern of agricultural production in the Midwest. I think it's important. I want somebody plotting the country's future that really understands this stuff.

And the final thing I'd say is, we're Democrats because, whether we're more conservative or more liberal on this or that spending issue or this or that crime issue, we're inclusive. We want poor people along for the ride. We want middle class people to have a chance to catch up with everybody else. We want everybody's kids to have an education. And we're not for demeaning people because of their race, their

religion, their sexual orientation, or anything else. And I want somebody as President that I absolutely trust to take us all along for the ride.

So we actually made America a better place, and you guys have just gotten started. All the good stuff is still out there to be done, but you've got to win now to do it then.

Thank you, and bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. in the Ballroom at the Westin Fairfax Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Simon Rosenberg, founder and president, New Democrat Network; Dave McCurdy, president, Electronic Industries Alliance; Alan Khazei, cofounder, City Year; and former Gov. E. Benjamin Nelson of Nebraska, a candidate for U.S. Senate. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a World War II Memorial Reception June 29, 2000

The President. Good morning, and welcome to the White House. I want to acknowledge especially Secretary Cohen, Secretary West, General Shelton. Chairman Gilman and Senator Lautenberg were here, and they had to go back to work. But I know we appreciate their being here, and their going back to work. [Laughter] I want to welcome all of the distinguished veterans who are here, especially, and thank General Herring, particularly. And I'll introduce Senator Dole and Mr. Smith in a moment.

I am very enthusiastic about this project, and I want to thank all of you who have already helped, including the schoolchildren who are here and all of you who will help.

One of the great pleasures of being President on warm nights and on the weekends is being able to sit out on the balcony that was built during President Truman's tenure here, and you can look out on The Mall and see the whole history of America, from the Revolutionary War, commemorated in the Washington Monument, to the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln. Now there are monuments to World War I, Korea, and Vietnam. We just celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Korean war. They teach us a

lot about our national history and our national character.

You also can see on The Mall the scientific genius of America in the Air and Space Museum, our Nation's heritage in the American Natural History Museum. You can see art in the National Gallery and the Hirshhorn. And I can see the Capitol, even on the days where I think they don't hear me down there. [Laughter]

And yet, the event that speaks most to the courage and character of America is World War II. It defined the 20th century. And until it has a place on our National Mall, the story of America that is told there will be woefully incomplete. This, therefore, in a real sense, is the last campaign of World War II.

Roger Durbin, who began it more than a decade ago, understands—understood that it's not just about the child that walks The Mall today whose grandfather served in the war. It is, in a larger sense, about the child who walks The Mall in a hundred years, tugging on his or her grandfather's sleeve, asking questions about the monument. That is the special quality of those monuments. It's how we learn from our past.

And so there must be a monument so that a hundred years from now those questions will be asked.

Roger Durbin knew that, and I want to thank his granddaughter, Melissa Growden, for being here with us today.

Four and a half years ago we came together on The Mall to sprinkle soil from America's overseas cemetery, to begin a drive to get this memorial built. I believe today, as I did then, that the site we dedicated is still perfect for the memorial. The distance traveled since is, in itself, a story of national resolve. And there are many people who deserve our gratitude, but I want to recognize just a few this morning.

First, I want to thank General Fred Woerner and Major General John Herrling for the terrific job they're doing at the American Battlefields Monuments Commission. It oversees 24 American military cemeteries and 27 memorials in 15 nations around the world. And I know they are anxious to add the World War II memorial to that list.

When this drive began, we were certain that one person we could count on was Fred Smith, the chairman of Fed-Ex and cochair of this memorial drive. This isn't the first time he's answered our country's call. He served two tours in Vietnam, and his father and three uncles all served in World War II. And I have known him for many, many years now, because we're from the same neck of the woods. Fred, I wasn't surprised you agreed to do this, but I was and remain very grateful. And on behalf of all the American people, we thank you for your service to the country.

Last week I had the privilege of presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Senator Dan Inouye and 21 other Asian-Americans who served with distinction in World War II. It was an amazing moment. I'm pleased that one of those—Senator Inouye's fellow Medal of Honor recipient Nick Oresko could join us today, as well as the president of the national Medal of Honor Society, Colonel Barney Barnum.

I also want to welcome all the veterans of World War II who are here. And I want to acknowledge the veterans from Congress—as I said, Senator Lautenberg and Congressman Gilman had to go back to work—Congressman Hall, Congressman Hyde, Congressman Regula, Congressman Sisisky, all veterans. And then the former Republican leader of the House, Congressman Bob Michel, is still here today, and

I want to welcome him and thank him. And Senator Harry Byrd, it's nice to see you, sir.

And I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur, who first recognized the vision of her constituent, Roger Durbin, and introduced the legislation to establish the memorial. I think they're voting on Capitol Hill, and she's not able to come. And Senator Sasser, we're glad you're here today, too, and we thank you.

I'd like to thank two people who aren't here, who have been a great deal of help, Tom Brokaw and Tom Hanks, who worked to bring attention to this cause. And their ability to do so, as you know, grows out of one's book and the other's movie, both of which were, I think, very important to increasing the understanding of Americans about the character and courage of those who fought in World War II.

More than 1,900 World War II veterans and their colleagues at Wal-Mart have undertaken a special effort, and I thank them. I understand they're represented here today by veteran Jean DeVault. I want to recognize the men and women, thousands of them, who formed community action councils across the country, represented here today by Viola Lyon and Linda Johnson, from the Quad Cities; Christine Dialectos, from Reading, Pennsylvania; and Deb Ellis, from Littleton, Colorado.

And finally, I want to say a special thanks to 11-year-old Zane Fayos from Fayetteville, New York. Last April, he was 10 then, Zane saw Tom Hanks in an ad for the memorial and decided to get involved. He wrote a letter that said he was very interested in World War II, that he was reading books about Normandy and D-day, that his mother said he could go see "Saving Private Ryan" when he finished his books, and that he had managed to save \$195 in 10 short years, and he wanted to donate the entire amount to building the memorial. If he is representative of the young people of America, I'd say we're in pretty good hands. I'd like to ask him to stand today. Zane, stand up. *[Applause]* Bless you, young man. Thank you.

Now, Zane gave everything he had for the memorial. And I know this violates some law the Counsel's office gave me, but we still need a little more money. *[Laughter]* So somebody else is going to have to give, not everything they have but a little more, until we get right over the top. And I'm going to help, and any

of you in this room who can give us a little more, I'll be grateful to, as well.

I'd like to now introduce someone who has given everything he had for our country, Senator Bob Dole. All of you know that his service in World War II was enough for three lifetimes, and then he gave us the next 50 years, as well.

In 1997 he agreed to lead this campaign, and that was a great blessing for the cause and for the country. Whenever I see Senator Dole and we share a joke or a story or a common cause or sometimes a common disagreement, I understand why his generation of Americans has been called the greatest generation.

Ladies and gentlemen, Senator Dole.

[At this point, former Senator Bob Dole, national chairman, and Frederick W. Smith, cochairman, World War II Memorial Campaign, made brief remarks.]

The President. Well, ladies and gentlemen, this concludes this formal meeting. I've been listening to Senator Dole and to Fred. I just want to say two or three things.

On the way in, they were playing "Hail to the Chief," and I leaned over to Bob Dole, and I said, "You know, when we get out of here, I'd like to make commercials with you. I'll be your straight man." [Laughter] It's the only commercial venture I've discussed the whole time I've been President. [Laughter]

We tried to divide it up so that one of the three of us would mention everybody, but I do want to say again how grateful I am to all of you for being here, especially my friend of nearly 30 years Jess and Betty Jo Hay. And thank you, Ed. And I thank the Wal-Mart people and all the companies—the Hank Greenberg Company—all of them that have given.

Senator Dole said one thing. I don't believe I've ever told this story in public, but I'm going to do this. I want you to know why this is so important to me. Senator Dole said one thing that I think is really true. He said, "What would the world be like today if we had not fought and prevailed in World War II?" And there are lots of obvious big, geopolitical things you could say. But Senator Dole and Senator Inouye served in Italy, so I want to leave you with this story.

When we were getting ready to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the D-day invasion and then the end of the war—and there was a ceremony in Italy, too—I got hundreds of letters. So one

day I get this letter from this guy in New Jersey, with an Italian surname. And he says, "Dear Mr. President," he said, "During World War II, I was an 8-year-old boy living with my mother. And we were starving to death, practically, and we didn't know what was going to happen to us. And the American soldiers came." And he said, "I was fascinated by automobiles, so I used to sneak down to the motor pool, where I met an American who taught me all about engines." And he said, "He also gave me chocolate. Then I would take him home, and my mother would make him pasta." And he said, "I decided that I wanted to go to America," and he said, "as soon as I was old enough, I came to America, and I opened my own garage. I met a wonderful woman. I had a great family. I raised two children. They both have college educations, all because I met an American soldier in a motor pool. I never knew what happened to the soldier until I read in our local paper a story about your father's experience in World War II, and there was a picture of your father, and I knew that was the man who had helped me. I think he would be very proud of me today."

The consequences of what was done by the World War II generation are being felt today, in ways big and small. A country is known by what it remembers. This is a noble endeavor. A hundred million dollars sounds like a lot of money. It's peanuts. I meant to ask Secretary Cohen before I came up here, but if we had to fight World War II today, it would cost several trillion dollars—\$100 million is nothing. We ought to come up with the rest of the money, a little more if we need it, and do it right. And never forget.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. John P. Herrling, USA (Ret.), secretary, and Gen. Fred F. Woerner, USA (Ret.), chairman, American Battle Monuments Commission; Melissa A. Growden and Jess Hay, members, World War II Memorial Advisory Board; Mr. Hay's wife, Betty Jo; former Senator Harry F. Byrd, Jr.; former Senator James R. Sasser, U.S. Ambassador to China; NBC News anchorman and author Tom Brokaw; and actor Tom Hanks. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of former Senator Dole and Mr. Smith.

Remarks Announcing the Nomination of Norman Y. Mineta To Be
Secretary of Commerce and an Exchange With Reporters
June 29, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. I'm pleased to bring you here to announce my nomination of Norm Mineta to be the 33d Secretary of Commerce, to carry on the successful work of Bill Daley, Mickey Kantor, and Ron Brown.

I want to welcome Norm and his wife, Danealia, here. And I want to thank Secretary Daley for returning from his new duties to be with us and for the truly magnificent job that he has done.

I also want to thank our Deputy Secretary of Commerce, Rob Mallett, for being here today and for also being part of that same tradition of excellence—his leadership in improving the way the Department is run and especially his efforts to open Government contracting to women and to minority-owned businesses. We couldn't do it without you, Bob, and we thank you for your service.

Norm Mineta is a worthy addition to the Cabinet. He was, of course, a Member of Congress for 21 years, representing Silicon Valley, serving as chair of the House Committee for Public Works and Transportation. He was a leader on trade and technology and helping his colleagues understand and promote the emerging digital economy.

We worked closely together on trade issues but on others as well, such as family and medical leave, where his support was absolutely pivotal. And he has ably chaired my Advisory Commission on Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Now, Norm thought he'd left politics for good in 1995 when he left Congress to work for Lockheed Martin. But politics and public service have a way of calling the best back. Norm is one of the best, a strong leader for the Department of Commerce, a highly skilled negotiator in Washington and throughout the world. He will play a crucial role in keeping our economic strategy on track, opening trade around the world, investing in our people, promoting high technology, bridging the digital divide.

He brings an indepth understanding of American business and a strong sense of the needs of our high-tech economy. But he also has a deep concern for people—for the people in

places who are not yet fully participating in this economy.

You see, Norm Mineta's family story tells a lot about the promise of the American dream and the power of one person's devotion to opportunity and to justice. As a young boy during World War II, he and his family were forced from their home and held hundreds of miles away in a desolate internment camp for Japanese-Americans. When he got home, young Norm vowed to work to make sure that kind of injustice could never happen to anyone else.

He grew up, went to college, served with the Army in Korea and Japan. Then he began a career of public service in the San Jose government, becoming the first Asian-Pacific American mayor of a major American city. He was elected to Congress in 1974 and became the first Asian-Pacific American to chair a major congressional committee. But he never stopped fighting for justice. His efforts led to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided an apology and compensation for every survivor of the wartime internment camps.

I am proud to add to Norm's string of firsts by naming him the first Asian-Pacific American ever to hold a post in the President's Cabinet, proud to have a man of his qualities as a member of our economic team, as we work to make the most of this moment of unprecedented opportunity.

Recently I received a remarkable book called, "Asian American Dreams." Its author writes that Asian-Pacific Americans are "a people in constant motion, a great work in progress, each stage more faceted and complex than before. As we overcome adversity and take on new challenges, our special dynamism is our gift to America."

Well, that pretty well describes Norm Mineta's life and why I decided to name him Secretary of Commerce. I am very grateful to him, and to his wife, for giving up the joys and the remunerations of private life to come back into public service. And I hope he will be swiftly heard and confirmed by the United States Senate.

Norm.

[At this point, Secretary of Commerce-designate Mineta made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you.

William M. Daley

Q. Mr. President, Mr. Daley is leaving your Cabinet, but he's going to another important job, and I wonder if you have any advice for him as he moves to take over the Gore campaign, and also, if you think you're going to be offering advice regularly to him over the next couple of months.

The President. My advice is not to discuss such advice in public but just to listen and do what he thinks is right.

Labor

Q. Mr. President, the industrial labor movement is none too pleased by Mr. Daley's movement over to the Gore campaign. I'm wondering if you think choosing someone from the corporate world will further antagonize the labor movement and cause difficulty for the Clinton/Gore administration generally, and for Vice President Gore and the campaign.

The President. No. I think, for one thing, anybody that looks at Bill Daley's lifetime record or his family's lifetime record would have a hard time finding someone who has been in the mainstream of Democratic politics who's been any more pro-labor.

You know, we all have a difference on these trade issues. The Vice President does, and I do, and Secretary Daley does. But on virtually every other issue, I think you can make a very compelling case that this has clearly been the most pro-labor administration since President Johnson, and maybe going back before that.

So, I don't think so. And I think he and John Sweeney will get along well. They're just two good Irish boys that are trying to do right by their country.

Q. Mr. President, while it's laudatory——

Q. [Inaudible]—in the corporate world, sir, do you think that will have any effect on labor movement's general direction?

The President. No. Certainly not. I mean, he's got a great record, particularly when he was chairman of the committee. I think labor supported what he did there, and I think they will receive him very well.

House Vote on Private Insurance Prescription Coverage

Let me just say this. I have to make one other announcement before you all go, because this is the only chance we have to talk about this. I want to talk about last night's vote on prescription drug coverage in the House.

As you know, the Republican bill passed by three votes. They would allow no vote on the Democratic bill. And I just want the American people to know that the bill that they passed is an empty promise to most of our seniors. The bill passed along partisan lines, and it offers a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that the insurance companies themselves—to their everlasting credit—the insurance companies themselves have said, this will not work; these policies will not be affordable; most seniors who need help will not be able to take advantage of this bill.

Now, they have said it over and over. This provides more political coverage for the Republicans who voted for it than insurance coverage for the seniors who need to buy medicine.

Now, let me just say this. In a report that was made available only late yesterday—too late to be of use in the debate, I might add—Congress's own budget office concluded that more than half the Medicare beneficiaries who don't have drug coverage today would not be covered by the Republican private insurance plan. It also shows that their premiums would be 50 percent higher than those under our plan, and the coverage would be 20 percent lower.

So, for seniors with incomes over \$12,600 a year, or couples with incomes over \$16,600 a year, this plan doesn't do the job. And it certainly doesn't do the job for Americans with disabilities, who would also be covered by a real Medicare prescription drug plan. That's why the leading aging and disability groups across the country have supported our plan, and that's why the drug manufacturers and their allies have supported the Republican plan. And it's important that the American people understand the difference between the two proposals.

Again I say, we have a substantial budget surplus projected. If we can protect the Medicare tax receipts, I'm prepared to work with Congress on a real prescription drug benefit and on marriage tax relief and other tax relief that will cost about the same amount of money that the Republicans say they want. But we're going

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

secure. It is up to us to realize our country's highest ideals of justice, equality, and human dignity. It is up to us to reject the forces of hatred that would seek to divide us and instead embrace our common humanity and the values, history, and heritage we share as Americans. Our nation's journey to form a more perfect union is far from over; but, strengthened by

our Founders' vision and inspired by our children's dreams, we are sure to reach our destination.

On this Independence Day, as we celebrate the past, present, and future of America, Hillary joins me in sending best wishes to all for a wonderful Fourth of July.

BILL CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bankruptcy Reform Legislation

June 29, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I write again because I am deeply concerned about recent developments concerning bankruptcy reform legislation pending before Congress. I understand the House and Senate Republican Leadership has reached a conclusion on a package they will soon move through the Congress. We have not seen the final language, but, if the reported description is accurate, I will veto the bill.

OMB Director Lew sent a letter to the informal conferees, on May 12, 2000, that laid out the principles against which I will judge any final bankruptcy bill that comes to my desk. I would like to sign a balanced consumer bankruptcy bill that would encourage responsibility and reduce abuses of the bankruptcy system on the part of debtors and creditors alike. The majority of debtors turn to the bankruptcy system, not to escape bills they can afford to repay, but because they face real hardship—uninsured medical expenses, unemployment, or divorce. We can target the abuses without placing unnecessary barriers before those in need of a fresh start who turn to bankruptcy as a last resort. I remain concerned about the balance in the bill that the informal conferees have produced.

In addition, in my letter of June 9, 2000, I highlighted five issues that could help to determine whether the final bill meets my standards of balance and fairness. On three of these issues, the Republican resolution is seriously flawed.

First, I cannot support a bankruptcy bill that fails to require accountability and responsibility from those who use violence, vandalism, intimidation, and harassment to deny others access to legal health services. Some have strategically abused the bankruptcy system to avoid the pen-

alties that Congress and the States have imposed for such illegal acts. The language that I understand the Republicans will include on this subject is inadequate. It would require a finding that there was a "willful and malicious threat of serious bodily injury" before certain debts would be made nondischargeable. Often, no such finding is made when holding parties liable for their actions in denying others access to legal health services under Federal or State law. The final legislation must include an effective approach to this problem, such as the one contained in the amendment by Senator Schumer, which passed the Senate by a vote of 80–17.

I am also concerned that the changes proposed to the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act would deny an effective remedy to victims of abusive check collection practices. We have yet to hear a compelling rationale for why check collectors should not be subject to the same requirements as those who collect other debts. Moreover, no committee in either body of Congress has considered this issue, raised for the first time in Conference. At a minimum, the proposal should be subject to full Congressional consideration, so that public scrutiny can be applied to the implications of the proposed changes.

The proposed limitation on State homestead exemptions will address, for the first time, those who move their residence shortly before bankruptcy to take advantage of large State exemptions to shield assets from their creditors. But the proposal does not address a more fundamental concern: unlimited homestead exemptions that allow wealthy debtors in some States to continue to live in lavish homes. In light of how other provisions designed to stem abuse

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will affect moderate-income debtors, it is unfair to leave this loophole for the wealthy in place.

I remain concerned that the negotiations have produced a bill that has lost some of the balance that the Senate bill had tried to achieve, albeit imperfectly from my perspective. As a result of all these concerns, I will veto the bill that we understand the Republicans plan to forward to my desk. But I continue to urge Congress to reconsider and send me a fair bill that meets the test of balance.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on a Payment to the Russian Aviation and Space Agency

June 29, 2000

Dear _____:

The NASA Administrator has informed me of his intent to proceed with an extraordinary payment of \$14 million to the Russian Aviation and Space Agency for the purchase of the pressure dome for the Interim Control Module and the Androgynous Peripheral Docking Adapter and related hardware for the United States Propulsion Module for the International Space Station. This payment is subject to the provisions of section 6(g) of the Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-178) (the "Act").

I hereby notify the Congress that, upon the expiration of the 5-day period specified in section 6(g)(1)(A) of the Act, the payment described above will be made. I have also concluded that the conditions described in section 6(g)(1)(B) and (C) of the Act have been satis-

fied. Specifically, no report has been made under section 2 of the Act; I have no credible information of any activity that would require such a report; and, the United States will receive goods of value to the United States commensurate with the value of the extraordinary payment.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr., chairman, House Committee on Science; Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John McCain, chairman, Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation; and selected Representatives and Senators.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.

June 29, 2000

Thank you. If I had any sense, I wouldn't say a word after that. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Margo. I want to thank you and Briggs for opening your beautiful home. I had a great time. They took me in through the ground floor, where there are all the golf clubs and golf pictures. *[Laughter]* I almost didn't make it up here to you, folks. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank you all for helping Sanford Bishop. I have a lot of friends here. In case any of you think I was scandalizing Ada HOLLINGSWORTH, we've been friends for more than 20 years, so it's okay. *[Laughter]* And Calvin Smyre was with me in 1991, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. *[Laughter]* Jesse Brown and Secretary West and

Ron Dellums and I—I miss him in the Congress, and so many of the rest of you here. I thank you for being here for him.

Sanford, I thank you for everything you said, and especially for that poem. People used to tell me in the tough times in the last 8 years that the good Lord never gives you more to carry than you can carry. And I thought, “Well, he’s certainly tested the envelope with me.” [Laughter] There was a time or two you could have fooled me. [Laughter]

People ask me all the time, “Well, what did you do? How did you do all that?” And I don’t have much of an answer, except I got up every day and realized that all those people that were kind of after me, didn’t hire me in the first place, that people like you hired me, and I just figured if I worked on my job and treated the rest as the cost of doing business in the 1990’s, that everything would work out all right. And it sort of did.

I want to say to you that, you know, I do a fair number of these; I always try to help our Members, our Representatives and our Senators. It’s very important to me. But it was especially important to me to be here tonight because I think that Sanford Bishop represents what, to me, is the best in our party and in our country and, to me, the best hope of our becoming a majority party again.

Look at all the people who are here tonight. He’s got people from the agricultural community, people from the industrial community. He’s got the friends he grew up with, which to me is always the acid test. [Laughter] I’m the only guy you ever met who got elected because of his friends. Nobody ever got elected just because he has friends, before. But I believe that—you know, because they’ll like you if you’re running a service station. [Laughter] And that’s pretty important.

I want you to know that this guy has served well, and he has had to take a lot of tough votes. For some of our Members, everything I wanted to do—they’ve been in totally safe seats. They’ve had people that thought sort of just like we did, and they never had to cast a tough vote. There is no telling how many tough votes this man has had to cast to get our economy turned around, to get the crime rate down, to do things that were right.

So he could have read that poem about himself. And I wanted to be here for that reason. Because if we can’t command the support of

people like the ones he represents in Georgia, we can’t really be a majority party. So I admire him, I like him, and I’m grateful.

Now, I just want you to know three things about this election—tell you everything you need to know. Number one, it is real important. It’s just as important as the elections of ’92 and ’96 were. And in 1992, as Sanford said, this country was in deep trouble. One of the biggest problems the Vice President has got today in this election is, everybody has forgotten what it was like before we showed up. They sort of pocket that, take it for granted. This country was in trouble.

But to be fair, we knew what we had to do. We knew we had to change the economic policy. We knew we had to change the social policy. We knew if we were going to get the crime rate down and reduce welfare, reduce poverty, lift children up, grow the economy, help people who were left out and left behind work themselves into the middle class, we had to change things. And so we did. And then in ’96, we knew that if we wanted it to work, we had to ratify that, we had to build that bridge to the 21st century, in the slogan of our campaign.

This election is just as important. Why? Because how a country chooses to deal with its moments of prosperity and promise is just as stern a test of our judgment, even our character, as how we deal with adversity.

There are a lot of young people here tonight, and I’m really glad, a lot of young people working for Sanford and working this event. And I’m grateful for that, and I like that. We even have a young woman from Russia here tonight. There you are. You’re welcome here. We’re glad to have you here.

But I want to say something here to the people that aren’t so young. [Laughter] No, wait a minute. Calm down. There is not a person in this audience tonight over 30 who cannot remember at least one time in your life when you made a humdinger of a mistake, either a personal mistake or a business mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well, you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate.

And that’s what we’ve got to deal with in this election and the congressional races and the Senate races and the Presidential race. So the first thing is, this is really important. In my lifetime, our country has never had at the

same time so much economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence with the absence of gripping, paralyzing crisis at home or threat abroad.

Now, what are we going to do with it? That's what this election is about. What do we propose to do with a truly magic moment? And it is a very stern test of our judgment, as well as our character and our values.

The second thing I want to say to you is: There are real differences between the two parties. And you don't have to be hateful to say that. I tell everybody, you know, we can really have a positive election this year because we can talk about the honest differences in our different vision of what we ought to do with this moment. And that's great. We've had enough elections over the last 20 years when the candidates tried to convince the voters that their opponents were just one notch above a car thief. [Laughter] And you know what I'm talking about. We don't have to do this. We can assume that everybody is honorable and that they mean exactly what they say. But there are real differences.

The third thing I want you to remember—and this is the kicker; this ought to tell you who you ought to vote for—only the Democrats want you to know what those differences are. [Laughter] Now, what does that tell you? It's interesting, the Republicans, who sort of pioneered this sort of mean, vicious campaign—what they did to McCain in the primary was embarrassing even to those of us who thought we'd seen it all. [Laughter] And now they all take the position that if you talk about how they voted or where they stand, you're running a negative campaign. If you give the voters information that's relevant to the decisions that are going to be made about their future, that's somehow going negative, and that's bad. I don't agree with that. Going negative is when you attack your opponent personally, when you say there is something wrong with their character, their value system; they're bad people.

But why have an election if you're not going to have a debate? But you just remember those three things: It's an important election; there are real differences; only the Democrats want you to know what they are.

Now, lest you think I'm kidding, there was a story in the press a few days ago saying that the Republicans in the House, where Sanford served, had hired a pollster to tell them what

words or phrases to use so they could convince the people that they're for a drug benefit for all the disabled and senior citizens on Medicare, even though they're not.

Now, this is not what you normally hire a pollster for. At least, I don't. Normally, you hire a pollster to figure out how you're doing in an election, whether what you believe in is flying, and not to change your positions but to change your campaign, emphasize other issues some. But this is—it's astonishing—hire a pollster to give you the words and phrases so that the people will think you're for something you're not, that is, to blur the differences. And I see this all over.

But there are differences. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights that is real and enforceable, and they're not, by and large. I'm talking about the leadership and the vast majority. And we're for a comprehensive Medicare drug benefit for senior citizens, and they're not. And we're for a tax cut, but one that helps people educate their kids or pay for child care or pay long-term care for family members that you've got to take care of, but that's affordable so we don't spend all this projected surplus, and we can keep paying the debt down and preserve Medicare and Social Security for the next generation, when all us baby boomers retire. And they don't agree with that. They really believe that you can take all this non-Social Security surplus right now and commit to spend it all on tax cuts or their Social Security plan, their missile defense plan, the other spending things—just spend it all.

Now, if I were to ask you tonight, what is your projected income over the next 10 years, you would all have a different answer. And then I said, "Okay, how much confidence do you have that this is your projected income?" And you say, "Oh, I'm more than 50 percent sure." I'd say, "Great. Now, I want you to sign on the dotted line—here's a piece of paper—that you're going to spend every nickel of it right now, and you can't get out of it for the next 10 years." That's their plan.

And I'm just telling you, we didn't get to where we are today without being careful. Interest rates are low. If you keep interest rates a point lower for the next decade than they would otherwise be—do you know what that's worth to you? Two hundred and fifty billion dollars in lower home mortgages alone—in lower home mortgages alone.

So we don't have the more popular side of this argument. They're saying, "Hey, we'll give it all back to you right now. We know what our income is going to be for the next 10 years, and we're going to sign it away." And we say, "Excuse me, but we were in debt" We had quadrupled our national debt in the 12 years before our side showed up, and now we're going to pay off \$400 billion of our debt before I leave office, and I'd like to get this country out of debt so these kids will always have low interest rates and be able to afford a college loan, a car loan, a home mortgage, and we'll be able to keep growing this economy. It's a huge difference. It's huge.

And I could go through issue after issue—the hate crimes legislation, the environmental position, in the Presidential race, the appointments—two to four people to the Supreme Court. Did you see all these decisions that came out this week? Five to four, six to three. There are going to be two to four appointments in the Supreme Court. Either one of them will change the balance of the Supreme Court—either one. The question is, how do you want it to go?

So here you've got this guy who is, I think, a really stand-up person. There are so many times in the last 8 years when it would have been easy for him to take a dive and call me on the phone and say, "Now listen, man, you're my buddy, but I've got a problem"—[*laughter*]"—and my district is not like the whole rest of America, you know; it's rural. And I've got all these farmers, and they think I'm a little too, you know, maybe close to you anyway. I don't know." [*Laughter*] I mean, just time after time, when we really needed somebody to stand up, he stood up. So I'm glad you're here helping him. But I want you to leave here committed to help shape this political environment.

This election is going to be fine. The American people normally get it right, if they have enough information and enough time to digest it. Otherwise, we wouldn't be here. We're the oldest big democracy in the whole history of the planet. And other people think it's a pretty good idea because over the last 8 or 9 years, we've had more people living under democratic

governments than nondemocratic governments for the first time in all of human history, around the world.

Russia, where she is from, they just had their first transition from one democratically elected President to another in a thousand years. This works if people have enough information and enough time to digest it. So I have absolute confidence in the outcome of this election if the people have enough information and enough opportunity to digest it. But you've got to help that.

The only problem here is, good times are full of danger as well as opportunity. So you sort of slide along here and think, well, there is not really much difference; these two guys seem pretty nice; our side had it for 8 years, maybe we should give their side a chance—you know, just sort of, blah, blah, blah. I've heard all this stuff. [*Laughter*]

And I'm telling you, you just remember, if people ask you about the election, you say, "It is really important, and I want you to take it seriously." If you meet a Republican, an independent, anybody, you tell them that. In a lifetime you may get one chance—one chance—to set a course in times as good as this. Even the kids here may never see another time like this. And then the second thing you tell them is, there are real differences, and you should listen to both sides. And then the third thing you tell them is, however—a key to who you'll agree with is—only the Democrats really want you to know what the differences are. And the final thing is, a guy like Sanford Bishop, he can always make all the difference.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:17 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Fernal and Margo Briggs; Ada Hollingsworth, owner, A&A Travel Services; former Georgia State Representative Calvin Smyre; former Representative Ron Dellums; former Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jesse Brown; and Senator John McCain. Representative Bishop was a candidate for reelection in Georgia's Second Congressional District.

Remarks to the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal
Employees in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
June 30, 2000

Thank you. Well, you know, I was still a little sleepy when I got here today. *[Laughter]* I'm pumped. Thank you very much. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Mr. President McEntee, congratulations on your reelection. Your job has some advantages over mine—no term limits, no opponents. Not bad.

I'm delighted to be here with all your officers—Will Lucy, it's good to see you again, and all the AFSCME officers. I do want to say a special word of appreciation to the vice presidents from Pennsylvania who are hosting you—Edward Keller, Henry Nicholas, Dave Fillman. And I want to acknowledge in the audience a good friend of AFSCME's down in Washington whom I brought home to Pennsylvania with me today, Congressman Joe Hoeffel. Give him a big hand. *[Applause]* Joe, thank you for coming with me.

Let me just say at the outset, I know everything I'm going to say today will not be news to you. It's almost like preaching to the saved. But the most important thing that I can say today is a simple thank you. I am so grateful for the support you've given me and for the work we've done together. Thank you.

It is fitting that one of America's greatest labor unions is meeting here in Philadelphia in the millennial year. This city is rich in labor history. In 1774 the very first Continental Congress met in Carpenter's Hall, which was built by the very first trade guild in America. In 1792 the shoemakers here in Philadelphia formed the first local craft union for collective bargaining over 200 years ago. And just as you are in a city with deep labor roots, you are looking at a President who feels he has deep roots in AFSCME.

When I was eligible as Governor, I was a dues-paying member of AFSCME. All the people who worked for me back then said it was the only check they ever saw me write. *[Laughter]* I'm grateful for the work you do every day, watching over our children and our parents, taking care of the sick and people with disabilities, helping the poor and moving millions of people from welfare to work, supporting our schools, improving our environment, making

sure not just your members but all Americans have a better life.

And I am very grateful, as I said, that AFSCME has stood by me since early in 1992, when only my mama thought I could be elected President of the United States. In sunshine and rain, you have never backed down; you have never walked away from the good fight we have waged for the American people and their future.

And what a long way we've come in these 8 years. Gerry was talking about it before I came in. But it's worth remembering. In fact, one of the biggest challenges we have in this election is that things have been so good so long, a lot of people don't remember what it was like the last time they had the ball and they carried it.

Together, we've worked hard to give this country the longest economic expansion in history: 22 million-plus new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years.

And a lot of things that you care about—the highest homeownership in history; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood illnesses for the first time in history; more land protected forever in the continental United States than any administration since Franklin Roosevelt; cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food—21 million people—21 million people have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law, the first law I signed and a law that was vetoed the last time they had the White House. Five hundred thousand felons, fugitives, and stalkers did not get handguns because of the Brady bill. We have a 35 percent drop in crime rates and in the gun crime. Not a single hunter has missed a day in the deer woods in spite of all their dire predictions. And the Brady law was another law that was vetoed the last time they had the White House.

Five million families have taken advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit for the first 2 years of college. And when I leave office,

we will have paid down almost \$400 billion on the national debt.

So the question is, what are we going to do with this? Now, I want to give a lot of whoop-de-doo lines, but I want you all to kind of listen to me now, because you've got a lot of friends, every one of you, who are not in AFSCME, who don't belong to any labor organization—the people you spend time with your kids with, the people you go to church with or synagogue with, maybe people you go bowling with, people you do other things with. And I want you to know what I think you ought to be telling them, because it isn't enough for you to show up and vote. It isn't enough even for you to get all your brothers and sisters in AFSCME to show up and vote. It isn't enough even to get all of the husbands and wives of all the AFSCME members to show up and vote. You've got to walk out of here determined to talk to every person you know and every person you run into between now and November and tell them why they ought to vote, for whom they ought to vote, and the reasons they ought to vote for them.

So this is what I think you ought to say. There are three things every American needs to know about this election. Number one, it is a big election; it is real important. Number two, there are real differences between the parties that you can see in the candidates for President, the candidates for the Senate, the candidates for Congress, and obviously, the local races. Number three—and this is a dead giveaway in terms of who people ought to vote for—only the Democrats want you to know what those real differences are.

Now, just be patient with me while I go through this. This is a big election. One of the things that bothers me—I had a friend from Chicago in to see me this week, and he is a business person, and he's been very successful the last 8 years. He's 41 years old, quite a bit younger than me—I hate it, but he is—[laughter]—and he said to me, he said, “You know, the thing that bothers me is that I talk to all these people that I spend time with who don't have anything to do with the Democratic Party, don't have anything to do with the Republican Party. They're people I know in my work life. And they don't think there's much of a difference between Vice President Gore and Governor Bush. They don't think there's much of a difference. And they think this economy is

rocking along so well, you couldn't mess it up with a case of dynamite.”

Now, that's what a lot of people think. So the first thing you've got to tell people is, “Hey, this is a big election.” You remember what it was like 8 years ago and what kind of a mess the country was in. But I want to tell you something. We've got some young people here, but there's not a person listening to me today who is over 30 years old, who cannot remember at least one time in your life, either in your work life or your personal life, when you made a big mistake not because things were going so badly in your life but because things were rocking along so well, you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate.

Now, every one of us has experienced that, right? Every one of us. So the first thing we've got to do is get America's head right about this. This is a big deal. How a country handles its moment of prosperity and opportunity is just as stern a test of our vision, our judgment, and our character as how we handle adversity. And in my lifetime, there has never been a moment like this where the economy was so strong, our social conditions were improving, the Nation had a lot of self-confidence, there was no internal crisis or external threat to divert us, where we really have a chance to build a future of our dreams for our kids. And we will never be forgiven if we blow this. You've got to convince people this is a big election. They've got to think about it, and they've got to show up and stand up and be counted.

Now, the second thing I want to tell you is what you already know. There are big and honest differences. This doesn't have to be a negative campaign, but we've got to define what negative is. Negative is what we've seen too many times over the last 20 years where one candidate tries to convince the voters that his opponent or her opponent is just one notch above a car thief. Now, that's negative. Pointing out the honest differences between you and your opponent in terms of record and position and statements is not negative. That's informational. There's a judgment here. There are consequences to the choice. That's not negative. We can have an honest debate. We can assume our opponents are honorable people and say we just have honest disagreements, but they're there.

It tickles me, you know, the Republicans have given us the awfulest mugging over the last

20 years, time and time again, and their primary was the roughest primary I ever saw. The things that the Bush campaign did to Senator McCain made my hair stand up on the back of my neck. And now they're all acting like we're being mean and negative if we point out what their positions are. "If you tell the American people where we stand and what we've done and what we want to do, how dare you do that. The only way you can be positive is if you let us keep that a secret from the American people until the election." No, thank you. This election is about the differences and the choices before the American people.

You watch what I tell you. The Republicans are coming here to Philadelphia—smart choice by them. Good politics. And you listen to them. And I mean, butter won't melt in their mouth at this—you watch them. You'll have the awfulest time trying to figure out what the differences are. They're going to love everybody and help everybody and do everything, and it's just going to be wonderful.

But there are differences here. We're for a prescription drug benefit for Medicare that all of our seniors can afford, and they're not. We're for a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We're for expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program, that some of you helped administer, so that the parents of those kids can have health insurance, and they're not. We're for letting people between the ages of 55 and 65 who lose their health insurance buy into Medicare, and they're not.

We're for letting families like you, whether you're in the 15 percent or in the 28 percent bracket, have a 28 percent deduction for the cost of college tuition, up to \$10,000 a year, and they're not for that. We're for it. We're for expanding the earned-income tax credit, for lower income working people that have three or more kids, and they're not. We're for equal pay for equal work for working women, and they're not. We're for raising the minimum wage a buck over 2 years, and they're not. How can we not raise the minimum wage?

We're for building or modernizing 6,000 schools and repairing another 5,000 a year over the next 5 years. We're for that, and they're not. We're for keeping on until we have 100,000 teachers to lower class sizes in the first three grades, and they're not.

On the issues that matter most, including the protection of labor rights, we are different—

honestly different. You don't have to believe they're bad people, but we ought not to hide what the differences are.

Now, you take this prescription drug issue. We think there ought to be coverage through Medicare that's available and affordable to all seniors and people with disabilities. That's what I proposed. That's what you've endorsed. We also think that in the balanced budget law, that cuts in Medicare reimbursement rates to hospitals, nursing homes, home health care agencies, were excessive, and we ought to put some more money back in there to help ensure quality care.

Now, what's their position? This is important. Now, you're going to have to talk to people who don't follow this like you do. Probably a good thing not everybody is as interested in politics as we are; otherwise, we would just be beating each other up all day. We would probably never get anything done. But what is their position?

Two nights ago the Republican House passed a plan designed to benefit the companies that make the prescription drugs, not the people that need to take them. Theirs is a private insurance plan that most seniors can't afford. Listen to this. Their own—the House Republicans' own Congressional Budget Office—not me, their people—say that more than 50 percent of the Medicare beneficiaries who need drug coverage won't be able to get coverage under their plan. They say the premiums will be 50 percent higher under their plan than ours, and the coverage will be 20 percent less.

So what did they do? They voted for it so they could say they voted for something, and the drug companies are happy. And then they hired a pollster—listen to this; this is amazing—they hired a pollster to tell them what words and phrases to use in Philadelphia and from now until November to convince you and the American people that they're for something they're not.

So your job is to say, "No, thank you. There's a real difference here. We want the voters of this country to know what the difference is."

Now, you take this Patients' Bill of Rights. The Republicans say they're for it. I was tickled—you know, I've got a passing interest in this Senate race in New York. So the other day, the Democratic candidate said that she was for a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and her opponent wasn't. So you know what her opponent

did? He goes on television and says, "She's being negative. I voted for"—listen to this; they are so clever; you've got to watch them. They call me slick? [Laughter] Listen to this. Listen to this. So what did he say? You all listen to this. You're going to need a shovel to deal with this between now and November. Now, listen to this. What did he say? He said, "How dare her say such a mean thing. I am for a Patients' Bill of Rights." "A" Patients' Bill of Rights? [Laughter] This tie here, it's got a little red on it. That don't mean I'm wearing a red tie. [Laughter] What is this?

So what happens? The Republicans last night in the Senate, on a party-line vote, passed "a" Patients' Bill of Rights. It's not strong. It's not real. It is not enforceable. Now, I want to give the Republicans credit. There were a number of good, brave Republicans who voted for a real Patients' Bill of Rights in the House, and I appreciate what they did. [Applause] And the leader—yes, we ought to clap for them. I appreciate what they did, a number of them did. They broke with the leadership, and they voted for a real Patients' Bill of Rights. And because they helped, and all our crowd did, we got a majority in the House.

The leader of those Republicans, Representative Norwood—here's what he says about this Patients' Bill of Rights the Republican party supports. The Republican leader for the real Patients' Bill of Rights called their bill a, quote, "monstrosity."

Now, we want a real bill. They want to deflect the issue. They want to be able to put up these ads and say, "I voted for 'a' Patients' Bill of Rights." So, you see, you've got to help people see through all this. That's your job. It's my job, but it's your job, too.

And the same thing, you know, on minimum wage. They say, "Well, I'll be for a minimum wage if you make it a little less and drag it over 3 years and put it on some regressive plan that will take care of our constituents." And let me just say this—this equal pay thing—I loved it when you all stood up. They're not even making a pretense of that; they just don't want to talk about it. They'll say, if you ask them they'll say, "Well I'm for equal pay. Everybody in the wide world's for equal pay. But when you pass a bill, you just make it complicated."

That's what they said about family and medical leave, "I hope people will give it, but we

couldn't possibly require it. Because if we did, it would be just terrible for the economy; it would be bad for small business." Well, we had an exemption for the smallest businesses, and if it was bad for the economy, if that's what the family and medical leave law was designed to do, then I did a poor job of it, because we've got 22 million people taking advantage of family leave, and over 22 million new jobs.

So you've got to tell people, this is where they stand on these issues—on the school construction issue, on more teachers, on quality training for all of our teachers, on smaller classes and fewer trailers.

Now, we just got some good news on this school construction issue. Again, we've got a handful of Republicans in the House that are willing to buck the trend, but don't forget, partly it's because we're only five seats away from a majority. But we got the 218th and 219th co-sponsors of the Johnson-Rangel bill. And this is really good news. That means that we could pass it in the House if we could bring it to a vote. We know where the Republican leadership stands in the House, and in the Senate they're equally, if not more, vociferously opposed. So I think our kids deserve better than this.

And let me tell you something. I'm giving you this speech, but anytime they want to meet me halfway and pass this stuff, that's good for America. I'd just as soon take school construction off the election-year list. I'd a lot rather have our kids out of the housetrailer and out of the unsafe schools and in school rooms that can be wired to the Internet and out of schools that are still being heated by coal, than have a political issue in an election year. And so would you.

And there's a lot of labor issues, too. They won't be talking about where they stand and what they're going to do for the 600,000 workers that are injured every year because of poor ergonomics. That's a new economy problem, and we ought to deal with it. We ought to continue to protect your health and your work site environment.

Now, look at this—where do they stand on hate crimes? We passed the hate crimes bill in the Senate this week, and again I want to compliment the handful of Republicans that voted with us. If they hadn't done it, we wouldn't have passed it. But the leadership is still against it. I think it's important that we

pass hate crimes legislation, employment non-discrimination legislation. I think it's long since time that we did that.

Let me just say one other thing about the gun legislation, because I know there are a lot of AFSCME members that are hunters and probably a lot of AFSCME members that are NRA members. I once had one of those jackets you wear in the deer woods so they won't shoot you instead of the deer that had "Lifetime Membership" on it. The NRA liked me once upon a time when we were doing training programs for kids and solving border disputes between property owners and hunters.

But you know, there is no excuse for us not trying to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals and children. We ought to do that. So we say, "What's wrong with requiring child trigger locks on guns?" And they say, "Well, if they want to do that voluntarily, it's okay with us. We don't object to it." Don't object to it—what's the matter with requiring it? They talk about gun control. I don't think it's gun control to say if you've got a background check log that applies when you buy a gun in a gun store, it ought to apply when you buy a gun at a flea market in a city or at a gun show.

If you've got a law that bans the sale of assault weapons that are meant only to kill people, I don't think there's anything wrong with saying you ought to also ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips which you can put on a weapon that's not an assault weapon and turn it into an assault weapon. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. What is wrong with that?

And the only way they ever make this an issue is to scare people, mostly male hunters, that we're for gun control. Now you know, when you leave here today, if you drove here and you go home and you're in a new car, you're in a car with seatbelts, and you may live in a State with a seatbelt law. If you've got a little baby, you may live in a State with a child restraint law, and you're certainly going to drive on a road with a speed limit. But you never hear anybody talking about car control. Car control is if I come get your car and put it in my garage. Otherwise, it's highway safety. And this is the same deal here. What are you talking about?

Now, what they're going to say is, they're for tougher enforcement of the present gun safety laws, and if we would just enforce our

laws, we wouldn't have any problems. Well, first of all, we've increased enforcement over what was done in the previous administration, and I just gave them the biggest increase enforcement budget in history, and guess what? The House voted against it. So they're going to say they're for it, but they voted against it. You need to know these things, and the people need to know these things.

All right, so three points: One, it's a big election. Two, there are real differences. Three, only our side wants you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about how you should vote?

Now, I want to thank you for the support the New Yorkers here have given to my wife. I thank you for that. And I want to thank you—[applause]. Thank you. And I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for the support you have given to Al Gore. And I want you to—now, here's what I think you ought to say to non-AFSCME members who ask you why they ought to vote for him.

And I believe after 8 years, I know him better than anybody outside his family, and here's what I want you to say. I want you to make four points: Number one, this country has had a lot of Vice Presidents who were great Presidents. Thomas Jefferson was a great President who was Vice President. So was Theodore Roosevelt. So was—this is a test. [Laughter] Now, I want you to remember this. See, a lot of people don't know. That's a big problem. People don't know about the Vice President. So was Harry Truman. Right? And Lyndon Johnson gave us Medicare and Federal aid to education and all those civil rights laws. So we've got a lot of people who were Vice Presidents who did great things as President.

But in the whole history of America—and I study the history of our country closely—there has never been, ever, a person who, as Vice President, had remotely the positive impact on the welfare of the people of the United States that Al Gore has. He's the best qualified person in my lifetime to run for President.

Now, he broke the tie on the economic plan of 1993, without which we wouldn't all be sitting here cheering today, because that's what got the deficit down, the interest rates down, and the economy going. And as he says, whenever he votes, we win.

He has led our efforts to run the empowerment zone program which has brought thousands of jobs to poor people in poor places that are left behind. He has led our efforts to hook all of our schools up to the Internet and to make sure that the poorest schools got a discount rate so they could afford to log on to the Internet. That wouldn't be a law today if it weren't for Al Gore, and that's a big deal.

He has led our efforts in the environmental area to prove we could grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time, and we've proved you could do that, and that's a big deal. He has managed so much of the responsibilities where I've gotten a lot of the credit. He's had—for the first Vice President ever, he's had big responsibilities for our relationships with South Africa, with Russia, with Egypt, with many other countries. And on every tough decision I ever had to make, he was always there. And the American people need to know this.

There has never been in the history of the country a Vice President who has had as much responsibility, done as much with it, and had as much of a positive impact on the people as Vice President. And they need to know that.

Now, here's the second reason that I think you ought to be for him and what you ought to say to people. And I admit, this is self-interested, since I'm about to become a private citizen, but I would kind of like to see this economic expansion go on a little while. Now, you need to tell people there is a huge difference in their economic theory. The Vice President wants a tax cut, but he wants it focused on the needs of working families, for child care, long-term care, college education, increasing the tax credit that we give to the lowest income folks who have got a lot of kids. He wants it focused on these things. And he wants us to save enough money to invest in education, in health, in the environment and the future of the country, and to keep paying the debt down in a way that saves Medicare and saves Social Security.

Now, let me just tell you something. You need to tell people this, because the other guys have got a better sounding argument the first time you hear it. They say, "Hey, you've got this huge surplus, and we'll give you a tax cut 3 times the size of theirs, maybe 4 times the size of theirs." But here is the fact: If you add up the cost of their tax cut, the cost of their plan to partially privatize the Social Security system—

which has other problems, but just the cost of them—you let younger people start keeping 10 percent of their payroll, all the rest of the people retiring on Social Security, who is going to make up the money? The taxpayers are. They're going to put money into the Social Security system.

So you add up the tax cut, the cost of privatizing the Social Security system, the cost of missile defense, and the cost of their other promises, and it adds up to more than the on-budget surplus projected for the next 10 years. And he says, "Well, the economy is doing great. We're going to have all this money." Look at what they say.

Now, I ought to be saying that since we produced these surpluses, but let me ask you something. Somebody says to you, "I want the bigger tax cut," you ought to say two things to them. First of all, if you keep paying down the debt, interest rates will be lower, and one percent lower interest rate—listen to this—one percent lower interest rates over the next 10 years saves the American people \$250 billion on home mortgages alone—on home mortgages alone.

But here's the next point. If I ask you—you don't have to answer, but you answer this question in your mind. What is your projected income over the next 10 years? You're answering the question in your mind. How confident are you that that is going to be your actual income over the next 10 years? And let's suppose you say, "I'm more than 50 percent confident."

Now, if I put a little desk out here and I said I want every one of you who has projected your income over the next 10 years and you're more than 50 percent confident where it is, come right up here now and sign a contract on how you're going to spend it, and you will be obligated—you will have to spend it regardless—you would think I had lost my mind, wouldn't you? I wouldn't have many takers. I would be sitting up here at this desk, all by myself, waiting for somebody to come up here and sign a contract to sign away your income for the next 10 years.

That's what the Republican tax plan is asking you to do. You need to say, "No, thank you. I like this economic expansion. I want interest rates down. I want Americans to have jobs. I want this economy to keep growing."

Okay, so the Vice President's been the best Vice President in history; he'll keep the prosperity going.

The third reason: The world is changing fast; we should have a President who understands the future and can take us there. What does that mean? I'll give you a couple of examples.

We just announced the whole mapping of the human gene structure, the human genome. Man, I had to read up for a year just so I'd understand the announcement I was making. [Laughter]. But you know what it means? Practically, it means that mothers will take little babies home from the hospital, and they'll have a map of what their bodies are going to work like. And they'll know if they're likely to get certain diseases, and they'll know if they raise them in a certain way, give them a certain diet, give them a certain medication, they can reduce the likelihood of that, and their kids will live longer, better lives. It means we may be able to cure Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and all kinds of cancers and diabetes. This is a big deal.

But if somebody's got a picture of your gene structure in a computer somewhere, should they be able to use it to deny you a job or a promotion or a raise or to deny you health insurance? I don't think so. Don't you think we ought to have somebody in the Oval Office that really understands this stuff and all the complications of it? I do. I really think so.

This Internet's a great deal, man. You know, when I became President, there were only 50 sites on the whole World Wide Web, and today, there are over 10 million. The Internet alone is going to give us the capacity to bring economic opportunity to rural areas in America that have been left behind. It's great. But all your health records and all your financial records are on somebody's computer somewhere. Don't you think you ought to be able to say, yes, before somebody gets into them?

And wouldn't you like to have somebody who's President who actually helped to draft the initial legislation in Congress to spread the benefits of the Internet to the world, who understands this stuff? I think somebody ought to be President who understands this stuff.

I'll give you another example. Everybody now concedes that the planet is warming, that the polar ice cap is melting too fast, that the water levels are rising. We're having more radical variations in weather events. Nine of the hottest 10 years in the history—since we've been measuring for 600 years—have occurred in the last 11 years. Nine of the hottest years in history

in the last 11 years. Now, everybody just about accepts it. Even the oil companies that put a lot of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, they say it's real; we've got to do something about it. The first lunch Al Gore and I had after we took office, in Washington, DC, in the White House, he took out his little chart and showed me how we were putting more stuff into the atmosphere in the last 30 years than we have in the previous 500, and that was going to do things that would change our children's future forever. It could flood the sugarcane fields of Louisiana, the Everglades in Florida. It could change agriculture in the Midwest. It could change our life forever.

Now, we're trying to solve this in a way that keeps the economy going. But it's a huge deal. Don't you think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands the importance of this and knows how to deal with it, and still grow the economy?

Now, so he's the best Vice President; he'll keep the economy going; he understands the future. The fourth reason is, he'll take us all along for the ride. And that's a big deal to me.

The next President gets somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court. They decided 20 cases this year by one vote—20. And the next President's going to change the balance on the Supreme Court one way or the other. I want somebody appointing those judges that believes in individual liberties, personal rights, and wants to take us all along for the ride.

I want somebody that believes all working families ought to have health insurance and the ability to send their kids to college and the ability to send their kids to schools where they have preschool and after-school programs and real commitment to standards, that really understands this stuff, that will take us all along for the ride. And I want somebody who wants us all to go, without regard to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation—thinks we all ought to go along for the ride.

This country is growing more diverse every day, and it will be a godsend in a global economy. Just look around here. Look at the picture of this—I wish we could see a picture of this group 40 years ago. I bet it looked different. America looked different. This is a big deal, folks. It is the biggest deal of all.

Now, we have an unusual situation this year where both the Presidential candidates speak Spanish. I'm probably the last President of the United States in the 21st century who won't speak Spanish, and I may learn when I get out of office and have time to do it. But there's a difference here. I'll just give you one example.

There's a guy named Enrique Moreno who lives in El Paso, Texas. Anybody know who he is? He grew up in the barrio there, very modest childhood, worked hard, went to Harvard, graduated summa cum laude, did great in law school. Texas judges said he's one of the three best lawyers in west Texas. So I nominated him to the Court of Appeals. The two Republican Senators from Texas wouldn't even give him a hearing. They said he wasn't qualified.

What they really meant is, he won't vote the way we want him to vote. That's what they really meant. As you know, the Governor of Texas is the Republican nominee. If he had asked them to give him a hearing, they would have done it. He didn't say a word. There was no Spanish-speaking plea for Enrique Moreno, because he's not part of their America. But he is part of our America. I think we all ought to go along for the ride.

So remember, I am so grateful to you. I will never be able to thank you enough. You were always there. You'll always be proud of the fights, even the one we lost on health care. We're looking smarter every day. I had a Congressman tell me the other day, he said, "You know, Mr. President, when I voted for your health care program, they said, 'Now, if you vote for Bill Clinton's health care program, you'll have more and more people insured by the Federal Government.'" He said, "I voted for your

health care program, and sure enough, more people are insured by the Federal Government. Why? Because private insurance keeps dropping them, and we have to pick them up." But in spite of our best efforts, there's still an unconscionable number of people without health insurance. We were right to fight for that.

But what I want you to understand is we've come too far to turn back now. We've changed this country too much to reverse course. And I'm grateful to you, and you've been wonderful to me today. But the test is going to be, now that we've got this great big old country turned around and moving in the right direction, what are we going to do with it?

You go out there and tell everybody, big election, big differences; we want you to know what the differences are. You go out there and tell everybody, Al Gore is the best and most important Vice President we ever had. He'll keep the prosperity going. He understands the future, and he can lead us there, and he'll take us all along for the ride.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:13 a.m. at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gerald W. McEntee, president, and William Lucy, secretary-treasurer, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Edward Keller, executive director, Pennsylvania AFSCME Council 13; Henry Nicholas, president, National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199; Dave Fillman, director, Southeast Pennsylvania Public Employees District Council 88; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on Signing the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act in Philadelphia

June 30, 2000

I would like to begin by acknowledging the presence here of Congressman Joe Hoeffel from Pennsylvania. He represents the district adjoining Philadelphia, and I thank you, Joe. And Martha Aikens, the superintendent of the Independence National Historic Park, where we are—thank you, Martha.

To all the other Park Service employees—that's one of the few Federal jobs that I haven't held that I'd like to hold. *[Laughter]* And I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to Dave Barram, the Administrator of the General Services Administration that manages our Federal buildings and has also played a critical

role in putting so much of the Federal Government on-line. Thank you, Dave. He took a modest pay cut to leave Silicon Valley to work for me several years ago, and I'm very grateful.

Two hundred and thirteen years ago, about 100 feet from where we are now, in a summer as hot as this one, the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution of the United States. In the very first article of that document, they wrote that Government shall make no laws, quote, "impairing the obligation of contracts." James Madison called the contract clause, and I quote again, "a constitutional bulwark in favor of personal security and private rights." He and his fellow framers understood that the right of individuals to enter into commercial contracts was fundamental not just for economic growth but for the preservation of liberty itself.

Just a few moments ago I had the privilege of signing into law legislation that carries the spirit of the Founders' wisdom into the information age. The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act will open up new frontiers of economic opportunity while protecting the rights of American consumers. The new law will give fresh momentum to what is already the longest economic expansion in our history, an expansion driven largely by the phenomenal growth in information technologies, particularly the Internet.

Firms across America are moving their supply and sales channels on-line, improving customer service, and reducing costs. The resulting productivity gains are rippling throughout our economy, helping wages to rise, businesses to start, jobs to be created without causing inflation. And individuals are not just buying and selling on-line; they're gaining information that is empowering them as consumers and as citizens.

Perhaps no invention since the railroad has had such potential to expand our opportunities and broaden our horizons—I would argue, more profound potential. But that potential is now being held back by old laws that were written, ironically, to protect the sanctity of contracts. Laws that require pen and ink signatures on paper contracts for them to be enforceable.

In order to unleash the full potential of the digital economy, Vice President Gore and I unveiled, 3 years ago, our Framework for Global Electronic Commerce. In that document, we set out the principles we believe should shape the rules governing electronic conflicts. We said that the rules should be simple and nonregulatory,

that they should not favor one technology over another, and they should give individuals and organizations maximum freedom to form electronic contracts as they see fit.

I'm grateful that Congress has kept those principles in mind as it drafted the Electronic Signatures Act. Under this landmark legislation—which I want to point out, passed by overwhelming majorities of both parties in both Houses, and I compliment both the Republicans and the Democrats for their support of this—on-line contracts will now have the same legal force as equivalent paper contracts. Companies will have the legal certainty they need to invest and expand in electronic commerce. They will be able not only to purchase products and services but to contract to do so. And they could potentially save billions of dollars by sending and retaining monthly statements and other records in electronic form.

Eventually, vast warehouses of paper will be replaced by servers about the size of VCR's. Customers will soon enjoy a whole new universe of on-line services. With the swipe of a smart card and the click of a mouse, they will be able to finalize mortgages, sign insurance contracts, or open brokerage accounts.

Just as importantly, the law affords consumers who contract on-line the very same kind of protections and records, such as financial disclosures, they currently receive when they sign paper contracts. Consumers will be able to choose whether to do business and receive records on paper or on-line. They will have the power to decide if they want to receive notice and disclosures electronically. It will be the company's responsibility to ensure that the data it sends to a consumer can be read on that consumer's computer—no more E-mail attachments with gibberish inside.

Finally, Government agencies will have the authority to enforce the laws, protect the public interest, and carry out their missions in the electronic world.

For 8 years now, I have worked to set forth a new vision of Government and politics that marries our most enduring values to the demands of the new information age. In many ways, the Electronic Signatures Act exemplifies that vision. It shows what we in Washington can accomplish when we put progress above partisanship, when we reach across party lines to work for the American people and our common future.

I want to congratulate the many organizations and again, the lawmakers in both parties, and the members of our administration who worked so hard to get this bill passed, and offer a special thanks to Vice President Gore who long ago had the vision to understand the potential of this technology, and who has led our administration's efforts to harness that potential to benefit all Americans.

Now, let's see if this works.

[At this point, the President electronically signed the bill.]

Now, we have to wait a while while the act comes up and the magic has worked. It's amazing to think that Americans will soon be using cards like this one for everything from hiring a lawyer to closing a mortgage. Just imagine if this had existed 224 years ago, the Founding Fathers wouldn't have had to come all the way

to Philadelphia on July 4th for the Declaration of Independence. They could have E-mailed their "John Hancocks" in.

[The President verified the electronic signature.]

Well, it works, and it will work for you. And all of you young people will someday look back on this day that you were here and marvel that we thought it was any big deal. [Laughter] And that will be the ultimate test of success. I wish you well; I hope we've done a good job of preparing your future.

Happy Fourth of July weekend. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:57 a.m. at Congress Hall in the Independence National Historical Park. S. 761, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106-229.

Exchange With Reporters in Philadelphia June 30, 2000

President's Electronic Signature

[The transcript began with a reporter's paraphrased question concerning bill signings.]

The President. —we had a question if I could even fax a signature back on bills and Executive orders. The electronic signature, in effect, defines what the obligations—the satisfaction of the obligations of commerce contracts. Congress clearly has the authority to define that. But there's an open question as to whether we could do it for bills and fax. That's why I signed the bill before I did this, because that might require a constitutional amendment. And at least it would require some sort of judicial opinion or something before we could decide to do it.

But the volume of bills signed every year is so small, that's really not that much of a problem. The only real problem would be if the President for some reason had to go abroad at a time when the time was running out on a bill. So that's really the only issue here.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 11:15 a.m. at Independence Hall. S. 761, the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106-229. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Signing the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act June 30, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 761, the "Electronic Signatures in Global and Na-

tional Commerce Act." This landmark legislation will help ensure that we reap the full benefits

that electronic technology offers for the American economy and American consumers.

The digital economy plays an increasingly important role in our Nation's well-being. Just as the telephone and internal combustion engine brought about a new era of economic prosperity, so too "Information Technology" (IT) is creating once unimaginable economic possibilities for the 21st century.

For American businesses, new information technologies are increasing productivity, lowering costs, and spurring growth. For consumers, electronic commerce can mean greater choice, faster service, and lower prices. For our economy, the digital age means more jobs, higher growth, lower inflation, and tremendous new investment that will strengthen our economy for the long term.

The Department of Commerce reports that information technology industries are responsible for about 30 percent of U.S. economic growth since 1995. Economists have consistently found that information technology accounts for at least half of the recent acceleration in U.S. productivity growth—from 1.4 percent per year, during 1973–1995, to 2.8 percent per year since 1995. Information technology accounts for two-thirds of the growth in overall business investment in recent years. And IT industries are a major source of research and development investment. These trends suggest that the economic payoff from the technology revolution will strengthen our economy for years to come.

As S. 761 removes legal impediments to electronic commerce, we can expect to see a transformation in how businesses do business with each other and with consumers. For example, companies will be able to contract on-line to buy and sell products worth millions of dollars. Businesses will be able to collect and store transaction records that once filled up vast warehouses on servers the size of a laptop. And consumers will have the option of buying insurance, getting a mortgage, or opening a brokerage account on-line, without waiting for the paperwork to be mailed back and forth.

In 1997, Vice President Gore and I unveiled our *Framework for Global Electronic Commerce*. In that document, we called for the "development of both a domestic and global uniform commercial legal framework that recognizes, facilitates, and enforces electronic transactions worldwide." Our *Framework* also noted that government action "may prove necessary to .

. . . protect consumers." This Act accomplishes both goals by providing business with a predictable, technology-neutral, legal environment while protecting consumers.

The Act clarifies the legal validity of electronic contracts, signatures, notices, and other records, and allows contracting parties to choose the technology for authenticating their transactions without government intervention. It provides the legal certainty necessary for entrepreneurs to invest in electronic commerce. Firms need to know that their contracts and transactions will not be unenforceable solely because they are electronic. They need to know how they can satisfy State and Federal notice and record-keeping requirements with electronic notices and records. They need to know that the same "rules of the road" apply to on-line business disputes as to those in the paper world.

The Act will also ensure that on-line consumers will have legal protections equivalent to those in the off-line world. The Act does not diminish the protections offered by any Federal or State law relating to the rights of consumers, other than to eliminate requirements that contracts and other records be written and signed on paper. Consumers retain the choice to do business and receive records on paper or on-line. Before notices and disclosures may be sent electronically, consumers must give their consent and the firm must verify that the consumer will be able to access electronically the information that will be provided.

Under my Administration, the Federal Government is rapidly adapting to the digital age. Federal and State government agencies still need, however, the ability to establish requirements to protect taxpayers, oversee program participants, and monitor program compliance on-line as well as on paper. I sign S. 761 with the understanding, reflected in the Congressional Record statements of Senators Hollings, Wyden, and Sarbanes, and Congressman Dingell, that this Act gives State and Federal governments the authority they need to establish record retention requirements, prescribe standards and formats for filings, and issue other regulations and orders to implement the legislation necessary to prevent waste, investigate and enforce the law, operate programs effectively, and protect consumers and the public interest. As they explained, this legislation principally addresses commercial and consumer activities, not governmental activities that have already been

addressed by the Government Paperwork Elimination Act. To the extent that these two laws overlap, I instruct Federal agencies to construe them in a manner consistent with protecting the public interest and effectively carrying out agency missions.

The Act puts in place the essential legal framework for electronic commerce in the United States. We will continue our discussions with other countries to encourage their adoption of technology-neutral, legal frameworks to enable and enforce electronic transactions and facilitate global electronic commerce.

I also urge companies to take advantage of the new technology responsibly. Giving companies the right to contract and disclose and store records electronically is akin to giving them a driver's license for the Internet. It does not teach them to drive safely or insure them against accidents. Companies adopting electronic technology should ensure that their information security, privacy, and consumer protection policies are sound. A company that inadvertently mails a customer's personal information to thousands of other customers or posts personal information on an insecure website faces a serious risk to its business, including the risk of losing the confidence of its customers.

This Act demonstrates that we can achieve the full measure of the benefits that electronic

commerce has to offer, if we marry one of our oldest values—our commitment to consumer protection—with the newest technologies. It also shows what we can do when we work together—business and consumer and government, State and Federal, Republican and Democrat—in the public interest.

I congratulate the many organizations that worked so hard to see S. 761 become law. I particularly want to extend my appreciation to Chairmen Bliley and McCain, who approached the conference negotiations in the spirit of bipartisanship and whose leadership allowed us to craft this compromise legislation. I thank Senators Hollings, Leahy, Sarbanes, and Wyden, and Representatives Dingell and Markey, for their excellent efforts and teamwork, and Representatives Eshoo, Inslee, and Lofgren for their continuing efforts to promote electronic commerce. I also thank Secretaries Daley and Summers, and Commerce Department General Counsel, Andy Pincus, for their leadership.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 30, 2000.

NOTE: S. 761, approved June 30, was assigned Public Law No. 106–229.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Luncheon in Englewood, New Jersey

June 30, 2000

Thank you. Well, thank you very much, Jon. Thank you for running. I'm going to say more about it in a moment. I'd like to begin by thanking Hilary and Orin for having us in their home. What a beautiful, beautiful day this is, not too hot. It's been real hot in Washington. And I want to thank all of you for coming. Some of you, I think, are here because you're Jon's friends. Some of you are here because you're good, loyal supporters of the national and the New Jersey Democratic efforts. And I hope all of you are here because you believe in what's at stake.

I want to say, I've never had a chance to say this in his district before, but I am very

impressed and grateful for the work that Representative Rothman is doing in the House of Representatives, and I think he's great, and I thank you for doing it. And I'm glad Bob Janiszewski and Ray Lesniak are here. They were for me for President when my mother was the only person in America who thought I could run. *[Laughter]* And I lost my voice and couldn't even talk, and no one knew who I was. It's very hazardous to lose your voice when you have zero name recognition. *[Laughter]*

Senator Baer, thank you for being here. And Assemblyman Zisa, thank you. And Assemblywoman Weinberg, I thought that was

great about you representing Sharpe James. That was really good.

Reverend McKinney, thank you for the prayer. It got me in a good frame of mind. And I thank all of you who worked on this event. And I'd like to say, Mr. Mayor, I'm glad to be in Englewood. It's a truly beautiful city, and we're delighted to be here. And you've got to forgive Senator Torricelli; we've got to pass that bill today.

It's actually quite important, what's going on in the Senate today. We have a chance to reach a bipartisan agreement to assist the democratic movement and the antidrug movement in Colombia in a way that, contrary to what the critics say, does not in any way, shape, or form involve America in the civil war down there but gives us a chance to save the oldest democracy in Latin America. And most of the cocaine and most of the heroin that flows into the bodies of the young people in America comes out of Colombia. They have lost control of approximately one-third of the land. And you've now got some people down there that are willing to risk their lives, and they literally have to risk their lives. We've had 500 police officers murdered in the line of duty in the last couple of years in Colombia by the drug traffickers and their allies in the guerrilla movement. That's, anyway, what they're doing, and it's very, very important. And I'm very grateful.

I'd like to make just a couple of points today. You know, I do have a passing interest in that Senate race in New York, and I've got a passing interest in this one in New Jersey and in Senator Robb's election in Virginia.

I think that—people ask me all the time who is going to win. I told them, Jon, I thought you were going to win early. I told them that you were the nominee; I thought you would be Senator. People ask me, and I say I think Hillary's going to win. I do. When Al Gore was 18 points behind in the polls, I said I thought he would win. I did then, and I do now.

But I want to talk about what's underneath that, because that's what's really important. Because when you leave here today, people may ask you why you came, and you could obviously say that, well, Orin harassed you and you wanted to do some event—I've got this written down—you were dying to do something that was devoid of social cachet. *[Laughter]* That's why—when I ran for President—that reminds me of what

President Bush said; he referred to me as a Governor of a small southern State. And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. *[Laughter]* And I still do.

So I'm glad you're doing this event devoid of social cachet. Maybe you did it because you didn't want Deborah to call you any more. *[Laughter]* But maybe you did it just because you love Jon and Joanne, but somebody is going to ask you. And as grateful as we are for your money, I think it's fair that—I believe that you can do just as much good if on every conceivable occasion between now and November you take the opportunity to talk to people you know about why you're here, why you wrote this check, why you're doing what you're doing.

And if I might, I'd just like to offer a couple of observations to build on the remarks Jon made. And I hope they will be taken somewhat seriously since I'm not running for anything. Most days I'm okay about it. *[Laughter]* For the first time since 1974, there is an election coming and going I'm not a part of—except I'm becoming the surrogate-in-chief for Hillary, for her, so she can campaign.

But let me just say, to build on what Jon said—in 1992, when I was elected, everybody knew what we had to do. The economy was in the tank. All the social trends were going in the wrong direction. Washington was divided in a pitched battle, and the Democrats and the Republicans seemed to operate according to kind of a rule of combat that went something like this, "I've got an idea. You've got an idea. Let's fight. Maybe we'll both get on the evening news."

And it's hard—you ask Mr. Rothman there what it's like. If he gets in a fight, he can make the news. Even the President sometimes can't get on the evening news unless you're in a pitched battle. I remember one of the most important days of my Presidency, to me personally, was the day I signed the bill creating the national service program AmeriCorps for young people. And I knew it was a big deal. And we had all these kids in this volunteer program that had been a model for what we did march up there with me. And Senator Kennedy was there, and I had the pen that John Kennedy used to sign the Peace Corps Act.

And in 4 years we had 150,000 young people serve their country in community service in AmeriCorps. It took the Peace Corps over 20 years to reach the same number. And yet, the

visibility of the Peace Corps was greater than the visibility of AmeriCorps because the people that night decided this was a good news story, what did it belong on the evening news for? So I understand this. But it didn't make any sense to me because I thought the country was in trouble.

So we all knew what we had to do. We had to fix the economy, and we had to try to change the crime policy, the welfare policy, the education policy of the country, and we had to try to have the Government work in a different way. And we had to be engaged in the rest of the world in a different way.

And so we brought this whole set of ideas there, Al Gore and I and the rest of our crowd, and lo and behold, most of them worked pretty well. And I'm very grateful for that. I am profoundly grateful that I had the chance to serve. I am so grateful that we've got over 22 million new jobs and the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, and the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years. I'm grateful for that.

But the issue that we face is, now what? And I guess what I would like to say to you is that I believe what a nation does with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment, wisdom, and character as what a nation does in adversity. There's nobody here today, over 30 years old at least, who cannot recall at least one time in your life when you made a fairly significant mistake, either personally or professionally, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate. If you live long enough, you'll make one of those mistakes.

And the thing that really bothers me about this election—I listen to people talk about this election—I had a friend of mine from Chicago spend the night with me a couple of nights ago. He's 41 years old. He wasn't particularly political before I became President. We got to be very close. None of his friends are politicians; they're not active in the Democratic or the Republican Party. He's just tearing his hair out. He says, "All these guys I run around with, they don't think there's very much difference between these two guys. And they sort of say, they seem kind of nice, maybe—it's like your

fraternity had it for 8 years, maybe we should give it to their fraternity for a while."

So the first and most important thing I want to say to you is, this is a big election. I've been following this stuff since I was a boy. Not in my lifetime, not one time, have the American people ever had this much economic progress, this much social progress, this much national self-confidence with so little internal crisis or external threat. We don't know whether this will come along again in 50 years. We don't know if this will come along again in 100 years. And the pastor there will tell you that nothing lasts forever.

Now, when you're in a tight, and I've been in a few in my life, that kind of keeps you going—thank God this can't last forever. [Laughter] But neither does anything good. Nothing lasts forever. And I submit to you that those of us who are of age will be judged and held at quite a high standard on the question of what we do with our prosperity, what we do with this magic moment? That's what this whole election ought to be about.

And I believe the reason that Jon has done so well is that people say, here's this guy that could be off making a gazillion dollars and laying around 3 days a week, and he actually cares about whether poor kids get a decent education and whether parents have a safe place to make a home and all that other stuff. I mean, this is a big deal.

What do you think we should do with this prosperity? Now, in elections, very often the answer depends upon what the question is. We've got a leg up if people really believe that's the question and if they understand what a very, very serious moment this is for our country—first one I want to make.

The second thing I would like to tell you is that we don't have to run a negative campaign this year. We can just run a campaign on the issues. I think for 20 years we've had too many of these really hateful campaigns where one candidate would be trying to convince the voters that his or her opponent was just one notch above a car thief. You've seen a lot of those, and maybe participated in a few. But this year we've got a gift here. We can say, look, let's assume, from the Presidential candidates to the Senate candidates to the House candidates, everybody is honorable and good. And let's just look at where we differ on what we should do with our future. And I'm just here to tell

you, there are real differences, and I'll just mention a couple.

First of all, on economic policy. The Republican—Governor Bush and the Republican congressional program ought to have a lot of appeal in New Jersey because there are a lot of wealthier people here. And basically, what they say is, "Vote for me, and I'll give you a \$1.5 trillion tax cut, 3 times what the Democrats will give you—more than 3 times. And I'll partially privatize Social Security, and you will do well with that." But you should know that when you do that, all of us who might take our 2 percent out, somebody's got to fill that up to keep this program from going broke. So, that will cost another \$1 trillion over the next decade. But it sounds good.

Their message is, "You couldn't mess this economy up with a stick of dynamite. Nobody's going to mess it up; it's on automatic. Information technology is surging ahead. Biomedical technology is surging ahead. This thing is rocking along. Nobody can mess this economy up. Vote for me, and I'll give you your money back." That's basically their message.

Our message is, we don't think that this economy happened by accident. We think it happened by prudence and discipline and vision. And we'll give a more modest tax cut, keep paying down the debt to save Medicare and Social Security for the baby boomers, and we think we've got to invest in America—Mr. Corzine's theme. We've got to give all our kids a world-class education. We've got to make sure we can grow the economy and preserve the environment. We've got to deal with the health and other challenges that families face. There's a whole bunch of investment issues out there.

Now, their argument is, "Hey, I'm trying to give you money. Have you been listening to me? This is a good economy. I'll try to give you a bunch of money." That's their argument. Our argument is—well, I'll just ask you this. Don't answer out loud but think to yourself. What is your projected—do you have an opinion of what your projected income is for the next 10 years? Have you thought about that, what you think you will actually make in each of the next 10 years? That's what all these proposals are based on—you need to know that—our projected income.

So what do you think your projected income is going to be for 10 years? Now, what's your level of confidence that that's your projected

income? How would you feel—let's assume all of you have a level of confidence over 50 percent—how would you feel if I asked you to come up here right now and sign a contract committing to spend all your projected income for the next 10 years? That's what the Republicans are asking you to do. And I don't believe I'd have many takers. That's what they're asking you to do.

And let me just point out this: If by continuing to practice prudence, we keep interest rates one point lower, that's worth \$250 billion in lower home mortgages alone. That's a \$250 billion tax cut just for home mortgages. That doesn't count student loans, car loans, business loans, and all the economic benefits attendant there. So that's a huge issue.

I think Jon's right. I think we're right. I think—and I think we have certain responsibilities to people who haven't fully participated in this economic recovery. We've got the biggest bunch of school kids in our country's history. They are the most diverse group ever. They're our meal ticket to the future, if we can prove they can all get a world-class education. These are big issues.

We differ on a Patients' Bill of Rights. We differ on the Medicare drug benefit. We differ on the nature of environmental protection that we should have. We differ on so many issues. We differ on whether we should take extraordinary efforts to ensure equal pay for women for equal work—big issue for our people. The average woman is still working 17 weeks a year longer for the same income as the average man in America, for all of the progress we've made. So there are real differences.

And the last point I want to make is this. It would be interesting to see if this is true in New Jersey. Most of the Republicans don't want you to know what the differences are, and that's a dead giveaway about who would win if the people knew what the differences were.

And so, here comes Jon, riding in on his horse—the guy has never run for office before—actually committing the unpardonable sin of saying exactly what he thinks, even when it gets him in trouble, and trusting the people to get it right. And what my experience is—and I encouraged him one time. I knew he was getting a little weary from the cost as well as the strain of the primary campaign, and I said, "Look, what makes democracy work?" This is why this campaign finance reform issue is important.

“What makes democracy work? When the people have enough time and enough information—and they need both—they nearly always get it right.” Otherwise, why would we still be around here after 200 years? People nearly always get it right.

So this big election, there are real differences. If the voters know what they are, I think they will make the right decision.

I just want to make two final points. I want to say a word for the Vice President; then I hope people may ask you about that. I just want you to know, I believe I know him better than anybody outside his family now, after 8 years. And there are four things I want all of you to know about that, four reasons I think he should be elected.

Number one is, our country has had Vice Presidents who have done great things as President: Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, Harry Truman. Lyndon Johnson gave us the civil rights legislation and the Federal aid to education and Medicare. But our country has never, not in over 200 years, never had anybody who made nearly anywhere near as much difference in a positive way as Vice President as Al Gore. He is by far the most positively impactful Vice President the country ever had. It's not even close. And I've spent a lifetime studying the history of my country and the institutions of National Government.

From breaking the tie on the economic plan in '93, to running our employment zone programs to bring economic opportunity to people and places left behind, to ramming through a telecommunications provision to guarantee that the poorest schools in America could be hooked up to the Internet—something I learned coming to New Jersey when I saw the benefits in some of the schools here—to managing a lot of our relations with Russia and Egypt and South Africa, no Vice President ever had remotely as much responsibility or done as much good.

The second thing I want to say to you is, he shares Jon's economic philosophy. We don't believe we should go to the American people and say, “You guys figure out your projected net income. Now, let's sign it away for 10 years right now.” Because it's all projected; you might get it, and you might not. And we don't want to get back into deficits and high interest rates and give away all the money we need to be investing in our future.

The third thing I want to say is this: You need somebody in office—another argument for Jon—you need somebody in office in 2000 that understands the future. Let me just give you a couple of examples. You see where we announced the human genome sequencing last week? I had to study that stuff for a year just so I'd understand what I was saying at the press conference last week. *[Laughter]* It's the most fascinating thing I've ever studied in my life. And I really do believe that those of you who are young enough to still be having kids, I think that it won't be 10 years before American children will be born with a life expectancy of somewhere around 90 years. Within 20 years, I'm confident American children will be born with a life expectancy of 100 years. Anybody who lives to be 65 today has a life expectancy of 83. It's going to change everything.

But people will know that all this genetic information is somewhere in somebody's computer. Don't you think that you ought to have the right to say yes before somebody gets to it, and that people shouldn't be denied jobs or promotions or health insurance because of their genetic profile? And don't you think we ought to have somebody in the White House that really understands this stuff?

Or, you take the Internet. When I became President, there were 50—50 websites on the World Wide Web in 1993. There are now 10 million—50 to 10 million. Now, Al Gore understands this as well as anybody in American life. All of our medical and economic information is going to be on somebody's computer. Don't you think you ought to have to say yes before somebody gets your financial information or your medical records, and don't you think somebody ought to be President who understands it?

And the last thing I'll say—and it's the thing that I really love about Jon, because life's been good to him, and he didn't go around being sanctimonious about being successful. I can't stand these successful people who want you to believe they were born in a log cabin they built themselves. And you've all heard a lot of that.

We need a President and we need a Congress who understand the future, who will keep the economic prosperity going, but who also want us all to go along for the ride. That's what the hate crime legislation is all about. That's what the employment nondiscrimination is

about. That's what the appointments to the Supreme Court are about. Twenty cases decided this term by one vote—20 by one vote—20. And the next President gets between two and four judges. So whichever one of them gets elected, it's going to change the balance of the Supreme Court. For you to pretend otherwise is to be living in a dream world.

And I think we ought to have a President and I think we ought to have a Senator from New Jersey and New York and a Senate and a House that think we all ought to go along for the ride. When you really strip it all away, that's basically why most of us are Democrats. We know we're lucky.

Shoot, man, people ask me, in the toughest days of my Presidency, weren't there days that I regretted it? I said, regretted it? Are you kidding me? Another turn in the road and I could be home doing \$200 divorces and deeds and stuff. *[Laughter]* This is the cost of doing business. The Republicans have decided to impose a certain cost of doing business if you want to be a Democrat and be President. I wouldn't take the world for it. I've had a wonderful time.

But I'll tell you what, on the good days and the bad days, I wanted everybody along for the ride. And that's another thing about this prosperity, we need to take everybody along. That's what Jon will do, and that's what Al Gore will do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:47 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Jon Corzine, candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey, and his wife, Joanne; luncheon hosts Hilary Bollon and Orin Kramer; Hudson County Executive Robert C. Janiszewski; State Senators Raymond J. Lesniak and Byron M. Baer; State Assemblyman Charles (Ken) Zisa; State Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg and Mayor Sharpe James of Newark, NJ; Corzine campaign cochair; Rev. Calvin McKinney, president, General Baptist Convention of New Jersey; Mayor Paul Fader of Englewood; Senator Robert G. Torricelli, chair, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee; luncheon co-chair Deborah Lynch; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Statement on Senate Action on Appropriations Legislation

June 30, 2000

I am deeply disappointed that today the Senate passed a Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill that fails to make crucial investments in our Nation's future. While the Senate bill provides more acceptable funding for some programs than the House version, it relies on unacceptable spending cuts and falls short on critical funding for education, health care, and worker training. The Senate bill invests too little in improving our schools and demands too little from them; fails to provide funds to reduce class size and repair aging schools; includes a fatally flawed so-called patient protection provision that excludes over 110 million Americans from protections and actually eliminates some of the limited accountability provisions now in State law; bankrupts the Social Services Block Grant, drastically reducing services to abused children, the elderly, and the disabled; and shifts funds from the State Children's Health Insur-

ance Program, undermining the bipartisan agreement passed by Congress in 1997 to insure millions of low-income children.

This bill also shortchanges vital health care programs, including domestic and global HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, mental health and substance abuse services, family planning, health care access for the uninsured, training for health professionals in children's hospitals, nursing home quality, and oversight of Medicare contractors. The bill fails to guarantee funding for critical education priorities such as reducing class size and making urgent repairs to our schools, including Native American schools. It underfunds programs that would strengthen accountability and turn around failing schools, expand before-school and after-school opportunities, assist low-income students in preparing for college, help bridge the digital divide, improve teacher quality, and expand English language/civics education programs for adults. The bill

also denies adequate resources for training programs to help unemployed workers and low-income youth train for and find jobs, assistance to help more low-income fathers work and support their children, efforts to ensure workplace safety and enforce domestic labor laws, and initiatives to address illegal and abusive child labor practices abroad.

Finally, I am deeply disappointed that the Senate chose to follow the House's imprudent action to block the Department of Labor's standard to protect our Nation's workers from ergonomic injuries. After more than a decade of experience and scientific study and millions

of unnecessary injuries, it is clearly time to finalize this standard.

For these reasons, as well as for others, this bill is unacceptable. I will veto this bill and any other bill that fails to provide necessary resources for education, health care, worker training, and other vital initiatives. We need to work on a bipartisan basis to develop a bill that strengthens our schools, adequately funds public health priorities, addresses the needs of our Nations' workers, and provides for other important national priorities while honoring our commitment to fiscal discipline.

Statement on the Nomination of Roger L. Gregory to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit *June 30, 2000*

Today I am very pleased to announce the nomination of Roger Gregory to serve on the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit. Roger Gregory is a highly qualified candidate who will, if confirmed, serve the fourth circuit and our Nation with distinction.

His life story is also a testament to the power and promise of the American dream. Roger Gregory is from Richmond, Virginia, and is the first in his family to finish high school. He went on to college and law school, returning as a young adjunct professor to a school where his mother had worked as a maid. Today Roger Gregory is a highly respected Richmond litigator. He has tried hundreds of cases in the Virginia courts.

I am honored to nominate Roger Gregory because he is highly qualified and a strong candidate. But I am also proud to nominate a man who, if confirmed, will be the first African-American ever to serve on the fourth circuit. The fourth circuit has the largest African-American population of any circuit in this country, yet it has never had an African-American appellate judge. It is long past time to right that wrong. Justice may be blind, but we all know that diversity in the courts, as in all aspects of society, sharpens our vision and makes us a stronger nation. Roger Gregory's confirmation would be an historic step for the people of

Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and for American justice.

The fourth circuit needs Roger Gregory. Its caseload has increased by over 15 percent in just 5 years yet more than a quarter of its benches stands empty. The seat for which I have nominated Roger Gregory has been declared a judicial emergency by the Administrative Office of the United States Courts. It has been vacant almost a decade, longer than any seat in the Nation. That is an embarrassment for any American who cares about our justice system. We cannot be tough on crime if our courts cannot conduct judicial reviews promptly and efficiently. And we cannot be tough on crime if the message we send Americans is that we do not care about our courts.

By all rights, Roger Gregory should be given a Senate vote in the next few months. But the Senate's failure to fulfill its obligations with respect to my nominees gives me cause for profound concern. Thirty-nine of my judicial nominees are pending before the Senate. These nominees have been kept waiting, on average, 273 days. And the fourth circuit has fared particularly poorly—my other fourth circuit nominee, Judge James Wynn, an African-American judge on the North Carolina Court of Appeals, has already been kept waiting for 330 days. I urge the Senate to give Roger Gregory and

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Judge Wynn the Senate votes that they so richly deserve.

We cannot afford to allow political considerations to empty our courts and put justice on hold. I have worked very hard to avoid contentious ideological fights over nominees. I have worked hard to put forward good, qualified candidates who reflect the diversity of our Nation. The judges I have nominated during my tenure as President are the most diverse group in history. They have also garnered, as a group, the

highest American Bar Association ratings of any President's nominees in nearly 40 years. They have shattered the myth that diversity and quality do not go hand in hand. But despite the high qualifications of my nominees, there is a mounting vacancy crisis in our courts. Too often, we are creating situations in which justice delayed means justice denied. And ultimately, if we fail to make our courts reflect America, we risk an America where there may be less respect for the decisions of our courts.

Statement on Funding To Hire Highly Qualified Teachers

June 30, 2000

Today Secretary Riley announced the award of \$1.3 billion to continue on the path to hiring 100,000 new, highly qualified teachers as part of my class size reduction program. These funds will allow States to place more high-quality teachers in smaller classes in the early grades, so that approximately 1.7 million children can receive the personal and academic support they need. The Vice President and I have a long-standing commitment to ensure that all children have access to a first-class education, and these grants provide support to State and local communities to work toward this goal by investing in what works. Unfortunately, Republicans in

Congress are rejecting this proven strategy of investing in what works and insisting on accountability for results, in favor of unfocused block grants with little or no accountability. I urge Congress to reverse its recent actions and enact full funding to reduce class sizes in the early grades, strengthen accountability and turn around failing schools, expand before-school and after-school opportunities, assist low-income students in preparing for college, help bridge the digital divide, improve teacher quality, and expand English language/civics education programs for adults.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Taliban

June 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the

Taliban is to continue in effect beyond July 5, 2000.

On July 4, 1999, I issued Executive Order 13129, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with the Taliban," to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States posed by the actions and policies of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The order blocks all property and interests in property of the Taliban and prohibits trade-related transactions by United States persons involving the territory of Afghanistan controlled by the Taliban.

The Taliban continues to allow territory under its control in Afghanistan to be used as a safe haven and base of operations for Usama bin Laden and the Al-Qaida organization, who have committed and threaten to continue to commit acts of violence against the United States and its nationals. This situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in

force these emergency authorities beyond July 5, 2000.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

The President's Internet Address *July 1, 2000*

Good afternoon. Two hundred and thirteen years ago, about a hundred feet from where I'm sitting now, in a summer as sweltering as this one, the Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution of the United States. In the very first article of that doctrine, they wrote that Government shall make no law, quote, "impairing the obligation of contracts."

James Madison called this contract clause "a constitutional bulwark in favor of personal security and private rights." He and his fellow framers understood that the right of individuals to enter into commercial contracts was fundamental not just for economic growth but for the preservation of liberty itself.

Yesterday I had the privilege of signing into law legislation that carries the spirit of the Founders' wisdom into the information age. The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, which passed with overwhelming support from both parties in both Houses, will open up new frontiers of economic opportunity while protecting the rights of America's consumers.

This new law will give fresh momentum to what is already the longest economic expansion in our history, an expansion driven largely by the phenomenal growth in information technologies, particularly the Internet with its almost unlimited potential to expand our opportunities and broaden our horizons.

Yet that potential is now being held back, ironically, by old laws written to protect the sanctity of contracts, laws that require pen and

ink signatures on paper documents for contracts to be enforceable.

Under this landmark new legislation, on-line contracts will now have the same legal force as equivalent paper ones. Companies will have the legal certainty they need to invest and expand in electronic commerce. They will be able not only to purchase products and services on-line but to contract to do so. And they could potentially save billions of dollars by sending and retaining monthly statements and other records in electronic form. Eventually, vast warehouses of paper will be replaced by servers the size of VCR's.

Customers will soon enjoy a whole new universe of on-line services. With the swipe of a smart card and the click of a mouse, they will be able to finalize mortgages, sign insurance contracts, or open brokerage accounts.

Just as importantly, the law affords consumers who contract on-line the same kinds of protections and records—such as financial disclosures—they currently receive when they sign paper contracts. Consumers will be able to choose whether to do business and receive records on paper or on-line. They will have the power to decide if they want to receive notices and disclosures electronically. It will not be their responsibility but the company's to ensure that the data sent to a consumer can be read on the consumer's computer. No more E-mail attachments with gibberish inside.

Finally, government agencies will have the authority to enforce the laws, protect the public

interest, and carry out their missions in the electronic world.

For 8 years now, I have set forth a new vision of government and politics, one that marries our most enduring values to the demands of the new information age. In many ways, the electronic signatures act exemplifies that vision. It shows what we in Washington can accomplish when we put progress above partisanship, cross party lines, think of the future, and work together for the American people.

Thank you, and happy Independence Day.

The President's Radio Address

July 1, 2000

Good morning. Millions of Americans will hit the highway this weekend to join their families in celebrating the birth of our Nation and the independence we enjoy. While our Nation has never been stronger or more prosperous, we must do more to free working families from the grip of rising energy costs, especially the price we pay at the pump.

We're all feeling the effects of higher gas prices. That's why our administration is taking action to meet America's energy needs in both the short and long term. Right now the Federal Trade Commission is conducting an investigation to determine if oil companies are engaging in illegal gasoline pricing practices.

In the 2 weeks since the investigation began, prices have fallen 8 cents a gallon at the pump in the Midwest and more than 12 cents a gallon at the pump in the Chicago region. We're also continuing to work with foreign countries to close the gap between oil production and consumption. While that's good news, we still have more to do to strengthen our security over the long term. That's the most important thing.

Over the last 7 years, with the Vice President's leadership, our administration has pursued a forward-looking and balanced strategy that increases both our energy supply and our energy efficiency, saving consumers money and preparing for unexpected energy shortages in the future. For example, we've invested in new technologies to more efficiently develop our domestic oil reserves and to promote wind, solar, and other alternative sources of energy. My

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:35 a.m. on June 30 at Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10 a.m. on July 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 30 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, approved June 30, Public Law No. 106-229.

budget this year includes several other measures to further enhance our energy security.

Unfortunately, the Republican Congress has failed to act on key elements of our strategy to meet America's energy needs in the 21st century. They want to revert to an old 19th century approach that endangers our environment instead of one that invests in the future.

Since 1993, the Congress has approved only 12 percent of the increases I've proposed to develop clean, efficient sources of energy. Now the Republican leadership wants to gut the programs they've already approved, like our partnership with Detroit to develop ultra-efficient cars of the future, and they want to turn back the progress we've made to protect our treasured lands by expanding drilling in our most precious natural areas, from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska to Federal lands in the Rockies and along the California coast. That's a shortsighted approach to a long-term problem.

Instead of drilling holes in our progress, I ask Congress again to approve the steps we have proposed to increase our energy supply, to protect the environment, to increase energy conservation, and keep our economy strong.

First, I propose tax incentives to support domestic oil production and the development of alternative energy sources. I've also proposed commonsense tax credits to help families and businesses buy fuel-saving cars, energy-efficient homes, buildings, and appliances. These measures won't just save energy; they'll also reduce

pollution and put money back in the pockets of consumers. Only by developing new technologies can we ensure a cleaner future where we're not as reliant on fossil fuels and foreign oil.

Second, in my budget this year I've asked for more than \$1 billion to accelerate the research and development of cleaner, more efficient energy technology. These investments will help to develop the technologies that will allow us to convert corn and other crops into the fuels of tomorrow.

Third, I've proposed comprehensive legislation to foster a new era of competition in the electricity industry. By allowing consumers all across our country to choose their own electric supplier, we can enhance the reliability of electric power and save consumers nearly \$20 billion a year on energy costs.

Fourth, I've asked Congress to reauthorize the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, a critical part of our Nation's insurance policy against national emergencies caused by interruptions in the supply of oil.

Once again, I ask Congress also to establish a home heating oil reserve in the Northeast

to reduce the likelihood that future heating oil shortages will harm consumers as they did this past winter. I've also asked Secretary Richardson to take the steps necessary to create a reserve through administrative authority if Congress does fail to act, so that a heating oil reserve will be in place by next winter.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Teddy Roosevelt reminded us, "Neither man nor nation can prosper unless, in dealing with the present, thought is steadily taken for the future." That's the vision that guided our Founding Fathers. It's especially true today when it comes to our energy security. If we take the right steps now, we can secure our independence, protect our environment, and continue to grow our economy for generations to come.

Have a happy and healthy Fourth of July, and thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:21 a.m. on June 30 in the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 30 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks on Signing Campaign Finance Disclosure Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

July 1, 2000

The President. Good morning. Just a few moments ago, I signed into law the first new campaign finance restrictions in more than two decades. This legislation closes a special interest loophole that allowed so-called 527 organizations to raise unlimited funds to influence elections without disclosing where the money came from or where it was going. Anonymous donors could simply pour millions of dollars into these efforts, while keeping citizens in the dark.

Today's actions will stop special interests from using 527 status to hide their political spending behind a tax-exempt front group. It will help clean up the system by forcing organizations to come clean about their donors. This is good news for the American people, and I want to commend Congress for passing this legislation with broad bipartisan support. Especially, of course, I want to thank Senator McCain, Sen-

ator Lieberman, and Senator Feingold in the Senate; and Representatives Doggett and Houghton, who worked hard on this legislation in the House.

Let me give you an example of why this disclosure is important. We're fighting hard here for voluntary, dependable, affordable Medicare prescription drug coverage for all seniors and people with disabilities. Three in five Medicare beneficiaries don't have such coverage now, and many seniors aren't getting the drugs they need.

Now, over the past few months, a so-called 527 group calling itself Citizens for Better Medicare has flooded the airwaves with negative ads against our plan. They spent tens of millions of dollars to mislead the public, confuse seniors, target Members of Congress, and distort the debate, all to the benefit of the drug companies.

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The American people have no earthly idea who Citizens for Better Medicare is, who is paying for the ads. The bill I just signed lifts the curtain. It makes groups like this reveal the sources of all future funding. Of course, in a case like this, the damage may already be done. The special interest money is already in the bank. The attack ads are already on the air.

So in the spirit of this law which I have signed, which clearly has broad bipartisan support, I think that Citizens for Better Medicare ought to respect the legislation, open their books, and disclose the sources of the funds which have paid for these ads. Let the American people judge if this organization truly is for better Medicare.

This law will make a difference, but it's just a step, not a substitute, for comprehensive campaign finance reform. Again, I ask Congress to pass the bipartisan legislation sponsored by Senators McCain and Feingold and Representatives Shays and Meehan, to limit spending, end soft money, and give candidates free or reduced rate TV air time.

As we celebrate this first Independence Day of the 21st century, let's do more to strengthen

our majority. I ask Congress to join the Vice President and me to build on today's progress, to put public interest over special interests, and pass real campaign finance reform.

But let me say, this is a good day, and this is a good law, and I thank everyone for voting for it. And I wish you a happy Fourth of July weekend.

Arkansas Supreme Court

Q. Mr. President, what is your reaction to the Arkansas Supreme Court?

The President. I'm sorry, but I've got to go back; I've got an important phone call, and I can't delay it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to his departure for Camp David, MD. H.R. 4762, To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to require 527 organizations to disclose their political activities, approved July 1, was assigned Public Law No. 106-230.

Statement on the Verdicts in an Iranian Espionage Trial *July 1, 2000*

I am deeply disturbed by the verdicts handed down in the trial of the 13 Jewish Iranians accused of espionage. International human rights organizations, the Special Rapporteur on Iran for the United Nations Human Rights Commission, the United States, and many other nations have denounced the seriously flawed judicial process by which these sentences were determined. The proceedings have been rightly criticized around the world for their failure to accord due process of law to the defendants.

We have raised our concerns time and again, when the Iranian Government has treated intellectuals, journalists, Muslim clerics, and mem-

bers of the Baha'i community with the same fundamental unfairness. We are deeply disappointed that the Iranian Government has again failed to act as a society based on the rule of law, to which the Iranian people aspire.

We call upon the Government of Iran to remedy the failings of these procedures immediately and overturn these unjust sentences. We will continue to engage with other interested governments and organizations as part of our broader concern for the treatment of minority groups and human rights in Iran.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Extension of Normal Trade Relations Status for Certain Former Eastern Bloc States *June 30, 2000*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On September 21, 1994, I determined and reported to the Congress that the Russian Federation was not in violation of paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection 402(a) of the Trade Act of 1974, or paragraph (1), (2), or (3) of subsection of the 409(a) of that Act. On June 3, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine were not in violation of the same provisions, and I made an identical determination on December 5, 1997, with respect to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. These actions allowed for the continuation of normal trade relations status for these countries and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver.

As required by law, I am submitting an updated report to the Congress concerning the emigration laws and policies of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. The report indicates continued compliance of these countries with international standards concerning freedom of emigration.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 3. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Statement on the Election of Vicente Fox as President of Mexico *July 3, 2000*

I called President-elect Vicente Fox today to offer my congratulations and those of the American people on his historic victory in Mexico's national elections yesterday. I also spoke to President Zedillo to express my admiration for his extraordinary contributions to Mexico, including his efforts in working with other Mexican leaders to strengthen and deepen democracy. Mexicans should be proud of the extraordinary steps they have taken during the last 6 years to strengthen and consolidate democratic

institutions and set Mexico on a course of economic growth and prosperity.

Mexico is our neighbor and friend. Mexico's national elections, the freest and fairest in the nation's history, stand as a vivid testimony to the depth of the democratic commitment of the Mexican people. I reiterated both to President-elect Fox and President Zedillo that the United States stands ready to work to enhance the close cooperation that characterizes our bilateral relationship.

Remarks Aboard the U.S.S. *Hue City* in New York City *July 4, 2000*

[The President's remarks are joined in progress.]

The President. —make this day possible. To all the rest of you, I can't imagine a better way to greet the dawn of Independence Day

than on this remarkable ship, with its outstanding crew.

I do want to say I learned this morning that one of your sailors, Petty Officer Sims, has been

nominated to come to work at the White House because he's a top-rate cook. I want to apologize and say I am not responsible for taking him away from you, but I'm not going to give him back.

Our military leaders have worked hard to increase your time with your families and your quality of life at sea. But all of us know that what you do will always require sacrifice from you and your loved ones. So I want to say on this Independence Day how grateful I am and how grateful your Nation is for your service, for you defend the freedom we celebrate today.

I hope every American will take a few moments to think about how we earned our exceptional place in human history. On this day in 1776 not all the action was taking place in Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Declaration was signed. Here in New York, General George Washington was preparing his troops for battle. Five long years and countless engagements later, America's soldiers and sailors emerged victorious and helped to light the flame

of liberty that now burns around the entire world.

So today, on the birthday of our Nation, I believe we should pay tribute to those who pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to our freedom. And today I think we should also honor all Americans, regardless of their background, whether their ancestors came here on immigrant ships or slave ships, whether they flew across the Pacific or walked across the Bering Strait, for all Americans have helped to extend the march of liberty, democracy, and opportunity.

God bless you. Thank you for your service, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:55 a.m. aboard the ship in New York Harbor. In his remarks, he referred to Mess Management Specialist First Class Petty Officer Talmadge F. Sims, USN. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the complete opening remarks of the President.

Remarks Aboard the U.S.S. *John F. Kennedy* in New York City July 4, 2000

Let me say, if Seaman Rosa Norales-Nunez gets much more practice, she can start running for office in her new country someday. Wasn't she terrific? Let's give her another hand. [Applause] I thought she was great. I would like to also welcome the other new citizens who we swore in a few moments ago, and I ask you to give them a hand, too. [Applause] They come from all over the world.

Hillary and Chelsea and I are honored to be here with all of you: Secretary and Mrs. Cohen, Attorney General Reno, Secretary Slater, Ambassador and Mrs. Holbrooke, Secretary Danzig; to the Members of the Congress who are here. I know that Senator Levin and Senator Dodd and former Senator John Glenn are back there behind me, and I saw Senator Lautenberg out in the audience. And there are a lot of other Members of Congress here. I'd like to ask all the Members of Congress to stand and be recognized. I saw a half a dozen—Representatives Lowey, Miller, thank you. Thank you all for being here.

I'd also like to recognize the currently reigning Miss America, Heather French, who has made the welfare of our veterans her great cause this year. Heather, stand up and be recognized. [Applause] Thank you for being here. And I would like to recognize also, because President Kennedy started this event, I would like to thank Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg and Ed Schlossberg and their three wonderful children for being here today. And welcome to all of you.

And I would like to thank Chairman Robertson and his wife. You know, he told me, when he got up here and opened this, that's the first public speech he had ever made. I think he did a pretty good job, don't you? And besides that, he produced all these ships. So give him a hand. [Applause]

I want to thank all the men and women in uniform who are here, and all of those who have come here from other nations to be a part of the international naval review and Operation Sail. I want to thank Captain Mike Miller,

the officers, and the crew of the *JFK*, especially. I know they had to “turn to” to make this day possible.

For all of you who are not familiar with the exploits of the U.S.S. *John F. Kennedy*, let me tell you that from the Atlantic to the Red Sea to the Mediterranean to the Arabian Gulf, this great ship has more than met its mission; it has proved truly worthy of its heroic and noble name.

Let me also say today that there is another heroic name we honor today. I am especially pleased to announce that the United States Navy will designate its newest class of ship, the Zumwalt class, in honor of Admiral Elmo “Bud” Zumwalt. And I would like to ask his wife, Mouza, and his son and other family members to stand today and be recognized. Let’s give them a big hand. [Applause] Thank you. God bless you.

Admiral Zumwalt passed away just 2 days into this new century. He was my mentor, my friend, and a magnificent role model. He was a friend and a passionate advocate for every sailor in his beloved Navy. His deeply, profoundly moral leadership will shape the character and conscience of our Navy for generations to come, and all America salutes him today. He deserves to have a class of ships named after him.

When he passed away, one of the naval aides who works for me in the White House, who happens to be a Filipino-American and has been in the United States Navy for 30 years, looked at me with tears in his eyes and he said, “Admiral Zumwalt was our admiral. He cared about all of us.” And today we honor him in this way.

I just want to say one or two other things about this important day, for the Navy and for all Americans. On this day, which we commemorate because of what happened at Independence Hall with the Declaration of Independence, the greatest hero of our Revolution was not in Philadelphia but instead was here on Manhattan Island preparing his outnumbered army for battle. Staring out over the very waters where we sit today, General George Washington saw the British warships landing at Staten Island, the vanguard of the largest expeditionary force ever launched by the British Empire.

As the armies eyed each other across this channel, the Declaration of Independence arrived from Philadelphia. George Washington ordered it to be read aloud to the troops. It was

at the tip of Manhattan Island, just to our north, where the troops first heard they were actually citizens of a new nation, where they first heard the words, “We hold these truths to be self-evident,” and where they first pledged their lives, their fortunes, their sacred honor.

The patriots of 1776 took these colonies and made out of them a country. They took a vision of liberty and made it into the law of this land. To a world that knew rule only by kings and lords, America’s creed confounded imagination. In the words of one British loyalist, “If the people be the governors, who shall be the governed?” America’s answer was, the governors and the governed must be one and the same.

More than two centuries later, for the first time in all of history, more than half of the people of this globe live under governments of their own choosing. An astonishing long way we have come since this day in 1776.

Just behind me on Ellis Island, the ancestors of more than 100 million United States citizens took their first steps on America’s soil. They’re the forebears of the immigrants who took the oath of citizenship today. Pulled by the vision of liberty and opportunity, often pushed by forces of intolerance and hopelessness, they came and brought with them their skills, their knowledge, and their hearts.

For more than a century, those who came through this gateway have passed a statue as large as the ideal for which it stands. “She was beautiful with the early morning light,” said one young woman fleeing tyranny from eastern Europe. “The whole boat bent toward her because everybody went out; everybody was in the same spot; and everybody was crying.” One Greek immigrant remembers looking up at the Statue of Liberty and asking her, “Please, give me the chance to become someone in America.”

Lady Liberty, like those whom she welcomed, was also an immigrant, a gift from France, a nation which did so much to help to give us birth.

Perhaps more than any other nation in all history, we have drawn our strength and spirit from people from other lands. Bearing different memories, bringing diverse traditions, immigrants have enriched our culture, enhanced our economy, broadened our vision of the world. And that is why, on this Fourth of July, standing in the shadow of Lady Liberty, we must resolve never to close the golden door behind us and

always, not only to welcome people to our borders but to welcome people into our hearts.

To go beyond the things which divide us, race and culture and religion, to understand that whether our ancestors came here on immigrant ships or slave ships, whether they flew across the Pacific or once walked across the Bering Strait a very long time ago, anyone who accepts the rights and responsibilities of citizenship is our fellow citizen, equal in the eyes of God, entitled to be treated equally and with dignity by all of us. That must be our resolution on this and every Independence Day.

In 1827, 51 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed, the sole surviving signer of the Declaration was Charles Carroll of Maryland. He wrote the following: "I recommend to the future generation the principles of the Declaration as the best earthly inheritance their ancestors could bequeath. All of us are created equal; all are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights; among them, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

You may have noted that last week it was my great honor to announce on behalf of our common endeavors with our British and Japanese and other counterparts that the first rough map of the human genome has been decoded. We now know that there will be an explosion of scientific discoveries which may give the young children in this audience a life expectancy of 100 years. But one thing we have already learned that proved the wisdom of the Founders

is that genetically, without regard to race, we are 99.9 percent the same and that the genetic differences of individuals within each racial and ethnic group are greater than the genetic differences of one group to another.

It is important that we remember that—that, after all, the Founding Fathers were pretty smart and that science has confirmed what they said so long ago. The really difficult thing is to confirm what they said in our everyday lives.

Remember this fine young woman who introduced me today, and resolve to make the creed of our Declaration the reality in all of our lives.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. aboard the ship in New York Harbor. In his remarks, he referred to Seaman Rosa Norales-Nunez, USN, newly sworn-in citizen, who introduced the President; President John F. Kennedy's daughter Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg, her husband, Edwin Schlossberg, and their children, Rose, Tatiana, and John; Operation Sail, Inc. Chairman Charles A. Robertson and his wife, Carol; Secretary Cohen's wife, Janet Langhart Cohen; U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Richard C. Holbrooke's wife, Kati Marton; Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.'s son James Gregory Zumwalt; and U.S.S. *John F. Kennedy* Commanding Officer Capt. Michael Miller, USN. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Announcing the Camp David Middle East Peace Summit and an Exchange With Reporters

July 5, 2000

The President. Good morning. Early next week, Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat will come to Camp David at my invitation. A few days before that, their negotiators will arrive to help pave the way for this summit. The objective is to reach an agreement on the core issues that have fueled a half-century of conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

After lengthy discussion with the two leaders and after listening to Secretary Albright's report, I have concluded that this is the best way—indeed, it is the only way—to move forward.

To state the task is to suggest the magnitude of the challenge. Behind the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lie the most profound questions about beliefs, political identity, collective fate. Etched in each side's mind are intense fears and emotions and a deep-seated commitment to defend their people's interests. There are no easy answers and, certainly, no painless ones. And therefore, there is clearly no guarantee of success.

Why this summit, and why now? While Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have made real

progress, crystallizing issues and defining gaps, the truth is they can take the talks no further at their level. Significant differences remain, and they involve the most complex and most sensitive of questions. The negotiators have reached an impasse. Movement now depends on historic decisions that only the two leaders can make.

I will be there with them, and I intend to do all I can to help them in this endeavor. But to delay this gathering, to remain stalled is simply no longer an option, for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as all of us has seen, knows no status quo. It can move forward toward real peace, or it can slide back into turmoil. It will not stand still.

If the parties do not seize this moment, if they cannot make progress now, there will be more hostility and more bitterness, perhaps even more violence. And to what end? Eventually, after more bloodshed and tears, they will have to come back to the negotiating table. They will have to return to face the same history, the same geography, the same demographic trends, the same passions, and the same hatreds, and, I am sure, the exact same choices that confront them here and now.

Of course, action does have its perils but so, too, does inaction. The decisions will not come easier with time. Fundamentally, that is what I have concluded. The leaders have to make the decisions that are still there to be made, and the longer we wait, the more difficult the decisions are likely to become. The Israeli and the Palestinian people have leaders now who are visionary enough, courageous enough, capable of building a fair, just, and lasting peace.

In coming here and accepting this challenge, Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have shown they are ready to take risks to pursue peace. The rest of the world, and especially the rest of the region, cannot afford to be bystanders. For all those who are truly committed to the cause of peace and to the well-being of the Israeli and Palestinian people, now is the time to lend their support to the peace-makers.

To the people of Israel and to the Palestinian people, I would like to say this: Peace under circumstances like these is never cost-free. Neither side can achieve 100 percent of its goals, for the optimal solution of each party is, by definition, one the other party cannot and will not accept. Negotiations, therefore, must create an outcome that is realistic, balanced, and fair

and that meets the fundamental objectives of both sides, an outcome that strengthens the two parties rather than weakens one of them, an outcome that accommodates both sides' vital needs and dreams, an outcome that reconciles their competing grievances. That is the only outcome that will permit Israelis and Palestinians to offer their children a future far different from the past, one with more opportunity and less fear, more hope and less despair. And that, of course, is the ultimate prize of peace.

The objective is often overshadowed, I might say, as all of you know, by the abject dreariness of the pursuit—one that you will, no doubt, have occasion to comment on in the days ahead. The ups and downs of the process, the daily hassles and disputes, the open-ended nature of the negotiations—all these, over time, have blurred the vision of what it is we are trying to achieve.

For Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, the challenge next week will be to start drawing the contours of the long-awaited peace, a peace that can fulfill the Israeli people's quest for security, for recognition, for genuine reconciliation with Palestinians and genuine acceptance in the region—acceptance in deeds as well as words—a peace that can fulfill the Palestinian people's legitimate aspirations to determine their destiny on their own land and to build a better future.

Almost 7 years ago now, we witnessed the historic handshake between the late Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat. It began a process that offered the Israeli and Palestinian people the chance to achieve what I then described as the quiet miracle of a normal life. That is still the vision that must inspire the efforts and call forth the commitment, courage, and creativity of Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat next week.

Q. Mr. President, do you think that this is the last opportunity for peace during your Presidency? And how long will you give these negotiations? Are you talking days, weeks, what?

The President. Well, the answer to the first—actually, the short answer to both questions is, I don't know. I'll tell you what I do know. I know that Prime Minister Barak strongly believes that the nature of this process is such that the final decisions cannot be made except by a meeting between the two leaders and that he cannot go further than he has gone without that sort of meeting.

Chairman Arafat understands that the nature of the process is such that the final decisions will have to be made by the two leaders. And so they're willing to give it their best shot. And they understand, too, that as we have already seen, delay tends to make these things worse, not better.

One of the most important judgments any political leader has to make when dealing with a thorny problem is whether delay will make it better or worse. Occasionally, you actually get problems where the best thing to do right now is nothing, that delay will actually cause them to become less severe. These are not such problems. Delay only seems, to me, to make them more severe. So that's the answer to the first question.

The second question is, we all know what the deal is. We know what the issues are. We know, at least within a range, what the options are. I think if we work hard, we can get it done in several days, but I will give it whatever time is required, as long as we're still moving forward.

Q. Mr. President, could you describe the extent of your participation? Are you going to move up to Camp David, lock, stock, and barrel, for as long as it takes? And are you going to present a U.S., maybe a model plan, that might bring these two sides together?

The President. Well, I think the less I say right now about what I'm going to do, the better. And I will spend as much time there as I need to spend. I may come back here from time to time, depending on what else is happening, what else I need to do. We've got a lot going on in Congress now, even though they'll be gone a lot—some of the time, perhaps. But I think they'll be here most of the time we'll be here, and I may have to come back. So we'll just see. But I will be there a lot, and I'll work as hard as I need to work.

Q. What happens if this slips past the deadline in September? How important is that deadline?

The President. Well, it's a deadline they set for themselves, and I think they all see it in terms that are—both sides see it in terms that are different from the deadline they set for the framework agreement; that is, they knew that there were problems inherent in making the framework agreement that if they could overcome, they could make the final agreement consistent with the framework agreement. So that's

one of the things, obviously, that has driven my decision here.

I think that neither of them really want to see us go by September without a resolution of this, and I think they understand the stakes here.

Q. Mr. President, can you talk about the symbolism of the location of Camp David, what impact at all it might have on the parties to help them bridge the difficult gaps between them?

The President. Well, it is a place where, obviously, a milestone in Middle East peace was reached, and I hope in that sense, I think, it has to be a positive environment. But I think they also realize that from the very beginning, these were the hardest questions that go to the core of both sides' identity and sense of themselves, far more difficult to resolve, with all respect, than any issues between Israel and the Egyptians or the Jordanians or even the Syrians. Although we are not there yet with the Syrians, everybody knows pretty much what the deal is there and that there are practical questions there that are not nearly so charged with emotion and identity and almost national consciousness as these are. So these are the difficult ones.

And obviously, I hope that the setting will help to inspire them and to inspire us. I hope we'll all be inspired by it. But it's also a great place for us to be, because it gives us a reasonable chance to work in quiet and without interruption and to observe the necessary discretion that without which we won't be able to move forward.

Thank you.

Mexican Elections

Q. Mr. President, something about Mexico, about the Mexican elections, please?

The President. Well, I called President Zedillo and congratulated him on what was clearly an open and fair and well-fought election, and I called President-elect Fox and congratulated him on his victory. We talked a little bit about the importance of our relationship and what lies ahead, and I told him that he would be welcome here at any time if he would like to come up.

Obviously, he has a lot of things to do, and he'll have to make that decision. But I'd be happy to meet with him if he would like to come up and sort of get our relationship started. Most of his term will unfold with the next President, but the relationship that we have with

Mexico needs to go beyond individual personalities always, because we have too much in common and too much of a future to build together. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White

House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and President Ernesto Zedillo and President-elect Vicente Fox of Mexico.

Remarks in New York City on the United Nations Optional Protocols on Children's Rights

July 5, 2000

Thank you very much, Ambassador Holbrooke. That generous introduction confirms one of my unbreakable laws of politics, which is, whenever possible, you should endeavor to be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. [*Laughter*]

I thank you, Deputy Secretary-General Fréchet, for your welcome and for hosting me here today, and I'm delighted to see Olara Otunnu, Carol Bellamy. And thank you, Jim Wolfensohn, for being here and for your truly visionary leadership of the World Bank. I thank the members of the Security Council and the other Ambassadors who are here.

It's a special honor to have the President of Mali, President Konare, here, as well. I thank Secretary Summers for his work, and for coming here. And I'm delighted to be here with three Members of the House of Representatives: the chairman of the House Committee on International Affairs, Mr. Ben Gilman from New York; and Representative Carolyn Maloney, who represents the district in which the United Nations is located; and Sheila Jackson Lee from Houston, Texas, who did so much work on these subjects we're here to discuss today.

I also appreciate the presence here of members of the NGO community and members of the State, Defense, and Justice Departments' negotiating team who worked on these agreements. I'd also like to acknowledge the leadership of the Defense Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff who worked hard to ensure that we could sign the child soldiers protocol in good faith, without compromising our military readiness or our national security in any way.

Let me begin just by expressing a general word of appreciation, if I might, to the United

Nations for the work that you have done. You mentioned the 500 multinational protocols that have come out of this organization since it began. We are grateful for the attention that you are now devoting to the world health crisis and for the opportunity that we will have to introduce this resolution tomorrow, for the work you are doing for peacekeeping, most recently in Sierra Leone, and in so many other ways. It's a profound honor for the United States to host the United Nations, especially in this millennial year, and I'm looking forward to coming back for the millennial summit.

These two protocols today, I believe, are very important statements that go beyond their very terms. With the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor I signed last year, they form a trio of vital protections for children, and they must be signposts for the future of the global society.

To give life to our dream of a global economy that lifts all people, first we must stand together for all children. Yet every day, tens of millions of children work in conditions that shock the conscience. Every day, thousands of children are killed and brutalized in fighting wars that adults decided they should fight in. Every day around the world, and even here in the United States, children are sold into virtual slavery or traffic for the worst forms of sexual abuse.

Think about what has been lost for the future because roughly 2 million children have fought in wars over the last two decades. In Sierra Leone today, as many as half the rebel forces are under 18, some as young as 5 or 6. In Colombia, guerrillas have taken thousands of children from their villages to serve as soldiers.

Two years ago, when we went to Africa, Hillary met with Ugandan children who had been abducted and heard their stories of unspeakable horror—of children forced to kill each other, family members, even their own parents. In Africa and around the world, she has been an eloquent and strong and consistent voice on behalf of our children, those who have been abused, exploited, and forced into war. And I wish she could be with me here today, because she's an important reason for why we're all here. This morning she reminded me that I should say, again, there is no worse sin in life than sending a child to kill the people who gave him life.

The optional protocol on children in armed conflict sets a clear and a high standard: No one under 18 may ever be drafted by any army in any country. Its signatories will do everything feasible to keep even volunteers from taking a direct part in hostilities before they are 18. They will make it a crime for any nongovernmental force to use children under 18 in war. And they will work together to meet the needs of children who have been forced into war, to save a generation that already has lost too much.

What happens to the world's children in peacetime can be just as shocking. In the 21st century, it is difficult to believe that the global traffic in human beings is the third-largest source of income for organized crime, hundreds of thousands of children bought and sold, exploited and prostituted every year. Yet many countries don't even have laws against this kind of trade.

The optional protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography will do a great deal to change that. It specifies that child pornography, prostitution, and enslavement are crimes everywhere. It provides better tools for law enforcement to extradite and prosecute those who profit from this dirty business.

Already we are waging a firm fight against those who traffic in children, but this protocol will make a big difference. And I was glad that the Deputy Secretary-General invited other countries to sign this and other outstanding protocols when they're here for the millennial summit.

Every American citizen should support these protocols. It is true that words on paper are not enough, but these documents are a clear starting point for action, for punishing offenders, dismantling the networks of trafficking, caring

for the young victims. They represent an international coalition formed to fight a battle that one country, even a large country, cannot win alone. They represent a worldwide consensus on basic values, values every citizen of our country shares. In short, I believe they represent the United Nations at its very best. And they remind us why, at a time when crime, disease, and hate can spread faster than ever before, we need a strong United Nations more than ever before.

The United States has already passed a sense of the Senate resolution in support of the Protocol on Children in Armed Conflict. I will send both protocols to the Senate this month, and I hope very much that they can be ratified this year.

Both agreements are stand-alone documents; they create no obligations to other agreements which the United States has not ratified. They speak to an international sense of justice and to the belief profoundly shared by our people that children deserve love and protection.

During one of the darkest moments of the 20th century, the great German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer reminded us that "the test of the morality of a society is what it does for children." Today more than ever, this is a test the world cannot afford to fail. The United States should always be at the forefront of this effort.

I am grateful for the opportunity Americans had to take a leading role in negotiating these agreements and to be among the first nations to sign them. I pledge my best efforts to see that we are also leaders in implementing them and, in so doing, in granting the world's children a future far better than its recent past. I thank all of you for your support as well.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:35 p.m. in the West Foyer at the United Nations. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Richard C. Holbrooke; U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette; U.N. Secretary-General's Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Olara A. Otunnu; UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy; and President Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali, president, U.N. Security Council.

Remarks at a Military Salute Week Dinner in New York City July 5, 2000

Please be seated. Let me say, first of all, I'm delighted to be here at Boomer Esiason's podium. *[Laughter]* When he was up here talking about being President, it was all I could do to avoid screaming, "Throw long, throw long!" *[Laughter]*

I want to also thank my good friend Lieutenant General Marty Steele, who is the president of the Intrepid Museum. It's a big step forward for him. He, like me, he was born and grew up in Arkansas, and he never saw a ship this big in his life until he was too old to figure out how to run one. *[Laughter]* So I appreciate your broadening his experience in life.

I'd like to thank the Members of Congress who are here, and General and Mrs. Shelton, I thank you for being here. And to all the executives who have worked so hard with Tony and the Fisher family to advance the cause of the Intrepid Museum and Foundation, I thank you.

I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Dick Grasso. He is the only person in New York who would give me any credit for the growth of the stock market in this last 7 years. *[Laughter]* There's ol' Mac saying he's wrong about that. It just shows you how confident Mr. Grasso is in his own leadership. *[Laughter]*

Let me say I am delighted to be here. Hillary and I were here yesterday with Chelsea for the tall ships and the review of the military ships. It was a magnificent day. I know many of you were here, and it's a Fourth of July that I think all of us who were here will never, ever forget.

We are now at a place which, in some sense, makes every day the Fourth of July, for the Intrepid is a monument to the heroism of our Armed Forces. It is a place where young people come to learn about our history and our values and exactly how we went about defending them. It is a testament to the extraordinary generosity and vision of Zachary and Elizabeth Fisher.

We all miss Zach tonight. I will never forget his devotion to our troops and to their families. His pride in them and their service and his sensibility to their hardship led him and Elizabeth to reach out to them in ways that were profoundly moving and genuinely life-changing for many of them. He gave a college scholarship or a place to stay near a hospitalized

loved one or a program for a disabled child over and over and over again.

By their acts of generosity, the Fishers made our Armed Forces stronger, and therefore, they made our Nation stronger. And I hope they made all the rest of us more sensitive to the sacrifices of military service and the continuing needs of our military families. All Americans owe them a debt of gratitude.

Now the Fisher family and those of you who support their work carry on this important legacy, a legacy embodied by this magnificent ship. But we all must carry on their legacy as citizens. Our remarkable economic prosperity, to which Mr. Grasso referred, has made this not only a time of opportunity but a time of profound responsibility as well.

I have been saying over and over again like a broken record—so much that even my fans are getting tired of it—but I'm going to say one more time tonight, how a nation handles its prosperity is as stern a test of its judgment, its values, and its character as how a nation handles adversity, and in some ways, it is more difficult. There's not a person in this audience tonight, over the age of 30 anyway, who can't remember at least one time in your life when you made a serious mistake, not because things were so bad but because things were so good you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. And so it is that our Nation today is confronted with the chance of a lifetime to shape the future of our dreams for our children and, with wise leadership, to shape the first several decades of the 21st century world, because of the gift of our prosperity.

A big part of that will depend upon whether we're prepared to give wise and generous leadership to the rest of the world for peace and freedom, for security and prosperity. And that will depend in no small measure on whether we do the right things in meeting the military challenges of the 21st century.

The Congress this year is passing a defense budget that I believe will meet those challenges—to modernize our forces, to strengthen our readiness, to give our men and women in uniform the training they need, the equipment they need, and even more than we have done

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in the past to give them the quality of life they deserve. A strong defense, no less than in the past, is still a force for peace and stability in the world.

I also hope the Congress will support a strong diplomacy as a part of that defense. Congress recently approved our package for aid to Colombia, which I know has been somewhat controversial, but I believe it is profoundly important. Colombia is the oldest democracy in all Latin America. About a third of her land today is besieged by drug traffickers and guerrillas. There are people there every day who put on military uniforms and police uniforms and put their lives at risk simply by doing their jobs, in a way that is almost inconceivable for an American to imagine in this year. And so we are going to help them, and in so doing, we hope they'll keep more drugs out of the bodies of our own children.

I hope we will continue to support peace in the Balkans. Our military won a war in Kosovo and ended another one in Bosnia and stood up for the proposition that people in Europe in the 21st century will not be murdered because of their religion or their ethnic background. We saw it happen before—it led to the Holocaust in World War II—and the United States will not let it happen again in this new century.

We are doing our best to free the poorest countries of the world from the burdens of crushing debt and disease, to support peace-keeping in Europe, Asia, and Africa, to support peace from Northern Ireland to the Middle East.

I announced today that early next week the peace talks will resume between the Israelis and the Palestinians in Washington with the Prime Minister and Chairman Arafat. I ask for your prayers and support for these brave people as they come here to try to end an old conflict. But if they are willing to make a sacrifice for peace, then the United States must lead the

way in helping to make the investments necessary to ensure that the peace has a positive impact in ordinary people's lives.

The challenge of securing peace did not go away with the end of the cold war; it only became more complex. It still requires our leadership, not just from the White House and from Congress and our military leadership but also from our scholars, our scientists, our engineers, our business leaders, and from ordinary citizens.

The reason there was a man like Zach Fisher is that America is a place of shining opportunity. The reason that our military families needed his help is that we need so many people to serve, and they have needs that, even with all the generosity of Congress, we have not fully met while we continue to try to lead the world toward peace and to avoid war. His example, if nothing else, should convince every American that we should support our military, and even more important, we should support our mission, because when citizens do that, in ways large and small, America is stronger, and the world is a safer and more decent place.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in Technologies Hall at the Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum. In his remarks, he referred to sports announcer and former NFL quarterback Boomer Esiason, who was the master of ceremonies for the program; Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum President and Chief Executive Officer Lt. Gen. Martin R. Steele, USMC (Ret.); Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, and his wife, Carolyn; Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum founder Zachary Fisher's nephew Anthony Fisher and widow, Elizabeth Fisher; New York Stock Exchange Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Richard Grasso, who introduced the President; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri *July 6, 2000*

Thank you very, very much. I want to begin by thanking President Pacheco and Chancellor

Wallace. I'm delighted to be here. I want to thank the doctors and nurses who are here. And

I want to say a special word of thanks to Doug Boudin. I wish he could make that talk personally to every Member of the United States Congress. That was very moving, and I thank him.

I want to thank the other officials who have joined us here: Attorney General Jay Nixon; Secretary of State Rebecca McDowell Cook; State Auditor Claire McCaskill; Speaker of the House Steve Gaw; and Representative Harlan and the other members of the legislature that are here. And Mayor Hindman and members of the city and county council who are here, I thank you all for joining me. And of course, a special word of thanks to Governor and Mrs. Carnahan for their friendship through the years and their leadership on this issue.

I must say I'm glad to be here. The last thing—when I got up this morning, very early in New York, to come here, the last thing my wife said to me was, she said, “You know, I went to Columbia once. It's a beautiful place. You'll have a good time.” So I told Hillary, I said, “Well, you made the decision about how you're going to spend this year. I'm going to Columbia and have a good time.” *[Laughter]* It was great.

I understand that in addition to the history lesson we got about the University of Missouri, that this university also began the tradition of homecoming. I always feel at home when I'm here in Missouri, so I like that, and I wanted to mention it.

I'd like to say, too, how much I appreciate the opportunities that I've had to work with the leaders and the people of this State over the years during the terrible floods along the Mississippi, and then when we were promoting welfare reform. I came here more often than to any other State during the 3½ year battle we had to pass meaningful welfare reform legislation because I thought that Governor Carnahan had done the best job of any Governor in any State in showing how to do the right kind of welfare reform.

We've worked together in education, in fighting crime, and, obviously now, in ensuring quality health care. And I'd just like to say—because I don't know how many more times I'll be in Missouri when I'm President—*[laughter]*—that before I was President, for a dozen years I was a Governor of your neighboring State. It's a great job. It's like being president of a State without all the perks and without all the hassles. *[Laughter]* And I served with 4 Missouri Gov-

ernors and over 150, believe it or not, other Governors across America. And Mel Carnahan is clearly one of the very best Governors I ever served with, and I thank him.

When I knew I was coming here—there are so many things that I want to talk about here at the university. I wanted to talk a little bit about increasing college access. We have now 10 million people taking advantage of either the HOPE scholarship or the lifetime learning tax credit. We reformed the student loan program. In 7½ years, students have saved \$8 billion on student loan repayments. We've increased the Pell grant a lot, and now I'm trying to convince the Congress to let college tuition be tax deductible up to \$10,000 a year. And I hope we can do that.

But the president talked about the importance of research, and we have tried to support basic research for our colleges and universities and through our national laboratories, and I could talk about that until tomorrow morning. But I'll just mention one thing to lead into why we're here.

I had the profound honor last week, along with Prime Minister Blair of Great Britain, to announce the completion of the first rough sequencing of the human genome. Now, this is a truly extraordinary thing that will change the lives of people who deliver health care.

Before you know it, young mothers will go home from the hospital with little genetic maps of their kids' lives. And it will be kind of scary in some ways. It will say, well, unfortunately, your child has a greater propensity to develop this or that problem. But it will also say, if you do the following five things, you can cut the risk by two-thirds.

We will see the combination, the continuing combination of the information technology revolution with the revolution in genetics so that most of my friends in the field believe that within a few years, we'll be able to develop digital chips to replicate the failures of nerve cells, even in the spinal column, so that people confined the wheelchairs will be able to walk again. We will see—people completely paralyzed will be able to regain the movement of their limbs. I believe that children born sometime within the next 10 years will probably have a life expectancy of somewhere around 90 years. And sometime in the first few decades of this century, we'll have children born who, if they

can manage to avoid accidents or other unnatural causes of death, will have life expectancies of 100 years. Now, that's the good news.

But the reason we're here today is that we have to run our health care systems consistent with our values. And if we're going to have all these advances, they have to be implemented in a way that all Americans can be treated fairly, equally, and have access to the benefits of everything from emergency room care to basic care to specialized care. That's what this whole debate's about.

Let me say to you, I feel a special responsibility here because I think, in general, managed care can be a good thing. That is, when I became President, the price of health care was going up at 3 times the rate of inflation every year. We were spending 4 percent more, and still are, of our gross national product on health care than any other country in the world, and it was obvious that we had to manage the system better.

But it's equally obvious that you can't turn the fundamental life-and-death decisions about the quality of health care over to people who are managing for things that have nothing to do with whether the patient turns out healthy or not. And that's what this whole thing is about.

It's about how to strike the right balance toward saying, "Yes, health care is like any other big enterprise. Of course you should have prudent management. Of course we should avoid wasting any money. Of course we should do the very best we can to run it. But let's not forget why all these people are doing this, why they've got their white coats on. It's to help people stay well and to help them get well if they get sick or to help them recover if they're injured."

The reason we need the Patients' Bill of Rights is because we are awash in examples, which Doug just gave us a couple of, of the forest overcoming the trees. We have lost the forest for the trees, over and over and over again. That's why we're here.

Now, as has already been said by the previous speakers, I wanted to come here because Missouri has passed a strong law, and you proved it wasn't a partisan issue in the heartland. It's amazing how many issues that are partisan issues in Washington aren't partisan issues once you get 5 miles outside of DC. [Laughter]. But survey after survey after survey shows that more than 70 percent of all Americans, whether they

identify themselves as Republicans or Democrats or independents, support a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. And therefore, in Washington, we have an obligation to pass it and not to pass less than that just because the organized interest groups are trying to prevent it up there.

Here's the state of play and why I wanted to come here to highlight this. We are so close. The Norwood-Dingell bill, a bipartisan bill, passed the House with a lot of votes to spare. We had virtually every Democrat for it, and a fair number of Republicans voted for it. We had a good bipartisan group. Then the bill was taken up in the Senate, and we came within one vote of having enough to pass it. We had all the Democratic Senators. And Senator McCain—once again proving his independence—Senator Specter, Senator Fitzgerald, and Senator Chafee voted for it. So we're one vote away. And that's very important. And I came here because I don't think we ought to stop one vote short.

I don't know how many health care professionals I've heard tell stories like the one Doug Boudin just told me. I don't know how many people I've heard—I saw a nurse once who was trying to explain to me what she had to go through calling HMO's to get approval for health procedures that the doctor for whom she worked wished to perform that were blatantly self-evident and how many times she'd been turned down and how many times it was her unhappy duty to go tell the patient that once again he or she had been shafted. And I'll never forget that woman just weeping. She literally could not complete what she had worked so hard on to tell me. And I've seen it over and over and over again.

Now, I have done all I can do through executive action. I issued an Executive order to extend the Patients' Bill of Rights safeguards to the 85 million Americans who get their health care through Federal plans, through Medicare, Medicaid, the veterans' system, the Federal health insurance plan. We have provided similar patient protections to every child covered under the Children's Health Insurance Program. But I've done all I can. The Governor and the State Legislature in Missouri, they've done all they can. But I want to explain clearly again why we need Federal legislation and why only Congress can close the loophole.

In spite of your strong law, which is as good as any in the country, more than one million Missourians do not have patient protections today because they are in plans that are outside the jurisdiction of State law, under Federal law. Now, only Federal legislation can fix that. The House-passed bill, the Norwood-Dingell bill does it. And the protections are listed here on the chart.

First, it must protect every American in every health plan. The bill that the Senate did vote on—that the majority passed, but they know is dead on arrival—excludes over 135 million Americans. It covers fewer than one in 10 people in HMO's. I mean, why are we doing this, anyway?

So when you hear people say, "Well, I support a Patients' Bill of Rights," the operative word in that sentence is "a" as opposed to "the." The difference in the one-letter word and the three-letter word is 135 million of your fellow citizens. This State has established strong safeguards, but not everybody is fortunate enough to live in Missouri. There are a lot of States that haven't done this.

Now, we have recognized that, on certain fundamental things, there should be national action—that's Social Security, Medicare, environmental standards, the civil rights laws. We have said, in certain fundamental areas, a patchwork is not enough; there ought to be a floor on which every American can stand and through which no American falls. That's what this bipartisan bill does.

The second thing, the Patients' Bill of Rights must ensure access to specialists. Under the Senate bill—the one that passed, not the one they beat by a vote—you might have the right to see a cancer specialist, but the nearest doctor your plan may offer could be 100 miles away, or you might have to wait 2 weeks to see the person that's listed. That's wrong. The bipartisan bill ensures real access in a timely fashion to specialists, and if you or your family has ever needed one, you know how important that is.

The third thing the bill does is to ensure access to the nearest emergency room care, and you just heard that story. Now, you've got to understand, this is not an exceptional story. This is not a story that happens to people in small towns, and, "Oh my goodness, our plan just didn't happen to cover"—you know, we've heard stories from people that live in big cities in this country where somebody gets hit by a car

on a crowded city street where there's a traffic jam everywhere, and they go past three hospitals before they get to the one that's covered for the emergency room.

This is not—Doug did not make up this story. I know you know he didn't make it up, but he did not make it up as a representative story. This is not some bizarre accident. This happens all the time, all over America. And most people don't know it, and when they hear it, they can't believe it. But it is true.

Now, the Senate bill, as Doug said, allows plans to saddle patients with an extra charge if they don't first call their health plan for permission before they go to an emergency room. Now, I feel quite confident that whoever wrote that has never been hit in a crosswalk by a passing car. "I have three broken ribs. My nearest relative is 500 miles away. I also have a concussion, but could you please wait before you put me in that ambulance and let me call my health plan?" [*Laughter*]

We're laughing because we don't want to cry, but this can be a life-or-death decision. You know it, and I know it. No one in an emergency should have to think twice about going to the nearest hospital. We just need to get over this.

Fourth, a real Patients' Bill of Rights must ensure access to clinical trials. This is also very important. Only the bipartisan bill provides coverage for all clinical trials, from cancer to heart disease to Alzheimer's to diabetes. This is going to get to be more and more important. You're going to have an explosion of chemical trials as a result of advances coming out of the human genome project, and people shouldn't be denied the right to get a new lease on life because they happen to be in an HMO. That's not right.

Fifth, and fundamentally, patients must be able to hold health plans fully accountable for harmful decisions. The Governor alluded to this, but—and I'm not sure even he knows this because it was just released today—but listen to this. A new analysis released today by a number of prominent legal scholars concludes that the Senate bill would be even worse than the current law, because it would effectively wipe out protections that States like Missouri have already passed and replace them with provisions that would make it more difficult to hold plans accountable for harmful decisions. In other words, when they voted to pass that bill, they voted to weaken the law you have already passed. So they voted to cast away vital protections that

the Governor and the State legislature fought so hard to give your families. That's not a step forward; it's a leap backward.

Now, the bipartisan bill, here's what it says. It doesn't say we want everybody to go file a lawsuit. That's not what it says. It says courts should be a last resort. There should be reasonable protection for companies and health plans that do the right thing, but if a health plan can be clearly proved to have caused harm, families simply must have the right to hold the insurance company accountable. A right without a remedy is not a right.

We need a real Patients' Bill of Rights with real accountability and real rights, not one that just provides cover for the special interests. We don't need more cover for them. We need more health care coverage for the American people.

I want to say one other thing for the skeptics who will hear about this, because I know I'm largely preaching to the choir here. People say, "Oh, this is fine, but what does it cost? Does it cost something?" Yes, it costs something. Do you know what it cost the Federal health plans when I ordered all these protections I just told you? I issued an Executive order, and we put it into the Federal health plans. Do you know what it costs? Less than \$1 a month a policy.

The congressional majority's own research service, that are the people that basically are against this, their own people say that the costs would be less than \$2 a month a policy. Now, I'd pay \$1 or \$2 a month on my policy to know that you could go to the nearest emergency room if you got in an accident. And I think you'd feel the same way about your friends and your neighbors. I would pay. So all of this business about how the cost is going to bankrupt the country and add to new health care costs, it is simply not so. And we have got to be clear about that.

Now, we are so close. We're one vote away. We have to overcome all the maneuvering power that the interest groups have through their influence with the leadership in the Senate, but we're one vote away. We can enact a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights this year. More than 300 health and consumer groups have endorsed it.

I've done everything I could to try to avoid making health care a partisan issue. We have passed bipartisan health care legislation to allow people to take their health insurance from one job to another, to have portability. We have

enacted bipartisan legislation to provide for children's health insurance for low-income people that aren't poor enough to be on Medicaid. We've approved a measure that allows people with disabilities to keep their Government-funded health care if they go into the work force. It's been a godsend. It hasn't cost you a penny as a taxpayer, and it's put a lot more people in the work force, making money and paying taxes themselves.

We have proved over and over again we could do this. And this whole thing is being hung up, with 70 percent of the American people on the other side, because one group of interests do not wish to be held accountable, like all the rest of us are, if they cause injury, because they don't want to give up the right to tell you which specialist to see, whether you could see one, and which emergency room you can visit. It doesn't make any sense.

So I'm honored to be here. I thank you all for what you have done and for once again having the Show Me State show the way. But I want you to think about the million Missourians who aren't covered by your own law, and the 135 million of your fellow Americans who wouldn't be covered by that Senate bill that poses as a Patients' Bill of Rights. And I want you to think about the one vote standing between all America and the kind of health care system we need. All we need is one vote, and we can change America for the better.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in Jesse Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to University of Missouri President Manuel T. Pacheco; University of Missouri at Columbia Chancellor Richard Wallace; family nurse practitioner Doug Bouldin, who introduced the President; State Representative Timothy Harlan; Mayor Darwin Hindman of Columbia; Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri and his wife, Jean; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The President also referred to his memorandum of February 20, 1998, on compliance of Federal agencies with the Patients' Bill of Rights (*Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, 1998 Book I* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999), p. 260).

Statement on the Release of School Accountability Funds July 6, 2000

I am pleased that the Education Department announced today the release of the first \$100 million from the Title I School Accountability Fund to help States and school districts turn around low-performing schools. Over the last 7 years we have followed a commonsense reform strategy: invest more in our schools and demand more in return. The funds announced today will support local communities in 31 States and the District of Columbia implement strategies that work to turn around their worst performing schools by implementing a tougher curriculum, helping teachers get the skills and training they need, and, if necessary, closing down a failing school and reopening it under new leadership or as a public charter school.

Today I call on Congress again to enact my budget proposal, which would double the ac-

countability fund to \$250 million; fulfill our commitment to hire 100,000 high-quality teachers to reduce class size in the early grades; build and modernize public schools; and ensure after-school help for every child in a failing school. I also urge Congress to pass my education accountability act, which will enhance the efforts of States, districts, and schools to ensure all of America's children can achieve high standards by focusing on results.

NOTE: The statement referred to the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Title I) (Public Law 103-382), which amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-10).

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Generalized System of Preferences July 6, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit a Proclamation in which I have determined that it is appropriate to suspend preferential treatment for Belarus as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) because Belarus has not taken and is not taking steps to afford workers in Belarus internationally recognized worker rights. The Proclamation also determines that Malta, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Slovenia meet the definition of a "high income" country as defined by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Develop-

ment and that therefore they will be graduated from the GSP, effective January 1, 2002.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The proclamation of July 6 amending the Generalized System of Preferences is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

July 7 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

Memorandum on FY 2001 Refugee Admissions Consultations *July 6, 2000*

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: FY 2001 Refugee Admissions Consultations

In accordance with section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), you are authorized to consult with the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning refugee admissions as follows:

1. The authorization of 80,000 refugee admissions, 76,000 of which are funded, during FY 2001, which would be allocated by specific region as follows: 20,000 for Africa; 6,000 for East Asia (including Amerasians); 3,000 for Latin America and the Caribbean; 10,000 for the Near East and South Asia; 37,000 for Europe (including 20,000 for the former Yugoslavia and 17,000 for the former Soviet Union); and 4,000 for the unallocated reserve. The recommended level of funded admissions is equal to the

level assumed in the FY 2001 budget request (76,000).

2. The authorization of an additional 10,000 refugee admission numbers to be made available for the adjustment to permanent resident status of persons who have been granted asylum in the United States.
3. The designation, pursuant to section 101(a)(42)(B) of the INA, of persons in Cuba, Vietnam, and the former Soviet Union, who, if they otherwise qualify for admission as refugees, may be considered refugees under the INA even though they are still within their country of nationality or habitual residence.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

cc: The Attorney General
The Secretary of Health and Human Services

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 7.

Remarks Dedicating the President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home National Monument *July 7, 2000*

Well, thank you very much. Hello, everyone, and welcome to what most people call the Old Soldiers' Home, the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home, on this historic day.

I want to begin by thanking General Hilbert for his leadership here. And I want to thank Bill Woods for speaking on behalf of all the residents at the home. He said to me, "You know, I stumble a little. I'm not used to doing this." I thought he did a fine job.

He told you one of the things that I wanted to say, which is that the people who live in this home open amazing volumes of mail—1.9 million pieces since he's been at it. A lot of that mail is mail that very young children send to Socks and to Buddy. And you may know that Hillary actually did a book on the best letters that children wrote to the White House asking questions of our pets. And it would have

been impossible to do that book, and it would be impossible to respond to those children with the staff we have at the White House, if it weren't for the veteran volunteers here who do this and so many other things to help the White House work.

I hope one of the things that will come out of this today is that the people who have retired after distinguished careers in military service will finally get some of the credit they deserve for helping the White House to operate every single day of the year. And we thank them all.

I also think we brought Buddy and Socks out here today to play. I hope I get them back before the end of the day.

I would like to say a special word of appreciation to Secretary West for his work with our veterans. And because of what we're doing today, I want to say again how indebted I feel

the country is to Secretary Babbitt and to those who work with him, especially Bob Stanton, the Director of the National Park Service. We make another milestone decision today under the leadership and with the drive of Bruce Babbitt. When all is said and done, I'm not sure America will ever have had an Interior Secretary who had done so much good for the natural heritage of America as Bruce Babbitt.

I want to thank George Frampton of the White House, who has done so much to support this effort. I thank the members of the DC City Council who are here today. We're going to try to raise a little more money to help you with the continued renaissance of our Nation's Capital, and we thank you for your leadership.

I want to thank Richard Moe, the president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, for all that his organization has done to protect this site and others like it. The trust is helping to put places like Anderson Cottage literally back on the map.

And finally, this is one of the First Lady's White House millennial projects, which has allowed us to honor our past and imagine the future. I want to thank Ellen Lovell, who runs that project, and I want to thank Hillary for the truly astonishing impact this millennial effort has had in our country. Dick Moe told me on the way up here that we've now seen \$100 million divided almost 50/50 between public and private monies committed to preserve the great treasures of America, of which this is one. And I know how passionately Hillary feels about this.

I'll never forget, I was once reading—a couple years ago I was reading this biography of Rutherford Hayes. And President Hayes, he was one of those Union generals from Ohio that got elected President—Grant, Hayes, Harrison, McKinley. After the Civil War, if you were a Union general from Ohio, you had about a 50 percent chance of being elected President. [Laughter] There has never been any category of Americans that had such a high probability of being elected President as Union generals from Ohio between 1865—or 1868 and 1900.

But anyway, I was reading how Hayes brought his family up here because the Potomac was a swamp, and the mosquitoes were terrible, and the heat was unbearable, and no one could work in the White House. And I started talking to Hillary about this, and she kind of nosed around up here. And we knew about the home because of all the work that the veterans here do for

the White House. And one thing led to another, and this became one of our millennial treasures.

But I am very grateful to her and to Ellen Lovell, because I think that the millennial projects around the country—and I'll say a little more about this later—have really given a lasting gift to America. So I want to thank them. I know Hillary wishes she could be here today.

Now, I understand I am the first President since Chester Arthur to actually go up and down the stairs at the Anderson Cottage—more than 100 years ago. But the place is very special to America. It has so much of the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, even though it has almost been forgotten for more than a century. It's not because the people have forgotten President Lincoln. Last year more than one million people visited Ford's Theatre alone. But barely 100 made it here to Anderson Cottage, where Lincoln lived and worked, where his son played and his wife found solace, where his ideas took shape and his last, best hopes for America took flight.

In some ways, this cottage behind me is the most important, as well as the least known Lincoln site in the entire United States. He spent a quarter of his Presidency at this cottage he called the Soldiers' Home. It was, in part, summer days like this one that drew the Lincolns here, to higher ground, where the breeze flows more and a visitor can breathe a little easier. In 1862, Mr. Lincoln's second year as President, he and Mary packed up and moved the family these few miles north for the summer. It was quieter here; it was a place to reflect; and for them, at that time, it was, sadly, also a place to grieve for the loss of their young son Willie.

It was a place where the President could sit beneath the canopy of a beautiful copper beech tree, to go again through the books of poetry he loved so or drop the books and follow his son Tad up into the cradle of the tree's great limb. That tree is just behind the cottage here. I saw it when I arrived, and I walked beneath its canopy just as President Lincoln did almost 140 years ago. It is still very much alive, standing proudly and, I might add now, because it is three centuries old, it is our last living link to Abraham Lincoln.

It's hard to believe we're just a few miles from the White House. On a clear day, it's close enough to signal by semaphore from the Sherman Building tower; close enough to commute. On my short drive here today, I thought

about how Mr. Lincoln used to come here on horseback or by carriage, up and down the old 7th Street Pike. His days were spent in wartime Washington, his nights and mornings here. Not a bad commute by our standards, but it wasn't especially safe either.

One evening in August of 1864 the sound of a gunshot sent Mr. Lincoln, who was riding alone on horseback, scrambling for home. He made it back here safely, though his \$8 plug hat did not. The bullet passed through the hat but, thankfully, not through him. His guards found it along the road, and they found the bullet hole.

The Soldiers' Home gave the Lincolns refuge in times of trouble, but not escape. If anything, being here often brought President Lincoln closer to the front. The Battle of Fort Stevens was waged just 2 miles north of here. Lincoln got on his horse and went to witness the fight. On another ride, he passed an ambulance train, a terrible reminder of the war's human cost. And in July of 1864 the able Confederate General Jubal Early got so close to this cottage that Lincoln had to return in haste to the relative safety of the White House.

The war was never far away from him. In that, I think we see the real significance of the Soldiers' Home. For Lincoln came to this cottage not to hide from war but to confront its deepest meanings, to plumb its most difficult truths, to find the solace necessary to muster the strength and resolve to go on. It was here, as many of you know, that President Lincoln completed a draft of the Emancipation Proclamation, which abolished slavery in the seceding States. When he signed it, Lincoln said, "My whole soul is in it." You can still feel that spirit strongly in the room in this cottage where he worked.

America knows Monticello, Mount Vernon, Hyde Park. We come to understand our heroes not only through their words and deeds but by their homes, the quiet places they created for themselves and their families. But not enough Americans know about Anderson Cottage and the truly historic role it has played in our Nation's history. We should, and now we shall. There is fragile, vital history in this house. Today we come to reclaim it, to preserve it, and to make it live again, not simply to honor those who came before and not only for ourselves but for generations yet to come who need to know how those who lived here lived and

made the decisions they made at a profoundly fateful time for our Nation.

Our compact with the past must always be part of our commitment to the future. So today I am proud to designate President Lincoln's summer home, the Soldiers' Home, as a national monument.

I am using the power vested in me under the Antiquities Act, because conservation applies not only to places of great natural splendor but to places of great national import. This cottage, in its way, is just as precious as a giant sequoia, as irreplaceable as the ruins of cultures long past, and it is our profound obligation to preserve and protect it for future generations.

I am also announcing, as part of our partnership with the private sector to save America's treasures, awards of \$1.1 million to Anderson College. Now, we need a lot more, but this is a good start, one of 47 grants we're awarding today, \$15 million overall, to fund preservation efforts across America.

As I said, Hillary inspired this whole millennial Save America's Treasures project. We both look forward to the important work ahead, to continuing it for the next 6 months and in the years ahead when we return to private life. This new round of awards will reach from Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas; from Ellis Island in New Jersey to the U.S.S. *Missouri* anchored off Hawaii.

The *Missouri*, as some of you may recall, is where the Japanese formally surrendered, bringing an end to the Second World War. We have a gentleman here today who served on that battleship and witnessed that ceremony. Tony Antos, if you're here, I wish you'd stand up so we could give you a hand. Where are you? [Applause] Thank you, sir.

The Save America's Treasures movement has already saved the Star-Spangled Banner, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution and now Anderson Cottage. The new steps I announced today, along with the new funds, will help to ensure that the Soldiers' Home is restored to the way it looked when the Lincolns lived here. Then, at long last, schoolchildren and scholars alike can tap this precious national resource, and we will all better understand the life, times, and legacy of Abraham Lincoln.

Earlier I said Mr. Lincoln sat beneath the copper beech tree and read books of poetry,

the works of Burns, Holmes, Whittier. His favorite poem was called, "Mortality," by William Knox. He knew every line, every word, by heart. He said it so often, people started to believe he had written it. In a few moments, when I sign the proclamation establishing this as a national monument, you might think of this stanza as a brief meditation, which meant so much to President Lincoln, and you might think of it any time we act to preserve our history and our heritage for our future:

For we are the same our fathers have been;
We see the same sights our fathers have seen;
We drink the same stream, we view the same
Sun,

And run the same course our fathers have
run.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon at Anderson Cottage at the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Gen. Donald Hilbert, USA (Ret.), Director, and M. Sgt. Bill Woods, USA (Ret.), resident, U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. The proclamation of July 7 establishing the President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home National Monument is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the National Economy *July 7, 2000*

Today we have more evidence that our economic strategy is working. The American economy has created more than 22 million jobs since the beginning of 1993. More than 20 million of these jobs are in the private sector, giving us the highest share of private-sector job creation since President Truman was in office. The benefits of job creation have been enjoyed across the American economy, with the unemployment rates for African-Americans and Hispanics falling to record lows this year.

This good news is another reminder that America should not reverse course with irresponsible tax cuts that risk our fiscal discipline and jeopardize our continued economic strength. Let's ensure that the American people can continue to break records by maintaining fiscal discipline, paying off the debt by 2012, keeping Social Security and Medicare strong for the next generation, and investing in education and other priorities.

The President's Internet Address *July 8, 2000*

Good morning. Earlier this week, we launched a new and improved White House website at www.whitehouse.gov. Today I want to talk a little about the website and about our other efforts to use technology to bring Government closer to the people.

I'm proud to have been the President who brought the White House into the digital age. When I became President, there were just 50 websites on the World Wide Web. Now there are 17 million, and almost 50 million households on-line in the United States alone.

It was just 6 years ago that we launched the very first White House website. Our website now has more than 9,000 pages of information, and that's not counting the archives. We've redesigned and updated it to keep pace with its growth and the rapid changes in technology. The new and improved White House website is another important step in our efforts to make Government high-speed, high-tech, and user-friendly. We're bringing information that matters into people's homes: policy papers, the citizens' handbook, links to Federal agencies.

We've also made it easier to find the features that visitors use most, like E-mailing the White House, taking an on-line tour, or finding special activities for kids. And we've made the website a permanent part of the Executive Office of the President, so that future Presidents will be able to change it to suit their needs as easily as they can change the furniture here in the Oval Office.

Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, we've used information technology to bring Government closer to citizens in many ways. People are now using U.S. Government websites to file their taxes, compare their Medicare options, and find good jobs. They're tapping into the latest health research, browsing the vast collections of the Library of Congress, and following along with NASA's missions in outer space. And we're in the process of creating a single, customer-focused website, www.firstgov.gov, where Americans can find every on-line resource offered by the Federal Government.

But we must do more to ensure that the benefits of the information revolution flow to every American. That means working to close the digital divide, to put computers in every classroom, to train our teachers to make the most of them. We must also pay attention to the issues of computer security and the privacy of our records on computers so that the newest technology doesn't undermine our oldest values.

The President's Radio Address

July 8, 2000

Good morning. With fewer than 40 days left on the congressional calendar, I'd like to speak with you about how we can seize this moment to modernize Medicare and help all seniors afford the prescription drugs that can lengthen and enrich their lives.

It was just 35 years ago this month that President Johnson signed the Medicare Act into law. He spoke of Medicare joining Social Security as a cornerstone of our society upon which the hopes and dreams of generations of seniors could securely rest. He directed our Nation, in his words, "never to ignore those who suffer

Eighty-one years ago this week Woodrow Wilson became the very first President to communicate by radio. On his way home from Europe, President Wilson used the radio, after several unsuccessful efforts, to call the then-young Franklin Roosevelt, who was his Assistant Secretary of the Navy back in Washington. It wasn't immediately clear how this new technology would be used or that in just 15 years Roosevelt, as President, would be making radio broadcasts that 80 percent of our Nation would hear. But it was clear that a new door to the future had opened.

We're at just such a moment again today, and the new White House website is just one small step toward bringing Government more fully into the information age. We have barely begun to understand how information technology will change our lives. But those of us in Government have a responsibility to use these new tools to expand the reach of democracy and give more people a chance to live their dreams.

I'll see you on-line at whitehouse.gov, and thanks for logging on.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 11 a.m. on July 7 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10 a.m. on July 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 7 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

untended, in a land that is bursting with abundance."

Over these past 35 years, Medicare has proven to be a remarkable success. Before Medicare, nearly half of America's seniors didn't have any health coverage at all. Serious illness often wiped away in an instant all the savings families had put away over a lifetime of hard work. Today, nearly every senior has the security of basic health coverage. And since that time, elderly poverty has fallen dramatically, and Americans over 65 have the highest life expectancy anywhere in the world.

Yet, for all its successes, Medicare has not fully kept pace with the miracles of modern medicine. The original Medicare law was written at a time when patients' lives were more often saved by scalpels than pharmaceuticals, when many of the lifesaving drugs we now routinely use did not even exist.

No one creating Medicare today would even consider excluding coverage for prescription drugs. That's why we've proposed a comprehensive plan to provide voluntary prescription drug benefits that are affordable for all seniors, a plan that ensures that all Medicare beneficiaries, no matter where they live or how sick they are, will pay the same affordable premiums, a plan that covers catastrophic drug costs, a plan that is part of an overall effort to strengthen and modernize Medicare so we won't have to ask our children to shoulder our burden when we retire.

Across the Nation, we've seen a great outpouring of support for adding such a prescription drug benefit. And yet I'm increasingly concerned that efforts in Congress are bogging down. One reason for this is clear: The pharmaceutical industry has unleashed a shameless, scorched-earth campaign to thwart the will of the American people.

An industry-funded group calling itself Citizens for Better Medicare—can you believe that?—has flooded the airwaves with negative ads against our plan. Just this week we learned that the drug companies have enlisted nearly 300 hard-gun lobbyists, more than one for every two Members of Congress, and paid them to do everything in their power to block all meaningful reforms. All told, the drug industry has spent a staggering \$236 million on its lobbying efforts. These millions would be a lot better spent on research for new medicines.

The pharmaceutical industry is pushing Congress to adopt a private insurance program rath-

er than a Medicare prescription drug benefit. Insurers, themselves, however, say this won't work, and they won't participate. Just today we learned that the State of Nevada is using a private insurance model that's very similar to the plan passed by the Republican majority in the House of Representatives last week. Not surprisingly, it has not found one single qualified insurer willing to participate.

You have to give it to the insurance companies; they have been honest here. They have said that the Republican plan won't work. It's a plan designed for those who make the drugs, not for the seniors who need to take them.

So today I call on Congress to reject that approach and the reckless campaign of narrow special interests, and act together in the public interest. We need a prescription drug benefit that works for seniors and people with disabilities, not just for the pharmaceutical industry.

A few weeks ago I put forth a good-faith proposal to do just that. I said that if Congress will agree to pass a plan that offers affordable Medicare prescription drug coverage to all seniors and people with disabilities, while protecting our hard-won fiscal discipline, then I will sign a marriage penalty relief law of equal size.

At this time of year it's natural that we begin to think ahead to election day, but let's keep in mind, as well, the spirit of common purpose we just celebrated on Independence Day. That's the spirit I hope Members of Congress will bring back to our Nation's Capital when they return to work Monday. At a time when America is once again bursting with abundance, there shouldn't be a limit on what we can achieve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks on the Home Heating Oil Reserve and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs Transition and an Exchange With Reporters

July 10, 2000

Home Heating Oil Reserve

The President. Good afternoon. I want to say a few words in a moment about Togo West

and Hershel Gober and the direction of the Department of Veterans Affairs and its mission.

But first, I'd like to make one brief announcement.

Since March, I have asked Congress to establish a home heating oil reserve in the Northeast to reduce the chance that future shortages will hurt consumers, as they did last winter. Congress recently, again, has failed to act, and time is running out. Winter may seem far off on this hot day, but if we don't do something now, reserve stocks of heating oil may not be in place before the cold weather comes. That's why today I am taking action to establish a home heating oil reserve to help families avoid higher energy costs this winter.

First, I'm directing Secretary Richardson to exchange crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve for 2 million barrels of home heating oil to store in the Northeast. Second, we're taking steps to establish this reserve on a permanent basis. The action I take today will leave us far better prepared to face the winter months. But it does not relieve Congress of the responsibility to act.

So I renew my call to Congress: Please, provide the authority so we can tap into this new home heating oil reserve when we need it; take up my energy budget initiatives and the tax incentives; pass comprehensive electricity restructuring; reauthorize the strategic petroleum reserve. These are things Congress can do right now to build a better, safer, more secure, and more affordable energy future. I ask them again to do their part to increase our energy supply, protect the environment, increase energy conservation, and keep our economy strong.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Transition

This morning I accepted the decision of Togo West to step down as Secretary of Veterans Affairs by month's end, after more than 2 years of effective leadership on behalf of our 25 million veterans and their families.

Every day, in every way, Togo West has given his all to make sure America does right by our men and women who have served us in uniform. As Secretary of the Army at the beginning of our administration, Togo West was known as a "soldier's Secretary." His leadership helped make the Army part of the best trained, best equipped, most potent fighting force in the world. He took special care to make sure that America took good care of our Army families. And he brought that same sense of purpose to the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Under his leadership, the VA has begun to confront some long-neglected problems head on, reaching out to more than 400,000 veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange, pressing for answers to the Gulf war syndrome and proper care for those who suffer from it, beginning the process of building five new national cemeteries, the most since the Civil War, and making a special effort to bring homeless veterans back into the society they did so much to defend.

His leadership and devotion to our veterans helped improve lives and make this country a better place. And on behalf of all Americans, Togo, I want to thank you for more than a quarter century of service and selfless devotion to our Nation.

To carry forward the vital work of the Department of Veterans Affairs, I turn to one who knows the work and the mission of the VA as well or better than anyone ever has, Deputy Secretary Hershel Gober. You all know we've been friends for many years. He did a superb job as the State director of veterans affairs in Arkansas when I served as Governor. He did a superb job as Acting Director between the tenures of Secretaries Jesse Brown and Togo West. There are few people in our country who have ever been as prepared for a job as Hershel Gober is for this one.

He has an ear for the needs of our veterans because he has the heart of a soldier. A veteran of both the Army and the Marine Corps, Hershel Gober served two terms in Vietnam, earning the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, and the Soldier's Medal. A few years ago, I was honored that he agreed to head a delegation back to Vietnam to seek the fullest possible accounting of our men and women still missing in uniform.

Hershel has already made his mark on the critical issue of veterans' health care. Early in our administration, he came to me and recommended that we look for ways to bring health care closer to the veterans who needed it. Since then, we've opened more than 200 outpatient clinics all across America and have more planned this year. That's one of the big reasons we were able to treat—listen to this—400,000 more veterans last year than we did the year before.

Hershel Gober has been a strong partner for both Secretary Brown and Secretary West. He will serve in a great tradition, and I thank him for agreeing to do so. Now I'd like to ask them

both to say a few words, beginning with Secretary West.

[At this point, Secretary of Veterans Affairs Togo D. West, Jr., and Secretary of Veterans Affairs-designate Hershel W. Gober made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you.

Middle East Peace Summit

Q. Mr. President, the Israeli Government is falling apart. How is Barak going to be able to negotiate a peace?

The President. Well, first, I think it's important to note that, as the news reports this morning in Israel reflect, a solid majority of the people want him to come and want him to pursue peace.

Look, if this were easy, it would have been done a long time ago. This is difficult. It is perhaps the most difficult of all the peace problems in the world, certainly dealing with the most difficult issues of the whole Middle East peace process, on which I have worked for nearly 8 years now. But both Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have the vision, the knowledge, the experience, and the ability and the sheer guts to do what it takes, I think, to reach an agreement, and then to take it back to their people and see if they can sell it.

And keep in mind, Prime Minister Barak has said that the people of Israel will have their say on this. So this is really, I think, a matter of trying to come to grips with the issues on the merits, asking whether the price of peace is greater than the price of continued conflict and all the associated difficulties and heartbreaks and uncertainties and insecurity that that carries.

And I'm going to do my best to help them. I admire both of them for coming. It's not easy

for either to come. But they have come because they think that the price of not doing it is greater than the risk of going forward. And I hope we'll have the thoughts and prayers and best wishes of all Americans. It's going to be a difficult process. But the fact that they're coming means that we still have a chance.

Q. Mr. President, given the fact that these are the most difficult issues, do you think you can do this in just 8 days? And would you consider delaying your trip or abandoning your trip to Japan?

The President. Well, first of all, let me say, just because they're difficult doesn't mean they're not understood. I mean, I would say the answer to that would clearly be, no, if this were happening in 1993 or '94. But an enormous amount of time and thought has gone into this. I think both sides have a pretty clear idea of what the various options are.

And I don't want to set an artificial deadline for these talks. But I think that they need to listen to each other, and I need to listen to them, and we need to get right after it, because it's not as if we don't know what's out there to be done. And this has been simmering on the stove for some years now, and I think we understand generally what the options are, and we'll go there and go to work, do our very best.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:26 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to departure for State College, PA. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary West and Secretary-designate Gober.

Remarks to the National Governors' Association Meeting in State College,
Pennsylvania
July 10, 2000

Thank you very much, Governor Leavitt, Governor Glendening. And Governor Ridge, thank you for welcoming me back to Pennsylvania and to Penn State. The Governor was kind enough to come to the airport, and we were reminiscing

about the opportunity I once had to come to Penn State to give the commencement address, and we talked about the Creamery. And then I learned all the Governors had been given access to the ice cream at Penn State. That was

the one thing I was going to give you today. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, the most important thing I wanted to do today is just come here and say thank you for the opportunities that we've had to work together over the last 8 years. Some of you—just a few now—were Governors when I served. Governor Thompson outlasted me. Governor Janklow made a comeback. Governor Hunt made a comeback. But it's been a wonderful experience for me. I look forward to your coming to the White House every year. And even though we're going to start the very important Middle East peace talks tomorrow, I didn't want to miss this opportunity to come to say thanks.

I really treasure the times that I spent—I remember the first time you came to the White House in '93. I'd only been President a couple of weeks, and they were very busy times. And my staff was all obsessed with getting our budget to Congress and all that, and they didn't really understand why I wanted to spend 4 or 5 hours with the Governors. And I told Governor Kempthorne when he left the Senate that he was going to be one happy camper after the next election, and I was right, wasn't I? [Laughter] So I thank you.

If you go back and look at the transcripts and the agenda of the 1993 NGA meeting and you compare what you discussed then to what we're talking about today, it is obvious that our country has come a long way in the last 7½ years. Back then, we were all focused, as we had been in a couple of previous years when I was a Governor, on big and immediate crises, the enormous deficits, the high unemployment, the soaring crime, the rising welfare rolls, the cost of health care, and the growing number of uninsured Americans.

At the time you came to the White House in '93, I pledged to make a new partnership between the State and the Federal Governments, to put the American people first, and to turn our country around. And we have done a lot of things together that you should be very proud of: welfare rolls the lowest in over 30 years, cut in half; the crime rate at a 30-year low; the Children's Health Insurance Program, the largest expansion of health insurance for children since the enactment of Medicaid. We've slowed the crippling costs of Medicare and Medicaid and extended the life of Medicare by a quarter century. We've expanded trade with

over 300 trade agreements. And the Governors have, without exception, always been there in a bipartisan way, and for that I am profoundly grateful.

And let me thank you, especially, for the work that many of you did on permanent normal trading relations with China. Most of our constituents who call us about that—in favor, anyway—do so because they understand the economics of it. But I have to tell you, after the last 7½ years, I have a different perspective. We fought three wars in Asia in the last 50 years, and I believe if we adopt this trade agreement, it will dramatically reduce the chances that our children will have to fight any wars in Asia in the 21st century. So anything you can do to help me get it up in the Senate in the next few days, I'd be very grateful for, as well.

We've worked together on the empowerment zones and other community development efforts. And I'd like to thank the Delta Governors here, which start with Governor Ryan in Illinois and go south, for the help that you have given me for our Delta initiative.

The size of Government is the smallest it's been in 40 years. We've eliminated over 16,000 pages of regulations. The Department of Education, as Secretary, Governor Riley never tires of telling me, alone has reduced regulations by over 60 percent. And as all of you know, we have worked to aggressively grant waivers to States to continue to be laboratories of democracy. And I'll say more about that in a few moments.

But finally—and I owe the Governors a lot of thanks for your support on this—across all of our partisan differences, you have never stopped supporting, as a body, bringing back commonsense notions of fiscal discipline to Washington. By cutting the deficit, expanding trade, and investing in our people, we've got the longest economic expansion in history.

People ask me all the time—I brought the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Alan Greenspan, who is here today—there was an interesting article in one of the major newspapers referring to us as the "Odd Couple," which I took, Mr. Chairman, as a compliment. [Laughter] I think it was, "What's this sophisticated financial genius doing working this deal with this," as someone used to refer to me, the "Governor of a small southern State?" I was so naive at the time, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do.

But anyway, we've work together. And people ask me all the time, "Well, tell me about Bob Rubin or Lloyd Bentsen or Gene Sperling or your economic advisers, what new, stunning insight did you bring to Washington?" And I always have a one-word answer, "arithmetic." I think we brought arithmetic back. And I hope that, again across party lines in the years ahead, you will keep arithmetic as an element in our national policymaking.

We have an enviable but unfamiliar task now. We've got to decide as a people, what should we do with the largest surplus in history and a very large projected surplus? And if I could just make one point here today that to me is more important than anything else I'll say down the road in these remarks, I believe dealing with good fortune is just as stern a test of a country's judgment, values, and character as dealing with adversity.

I say this over and over again, but I'll repeat it one more time. There's not a person in this room over 30 years of age that cannot remember at least one time in your life when you made a personal or a business mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well you felt there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. It is just human nature. So this is a big, big moment for our country.

You know what I think we ought to do. I think we ought to do what I said in the State of the Union. I think we ought to take on the big challenges and big opportunities in a responsible way; to keep the economy going and spread its benefits; to deal with the aging of America; to deal with the fact that child poverty is twice what it is among the elderly people; all of our kids still aren't in the best schools; prove that we can beat these big environmental challenges and grow the economy; to make America the safest big country in the world; to help people balance work and family better; to meet our national security and foreign policy challenges; to put a more human face on the global economy; to keep bringing people into the circle of our national community as we grow more diverse.

But this election season is very important for making that decision. I, frankly, think that Americans should be very upbeat about this, because it gives us a chance to have a very positive political season. And I think maybe over the last 7 years we've finally purged some of

the poison out of national politics. And I would really like to just see a debate where people get up and say, "Okay, it's a big election. We have honest differences over everything from education and the environment and crime and Internet privacy rights and how to build a national community and the future of the courts—everything—and let's just talk about it and let the voters decide."

And let's just assume everybody running is honorable, and just say what the differences are and let the people decide. That's what I hope will happen in this election, because in our lifetime we may never get another chance like this. We have never had a chance like this in my lifetime, not ever, not once. The last time we had an economy this prosperous was in the 1960's. That was the last longest economic expansion in history. And when I graduated from high school in 1964, I had the feeling that I think a lot of Americans think today. I thought everything was on automatic; nobody could mess it up. I thought all the civil rights problems of the country would be solved in the courts and the Congress. I thought everything would be hunky-dory.

Two years later we had riots in the streets. Four years later we had Dr. King and Senator Kennedy killed, and we had a President who couldn't seek reelection because the country was so divided. And a few months later, the last longest economic expansion in American history was history.

So if I could just say anything, I hope when you go home you'll ask the American people in your own States to be really good citizens this year and concentrate. And just think and decide, because we may never have this chance again in our lifetime. And it is profoundly important.

I also believe that it's important what we do in the next 6 months. And I know all the press coverage is always on the fights that we have, but let me tell you, we actually agree on things every now and then in Washington. And there are a lot of things we could do in the next 6 months that I think are pretty important. Let me just review.

Already this year the Congress lifted the earnings limit on Social Security. I think that's really important. If you live to be 65 today, you've got a life expectancy of 82. And if things keep going the way they are and there's only two people working for every one person drawing

Social Security, we ought to want some older people in the work force. I hope to be one of them. *[Laughter]* And it passed almost unanimously.

I signed a bill the other day, the electronic signatures bill, necessitated by Article I of the United States Constitution, to make sure that there could be a contract using E-commerce. I see where some people think there's some problems with it. If there are, we'll fix them up. But we don't want to slow down E-commerce; we want to speed it up.

We had the China bill passing in the House, and in the House and the Senate, a remarkable bill to expand our relations, trade relations with Africa and our neighbors in the Caribbean. So there's a chance we can get a lot done.

And one of the things that I would like to just say today—and again, because of the season we're in, I guess my opinion can't avoid having some sort of partisan edge—but I'd just like to tell you where things are and where I hope we can go with them in the next few months.

I think our single most important obligation now, since most Americans make good things happen in their own lives apart from government, is to try to keep this economic expansion going and to try to spread its benefits to people in places that have been left behind.

Now, let me deal with the latter first. The spreading of its benefits, for me, means passing the new markets initiative that I presented to the Congress, which the Speaker of the House—we've worked together on it, and we now have a uniform, unified bill where we took the best ideas of the Republicans, the best ideas of the Democrats, and we're going to essentially try to give people the same incentives to invest in poor areas in the Mississippi Delta or the Indian reservations or the inner cities that we now give them to invest in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, along with a little extra help. And we've worked very hard on this. It was an astonishing announcement at the White House the other day, with the broadest ideological spectrum of people I've ever seen in the Roosevelt Room at the same time. And I hope you'll help us pass that.

In a larger sense, I think we've got to keep the economy going by hewing to the same principles of fiscal discipline that got us where we are. That means, I think, whatever combination of spending and tax cuts any candidate for any office proposes, there ought to be enough left

over to get us out of debt over the next dozen years, to pay down the public debt.

Why? Because it will keep interest rates lower. And let me just give you one little tax cut factoid. If keeping interest rates a percent lower than they otherwise would be for a decade reduces mortgage payments alone in the United States by \$250 billion, keeping interest rates lower than they otherwise would be for a decade by just one percent amounts to a \$250 billion tax cut on mortgage payments alone. That doesn't count car loans, college loans, business loans, which are obviously very important because you want the cost of capital for borrowing for business expansion to be as low as possible for obvious economic reasons. So I think that's very important.

That's one of the reasons I supported the Vice President when he said we ought to lock away the Medicare taxes the way we lock away the Social Security taxes. A lot of the surplus has, in effect, been overstated, and a lot of our deficits in past years were understated because the taxes from Social Security and Medicare were producing more money than we were spending every year, as all of you know, and we used to talk about around here all the time.

So now we said, "Okay, we're not going to spend the Social Security tax money. We're going to use it when it comes in to pay the debt down." And that's what I think we ought to do with Medicare. Now, in addition to that, because I think we have a big aging crisis, I believe that we ought to take the interest savings from debt reduction by doing that—something we didn't do before—and put it into Social Security and Medicare, and if you did that, you could take them on out beyond the life of the baby boom generation.

And by the way—let's get to the numbers—that's about 20 percent of the projected surplus. It's about \$400 billion of the \$1.9 trillion projected on-budget surplus. So it's a great hedge in case the money doesn't show up. Now, once we agree to do that, I think we've got a great opportunity to decide as a nation how to spend the rest of it, whether it should be on tax cuts or investment, or what the mix should be.

The budget I presented for this year has significant new investments in education, health care, research and development, and defense and foreign policy and the environment, especially meeting the challenge of climate change. But it also provides targeted tax relief for long-

term care, child care, college tuition, retirement savings, and easing the marriage penalty. But the main thing is, it leaves \$500 billion in a fund for America's future that would be completely unencumbered for the next President and the next Congress. Because I think it would not be responsible for me to propose how to spend all that money—if anybody cares what my opinion is, it'll be worth that and a quarter will get you half a soda pop after next year, but I will be glad to give it. But I don't think it would be responsible to propose it. So I've decided to just leave it there.

But I'm very concerned about the way we're moving in Congress. And I just want to point out, the congressional majority, with some support from Members of my party, as well, has taken a sort of an incremental approach to this, starting with tax cuts. Now, none of the tax cuts proposed individually would bust the budget. But if you add them all up and you combine that with the proposals that are out there for next year, that are, in effect, going to be commitments, since they're part of the election contract, it would exhaust every dime of the projected surplus and then some. And I believe that would lead to a rise in interest rates and a slowdown in the economy and, ultimately, to fewer revenues over the long run and less investment for things like adding a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. I'll give you an example.

This week the Senate is going to vote on repealing the estate tax, and there is some speculation that it might pass by a veto-proof majority. Now, one reason is the full benefit of the estate tax relief we provided in 1997 has not been—it was phased in over a period of years, so that hadn't been felt by the taxpayers. We provided some estate tax relief in 1997—I really didn't think it was enough; I think there should be more, but I don't believe we should completely repeal it. It cost \$100 billion in the first 10 years, in today's terms, and \$750 billion in the second 10 years; 100 percent of the benefits go to 2 percent of the American families; and only a small fraction of those are those that really need the help—the farmers, the family farmers, and the small business people. You could take them out altogether for much less money and do what we say we want to do.

And I think it's important to point out—one man I know who is a billionaire called me the other day and said, "Why are you doing this

for me?" I said, "I'm not. One-tenth of one percent of the American people would get half of the benefits of the bill." Now, if you're philosophically opposed to the estate tax, then it's just a matter of principle. But if it's a matter of economics and you're sympathetic with small businesses and family farmers, there is a way to get this done for much less money and, by the way, give more relief to others. I mean, you could argue that the rates are too high, because they're higher than the maximum income tax rates now, something that didn't used to be the case. There are lots of options here, but repealing it costs a lot of money.

So what I asked the Congress to do—and they also want to pass a marriage penalty relief bill. But I think for us to repeal the estate tax before we raise the minimum wage or give a tax relief to low-income working families with lots of kids or give a tax deduction for college tuition or increase the child care credit or adopt a long-term care tax credit is a huge mistake. First of all, I think it reflects a wrong set of priorities, but it puts us on a—then people will say, "Well, we did that. Now we've got to do all this," and pretty soon, before you know it, you've spent more money than you meant to, and we're back in the soup again.

So what we need to do is get everybody together and figure out who wants what and what we can afford to do and do it in a way that allows us to keep the fiscal discipline, to stay with arithmetic.

Now, I asked Congress to compromise with me. I basically said, "Let's do a Medicare prescription drug benefit for \$250 billion and a tax reduction package focused on the marriage penalty relief," which is very important to the Republican majority, "for the same amount of money. Let's set aside the Medicare Trust Fund money, and let's just save the rest and adopt a good budget this year."

Now, this week Congress is also going to vote on the marriage penalty. I hope that they will consider this, because we really have a lot to gain here by doing this in a balanced way. The surpluses are there because of fiscal discipline. And let me just say, one big thing that I want to thank you for, because a lot of you had to bear the burden of it, was the reduction in the growth of Medicare and Medicaid. Since we made some changes in that—and it was growing at 3 times the rate of inflation when I took office—we've reduced projected Federal

health expenditures by over half a trillion dollars and extended Medicare solvency through 2025.

This is something very few people know. About 30 percent of the improved budget outlook included in the midsession review—that is, about 30 percent of this extra trillion dollars in surplus that is projected—comes from lower spending in Medicare and Medicaid, thanks to your efforts and ours to reform the programs and reduce fraud and waste.

So I think spending these dollars more efficiently is good for the economy. But I also want to say, investing more can be good, too, if it's done wisely. I recommended that we put \$40 billion back into these programs, because we actually cut them more than we meant to. Back when we did the Balanced Budget Act in '97, we agreed that this is what we wanted to save, and we got a list of programs from the Congressional Budget Office necessary to save it, and it actually—they saved a lot more money than we thought. And it wound up putting undue burdens on the providers. So I think we've got to give a little of this money back over the next 10 years, and I hope that you will support that.

But we also know that there's some other needs there. Children without health insurance often don't get glasses or treatments for ear infections. That limits their ability to learn. We know that adults without health insurance are 50 to 70 percent more likely to be hospitalized for treatable conditions, running the cost of health care up. We know that seniors who can't afford prescription drugs are more likely to end up in nursing homes, running their quality of life down and their health care costs up. And when that happens, it means the States pay Medicaid nursing home bills, because Medicare doesn't pay the prescription drug bill in the first place. Now, that's why I proposed that we have expansions of the health care program. And that's why I set aside over \$250 billion over 10 years for this voluntary prescription drug benefit.

If we were starting the Medicare program today, we'd never set it up, none of you would, without a drug benefit. Thirty-five years ago, when we started Medicare, medicine was about doctors and hospitals. Doctors were making house calls still, and hospitals weren't very expensive, and the whole thing was different than it is today. And the pharmaceutical revolutions that we've seen in our lifetime didn't exist.

And let me say—let me just tie this again to the aging of America. This Medicare prescription drug issue is a big issue today. It will be twice the issue in 10 years. The sequencing of the human genome is the beginning of a biomedical revolution the extent of which we cannot imagine. I believe that those of you who have children who are like my child, in college and about to go out and start their lives, I think it is almost certain that their children, the children of people in college today, will be born with a life expectancy of 90 years. And keep in mind, that will include those who die of violence, accident, and things of that kind.

And we're going to have to just think about getting older in a whole different way. And we'll never be able to have the kind of society we want unless we can have shared and equal benefits and access to the biomedical revolution manifested in the development of these new drugs.

Now, what I recommended was a voluntary program; the prices would be set by competition, not by Government price controls. But I think it is the only thing that will work if, like me, you believe everybody who needs it ought to have access to it.

The Congress passed a bill that would set up a private insurance plan and basically covered the cost of people up to 150 percent of the poverty line, but that's only \$12,600 for an individual and \$16,500 for a couple. And it leaves out over half the people who need drugs today who can't afford them.

And in addition to that, the health insurance companies—and all of you know they haven't always been my biggest advocates; I mean, we've fought about everything—but the health insurance companies say the thing won't fly, that they cannot put together insurance policies that will work that will be affordable. And there was an article in one of the newspapers within the last 48 hours that said that one of our States has a program like the one that the House passed, and not a single insurance company has offered a policy under it, because they don't want to participate in something that's not real.

So I want to make these two points. I hope I can make an agreement, an honorable agreement, an honorable compromise—like the Balanced Budget Act of '97, like the Welfare Reform Act in '96—on tax relief and the Medicare drug program. But I think we ought to leave

a huge chunk of this money to the next President and the next Congress. And I think we ought to commit ourselves to saving another big chunk of it, no matter what. For us to commit all the projected income of the country over the next 10 years is a mistake.

If I asked you, every one of you in this room, what's your projected income over the next 10 years, and how comfortable are you that you're going to have that money, and you just think about it right now and settle on something you've got 80 percent confidence in, and I asked you to come up here right now and sign a contract committing every penny of your projected income for the next 10 years, would you do it?

Now, this ought not to be a partisan issue. We shouldn't do this. And everybody who—people in my party, everybody that proposes a spending program, everybody that proposes a tax cut program, whatever they're proposing, it all ought to add up, and there ought to be a good chunk of safety net left in there, because that money may or may not be there.

And the number one thing we've got to do is keep this engine going, because most Americans do most of what they do without direct contact with the Government, and we want them to be able to succeed.

So I've got a lot of hope that we can still get something good done in this last session of Congress. I have a lot of hope that we can pass the drug program. I think we ought to increase the health care coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program to cover the parents of the CHIP kid. I think that we ought to make sure, however, that we don't see a revival of the idea of shifting the cost of uncompensated care to the States, and I think that's what a prescription drug block grant would do.

So you all have to weigh in on this. You can do what you think, but you just think about what we could do for health care if we had a Medicare prescription drug program, if the parents of CHIP kids could buy into CHIP. And if people between the ages of 55 and 65, with a modest tax credit, could buy into Medicare, we could cover the 25 percent of the uninsured people in America, the ones who need it most, and we could increase the length and quality of life of our seniors. So I hope we can do that.

Now, let me just say a few words about a couple of specific issues of concern to you. I want to thank you for the work you've done with the CHIP program. We've now got over 2 million kids enrolled. I'm especially proud of the States that have found innovative ways to overcome the problems of signing kids up. And I always hate to mention some, for failure of not mentioning others, but I would like to acknowledge, for example, that Ohio has changed its system to make it easier for CHIP parents to mail in forms that are simpler. Indiana has actually gone out to schools and child care centers and had a remarkable amount of success in signing people up. Virtually every State has done something innovative.

But the money is there to sign the rest of the kids up. There's another 2 million or 3 million kids we could get signed up. Some people in Congress think that, because it's been out there and not spent, it should be taken away. This is another version of what happened when there was a proposal to take back billions of TANF dollars from welfare reform. Now, the money is the direct result of the success we've had in the TANF case of moving people from welfare to work. I think it ought to be left with the States.

I think States should use it to finish the job of welfare reform, making sure families don't lose Medicaid when they leave welfare for work, making sure the dollars help families still on the rolls move into the work force. But welfare reform's success, it seems to me, shouldn't be turned against the States. It should be used to make sure that people that are still falling through the cracks have a chance to make it, as well.

And I want to thank those of you that are responding to this. I mention, in particular, Washington State did something that I read about that impressed me. They found that they had cut a lot of families off Medicaid erroneously when they returned to work, and they actually chased them all down to sign them up again, individually. And that's the sort of thing that I think the Congress should be reminded of, people in either party who think that this money should be taken back.

So I hope we can do more with CHIP and do more with welfare reform. And I know one of the things you've been waiting for us to do—and Secretary Shalala has already mentioned this, I think—is to send out the guidance on

applying for CHIP waivers. A lot of you have innovative ideas to use this Children's Health Insurance Program to cover more people. And that guidance will come out before the end of the month, and I just want to urge you to make the most of it.

The one area in terms of social indicators where our country cannot claim to be better off today than it was 8 years ago—and the only one, as far as I know—is that a higher percentage of our people are without health insurance. And the only way I can figure out to do anything about it is to make the CHIP program work better, ultimately cover the parents of the CHIP kids, and do something about the people who are not old enough for Medicare but have lost their health insurance at work.

We need more waivers, but we also will have to provide more resources. The Governors have advocated building on CHIP, a lot of you have. And I have strongly supported it. My 2001 budget sets aside \$110 billion over the next 10 years for health insurance for those parents and their kids and others. And as I said, if we do this, we can cover another quarter of the uninsured people in America.

Now, this doesn't have anything to do with the surplus. This is in the regular budget. This is what I proposed in the beginning, so I'm not double-counting any of this money I just told you. And again, it's something that I hope we can do in a bipartisan way. I hope we can pass a good education budget for you, in a bipartisan way.

But I'd like to end where I began. I thank you for the last 8 years. I thank you for the role you played in turning this country around. I ask you to help ensure an election season which is positive, open, and vigorous about the real and honest differences, but devoid of the poison that has too often clouded the judgment of everybody involved in the public process. I think we can have that kind of an election. And it would be good for America.

I ask you to help me make the most of this next 6 months, make the progress we can make but do nothing—nothing—that would under-

mine the fiscal discipline that got us to this remarkable dance. And if we can do that, I think that we will be unbelievably well-positioned. I think the greatest days of this country are still ahead; I think all the stuff that's happened in the last 8 years is just a prelude. I think that what will happen in information technology, what will happen positively in globalization—I think we'll see a digital bridge instead of a digital divide—I think that all these things will happen if we don't forget our fundamental responsibilities.

And I'm looking forward to observing and to being a responsible citizen after the next 6 months. And meanwhile, I will do everything I can to get everything I can done in the time we have remaining.

The only other thing I would say to all of you is, we have some Congressmen in both parties that are afraid if we don't have everything left to fight about, we won't have anything left to fight about, and that's not true. Now, we could pass everything I proposed today and still have plenty left to fight about in the election.

So I ask everybody to take a deep breath, be grateful for the prosperity we have, understand the enormous responsibility it puts on us, and let's do what we can to make the most of it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:20 p.m. in President's Hall at the Penn Stater Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah, chairman, and Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland, vice chairman, National Governors' Association; Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania; Gov. Tommy G. Thompson of Wisconsin; Gov. William J. Janklow of South Dakota; Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina; Gov. Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho; Gov. George H. Ryan of Illinois; former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen. The President also referred to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act, Public Law 106-299.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Representative Ron Klink
in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 10, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you for the wonderful welcome. I want to thank you, Mayor Rendell, for agreeing to take this little part-time job I offered you as head of the party—[laughter]—and for doing it so well. And thank you, Mayor Street, for proving beyond doubt that I was right when I came up here and campaigned for you. I told them you were going to be a great mayor, and you have been. Thank you.

I thank Chaka Fattah for being here for Ron and for always being there for me and for the people of Philadelphia and for his truly exemplary leadership in the Congress. One of the things that Chaka Fattah will always be known for is getting us to adopt a program to put mentors into schools with poor kids, to tell them early that if they learned their lessons and took the right courses, they would be able to go to college, and we would be able to have the money for them. And we owe him a lot for that, and I thank him for that.

I want to thank Ron Klink for running. [Laughter] You know, I kind of identify—he started running, and everybody said, “Well, nobody can win the Senate race. They don’t have enough money. They’re going to have a primary”—blah, blah, blah. It reminded me when I ran for President in 1991, only my mother and my wife thought I had a chance to win. [Laughter] And on the bad days, they weren’t sure. [Laughter]

So I want to thank him for running, and I would like to thank his wife, Linda, for being here and for supporting him and for being great. Thank you.

These races are tough for everybody. I’ll tell you, now that I’m struggling to become a member of the Senate spouses club—[laughter]—I’m a lot more nervous about Hillary’s campaign than I ever was about mine. [Laughter] I mean, you’re running, you just sort of suit up and go out and play the game. But otherwise, you just sit home and claw the walls and hope it’s working out all right. [Laughter]

So I want to thank them for undertaking this. He has been a superb Congressman. We’ve worked together for almost 8 years now. Every

time the interest of working families, the long-term interests of the ordinary citizen of this country were at stake, he was always there with me, and I’m grateful. And he could have stayed in the House and never been touched. You know, they told him, “Well, you represent this sort of heartland, old-fashioned district. You won’t play in Philadelphia.”

Well, one of the reasons I came here tonight is there is nobody in the whole wide world Philadelphia has ever been better to than Bill Clinton, and I came to ask you to help Ron Klink play in Philadelphia, because we’ve got to have you to win this race.

I must tell you, this is somewhat awkward for me tonight to be here because, you know, tomorrow morning I’m going up to Camp David to start the Middle East peace talks. And we’re going to try to agree on a resolution of these big, thorny issues that the parties agreed, on the White House lawn in September of 1993, they would come to terms with a good while before now. And it isn’t easy.

I just got back from Penn State. I went over to Penn State to speak to the Governors’ conference—they’re meeting over there—and to go to the Creamery and get my ice cream cone. [Laughter] Anyway, I just got back from there. And all these people were saying, that I’ve known forever, saying, “Gosh, you look tired.” I said, “I am tired. I’ve been up studying. Give me a test on some piece of land anywhere in Jerusalem or Israel. I know the answer.” [Laughter] “Ask me to draw a map of the West Bank in my sleep. I can do it.”

But I say that to make this point. What really matters in our common life, when you strip it all away, are things like what Ron said—quoting Hubert Humphrey.

I’m glad these children are here tonight. What will this election mean for those who have most of their lives in front of them? Did you ever think of that? A lot of people who have the most influence in elections are those who have lived most of their lives, but the people that will be the most impacted by the decisions are those that have most of their lives in front of them.

What will this election mean for the people who couldn't afford to come to this fundraiser tonight but get up every day and work their hearts out, with dignity, and do their very best to raise their children and do everything else they're supposed to do, people like the folks that served all of you your drinks and helped you come in tonight? What about them? [*Applause*] What about them?

In a larger sense, I'm here not just because I like Ron Klink and I'm grateful for the support he's given to everything we've done for the last 8 years but because I think that this election is just as important as the two in which I was elected and reelected President and to which the Vice President was elected and reelected Vice President. I think it's just as important. And I'd just like to tell you three things. You only have to remember three things about this election, and a few odd details.

Number one, it really is a big election, for President, for Senator, for Congressman. Why? Because how a nation deals with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment, its values, and its character as how a nation deals with adversity.

I mean, when I ran for President in '92, the economy was in the dumps; the deficit was exploding; crime was going up; welfare was going up; social divisions and political paralysis were getting worse. You didn't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out we ought to change something.

But now everything is going in the right direction. We've got over 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in more than three decades, the lowest crime rate in three decades, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years—half the size they were when I took office—the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded, highest homeownerships ever. So what are we going to do with this?

Here's the point. Think about these kids. There's not a person in this room tonight, not one over 30, who cannot remember one time in your life when you made a mistake, not because things were going so poorly but because things were going so well you thought there was no penalty for your failure to concentrate. That is what this election is all about. This is a huge deal. We may never in our lifetime, ever, get the chance we have today to build

the future of our dreams for our children. That's the first point.

The second point I want you to know is, there are real and honest differences. And I hope and pray for my country's sake that we can have an old-fashioned election. I wish it could be like the old Lincoln-Douglas debates. I wish Governor Bush and Vice President Gore could get in a caravan and just go around the country and have debates—have 8 or 10 or 20 or 30. I wish that we could have it in the Senate races.

And this is an election where we don't have to have the kind of things coming out of the candidates, and unfortunately, out of other quarters in our society—we've had too much the last 20 years where people are afraid the only way they can win is to convince the voters that their opponent is just one notch above a car thief. We'd just talk about where the differences are and let the folks decide. And we don't have to assume there's something wrong with our opponents. We say, "They're good people. They really do believe this, and I really do believe that, and you decide." So there are real differences—important election; real differences.

Here's the third thing you need to know. Only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for? [*Laughter*]

Now, I see it all over the country, in campaign after campaign after campaign, where our guys just want to talk about, "Here's where I stand; here's where my opponent stands. Here's how he voted; here's how I would have voted. Here's what the position is on the issues current; here's what their position is on the issues." And the other guys, they complain about a negative campaign. And then they go out and say bad things about our side, personally, something wrong with our people, personally. But if you just tell the voters, if you give them information about how they voted, is that a negative campaign? Beats anything I ever saw.

But I'm just telling you that's why it's so important for you to be here. You are giving Ron Klink the ammunition he needs to get the evidence out there.

And look, we don't disagree on everything. I'm working with the Speaker of the House, and I hope we can pass it in the Senate, pass this new markets legislation that I think will have overwhelming bipartisan support to bring more economic opportunity to poor areas. We

voted virtually unanimously to lift the earnings limit on Social Security. So there are lots of things that we still can do, that we don't disagree.

But let me just tell you that the areas of disagreement that are real and honest are profoundly important. I'll just give you a couple of examples—and Ron alluded to them. Let's talk about people in the twilight of life, first. We believe, now that we've got this big surplus, that one thing we ought to do is to give a Medicare prescription drug benefit—voluntary—for all seniors who need it, make it affordable. That's what we believe.

And when we say that we're for it and they're not, they have now all been conditioned—there was a survey the other day that said they had hired a pollster to give them words and phrases to convince you that they're for something they're against. In fact, they actually owned up. They didn't even deny it. It was in the press the other day. And they act very wounded. They said, "Oh, how could they say that about me?" [Laughter] "I am for a Medicare prescription drug benefit," or, "I'm for a prescription drug benefit for seniors." That's what they say.

Well, they are. But their plan is a private insurance plan that even the health insurance companies say nobody will buy because it won't be affordable. A couple of days ago the press reported that Nevada had actually adopted a plan exactly like the one the Republicans are advocating, and now it's been several months, and there is not a single insurance company offering this drug insurance because they know they can't offer it to the people who need it at a price they can afford to pay.

Now, look, we've never had a surplus like this before. And if we were starting Medicare today instead of 35 years ago, we'd never think about having a program for seniors if it didn't cover drugs in it. The average person who lives to be 65 has got a life expectancy of 82 years. The prescription drugs keep people out of the hospital. They lengthen their lives; they make them richer. This is a big deal. You have people every single week choosing between food and medicine.

So I say to you, this is a profound difference. And I believe we're right. And they say, "It's not worth it. We're worried about the cost"—I'll come to this later. They say, "We're worried about the cost of this. We don't want to spend all this money here. So that's why we just want

to help a few people. We want to help people up to 150 percent of the poverty line." That sounds reasonable, doesn't it? You know what that is? That's an income of \$12,600 for a senior citizen and \$16,600 for a couple. There are lots of seniors in this country who spend that much every year on drugs. This is a big deal. This is not rhetoric or hot air. They have differences of opinion. The truth is, that's not one of their big priorities. They'd rather spend the money on something else, and they ought to just say that and let you decide.

Or, take the Patients' Bill of Rights. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, and we do have some Republicans who are for it, and we appreciate that. The bill that passed the House of Representatives says everybody in an HMO anywhere in the country has got a right to see a specialist when they need to see the specialist, that you cannot be forced to give up your doctor in the middle of a treatment even if you change employers. For example, if you have cancer and you're taking chemo or if you're a young pregnant woman and you're about to have a baby, just because you change employers, you can't be forced to give up your doctor.

And if you get in an accident in Philadelphia, you don't have to go all the way across town. You can stop at the nearest hospital emergency room without a financial penalty. And if you get hurt by a bad decision, you have a right to redress, in other words, to enforce the Patients' Bill of Rights. That's our position.

Now, this is a big deal. I don't know how many people I've talked to in the last 2 years in the health care system who told me horror story after horror story after horror story. I was with a man just the other day, in the State of Missouri, who introduced me, a male emergency room nurse. This guy was amazing. He was about 6 feet tall, weighed about 230, looks like he could bench-press me on a cold day. [Laughter] I could just imagine him just yanking the doors off cars to rescue people and stuff. And he told a story about losing a patient, that he had to go by two hospital emergency rooms to get to the one that was covered by the plan. This is a big deal. Now, in the Senate, the Patients' Bill of Rights failed by one vote, 51 to 49. If it had been 50–50, the Vice President could have voted, and as he says, whenever he votes, we always win.

Now, this is a big deal, folks. Think about how you'd feel if it was somebody that you

loved. How would you feel if you walked out of this hotel and—God forbid—got hit by a car? Would you want the ambulance chasing around looking for the approved hospital, or would you want them to go to the quickest one? How would you like to know that you could be docked because you didn't call for permission? How are these people supposed to call when they get hit? What if they get knocked unconscious? Did you ever make a phone call with three broken ribs? *[Laughter]* I know you're laughing at this, but I'm very serious. This happens every day.

So their side has a bill which leaves out 100 million Americans and doesn't give you a right to redress and actually weakens some States' patients' bill of rights. And we have the one that a couple of hundred medical professionals have endorsed, all of these groups, health care groups. So when we say we're for the Patients' Bill of Rights and our opponents aren't, they look very wounded and they say, "But we're for a patients' bill of rights." The operative word is "a." And there is a lot of difference between "a" and "the," more than two letters let me tell you.

So what you have to do to help Ron Klink, and all you have to do, is to say, "We don't have anything bad to say about the person of his opponent. They honestly differ. He's for the Patients' Bill of Rights, and his opponent isn't. And if he changed his vote, we'd have it today—today—that one vote. One hundred million Americans, their livelihood and maybe their very lives riding on a vote just cast in the United States Senate—one vote. If he had been there, we'd have the Patients' Bill of Rights."

Like I said, I'll give you just one more example, because I know I'm preaching to the saved here, but you've got to think of things you're going to say to other people. I'll give you one more example.

It seems to me that one of the most important things the next administration and the next Congress have to deal with is how to keep what is already the longest economic expansion in the history of the country going, and how to extend it to people in places that still aren't fully participating in this prosperity. How are we going to keep this thing going?

Well, I believe that what we ought to do is invest in what we know works, in education, in science and technology, and the energy future of the country. You ought to take care of the

baby boom generation. That is, we ought to make sure that when all of us retire, Social Security and Medicare are safe so we don't bankrupt our kids and our grandkids. We ought to have a tax cut, but it ought to be one we can afford. It ought to be targeted toward long-term care, child care, retirement savings, savings for a college education, giving people incentives to invest in these poor areas of our country. That's what I think. But we've got to save back enough money to keep paying the debt down.

Now, why should the progressive party, the Democratic Party, be for getting the country out of debt? Under our plan, you get out of debt in 12 years, the first time since 1835. Why should we be for that? Well, why are we all standing here? How could you afford a ticket tonight? Because we've got the longest economic expansion in history. And when you drive interest rates down and people can borrow money, they buy more cars; they buy more homes; they finance more college educations; they start more businesses; they expand more businesses; they create more jobs; and they raise more wages. That's why. The most progressive thing we can do for ordinary people is to keep this economy going, and that's why we are for doing this whole thing in a way that enables us to keep paying down the debt.

Let me just give you one little statistic. If we pay down the debt and we keep interest rates just one percent lower than they otherwise would have been, just one percent, that amounts to \$250 billion in lower mortgage payments for the American people over the next 10 years. It's the same thing as a \$250 billion tax cut.

Now, that's what I think. That's where we are. That's one reason why I want Ron Klink to be there, because the progressive party has become the fiscally conservative party. And I don't think that's bad; I think that's progressive. In a global economy where people put their money anywhere they want, we've got to get the money here, at prices people can afford.

Now, what is their policy? Their policy is to say, "We've got this huge surplus. It's your money. We're going to give it back to you." Now, that sounds better than what I just said. And I could say it in 3 seconds, right? It's got to be a political winner. *[Laughter]*

Here's the problem. By the time you take their proposed tax cut, which includes 100 percent doing away with the estate tax—and I think it ought to be changed, by the way; I think

it's too onerous on people—but they want to get rid of 100 percent of it, and that's \$100 billion over 10 years, and \$50 billion goes to one-tenth of one percent of the population.

A friend of mine who is now a billionaire called me last week and said, "What are you guys doing in Washington? I don't need—why are you doing this?" He said, "Raise the minimum wage. Give people a child care tax credit. Why are you cutting my taxes?" It was very interesting.

But look, that's just part of it. It does need to be changed for small businesses and farms. We ought to change it some. But it doesn't have to be done away with.

But here's the main point I want you to know. When you pay for all their tax cuts and their privatization of Social Security, it costs a lot of money. That is, if you let people keep their own payroll taxes and invest it and—you've still got to pay for all the retirees and you've got to get the money from somewhere, right? So when you just pay for all their tax cuts and the privatization of Social Security, before they keep any of their other spending promises, you've already spent the entire projected surplus.

Now, let me just say that, projected. All the people that talk about how big the surplus is—the only surplus you really know about is this year's \$211 billion; and when I leave office, we'll have had 3 years in a row, and we'll have paid off \$400 billion of the national debt. Everything else is projected. That's the important word, "projected."

Now I want to ask you all a question. Don't answer it, just think. Think. What is your—the people working here and the people that showed up for the fundraiser—everybody think—what is your projected income over the next 10 years? That is, what do you think it will be? And I want you to think just for 20 seconds, and I want you to arrive at a figure that you have 80 percent confidence in; I mean, you're just sure over the next 10 years you'll make at least this much. Now, you think about it.

Okay, now, if I asked you to come up here right now and sign a contract spending every last penny of your projected income for the next 10 years, would you do it? [*Laughter*] Now, if you would, you should vote for the incumbent Senator. But if you wouldn't, you better vote for Ron Klink and keep this economy going.

I could go on and on, but you get the picture. The Patients' Bill of Rights, the Medicare drugs, the paying down the debt, and there are lots and lots of other issues. Senators cast a lot of votes, or they decide not to cast votes. Just in the last year, the Republican majority on the party-line vote defeated an African-American judge from Missouri I nominated for the Federal court. They said he wasn't qualified; he was too liberal. He was the only African-American ever to serve on the State Supreme Court of Missouri. He had the highest recommendations from the American Bar Association. But the way they figured it, he wasn't qualified. If Ron Klink had been in the Senate, there would have been one less vote against that African-American judge and one more vote for one America.

I appointed a Hispanic man from Texas who grew up in a poor community in El Paso, a poor neighborhood, went to Harvard, graduated summa cum laude. The judges in west Texas said he's one of the best three best lawyers in west Texas. He got the highest recommendation from the American Bar Association. The Republican Senators from Texas, they won't even give him a hearing. They say he's not qualified. And when they say "not qualified," what they mean is, he's not rightwing enough for me, not part of my America. And the leader of the Republican Party in Texas—and you all know who he is—[*laughter*—total silence while this man is denied even the dignity of a hearing.

Now, why did they not want to give him a hearing? Because they don't want him on the court, but they don't want you to know they don't want him on the court. And they want it to just go away. It's a big deal, a vote in the Senate. It's a big deal.

I'll say something else. You all clapped when I mentioned the people, the people that work in this hotel. Their kids ought to have a chance to go out and be Federal judges or Senators or Presidents.

So I came here because Philadelphia has been good to me. You've never been better to anybody than you've been to me and the Vice President. We're grateful. But these Senate seats are real important, and you've got a guy that comes out of a part of this State and has ties to people that give him a chance to win this race. It's very difficult to beat a well-funded incumbent. He's got a chance to win it, and he's worth fighting for.

If you want to keep the prosperity going, if you want to extend it to people left behind, if you want to take more children out of poverty and give more children a world-class education, if you want our seniors to have a Medicare drug program, if you want people in managed care programs to be protected, if you want to know that everybody will get fair consideration and everybody can be represented on our courts and other parts of our national life, we really can build one America. It's a big deal who you send to the Senate, and I hope you'll send Ron Klink.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:45 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Warwick Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; family nurse practitioner Doug Bouldin; and judicial nominees Ronnie L. White of Missouri and Enrique Moreno of Texas. Representative Klink was a candidate for U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania.

Remarks on the Middle East Peace Summit and an Exchange With Reporters

July 11, 2000

The President. Good morning. As all of you know, I am now leaving for Camp David to join Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat in their effort to reach agreement on the core issues that have divided Israelis and Palestinians for half a century now.

The two leaders face profound and wrenching questions, and there can be no success without principled compromise. The road to peace, as always, is a two-way street. Both leaders feel the weight of history, but both, I believe, recognize this is a moment in history which they can seize. We have an opportunity to bring about a just and enduring end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. That is the key to lasting peace in the entire Middle East. Of course, there is no guarantee of success, but not to try is to guarantee failure.

The path ahead builds on the journey already taken from the first Camp David summit to Madrid to Oslo to the first handshake on the lawn between Prime Minister Rabin and Chairman Arafat to the peace between Israel and Jordan and the agreement at Wye River. The parties have proven that peace is possible when they are determined to make it.

In the process, they have passed the point of no return. The only way forward now is forward. Both sides must find a way to resolve competing claims, to give their children the gift of peace. It will take patience and creativity and courage. But Prime Minister Barak and

Chairman Arafat have those qualities, or they would not have come this far. They will also have the unstinting and unequivocal support of the United States.

I'll do everything I can over the coming days to see that this moment of promise is fulfilled. And I hope that those leaders will have the thoughts and prayers and support of all Americans.

Thank you very much.

Israeli Knesset Vote

Q. Mr. President, having barely survived the no confidence vote, does Prime Minister Barak come here with a handicap? Can he negotiate with the full weight of the Knesset and the Israeli people behind him?

The President. First of all, I'll say what I said yesterday. The polls show, in Israel, that well over half the people support his coming here and believe he ought to work for peace. Secondly, he has promised to put whatever agreement is reached here, if an agreement is reached, to a vote of the people. So they have nothing to lose. They'll have final say anyway. There ought to be 100 percent support for his coming here, because the people will be the ultimate deciders on the question. So I think that that is fine. And yes, he had an eight-vote margin yesterday; I would remind you that on most of the days when Yitzhak Rabin came here, he had a one-vote margin in the Knesset.

So I think we're in as good a shape as we're ever going to get, and we might as well just go to work.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:38 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to depar-

ture for Camp David, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel at Camp David, Maryland

July 11, 2000

Middle East Peace Summit

Q. Mr. President, how is it going? Mr. President?

Q. How long is it going to take, Mr. President?

The President. We pledged to each other we would answer no questions and offer no comment, and I'd like to set a good example. [Laughter]

Q. Can you resist us, sir?

The President. It's difficult to resist, but I will make it—today, at least.

Q. Is that the only agreement you have reached so far? [Laughter]

The President. That would be answering a question. [Laughter]

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:25 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on Environmental Protection Agency Action To Strengthen Water Quality Protections

July 11, 2000

Today's action by the Environmental Protection Agency to strengthen water quality protections nationwide is a critical, commonsense step to ensure clean, safe water for all Americans. While we have made tremendous progress over the past quarter-century, too many of our rivers,

lakes, and bays are still too polluted for fishing or swimming. With the new strategy we launch today, we will work in close partnership with States and communities to tackle our remaining pollution threats and complete the job of cleaning up America's precious waterways.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Haiti

July 11, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 559(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000 (Public Law

106-113), I hereby transmit to you a report concerning the status of Haiti's progress.

The report contains eight subsections, that provide information required by section 559(b)

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of the Act, to the extent that such information is available. These subsections address:

- Governmental Institutions Envisioned in the 1987 Haitian Constitution;
- Privatization of Haiti's Major Public Entities;
- Efforts to Re-sign the Lapsed Bilateral Repatriation Agreement, and Cooperation in Halting Illegal Migration;
- Investigations and Prosecution of Extrajudicial and Political Killings, and Cooperation with the United States in Such Investigation;
- Removal and Maintenance of Separation of Human Rights Violators from Haitian Public Security Entities or Units;
- Ratification of the 1997 Maritime Counter-Narcotics Agreement;
- Development of Haiti's Domestic Capacity to Conduct Free, Fair, Democratic, and Administratively Sound Elections; and
- Demonstrated Commitment of Haiti's Minister of Justice to the Professionalism of the Judiciary, and Progress Toward Judicial Branch Independence.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations, Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations, and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 12.

Statement on the Accident in the Philippines

July 12, 2000

I was deeply saddened to learn of the lives lost and families devastated by the terrible incident that took place on the outskirts of Manila. On behalf of the American people, I extend my deepest sympathies to all those who have suffered losses and injuries. Our thoughts and prayers also go out to those who are still waiting

to hear word about friends and family members still missing.

NOTE: On July 11, debris from the collapse of the Payatas garbage dump killed more than 100 area residents.

Statement on Proposed Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Legislation

July 12, 2000

Thirty-five years ago this month President Johnson enacted the Medicare program into law. The program has proven to be a remarkable success, providing basic health care services to tens of millions of older Americans and people with disabilities. Since its enactment, there has been a decrease of over 60 percent in elderly poverty and Americans over 65 now have the highest life expectancy of seniors anywhere in the world.

I am particularly proud of my administration's stewardship of the Medicare program. When I came into office, Medicare was projected to be-

come insolvent in 1999. Our success in keeping overall and health care inflation low, combating fraud, waste, and abuse, and making the Medicare program more competitive and efficient has resulted in the strongest Medicare Trust Fund solvency in a quarter century. We have extended the life of the Trust Fund to 2025 and Medicare premiums are nearly 20 percent lower today than projected in 1993. We have also modernized the program to cover preventive services and coverage for clinical trials.

We need to build on our successful management of the Medicare program and prepare it

for the inevitable health and demographic challenges it faces in the 21st century. No one would create a Medicare program today without a prescription drug benefit. With the announcement of the completion of the human genome and the revolutionary impact it will have on the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of most, if not all, human disease, the importance of pharmaceuticals as a clinical tool will only increase.

That is why I have proposed a comprehensive plan that would take the Medicare Trust Fund off budget, extend the life of the Trust Fund to at least 2030, make the program more efficient, provide for increased health care provider payments, and modernize it to include a long overdue Medicare prescription drug benefit option. This benefit would be available and afford-

able to all beneficiaries, no matter where they live or how sick they are.

I am pleased that there is growing momentum on Capitol Hill to provide a real Medicare prescription drug benefit, not a flawed insurance model. Because we have managed the program so efficiently, due to the leadership of the longest serving Secretary of Health and Human Services in history, Donna Shalala, we can use our success in reducing the cost of the program and reinvest the savings to help finance a meaningful Medicare prescription drug benefit. I urge the Congress to work together in a bipartisan fashion to meet the challenges this program faces and to ensure that it continues to provide the critically important insurance coverage for the 39 million seniors and people with disabilities the program serves.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Hate Crimes Prevention Legislation

July 12, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I write to urge you to bring the Hate Crimes Prevention Act (HCPA) to the floor for a vote before the August recess. Last month, the Senate, in a strong bipartisan showing, voted overwhelmingly to pass this legislation that would strengthen federal hate crimes law. As the Senate vote demonstrates, passing hate crimes legislation is not a partisan issue. It is a national concern requiring a national response. Now it is time for the House to do its part to ensure that strong hate crimes legislation becomes law this year.

Since this legislation was introduced in November 1997, our country has witnessed countless acts of bigotry and hatred. In June 1998, James Byrd, Jr., an African-American man, was brutally dragged to his death. In October of that year, Matthew Shepard, a gay college student, died after being beaten and tied to a fence. In July 1999, Benjamin Smith went on a racially motivated shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana. At the end of this hate-fueled rampage, Ricky Byrdson, an African-American who was former basketball coach at Northwestern University, and Won-Joon Yoon, a Korean graduate student at Indiana University, were killed,

and eight others were wounded. In August 1999, Joseph Ilete, a native of the Philippines and U.S. postal worker, died at the hands of a gunman in Los Angeles. This same gunman also injured five persons, including three children, at a Jewish community center. Finally, this year there were two killing rampages in Pennsylvania. In March, an African-American man shot and killed three white men. In April, another man murdered an African-American man, a Jewish woman, two Asian-American men, and an Indian man. We must take action now to stop these acts of violence.

This legislation is absolutely necessary because hate crimes are fundamentally different from other crimes. Victims are targeted simply because of who they are—whether it is race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender. These acts of violence affect entire communities, not just the individual victims. This legislation would provide more tools to State and local law enforcement to investigate and prosecute hate crimes. It would also expand protection to include hate crimes based on sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

I ask the House of Representatives to follow the bipartisan example of the Senate by passing

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hate crimes legislation before the August recess. We must send a message that hate crimes will not be tolerated, and that one more hate crime is one too many.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks to the NAACP National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland July 13, 2000

Well, let me say it's good to see you. Thank you for making me feel so welcome. Thank you, Julian; thank you, Kweisi. Thank you, Myrlie Evers-Williams, Ben Hooks, Elaine Jones, the whole board. Thank you, Wendell Anthony, for letting me come to Detroit to the biggest dinner in the history of the world.

I know I had dinner with Wendell in Detroit with over 10,000 people, because he told me so, but I couldn't even see the people at the other head table, it was so big. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Mayor O'Malley, for welcoming us to Baltimore and for being such a great leader. Thank you, Representative Elijah Cummings, for representing Baltimore so well. And thank you, Mayor John Street, for representing Philadelphia so well and making it true to the Founders' dreams.

I have, I know, oh, a dozen or more members of the White House staff here, but I would like to mention a few: Thurgood Marshall, Jr., whose father was a native of Baltimore; my chief speechwriter, Terry Edmonds, a Baltimore native. I thank Mark Lindsay; Mary Beth Cahill; Ben Johnson, who runs our One America office; my political director, Minyon Moore; Janis Kearney; Broderick Johnson, a Baltimore native; Orson Porter; and we have at least another half a dozen folks who are here because they wanted to be here with you today.

This has been a remarkable week for African-Americans. Venus Williams became the first African-American woman since Althea Gibson to win the Wimbledon. Perhaps even more remarkable for those who know the mysteries of the church, Baltimore's own Dr. Vashti McKenzie became the first woman bishop in the history of the A.M.E. church.

And you have had an amazing conference. I'm really glad Governor Bush came. *[Laughter]* I am. But I thought the other fellow gave a

better speech. *[Laughter]* And I liked especially the speech that that Senate candidate from New York gave. I caught that one on Tuesday.

I want to tell you, I'm very proud, as we look back on the last 7½ years of all the work that my wife has done, not just for those but for 30 years for children, for families, for education, for health care. But as First Lady, she has done so much to increase adoption and improve foster care, to increase the access to children to health care and to early education. And one thing that ought to be of particular importance to the African-American community—for the celebration of the millennium, she started—she had this theme, we were going to honor the past and imagine the future. And part of honoring the past was setting aside millennial treasures, a lot of which are important landmarks of the civil rights movement, Abraham Lincoln's summer home at the Old Soldiers' Home, Harriet Tubman's cottage up in New York, a lot of other places.

And the head of the National Historic Preservation Trust came up to me the other day when we were protecting Mr. Lincoln's home, and he said, "Mr. President, I want you to know that your wife came up with this idea of the millennial treasures. It has now raised \$100 million in public/private money. It's the biggest historic preservation movement in the history of the United States of America." So I'm very proud of her for that.

Now, as all of you know, I came here from Camp David this morning, where we are meeting with the Israelis and the Palestinians in an effort to resolve the profound differences that have kept the people of the Middle East apart for a very long time. I know that in our quest for a full, fair, and final peace—which Dr. King reminded us is more than the absence of war, but the presence of justice and brotherhood and

genuine reconciliation—I know we will have your prayers and your best wishes.

But I had to come to Baltimore today, because you embody the spirit of freedom and reconciliation we're trying to capture there, that we need so badly in our talks; a spirit that is woven into the fabric of American life because of the contributions of African-Americans from W.E.B. Du Bois to Rosa to Thurgood to Martin to Daisy Bates, Coretta, Medgar, Malcolm, to Jesse, and John Lewis and Julian and Kweisi.

One of the greatest days of my Presidency was last March, on the 35th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, when I was honored to walk with many people in this room across the Pettus Bridge in Selma. I said then something I'd like to repeat today, that as a son of the South, the brave souls who marched across that bridge 35 years ago set me free, too. It is important to know that every movement for human rights in this country is about even more than gaining equal opportunity and equal rights and decent justice for the oppressed. It is also about forgiveness and healing, about letting go and moving on, about giving our children a better tomorrow.

So I wanted to be here especially during these peace talks to draw strength from you and take the spirit of the NAACP back to Camp David. And I wanted to come here one last time to say thank you, a simple but deep thank you for your support, your prayers, your friendship over all these years, for all that we have done to turn America around and bring America closer together.

Eight years ago this week—I can't believe it—8 years ago this week, at your national conference in Nashville, I was the Governor of Arkansas, the apparent nominee of the Democratic Party. And I brought my choice for Vice President, Senator Al Gore, to the NAACP convention. Rather, I accepted Ben Hooks' mandatory invitation to appear. *[Laughter]*

And I pledged then—and I want to quote it exactly; I don't want to miss a word—I pledged you, “an administration that looks like America, one that knows the promise and the pain of this country, one that will rebuild, reunite, and renew the American spirit.” I think together we have honored that pledge.

The American dream is real to more Americans than it was 7½ years ago. And we are more nearly one America than we were 7½ years ago with 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment and welfare rolls in 30 years,

the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest child poverty in 20 years, the lowest minority unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rates in 40 years, the highest homeownership in history, the longest economic expansion in history. We have more opportunity than we did 7½ years ago.

And perhaps equally important, our social fabric is on the mend. The family and medical leave law, the first bill I signed, vetoed in the previous administration, has allowed over 20 million Americans to take a little time off when a baby was born or a parent was sick, without losing their jobs, and it's been good for the economy, not bad for the economy.

For the first time ever, 90 percent of our children are immunized against serious childhood diseases. Our food is safer. Our air is cleaner. Our water is purer. More land has been protected for all time to come for Americans to enjoy; 150,000 young Americans have served in communities in every State in this country in AmeriCorps. The high school graduation rate of African-Americans is virtually equal with that of the white majority for the first time in the history of the United States of America. And all over the country I have seen schools, that once were failing, turning around.

In Harlem, I was in a school the other day where 2 years ago 80 percent of the children were reading and doing mathematics below grade level; 2 years later 74 percent of the children reading and doing mathematics at or above grade level—in just 2 years. This is happening all over America.

Today we're releasing an annual report on the status of our children. According to the study, the teen birth rate for 15- to 17-year-olds has dropped to the lowest level ever recorded. The birth rate for African-American adolescents has dropped by nearly one-third since 1991.

The report also found that child poverty continues its decline. And the rate of serious violent crime committed by young people has dropped by more than half since 1993 to the lowest level recorded since statistics has been kept on this subject. This is very good news. And I hope you will trumpet it, not because we're as safe as we need to be but because we need to destroy stereotypes so we can start making real progress on the issues still remaining.

Now—so that's my report. Thank you for giving me a chance to serve. That's my report.

Now, here's my question: What do you intend to do with all this? You know, I'm going to treasure this award for the rest of my life. But what really matters is what all of us do tomorrow with what our yesterdays have piled up. So before you leave here, when you go home and people say, "What did you do in Baltimore?" if you don't answer any other thing, you ought to be able to say, "Well, I figured out what I was going to do with all the prosperity and progress my country has made in the last 8 years."

That is the issue. And I guess I can say this now because my hair is a lot grayer, and I've got a few more wrinkles than I had 8 years ago. But one thing I know—how a nation deals with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment, its vision, and its values as how a nation deals with adversity. After all, when you elected me 8 years ago—and the other side kind of referred to me as a Governor of a small southern State, and I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. *[Laughter]* And you know what? I still do. But when you elected me, it didn't require rocket science to know that if we had quadrupled the debt in 12 years and all the social indicators were going in the wrong direction and the country was coming apart at the seams and unemployment was going up and crime was going up and opportunity for our children was going down, that we had to change. I mean, this was not—I don't want to deprive myself of any credit, but it wasn't rocket science. We had to do something. So you said, "Well, I'll take a chance on that fellow."

Now, every person in this room—we've got a lot of young people here, and I'm grateful for that, and I'm grateful for the role that you've done to bring all the young people back into the NAACP. But listen, everybody over 30 in this room—listen to me—if you're over 30, you can remember at least one time in your life when you have made a mistake, not because times were so bad but because times were good, so good you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Am I right about that? *[Laughter]*

Listen to this. In the Scripture, Ecclesiastes 11:25 says, "In the day of prosperity there is forgetfulness of affliction." Everybody over 30 has had that kind of forgetfulness at one time or another. Am I right about that? So here is my point to you. You look at these kids before you leave here. We cannot do that now. I have

done everything I knew to do to turn this country around, to move this country forward, to lift people up, to lift people together. But man, the best stuff is still out there. And the big challenges are still on the horizon. And we will never forgive ourselves if we don't say we are going to use this moment of prosperity to build the future of our dreams for all God's children. That's what this is for.

That's what this millennial election is all about. I want to commend the NAACP for your campaign to register new voters. I want to join you in mourning the passing of the chairman of your voter empowerment campaign, Earl Shinhoster. But you need to finish his job. And then, you have to get people to actually go to the polls, to choose and choose wisely.

We must make it clear again that every election is a choice. This is a big election. There are big differences, honest differences, between the parties, the candidates for President, the candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives—big and honest differences.

I'm determined to make as much bipartisan progress with the Congress as I can in the last 6 months. I think we'll get a lot done, but no matter how much we do, there will still be a lot that remains on America's future agenda. And there will be differences. And the thing I like about this election is, if we've got the right attitude about it, it can be an old-fashioned election, the kind the civics books say you ought to have, where we don't have people swinging mud at each other and repeating what we've seen in too many elections in the past where people basically say, "You ought to vote for me, not because I'm so great, because my opponent is just one step above a car thief." *[Laughter]* I mean, how many elections have you seen run like that?

Well, we don't have to do that. We can assume everybody is honorable and good, got their merit badges in the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, but they're different. There's a choice to be made, and there are consequences.

So when you leave, you say, "What I learned was, we've got to use this year to decide what to do with this moment of prosperity. It may never come around again in our lifetime. I want to build the future of my dreams for my children. This is a big election. That's the main arena right now, and there are big differences."

Now, let me just mention a few of them. On economic policy, the Vice President and

most people on our side of the political aisle, we believe that we ought to keep the prosperity going and do our dead-level best to extend it to people and to places that have been left behind so far. But we think to keep the prosperity going, the right thing to do is to take the taxes you pay for Medicare and take them off the books, like we do with Social Security; keep paying the debt down; use the interest savings to put into Medicare and Social Security to lengthen our life so us baby boomers don't bankrupt the rest of you when we retire; invest in education and science and technology, the health care, and the environment; and then have a tax cut we can afford that helps families with the basic things they're dealing with and still leaves us the money to meet our responsibilities around the world—to help fight AIDS in Africa and Asia, to help relieve the debt of the poorest countries of the world, to help promote freedom and stand against ethnic cleansing, fight against terrorism—that allows us to do these basic things and still get this country out of debt over the next 12 years.

Why? Because that will keep interest rates lower. And if interest rates stay a percent lower over the next 10 years than they otherwise would be, that saves families—listen to this—African-American homeownership at an all-time high—that will save families \$250 billion in home mortgage rates in a decade.

Now, they say something different, and it's easier for me to give you their pitch, and it sounds better the first time you hear it. They say, "We have a projected surplus of \$1.9 trillion, and it's your money. So we're going to give more than half of it back to you in a tax cut. And then we're going to spend the rest of it to partially privatize Social Security. And when we take money out of the Social Security Trust Fund, we'll put money in it from this surplus." And by the time you do that, they've spent the whole projected surplus and then some.

Now, here's the problem with that. If I ask you—I want to ask all of you right now—you just think about this real quiet, now; you don't have to say anything out loud, but everybody think about this—what is your projected income over the next 10 years? Now, think. How much money do you think you're going to make over the next 10 years? How confident are you that you're right about your projected income? [Laughter] Now, get it on up there to where

you're about 80 percent confident. Now, if I sat here at a desk with a pen and a notary public, and I said, "I want every one of you to come up here right now and sign a contract that commits you to spend every penny of your projected income," would you do it? Well, if you would, you should support them. If not, you should support us and keep this economy going. That's what this is about.

Then there are the issues of economic justice. How can we assure a fair share? We believe that we should strengthen efforts to require equal pay for equal work for women, and they don't agree with us. We think we should raise the minimum wage a dollar over 2 years, because we think the people that serve our food at restaurants and help us do things, we think they ought to be able to raise their kids, too, and send their kids to college and make a decent living. And they're not.

Our top tax cut priorities are for working families with low incomes and a lot of kids, for increasing child care assistance, for a long-term care tax credit, when you've got an elderly or disabled loved one, for retirement savings, and to allow you to deduct college tuition for up to \$10,000 a year. That's our top—[inaudible]. We can do all that and still pay the country out of debt over the next 12 years and have money to invest. Their top tax cut priority rolling through Congress like a hot knife through butter is a complete repeal of the estate tax, which costs \$100 billion over 10 years, and half of the benefits—half the benefits go to one-tenth of one percent of the population. There's a difference here.

In education, we know that every child can learn. I just told you about the school I visited in Harlem. I was in rural western Kentucky the other day in this little old school that, 4 years ago, 12 percent of the kids—over half the kids on school lunches—4 years ago 12 percent of the kids could read at or above grade level; today, 57 percent; 5 percent of the kids could do math at or above grade level; today, 70 percent; zero percent of the kids could do science at or above grade level; today, 63 percent—in 4 years. It's amazing. It's happening everywhere.

Now, intelligence is equally distributed. It's opportunity that's not equally distributed. So our education policy is to invest more and demand more—higher standards, greater accountability, but empower people to develop the capacities

of all of our children. And it's working. But we have a very definite set of ideas about that, based on what we have seen and what educators have told us.

We want to modernize or build 6,000 schools and repair another 25,000 over the next 5 years. And the other side doesn't agree with us. They think that's wrong. We want to keep our commitment to hire 100,000 teachers for smaller classes in the early grades, because we know that's important to long-time learning capacity, and the other side doesn't agree with us. They don't think we should require that, somehow, of the States.

We want universal access to preschool, summer school, after-school for all kids who need it. You can't say, end social promotion and then blame the kids for the failure system; you have to have a system that says, okay, no social promotion, but here is how the children are going to meet the standards and go on and learn and do what they're supposed to do.

So there are differences here in the economy, in economic justice, in education, and there are differences in health care. And the Vice President talked a lot about this yesterday, so I won't beat it to death. But this is very important. We believe that because we have the money to do it, we should have a true Medicare prescription drug benefit that's available and affordable to all seniors and disabled people who need it. We think we should do this.

They say it might be too costly. I'll give you their honest—and I think they really believe this. [Laughter] No, I do. I think they really do believe this. They say it could cost more money than we think it would, and so we ought to have this more limited, private benefit, funded through insurance companies.

The problem is—let me say just this—the problem is—I fought with the health insurance companies quite a bit, you may have noticed that. But I've got to give it to them, they've been real upfront about this. The health insurance companies have said, "No, this won't work. We cannot offer these poor people an insurance policy to buy drugs that they can afford to buy that will be worth having." The insurance companies have been really honest about it. And you know what? Nevada adopted a plan just like the Republican plan, and you know how many insurance companies have offered coverage under it? Zero. Not one.

So we've got this interesting debate going on now in Washington. We said "We're for Medicare prescription drug coverage," and they say, "So are we." So the "so are we" is designed—I learned from reading the newspaper that they hired a political consultant to tell them what language to use so you would think they were for something they were not. [Laughter]

And I'd rather them say, "Look, we're not for this, because we think it will cost too much money." But if they took that position, then they would have to explain how come they want to spend \$100 billion on repealing the estate tax and give 50 percent of it to the top one-tenth of one percent of the population and not spend money on drugs for our seniors. There are choices to be made here.

We don't have to be hateful. They really believe this. They don't think it's a good idea. But instead of trying to convince us that they are really for our plan, they should fess up that they're not and explain why they're against it. And then you decide whether we are right or they are.

And the same thing on the Patients' Bill of Rights. The Patients' Bill of Rights we're for covers all Americans and all health care plans and gives you a right to see a specialist, a right not to be bumped from your doctor if you change employment and you're in the middle of having a baby or a chemotherapy treatment or any other kind of treatment. It gives you a right to go to the nearest emergency room if you get hit—God forbid—when you walk out of the convention center here today. And if you get hurt and you're wrongly treated, it gives you the right to sue. Their plan doesn't cover 100 million people, and it doesn't give you a right to sue.

Now, we say we're for the Patients' Bill of Rights. They say—what they should say is, "We don't agree with this. We think it will cost too much." But that's not what they say. What they say—they try to figure out how to convince you they're for what we're for. So they say, "We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights"—if you ever hear that, if you hear "a" instead of "the," big alarm bells ought to go off in your head. You ought to say, ding-dong, hello, what is going on here?

But this is a huge deal. You heard the Vice President talking about this yesterday. I was down the other day in Missouri with the Governor, and we were with an emergency room nurse, a male, who was 6'1", weighed 230,

looked like he could bench-press me on a cold day. [Laughter] And this big old husky guy spends his life trying to save people's lives. And he almost couldn't get through his talk, talking about somebody who died because they couldn't take him to the nearest emergency room. This happens every single day.

We're one vote away from passing it. I want to compliment the Republicans in the House who voted for the Patients' Bill of Rights, and the four in the Senate who did. We are one vote away. I'm telling you, there are big issues here. This affects 100 million of your fellow citizens.

We're for expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program that Hillary did so much to create. We think the parents of the kids ought to be able to buy in, too. We think people who are over 55 and not old enough to be on Medicare but lost their insurance at work, ought to be able to buy into the Medicare program, and we should give them a little help of they need it.

And we want to do more to close the gaps and do something about the fact that people of color suffer far higher rates of heart disease, cancer, AIDS, and diabetes. Let me just give you one example. Diabetes is 70 percent higher among African-Americans than white Americans. Hispanics are twice as likely to suffer from it.

Type I diabetes, commonly known as juvenile diabetes, affects a million Americans alone, half of them children, but research has taken us to the threshold of a potential new breakthrough. Recently, researchers successfully transplanted insulin-producing cells into seven individuals with juvenile diabetes, and apparently, every single one of them was cured.

Now, if we can repeat these preliminary findings, it could put a cure for juvenile diabetes within our reach, a true miracle—for anyone who has ever had this in your family, you know this. But we have to do more to get there. That's why today I want to tell you a couple of things we're doing.

First of all, the National Institutes of Health is investing in 10 research centers immediately to try to replicate the results of the first study so we can prove it wasn't an accident. This is part of a larger partnership between the NIH and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation—we have some of their leaders here with us today—with a commitment of \$300 million over 5 years for research and the prevention of diabetes.

Now, I've been pretty tough on my friends on the Republican side today, so I want to say something nice about them. This is one we all agree on—that there is no partisan position on whether we would like to see our children lifted from the burden and the fear and the terrors and the agony that can come with juvenile diabetes. But we actually have some research here that may allow us to close one of the big racial gaps and help disparities in our country. And I just want you to know we're going to do everything we can about it, and I hope we'll have your prayers and your support. It's worth some of your money to spend on that.

The last thing I want to talk about in terms of your decision this year is civil rights and equal justice. I don't have to come here and say nobody should be denied a job, a home, access to school or a loan because of their race or any other condition; that no one should have to fear being a target of violence because of the way they worship God or their sexual orientation. And I don't have to come here for you to know that those indignities are still all too real to too many Americans. I have proposed the largest investment in civil rights enforcement ever, so that the EEOC, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and others can enforce our civil rights law.

And we're fighting for passage of a strong hate crimes bill. And I am so grateful—I'm so grateful—that our unanimous caucus was joined the other day by enough Republicans who are willing to break from the leadership to pass the hate crimes bill in the Senate. I am grateful for that, and I hope that we can pass it in the House.

But the hate crimes legislation, if it does not become law, should be an issue in this election. The employment nondiscrimination legislation, if it doesn't become law, should be an issue in this election. This is not negative politics. We should talk about what side we're on and why, and let people decide. It's important.

You look all around the world at all these places that are bedeviled by the hatreds of the groups of people within their countries for one another, from Kosovo to Northern Ireland to the Middle East to the tribal wars in Africa to the Balkans. I mean, look at what the world has been dealing with just for the last few years. We have to keep hammering away at this. It's not over.

And you look at all the hate crimes that have occurred in America in the last few years, in spite of all of our improving attitudes and greater contact across racial and religious lines. We've still got problems here. This deals with the biggest problems of the human heart. We've got to keep at it, and we ought to debate our different approaches to it in an open way. We may never have this chance again, where we are secure and confident and we know we can go forward if we make the right decisions.

One other thing I want to say about this: One of the most important responsibilities of the next President is appointing judges, and one of the most important duties of a Senator is deciding whether to confirm the people the President appoints. Now, I believe the next President will be called upon to appoint in the next 4 years between two and four Supreme Court judges, more than a score, much more, Court of Appeals judges; and perhaps over 100 Federal district court judges.

The record here is instructive. The quality of justice suffers when highly qualified women and minority candidates, fully vetted, fully supported by the American Bar Association, are denied the opportunity to serve for partisan political reasons.

Now, just last year the Republican majority in the Senate, on a party-line vote, defeated my nominee for the Federal court in Missouri, Ronnie White, the first African-American State supreme court judge in the history of the State of Missouri, plainly well-qualified, defeated on a party-line political vote in an attempt to give the incumbent Senator a death penalty issue against the incumbent Governor in the race for the U.S. Senate in Missouri. Never mind that—throw this guy's career away. Act like he's not qualified. Distort his position on the death penalty. Ignore what it will make the African-American community in Missouri feel like. It was awful.

As we speak today, there are four African-American appellate court nominees poised to make history if the Senate would just stop standing in their way: Judge James Wynn, Roger Gregory, Kathleen McCree Lewis, Judge Johnnie Rawlinson. That's just the ones I've got up there now. But let me—to put that in perspective, in the 12 years that they served, the two previous Presidents appointed just three African-Americans to the circuit courts of our country—in 12 years.

Of course, we all want justice to be blind, but we also know that when we have diversity in our courts, as in all aspects of society, it sharpens our vision and makes us a stronger nation.

I have nominated two highly qualified candidates for the fourth circuit—that includes where we are now, the State of Maryland. The fourth circuit has the largest African-American population of any of our circuits, and remarkably, there has never been an African-American jurist on the fourth circuit. We've got a chance to right that wrong.

Two weeks ago I nominated Roger Gregory of Virginia. He is a Richmond lawyer of immense talent and experience. Almost a year ago, I nominated Judge Wynn for a North Carolina seat on the circuit, and he's not the first African-American from North Carolina I nominated. Now, Senator Helms won't let these people get confirmed. He says we don't need any more judges on the fourth circuit.

Maybe, that's what he thinks. But I think it's interesting that for over 7 years now, he has stopped my attempts to integrate the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Republican majority has made no move to change the tide that turned the policies. This is outrageous—the circuit court with the highest percentage of African-Americans in the country, not one single judge on the Court of Appeals.

Now, a lot of women don't do much better. We have excellent nominees—Elena Kagan; Helene White; Bonnie Campbell, former attorney general of Iowa, up there—no movement.

Another travesty of justice is taking place in Texas, and I want to talk about this. I nominated a man named Enrique Moreno to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. He grew up in El Paso and graduated from Harvard Law School. The State judges in Texas said he was one of the three best trial lawyers out there in far west Texas. The ABA, the American Bar Association, unanimously gave him its top rating. But the two Republican Senators from Texas, they say he's not qualified. And the leader of the Republican Party in Texas—who, I think, talked here a couple days ago—[laughter]—stone cold silence. Nobody says, "Give this guy a hearing."

Why don't they want to give these people a hearing and vote? Because they don't want him on the court, but they don't want you to know they don't want him on the court.

The face of injustice is not compassion; it is indifference or worse. For the integrity of our courts and the strength of our Constitution, I ask the Republicans to give these people a vote. Vote them down if you don't want them on; go out and tell people. At least they voted Judge White down. They're having a hard time explaining it in Missouri, but at least they did it.

This is not right, folks. You know, the judges I've appointed, yes, they're the most diverse judges in history. But they also have the highest ratings from the ABA in 40 years. And no one says that they're ideological extremists. Therefore, I conclude that the people that don't want them on the court want people who are ideological purists.

But you've got to have—a judge needs somebody that's felt the fabric of ordinary life, that's got a good mind for stuff in the books and a lot of common sense, that can understand what happens to people, that can be fair to everybody that comes before him. I'd be ashamed if one of my judges discriminated against someone before them because they were members of the other political party or a different religion or had strong views. I would be outraged. I just want people who will be just and fair. But I don't want people denied their chance to serve because of their race or their politics. It's not right. Now, you need to think about that, because it's an important part of the next 4 years.

I just want to make one last point in closing. You all heard the Vice President's speech. I thought it was brilliant and impassioned, and I can't make a better case. But I want you to remember four things about him. I don't want you to forget this—"the President told me four things about Al Gore."

Number one, he is by far the most influential and active Vice President in this history of the country. We've had a lot of Vice Presidents. A lot of Vice Presidents made great Presidents—Thomas Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson—but we've never had a Vice President that did so much good as Vice President as Al Gore—never, not ever in the history of the country.

Second, for the reasons I said earlier, when none of you wanted to contract away your projected income for the next 10 years, he is the most likely, by far, to keep our prosperity going and to spread it to people left behind.

Thirdly, you can see from his leadership with the empowerment zones, to connect all of our schools to the Internet, to his work with the science and technology issues and the environment issues, this is a guy who understands the future. And the future is coming on us in a hurry.

I'm glad we've decoded the human genome, but I don't want anybody denied a job or health insurance because of their genetic map. I love the Internet, and I think the Internet can move more people out of poverty more quickly than ever before. But I don't want anybody to be able to get your financial or health care record just because they're on somebody's computer somewhere unless you say okay.

You need someone in the White House who understands the future. So, he's the most qualified person we've ever had because he's the best Vice President. He'll keep the prosperity going. He understands the future.

And the fourth and most important thing for your point of view is, he really does want to take us all along for the ride, and I want a President that wants to take us all along for the ride.

Thank you. Thank you. Let me just say this one last thing. After January, I won't be President, but I'll still—wait a minute—[laughter]—hey, everything comes to an end. [Laughter] But I have loved every day of it. It has been an honor to fight, an honor to work. And for the rest of the time the good Lord gives me on this Earth, I'll be with you. I'll work with you.

But you just remember this. The arena that counts today on the question of what we're going to do with our prosperity is what we do today to elect tomorrow's leaders. You've got to lead the country in this. You've got to make sure we choose and choose wisely. Believe me, in spite of all that's happened, the best is still out there. Go get it.

I love you. Godspeed. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. at the Baltimore Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Julian Bond, chairman, Kweisi Mfume, president and chief executive officer, Myrlie Evers-Williams, former chairwoman, Benjamin Hooks, former executive director, Elaine Jones, Legal Defense and Education Fund director-counsel, and Rev. Wendell Anthony, Detroit branch president, NAACP; Mayor Martin J.

O'Malley of Baltimore; Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia, PA; Orson Porter, Mid-Western Political Director, White House Office of Political Affairs; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Richard Moe, presi-

dent, National Trust for Historic Preservation; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Coretta Scott King, widow of Martin Luther King, Jr.; Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri; and family nurse practitioner Doug Bouldin.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to Father Theodore M. Hesburgh

July 13, 2000

Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker; Senator Daschle, Senator Thurmond, Senator Bayh, Senator Lugar, Congressman Roemer. Thank you all for your efforts today. Chaplain Coughlin and distinguished Members of the Congress and, of course, Chaplain Ogilvie. I'd like to say a special word of welcome to the Notre Dame Glee Club, who sang the national anthem without benefit of musical background. Most of us need the music to cover up the mistakes we make, and they were wonderful.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking you for your gracious leadership on this and many other occasions like this, and especially today. I want to also thank you for your work for democracy and freedom and helping to save it in the oldest republic in Latin America, Colombia. I just signed the legislation that you passed in a bipartisan way, and I thank you for that.

I want to say, I have heard many speeches today about a man I admire very much, a servant and child of God, a genuine American patriot, and a citizen of the world and a person that Hillary and I were fortunate to get to know several years before we moved here to Washington. Father, she told me this morning to tell you hello and congratulations. We hope that now that you've got one more award, you'll still be nice to all your ordinary friends who admire you so much. *[Laughter]*

In 1987, when Father Hesburgh retired after 35 years as president of Notre Dame, the New York Times wrote this: "The Hesburgh era is ended, and the Hesburgh legend begins." Well, today, we have seen the legend growing. We've heard a lot about the recognition of his accomplishments, beginning with President Johnson's bestowal of the Medal of Freedom and going through these degrees. You know, this is getting

to be like a fish story; there will be 200 degrees before we finish this ceremony today. *[Laughter]*

But I will say again, I think that all of your friends, the people who have known you over the years and admired everything you've done for civil rights and world peace and for Notre Dame, they'd say that the most important thing about you and the greatest honor you will ever wear around your neck is the collar you have worn for 57 years. From the age of 6, you wanted to be a priest—in his words, a mediator between God and humankind. "A priest belongs to no one," he said, "so he can belong to everyone."

Father's first job at Notre Dame was chaplain of the married veterans who enrolled on the GI bill. He said he loved the job. He had two or three baptisms every Sunday, and he bargained with the local obstetricians to get volume discounts for Notre Dame babies. *[Laughter]*

One of his charges rushed into delivery only 6 months pregnant. The baby was taken by caesarean with a heartbeat but no breath. The medical team could not bring breath. But the instant Father Hesburgh baptized the baby with cold baptismal water, the baby began to cry loudly. That premature baby is now a 6-foot, 2-inch graduate of the University of Notre Dame.

Father Hesburgh never let one value be an excuse for not achieving another. You heard Senator Daschle say that he gave Notre Dame a great university with a great football team. Once he was criticized by some clergy for his emphasis on academic improvement, and he said this: "Piety is no substitute for competent scholarship."

The legendary Robert Maynard Hutchins of the University of Chicago once said that Father

Hesburgh's improvements at Notre Dame constituted, and I quote, "one of the most spectacular developments in higher education in the last 25 years."

But the thing that was most important is that he saw himself as a child and servant of God. The thing that I have always been most impressed by is that even as President of Notre Dame, he never stopped being a priest. The light from his third-floor office under the Golden Dome was often glowing late at night. Students seeking counseling or conversation could climb the fire escape, tap on the window, and get a post-midnight visit. He called it his open window policy. I'm thinking of adopting it now.

Once at Notre Dame, a young Jewish student from Boston left campus 2 weeks into the semester because two freshmen hurt him deeply with their anti-Semitic slurs. The freshmen were sent to Father Hesburgh. Here is what he did: "Pack your bags," he said, "and go to Boston.

You either convince that young man to come back to Notre Dame, or you don't come back to Notre Dame." They all came back, and they all graduated. Now, that is leadership.

I say again, Father, we value everything you have done and all your public service. We know it is built on the bedrock of faith. For, faith, in your words, enables us to rise above ourselves with the help of God.

For all of us who have been privileged to know you in any way, in any of your many capacities, the thing that we know is that your greatness, which led to all this achievement, was rooted in your peculiar understanding of our common humanity and our common tie as children of God. You have done your church, your country, your family, and your friends very proud, and we thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in the Rotunda at the Capitol.

Remarks on the Trade Agreement With Vietnam and an Exchange With Reporters July 13, 2000

The President. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Just a few moments ago, Ambassador Barshefsky and Minister Vu Khoan signed an agreement between the United States and Vietnam that will dramatically open Vietnam's economy, further integrate it into the international community, and increase trade between our two nations. And so from the bitter past, we plant the seeds of a better future.

This is another historic step in the process of normalization, reconciliation, and healing between our two nations. Improvements in the relationship between the United States and Vietnam have depended from the beginning upon progress in determining the fate of Americans who did not return from the war.

In 1994, with the support of the Members of Congress standing with me here, and others, I lifted the trade embargo on Vietnam in response to its cooperation on the POW/MIA issue. A year later I normalized diplomatic relations between our two nations to further this goal. As further progress was made in 1996, I appointed former Congressman Pete Peterson,

himself a former prisoner of war, to be our United States Ambassador in Vietnam.

With the indispensable help of key congressional allies, especially Senator John Kerry and Senator John McCain, Senator Bob Kerrey and Senator Chuck Hagel and Senator Chuck Robb, Representative Rick Boucher, Representative Reyes, who is here, Representative Manzullo, Representatives Lane Evans, Kolbe, Bereuter, and McDermott, this process has worked.

Since 1993, we have undertaken 39 joint recovery operations with Vietnam, and the number of 40 is underway as we speak. One hundred and thirty-five American families have received the remains of their loved ones, and we're in the process of identifying another 150 possible sets of remains. Time and again, the Vietnamese people have shared their memories with Americans. And we, too, have sought to help Vietnam in its own search for answers.

Our Nation has also felt a special sense of responsibility to those people in Vietnam whose families were torn apart during and after the

war. In the last few years, we've made tremendous progress in resettling tens of thousands of Vietnamese refugees in the United States, closing yet another painful chapter.

And Vietnam has done much to turn its face toward a changing world. It has worked to open its economy and move into the mainstream of Southeast Asia as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and APEC. Our trading relations have also grown. When I took office, our exports to Vietnam totaled just \$4 million. Today, they stand at \$291 million.

The agreement we signed today will dramatically open Vietnam's markets on everything from agriculture to industrial goods to telecommunications products, while creating jobs both in Vietnam and in the United States.

With this agreement, Vietnam has agreed to speed its opening to the world, to subject important decisions to the rule of law and the international trading system, to increase the flow of information to its people; by inviting competition in, to accelerate the rise of a free market economy and the private sector within Vietnam itself. We hope expanded trade will go hand in hand with strength and respect for human rights and labor standards. For, we live in an age where wealth is generated by the free exchange of ideas, and stability depends on democratic choices. By signing this agreement, Vietnam takes an important step in the right direction.

We've been working on this agreement since 1996, and there are many people who deserve recognition. I want to say a special thanks to our Trade Representative, Ambassador Barshefsky; our Deputy USTR, Richard Fisher; Joe Damond, of USTR, for working so hard in the last 4 years to turn this agreement into reality.

I would also like to thank their Vietnamese counterparts, Trade Minister Vu Khoan, Chief Negotiator Nguyen Dinh Luong. And I want to say a special word of thanks also to Vietnamese Ambassador Le Van Bang and to our Ambassador, Pete Peterson, who have worked so hard to build ties among our nations and our people.

And let me say again, it is my opinion that none of this would have been possible had it not been for the visionary and brave and reconciling leadership of the Americans in the United States Congress who served, many of whom suffered, in Vietnam; especially those who are here with me and the others whose names I men-

tioned earlier. Our debt to them as a nation is immense.

This agreement is one more reminder that former adversaries can come together to find common ground in a way that benefits all their people, to let go of the past and embrace the future, to forgive and to reconcile. As all of you know, that is what we are now trying to achieve at Camp David, in what many believe is the most difficult of all historical circumstances.

This day is encouraging to me, and I will take the energy I feel here from all these people back to Camp David and make the argument that they should follow suit.

Thank you very much.

Possible Visit to Vietnam

Q. Mr. President, you've talked about going to Vietnam. Are you planning to go to Vietnam after the APEC ministerial in November?

The President. I haven't made a decision yet.

Philadelphia Police Incident

Q. Mr. President, have you seen the videotape of the beating that a suspect apparently took at the hands of the Philadelphia police yesterday, and are you concerned about it? Have you asked any of the authorities to look into it?

The President. No, I haven't seen it, because I've been pretty isolated in the peace talks, but I've been briefed about it. The Justice Department is looking into it. And when I was in Baltimore on the way down here today, I spoke briefly with Mayor Street. And he assured me that he was going to go home and handle it in the appropriate way, and I trust him. He's a strong man and a good man, and I think he will do what is right.

Middle East Peace Summit

Q. Sir, is any substantial progress being made at Camp David? And there seems to be some confusion about whether you will allow the Palestinian opposition figures to come in to see Chairman Arafat.

The President. I think I should say nothing about what's going on at Camp David. The less I say, the greater our chances of success.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House prior to departure for Camp David, MD. In his remarks, he

referred to Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia, PA. A reporter referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Statement on the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy *July 13, 2000*

Today I am pleased to announce the appointment of the Chair and the first 10 members of the White House Commission on Alternative Medicine. This Commission, created by an Executive order on March 8, 2000, is charged with developing a set of legislative and administrative recommendations to maximize the benefits of complementary and alternative medicine for the general public.

Each year tens of millions of Americans receive alternative therapies. The great potential and possible perils associated with the use of complementary and alternative medicine have been well documented. There is no doubt that these therapies should be held to the same standard of scientific rigor as more traditional health care interventions.

If we are going to hold complementary and alternative therapies to an appropriate standard of accountability, we need to invest in research so health care professionals and consumers can make informed judgments about the appropriate use of these services. In that vein, we have worked with Senator Harkin and a bipartisan coalition of Members of Congress to establish the NIH Center for Complementary and Alter-

native Medicine to invest resources in scientific analysis to make such information available.

But we need to do more. We need to be able to use information about alternative therapies to set the national agenda for the education and training of health care practitioners in this field and provide recommendations for advisable coverage policies for alternative therapies.

I particularly want to applaud the leadership of Senator Tom Harkin, Senator Barbara Mikulski, Senator Arlen Specter, Senator Harry Reid, and Congressman Peter DeFazio in advocating for and finding funding for this Commission. There is no question in my mind that we would not be making this announcement without their tireless efforts. I also want to thank Secretary Shalala for her commitment to explore all avenues of scientific discovery to help ensure that Americans have access to the most accountable and responsive health care system possible.

As we enter into the 21st century, we need to get better information to ensure American families have access to the best and most cost-effective health care. I know I join the Congress, the policymakers, and the American public in saying how much we look forward to the results of the Commission's work.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Debt-Relief Legislation *July 13, 2000*

While the bill passed today underfunds vital international priorities and should not become law, the Waters amendment passed by the House of Representatives increasing funding to the Heavily Indebted Poorest Countries (HIPC) initiative is an enormously encouraging step. Relieving the world's poorest nations of crushing debt obligations will help free up crucial funds

for education, health care, and basic human needs. Unsustainable debt continues to help keep too many poor countries and poor people in poverty. I urge Congress to pass the full amount that I have requested for debt relief this year. As it stands, this bill still falls far short of what is necessary to fully implement this initiative.

Statement on Signing the Emergency Supplemental Act, 2000 *July 13, 2000*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4425, which includes emergency supplemental funding to bolster democracy and battle drug-trafficking in Colombia, and to keep the peace and build stability in Kosovo.

Colombia is a strong ally of the United States and the oldest democracy in Latin America. Today it is under attack—from civil conflict and drug trafficking that fuels violence, undercuts honest enterprise, and undermines public confidence in democracy.

President Andres Pastrana has worked with experts in his country and elsewhere to put together “Plan Colombia”—a comprehensive plan to seek peace, fight drugs, build the economy, and deepen democracy. The legislation I signed today represents America’s contribution to the struggle. It includes a ten-fold increase in U.S. funds to promote good government, judicial reform, human rights protection, and economic development. It will increase incentives for the peaceful resolution of the civil war, while helping the government staunch the flow of drugs to our shores.

As Colombians fight to build their democracy and block the illegal drug trade, they are fighting for all of us. If they are willing to take up the fight, we should be willing to take on some of the cost. I am proud to sign legislation that appropriates funds for doing that.

This legislation also funds our request for military operations in Kosovo. NATO forces won the war in 78 days; it will take longer to secure a stable peace. I applaud Congress for sending a message that we will stand by our troops until the job is done.

While I am pleased with Congressional action on Colombia and Kosovo, this legislation is disappointing for what it leaves out. It undercuts U.S. interests by omitting funding for U.N. peacekeeping operations in Southeast Europe, assistance for economic and democratic reforms, and support for civilian infrastructure. Such support is critical not only to advance long-term stability in Southeast Europe, but also to create the conditions for the eventual withdrawal of U.S. troops.

I am also disappointed the bill does not include requested funding to relieve the debts of the world’s poorest countries, delaying relief for nations that have implemented far-reaching economic reforms. Additionally, the bill offers inadequate funding for Mozambique and other Southern African nations devastated by recent flooding.

Finally, I am pleased the bill provides needed home energy assistance for low-income families, which will be essential in the event of a dangerous heat wave this summer, and provides further assistance, including housing construction and repair, to the victims of Hurricane Floyd, some of whom still lack permanent shelter.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 13, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4425, approved July 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–246. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Statement on Signing the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, Emergency Supplemental Act, 2000, and Cerro Grande Fire Supplemental *July 13, 2000*

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4425, the Military Construction Appropriations Act, FY 2001, Emergency Supplemental Act, FY 2000, and Cerro Grande Fire Supplemental, which provides funding for military construction and

family housing programs of the Department of Defense (DoD), and urgently needed supplemental resources.

I am gratified that my Administration and the Congress were able to reach agreement on the

FY 2000 supplemental legislation included in H.R. 4425. This important supplemental appropriation provides urgently needed resources to keep the peace and build stability in Kosovo, bolster democracy and reform elsewhere in Southeast Europe, support the Colombian government's fight against drug traffickers, provide needed home energy assistance for low-income families, provide further assistance to the victims of Hurricane Floyd and other natural disasters, including the crisis in Mozambique, and for other purposes.

I commend the Congress for providing the critical resources needed to continue our support for Plan Colombia, President Pastrana's strategy to address Colombia's national security, socioeconomic, and drug-related problems. The \$1.3 billion provided underscores our commitment to support the fight against drug traffickers and benefits the United States by bringing greater peace and prosperity to an important American ally.

Nonetheless, I am concerned that certain provisions of the bill will limit the effectiveness of our assistance. Key initiatives, such as ground-based radar, secure field communications, and force protection are funded at levels below my request. Furthermore, the Congress substituted its own judgement for that of the U.S. and Colombian militaries, and provided funding for only 16 of the 30 Blackhawk helicopters requested for the Colombian Army, providing instead funding for 30 Huey II helicopters. The substitution of Huey IIs for Blackhawks creates logistical and pilot training problems for an already stretched infrastructure in Colombia, and fields a significantly less capable helicopter for the counterdrug mission.

I am pleased that the bill fully funds our request for military operations in Kosovo. We will work to ensure that the additional resources for readiness, military personnel, natural disaster recovery, defense healthcare, fuel, equipment upgrades, and intelligence support high priority activities within the Department of Defense.

I am disappointed that the bill does not include funding I requested for U.N. peace-keeping operations in the region, requested security and operational needs for embassies in Kosovo, or assistance for economic and democratic reforms in the region. The U.N. mission in Kosovo is performing an extraordinarily difficult but essential task of overseeing civilian administration until the people of Kosovo are

able to assume that responsibility themselves. Secure facilities are needed in Kosovo to ensure the security of our employees serving U.S. interests and working to achieve lasting peace in the region. The requested funds support essential civilian infrastructure that would facilitate a prudent exit strategy for Kosovo and achieve long-term stability in the Balkans.

I am also disappointed that the bill does not include requested funding for the multilateral Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt reduction initiative. Debt relief is both a moral imperative and good economics. Each year, most countries eligible for the HIPC initiative spend more on foreign debt service than on health. In many, one in ten children dies before his or her first birthday, one in three is malnourished, the average adult has had only 3 years of schooling, and HIV infection rates are as high as 20 percent. The failure of the Congress to provide this funding will result in delays in implementing debt reduction for qualifying countries, especially those in Latin America that have implemented far-reaching economic reforms. Similarly, while I am pleased that the Congress provided some funding for reconstruction assistance to Mozambique and the other Southern African countries devastated by recent flooding, these countries require additional assistance to recover from natural disasters and continue their progress in implementing economic and democratic reforms.

I am disappointed that requested funding was not provided for a number of other important programs including:

- Projects designated to strengthen our critical infrastructure.
- The Ricky Ray Hemophilia Relief Trust Fund. This request was part of my plan, announced in the Mid-Session Review Budget, to fully fund the \$750 million Trust Fund by FY 2001. I will work with the Congress to find other ways to achieve this goal. Delay in funding the Trust Fund will mean there will be fewer hemophiliacs with HIV alive to benefit from this program.
- Summer jobs and other education and training opportunities for disadvantaged youth. The request would have ensured that our Nation's young adults were not

left behind as States and local areas transition to the requirements of the Workforce Investment Act.

I am pleased that the bill provides \$40 million included in our agreement with the Government of Puerto Rico related to the Navy training facility on the island of Vieques. This will be used for projects that will meet the health, environmental, and economic concerns of the residents as well as fund the referendum to determine the range's future.

I am especially pleased that this legislation includes over \$300 million in relief funds for Hurricane Floyd and other natural disasters. It also includes \$600 million I requested for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. This funding will provide needed assistance for low-income families.

The bill provides \$661 million to address the consequences of the fires in Los Alamos, New Mexico, as well as \$350 million for firefighting activities.

While the Congress dropped most of the objectionable riders from the bill, regrettably, the Congress has included several objectionable language provisions:

- Most objectionable is an anti-environmental rider that was not in either the House or Senate version of the bill, which could significantly slow efforts to clean up the 20,000 bodies of water the States have identified as too polluted for fishing or swimming. Before this problematic prohibition became effective, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published its final clean water rule, which is the subject of this rider. In the final rule, EPA responded to many of the comments it received, including comments from the States and Members of Congress. The EPA rule grants to the States flexibility in deciding how reductions in water pollution can best be achieved, contains deadlines for the development of State clean water plans and additional time for achieving the pollution reductions States have chosen, and drops provisions that could require new permits for forestry, aquaculture, and animal feeding operations. Moreover, the rule's effective date coincides with the end of the congressional prohibition—October 1, 2001. This delayed effective date will allow

States to develop their plans during FY 2001, under existing clean water rules.

- The bill also includes a rider that would delay until the end of the fiscal year environmental analysis of Central Arizona Project (CAP) water allocations that must be made before major Indian water rights settlements and litigation over the CAP repayment obligation can be finally resolved, thus jeopardizing these important settlements.
- The bill includes riders to Colombia assistance, limiting the use of certain funds to support the initiative, placing caps on U.S. personnel, and requiring detailed certifications concerning Colombian compliance with specific human rights provisions and the Colombian drug eradication strategy. These riders may make it more difficult to provide effective assistance as drug traffickers change their tactics.
- There is also a provision that would create a burdensome reporting requirement for the National Missile Defense Organization.

I am pleased that the Congress has decided not to include statutory language that would have interfered with the Department of the Army's management of the Army Corps of Engineers. The proposed legislative rider would have prevented the Secretary of the Army from clarifying the proper relationship between senior Corps of Engineers officials and the appointed civilian officials of the Army who have responsibility for overseeing the Corps of Engineers' activities. It is important and appropriate that the Congress has retained for these civilian officials, who are confirmed by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, the means to ensure a clear chain of command necessary for effective organization performance.

Weakening this relationship statutorily would raise serious constitutional issues that extend to civilian-military relationships far beyond the Corps of Engineers. I am concerned, however, about language included in the Conference Statement of the Managers setting out certain conditions related to these management issues. As this language does not prevent the Army from proceeding with management improvements, to the extent the Congress has requested additional consultation, this request will be fully honored. The Congress has also requested that the Army not move forward with these clarifying

improvements until ongoing investigations regarding the Army Corps of Engineers are made available and considered. We take this language to refer to the Army Inspector General's investigation of matters related to the Upper Mississippi study, which is the only investigation the Army has underway regarding the Corps of Engineers. I am directing the Secretary of the Army to review potential implications of the Inspector General's investigation for the proposed reforms, to take them into account if relevant, and to consult with the Congress about these investigations as he proceeds with his management improvements.

The Act funds the vast majority of my request for military construction projects, the military housing program, and other quality-of-life projects for our military personnel and their families. The requested projects are critical to supporting military readiness and the quality of life of our soldiers and their families. However, I have several concerns with the bill:

- Continuing a trend of the past few years, the Congress has not provided the requested level of construction funding for the Chemical Weapons Demilitarization program, an important national program. This year's reduction of my funding request by \$20 million threatens the ability of the United States to meet the 2007 Chemical Weapons Convention deadline for the destruction of the U.S. stockpile of chemical weapons. The sooner these weapons are destroyed, the safer we will all be.
- The Congress has chosen to add funds for projects that DoD has not identified as priorities. In particular, the bill includes \$475 million for 83 projects that are not in DoD's Future Years Defense Program.
- The Congress has again included a provision (section 124) that would prevent the use of funds provided by this Act for Partnership for Peace Programs in the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. Although this provision would have no practical effect in the short term, I believe it could adversely affect U.S. foreign policy initiatives, as well as future NATO-led operations, if it were to become a permanent fixture in future Military Construction Appropriations Acts.

Today, I am designating as emergency requirements the funds—with two exceptions—in the Act that the Congress has so designated. The exceptions are for the Department of Health and Human Services Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program and the Department of the Interior Wildland Fire Management program. The emergency designations are necessary so that urgently needed funds are available for critical needs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 13, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4425, approved July 13, was assigned Public Law No. 106–246.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Cyprus-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty July 13, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Nicosia on December 20, 1999. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. Together with the Extradition Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, which entered into force September 14, 1999, this Treaty will, upon entry into force, provide an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of offenses, including organized crime, terrorism,

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drug-trafficking offenses, and other violent crimes as well as money laundering and other white collar crimes of particular interest to the U.S. law enforcement community. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and other items; locating or identifying persons or items; serving documents; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing searches and

seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobilization and forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 13, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the South Africa-United States Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty

July 13, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of South Africa on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Washington on September 16, 1999. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. Together with the Extradition Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of South Africa, also signed September 16, 1999, this Treaty will, upon entry into force, provide an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of offenses, including terrorism, organized crime, drug-trafficking offenses, and other violent crimes as well as money laundering, and other white collar

crimes of particular interest to the U.S. law enforcement community. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes taking the testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records and articles of evidence; locating or identifying persons; serving documents; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to restraint or immobilization and confiscation or forfeiture of assets or property, compensation or restitution, and recovery or collection of fines; and any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 13, 2000.

Statement on Senate Action on Estate Tax Legislation *July 14, 2000*

While I am willing to support targeted and fiscally responsible legislation that provides estate tax relief for small businesses, family farms, and principal residences, the estate tax repeal passed by the Senate is a budget-busting bill that provides a huge tax cut for the most well-off Americans at the expense of working families. This back-loaded bill explodes in cost from \$100 billion from 2001–10 to \$750 billion from 2011–20, just when Medicare and Social Security are coming under strain. The Senate is wrong to pass this costly, irresponsible, and regressive bill which provides half of its benefits to about 3,000 families annually while more than 10 million Americans are waiting for an increase in the minimum wage and tens of millions of seniors lack dependable prescription drug coverage. Furthermore, studies by economists have found that repealing the estate tax would reduce charitable donations by \$5 billion to \$6 billion per year. When this bill comes to my desk, I will veto it.

I am disappointed that the majority in the Senate placed such an emphasis on passing such

a large and regressive tax cut, while voting against the priorities of millions of American families. The majority in the Senate voted against more targeted and fiscally responsible estate tax relief that would have eliminated estate taxes for two-thirds of families and the vast majority of small businesses and family farms at a fraction of the cost of repeal. The Senate also voted against measures to reduce poverty among senior citizens, provide for a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, make college more affordable, provide additional housing, help working families save for retirement, and assist families in assuring affordable health insurance and long-term care.

I urge the congressional leadership to work with me to relieve the burden of estate taxes for small businesses, family farms, and families in a fiscally responsible manner while strengthening Social Security and Medicare, investing in key priorities, and paying down the debt by 2012.

Statement on Senate Action on Proposed Legislation for Critical Lands Protection Funding *July 14, 2000*

I am pleased that a bipartisan agreement was reached today in the Senate on legislation to provide permanent funding to protect critical lands across America. We have before us an historic opportunity to build a truly enduring conservation endowment. I commend Senator Bingaman and Senator Murkowski for their leadership in moving us closer to that goal. I am

committed to working with Congress in the bipartisan spirit reflected in today's agreement so that future generations will have the resources to protect precious lands, from city parks to threatened farmland to our grandest natural treasures.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Foreign Operations
Appropriations
July 14, 2000

Yesterday the House of Representatives passed a foreign operations bill which includes certain positive elements but is nonetheless deeply flawed. I am pleased that members of both parties joined together to support debt relief for the poorest of the poor nations, as illustrated by the vote on Representative Maxine Waters amendment. While this is an encouraging step, I urge Congress to build on this support by fully funding my request for debt reduction to fully implement the landmark Cologne debt initiative. I am also pleased that a majority in the House supports our efforts to halt the global spread of AIDS. In Africa, AIDS is a leading cause of death and is undermining decades of effort to reduce mortality, improve health, expand educational opportunities, and lift people out of poverty.

However, it is unfortunate and unacceptable that this bill fails to provide the resources necessary to support our efforts to keep building peace and stability around the world. The House bill imposes deep, untenable cuts to U.S. contributions to multilateral development banks, including the International Development Association which provides loans for the world's neediest countries in areas like health, clean water supplies, education, and other infrastructure needed for lasting poverty reduction. It is counterproductive to slash development loans that are aimed at lifting the world's poorest nations from poverty, as they reform their social and economic policies, while providing debt relief to these same nations for the same purpose. To do so undermines efforts to lift these countries from deepest poverty and sends them in the wrong direction just when they are working to reverse the devastating spread of AIDS among their people. This bill also denies funding for other multilateral development banks, in-

cluding draining resources from efforts to encourage developing nations to promote sound environmental policy. We must support the efforts of multilateral development banks, and we must fully fund our obligation to debt relief for the world's poorest nations.

This bill includes deep cuts in military assistance for nations working with the United States to advance stability; in particular, it would drain essential funds necessary to support Mid-East peace. It also cuts funding from the Ex-Im Bank which supports the export of American products overseas.

Support for combating terrorism and nuclear proliferation is inadequate. This bill fails to provide sufficient resources for work with scientists of other nations to reduce the threat of nuclear proliferation, and it denies funds to an administration initiative for anti-terrorism security training. By significantly cutting my request for funds to support Eastern Europe and voluntary peacekeeping, the bill also fails to provide the resources needed to implement a lasting peace in Kosovo and the Balkans and to bring our troops home from that region as quickly as possible.

In addition, Congress should not maintain the unnecessary restrictions on international family planning. We should not impose limitations on foreign nongovernmental organizations' use of their own money or their ability to participate in the democratic process in their own country. The bill also fails to provide sufficient funding for international family planning and other USAID development activities, thereby inhibiting our efforts to increase development assistance to Africa and Latin America. As this bill moves forward, I call on Congress to address the numerous and serious problems in it and to produce a foreign operations bill I can sign.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Review of Title III of the Cuban
Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996
July 14, 2000

Dear _____:

Pursuant to subsection 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114), (the “Act”), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond August 1, 2000, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

The President’s Radio Address
July 15, 2000

Good morning. Today I want to talk about what we as a nation must do to keep our economic expansion going and extend its benefits to every American.

For more than 7 years now, our Nation has followed a course of fiscal discipline that has paid tremendous dividends for the American people. We made tough choices, cut our deficits, paid down our debt. We’ve strengthened and extended the life of Social Security and Medicare. And we made the investments that matter most for America’s future in education, in health care, in the environment, in science and technology, and in targeted tax cuts.

But in recent weeks, the Republicans in Congress have done an about-face on our strategy of fiscal discipline. Having already passed more than half a trillion dollars in reckless tax cuts, this week they passed a fiscally irresponsible plan to repeal the entire estate tax. Its costs would explode to \$750 billion after 10 years. And every year fully half its benefits would go to just 3,000 families.

But they haven’t been able to provide an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit for tens of millions of Americans. They haven’t been able to add even a day to the life of Social Security or Medicare. They haven’t done anything new to improve our schools, increase the

minimum wage, expand health insurance coverage for children or parents whose children have coverage, or even to pass a meaningful Patients’ Bill of Rights. And now they seem ready to give up on our bipartisan plan to use Social Security and Medicare surpluses for debt reduction. All these actions are serving special interests, not our national interest.

As we look to the future, if we want to keep this economic expansion going, we have got to keep fiscal discipline at the forefront. That’s why I want to stay on track to pay off our national debt by 2012. That’s why we should dedicate Social Security surpluses to paying down the debt and use savings from debt reduction to extend the life of Social Security to 2057. Also, I support Vice President Gore’s proposal to take Medicare funds out of the budget as well, and to use savings from debt reduction to help extend the life of the Medicare Trust Fund out beyond 2030.

Now, their plan would take all of our projected surplus and spend it all for tax cuts and for the cost of privatizing partially the Social Security system and other spending. Let me ask you something. If someone asked you to sign a contract committing you to spend every penny of your projected earnings for the next 10 years, would you do it? Unfortunately, that’s what the

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congressional Republicans want us to do. Most of us would not sign away money we don't have, and neither should America.

That's why I've proposed setting aside \$500 billion as a reserve for America's future, so we can have a national discussion of our priorities and so we're prepared for a rainy day. If we do it responsibly, we'll still have the resources to meet key needs of American families. We can increase our investments in education and health care. We can have the right kind of targeted tax cuts to help Americans modernize our schools, send our children to college, care for sick family members, pay for child care. And we can offer every older American the option of affordable, dependable prescription drug benefits through Medicare.

There's a growing consensus, in the Senate and all across America, that we need a real Medicare prescription drug benefit, not a flawed private insurance program that even the insurance companies admit won't work. I also think we can agree to protect our hard-fought fiscal discipline by pledging to use Medicare surpluses only for debt reduction, as Vice President Gore has urged. I hope Republicans and Democrats would start from there and move forward together on America's other priorities.

In that spirit, I've reached out to Congress and said that if they'll agree to pass a plan that offers affordable Medicare prescription drug

coverage to all seniors and people with disabilities, while protecting our hard-won fiscal discipline, I will sign a marriage penalty relief law.

As yet, the Republican leaders have not yet responded to the Nation's call for a real prescription drug plan. But it's not too late to put progress over partisanship. The American people know what they need, a Medicare prescription drug benefit, investments in health and education, and targeted tax cuts that don't take us off the path of fiscal discipline and debt reduction.

Some people here in Washington already are looking ahead to election day. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. We did not reach this moment of prosperity by accident, but we could lose it through inattention. Remember, how a nation deals with prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment and values as how it deals with adversity. If we fail that test, the losers won't be political parties or special interests; they'll be our children and our future. But if we succeed, America's best days are still ahead.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:46 p.m. on July 14 at Camp David, MD, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Excerpt of an Interview With Michael Kramer of the New York Daily News

July 16, 2000

Middle East Peace Summit

Mr. Kramer. How's it going?

The President. I'm more optimistic than I was when they got here. This is really important. We might make it. I don't know. God it's hard. It's like nothing I've ever dealt with—all the negotiations with the Irish, all the stuff I've done with the Palestinians before this and with the Israelis, the Balkans at Dayton. What's really troubling is that they know if they make a peace agreement half of their constituencies will have to be angry at them for a while. But I would be totally misleading if I said I had an inkling

that a deal is at hand. That's just not true. But we're slogging.

Group of Eight Summit

Mr. Kramer. Will you leave for Japan on Wednesday?

The President. I hope so. I'm going to do my best to finish here. There's been some progress, but I can't say I know we'll succeed. They're trying. It's so hard. My heart goes out to them. It's really hard. It's the hardest thing I've ever seen.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 5:20 p.m. The President spoke by telephone from Camp David, MD. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this excerpt.

Statement Announcing Funding for Research To Prevent and Treat Alzheimer's Disease

July 16, 2000

Earlier this week, we learned that there has been exciting new progress in our quest to understand the root cause of and to possibly prevent Alzheimer's disease. In the absence of successful efforts to prevent and treat Alzheimer's disease, the number of our citizens afflicted with this devastating condition will more than triple over the next 50 years—from 4 to 14 million Americans.

Today I am pleased to announce that the National Institutes of Health, through the National Institute on Aging, will dedicate \$50 million to new research on the prevention and treatment of Alzheimer's disease, with a particular emphasis on the development of a vaccine to prevent the disease. This research, which builds on the encouraging findings reported this week at the World Alzheimer's Congress 2000, provides new hope not only for Americans who are at risk for developing Alzheimer's disease

in the future but for those who are already in its early stages.

It is more clear than ever that the Nation must continue its strong bipartisan support for biomedical research on the causes, treatments, and cures for Alzheimer's disease and other diseases affecting millions of Americans. Our public investment has and will continue to yield extraordinary advances in treatment. However, these treatments will not be available or affordable to millions of older Americans and people with disabilities if the Congress does not pass a meaningful Medicare prescription drug benefit this year.

I am pleased that there is growing bipartisan support for a real Medicare drug benefit—not a flawed private insurance model. Just as we have worked in a bipartisan manner to support biomedical research, we must do so for a long overdue Medicare prescription drug benefit.

Memorandum on the 2000 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area

July 14, 2000

Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: 2000 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area

I am delighted that the Secretary of Transportation Rodney E. Slater has agreed to serve as the Chair of the 2000 Combined Federal Campaign of the National Capital Area. I ask you to enthusiastically support the CFC by personally chairing the campaign in your agency and appointing a top official as your vice chair.

The Combined Federal Campaign is an important way for Federal employees to support thousands of worthy charities. Public servants

not only contribute to the campaign but also assume leadership roles to ensure its success.

Your personal support and enthusiasm will help positively influence thousands of employees and will guarantee another successful campaign.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 17. An original was available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

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Statement on the Community Reinvestment Act

July 17, 2000

The Community Reinvestment Act is helping to increase homeownership, create new jobs and businesses, and rebuild our country's inner cities and rural areas. Today's Federal Reserve Bank study of banks' and thrifts' CRA lending confirms that these loans are profitable and bring other benefits to banks as well. In part due

to CRA, many banks and thrifts have shown commitment and innovation in putting capital into the hands of individuals and into the communities that need it most. I am deeply committed to keeping CRA strong and effective to help do more to meet the needs of those not fully participating in our Nation's prosperity.

Statement on the Agreement by the Government of Germany To Compensate Victims of Nazi Slave and Forced Labor

July 17, 2000

In Berlin today the German Government and German companies signed an agreement that will lead to payments to victims of Nazi slave and forced labor. This important and generous act will bring comfort and some measure of justice to surviving victims of the Nazi era. It is a fitting capstone to the 20th century and a cornerstone for a 21st century of peace and

tolerance. I welcome the signing of this historic agreement and commend the German Government and companies for their responsibility and courage. I also applaud Chancellor Schroeder, Deputy Treasury Secretary Eizenstat, and German negotiator Lambsdorff for their leadership and perseverance in bringing us to this point.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions

July 17, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1 as amended by Public Law 106-113) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council. I shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 18.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to the Taliban

July 17, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the

Taliban (Afghanistan) that was declared in Executive Order 13129 of July 4, 1999.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 17, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 18.

Statement on Proposed Marriage Penalty Tax Relief Legislation

July 18, 2000

While I strongly support targeted marriage penalty relief, the marriage penalty bill put forth by the majority in Congress is one part of a fiscally irresponsible, poorly targeted, and regressive tax plan. If this strategy succeeds, more benefits will go to the top one percent of taxpayers than to the bottom 80 percent of all Americans, while ignoring tax cuts I have proposed for college tuition, long-term care, savings, and child care. By itself, I would veto this bill. In the spirit of bipartisanship, however,

I am willing to accept marriage penalty relief on this scale if Congress passes a plan that preserves the Medicare surplus to pay down the debt and passes a plan that gives real, voluntary Medicare prescription drug coverage that is available and affordable for all seniors. This is the best way to break the partisan logjam and help the tens of millions of older Americans across this country who face rising prescription drug costs.

Statement on the Japan-United States Agreement on Interconnection Rates

July 18, 2000

This important agreement on interconnection rates will help further reduce regulatory barriers to trade between the United States and Japan. It will level the playing field for America's cutting edge technologies and increase the number of Japanese consumers connected to the

Internet. It's a win-win for the United States and Japan and represents an important step as we prepare to discuss the impact of information technology on the global economy at the G-7/G-8 summit.

Statement on the Death of Senator Paul Coverdell

July 18, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Senator Paul Coverdell.

Paul Coverdell spent a lifetime serving the people of Georgia and our country. He was a tireless advocate who worked to ensure that children have access to quality education. And he was a leader in America's war against drugs. As Director of the Peace Corps, he proudly

carried America's spirit of volunteerism around the world.

I join all Americans in honoring Paul Coverdell for his years of service as a soldier, a public servant, and a statesman. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Nancy, his family, and his many friends.

Remarks on the Middle East Peace Summit and an Exchange With Reporters in Thurmont, Maryland

July 20, 2000

The President. As all of you know, for the past 9 days we have been engaged in the most comprehensive and thorough negotiations ever between Palestinians and Israelis on the core issues of their 52-year conflict. The two parties have been making an intensive effort to resolve their differences over the most difficult issues. The gaps remain substantial, but there has been progress, and we must all be prepared to go the extra mile.

After a round of intensive consultations this evening, the parties agreed to stay at Camp David while I travel to Okinawa for the G-8 summit. Mr. Lockhart will be able to fill you in on the details of how this occurred. I have to take the plane, and I'm running late, but I do want him to explain what happened.

During the time I am gone, Secretary Albright will be working with the parties, and we'll continue to try to close the gaps. Upon my return, I will assess the status of the talks.

There should be no illusion about the difficult task ahead, but there should be no limit to the effort we're prepared to make. These are in fundamental ways the hardest peace issues I have ever dealt with, but the short answer to why we're still here after everybody thought we were through is that nobody wanted to give up. After all these years, as hard as these issues are, they don't want to give up. And I didn't

think we should give up, and so we're still plugging away.

But you should draw no inference from this. I will observe the news blackout on the details and will continue to do it, but this is really, really hard.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, could you say one thing about your personal involvement here, what you have invested here personally over the past 9 days, and what it was that led you to conclude that this phase of the summit is not going to pan out as you had hoped?

The President. Well, I don't know that it won't now. I think anything I would say about that would in some way or another violate the prohibitions we have had. I have respected that rigorously. I have asked the other members of the parties to do so. And I just think any characterization or description beyond what I told you—we all thought it was over, at least now that—and then we discovered that nobody wanted to quit. Nobody wanted to give up. And that should be encouraging.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 a.m. at Thurmont Elementary School prior to departure for Okinawa, Japan.

Statement on the Tokyo, Japan, Group of Eight Meeting *July 20, 2000*

At today's unprecedented meeting in Tokyo, G-8 leaders met with leaders from developing nations and representatives from the private sector and international development institutions. While I regret that I was unable to participate, I look forward to hearing from Secretary Summers and my G-8 colleagues about the discussion and working to ensure that everyone benefits from the global economy.

Building on last year's Cologne debt initiative, the Okinawa summit will create a framework

to fight infectious disease, increase access to basic education, and expand opportunity through information technology. Despite a stronger global economy, too many people around the world live every day without essential health care, basic literacy, or the opportunity to share in the benefits of modern technology. I am committed to continuing to work closely with America's partners in the G-8 and the developing world to address these issues, reduce poverty, fight infectious disease, and increase opportunity for all.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Budget Request for the District of Columbia *July 20, 2000*

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 202(c) of the District of Columbia Financial Management and Responsibility Assistance Act of 1995 and section 446 of the District of Columbia Self-Governmental Reorganization Act as amended in 1989, I am transmitting the District of Columbia's Fiscal Year 2001 Budget Request Act.

The proposed FY 2001 Budget reflects the major programmatic objectives of the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority. For FY

2001, the District estimates revenue of \$5.718 billion and total expenditures of \$5.714 billion, resulting in a budget surplus of \$4.128 million.

My transmittal of the District of Columbia's budget, as required by law, does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 20, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks at the National Peace Memorial Park in Okinawa, Japan *July 21, 2000*

First, let me thank the Governor and the other distinguished officials from Okinawa; the family members of those whose names are on this memorial; the distinguished veterans; ladies and gentlemen. I think I should begin by saying that in as much as we are here to talk about the future as well as the past, I think we should give another round of applause to Machika. [*Applause*] She did a fine job and was a great credit to the students of this island.

I am very honored to be the first American President to visit Okinawa in 40 years. This week our partners from the G-8 will come here to speak many words about the future. I wanted to come first to this place that speaks so powerfully in silence about the past, to remember those who lost their lives here, to honor what must have been their last wish, that no future generation ever be forced to share their experience or repeat their sacrifice.

The battle of Okinawa itself lasted more than 80 days. More than 100,000 Japanese soldiers died—or almost 100,000. More than 10,000 American soldiers. But the heaviest tragedy by far fell on the people of Okinawa themselves: One-third of the civilian population lost; 90 percent of those who survived left homeless. Every life lost was a life like yours and mine, a life with family and friends, with love and hopes and dreams, a life that in a better world would have run its full course. I thank, especially, the family members of the Okinawans who died for meeting me here at the memorial today.

The battle of Okinawa was warfare at its most tragic. But this monument built in its memory is humanity at its most inspired; for here, no grief goes unrecognized. And while most monuments remember only those who have fallen from one side, this memorial recognizes those from all sides and those who took no side. Therefore, it is more than a war memorial. It is a monument to the tragedy of all war, reminding us of our common responsibility to prevent such destruction from ever happening again.

Over the past 50 years, our two nations have come together in this spirit to meet that responsibility. The strength of our alliance is one of the great stories of the 20th century. Asia is largely at peace today because our alliance has given people throughout the region confidence that peace will be defended and preserved. That is what alliances are for, and that is why ours must endure.

Of course, Okinawa has played an especially vital role in the endurance of our alliance. I know the people of Okinawa did not ask to play this role, hosting more than 50 percent of America's forces in Japan on less than one percent of Japan's land mass. I heard what the Governor said, and we had the opportunity to discuss this as we walked through the memorial. I have tried hard to understand the concerns of the people here. Five years ago we began a process of consolidating our bases here. Together, we agreed on 27 specific steps, over half of which are already completed.

Today, Governor, I want to reaffirm to you and the people of Okinawa, we will keep all our commitments, and we will continue to do what we can to reduce our footprint on this island. We take seriously our responsibility to be good neighbors, and it is unacceptable to the United States when we do not meet that responsibility.

In the meantime, there is more that we can do together to bring the benefits of peace and prosperity to this part of Japan. I want the world to see Okinawa not just as a battle in the past but as *bankoku shinryo*, a bridge between nations; appropriately, the very name of the conference center in which we are meeting this week.

Five centuries ago, during the golden age of the Sho dynasty, this land served as a crossroads for all trade that flowed through Asia. In the information age of the 21st century, Okinawa again can be a crossroads and a gateway between Japan and the rest of the world. In the past year, three American Fortune 500 companies have followed more than 20 Japanese information technology companies in opening operations here.

So here I say, because we have our friends from the media here, to people in the United States, in Europe, and all over the world, who will see this magnificent place on television tonight: Okinawa is a good place; come here and help the people build the future.

I am especially pleased to be here in the same year that Ryukyu University celebrates its 50th anniversary, proud that the United States played a leading role in its creation, equally proud that so many young Okinawans studied in the United States through the Garioa and Fulbright programs. In that great tradition, it is my honor to announce today that the United States and Japan will create a new scholarship program to send young Okinawan graduate students to the prestigious East-West Center in Hawaii. And we dedicate this program to the memory of my good friend, your late Prime Minister, Keizo Obuchi. May it add to the friendship and understanding between our nations that he worked so hard to advance.

This week Prime Minister Mori is bringing the partners of the G-8 to Okinawa to find ways to close the gap between the wealthiest and poorest nations of the world and, within nations, between the wealthiest and poorest areas. The message of hope and reconciliation embodied in this beautiful memorial and the remarkable friendship forged by the United States and Japan give us hope that we can build bridges over all the troubled waters of the new century that still keep too many people from the joys and possibilities that should be everyone's birthright.

In 1879 Sho Tai, the last King of the Ryukyus, left Shuri Castle for the last time. One of his final acts as king was to read a poem that summed up his hope for the future. Today, his words speak to us across the generations: *Ikusa-yun sumachi. Miruku-un yagate*. "The time for wars is ending. The time for peace is not far away. Do not despair. Life itself is a treasure." May Sho Tai's words guide our friendship and our work in the months and years to come.

Governor, I thank you for your remarks and your leadership here. In the end, the words

of Sho Tai, if we can make them real in our time, is the very highest tribute we can pay to all those people whose names are on this magnificent memorial.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. at the Cornerstone of Peace in the park. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Keiichi Inamine of Okinawa; Machika Kawamitsu, student, who introduced the President; and Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in Okinawa

July 21, 2000

Middle East Peace Summit

Q. Mr. President, are you more optimistic today about the prospects for a Middle East peace settlement?

The President. All I can tell you is that they're still talking, and consistent with our rules, I'm still not talking. [*Laughter*] But I'm hopeful.

National Missile Defense System

Q. Mr. President, are the two of you going to be talking about missile defense here today?

The President. I'm sure we will. We talked about it last month in Moscow, and I'm sure we'll talk about it.

NOTE: The exchange began at 6:20 p.m. at the Busena Terrace Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Russia-United States Joint Statement on Cooperation on Strategic Stability

July 21, 2000

The United States and Russia underscore that continued strengthening of global stability and international security is one of the most important tasks today. The Joint Statement on Principles of Strategic Stability, adopted in Moscow on June 4, 2000, establishes a constructive basis for progress in further reducing nuclear weapons arsenals, preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty and confronting new challenges to international security.

The United States and Russia have begun intensified discussions on the earliest entry into force of the START II Treaty, on further reductions in strategic forces within the framework of a future START III Treaty and on ABM issues.

The United States and Russia are dedicated to the search for new ways of cooperation to control the spread of missiles and missile technology. They will work together on a new mechanism to supplement the Missile Technology Control Regime. This mechanism would integrate the Russian proposal for a Global Monitoring System, the U.S. proposal for a missile code of conduct, as well as the mechanisms of the Missile Technology Control Regime, which the United States and Russia will continue to strengthen. They are prepared to expand their discussions of issues related to the threat of proliferation of missiles and missile technology.

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The United States and Russia reaffirm their commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the foundation of the international nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. They will work to ensure early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and seek to expand cooperation related to the CTBT to promote mutually beneficial technical exchanges that will facilitate implementation of the CTBT after its entry into force.

Broadening their cooperation for the purpose of strengthening stability, the United States and Russia will apply their efforts toward creating, and placing into operation within the year, a joint U.S.-Russian center for exchange of data from early warning systems and notification of launches. They will seek to complete work on an agreement on pre-launch notification for

launches of ballistic missiles and space launch vehicles, and on principles for opening this system to the voluntary participation of all interested countries.

The United States and Russia are prepared to renew and expand their cooperation in the area of theater missile defenses, and consider the possibility of involving other states.

The Presidents of the United States and Russia have agreed that officials will meet in the near future to coordinate their activities in this area.

Russia and the United States call upon the other nations of the G-8 and all other nations of the world to unite their efforts to strengthen strategic stability.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori of Japan in Okinawa

July 22, 2000

Japan-U.S. Trade

Q. Mr. President, has Mr. Mori agreed to a fourth year of the trade deregulation talks with the U.S.?

President Clinton. Maybe the Prime Minister should answer that.

Prime Minister Mori. Yes, we agreed to continue the dialog for another year.

President Clinton. And I'm very pleased about that because it's, I think, been a very fruitful thing for both our countries, and I think it will—the agreements we've made here at this summit, I think, will be very positive for Japan's economy and our relationship.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, what is your assessment of North Korea's offer to curb its missile program in exchange for space exploration assistance? Is there any reason to believe that's credible?

And Mr. Prime Minister, were you reassured by that offer?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, based on what President Putin said last night in our conversations, I think that it's something that needs to be explored, and we need to see exactly what the specifics are. I think that he would agree with that, too. It's not clear to me exactly what the offer is and what is being requested and the time for it. But I think we heard enough so that there should be an attempt to determine what the facts are here, but I can't say that I'm clear enough on what the offer was to make a final judgment.

NOTE: The exchange began at 9 a.m. at the Bankoku Shinryokan convention center. In his remarks, the President referred to President Vladimir Putin of Russia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's Radio Address *July 22, 2000*

Good morning. Today I want to talk about securing our economic future by keeping our prosperity going and extending its benefits to all Americans. For more than 7 years now, our Nation has stuck to a course of fiscal discipline. We've made tough choices, paid down the national debt, invested in our people. The strategy is clearly paying off, with the longest economic expansion and the largest budget surplus in our history. Now we have the chance to pass responsible tax cuts as we continue to pursue solid economic policy.

But instead of following the sensible path that got us here, congressional Republicans are treating this surplus as if they'd won it in the lottery. Although it took 7½ years to put deficits behind us, Congress has already drained more than \$900 billion of the projected surplus on tax breaks, most of it in just the last few weeks. And they've promised to do even more, working from numbers that are nothing more than estimates from the future.

Taken together, the tax cuts passed last year and this year by this Congress would completely erase the entire projected surplus over 10 years. The majority seems to have forgotten that projections in a report are not the same as dollars in the bank.

Think of it: If someone asked you, "What is your projected income over the next 10 years? Now we want you to sign a contract committing you to spend every single penny of it right now," would you do it? Would you spend all your money now and save nothing for retirement or emergencies or educating your children? Well, that's exactly what congressional Republicans want us to do—sign away a budget surplus we don't yet have and may not get.

In good conscience I cannot sign one expensive tax break after another without any coherent strategy for safeguarding our financial future. At this rate there will be no resources left for extending the life of Social Security or Medicare, a real Medicare prescription drug benefit, investing in education, much less getting us out of debt, which is so critical to our continued economic health.

What's more, the Republican cuts provide relatively few benefits for the vast majority of our

working families. They will provide more relief to the top one percent of taxpayers than to millions of working people who make up the bottom 80 percent of taxpayers. These tax breaks spend hundreds of billions of dollars and give one percent of Americans \$17,000 a piece, while most Americans get less than \$200 each. And tax cuts this large will stop us from paying down the debt, thereby raising interest rates, which will more than take away the tax cuts most Americans get in higher mortgage and interest payments.

Now, we should have tax cuts this year, but they should be the right ones, targeted to working families to help our economy grow, not tax breaks that will help only a few while putting our prosperity at risk.

That's why I've proposed a program of cuts to give middle class Americans more than twice the benefits of the Republican plan, at much less cost. Two-thirds of the relief of our proposal will go to the middle 60 percent of Americans, including my carefully targeted marriage penalty relief. My tax cuts would also help send our children to college, care for sick family members, pay for child care, ease the burden on working families with three or more children. And because my tax plan will cost substantially less than the tax cuts proposed by Congress, we'll still have enough money to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit, to strengthen Social Security, modernize Medicare, and stay on track to be debt-free in 2012.

In a way, being debt-free is the biggest tax cut of all. If we can just keep interest rates one percent lower over the next 10 years, that's worth about—way over \$250 billion in lower mortgage payments, \$150 billion in lower car payments, \$100 billion in lower student loan payments. That will benefit all Americans.

We have the resources. What we need is a common vision that extends beyond the November elections and a commitment to benefit all Americans, not just a few. That's why I've asked Congress to work with me on a balanced framework for tax cuts, investments, and debt reduction.

Throughout our history, America has been at its best when we looked to the future, when

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we chose the right way instead of the easy way. How we respond to this unprecedented moment of prosperity is just as great a test of our values and judgment as how we respond to adversity. Today, the right thing is for Democrats and Republicans to put election politics aside and work together to craft a 21st century budget, a framework for targeted tax cuts, responsible investments, and getting us out of debt.

This surplus comes from the hard work and ingenuity of the American people. We owe it

to them to make the best use of it—for all of them, and for our children's future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:45 p.m. on July 21 at the Manza Beach Hotel in Okinawa, Japan, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 22. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 21 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Proposed Marriage Penalty Tax Relief Legislation

July 22, 2000

While I strongly support targeted marriage penalty relief, the marriage penalty bill promoted by Republicans in Congress is one part of a costly, poorly targeted, and regressive tax plan. This plan would risk our fiscal discipline and continued prosperity while giving more benefits to the top one percent of taxpayers than to the bottom 80 percent of all Americans. At the same time, the Congress has ignored tax

cuts I have proposed for college tuition, long-term care, savings, and child care. This latest bill just passed by the Congress is even more costly than the earlier versions passed by the House and Senate. In the interest of fiscal responsibility, I will veto this and any subsequent legislation that threatens our ability to pay down the debt and strengthen Medicare and Social Security.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Norman Y. Mineta as Secretary of Commerce

July 22, 2000

I am grateful that the Senate has acted expeditiously to confirm Norman Y. Mineta as Secretary of Commerce, and am pleased that he was sworn in to office today.

As a Member of Congress for 21 years, Mr. Mineta was a leader on trade, technology, and other issues critical to the emerging digital economy. He brings to his new post not only an in-depth understanding of American business and the needs of our high-tech economy but also a deep concern for people—especially those not yet fully participating in this economy. He will play a crucial role in keeping our economic strategy on track, opening trade around the

world, investing in our people, promoting high technology, and bridging the digital divide.

Mr. Mineta also has been a passionate voice for opportunity and justice for all. Stirred by his experiences as a young boy during World War II, when he and his family were relocated to a Japanese-American internment camp, he has fought tirelessly to ensure that others are spared such injustice. I am proud to welcome him as the first Asian-Pacific American ever to hold a post in the President's Cabinet and congratulate him on his confirmation.

Remarks to the Community at Camp Foster Marine Base in Okinawa July 22, 2000

Thank you. Well, this is the largest crowd I have ever addressed at this late hour. Hello, U.S. forces, Okinawa!

Thank you, General Hailston, General Smith, General Hughey, Admiral Schultz, Colonel Sullivan. Let's give another round of applause to Staff Sergeant Wehunt. *[Applause]* He did a good job for you up here, didn't he?

I'm delighted to be here with my daughter, Chelsea, and Ambassador Foley. We're glad to be here. Thank you. We were supposed to do this tomorrow, but I think you know that I have to leave early to try to go back to the peace talks at Camp David on the Middle East. And I hope we will have your thoughts and prayers. And that's why we can't do it tomorrow.

But now I will go back in the right frame of mind, since I spent the night with you. And when I fly back home to peace in the Middle East, maybe you'll be going to Okuma instead of listening to me give a speech.

This is a really beautiful place, and I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to come here and to see the impact of your service here. In spite of how beautiful Okinawa is, I know you're still a long way from home. So let me begin, on behalf of every American citizen, by thanking our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines and your families for your service here for the United States.

Earlier this month, I spent the Fourth of July, my last Fourth of July as President, in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty on the flight deck of the U.S.S. *John F. Kennedy*. On the very first Fourth of July back in 1776 George Washington was not in Philadelphia when the Declaration of Independence was signed. Instead, he was with his troops in New York, in Manhattan, as the British ships landed just a few miles away on Staten Island. When the Declaration of Independence arrived from Philadelphia, General Washington had it read aloud to his troops so they would understand that the success of America depended upon the success of our military. It was true 224 years ago; it remains true today.

Thanks to you, the work you do everywhere, and here with our ally Japan, we live in peace. There is peace here, in part because III MEF

is here, with the 3d Marine Division; the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing; the 3d Force Service Group; the Marine Corps Base, Camp Butler; the Air Force's 18th Wing; the Army's 10th Area Support Group; the Navy's Task Force 76; and Fleet Activities Okinawa. And everybody I didn't mention, cheer for yourselves here. *[Applause]*

All of you know well the sad and difficult history of the Battle of Okinawa. On Friday I had the honor of visiting the Cornerstone of Peace park. The names of all who died are inscribed on the walls there, Japanese and Americans and Okinawan soldiers and civilians alike.

It is a remarkable memorial, not just to one side in a battle but to all the people who lost their lives. It is a stirring statement of our common humanity. And it strengthens our commitment to see that such a terrible thing never occurs again. That is why you are here. I don't want you to ever forget it, and I want you to always be very, very proud of what you are doing.

You will never know how many wars you have deterred, how many deaths you have prevented. But you know the number of wars that have been fought in these waters since the United States forces have been stationed here. That number is zero. You should be very, very proud.

We know our hosts in Okinawa have borne a heavy burden, hosting half our forces in Japan on less than one percent of its land. They, too, have paid a price to preserve the peace, and that is why we need to be good neighbors to them in addition to being good allies, why each one of us has a personal obligation to do everything that we can to strengthen our friendship and to do nothing to harm it.

We must continue to hear the concerns of our Okinawan friends to reduce the impact of our presence, to promote the kinds of activities that advance good relations, activities like those of the volunteers who help with English language instruction for elementary schoolchildren in Okinawa; like the 9th Engineer Support Battalion, who just replaced a 30-foot-high steel footpath bridge in an island village in northwest Okinawa; like the volunteers from the 10th Area Support Group who joined the people in

Yomitan Village in getting the island ready for the G-8 summit; like our naval hospital and our fire departments, working with their counterparts to improve emergency services; like the 7th Communication Battalion's efforts to do cleanup, make repairs, and pay visits to the residents of Hikariga Ogata Nursing Home.

And so many of you, the rest of you who reach out in your own way to schools, to orphanages, to hospitals, to retirement homes, these acts of kindness give a whole new meaning to the old words: Send in the Marines.

Two hundred and twenty-four years ago, when America was born, the world's only democracy was defended by an army that was then very badly outnumbered. Today, you are part of the greatest fighting force in history, part of the forward march of freedom.

But the most important thing I want to say to you is that your fellow Americans are proud of you and grateful to you. As I think about the enormous honor I have had for 7½ years now to serve as President, an honor which includes visiting more military units than any other

Commander in Chief in the history of the Republic, I am profoundly moved by what I have seen and by what I see here tonight. I wanted to come here, and I thank you for changing the schedule and coming out tonight. I thank you for the inspiration you've given me as I go back to try to finalize the peace talks on the Middle East. I thank you for giving your lives to the United States and the cause of freedom and peace.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to 7th Fleet Landing Force Commander Lt. Gen. Earl B. Hailston, USMC; 18th Air Wing Commander Brig. Gen. James B. Smith, USAF; Camp Smedley D. Butler Commander General Brig. Gen. Gary H. Hughey, USMC; Seventh Fleet Amphibious Force Commander Rear Adm. Paul S. Schultz, USN; First Special Operations Squadron Staff Sgt. Shane A. Wehunt, USAF; and U.S. Ambassador to Japan Thomas S. Foley.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and an Exchange With Reporters in Okinawa

July 23, 2000

Education Initiative for Developing Countries/ Group of Eight Summit

President Clinton. Good morning. Well, Prime Minister Blair and I are about to have breakfast together, and we have a lot to talk about, but before we do, I wanted to just make a couple of comments.

First of all—can you hear me now?—I wanted to make a couple of comments before I start my breakfast with Prime Minister Blair. First of all, let me say how much I appreciate the leadership of Prime Minister Mori in hosting this G-8 summit. This was the idea of the late Prime Minister Obuchi. I talked to him about it several times. I'm so glad that his wife was also able to be at our event last night. But I think the Japanese were very wise in bringing us to Okinawa. I personally enjoyed it. Of course, for an American President, it was a special pleasure because I was able to see so many of our troops and their families here. But this

was a very good thing. I also think it was a very good summit.

I wanted to say just a few words about one aspect of development that Prime Minister Blair has been particularly interested in, and shown a lot of leadership in our group, and that is the importance of the developed countries, the EU, the United States, Japan, and others, doing more for education in the developing countries. And I wanted to say just a few words about that.

I've been working on a proposal now for some months. It's obvious to me that we can't fight poverty effectively without not only dealing with the disease issue, which you Americans know we've done a lot with, without trying to close the digital divide, but also without expanding literacy and learning.

About 120 million children in the developing world never enroll in school. Hundreds of millions more never learn to read. The G-8 embraced our common commitment to ensure universal basic education in the poorest countries. One of the best things we can do to get children in school is to provide them at least one nutritious meal there every day.

So today I'm announcing a new initiative to support the international effort to provide meals to hungry school- and preschool-age children. Working with the World Food Program and NGO's, the United States will make a contribution of \$300 million to this effort. That money is enough to give one good meal to 9 million schoolchildren for a year in the developing world.

It will go to countries with a commitment to expand access to basic education, especially for girls who are still disproportionately left out of the education process. We will work carefully to do this in a way that does not interrupt local agricultural production. And let me say, one of the reasons we have to try to do this in a pilot way, even though this is a very large pilot, is to make sure we can find ways to add to the stock of school meals for children without interrupting the livelihoods of local farmers.

This idea has extraordinary bipartisan support in the United States. It was first brought to me by our U.N. Ambassador in Rome for Food, former Senator George McGovern, and Senator Bob Dole, along with Congressman Jim McGovern from Massachusetts. There is an enormous amount of support in both parties in our country for this, and I want to especially thank Senator McGovern, Senator Dole, and Congressman McGovern for their leadership in this.

I hope this pilot will grow over time as other nations participate and as we find out how to do this in a way that supports, not undermines, local agricultural efforts. And we will work with our partners and with Congress to make sure this has the maximum impact.

But I just want to say again, we estimate that we can increase school enrollment in the developing countries by millions and millions just by telling these children and their parents that we can give them one nutritious meal a day if, but only if, they show up in school. So I think this is one of the most cost-effective ways we can help the developing

countries who are trying to improve school enrollment to do so.

So that's what I wanted to say. And again, I want to thank Prime Minister Mori for his leadership in this conference and especially for the work done on development. This is the first time, at least in my experience, and this is my last G-8 conference, that there has been such a systematic focus on the developing world, on the problems of disease and the digital divide and education. And he deserves a lot of credit for that, as well as for the advances we made today—I mean, this week—in our bilateral relations. So I'm glad I came, and I think it was a great conference.

I'd like for the Prime Minister to have a chance to say a few words now.

Prime Minister Blair. First of all, can I join in what President Clinton has just said to you about the excellence of the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mori, and our thanks, too, for the way that he has hosted this conference, and also to the people of this island of Okinawa.

Can I also express my very strong support for the initiative that President Clinton has just announced to you. And we in the U.K. will look at the ways that we can help work with the U.S. and with others to make this initiative count.

I mean, obviously at this G-8 conference we have been discussing issues to deal with the international financial system. You may remember a couple of years ago that was the very difficult issue that we were trying to deal with, and we managed to deal with it with a certain amount of success I think. We dealt also with issues like organized crime and drugs, issues to do with biotechnology and so on.

But I think President Clinton is absolutely right that the focus of this summit has been very much on what we can do for the developing world. And I think that this summit, perhaps more than any other that I've attended, we've tried not just to deal with the issue of debt, with the issues of trade, with the issues of aid and development, with the issues of health, but we've also tried to look at how we foster and help education and access to education in the developing world. Because unless we deal with all these issues together, and in particular, unless we give the young children in the developing world the chance of getting quality education and being able to enroll in school and being able to get access to the new

technology and best learning available, then it's very difficult for these children, for these countries, to make progress.

So, of course, I know for many who work hard in the developing world, progress is often agonizingly slow. But I think that in the range of issues that we've discussed over these last few days, and in the focus on dealing with all these issues together, we have made some very significant steps forward. And I think and hope in the years to come that we will be able to do even more.

I think also, if I may just say, since this is President Clinton's last G-8 summit, last night all the leaders of the G-8 spoke not just of our immense affection for President Clinton, personally, but of our real admiration for his strength and his leadership over these past few years. I mean, he will have heard me say this many times, but I wouldn't want to leave this G-8 summit without just underlining that. That is the universal feeling amongst the leaders of the G-8, and we're all going to miss him very greatly, indeed.

Middle East Peace Summit

Q. Mr. President, after this 3-day interlude in the Middle East peace talks, do you think the chances of getting an agreement are any better than when you left Washington and it appeared that it was basically dead?

President Clinton. Well, I can't say that because of the rule that they follow, which you have to follow in such matters, which is nothing is agreed to until everything is agreed to. But I can say that they have not wasted the time. They've really worked, and I am very grateful for that. There is a rhythm in every one of these things I've ever been involved in. Some of them start off with a bang, and you go from there. Some of them never get off the ground. Some of them—most of them, there's a lot of feeling around until you get your bearings. They have worked. That's all I can tell you. Whether we get an agreement or not, they have tried. They have really been out there working.

I cannot comment yet on the respective positions of the parties because they're going on, and it would violate my understanding. But my understanding is, since I left—maybe because I left—I don't think that—but since I left there has been a lot more sort of systematic effort with the groups on a lot of the issues. So what-

ever happens, I think they have continued to make headway.

Genetically Modified Foods

Q. Mr. President, do you think the Europeans are being too cautious on the issue of GM foods? And perhaps the Prime Minister could also comment on that issue.

President Clinton. Well, I think you know that I believe that. On the other hand, I believe every country, and certainly the European Union, has a right and a responsibility to assure food safety. The only thing I have ever asked on GM foods is that the decisions be made based on clear science.

And I have certainly no objection to consumers knowing whether the food they buy are GM—I think there's nothing wrong with people knowing that—but knowledge only matters, knowledge of a certain category of things only matters if you know what it means underneath. So I think we should continue to do research; we should explore all alternatives. I can only tell you that I would never knowingly let the American people eat unsafe food.

Q. Prime Minister?

Prime Minister Blair. At the risk of running into trouble on these issues back home from time to time, I just believe what is essential is that we recognize two things. The first is that this whole science of biotechnology is going—I mean, I'm not an expert on it, but people tell me whose opinions I respect that this whole science of biotechnology is perhaps going to be, for the first half of the 21st century what information technology was to the last half of the 20th century. And therefore, it's particularly important, especially for a country like Britain that is a leader in this science of biotechnology, that we proceed according to the facts and the science.

And the second thing to say is that in respect to the facts and the science, I just hope we have an open and a fair debate. I mean, there are intensely held views on both sides of this argument, but the most important thing is that we get access to the best scientific evidence. Consumers should, of course, know what it is that they're eating and consuming. But for the consumers to make that judgment properly, they need the best science available. And that's what we've been working to in the U.K.

As I say, it's not always popular to say that, but I think it's important because it's the right

thing to do. And who knows what in 10, 20, 30 years will be the judgment about this new science. All I know is that our responsibility as leaders is to say to people, let's set up the best system, best process available so that you get the real facts, not the prejudices of one side or the commercial interests of one side but the facts and the science. And then we can make judgments.

President Clinton. Let me just make one other comment about this, because I'm not running for anything so I can say this. This tends to be treated as an issue of the interest of the agribusiness companies and earning big profits against food safety or some ultimate impact on biodiversity, which of course also should be studied. But that's not the real issue here.

The real issue is, how can you get the best food to the largest number of people in the world at the lowest possible price? That is the real issue. If it's safe—that's the big issue. All the evidence that I've seen convinces me, based on what all the scientists now know, that it is. But of course, every country has to deal with that.

But just for example, if we could get more of this golden rice, which is a genetically modified strain of rice, especially rich in vitamin A, out to the developed world, it could save 40,000 lives a day, people that are malnourished and dying. So this is a big issue, and it seems to me that's the way we ought to approach it, which is why I think we ought to, of course, be guided by the safety issues, but it ought to be a scientific judgment.

Go ahead.

Group of Eight Summit

Q. Mr. President, this being your last G-8 summit, how would you sum up the achievements of this summit, and how would you change G-8 for the better, given your experience over the years? And finally, do you think Russia should now be a full member of G-8, from start to finish, without a separate G-7 and G-8 procedure?

President Clinton. Let me start at the back. For all practical purposes, Russia is a full member of this. But the G-7 have to meet separately when there are creditor nation issues that only the creditor nations can deal with. And I think that you will see more and more and more of that. But for all practical purposes, they are.

There are some decisions that have to be taken by the leaders in the G-7 as creditor nations. It's purely a question of financial necessity. Otherwise, Russia is fully involved.

Secondly, last year we had a big—at Cologne—we had a big debt relief initiative for the developing world. This year we've built on the debt relief issue by looking into other issue related to alleviating poverty and closing the vast gaps in income and quality of life. And that's what we talked about today with education; that's what the disease initiative was all about. So I think they're going in the right direction.

And I don't have any particular suggestions for changes, except I think that every year if we could do what Prime Minister Mori did this year, focus on some problem that affects not only us but the rest of the world and have at least half-day where we bring in people like they did in Tokyo—and I regret that I missed that part of it because I think it was fascinating—I think that would be a good thing to do.

I think the fact that it's more informal now than it used to be and that the leaders spend more time talking than they used to—maybe not making news on a particular day, is a plus, not a negative. These people need to know each other. There are a lot of decisions they have to make, a lot of conflicts they can avoid if they know each other and trust each other. So I'm not troubled by the format.

U.S. Presence on Okinawa

Q. Mr. President, if so many people on Okinawa resent the presence of American military here, why not withdraw them?

President Clinton. Well, because we still have security needs here and because I believe that as long as we're good citizens, most of the people on Okinawa understand and appreciate that. What we are doing is aggressively trying to reduce our footprint, and we should continue to do that. We should be as little burden and as great an economic support to the people of Okinawa as possible, because they have borne a disproportionate share.

But I want to say again to Governor Inamine and the people of Okinawa, they've done a great job on this conference, but they've been very, very good to the United States service families that have been here over all these years. And we're going to keep trying to reduce our burden, but we have not yet reached the time, in my

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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

be a great United States Senator, and I look forward to working with him.

Trilateral Statement: Middle East Peace Summit *July 25, 2000*

Between July 11 and 24, under the auspices of President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat met at Camp David in an effort to reach an agreement on permanent status. While they were not able to bridge the gaps and reach an agreement, their negotiations were unprecedented in both scope and detail. Building on the progress achieved at Camp David, the two leaders agreed on the following principles to guide their negotiations:

- 1) The two sides agreed that the aim of their negotiations is to put an end to decades of conflict and achieve a just and lasting peace.
- 2) The two sides commit themselves to continue their efforts to conclude an agreement on all permanent status issues as soon as possible.
- 3) Both sides agree that negotiations based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242

and 338 are the only way to achieve such an agreement and they undertake to create an environment for negotiations free from pressure, intimidation and threats of violence.

- 4) The two sides understand the importance of avoiding unilateral actions that prejudice the outcome of negotiations and that their differences will be resolved only by good faith negotiations.
- 5) Both sides agree that the United States remains a vital partner in the search for peace and will continue to consult closely with President Clinton and Secretary Albright in the period ahead.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this trilateral statement.

Remarks on the Middle East Peace Summit and an Exchange With Reporters *July 25, 2000*

Air France Concorde Tragedy

The President. First of all, let me say, like all of you, I just heard the news of the crash of the Concorde outside Paris, and I wanted to extend the deepest condolences of the American people to the families of those who were lost.

Conclusion of the Middle East Peace Summit

After 14 days of intensive negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, I have concluded with regret that they will not be able to reach an agreement at this time. As I explained on the eve of the summit, success was far from guaranteed given the historical, religious, political, and emotional dimensions of the conflict.

Still, because the parties were not making progress on their own and the September deadline they set for themselves was fast approaching, I thought we had no choice. We can't afford to leave a single stone unturned in the search for a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace.

Now, at Camp David, both sides engaged in comprehensive discussions that were really unprecedented because they dealt with the most sensitive issues dividing them, profound and complex questions that long had been considered off limits.

Under the operating rules that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, they are, of course, not bound by any proposal discussed at the summit. However, while we did not get

an agreement here, significant progress was made on the core issues. I want to express my appreciation to Prime Minister Barak, Chairman Arafat, and their delegations for the efforts they undertook to reach an agreement.

Prime Minister Barak showed particular courage, vision, and an understanding of the historical importance of this moment. Chairman Arafat made it clear that he, too, remains committed to the path of peace. The trilateral statement we issued affirms both leaders' commitment to avoid violence or unilateral actions which will make peace more difficult and to keep the peace process going until it reaches a successful conclusion.

At the end of this summit, I am fully aware of the deep disappointment that will be felt on both sides. But it was essential for Israelis and Palestinians, finally, to begin to deal with the toughest decisions in the peace process. Only they can make those decisions, and they both pledged to make them, I say again, by mid-September.

Now, it's essential that they not lose hope, that they keep working for peace, they avoid any unilateral actions that would only make the hard task ahead more difficult. The statement the leaders have made today is encouraging in that regard.

Israelis and Palestinians are destined to live side by side, destined to have a common future. They have to decide what kind of future it will be. Though the differences that remain are deep, they have come a long way in the last 7 years, and notwithstanding the failure to reach an agreement, they made real headway in the last 2 weeks.

Now the two parties must go home and reflect, both on what happened at Camp David and on what did not happen. For the sake of their children, they must rededicate themselves to the path of peace and find a way to resume their negotiations in the next few weeks. They've asked us to continue to help, and as always, we'll do our best. But the parties themselves, both of them, must be prepared to resolve profound questions of history, identity, and national faith as well as the future of sites that are holy to religious people all over the world who are part of the Islamic, Christian, and Judaic traditions.

The children of Abraham, the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael, can only be reconciled through courageous compromise in the spirit of

those who have already given their lives for peace and all Israelis, Palestinians, friends of peace in the Middle East and across the world who long for peace and deserve a Holy Land that lives for the values of Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

Thank you.

Q. Was Jerusalem—Mr. President, was Jerusalem the main stumbling block? And where do you go from here?

The President. It was the most difficult problem. And I must tell you that we tried a lot of different approaches to it, and we have not yet found a solution. But the good news is that there is not a great deal of disagreement—and I want to emphasize this—it seemed to me, anyway, there was not a great deal of disagreement in many of these areas about what the facts on the ground would be after an agreement was made—that is, how people would live.

For example, everyone conceded that Jerusalem is a place that required everyone to have access to the holy sites, and the kinds of things you've heard, and lot of other things in terms of how, operationally, the Israelis and the Palestinians have worked together; there was actually more agreement than I had thought there would be.

But obviously, the questions around Jerusalem go to the core identity of both the Palestinians and the Israelis. There were some very, as I said—it has been reported Prime Minister Barak took some very bold decisions, but we were in the end unable to bridge the gaps. I think they will be bridged, because I think the alternative is unthinkable.

Tom [Thomas L. Friedman, New York Times].

Q. There is a striking contrast between the way you described Prime Minister Barak's courageous and visionary approach to this, and Mr. Arafat seemed to be still committed to the path of peace. It sounds like that at the end of the day, Prime Minister Barak was ready to really step up to something that President Arafat wasn't yet ready to step up to.

The President. Let me be more explicit. I will say again, we made progress on all of the core issues. We made really significant progress on many of them. The Palestinian teams worked hard on a lot of these areas. But I think it is fair to say that at this moment in time, maybe because they had been preparing for it longer, maybe because they had thought through it

more, that the Prime Minister moved forward more from his initial position than Chairman Arafat, on—particularly surrounding the questions of Jerusalem.

Now, these are hard questions. And as I said to both of them, none of us, no outsider can judge for another person what is at the core of his being, at the core of his sense of national essence. But we cannot make an agreement here without a continuing effort of both sides to compromise.

I do believe that—let me say this—and you will appreciate this, Tom, because you've been covering this a long time—but I want to give credit to both sides in the sense that they were really coming to grips with things they had never seriously come to grips with before.

Oh, yes, there were always side papers—even going back to 1993—about how these final issues would be solved. There were always speculation. There were always the odd conversation between Palestinians and Israelis who were friends and part of the various—the different government operations. But these folks really never had to come together before, and in an official setting put themselves on the line. And it is profoundly difficult.

So I said what I said, and my remarks should stand for themselves, because—not so much as a criticism of Chairman Arafat, because this is really hard and never been done before, but in praise of Barak. He came there knowing that he was going to have to take bold steps, and he did it. And I think you should look at it more as a positive toward him than as a condemnation of the Palestinian side.

This is agonizing for them—both of them. And unless you have lived there and lived with them and talked to them or lived with this problem a long time, it is hard to appreciate it. But I do think—I stand by the statement as written. I think they both remain committed to peace. I think they will both find a way to get there if they don't let time run away with them so that external events rob them of their options. And that's why I decided to call the summit in the first place.

I got worried that—this is like going to the dentist without having your gums deadened, you know. I mean, this is not easy. And I got worried that if we didn't do the summit and we didn't force a process to begin, which would require people to come to grips with this in a disciplined, organized way, as well as to face—

look themselves in the mirror and look into the abyss and think, "What can I do, and what can't I do," that we would never get there. Now, I believe because of the work that was done within both teams and what they did with each other, we can still do it. Let me just make one other observation, and then I'll answer your question.

You know, when we worked—I remember when we went to Dayton over Bosnia, when we went to Paris over Bosnia. After the Kosovo conflict—and I went there and met with all the people who were going to have to work on Kosovo's future—even when we first started the Irish peace talks, we were dealing with people who would hardly speak to each other. We were dealing with people who still often wouldn't shake hands. We were dealing with people who thought they were from another planet from one another, whose wounds were open.

Let me give you some good news. Of all the peace groups I ever worked with, these people know each other. They know the names of each other's children. They know how many grandchildren the grandparents have. They know their life stories. They have a genuine respect and understanding for each other. It is truly extraordinary and unique in my experience in almost 8 years of dealing with it.

So I'm not trying to put a funny gloss on this. They couldn't get there. That's the truth. They couldn't get there. But this was the first time in an organized, disciplined way they had to work through, both for themselves and then with each other, how they were going to come to grips with issues that go to the core of their identity.

And I think, on balance, it was very much the right thing to do, and it increases the chance of a successful agreement, and it increases the chances of avoiding a disaster.

Now, I promised you, you could ask now.

Q. What is your assessment of whether Arafat's going to go through with the threat to declare statehood unilaterally? Did you get any sort of sense on whether he's going to go through with that? Did you have any—

The President. Well, let me say this. One of the reasons that I wanted to have this summit is that they're both under, will be under conflicting pressures as we go forward. One of the things that often happens in a very difficult

peace process is that people, if they're not careful, will gravitate to the intense position rather than the position that will make peace. And it's very often that people know that a superficially safe position is to say no, that you won't get in trouble with whoever is dominating the debate back home, wherever your home is, as long as you say no.

One of the reasons I called this summit is so that we could set in motion a process that would give the Palestinians the confidence that all of us—and most of all, the Israelis—really did want to make peace, so that it would offset the pressure that will be increasingly on Chairman Arafat as we approach the September 13th deadline.

Q. Are you implying that he should give up his claim to East Jerusalem—the Palestinians should?

The President. No, I didn't say that.

Q. Or any kind of a foothold?

The President. I didn't say that. I didn't say that. I didn't say that. And let me say, I presume, I am bound—I'm going to honor my promise not to leak about what they talked about, but I presume it will come out. No, I didn't say that. I said only this: I said—I will say again—the Palestinians changed their position. They moved forward. The Israelis moved more from the position they had. I said what I said; I will say again: I was not condemning Arafat; I was praising Barak. But I would be making a mistake not to praise Barak because I think he took a big risk. And I think it sparked, already, in Israel a real debate, which is moving Israeli public opinion toward the conditions that will make peace. So I thought that was important, and I think it deserves to be acknowledged.

But the overriding thing you need to know is that progress was made on all fronts, that significant progress was made on some of the core issues, that Jerusalem, as you all knew it would be, remains the biggest problem for the reasons you know.

But what we have to find here, if there is going to be an agreement—by definition, an agreement is one in which everybody is a little disappointed and nobody is defeated, in which neither side requires the other to say they have lost everything, and they find a way to—a shared result.

And there's no place in the world like Jerusalem. There is no other place in the world

like Jerusalem, which is basically at the core of the identity of all three monotheistic religions in the world, at the core of the identity of what it means to be a Palestinian, at the core of the identity of what it means to be an Israeli. There is no other place like this in the world. So they have to find a way to work through this.

And it shouldn't surprise you that when they first come to grips with this in an official, disciplined way where somebody has to actually say something instead of sort of be off in a corner having a conversation over a cup of coffee that no one ever—that has no—it just vanishes into air, that it's hard for them to do.

Q. But did they make enough progress, sir, to now go back home, check with their people, and possibly come back during your administration—next month or in September—to come back to Camp David and try again?

The President. I don't know if they need to come back to Camp David. I think that it rained up there so much, I'm not sure I'll ever get them back there. [Laughter] But I think if you asked me, did they make enough progress to get this done? Yes. But they've got to go home and check; they've got to feel around. And what I want to say to you is, the reason I tried to keep them there so long—and I feel much better about this than I did when we almost lost it before—and you remember, and I got them, and we all agreed to stay—I didn't feel that night like I feel today.

Today I feel that we have the elements here to keep this process going. But it's important that the people who both leaders represent, support their continuing involvement in this and stick with them, and understand that this is a script that's never been written before. They have to write a script, and they've got to keep working at it.

But yes, I think it can happen——

Q. During your administration?

The President. Yes. Not because it's my administration; that's irrelevant. They're operating on their timetable, not mine. It has nothing to do with the fact that it's my administration. I think it can happen because they set for themselves a September 13th deadline. And if they go past it, every day they go past it will put more pressure on the Palestinians to declare a Palestinian state unilaterally and more pressure on the Israelis to have some greater edge in conflict in their relations as a result of that.

Neither one of them want that; so I think they will find a way to keep this going. And the only relevance of my being here is that I've been working with them for 8 years, and I think they both trust us and believe that Secretary Albright and Dennis and Sandy and our whole team, that we will heave to to make peace.

Q. But, Mr. President, the Prime Minister came here in quite a precarious position to begin with back home. And some of the things you call bold and courageous, his critics back home have called treason. Can he go home, and do you believe he will have the political stability to come back at this, and did he voice any concerns to you about that?

The President. First of all, this is not a weak man. It's not for nothing that he's the most decorated soldier in the history of Israel. He didn't come over here to play safe with his political future. He came over here to do what he thought was right for the people of Israel, and I think that he—he knows that he would never do anything to put the security of Israel at risk, and that the only long-term guarantee of Israel's security is a constructive peace that's fair with her neighbors—all of them—starting with the Palestinians.

So I think the people of Israel should be very proud of him. He did nothing to compromise Israel's security, and he did everything he possibly could within the limits that he thought he had, all the kinds of constraints that operate on people in these circumstances, to reach a just peace. So I would hope the people of Israel will support him and let this thing percolate, not overreact, and say, "Keep trying."

I want the people on both sides to tell their leaders to keep trying—to keep trying. You know, that's the only real answer here—is just to bear down and go on.

Q. Mr. President, couldn't you have gotten a partial agreement and left Jerusalem for later? Was that a possibility at all?

The President. That possibility was explored and rejected.

Q. Why?

The President. I can't talk about it. If they want to talk about it, that's their business, but I can't.

Q. Have you done all you can do, sir, or would you be making more proposals?

The President. Oh, I think—well, first of all, we all agreed to reassess here. So the first thing

we're going to do is, we're going to let each side go home and try to get a little sleep. I mean, we've all been sort of—we're kind of—nobody knows what time it is, I don't think, on either team.

Last night we quit at 3; the night before, we went all night long. And so, we've been working very hard at this. So what I'm going to do is let them take a deep breath and then our side, Madeleine and Sandy and all of our team and I and Dennis, we'll try to think what we think we ought to do. Then we'll ask them what they want to do, and then we'll figure out what we're going to do.

We don't have a lot of time, and I wouldn't rule out the possibility that all of us will be coming up with new ideas here. I wouldn't rule anything out. The clock is still working against us. The bad news is, we don't have a deal. The good news is, they are fully and completely and comprehensively engaged in an official way for the first time on these fundamental issues.

Keep in mind, when the Oslo agreement was drafted, these things were put down as final status issues because the people that drafted them knew it would be hard. And they took a gamble. And their gamble was that if the Israelis and the Palestinians worked together over a 7-year period and they began to share security cooperation, for example, they began to—we had some land transfers, and we saw how they would work in a different geographical way, and if they kept making other specific agreements, that by the time we got to the end of the road, there would be enough knowledge and trust and understanding of each other's positions that these huge, epochal issues could be resolved.

Now, we started the process, and we've got to finish. And so, and again I say, the thing I hope most of all is that the people in the Middle East will appreciate the fact that a lot was done here, and we'll support their leaders in coming back and finishing the job. The venue is not important. The mechanisms aren't important. But we know what the state of play is now, and if we'll keep at it, I still think we can get it done.

Q. Can you describe what type of U.S. role was discussed in sealing the agreement financially and otherwise?

The President. Let me say, first of all, anything that would require our participation, other than financial, was not finalized. But there were

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a lot of ideas floated around. None of it amounted to large numbers of people. But they were potentially significant in terms of the psychology of the situation. But there was no decision made about that.

On the money, basically, you know, I think that the United States should be prepared to make a significant contribution to resolving the refugee problem. You've got refugees that have to be resettled. You've got some compensation which has to be given. And there are lots of issues in that refugee pot that cost money. And then there's the whole question of working out the economic future of the Palestinians, and the whole question of working out what the security relationships will be and the security needs will be for Israel and in this new partnership that they will have—the Palestinians. How is that going to work, and what should we do?

I also, when I went to the G-8, I gave a briefing to the G-8, and I asked the people who were there to help pay, too. I said, you know, this is going to have to be a worldwide

financial responsibility, but because of the United States' historic involvement, which goes back many decades in the Middle East—we were the first country under President Truman to recognize Israel; we've had Republicans and Democrats alike up to their ears in the Middle East peace process for a long time—and because we have such a lot of strategic interest over there, if there could be an agreement, I think we ought to lead the way in financial contributions, but the others who are able to do so should play their part, as well.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:07 p.m. in the James S. Brady Press Briefing Room at the White House upon returning from Camp David, MD. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; National Security Adviser Samuel R. (Sandy) Berger; and Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Community Economic Renewal Legislation

July 25, 2000

I commend the House of Representatives for passing today the bipartisan new markets, empowerment zone, and community renewal legislation. At a time of unprecedented prosperity, too many Americans in our cities and rural areas still do not have access to investment capital and economic opportunity. This legislation will

spur more private sector investment in these new markets so that all Americans can fully participate in our thriving economy. I look forward to working with Members of both parties in the House and the Senate this year to enact this historic and innovative legislation.

Statement on Signing the Valles Caldera Preservation Act

July 25, 2000

I am very pleased today to sign bipartisan legislation authorizing protection of New Mexico's Baca Ranch as the new Valles Caldera National Preserve.

From time to time, we are presented with an opportunity to save a truly magnificent piece of America's rich natural endowment. Today we seize one such opportunity. At the heart of the

scenic Jemez Mountains west of Santa Fe, the Baca Ranch contains the remarkable Valles Caldera—the collapsed crater of an ancient volcano—and sustains one of our Nation's largest wild elk herds. Thanks to the careful stewardship of the Dunigan family, this extraordinary landscape appears today much as it did when the first settlers arrived. And thanks to the

bipartisan efforts of the New Mexico delegation, we will ensure that it remains healthy and whole for generations to come.

I commend the Dunigans, for offering us the chance to open this treasure to the American people; Senators Bingaman and Domenici, and Representatives Udall and Wilson, for helping to lead this historic conservation effort; and the leaders of the Santa Clara Pueblo, for sharing with us their reverence for this land.

Today's success should inspire us to work even harder to conserve America's natural heritage. The acquisition of Baca Ranch was made possible with increased conservation funding I secured last year through my lands legacy initiative. I have proposed another significant increase in lands legacy funding for the coming fiscal year. Unfortunately, appropriations bills passed by both the House and the Senate would provide only a third of my request, cutting lands legacy funding considerably below this year's level. In addition, riders attached to several appropriations measures aim to cripple wildlife

protections, surrender public lands to private interests, and hamper commonsense efforts to combat global warming. I urge Congress to drop these anti-environmental riders and to fully fund my lands legacy initiative.

Ultimately, our goal must be to establish permanent conservation funding so that each new generation will have the resources to protect other critical lands across America. I am very pleased that the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee today approved a version of bipartisan legislation passed overwhelmingly by the House that moves us closer to that goal. I am fully committed to working with Congress to create a lasting endowment to support Federal, State, and local conservation efforts. Let us work together, in the spirit of today's historic conservation achievement, to strengthen, not weaken, environmental protections.

NOTE: S. 1892, approved July 25, was assigned Public Law No. 106-248.

Statement on Signing the Valles Caldera Preservation Act *July 25, 2000*

I am very pleased to sign into law S. 1892, the "Valles Caldera Preservation Act." This legislation is the culmination of a gratifying cooperative effort with the Congress, led by Senator Bingaman, Senator Domenici, Representative Udall, and Representative Heather Wilson of New Mexico. Its enactment will permit us to protect over 95,000 acres of unique, irreplaceable land in northern New Mexico—one of my top conservation priorities—for future generations to enjoy.

Specifically, this Act authorizes the acquisition and preservation of nearly 95,000 acres in the Valles Caldera, New Mexico. It also permits the sale of about 5,000 acres, containing the headwaters of the Santa Clara Creek, to the Santa Clara Pueblo, to allow the Pueblo to protect its water quality and resource values. A separate title of the bill authorizes the proceeds from the sale or exchange of certain Federal lands identified by the Bureau of Land Management as surplus to be used to purchase and protect

other lands with exceptional natural resource values.

The Valles Caldera is at the heart of the Jemez Mountains and is the site of perhaps the greatest of New Mexico's volcanic features. It also is home to a wide range of scenic, wildlife, cultural, and ecological resources, and provides incomparable scenic beauty and recreational potential. The importance of the preservation of the Valles Caldera lies in the unique combination of all of these features in a relatively pristine setting that is nevertheless close by, and accessible to, the people of New Mexico. It has remained intact as a single unit in private ownership since the original land grant in 1860. Known as Baca Ranch, it has been well managed for several decades and is an example of a sustainable working ranch.

The caldera is an enormous depression more than a half-mile deep and 15 miles wide that was created by a volcanic eruption over a million years ago. Secondary volcanic domes arise from the caldera floor to elevations as high as 11,000

feet. Its scenic quality—a large network of grassland and forested mountains, surrounded by the caldera rim—does not exist elsewhere in the Southwest. It provides habitat to a broad range of species, including one of the largest elk herds in the continental United States, black bear, mountain lion, Mexican spotted owl, goshawk, peregrine falcon, and Rio Grande cutthroat trout. Its vegetation reflects a high level of ecological diversity, and includes grasslands, ponderosa pine, spruce, Douglas fir, and aspen.

The Jemez Wild and Scenic River, which originates in the Caldera, as well as the San Antonio, Jaramillo, and La Jara Creeks, all have outstanding fishery resources. Baca Ranch also adjoins the Santa Fe National Forest and Bandelier National Monument, and its protection will enhance the values of those properties as well.

The special designation of the ranch as the Valles Caldera National Preserve will help ensure the protection of important scenic and natural values. Baca Ranch has been well managed by its current owners, who permit selective grazing, timber harvest, fishing, and hunting—all in a manner that respects and preserves the underlying resource. The bill creates a unique management structure for this unique property. A Board of Trustees, with each member providing a particular expertise in the range of issues raised by the management of this property, will make decisions about Baca Ranch in a process that fully involves the American public—the real owners of the land. It is my hope that a member

of the Native American community in New Mexico be included on this Board. This legislation makes clear that the managers of this property will make resource protection a top priority, and that sustainable multiple uses and financial self-sufficiency will be pursued to the extent consistent with protection of these irreplaceable resources. The Baca Ranch is a working ranch today, and the goal is to make it a model of sustainable practices, ensuring resource protection and providing for public recreational uses.

The purchase of the Valles Caldera is one of the most significant Federal land acquisitions in recent history and is a prime example of what we can achieve through my Lands Legacy Initiative. The permanent funding source for conservation that I am working with the Congress to provide will guarantee that places like the Valles Caldera will not disappear, but will be protected for all to enjoy. The acquisition of this irreplaceable resource has been a top conservation priority for my Administration and many in the Congress. This Act protects a magnificent natural resource for New Mexicans and all Americans, and we can all be proud of this legacy that we leave for generations to come.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 25, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1892, approved July 25, was assigned Public Law No. 106–248.

Memorandum on Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive Technology and Universal Design

July 25, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Strategy for the Development and Transfer of Assistive Technology and Universal Design

It is my Administration's policy to accelerate the development and deployment of assistive technology and technology that promotes universal design. Assistive technology maintains or improves the functional capabilities of people

with disabilities. Universal design is the design of products and environments that enables all people to use these products, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Assistive technologies and products that incorporate universal design principles can significantly improve the quality of life for people with disabilities and increase their ability to participate in the workplace.

Therefore, to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, I direct as follows: (a)

The Interagency Committee on Disability Research (ICDR) shall, within 120 days from the date of this directive, publish a report identifying priority areas for the advancement of assistive technologies and universal design capabilities. This report should be prepared in cooperation with the disability and the research communities. The report should cover technologies needed for improving or increasing:

- Sensory functioning, such as digital technologies to enhance speech intelligibility;
- Mobility enhancement, such as advanced prosthetic devices;
- Manipulation ability;
- Cognitive function;
- Accessibility of information and communications technology, such as text-to-speech and speech recognition systems; and
- Accessibility to, and mobility within the physical environment.

(b) Following the issuance of this report, each agency that participates in the Small Business Innovation Research program (SBIR) shall, consistent with current law, develop a strategy for enhancing the transfer of technology that can contribute to the needs and requirements identified by the ICDR. This strategy must address both intramural and extramural research and development. Agencies shall publish their strategies 6 months after the issuance of the ICDR report. Agency strategies should include, but not be limited to, the development of focused solicitations under the SBIR program.

This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law, by a party against the United States, its officers, its employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Message to the Senate Transmitting Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child

July 25, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith two optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, both of which were adopted at New York, May 25, 2000: (1) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; and (2) The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. I signed both Protocols on July 5, 2000.

In addition, I transmit for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to both Protocols, including article-by-article analyses of each Protocol. As detailed in the Department of State report, a

number of understandings and declarations are recommended.

These Protocols represent a true breakthrough for the children of the world. Ratification of these Protocols will enhance the ability of the United States to provide global leadership in the effort to eliminate abuses against children with respect to armed conflict and sexual exploitation.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to both Protocols and give its advice and consent to the ratification of both Protocols, subject to the understandings and declarations recommended in the Department of State Report.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 25, 2000.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Diane Blair in Fayetteville, Arkansas July 25, 2000

I think my friend would get a big kick out of knowing today that I am virtually at a loss for words. *[Laughter]* Every friendship has a chronology. Ours started in 1972 when I came up here to Fayetteville to see Diane because she was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. And we two comprised, along with Jim, some 50 percent of the white Arkansans who wanted to vote for George McGovern. *[Laughter]*

So we're drinking a cup of coffee or drinking a Coke or something at the union, and I'd met this woman like 10 minutes ago, and I was supposed to be talking politics with her, and all of a sudden, I started talking about Hillary, and I was talking about how much she had reminded me of Hillary. And all of a sudden, I felt that, somehow, she had totally captured me, and in some fundamental way, I would somehow belong to her for the rest of my life. *[Laughter]* And that's exactly what happened.

And in 1973 when I came home to Arkansas, and then Hillary came here, and I made sure they got together, and Diane and Jim and I—we'd meet her, one of us—we weren't married then, and it's been kind of the most interesting thing in my friendship life that Hillary and I always considered Diane and Jim our best "couple friend." But we were both privileged to have individual friendships with both of them, and it has been a true blessing.

It does tickle me that she worked in all my campaigns, and after Jim made her a rich lady, she still lived in that lousy apartment in Little Rock in '92—*[laughter]*—still working the campaign. *[Laughter]* It tickles me that when I married them in 1979—that's one way a Governor has more power than a President; I can't do that anymore—*[laughter]*—they wanted me to wear a top hat, tails. I even had a cane. And I never get tired of looking at that wedding picture. It's in the program.

Then, this was not a woman to let you wallow in self-pity. In 1980 I became the youngest former Governor in the history of America. *[Laughter]* So after giving me a couple of months to lick my wounds and feel sorry for myself, she made me show up at her political

science class to explain how I got my brains beat out. *[Laughter]*

So many times over the last several years, she gave me a home away from home, and then since we've been in the White House, as you heard Hillary say, even in the Governor's mansion, we tried to give them the same.

It was just a little over 5 months ago, and probably 2 or 3 days before we learned that Diane was ill, that Jim came up and spent 3 nights—3 days and 3 nights—in Washington, and we were thinking about all the trips that we would take together when, finally, Hillary and I were liberated from our present responsibilities.

It doesn't take long to live a life. And I guess what I would like to say today is that somehow, I felt about her as I have rarely felt about any human being, that she had this peculiar blend. She was beautiful and good. She was serious and funny. She was completely ambitious to do good and be good but fundamentally selfless.

Sometime in our mid-thirties when Hillary and I were living in the Governor's mansion, we woke up one day and realized we might not live forever and that something could happen to us, and we actually made out a will. And I called Diane and Jim and said, "You know, we're making out this will. Would you raise Chelsea if anything happens to us?"

Thankfully, we were able to watch our children grow up together. Diane had great kids and great stepchildren. Bill and Missy both work for Hillary and me now, and we're very grateful for that.

There are just three other points I would like to make. Diane had an interesting life—came to Arkansas because she married Hugh Kincaid, and she stayed. Jim Blair would be the first person to tell you she made a lot better man out of him than he was before he married her. *[Laughter]* And most of us would tell you that she somehow made better people of us as well.

But I want to say this, because somebody needs to. I've never seen a more beautiful, complete expression of love in my life than you, Jim, when you fought to save her, and you took care of her when you realized you couldn't.

The second thing I want to tell you is Diane Blair lived to the very end. I mean, really lived. She and I were still doing the New York Times Sunday crossword puzzle together. All these times, you know, we got all these—Hillary and I would get good publicity for flying down here to see Diane, and people wanted to know what we did. We sat on a couch, and we worked the crossword puzzle. And she was exceedingly jealous of me because I would get the copy 3 or 4 days before Sunday, and she got it a couple days later. *[Laughter]*

So I used to taunt her. I would do it—I would do the crossword puzzle, and I was faithful in doing it. Once she got sick, I did it the first day I got it. I would send it to her, and I would taunt her, because she prided herself so much in being too noble to sneak and see whether I had gotten the answer right if she was having trouble. *[Laughter]*

The second thing I want you to know is, she was still writing me letters to the end. “Dear President Bill: You should give a farewell address. Only a few Presidents have. You should do it. And here is exactly what you should say.” *[Laughter]*

I was looking at all of these pictures up here. And I thought about how many times over the years I would just—we’d be up at the lake doing something, just grungy as we could be, all four of us, and Diane would turn a certain way, and I would think: My God, she’s beautiful—

in a totally unique way. And I was seeing all these pictures, thinking about that again.

The last time Hillary and I saw her, I think it was the day before she essentially lost consciousness. And she was there with her little grandchildren on the bed, and she had lost all her hair, and she wasn’t going to the trouble to wear a wig anymore. But her eyes were still burning, and she was so beautiful.

And the last thing she ever said was the thing I’d like to say to you. Hillary and Chelsea and I were standing there, and Hillary and I were holding her hands, and she said, “Before I go”—because we were leaving; we had to leave—she didn’t say before you go, she said, “Before I go, I want to tell you: Remember.” And Hillary said, “Remember what, Diane?” And she smiled and said, “Just remember.” So that’s what I say to you. And every dark and difficult moment of your life, whenever you need to remember something profoundly good, get a little more energy to redouble your efforts, feel less sorry for yourself, be more grateful, just remember.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in the Baum/Walker Hall at the Walton Arts Center. In his remarks, he referred to Ms. Blair’s son, William Reid Kincaid, and daughter, Katherine (Missy) Kincaid.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Burdensharing in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

July 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 3(2)(B) of the Senate’s resolution of April 30, 1998, providing its advice and consent to ratification of the Protocols on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949, I hereby transmit to you the report concerning burdensharing in the Alliance and other matters.

The report contains two sections: (1) an unclassified section on allies’ contributions to common NATO budgets, allies’ national defense budgets and their adequacy, costs incurred to

date in connection with the membership of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, and the status of discussions concerning NATO membership for Partnership for Peace countries; and (2) a separate, classified section on steps taken by allies to meet NATO force goals.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman,

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Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd

Spence, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 26.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the Deployment of Military Forces for Stabilization of Areas of the Former Yugoslavia

July 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In my report to the Congress of January 25, 2000, I provided further information on the deployment of combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces to Bosnia and Herzegovina and other states in the region in order to participate in and support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led Stabilization Force (SFOR), which began its mission and assumed authority from the NATO-led Implementation Force on December 20, 1996. I am providing this supplemental report, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, to help ensure that the Congress is kept fully informed on continued U.S. contributions in support of peacekeeping efforts in the former Yugoslavia.

In Resolution 1305 of June 21, 2000, the U.N. Security Council authorized member states to continue SFOR for a period of 12 months. The mission of SFOR is to provide a continued military presence in order to deter hostilities, stabilize and consolidate the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, contribute to a secure environment and provide, within its means and capabilities, selective support to key areas and key civil implementation organizations.

The U.S. force contribution to SFOR in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been reduced from approximately 6,200 to 4,600 personnel since my last report. United States personnel comprise 19 percent of the total SFOR force. In the first half of 2000, 18 NATO nations and 16 others, including Russia and Ukraine, have provided military personnel or other support to SFOR.

Most U.S. forces are assigned to Multinational Division, North, centered around the city of Tuzla. In addition, U.S. military personnel are deployed to other countries in the region in support of those efforts. Specifically, approximately 1,000 U.S. military personnel are presently deployed to Hungary, Croatia, and Italy in order to provide logistical and other support to SFOR. The U.S. forces continue to support SFOR efforts to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes. In the last 6 months, U.S. forces have sustained no combat-related fatalities.

I have directed the participation of U.S. Armed Forces in these operations pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive, and in accordance with various statutory authorities.

I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed about developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other states in the region. I will continue to consult closely with the Congress regarding our efforts to foster peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 26.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Peacekeeping Operations July 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 1999 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping required by section 4 of the United Nations Participation Act (Public Law 79-264), as amended.

United Nations and other peacekeeping operations helped us protect our interests before they were directly threatened, and ensured that other nations shared with us the risks and costs of maintaining international stability.

I look forward to working with you to ensure that peacekeeping remains a viable option for dealing with international conflicts.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; John W. Warner, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations; and Floyd Spence, chairman, House Committee on Armed Services. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 26.

Remarks on the Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act July 26, 2000

Thank you very much. And thank you, Justin, for all you said, all you've done; how you've been a conscience to me and to Hillary and to the Vice President and our entire administration and to the country.

I want to thank all the Members of Congress who are here, especially, obviously, Senator Harkin and Senator Hatch. But thank you, Senator Kennedy, Senator Specter, Senator Jeffords. Senator Metzenbaum, it's good to see you back. I'd like to thank Representative Morella and former Representative Bartlett. And Secretary Mineta, former Representative Mineta, thank you for what you did on this; and recognize that Tony Coelho—I'm not sure that he's here—but for all he did, along with—and I thank all the members of the administration who are here: Secretary Herman, Secretary Goyer, and Commissioner Apfel, Director Lachance, the EEO Chairwoman, Ida Castro, and many others over there.

But I'd like to especially thank the people that Justin Dart recognized, the Americans with disabilities who have made our administration the most diverse in America, and I think the best, because of their contributions in terms of

reflecting America's values. Thank you, Paul Miller, Bob Williams, Marca Bristo, Judy Heumann. Thank you, Becky Ogle, and all the others who are here for what you did for our administration.

I finally think I've carried this too far. There is an article in the Washington Post this morning on Becky Ogle. If you haven't seen it, you ought to. I've been here 8 years, and I have never gotten that good of press in the Washington Post. *[Laughter]* It was amazing, so we're really making progress.

I'd also like to thank young Beth Gray from my home State of Arkansas for singing the national anthem. Didn't she do a wonderful job? *[Applause]* I thought she was really terrific—and all the other young people that are here.

One of the things that Tom Harkin didn't tell you about his brother, Frank, is that when we celebrated the first anniversary of the ADA, that I had a chance to celebrate as President in 1993, we made the first—Tom and I did—made the first and ever phone call from the White House to the nationwide relay service which allows people who are deaf to use the phone. We called Frank at home in Cumming,

Iowa. And guess what? Here we were, the whole national press, we're in the Oval Office, Tom and I—the line was busy. [Laughter] Frank couldn't wait for us. He was already calling his friends to say hello, because he was so excited to be on the phone for the first time. Eventually, Frank found time to take our call, and we had a wonderful visit.

I say that to make this point. A lot of what the Americans with Disabilities Act is all about is making sure people can live like people, can do things that other folks take for granted. The Americans with Disabilities Act—and I thank all these Members of Congress from both parties who are here, and those who couldn't be here today—is basically a statement by human beings that they want: Sympathy, no; self-determination, yes. That they don't want excuses. Instead, they want opportunity in terms of jobs and careers.

The FDR Memorial is a pretty good place for us to be having this because, as all of you know, it is more than a monument to one of our Nation's leaders. It's a symbol of who we are as a nation and what we can overcome.

Tom told me before I came up here, Senator Harkin said, "You know, my father used to say that Roosevelt became President at the darkest time of our country's history. It took a disabled man to lead a disabled nation. They both forgot they had a disability by making it go away in their common endeavors." If we could just remember a few basic things: that everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, everybody has a role to play, we all do better when we help each other. That's what this Memorial represents; that's what the ADA represents; that's America at its best.

You know, the ADA has changed America in ways we have, I think, forgotten to be conscious of: curb cuts, braille signs, closed captioning. These things are part of everyday life now. It's also changing the way, I think, many Americans see one another, and dropping a lot of those invisible barriers to progress.

I was proud last year to come here to sign the Jeffords-Kennedy Work Incentive Improvement Act, last December. It was the last bill signing of the 20th century. But on this 10th anniversary, as others have said, I want us to look ahead. In the midst of the longest economic expansion in history, more Americans with disabilities are working than ever before. But far too many who want to work are still

not working. So on this anniversary, we're looking forward.

Yesterday Vice President Gore announced a number of new steps we're taking to promote real choices in home- and community-based services and supports, especially with technology.

Today I thank Hillary for what she said and for her commitment. I'm the first person that ever heard that story about her going from door to door finding out why kids weren't in school 27 years ago. I've heard it several times over the last 27 years, and I never get tired of it, because the things that happen to us along life's way—sometimes something simple and unexpected that make a searing impression are the things that really enable us, sometimes many years later, to make a real difference.

Here's what we want to do today to help more Americans lead productive, self-sufficient lives. First, we must do more to remove barriers to work. Last year we raised the limits people can earn while still keeping Social Security disability benefits. From now on, the earnings limit will be automatically adjusted every year, based on the national average wage index. Now, this will reward work and help as many as 400,000 Americans with disabilities.

Second, the Federal Government must lead by example. Our Federal work force is the smallest in 40 years. But as we make new hires, we need to ensure that we're tapping the deepest pool of talent. Today I will sign an Executive order calling on the Federal Government to hire 100,000 people with disabilities by the 15th anniversary of the ADA. Now, one of the people on stage today is Mark Moore. He's a law student who helped to draft that Executive order. I want to thank him, all of the people at the Office of Personnel Management. Give Mark Moore a big hand. Thank you. [Applause]

Third, Members of the Senate and the House have introduced the first bipartisan "Family Opportunity Act," to ensure that children with disabilities can keep their Medicaid coverage even when their parents return to work. I plan to work with Congress to enact legislation to achieve those goals this year. We can do it this year. I thank the Members who are here who have done that.

Fourth, we're going to have a new website to be a one-stop electronic resource link for people with disabilities to log on and get the latest information on tax credits and deductions,

the nearest employment and training center, to learn more about civil rights and protections guaranteed by the ADA. It's called Access America, www.disAbility.gov.

And finally, I ask Congress again to act on important pending legislation to improve the lives of people with disabilities. We must be vigilant in defending the rights we have already secured, and our budget increases funds for ADA enforcement.

I also asked Congress to pass our \$1,000 tax credit to help workers with disabilities pay for support services and technologies needed to stay on the job, and our \$3,000 tax credit for Americans of all ages with long-term care needs. I also say the disability community in America needs a strong hate crimes bill that protects people with disabilities and a real Patients' Bill of Rights that covers Americans, all of them, in all health plans.

More than 60 years ago, President Roosevelt marked the anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation. He said it was an occasion for recalling great progress and a time for remembering that in the truest sense, freedom cannot be bestowed; it must be achieved. Because of all you have done, America has achieved greater freedom. We have liberated not only Americans with disabilities, but as Martin Luther King said

of the civil rights movement so long ago, when people find their own freedom, those who have denied it to them for too long are, themselves, made more free. We are all a freer, better country because of the ADA and what you have done.

When you look at the young people on this stage, you know that you have given them a better today. When we leave here, we should leave committed to giving them a much better tomorrow.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial. In his remarks, he referred to Justin Dart, Jr., chairman and founder, Justice For All; former Representative Steve Bartlett; former Senator Howard M. Metzenbaum; Rebecca Ogle, Executive Director, Presidential Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities; Marca Bristo, chair, National Council on Disability; and Tony Coelho, Chairman, President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady. The Executive orders on increasing employment opportunity and provision of reasonable accommodation are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Memorandum on Renewing the Commitment To Ensure That Federal Programs Are Free From Disability-Based Discrimination

July 26, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Renewing the Commitment to Ensure that Federal Programs are Free from Disability-Based Discrimination

On the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we have much to celebrate. This landmark civil rights law has increased opportunities for employment, education, and leisure for millions of Americans. Our country is stronger as a result.

As we celebrate the ADA, we cannot forget that it was built on the solid foundation of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Act) (29 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*), as amended, which prohibits discrimina-

tion on the basis of disability in Federal programs and activities. One important goal of the Act for the Federal Government is to set an example for the rest of the country by being a model employer and providing exemplary service to its customers with disabilities. While this goal remains constant, the nature and structure of government have changed in the decades since the inception of the Act. New agencies have been formed, while others no longer exist. Government is more efficient and doing more with less.

The time has come to reaffirm the Federal Government's commitment to ensuring that agencies' programs are free from discrimination. The means we use to accomplish our goals

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should be tailored to the changing nature of government.

I call upon the Department of Justice (DOJ), the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Interagency Disability Coordinating Council (IDCC), and the National Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (Task Force) to provide leadership to Federal agencies in meeting their common goal: to ensure that today's Federal programs, including programs of employment, continue to be readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

To meet this goal, I hereby direct the DOJ and the EEOC, in close consultation with the IDCC and the Task Force, to develop priorities under which agencies will focus on specific programs or types of programs to ensure that they are readily accessible to persons with disabilities in accordance with the requirements of sections 501, 504, and 508 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 791, 794, 794d). As the initial steps, agencies are directed to do the following:

- (a) Make all programs offered on their Internet and Intranet sites accessible to people with disabilities by July 27, 2001, consistent with the requirements of the Act and subject to the availability of appropriations and technology; and
- (b) Publish by various means, including by incorporation on all agency Internet home pages, the name and contact information

for the office(s) responsible for coordinating the agency's compliance with sections 501 and 504 of the Act (29 U.S.C. 791, 794).

I direct the IDCC to coordinate executive agencies' efforts to make the Federal Government's electronic and information technology accessible to persons with disabilities.

I designate the Administrator of General Services and the Secretary of Defense to participate in the IDCC, in addition to those members set out by statute (29 U.S.C. 794c).

These steps will enable Federal agencies to work together as they renew their ongoing commitment to ensure that Federal programs do not discriminate against people on the basis of disability.

Nothing in this memorandum is intended in any way to limit the effect or mandate of Executive Order 12250 of November 2, 1980, which conveys certain authorities upon the Attorney General, or Executive Order 12067 of June 30, 1978, which conveys certain authorities upon the Chair of the EEOC.

This memorandum is for the internal management of the executive branch and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Memorandum on Employing People With Significant Disabilities To Fill Federal Agency Jobs That Can Be Performed at Alternate Work Sites, Including the Home

July 26, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Employing People with Significant Disabilities to Fill Federal Agency Jobs that can be Performed at Alternate Work Sites, Including the Home

Cutting-edge telecommunications technology has recently made it possible for customer service "call/contact" centers to transmit voice and data to employees who are located at work sites other than the call/contact centers, employers'

headquarters, or other centralized locations. Individuals employed as customer service representatives can work from their homes or any other accessible off-site location just as if they were working in the call/contact centers themselves. Technology also enables other types of work activities, such as the processing of insurance claims and financial transactions, to be carried out from such alternate work stations.

The unemployment rate of individuals with significant disabilities is among the highest of

disadvantaged groups in the Nation. These individuals are an important untapped resource of talent and skills, and a key element in our Nation's ability to sustain our historic economic growth. The increasing use of off-site work stations to carry out significant and competitive work activities provides a critical new source of employment opportunities for individuals with significant disabilities.

It is in the interest of the Federal Government to utilize the skills of qualified people with significant disabilities by recruiting them for appropriate off-site, home-based employment opportunities with Federal agencies, including employment as home-based customer service representatives linked to Federal customer service call/contact centers.

To harness the power of new technologies to promote Federal sector employment of qualified people with significant disabilities, as defined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.*), as amended, and to improve Federal customer service representation, I direct executive departments and agencies as follows:

- (a) Each head of an executive department or agency operating customer service call/contact centers shall identify positions that can be relocated to home-based or other off-site facilities, and that can be filled by qualified individuals, including those with significant disabilities.
- (b) Each head of an executive department or agency shall identify the appropriateness of using home-based and other off-site positions to carry out other specific work activities, such as the processing of insurance claims and financial transactions, that could be accomplished by qualified individuals, including those with significant disabilities.
- (c) If the head of a department or agency determines it is feasible and appropriate to use home-based and other off-site locations pursuant to its actions under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this memorandum, such head shall develop a Plan of Action that encourages the recruitment and employment of qualified individuals with significant disabilities.
- (d) The Plan of Action developed pursuant to paragraph (c) of this memorandum shall be submitted to the National Task Force on Employment of Adults with Disabilities (Task Force) (established by Executive Order 13078 of March 13, 1998) within 120 days from the date of this memorandum.
- (e) The Task Force shall review and approve agency Plans of Action and shall be responsible for developing guidance for the implementation of the plans and the provisions of this memorandum.
- (f) In implementing this memorandum, agencies must honor their obligations to notify their collective bargaining representatives and bargain over such procedures to the extent required by law.
- (g) This memorandum shall be implemented consistent with merit system principles under law.
- (h) This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its officers, its employees, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks on Fiscal Responsibility and an Exchange With Reporters July 26, 2000

The President. For more than 7 years now, our Nation has stuck to a course of fiscal discipline, making tough choices that have resulted in the elimination of record deficits, investing in our people, and paying down our debt.

Clearly, the strategy is paying off. It has given us the longest economic expansion in our history, over 22 million new jobs, and the largest

budget surplus in history. Now, we have the chance to pass responsible tax cuts, continue to pay off the national debt, and keep our prosperity going.

Instead of following the path that got us here, congressional Republicans want America to take a U-turn. Over the past 2 weeks, they have pushed through a series of expensive tax bills,

one after another. They've been in a rush to get these bills passed before their convention, but they've been in no rush to get them to my desk, because they fear what will happen when the American people have a chance to add them all up and do the math.

Taken together, Republican tax bills now stacking up from this Congress would cost nearly \$2 trillion over 10 years. By our accounting, that would put America back into deficits. Even by their own rosy scenario, the Republican tax bills consume every dime of the surplus the American people have worked so hard to create. That's what this chart shows.

However you add it up, a \$2 trillion tax plan is too big, too reckless, too irresponsible. It leaves nothing for lengthening the life of Social Security and Medicare to make provision for the baby boomers' retirement. It leaves nothing for adding a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. It leaves nothing for greater investment in education or the environment or science and technology or health. It would make it impossible for us to get America out of debt by 2012.

Now, if the congressional Republicans truly think these tax cuts are good policy, instead of just good politics, they should put them together and send them down to me right now, before they break for their convention. Then the American people can add up the costs and draw their own conclusions. But if they adjourn for the summer and the bills aren't on my desk, the American people will know that they're playing politics with our surpluses.

Remember something else—and this is very important—these are projected surpluses. It's not money we have now but money we might have over the next 10 years. Think about it. If you got one of those sweepstakes envelopes from Ed McMahon in the mail saying you may have won \$10 million, would you go out and spend it? Well, if you would, you should support their tax plan, but if you wouldn't, you should think again because that's what the congressional Republicans want us to do, commit right now to spend all the money that we might get over the next 10 years.

In good conscience I cannot sign one of these tax breaks after another without any coherent strategy for safeguarding our future and meeting our other national priorities. At this rate, there will be no resources left for extending the life of Social Security and Medicare, for adding a real prescription drug benefit to Medicare, for

investing in education, or for getting us out of debt. And getting us out of debt will keep interest rates low and keep our economy growing. That could give the American people the biggest tax cut of all.

Lower interest rates, in a way, are the biggest tax cut we can give to most Americans. Because of the deficit and debt reduction already achieved, the average American family—listen to this—the average American family is already paying \$2,000 less a year in mortgage payments, \$200 less a year in car payments, and \$200 less a year in student loan payments.

If we keep interest rates just one percent lower over 10 years, which is about what my Council of Economic Advisers thinks we'll do if we keep paying down the debt instead of giving it all away in tax cuts, homeowners—listen to this—homeowners will save \$250 billion over the next 10 years in lower home mortgage rates alone. That's \$850 a family a year in lower mortgage payments.

And then to see what people are getting, you would have to add proportionally lower car payments, lower college loan payments. And of course, with lower interest rates, businesses will be able to borrow more easily and invest more, creating more jobs to sustain our prosperity. The more you do the math the less sense the Republican tax plan makes.

Consider this: The typical middle class family will get \$220 a year from the tax cuts the Republicans have passed this year—just the ones they've passed this year, not in this Congress. If interest rates went up because of the Republican plan one-third of one percent, just one-third of one percent, then that average family's mortgage payments would go up by \$270, completely wiping out the tax cut and leaving the average family worse off than they were before. It does not have to be that way.

I have proposed tax cuts to give middle class Americans more benefits than the tax bills the Republicans have passed at less than half the cost. Two-thirds of the relief of our proposal will go to the middle 60 percent of Americans, including our targeted marriage penalty tax relief.

Our tax cuts would also help send our children to college with a tax deduction for up to \$10,000 in college tuition a year, help to care for sick family members with a \$3,000 long-term care tax credit, help to pay for child care and to ease the burden on working families with

three or more children, to pay for desperately needed school construction.

And because our plan will cost substantially less than the tax cuts passed by the Congress, we'll still have enough money—and this is critical—we'll still have enough money left to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit, to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare, to pay for the baby boomers' retirement, and to stay on track to be debt-free by 2012, and I might add, to keep interest rates lower so that we'll have billions of dollars in lower home mortgages, car payments, and college loan payments.

We should have tax cuts this year. But they should be the right ones, targeted to working families to help our economy grow, not tax bills so big they put our prosperity at risk. Now, we've tried it our way for 8 years, and we've tried it their way for several years before then. I say to Congress, stop passing tax bills you know I'll have to veto; start working together with us on a balanced budget that cuts taxes for middle class families, continues to pay off the national debt, and invests in America's future.

Over the last 7 years, our country has overcome tremendous odds to create a moment of unprecedented prosperity and promise. But how we respond to good fortune is as stern test of our values, our judgment, and our character as a nation as how we deal with adversity. I think we'll meet the challenge, and when we do, we'll ensure that America's best years are still to come.

Thank you.

Q. Are you still going to veto each of the bills if the Republicans did send them down to you?

The President. That is my plan. You know, a lot of these bills, individually, have a lot of appeal; I'm sure they do. And maybe, collectively, they have a lot of appeal until you know what they cost. But it's obvious that if you look at the income tax bill they passed last year and all these bills they're passing this year, together, they just eat up the projected surplus.

And let me say, the projected surplus is based on not only—let me just make a few more points to you. The projected surplus is based not only on, I believe, a very rosy scenario by them, a somewhat less optimistic scenario from us; it's also based on an assumption of spending which assumes that Federal spending will grow

less than the economy will grow over the next 10 years, which is, at least if you look at the record of even the Republican Congress over the last 4 years, a highly questionable assumption.

So keep in mind, this is before they spend money for anything, before they pay for their proposed national missile defense, before they pay for the promises being made in this national campaign on the domestic side, before they may decide that, at least for the things they like to spend money on, like highways and things, they want the spending to grow as fast as the economy grows.

This is a prescription, make no mistake about it, for going back to the economic policy of the past and going back to higher interest rates, and higher interest rates which will take away the benefit of the tax cut to the vast majority of Americans and undermine the long-term economic strength of the country. I know that it's not as appealing in an election year, maybe, but we're right to pay the debt down. We need to keep getting America out of debt. We need to get rid of it. It's the right thing to do for the young people of the country.

Q. Do the increased projected surpluses make it harder for you to make this case with every headline saying we're going to see this much more than we thought? Does that make it more difficult for you to argue that there is no room for these tax cuts?

The President. Well, again, I think in the beginning it does. That's why I'm here making the argument. But it doesn't change the reality. If you look at the projected surplus, just look at the spending levels alone, the projected surplus is based on, by the Congressional Budget Office, and then just—but the main thing I want to say is, once you put these tax cuts in, they're in. They're not like spending bills. You know, if Congress wants to spend money, they come in next year, and they spend money again.

So if the money turns out to be—let's suppose they spend money in 2001, and they've got a 5-year program. But in 2002 the revenues tail off; well, they don't have to appropriate as much money. They can always cut back on spending. But once you put the tax cuts in, they're in. It's a lot harder to say, "Well, I made a mistake. I think I'll raise taxes."

So there should be a tax cut. No one questions that there should be a tax cut. The question is, how big should it be and who should

be helped by it and what are the other interests the country has? We shouldn't mislead the American people about our obligations to keep interest rates low, because almost all Americans will be hurt more by higher interest rates than they can possibly be helped by any of these proposed tax cuts. And we shouldn't mislead the American people about the money we think the Congress is really going to have to spend.

This takes into account—what if we have in the next 10 years a bunch of farm emergencies, like we've had for the last 3? Let's go back and look at the extra money we've poured into spending on agriculture alone in the last 3. And if you were in Congress, wouldn't you want to at least see education spending grow at the rate of the economy growing? And look at the commitments they've made there.

And so I'd just tell you, the idea that we would say, "Okay, here's the surplus. Now let's pass tax cuts which take it all away, and never mind what might happen to the revenues, and never mind what new investments we might have to make as a country that we don't even know about now for the next 10 years"—I think it's very troubling.

Dick Cheney

Q. Mr. President.

The President. Yes.

Q. Do you think Governor Bush played it safe in choosing Dick Cheney as a running mate? And would you advise Vice President Gore to similarly play it safe in choosing his running mate?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't know—I think the most important thing about that decision is that it will—and everything I know about Mr. Cheney, personally, I like. I actually was kind of pleased by the decision, because there's no question that he has many years of experience in the Congress and in the previous Bush administration.

But the thing I liked about it was, it further clarified the choices for the American people, and I think that's important. I think the most important thing you want out of any election is that the voters understand what they're doing when they vote, and they understand that there are consequences to their vote. And it further clarifies that there are significant choices here to be made. There are big differences on the environment, on gun safety, on a woman's right to choose, on civil rights enforcement, and on

economic policy. That's what I think the election ought to be about.

I think this ought to be a positive election where people say good things about their opponents, personally, and say they have honest differences. And I think having Mr. Cheney coming on the ticket will help to clarify that there are big, profound differences between the two leaders and the tickets, and that those differences will have real consequences for the country. And I think because he's a good man, we can further dispense with the 20 years of politics of personal destruction and focus on the differences between the people that are running and the parties and how it will change life in America.

So I think anything that clarifies the debate, lifts it up, focuses it on the issue differences, is positive. And there are real, huge differences, and I think this will help to clarify them, and I think that's positive.

Recess Appointments

Q. Mr. President, you've complained that Congress has been slow to act on your appointments for judgeships and ambassadorial posts. If they don't act, do you feel in a mood to do this by recess appointments?

The President. Well, first, I have made no decision on this. I haven't made any kind of—I haven't had a meeting about it. As you know, I've been otherwise occupied the last couple of weeks. I'd like to begin by just citing the record here.

I have bent over backwards to respect the constitutional senatorial appointment process. The record will reflect that I have made less use of recess appointments than either President Bush or President Reagan, even when I had a Republican Senate the way they had Democratic Senates. I think the record will reflect that I have shown more restraint in that, even when I've had a little more partisan differences with the Senate than they did on the appointments process—my predecessors.

So I have shown a reluctance to make robust use of that option. And I just have—to be perfectly candid, I've been so absorbed with other things, I have not—I don't even know for sure what my options are, what's out there, what irrevocable consequences could result if I don't use it during this session, in terms of unfairness to particular individuals or to the public interest. So I've just got to look at the facts and make

a judgment. But I have not made a decision yet.

Q. It does sound like your patience is running out it, though.

The President. No, but I really haven't made a judgment on this. I've never been—if you just look at the record here, I have not been a big user of recess appointments, because I respect the whole process by which the Senate reviews these things, even when I think it's been strained. But I honestly haven't made a decision yet. I just have to look and see what the options are.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. On the Middle East, Mr. President, the Palestinians are saying the deal on the table on Jerusalem is just not doable. If that's the case, how can there ever be a compromise?

The President. Well, first of all, let me try to frame this in a way that I think that the Palestinians and the Israelis, and I would hope other friends of peace around the world, would think about it. We all know how hard Jerusalem is because it goes to the sense of identity of both the Palestinian and the Israeli people, and in a larger sense, the adherence of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity all around the world.

In a sense, therefore, the city of Jerusalem is not just Yerushalayim for the Israelis and Al-Quds for the Palestinians. It is a holy place that reaches beyond even the geographical boundaries of the city.

If there is to be an agreement here, it must be one which meets the legitimate interests of both parties. And that requires a certain imagination and flexibility of defining those interests and then figuring out an institutional and legal framework for them that, frankly, just takes more time and more reflection and probably less pressure than was available in our 15 days at Camp David.

But in any negotiation, it must be possible for both sides to say they got most of what they wanted and needed, that they were not routed from the field, that there was honorable compromise. And so, therefore, the issues cannot be framed in a "you have to lose in order for me to win, and in order for you to win, I have to lose" framework. If they are like that, you're correct, then we can never reach an agreement.

But I have spent a great deal of time, obviously, not only studying about this but listening

to the two sides talk about it, think about it, and looking at all the options available for a potential resolution of it. And all I can tell you is, I'm convinced that if the issue is preserving the fundamental interests of the Palestinians and the Israelis and the genuine sanctity of the Muslim, Christian, and Jewish interest in the Holy City, then I think we can do that. I just do. But we couldn't do it in the 15 days we were there.

The decision that will have to be made is whether there is a way—for example, in this case, you mentioned the Palestinians—for the Palestinians to win their fundamental interest without also winning the right to say they have routed the Israelis, or whether there's a way for the Israelis to protect their fundamental interests without also winning the right to say they have stuck it to the Palestinians. I believe there is, and we're going to explore how we might persuade them, all of them, that there is and where we go from here.

And I hope that just this kind of thing I've been talking about will spark a whole range of "oh" articles in the press, commentators on the TV programs, other people talking and thinking this way, trying to be innovative and open—and you know, I realize the incredible pressure these people were under in even having this discussion. That is, in the end, why I realized we couldn't get it done in 2 weeks. You've got to get used to talking about something for a little bit before you can then entertain how you can create an edifice that you hadn't previously imagined. And I think we'll be able to do it.

Q. How long are you going to wait before you give it another shot?

The President. Well, it depends. I can't answer that. I've tried to make the judgments here for 8 years based on what I thought would aid the process, and I can't yet tell, Mark, [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio] what would be most in aid of the process. I just can't tell yet.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson Ed McMahon; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

July 26 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority

July 26, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 701 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-454; 5 U.S.C. 7104(e)), I have the pleasure of transmitting to you the Twenty-first Annual Report of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for Fiscal Year 1999.

The report includes information on the cases heard and decisions rendered by the Federal

Labor Relations Authority, the General Counsel of the Authority, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

July 26, 2000.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Terry L. Lierman

July 26, 2000

Thank you very much. Let me say to all of you, I thank you for being here. And I want to thank the organizers of this event for holding it in this wonderful museum. It's one of Hillary's and my favorite places in all of Washington, DC, and I hope you'll always support it and bring some people back here. This is a great thing for the women of America, this museum, and I'm delighted to be here.

I want to thank Governor Glendening for what he said and for his sterling leadership. Maryland, in so many ways, has led the country in education and health policy and so many other things since Parris Glendening has been Governor and Kathleen Kennedy Townsend has been Lieutenant Governor. I am so proud of them. I have been to Maryland more than any other State in America the last 8 years, to highlight reforms at the State level that work. And it's a real tribute to him. I'm grateful to him.

I also want to thank the Members of Congress who are here and those who are gone. I know Steny Hoyer was here; I heard him, with his booming voice, speaking when I came in and started taking pictures with a few of you. And I thank him and Al Wynn. And thank you, Jim Moran, for being here. Thank you, Elijah Cummings, for being here. And thank you, Patrick Kennedy, for being here, out there in the crowd, just one of the folks, like all the Kennedys. [*Laughter*] I appreciate you being here. Good for you.

Patrick has been the chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, which means he has to go out and make sure all the House Members have enough money to get on television. So he's just out here checking you all out. He'll probably call you all tomorrow for somebody else. [*Laughter*] But you've done a great job. Thank you, Patrick.

Finally, I want to say a word of appreciation and admiration and thanks to Senator Paul Sarbanes—I think not only one of the brightest but one of the most wise people in the United States Congress. You are very lucky to have him as your Senator. I'm glad to see him and Christina here tonight. Thank you.

And I would like to thank Terry and his entire family, because this is a family endeavor, for their commitment to this race and to the future of our country. It is not easy to run for Congress today, still less to run against an incumbent and to run for a clear reason that overrides his or anyone else's individual interests. And I admire him for doing it, for taking it on, and for doing it with such gusto. So I thank you, and I thank your family.

Now, it is true, as all of you know, that I've been up most of the last 15 days. This will be the first night in 15 nights that I've been to bed before 2 o'clock in the morning, and the most of the nights we were at Camp David, we went to bed at 3 or 4. The last 2 nights we were all up until 5 o'clock in the morning.

Somewhere in the middle—I can't remember exactly when—I flew to Okinawa and back. [Laughter] So I'm just barely here.

But I'm honored to be here. I'm very grateful to the people of Maryland for voting for me and Al Gore twice, for giving us a chance to serve, and I thank you for that. I just want to say two or three things.

First of all, this is a profoundly important election. Ninety-two was a big election because the country was in trouble. And the people voted for me and gave me a chance, even though most of them probably, when they first heard about me running, had the same reaction Abe Pollin did. [Laughter] I'll never forget President Bush referring to me as the Governor of a small southern State. [Laughter] And when I ran, I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And you know something? I still do.

But it didn't take rocket science to figure out we needed to make a change in the country. But now—it's interesting, a lot of these surveys show that people don't know if there is a real difference between the Vice President and the Republican candidate's economic policy or the two parties—what's the deal here?

And the first thing I have to drum home is that this is a really important election. And a lot of people won't believe that because things seem to be going well. You say, "Well, how can it be so important? The economy is strong. We've got a surplus. All the social indicators are going well: The unemployment rate is the lowest it's been in 30 years; the welfare rolls have been cut in half; the crime rate is dropping; teen pregnancy rate is dropping; drug use among young people is dropping. What's the big deal here? We have no internal crisis or pressing external threat. The United States is involved in making peace around the world and all that."

I'll tell you what the big deal is. In my lifetime we have never had a moment where we had this much prosperity, this much social progress, and this much national self-confidence. But the world is changing very fast, and there are all these huge challenges and opportunities out there. And for the first time in my adult lifetime, we're actually free to talk about what we might do to meet them, to build the future of our dreams for the children here. And I'm so glad so many kids came to this.

So the reason it's so important is, I don't know when we'll ever have another chance like this. It may be another 35 years. It may be another 50 years. And for a democracy, it's normally quite difficult to take on big challenges, except when you're under the gun. So I honestly believe how a nation deals with this kind of prosperity and all the opportunities it presents in a rapidly changing world is just as stern a test of our character, our values, and our judgment as how we dealt with adversity 8 years ago. And it may be harder.

There is not a person in this audience tonight over 30 years old who can't remember once in your life when you made a big mistake, not because things were going so bad but because things were going so well that you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. But make no mistake, this is a huge election.

The second thing I want to say to you is that there are big differences—huge. And I'll talk a little about some of them in a minute.

And the third thing I want to say is, only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. [Laughter] What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for? [Laughter] It beats anything I ever saw. My wife's opponent up in New York is running ads with me and Senator Moynihan in them; running ads saying, "I voted for a patients' bill of rights." The operative word there is "a," as opposed to "the." And it's happening all over the country, just blur, blur, blur, take advantage of the era of good feelings, out-spend them, and smile them to death and hope nobody ever figures out what the differences are.

There are real differences. And I'll just start with economic policy. Today I announced that since this Congress began last year, the Republicans have, piece by piece, passed tax cuts equal to the whole projected surplus over the next 10 years—the whole projected surplus. That's before we spend any money over and above bare inflation, before we deal with any emergency, before they spend any of their spending priorities. And let me remind you, this is projected. And their platform calls for even bigger tax increases. Now, what they want to tell you is, "Hey, this economy is so strong, you couldn't mess it up with a stick of dynamite. It's your money. I'm going to give it back to you." That's their line.

Our line is, "We got where we are being fiscally responsible. We want to keep paying

down the debt. We want to have enough money to invest in the education of our children, in science and technology, in the environment and health care, and we'll give you a tax cut to educate your kids, for child care, for long-term care, for elderly and disabled people, to help people save for retirement, to help especially lower income working people with a lot of kids." But we're not going to tell you, even in an election year, we can give you more than is prudent because we've got to keep the economy strong. And if you keep interest rates low, which we'll do and they won't, one percent lower interest rates over the next decade is worth \$250 billion in lower home mortgages—\$250 billion—and nearly \$50 billion more in lower car payments and in college loan payments.

So here's my pitch to you: If you got one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon—[laughter]—and it says, you know how it says on the envelope, you may have won \$10 million. Would you go out the next day and spend the \$10 million, based on the envelope? Well, if you would, you ought to be for them. If not, you better stick with us and keep this economy going.

There couldn't be any bigger difference in economic policy than there is in this year. They actually want to go—they think now that we have gotten the budget balanced and now we've run a surplus and we've paid \$300 billion or \$400 billion off the national debt, that you'll be willing to go back to what they did for 12 years. That's the deal here. That's what this election is about on economic policy. It could hardly be a starker difference. And you have to decide. And then you've got to talk to other people about it.

Then there is a big difference in social policy. We want to have a responsible gun safety approach in America. We want to strengthen the Brady bill and close the gun show loophole. We want to stop the importation of large capacity ammunition clips. We want child safety locks on all the guns in America, like Maryland already requires. And Vice President Gore and I believe that people that buy handguns ought to have a photo I.D. license, just like a car license, to prove you passed a gun safety check and a background check. That's what I believe. They honestly don't believe that. I'm convinced they didn't just sell out to the NRA; they just agree with them. You don't have to say anything bad about them; they just don't believe that.

Now, we've tried it their way. We've tried it our way. And gun crime has dropped 35 percent since we adopted the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, and a half a million people were denied the right to buy handguns because they had a criminal background problem or some other problem in their background that made them manifestly unfit. You have to decide.

The NRA says, if the other crowd wins the White House, they'll have an office there. That's what they said. That's not a negative campaign ad. That's what they said.

That's another new feature you'll notice in this election. This year the Republicans, who pioneered for 20 years negative campaigns, smashing us all to bits and telling everybody how terrible we were and how there was nothing good about us—they now have sworn off negative campaigns. Furthermore, their definition of a negative campaign is if you say how they voted. [Laughter] If you tell people how they—how dare you do such a thing. How can you be so mean and unfair as to tell people how we voted and what we said in the primary, when we hoped no general election voters were looking? It's a big deal.

Look, we're laughing, having a good time. But this is a big deal. This is about people's lives. Yes, we've got the lowest crime rate in a long time, and yes, I'm proud it has dropped every year. But this country is not near safe enough. You know it's not. I know it's not. And it's important.

There is a huge difference in health care policy. Whether we're going to provide Medicare for the baby boom generation without bankrupting our kids, whether we're going to provide a real, affordable prescription drug benefit for all the seniors in our country who need it. The bill that they passed won't work, and even if it did, it would leave more than half the seniors who need the drug coverage behind. It's just crazy. It's not right.

And I could just go on and on and on. There are real, significant differences here. The hate crimes legislation, should we have it or not? Employment nondiscrimination, should we have it or not? It's a huge issue.

The final thing I want to say is that a lot of you talked to me tonight about the Middle East peace process. And I don't want to say any more than I've already said, except that it's nowhere near over, and I think it was a very important 2 weeks. The parties had never

before really come to grips in an official, face-to-face way with the profound differences in the way they imagined their future and the profound similarities. But you should not be disheartened.

But here's what I want to tell you about that. It is the most visible and powerful example in the world today about how we define our differences and our commonality. You all know that one of the most profound differences is over what the future of Jerusalem should be. It's interesting, isn't it, that the three great monotheistic religions of the world basically grew out of the same soil and look at Jerusalem as their Holy City.

Now, if all these people, billions of them now in the world that believe there is just one God who created us all, and they understand that reality in slightly different ways, how can it be that what is different about them is more important than their common humanity as children of God?

I say that to those of you who saw the accounts over the weekend—I'm telling you, these are very impressive people on these negotiating teams. They're very impressive people. And you thought, "Well, gosh, I'd wish they'd worked out—I wonder why they couldn't work that out. I wonder why people ever can't get over their differences to what they have in common."

You know, why couldn't the Irish and the Catholics in Northern Ireland get over it for so long? It's a little-bitty place, smaller than Israel, even. Why did all the Orthodox Christians and the Catholics and the Muslims in the Balkans bloody themselves in Bosnia and Kosovo and before in Croatia? Why do these things happen?

Well, why do we ever have racial discrimination in America? Why do we still have hate crimes? Why does some guy go nuts in the Middle West and kill the African-American former basketball coach at Northwestern and then shoot a young Korean Christian walking out of church? And why did a crazy guy shoot a bunch of Jewish kids going to their community center in L.A. and then kill a Filipino postal worker because he was Asian and a Federal employee? Why did Matthew Shepard get stretched out on a rack?

Now, the point I'm trying to make is this—and I'm not accusing the Republicans of this. But one of the things that I'm proudest of is that the Democratic Party is the more inclusive

party in America. We are. I was so proud of a man that I think a lot of, actually—a Republican United States Senator who gave a speech for the hate crimes legislation, using the parable of what Jesus said to the woman who was caught in sin and brought to him for stoning. And he said to let he who is among you without sin cast the first stone. The whole Senate was practically weeping when this guy spoke. It was so moving.

But why is that? Because they were surprised that a member of his party and his wing of his party would do such a noble thing. It was a noble thing he did. But why were they surprised? Because they expect us—the American people expect us to stand up for inclusion for people, without regard to their background, their race, their religion, their sexual orientation, or their income. They expect us to stand up for ordinary people and the left-behind and the broken and the vulnerable. And I'm proud of that.

I tell people this all the time. You ought to be for the Democrats this year because our economic policy is right, and it's no time to reverse it. You ought to be for us because we'll try to include everybody, including those who aren't part of our economic prosperity. You ought to be for us because we will think of the future and we want the baby boomers to be able to retire without bankrupting their children and grandchildren. You ought to be for us because we have a good education policy and a good environmental policy.

But the most important thing of all is, we really do want to take everybody along for the ride. And in the end, as I have just learned over 15 hard days, that is the most important thing of all.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:27 p.m. at the Museum of Women in the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Sarbanes' wife, Christina; NBA Washington Wizards owner Abe Pollin, chairman of Mr. Lierman's campaign; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson Ed McMahon. Mr. Lierman was a candidate for Maryland's Eighth Congressional District.

Statement on Signing the Griffith Project Prepayment and Conveyance Act *July 26, 2000*

Today I have signed into law S. 986, the “Griffith Project Prepayment and Conveyance Act,” a bill to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey the Griffith Project to the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA).

This legislation is consistent with Administration policy of transferring certain facilities to private water districts where it is more efficient for the nonfederal entity to manage the project. I am pleased that the Congress addressed many Administration concerns with earlier versions of this legislation. For example, the bill clarifies questions regarding the lands to be transferred and eligibility for future benefits for Bureau of Reclamation programs.

I am disappointed that the bill directs rather than authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to convey the facilities of the Project. My Administration believes that prior to transferring title, the Secretary should conduct a meaningful National Environmental Policy Act analysis so that the Department, the Congress, and the public can fully understand the impacts of the proposed transfer, its alternatives, and potential mitigation measures. My Administration continues to oppose such mandatory provisions in transfer bills. However, because of the cooperative efforts with the SNWA and the progress made to date in the environmental review, the Department of the Interior indicates that it believes that the process can be satisfactorily completed with regard to this Project.

In signing S. 986, I state my interpretation that section 5(c) of the bill, which provides that nothing in the Act shall transfer or affect Federal ownership, rights, or interest in Lake Mead National Recreation Area associated lands, nor affect the authorities of the National Park Service to manage the Area, read together with section 3(b)(2), makes clear that no interests in real property would transfer to the SNWA other than the right-of-way that is reasonably necessary for the Authority to operate, maintain, replace, and repair the Griffith Project, as constituted on the date of enactment of this Act. Further, notwithstanding language in the bill that provides that the right-of-way shall be “at no cost,” the Federal Government is not prevented from seeking reimbursement for expenditures associated with implementing this Act and protecting the resources of Lake Mead National Recreation Area when rights-of-way are established.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 26, 2000.

NOTE: S. 986, approved July 26, was assigned Public Law No. 106-249. This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 27.

Radio Remarks on Restoration of the Wild Salmon of the Pacific Northwest *July 27, 2000*

Today my administration is proposing a comprehensive strategy to bring back the wild salmon of the Pacific Northwest. We'll pursue a practical course that will help both the economy and the environment. Congress must also do its part by fully funding my salmon restoration budget, and the people of the Pacific Northwest must be prepared to take the necessary steps. Only in partnership with State and tribal govern-

ments and other stakeholders can we restore the salmon without resorting to costlier measures. I welcome the recommendations of the region's Governors and look forward to working together to ensure our success.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at 2:30 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for immediate broadcast. These remarks were also

made available on the White House Press Office
Actuality Line.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda July 27, 2000

The President. Well, ladies and gentlemen, first of all, on behalf of all of us, I want to apologize—please be seated—for keeping you waiting. But these are the closing hours of the congressional session, before the August recess. And Senator Daschle and Leader Gephardt and the other Members of Congress have come here today to speak with one voice about our position. But Congress is packing up and preparing to adjourn for the summer recess and the two conventions. And I only wish we were late because they'd been out there passing our bills. [Laughter]

Let me say, we're here because we believe the congressional Republican leadership is leaving town with a trunk full of unfinished business vital to the health of our economy and the well-being of our people. We spent the last 7 years charting a course of fiscal discipline and investment in our people, and it has paid off, with the longest economic expansion in history, over 22 million new jobs, the lowest minority unemployment rate in our history, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years.

Instead of continuing on that path in the last few weeks, indeed, for the last year, the Republican majority has risked squandering our progress. They have passed reckless tax cut after reckless tax cut after reckless tax cut, to drain away our hard-earned surplus and put us back in the red. When you add them all up, this Congress has passed tax bills that would cost nearly \$2 trillion over 10 years. Even by the most optimistic estimates, this wouldn't leave a dime for lengthening the life of Social Security or Medicare—not one dime; not a dime for voluntary and affordable Medicare prescription drug benefits or for education and school construction. And it would make it impossible for us to get America out of debt by 2012.

There is a better way. We can do all the things I just mentioned and still give the American people needed, targeted tax relief. Let me be clear. We do support the right kind of tax

cuts for working Americans. I have proposed a program of cuts that will give a middle class American family substantially more benefits than the Republican plan at less than half the cost; two-thirds of the relief going to the middle 60 percent of our people, including our carefully targeted marriage penalty relief.

The tax cuts will also help families save up to \$2,800 a year on the cost of college by making tuition tax deductible; a \$3,000 long-term care tax credit to help millions of Americans shoulder the enormous financial burden of caring for chronically ill family members; and a tax cut that will help millions of families pay up to \$2,400 a year for child care; to expand the EITC, providing up to \$1,100 of tax relief for millions of hard-working families.

Today we have more evidence that our plan will help more of the people who really need it. We're releasing a State-by-State analysis, showing that the estate tax repeal, recently passed by the Republican majority, would benefit only about 2 percent of America's families—the wealthiest 2 percent, of course—providing them of an average tax cut of \$800,000. And fully half those benefits would go to just one-tenth of one percent of all Americans.

Let me hasten to say the Democrats offered an alternative which would have taken two-thirds of the people subject to the estate tax out from under it but would have left its progressive character, not repealed it entirely, and not cost the budget \$100 billion over the first 10 years and \$750 billion thereafter.

In contrast to these proposals, our Medicare prescription drug benefit would provide affordable coverage for 39 million seniors and people with disabilities, with average incomes of about \$20,000 a year. This report clearly shows that our approach put the interest of American families first and ensures that the Nation's unprecedented prosperity benefits everyone.

Let me just mention one other thing. I never want to talk about this without mentioning—

we also have a report from the Council of Economic Advisers estimating that if our economic proposals are followed—as opposed to theirs giving all this money away with the tax cuts—interest rates will be one percent lower over the next decade. That is the equivalent of a \$250 billion tax cut for home mortgages. It's the equivalent of a \$30 billion tax cut for lower car payments and college loan payments.

There is a huge difference here that the American people have to understand. I think the Republican majority ought to go to work in the time we have left this year on the people's business.

So when they go off on vacation, the congressional majority should take a long list of required summer reading, a list of what we need to get done when they come back to Washington: to strengthen and modernize Social Security and Medicare and add that prescription drug benefit; to stand up to special interest and pass a strong and enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights; to pass commonsense gun legislation to close the gun show loophole, require child safety locks for all handguns, ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips; to raise the minimum wage by \$1 over 2 years; to continue hiring those 100,000 teachers; to reduce class sizes in the early grades; to improve teacher quality; to modernize 6,000 of our schools that are literally falling apart and repair another 5,000 a year; and to provide after-school programs and summer school programs for all the kids in this country who need it so that we can turn around those failing schools; and we need to stop the delay and pass strong hate crimes legislation.

This is not a list to be read; it's a list to be acted upon. [*Applause*] Thank you. I hope when Congress comes back, they'll do it. Again, I want to thank all the Members that are here, and another 40 or 50 or so that wanted to come, but because of the way the timetable and the voting is unfolding, they can't.

I'm going to modify the program just a little bit and ask Senator Daschle to come forward, because he's got to get back to make sure we don't lose any more votes.

Senator Daschle.

[*At this point, Senator Thomas A. Daschle and Representative Richard A. Gephardt made brief remarks.*]

The President. Debbie, I want to ask your parents and all your siblings and family members to stand. Everybody that is here from Debbie's family, stand up. Isn't that great? [*Applause*] Bless you.

I just want to make a couple of points in closing. If the Congress passed only our college opportunity tax cut, it would be worth 10 times as much to families like Debbie's as the entire Republican tax cut.

The second thing I want to say is, if interest rates rise one percent higher than they otherwise would be because we spend the entire surplus on tax cuts, it will cost the average family \$270 a year, which is more than they'll get in a tax cut.

The final thing I want to say is this. Even if you don't think you'll get any benefits out of any of these tax cuts we've proposed—keep in mind, all this proposed surplus that they want to spend is just that; it's estimated. We don't have a dollar of it yet.

Now, if you got one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon—[*laughter*]*—that said, you may have won \$10 million, would you go out and spend \$10 million the next day? If you would, you should support their plan. [Laughter]* But if you wouldn't, you better stick with us and keep the prosperity going and help people like Debbie.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to George Washington University student Debbie Boudoulvas, who described how proposed tax legislation would benefit her family; and Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson. The President also referred to EITC, the earned-income tax credit. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Senator Daschle and Representative Gephardt.

Statement on the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act *July 27, 2000*

It is long past time that we correct several injustices in the immigration system by changing the registry date and amending the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). People who have been living for many years in the United States and have developed strong ties to their communities deserve the opportunity to normalize their immigration

status. There is no reason for Congress to stand in the way of a reasonable bipartisan bill to increase H-1B visas, invest in our workers, and correct these longstanding injustices. Congress should not pass H-1B or any other immigration legislation this year without ensuring that these injustices are addressed. The American people deserve no less.

Statement on Congressional Action on Republican Tax Cut Legislation *July 27, 2000*

I am disappointed that the Republican Congress continues to strip away our fiscal discipline bill-by-bill by passing another in a series of costly tax cuts that, taken together, will spend our entire hard-earned surplus. This misguided plan leaves nothing for lengthening the life of Social Security and Medicare, nothing for a prescription drug benefit, nothing for education or other priorities, and would make it impossible for us to get America out of debt by 2012. In its latest action, the House passed a bill that does nothing for more than 80 percent of seniors while failing

to act on a Medicare prescription drug benefit which would be available to all Seniors and people with disabilities.

This is the wrong approach. We can maintain our fiscal discipline while providing targeted tax relief to help families pay for college, long-term care, child care, build and modernize schools, and save for retirement. In the interest of fiscal responsibility, I will veto this legislation that threatens our ability to pay down the debt, strengthen Medicare and Social Security, and invest in education.

Statement on the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child *July 27, 2000*

This week I sent to the Senate two historic United Nations protocols that will protect the world's children in unprecedented new ways. Over the past 7 years, I am proud of the work we have done with Congress on a bipartisan basis to stand up for young people and protect the dignity and rights of children around the world. These two protocols will build on that work. One of these agreements prohibits the forcible recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. The other protects children from slavery, prostitution, and pornography. Together, they represent a large step forward in the inter-

national effort to eliminate abuses committed against our children and keep them safe.

Both of these agreements were adopted by the U.N. General Assembly on May 25th, and the United States was among the first nations to sign them. I was pleased to see that both the Senate (on June 7th) and the House of Representatives (on July 11th) expressed their support for the Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. Neither agreement will create obligations for the United States under any international agreement to which we are not a party. I am hopeful that the Senate will act quickly and give its advice

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and consent to both of these agreements by the end of the year.

Statement on Compensation and Benefits for Filipino Veterans

July 27, 2000

Today I am directing the Department of Veterans Affairs to produce a study on the needs of Filipino veterans who served with the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. I have asked that the study provide specific options on how our Veterans Affairs' health care system can address the needs of these Filipino veterans now living in the United States.

During World War II, Filipino nationals were called into military service by Executive order of the President and fought valiantly under U.S. command to help achieve peace and freedom in the Pacific. After the war, the United States made grants to the Philippine Government to provide for the needs of these veterans. In addition, some are eligible for benefits under the United States veterans system. However, many

of these deserving veterans living in the United States are currently not eligible for such benefits.

For several years, my administration has worked with Members of Congress such as Representatives Bob Filner and Patsy Mink to recognize the contributions of Filipino veterans and to improve the compensation and benefits of those living in the United States. As this population ages, it has a growing need for quality health care. That is why I am asking the Department of Veterans Affairs to look at ways we can address their needs. I look forward to the Department's recommendations. I am eager to find a way to fulfill the needs of this deserving group of veterans.

Memorandum on a Study of Compensation and Benefits for Filipino Veterans

July 27, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of the Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Study of Compensation and Benefits for Filipino Veterans

My Administration has recognized the unique contribution of Filipino veterans of the Second World War and worked to improve their compensation and benefits. In fact, for the last two sessions of Congress we have proposed legislation to eliminate the current dollar limitation for authorized compensation payments to Filipino beneficiaries residing in the United States. The proposed legislation has not been enacted. This reality, coupled with the fact that numerous Filipino veterans have immigrated to this country, suggests that the we need to raise awareness

of the issues and options to help this group of deserving veterans.

To that end, I am directing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to complete a study by October 31, 2000, of the needs of these veterans and the options available for addressing those needs. This study shall be conducted in coordination with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the Department of State, and the Department of Defense, and would include a historical background of, and the issues associated with, the benefits afforded to Filipino veterans. It should also take into consideration changes in the Filipino veteran population and review options relative to the benefits afforded these veterans. It also would include the cost implications of options approved by OMB.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

July 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East

peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 27, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Efforts To Achieve Sustainable Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina

July 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the Levin Amendment to the 1998 Supplemental Appropriations and Rescissions Act (section 7 of Public Law 105-174) and section 1203 of the Strom Thurmond National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (Public Law 105-261), I transmit herewith a report on progress made toward achieving benchmarks for a sustainable peace process.

In April 2000, I sent the third semiannual report to the Congress under Public Law 105-174, detailing progress towards achieving the ten benchmarks adopted by the Peace Implementation Council and the North Atlantic Council for evaluating implementation of the Dayton Ac-

cords. This report provides an updated assessment of progress on the benchmarks, covering the period January 1 through June 30, 2000.

In addition to the semiannual reporting requirements of Public Law 105-174, this report fulfills the requirements of section 1203 in connection with my Administration's request for funds for FY 2001.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 27, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

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Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Libya

July 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emer-

gency with respect to Libya that was declared in Executive Order 12543 of January 7, 1986.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 27, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the National Institute of Building Sciences

July 27, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the requirements of section 809 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701j-2(j)), I transmit herewith the annual re-

port of the National Institute of Building Sciences for fiscal year 1998.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 27, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Belize-United States Extradition Treaty

July 27, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Extradition Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Belize, signed at Belize on March 30, 2000.

In addition, I transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty. As the report explains, the Treaty will not require implementing legislation.

The provisions in this Treaty follow generally the form and content of extradition treaties recently concluded by the United States.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern extradition treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. Upon entry into force, the Treaty will replace the outdated Extradition Treaty between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the United States of America, signed at London, June 8, 1972, entered into force on October 21, 1976, and made applicable to Belize on January 21, 1977. That Treaty continued in force for Belize following independence. This Treaty will, upon entry into force, enhance cooperation between the law enforcement communities of the two countries. It will thereby make a significant contribution to

international law enforcement efforts against serious offenses, including terrorism, organized crime, and drug-trafficking offenses.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

July 27, 2000.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Richard A. Gephardt July 27, 2000

Thank you very much. That's the way it will be on January 20th. *[Laughter]* Just one hand left, that's all. *[Laughter]*

Let me say first of all, I'm glad to see you all here. I'm delighted that you have contributed so much money to our cause, and I thank you for that. I want to thank Chevy Chase and Jayni for being here. They've been great friends to Hillary and me. I always tell everybody that I knew that I would be friends with this guy for life in our first two encounters. I mean, our first two meaningful encounters.

You may remember that I gave a very ill-fated speech in 1988 at the convention. *[Laughter]* I'm still looking for the chance to finish it. I've just never—*[laughter]*.

And so everybody's making fun of me. And that summer I went up to Long Island, and I went to this charity softball game they have up there every summer between writers and artists. And the guy that was calling the game—they asked me to be an umpire. So I said, "Okay, I'll do that. I know how to play ball." And by then, I thought I was finished anyway, so I didn't mind making all those writers mad at me. *[Laughter]* "Strike," you know. *[Laughter]*

And so the guy starts ragging me about this speech I gave at the convention, and between innings, this big tall guy gets up out of the stands, walks down. I looked up, and I said, "Lo and behold, it's Chevy Chase." And he comes to me, and he says, "To hell with them all. I liked the speech." *[Laughter]* Now, only my mother said that to me before he did. *[Laughter]*

The second time I saw him was—to really have an encounter, was June 2, 1992. A great night—I won the California primary, the Ohio

primary, the New Jersey primary. It was the first time I knew for absolutely sure I'd be the nominee of the Democratic Party on the first ballot.

The whole story in the press that night was, "We did all these exit polls. Nobody's for Clinton. He's in third place. They really want Perot. He's dead." It's the first time anybody ever got nominated who was dead meat before he was even nominated. He came to my suite in Los Angeles, at the Biltmore Hotel, and said, "To hell with them. I'm still for you." *[Laughter]* I will never forget that as long as I live.

Now, he is, however, a terrible golfer. *[Laughter]* "Caddyshack" was not only a comedy; it was a fraud. *[Laughter]* But I can tell you truthfully, it's only because he never made an effort. He was actually quite extraordinary when he took a little instruction. *[Laughter]*

What is he doing back there, anyway? *[Laughter]*

Let me say on a more serious note, anything I have been able to do for our country would have been impossible without the leadership in the Congress—in the Senate, over these last 7½ years, that's George Mitchell and Tom Daschle, and in the House with Dick Gephardt.

I was sitting here looking at Dick and Jane tonight thinking about the time he came to Arkansas to give a speech in 1988, and I brought him back to the Governor's mansion, and we ate french fries. Do you remember that? It's really unhealthy—11:30 at night and we're eating french fries on the kitchen counter at home. And I really liked him.

But I have to tell you that I hope that in some way I have grown in this job I have had, because we're supposed to grow with the experiences we have in life. I can tell you, I have

never seen anybody—he was good when I first met him. But he's probably the best leader we have ever had, certainly in the 20th century, certainly in any of my experience and knowledge.

And if ever anybody deserved to be the Speaker of the House of Representatives and earned it, he did. He didn't quit the Congress. He didn't do something else. He didn't turn away. He didn't get bitter. He didn't get cynical. When we got beat in '94, he just kept working. And we worked together. We learned some things about how to work together from our defeat, and we got more effective. We picked up seats in '96.

Then we picked up seats in '98, the first time that we'd won in the midterm of an incumbent President since the thirties, the first time in the sixth year of an incumbent President since 1822. Dick Gephardt did that with his leadership and the unity of our Democratic caucus.

And we're just five little seats away now. And soon, I think, it will become apparent that we have an excellent chance of winning, thanks in no small measure to your support. One of the people that I expect to help make up our new majority is here tonight, and he is the Congressman from a district that includes a little town in which I was born, and I want you to make him welcome, State Senator Mike Ross from Arkansas. Mike, come up here and weigh in. He's a good candidate, and if you want to write him an extra check, it will be all right with me. [Laughter]

Now, let me just say a few words—and I realize I'm preaching to the saved tonight. But it's very important that every one of you recognize that in all probability this will be a close race for the Presidency, for the House, and for the Senate. We have an excellent chance to win the House. We have a realistic chance to win the Senate. And I have always believed we would win the White House when the American people understood what the issues were and what the choices were. You have to make them understand that.

There are just three things you need to know about the 2000 election—only three. It is a huge election. We are deciding how to use our prosperity, and it is a stern test of our character and judgment. And a lot of Americans don't believe that yet. The biggest problem we've got—a lot of them think that we couldn't mess this economy up if we tried. Everything is going

along all right. You know, maybe we're electing a President of the student body. [Laughter] I'm telling you, it's a serious thing.

You have got to go out and remind people that how a nation handles its prosperity is, if anything, a sterner test of its judgment, its values, and its character than how you handle adversity. We all talk about, you know, what a miracle '92 was. I'll never forget President Bush derisively referring to me as the Governor of a small southern State. I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do. [Laughter]

But you know, the country knew we had to change. They knew we—we didn't have an economic policy that worked. We didn't have a social policy that worked, from education to welfare to crime. We didn't have a political theory about how we could pull the country together. We didn't really have a clear vision about what our national role was going to be in the world. We knew we had to change.

The worst thing that can happen to the Democrats this year is if people think this is an election without consequence. So I'm just telling you, the first thing you've got to do is convince everybody you know anywhere in America that this is a profoundly important election. I've waited all my life to see my country in a position to paint a picture of the future, to realize our dreams for our children.

We've got that chance now. I don't know if it will ever come around again, and neither do you. And it may not happen in your lifetime. It is a big election. If people think that, we're halfway home.

The second thing you need to know about this election is, there are real and profound differences between the two parties and our candidates for President, Senate, and Congress, differences on economic policy, on crime policy, on health care policy, on education policy, right across the board.

The third thing you need to know—and this is all you need to know—is only the Democrats want you to know what those differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for? [Laughter] I never thought I'd live to see it. All over America, these Republicans are moaning, crying these big crocodile tears about how mean and negative the Democrats are. These are people that brought us over the last 20 years the most vicious era of personal-destruction politics in modern American history,

and what is it they're crying about? Is it because we're doing what they did? No. We're telling the voters how they voted. And they say, "Oh, this is so mean. It's so negative. How dare you tell people back home how I voted and what my positions are?" [Laughter]

Do you think I'm kidding? Just look at any race involving a Republican incumbent, and that ought to be sobering to you, because the only reason they have a chance to get away with this is because times are going so good, people are doing well. People are optimistic, and they're upbeat. And goodness knows, one of the best things about America is we always want to believe the best about people.

Well, I don't think we have to believe the worst about people. I don't want anybody saying anything bad about these folks. I want us to say that we assume they're honorable, good, and decent people, and they mean exactly what they say; they intend to do what exactly what they say. But they shouldn't be able to hide all they have done and said, starting at that Republican Convention and going all the way to November. And it's your job to make sure people know what the differences are, because they don't want you to know.

If we run ads in a State to say they voted against the Patients' Bill of Rights, they come back with ads that say, "How dare they say that. I voted for a patients' bill of rights." There is a big difference between "a" and "the," all the difference in the wide world. And I could go on and on.

Now, I want you to think about this. And I want to say a word about the Vice President. I always tell everybody there are four reasons you ought to vote for him, and all but the first applies to all the rest of the Democrats.

The first is, never in the history of the Republic has anybody held the office of Vice President to such great effect with so much influence and so much impact. I noticed the other day that the prospective nominee of the Republican Party said he'd be a more conventional Vice President; Al Gore had done too much. Well, I don't want anybody working for me that's not trying to do too much. I thought that's what we hired on for. Did you hire us to take vacations?

I'm telling you, from breaking the tie on the economic plan in '93, which broke the back of the deficits and the big debts in this country and got us going again, to his leadership on

technology, on energy, on empowering poor communities, there has never been anybody in this job that did so much good. There have been a lot of Vice Presidents that made great Presidents, but no one as Vice President who ever did remotely as much as Al Gore. He's the best qualified person to be the President of the United States, to run in my lifetime, and you ought to make sure every American voter knows that.

The second thing I want to tell you is that if you want to keep making enough money so you can afford to come to fundraisers like this—[laughter]—you should vote for us—[laughter]—because we'll keep this prosperity going. Their proposal—last year they passed this big old tax cut, and I vetoed it. And they went out in the August recess, and they tried to stir up the folks, and it turned out the people agreed with us. So this year they did something smarter. They did a salami tax cut. They just slashed it a little bit along. And every one of them sounds great. It's like going to a cafeteria, you know? If you pick everything off a tray that sounds good and looks good and you want to eat it all, by the time you eat it all, you're really sick—[laughter]—even though it was all good.

They have passed in this Congress, in the last 12 months, tax cuts totalling almost \$2 trillion, the entire projected surplus: no money to lengthen the life of Medicare and Social Security; no money to invest in our children's education; no money to do what we need to do in health care to provide Medicare prescription drugs; never mind the environment or medical research or any emergencies that will come up along the way. They want to spend right on the front end our whole projected surplus.

Now, let me ask you this. This is like one of those—did you ever get one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon? [Laughter] "You may have won \$10 million." Did you go out the next day and spend \$10 million? If you did, you should support Governor Bush and the Republicans. [Laughter] If not, you better stick with us and keep this economy going.

Now, this is serious. There was an article the other day in one of the major papers saying the voters saw no difference in the economic policies of the two candidates and the two parties. And I said, "You know, they keep saying I'm a good communicator. I must have totally

flubbed here.” [Laughter] It’s just because things are going well.

They had the White House for 12 years, and they quadrupled the debt of this country—4 times what we’ve run up in 200 years before. And they want to go right back to the same policy and convince you that things are so good, they couldn’t mess it up if they tried.

You’ve got to make sure people know that. If the American people want that, if they want to read the Ed McMahon letter and say, “I’m going to spend that \$10 million right now. I hope it comes in”—[laughter]—then that’s fine. It’s a free country. It’s a democracy. People ought to be able to get whatever they want.

But they don’t want that, and you know it. So if they vote against our nominees from President to Senator to Congress, it’s because they don’t understand that that’s a choice. You know that by two to one they will agree with us. You know they will.

If I ask you what you were going to make over the next decade—what are your projected earnings? Every one of you just think about it. Just think about it. What do you think you’re going to make for 10 years?

Now, I’m going to set up a chair here and a desk, and I’ve got a notary public, and I want you to come up here right now and sign a contract spending it all. [Laughter] If you’d do that, you ought to vote for them; if not, you better stick with us. Now, that’s a pretty clear choice.

The second thing I want to say to you is, we have differences over social policy that I think are profoundly important. We’re for a Patients’ Bill of Rights that’s real, and they’re not. We’re for a Medicare prescription drug benefit that all of our seniors can buy who need it and our disabled Americans, and they’re not. We want to close the gun show loophole, and they don’t. The head of the NRA says they’re going to have an office in the White House if they win the next election. They won’t need it; they’ll have their way, anyway.

Now, I’m not saying anything bad about them. That’s the way they are. [Laughter] No—they believe that. They believe that. You don’t have to be a bad person to have a difference of opinion. But it’s very bad to try to obscure the difference of opinion and hope the voters don’t know.

If the voters want, by a majority, to have a Congress that won’t close the gun show loop-

hole, that won’t provide a genuine Medicare prescription drug benefit for our seniors, that won’t pass a real Patients’ Bill of Rights, that won’t help our schools with new building and hire more teachers, and do these things that need to be done, they have a right to choose that. But they must know what the choice is. And if they don’t, it’s our fault, because if I were them, I wouldn’t tell them either. [Laughter] They know if anybody finds out where they stand, they’re sunk. So they have to paint these pretty pictures.

And the last and most important thing I want to tell you, more important than anything else, is that Al Gore and Dick Gephardt and our crowd, we want to take everybody along for the ride. That’s why we’re for hate crimes legislation. That’s why we’re for employment non-discrimination legislation. That’s why we support strong civil rights enforcement. That’s why we want to extend the benefits of this economic prosperity to everybody in every corner of this country. That’s why we want to raise the minimum wage. That’s why our tax cuts are targeted toward helping people send their kids to college or pay for child care or pay for long-term care for the elderly and disabled. That’s why we want to give a big income tax cut to low wage working people with three or more kids, because we think the people that are here working in this hotel tonight that could never afford to pay a ticket to come to a fundraiser like this deserve the same chance we do to send their kids to college and to live the American dream. That’s who we are, and that’s what we are.

So if you believe that we ought to keep the prosperity going and you want to extend it to everybody, if you believe that we’re right in trying to do the sensible thing on health care policy and crime policy and environmental policy, and if you think we ought to take everybody along on a great ride in the 21st century, you need to make sure that Al Gore is the President and that Dick Gephardt is the next Speaker.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:17 p.m. in the State Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to comedian Chevy Chase and his wife, Jayni; Representative Gephardt’s wife, Jane; former Senator George J. Mitchell; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes

spokesperson Ed McMahon; National Rifle Association executive vice president Wayne LaPierre; and Republican Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Mexico-United States Treaty on the Western Gulf of Mexico Continental Shelf

July 27, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States on the Delimitation of the Continental Shelf in the Western Gulf of Mexico beyond 200 nautical miles. The Treaty was signed at Washington on June 9, 2000. The report of the Department of State is also enclosed for the information of the Senate.

The purpose of the Treaty is to establish a continental shelf boundary in the western Gulf of Mexico beyond the outer limits of the two countries' exclusive economic zones where those limits do not overlap. The approximately 135-nautical-mile continental shelf boundary runs in a general east-west direction. The boundary defines the limit within which the United States and Mexico may exercise continental shelf jurisdiction, particularly oil and gas exploration and exploitation.

The Treaty also establishes procedures for addressing the possibility of oil and gas reservoirs that extend across the continental shelf boundary.

I believe this Treaty to be fully in the interest of the United States. Ratification of the Treaty will facilitate the United States proceeding with leasing an area of continental shelf with oil and gas potential that has interested the U.S. oil and gas industry for several years.

The Treaty also reflects the tradition of cooperation and close ties with Mexico. The location of the boundary has not been in dispute.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Treaty and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
July 27, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 28.

Remarks on the National Economy and an Exchange With Reporters in Providence, Rhode Island

July 28, 2000

The President. Let me say, first of all, I'm delighted to be back in Rhode Island with Senator Reed and Congressman Kennedy—and Senator Kennedy here showing good family support.

I have some good news to report. Today we learned that our economy grew at a vigorous 5.2 percent during the last quarter. This is a credit to the hard work of the American people and further confirmation that we are on the right economic path, with stronger and steadier growth than at any time since the 1960's, with

22 million new jobs, and the lowest unemployment rate in over 30 years. Growth over the past 7½ years has now averaged 4 percent. That's the best growth rate America has had since the Kennedy-Johnson years. Unemployment here in Rhode Island has been cut in half since 1993 to 4 percent. The growth in the last quarter has been driven by extraordinary levels of private sector investment and increased productivity on the part of the American people. This has been the trend now for 7 years, thanks to the strategy of fiscal

discipline and investing in our people and our future we adopted back in 1993.

This good economic news is more proof that we should stay on the path of fiscal discipline and not endanger our prosperity by passing one expensive tax cut after another until, when totaled up, they would spend every single dime of our projected surplus for a decade.

Already, the Republicans have passed tax cuts this year that would drain a trillion dollars from the projected surplus. Now, they're going to Philadelphia in support of tax cuts that would drain well over another trillion dollars, over and above what they've already passed from the surplus.

Simple math says that one plus one equals two, and \$2 trillion are too many reckless tax cuts. It's too big and too irresponsible for our economy. And I would remind the American people again: This is tax cuts that are permanent against surpluses that are just projected.

I said yesterday, and I'll say again: If you've got one of those letters from Ed McMahon saying, you may have won \$10 million, would you go out and spend \$10 million the next day? Well, if you would, you should support their program. But if not, you ought to stick with what works.

So when you're listening to what they say in Philadelphia, ask yourself and, more importantly, ask them: Can we really afford \$2 trillion in risky tax cuts? Can we afford not to leave a single penny to strengthen Medicare and Social Security against the day when the baby boomers retire? Can we really afford not to save a penny for a Medicare prescription drug benefit? Can we really afford to do nothing for education, for school construction, and should we give up trying to get America out of debt by 2012? Can we really afford to go back to the bad old days of debt and deficits and double-digit mortgage rates? There is a better way.

I have proposed and, indeed, all our candidates and our leaders in Congress support affordable tax cuts, including carefully targeted marriage penalty relief, tax cuts for college tuition, for long-term care for the elderly and disabled, for child care, to help ordinary working people save for retirement; and tax cuts to spur investment in new school construction and in underdeveloped areas of America.

The tax cuts we have proposed will give middle class families substantially more benefits than the Republican plan at less than 25 percent

of the cost of their total tax cuts. Under our plan, we'll still have the resources we need to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit, to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, to pay for the baby boomers retirement and to get this country out of debt by 2012, so that we can keep our economy going.

Our plan will keep interest rates at least one percent lower over the next decade than their plan. Let me tell you what that's worth to ordinary people. That's worth \$250 billion in lower mortgage payments, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. That's a pretty good tax cut itself, over and above our direct proposal.

The strong economic news today is just the latest indication that fiscal discipline has put America on the right track. And on my watch, we'll stay on track.

The rest of the decision is up to the American people. But we will not squander this surplus as long as I am here. We will not. Instead, we should have the right kind of tax cuts to put our people and our children's future first.

Thank you very much.

U.S. Embassy in Israel

Q. Mr. President, are you going to move the Embassy to Jerusalem, or take any other steps to reward the Israelis and punish the Palestinians over Camp David?

The President. First of all, I have nothing to add to what I said yesterday. I think we released the transcript of my interview with Israeli television. We are working aggressively to get these talks back on track. The two parties are meeting, as you know, and has been widely reported.

I meant what I said yesterday, and I reaffirm it. I think what we should all do is to recognize that Prime Minister Barak took some far-reaching steps. The two parties discussed things they had never discussed before. They came closer together than they had ever come before. They still have a ways to go. And I think we need to support the friends of peace and this process in every way that we can. That's what I intend to do.

Thank you.

Chelsea Clinton

Q. Mr. President, any comment on Chelsea taking a semester off?

The President. No, she's actually—Stanford is on the quarter system. They do three quarters. So she doesn't have to take that much time off. She's already got way more credits than she needs to graduate, and she wants to be with her mother and me for these last few months of our time together.

You know, she spent about—well, now, more than a third of her life in the White House, and she wants to have some more days there. She wants to be able to help her mother. And she wants to be able to keep company with her father, which is always a surprising thing when your children grow up and they want to spend time with you. I think Hillary and I are immensely gratified by that.

I hope that she enjoys her time here. And it's been a great comfort to Hillary and me to have her around more. I just think it's just a family decision that she wanted to make, and she can still graduate on time with her class, and so I'm glad she's doing it.

Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. at Theodore Francis Green State Airport on arrival in Providence, RI. In his remarks, he referred to Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Representative Patrick J. Kennedy in Barrington, Rhode Island

July 28, 2000

Thank you. You have to be 33 years old to have that kind of energy. *[Laughter]* You know, Patrick is—he celebrated his 33d birthday, but he looks like he's about 23. And he told me that story that he told you. You remember when he started his remarks, and he talked about being grounded? He was supposed to go to his birthday party; he was grounded by bad weather. The first time he said it, I thought one of his parents made him stay home for bad behavior. *[Laughter]*

Don't pay any attention to this. We're all just jealous, Patrick. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Bill and Nancy for opening this magnificent home, this beautiful, beautiful place and for giving me a reason to come to Barrington. I hope I can come back. I really think it's amazingly beautiful.

I want to thank Senator Reed for being here with us and for his truly outstanding leadership in the Senate. I want to thank Ted and Vicki and Joan for being here to support you, Patrick. You deserve it, and everything you said about your dad is the truth.

When Patrick was up here bragging on his father, I leaned over to Bill and I said, "You know, you would be hard-pressed to name 10 people who have served in the United States Senate in the entire history of America who

have done as much good as Ted Kennedy has." And I think that's very important.

I want to thank your former Governor, Bruce Sundlun, and your former Lieutenant Governor, Bob Licht, for being here and Lieutenant Governor and all the mayors and legislative leaders. And there are a lot of people here who helped me from the beginning, but I want to especially mention Joe Paolino and Mark Weiner and Ira Magaziner, and his whole family, for being there for me when I was just what then-President Bush referred to as a Governor of a small southern State. *[Laughter]* And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. *[Laughter]* And I still do. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Patrick for giving me the opportunity to come here for him today. I don't know anybody in the Congress who works as hard as he does. I don't know anybody in the Congress any more devoted to his or her constituents than he is. I don't know anybody in the Congress on the good days and the bad—and believe me, you get your fair share of both down there—who is always up, always there, always focused, always doing what he's supposed to do. You should be very proud of what he has done with his life for you and the people of Rhode Island.

I think it is truly astonishing that one family has produced so many people so devoted to public service. His cousin Joe did a great job in the Congress. His cousin Kathleen, I think, is the finest Lieutenant Governor in the entire United States—unbelievable in terms of what she's been able to accomplish.

But over the long run, if you will just stick with him, his energy and consistency and dedication will make a unique mark on Rhode Island and on the United States, and I want you to stick with him. And besides that, he's now raised all this money for these other people in Congress, and they owe him everything. I mean, if we get the majority, they may move the Capitol up here, for all I know, just because of Patrick.

Let me just say, too, on behalf of Hillary and myself and Al and Tipper Gore, I want to thank the people of Rhode Island for being so good to us and to me, especially, through two elections. I stopped at a school on the way here and read my radio address for tomorrow morning. And on the way out, I stopped and shook hands with a lot of the folks that were on the street. And I turned to one of my aides and I said, "You know, I want to spend the rest of my Presidency in places where I got 60 percent of the vote or more." [Laughter] I was pretty happy. But I'm very grateful to you.

And I guess the remarks that I make today are sort of like what we at home used to call preaching to the saved. But I hope you will listen to what I have to say, and I know that you have friends, not only all over this State but all over this country, and I hope you will share it with them.

Some people think I'm crazy for doing what Patrick said I am. I've never worked harder in an election for myself than I'm working for our Congressmen and our Senators and our Vice President. And of course, there is one particular Senate race I have more than a passing interest in. [Laughter] But I'm doing it for other reasons.

I come here today a little—actually, reluctant to speak because the night before last was the first time in 2 weeks I've been to bed before 2 in the morning, because we were at Camp David working on those Middle East peace talks. And I'm not sure I'll remember what I say when I finish, because I'm still a little tired.

But let me tell you what I think is most important and what I'm concerned about. Patrick had it right; I always tell people there's only three things you need to know about this election: It is a big election; there are big differences; and only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

But let me explain what I mean by that. We're in the midst of the longest economic expansion in our country's history, including those which occurred in wartime, and we've had no war. All the social indicators are going in the right direction. The welfare rolls are half what they were when I took the oath of office. The crime rate is down. The teen pregnancy rate is down. We have the highest homeownership in our history. We have the lowest poverty rate among single-parent households in over 40 years, the lowest unemployment rate among women in 40 years, the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded. Our country is at peace, and we've been able to be a force for peace from Northern Ireland to the Balkans to the Middle East and throughout the world.

So what's the big deal here? Well, in my lifetime we have never had such an opportunity to build the future of our dreams for our children. But we also know that even though things are going very well, nothing stays the same forever. America is changing rapidly and there are big challenges out there on the horizon.

So I say to you, not in any morose way—I mean, I'm just as happy as the next guy—and for my age, I'm almost as happy as Patrick. But I want you to listen to this. How a nation deals with a unique moment of prosperity, a democracy, is just as stern a test of our judgment, our values, our wisdom, our character as how we deal with adversity.

You didn't have to be a genius in 1992 to know we needed a change. This country was in trouble. We quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years and reduced our investment in the future.

We were in trouble. The country was becoming more divided socially. The politics of Washington were stuck in sort of a partisan verbal warfare. And we had to change. Now, people think there may be no consequences to change one way or the other.

Well, what I want to say to you is this: However people vote this year, they will be voting for change. There is no doubt about that. The

question is, what kind of change will we vote for? This is profoundly important. And countries are like individuals. There's not a person out here who is over 30, at least, who can't remember one time, at least one time in your life when you made a huge mistake, professionally or personally, not because things were going so poorly but because things were going so well you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. It's almost endemic to the human condition.

And I see a lot of people nodding their heads. You know I'm telling the truth. That's the only thing I'm worried about this year. People just sort of saying, "Gosh, things are going so well, you couldn't mess this economy up with a stick of dynamite. There doesn't seem to be much difference to me; all these people are so nice.

Now, that basically is the message of our Republican friends. Near as I can tell, the message of the Bush campaign is just that. "I mean, how bad could I be? I've been Governor of Texas. My daddy was President. I own a baseball team." [Laughter] "They like me down there. Everything is rocking along hunky-dory. Their fraternity had it for 8 years. Give it to ours for 8 years because we're compassionate and humane, and we're not like what you think about us from watching the Congress for the last 5 years." That's the message isn't it? Blur, blur, blur. Blur all the distinctions.

Well, there is a difference. And that's what I want you to tell every friend you've got all over this country. Whatever decision the American people make, I will gladly accept. And I've already had so many gifts in life I could never complain about anything that happens to me. But I want my country at least to make this decision knowing what the alternatives are and knowing that there are consequences for whichever choices we make. And let me just give you a few.

There is a huge difference in economic policy—massive. This year already, the Republicans have passed—not this calendar year but over the last 12 months—tax cuts totalling over a trillion dollars. They're going to Philadelphia to advocate another tax cut way over a trillion dollars. In other words, they propose to spend 100 percent and more of the projected surplus over the next 10 years on tax cuts—all of it. And if they enact them in a year, which they would do if they had the White House and the Con-

gress, they would be there, but the money may not be.

Let me ask you something. Did you ever get one of those letters in the mail, like from Ed McMahon, saying, "You may have won \$10 million"? Now, if you got one of those letters and you went out the next day and committed to spend \$10 million, you ought to be for them. If not, you had better stick with us. [Laughter] You think about that.

If I ask you what your projected income is for the next 10 years—you think hard. How much money are you going to make over the next 10 years? If I ask you to come up here right now and sign a binding contract to spend 100 percent of it, would you do it? If you would, you ought to support them. If not, you better stick with us. [Laughter] Now, you're laughing, but that's exactly what the deal is.

Now, our proposal is different. We say our tax cuts are less than 25 percent of their \$2 trillion-plus. But we give more tax benefits to the 80 percent of the American people that are the first four quintile. Which means in the short run, most of you who can afford to be here today would do better with theirs than with our ours. But 80 percent of the American people would actually get more relief under our plan than theirs, even though we spend less than a fourth as much.

And what do we do with the rest? Well, first of all, we're not going to spend it because we don't know if it's there yet. Secondly, we think some money should be invested in the education of our children. We have the largest number of our students in our country's history. We have the most diverse number of our students in our country's history. We have kids in these classrooms bursting at the seams, and we want to make them smaller. We have school districts who can't afford to build buildings, and we want to help them build them. We have kids that come from troubled homes and troubled neighborhoods that need after-school and summer school programs, and we want to give them those opportunities.

And I've been working on education seriously now for more than 20 years—seriously—going to schools, talking to teachers, talking to principals, watching how they work. And I can tell you we know more now than we have ever known about how to turn these failing schools around.

I was in a school in Spanish Harlem the other day in New York City, where 2 years ago 80 percent of the children were reading and doing math below grade level. Today, 74 percent of the kids are reading and doing math at or above grade level.

I was in a school in rural Kentucky the other day, where—[laughter]—your national ambitions are being outed, Patrick; you've got broad bases. [Laughter] So I was in this school in rural Kentucky, over half the kids on the school lunch program; 4 years ago, one of the failing schools in Kentucky—4 years. They went from 12 percent of the kids who could read at or above grade level to almost 60 percent. They went from 5 percent of the kids who could do math at or above grade level to 70 percent. They went from zero percent of the kids who could do science at or above grade level to almost two-thirds in 4 years, and they're one of the 20 best elementary schools in Kentucky. We can turn these schools around, folks. We can do that.

But you can't say that we care more about our children than anything, but we're going to take the money and run. You've got to save some to invest in them. And in health care and in the environment and in science and technology and in health research.

So I think this is very, very important. And it's not like you hadn't had a test run here. We tried it their way for 12 years, and we've tried it our way for 8 years, and you do have a record here. You cannot let this election unfold as if there are no differences in economic policy and no consequences to the decision the American people will make.

The same thing is true in health care policy. We're for a strong Patients' Bill of Rights that Senator Kennedy has led the way on, and they're not. We're for a Medicare prescription drug program that all the seniors in our country who need it can buy into. We would never create Medicare today—never—without prescription drugs. Only reason it was done that way in 1965 is that health care in 1965 was about doctors and hospitals.

Today, if you live to be 65, your life expectancy is 82 or 83 years. And it's about keeping people out of the hospital and keeping them healthy and extending the quality as well as the length of their lives. We would never create a Medicare program without prescription drugs today. And Patrick's right—there are people

every week who choose between medicine and food. This is a big difference. And what kind of country are we going to live in?

There are big differences on environmental policy. You know, one of the things I'm proudest of is that we have set—Al Gore and I have set aside more land for future preservation for all time than any administration in American history except those of the two Roosevelts in the continental United States—ever.

Now, in the primary, their nominee said if he were elected, he would reverse my order creating 43 million roadless acres in our national forests, something that I think would be an environmental terrible mistake. So make no mistake about it. There are big differences here. We believe you can improve the environment and grow the economy, and they basically don't.

And there are big differences in crime policy. Patrick talked about this. The previous President vetoed the Brady bill, and I signed it. And they said—and we lost the House of Representatives, in part, because I signed that and the assault weapons ban, because they scared all the gun owners in the country into believing we were going to take their guns away, and they wouldn't be able to go hunting.

And I went up to New Hampshire, I remember, in 1996, where they beat one of our Congressman. And I said, "I know you beat him because he voted with me on the assault weapons ban and the Brady bill." And I told all these hunters, I said, "Now if you missed a day in the deer woods, you ought to vote against me, too, because he did it for me, because I asked him to. But if you didn't, they didn't tell you the truth, and you need to get even." And they did, and we won.

But the point I want to make to you is, there is a huge philosophical difference. The head of the NRA said the other day that they would have an office in the White House if the Republican nominee won. What I want you to know is, they won't need an office, because they'll do what they want anyway. And we just have a difference of opinion there.

Al Gore, he wants to close the gun show loophole and require child trigger locks and stop the importation of these large capacity ammunition clips and require people when they buy handguns to have a photo ID license showing they passed a background check and they know how to use the gun safely. And I think that's

the right thing to do, and they don't—and they honestly don't. But I do.

And the American people need to know there are consequences here. And if they agree with them, then they ought to vote for them. But at least they have to know. There are big differences on our ideas about what it means to be genuinely inclusive. We're for the hate crimes legislation. Some of them are, but most of them aren't. We're for employment non-discrimination legislation. We can't get it passed. Senator Kennedy has been working on it a long time. We're for raising minimum wage, and they're not. I'll bet they will do that before the election, because that's pretty hard to defend. But we've been trying to do it for over a year.

Ted Kennedy has worked with them for over a year trying to raise the minimum wage—the strongest economy we've ever had. The last time we did it in '96, they said it was a job killer disguised in kindness. They said it would cost a terrible number of jobs. And that would lead to skyrocketing juvenile crime because we were going to throw all of these kids out of work by raising the minimum wage. And since they said that, we've got 11 million more jobs and the lowest juvenile crime rate we've had in 25 years. It's not like we don't have any evidence here.

So what's the point I'm trying to make? There are big differences, and we have evidence. So how could Patrick not be successful in his quest if people really believe there are no consequences to their failure to concentrate if they really don't know what the differences are?

You know, we wouldn't be around here after 226 years—224 years—if the American people weren't right most of the time. That's the whole premise of democracy. Most of the time, the people get it right on most of the issues if they have enough information and enough time.

So that brings me to this next point I want to make. Their clear objective is to blur all these differences. You don't ever hear them talking about that primary they had for President, do you? You don't ever hear them talking about the commitments they made in the primary. They just want to make like that never happened. But it did happen.

Now, here's what I want to say to you. I think we can have a positive election. I'm tired of 20 years of politics where people try to convince the voters that their opponents were just

one step above car thieves. And you're tired of it too, aren't you? The whole politics of personal destruction: We ought not to have that.

We Democrats ought to stand up and say, "As far as we know, from the Presidential nominee to the Vice Presidential nominee, to their candidates for Senate and the House, our opponents are honorable, patriotic people who differ with us. And we think elections are citizen choices about the differences." That's what we ought to do.

But they have now taken—but after basically trying to be the beneficiaries of this torrent of venom we've seen in American politics over the last 20 years, they have now taken the position that we're running a negative campaign if we tell you how they voted.

We see this in New York all the time. "If you tell people how I voted, you're being negative. I've got a right to hide my voting record from the people." [Laughter] "How dare you tell them how I voted." This is a choice, folks. It will have consequences. I know it's a beautiful place, and the economy is doing great. We're all in a good humor, but I'm telling you, we might never have another time in our lifetimes when the country's in this kind of shape, never have a chance like this to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And I want to say this about my Vice President really quickly—I guess he still is; I haven't seen him in a while—[laughter]—there are four things you need to know about Al Gore. One is, there have been a lot of Vice Presidents who made great Presidents. I believe President Kennedy's Vice President, Lyndon Johnson, did some magnificent things for this country. I believe Theodore Roosevelt made a great President. I know Thomas Jefferson made a great President. I know Harry Truman made a great President.

There have been a lot of Vice Presidents who were great Presidents. There has never been a person who, as Vice President, did as much for the economy, for technology, for the environment, for economic opportunity for poor people, and to help this country to have a foreign policy that promotes peace. Nobody has ever remotely done what Al Gore has done as Vice President of the United States—ever in the history of the country. You need to know that. And the American people need to know that. It's not even close.

The second thing you need to know is, he's got a good economic policy, and I already explained that. When you talk to people, you tell them the Ed McMahon story. Just tell them: You get that letter saying you may have won \$10 million; if they want to spend it, they should support the other side; if not, they ought to stick with us.

The third thing that I think is important is, is he understands the future. And we need somebody in the White House who understands the future. The Internet, the human genome developments, that's all great and exciting, but your banking and financial records are on somebody's computer. Don't you think you ought to be able to say yes before somebody gets them? Your little gene map is going to be out there somewhere. Don't you think that you ought to know that nobody can use it to deny you a job or a raise or health insurance? You need somebody that understands the future.

The last thing is, he wants to take us all along for the ride. And I want to be in a country where my President wants us all to go, blacks and whites and browns, the abled and the disabled, straights and gays, everybody that will work hard, play by the rules, obey the law, do their part. I think we ought to all go along for the ride.

You've got your great secretary of state running for the United States Congress, in part because we now live in a country which says we will not look at people who have physical disabilities as if they are disabled; we will look at their abilities and think about what they can do and what they can do. Let me just—I'll close with this.

I graduated from high school in 1964, and our country was still profoundly sad because of President Kennedy's death. And I was a white southerner who believed in civil rights. And we were in the middle of the longest—what was then the longest economic expansion in American history. And I really believed—I was 17 and wide-eyed, and I really believed that all the civil rights problems would be solved in

Congress and in the courts. And I thought that economy was on automatic, and it would go on forever, and all the poor people in my native State would be able to get an education and get a job. And everything was just going to be fine.

But we lost our concentration. And we got in trouble. And by the time I graduated from college, we had 2 years of riots in the streets. It was 9 weeks after Martin Luther King was killed—about 6 weeks—9 weeks after President Johnson said he couldn't run for reelection because the country was so divided, and 2 terrible days after Senator Kennedy was killed. And just a few months later, the previous longest economic expansion in American history was history. It doesn't take long to live a life. Nothing ever stays the same. We should be happy and thank God every day that we live in this time. But the test is, what will we do with it?

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:03 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts William and Nancy Gilbane; Representative Kennedy's father, Senator Edward M. (Ted) Kennedy, and the Senator's wife, Vicki; Representative Kennedy's mother, Joan Kennedy; Lt. Gov. Charles Fogarty and former Lt. Gov. Richard A. Licht of Rhode Island; former Mayor Joe Paolino of Providence; Mark Weiner, treasurer, Democratic Governors' Association; former Senior Adviser to the President for Policy Development Ira Magaziner; former Representative Joseph P. Kennedy II; Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Rhode Island Secretary of State James R. Langevin, candidate for Rhode Island's Second Congressional District; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and Ed MacMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesman. Representative Kennedy was a candidate for reelection in Rhode Island's First Congressional District. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Interview With Israeli Television Reporters July 28, 2000

Israeli-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, time is of the essence. How do you consider right now the relationship between Israel and the United States after the summit?

The President. Well, I think it's very strong. But I think in view of the courageous actions that the Prime Minister and the Israeli team took at the summit and in view of the withdrawal from Lebanon, I think some review and strengthening is in order.

I plan to have a comprehensive review to improve our strategic relationship. We're going to have talks that will start right away, with a view toward what we can do to ensure that Israel maintains its qualitative edge, modernizes the IDF, and meets the new threats that Israel and the other countries will face in the 21st century.

Secondly, I want to have a memorandum of understanding done as soon as possible with regard to our bilateral assistance, with a goal of making a long-term commitment to the necessary support to modernize the IDF. I think that's important.

The third thing that I think is significant is that we provide assistance, which we will do, to Israel, to upgrade its security in light of the withdrawal from Lebanon. And in that context, we also want to try to help the Government of Lebanon to strengthen its ability to control south Lebanon and to make progress toward a more normal existence. There are some other things that we're reviewing.

You know, I have always wanted to move our Embassy to west Jerusalem. We have a designated site there. I have not done so because I didn't want to do anything to undermine our ability to help to broker a secure and fair and lasting peace for Israelis and for Palestinians. But in light of what has happened, I've taken that decision under review, and I'll make a decision sometime between now and the end of the year on that.

And there are other things I think we have to be open to. But the main thing that I want the people of Israel to know is that the United States remains a friend and a partner, completely committed to the security and future of

Israel, continuing to believe that a just and lasting peace is the best alternative and the only alternative for absolute security. But in the meanwhile, we have to do what we can to strengthen the capacity of Israel to defend itself and to deepen our bilateral relationship. So I intend to do that.

U.S. Embassy in Israel

Q. You mentioned the relocation of the Israeli—of the American Embassy and put it in Jerusalem. Would you consider it in any circumstances, even if there is no agreement?

The President. Well, I think I should stand on the words I said. I have always wanted to do it. I've always thought it was the right thing to do. But I didn't want to do anything to undermine the peace process, our ability to be an honest broker, which requires that we be accepted by both sides.

But it's something that I have taken under review now because of the recent events. And I think that's all I should say about it now.

Israeli-Palestinian Talks

Q. So what is the next move right now? As I understand, Prime Minister Barak is saying that he's willing to go to another summit. What do you think is the next move?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, we need to have their people start talking directly again, and I think they will at a certain level. And then the Prime Minister needs to have a little time, I think, in Israel to deal with governmental issues. And I would hope that Chairman Arafat and the other leaders in the Arab world will work to prepare their public for the proposition that there can be no agreement without courage and conscience but also honorable compromise. That's what agreements are.

The Palestinians did make some moves at these talks that have never been made before. And while I made it clear in my statement I thought that the Prime Minister was more creative and more courageous, they did make some moves, and the teams, the negotiating teams, for the first time in a formal setting where it counted, actually discussed these issues.

Now, you know, there had been side papers and discussions and all that over the last 7 years,

since Oslo, but nothing like this, not ever. And there's a reason when the Oslo agreements were signed that these final status issues were put off until the end: They're hard; they're difficult; they're contentious. But the fact that they were actually there talking and the fact that I saw changes emerge on both sides, including within the Palestinian camp, I think is hopeful.

But what I want to do—first of all, I'll do anything I can. I'll be glad to convene another meeting. I'll go anywhere, do anything, anything I can. But—

Q. Will you consider a visit to Israel?

The President. Well, I just want to defer making any statements until I make a decision about what is the best thing for the peace process. I will act as soon as I can be helpful. We're doing things all the time, including now, today, as we speak. But I don't want to do something that's not helpful. And if we're going to make a difference, then the next time we meet, both sides have to be prepared to make the decisions necessary to conclude an agreement. And as soon as I'm convinced that's a good possibility, I'll do what I can to make it happen.

Jerusalem

Q. You know, the discussion about Jerusalem during the summit opened Pandora's box in Israel. Can you assure the Israeli people that Barak isn't going to divide Jerusalem?

The President. Let me say this. First of all, all the discussions that were held were private, and I have to honor that. What the Israelis and Palestinians decide to say about it is their affair. But I can't be in the position of violating the trust of either side.

What I believe is that Prime Minister Barak in no way ever compromised the vital interests of the security of the State of Israel. One thing I think that I can say without violating either side is that the most progress in the talks was made in the area of security, where there was a surprising amount of consensus and an understanding that neither side would be secure after a peace agreement unless both were secure and unless both worked together. And there was no interest, fundamentally, in the Palestinians in having a weak Israel, a vulnerable Israel, an Israel unable to defend itself; and that the Palestinians would be stronger if they were working together.

I think if there is one thing that should be encouraging to the people of Israel, of all polit-

ical parties and persuasions, it would be that. There was a clear willingness to try to come to grips with what were very different positions on this issue when they met and come together. And I was quite encouraged by that.

You know, Jerusalem is a difficult issue. But I believe that the Prime Minister did everything he could to reach an agreement while preserving the vital interests of Israel.

Q. Israel is afraid that if Barak already made some concessions right now, and that the Palestinians didn't make any concession—in Jerusalem—so many people are afraid that if the negotiations will resume, Israel will be asked to do, to make some more concessions. Can you tell the Israeli people that you wouldn't ask Barak to give much more than what he already was ready to give?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't think that he will ever do anything that he believes undermines the vital interest of the people of Israel and Jerusalem. And it is true that while the Palestinians, themselves, didn't make some moves on Jerusalem, that Israel did more, but nothing that I think undermined the vital interests of the people of Israel.

And I think that is an issue where—and frankly, most of the discussion involved ideas embraced not formally by either side. And they are not bound by it. So I believe that everybody pretty well knows right now that there won't necessarily be a lot more movement of the same kind. And we may have to have a resolution in some ways that no one has quite thought of yet.

But I kept telling the Palestinians, and I will say again to the world, that you cannot make an agreement over something as important as a city that is the holiest place in the world to the Jews, to the Christians, and to the—one of the holiest places in the world to the Muslims—if it is required of one side to say, "I completely defeated the interest of the other side." If either side gets to say that at the end, there won't be an agreement, there can't be.

There has to be a way to identify the legitimate interests—and there are legitimate interests in both sides, in Jerusalem—in such a way that they are met and honored and that the sanctity of the Holy City is uplifted. There has to be a way to do that. But you know, it's not for me to design a plan. They have to come to it. And I think they will come to it if the people of Israel, and if the Palestinians will give

their leaders a clear message that they trust them not to compromise their vital interest or their security; but beyond that, to be as flexible as possible to try to honorably accommodate each other's true interests.

Israeli Domestic Reaction

Q. During the talks, did you consider the possibility that maybe Barak's concession will not pass a referendum?

The President. I did. Of course, he has to be the final judge of that.

Q. [*Inaudible*—help him with that.

The President. Excuse me?

Q. You can always advise him and help him with that, too.

The President. Well, if they reach an agreement that they both believe is right and honorable and protects their vital interests and their security, obviously I would do whatever I could to persuade the people to support it. I don't know that I would have much influence, but I would do whatever I could. I would certainly never countenance an agreement that I thought undermined Israel's security, but you don't have to worry about that. I don't think there was ever anything that was clearer to me in these negotiations. The people of Israel may differ with their Prime Minister on some of the details, but they should never question whether he had the long-term security and vital interests of Israel uppermost in his mind. That was clear. And as I said, to me something that should be very encouraging is that they really did make a lot of progress on the security issue. And Israel was, I think, the big winner there, but only because the Palestinians recognize that their security will be tied to Israel's security if they make an agreement.

President's Role in the Peace Process

Q. I'm sure that you know that the majority of Israeli, the people admire your devotion to the peace process. And they ask themselves today if President Clinton can't bring peace, which President of the United States will do it?

The President. Well, I would hope that any President would honor America's historic commitment to Israel and our decades of involvement in the Middle East and our attempt to be fair to the legitimate interests of all the people of the region, including the Palestinians. I don't know if anybody else will ever put the

time in on this that I have or have the kind of personal, almost religious conviction I have about it.

But keep in mind, this is an evolutionary process. If we don't finish—and I believe we can, and I still believe we will—but if we don't finish this year, the negotiating teams for the two sides and the attitudes of the people will be in a different place than they were because of all that has happened over the last 7 years, and especially because of what happened at Camp David, as long as there is a constructive attitude taken about it and a deepened resolve to be frank with the public and that this is especially important for the Palestinians.

Q. You are known as the tireless master of negotiating. What happened there? How can both leaders resist the Clinton charm?

The President. I'm afraid my charm and my reasoning abilities, at least for just 15 days, cannot compare with the thousands of years of history that go to the core of the identity of Israelis and Palestinians, as regards Jerusalem. But that's okay. We made a lot of progress. We got people to talk about it, to deal with it, to think about it. And I hope I prompted a lot of thinking about all the various options available to them. There is more than one way to resolve this in a way that's honorable for everyone.

But I must tell you, when we started these negotiations, I didn't think we had a one-in-10 chance to succeed. And we actually got more done than I thought we would.

I called this summit because I was afraid that the lack of progress was spinning out of control. The parties, after all, promised each other they would reach an agreement by the middle of September. And they'd never even met to formally, frankly, openly discuss these issues—ever.

So I think when you look at it in that context, it's—you know, if I were just sitting on the outside, and I didn't know any more about it, I would be profoundly disappointed. I'd say, "They've had 7 years. What have they been doing all this time?" Well, you know what they've—we've had a lot of progress in the last 7 years, an enormous amount. But these final status issues were put off until the end because both sides knew they were potentially explosive and agonizingly difficult.

So it wasn't really a matter of charm. Believe me, if I could have prevailed by charming, cajoling, arguing, or just depriving them of sleep, we would have a deal. The last 2 nights I went

to bed at 5 in the morning both nights. I did my best so I would be the last person standing on both sides, you know, of all the sides there.

But we just couldn't get there. And we won't get there until each side decides. And this is the decision I think Prime Minister Barak made. That he would go as far as he could without making any specific commitments, because we had it organized so that neither side would be exposed.

So for people to say that he's bound by all these commitments, I don't think that's an accurate reflection of the way I conducted the negotiations. I went out of my way, especially as regards Jerusalem, to set it up so that if either side were willing to float some ideas or entertain some ideas, they wouldn't be exposed, and they could always take them back if there was no agreement.

But both sides—and this applies to the Palestinians; they're going to have to think about this—they have to decide that there is a solution which meets their vital interests, that does not permit them, after it is over, to say, "I won, and they lost." You have to be able to be able to say, when this is over, "We won. Peace won. Our children won. The future won." We may—yes, if we can get 100 percent of everything we wanted, no. Is it an honorable compromise that preserves our vital interests and enhances our security—not just maintains it, enhances it, yes. That has to be the test. The test has to be that our vital interests are preserved; our security is enhanced; our future is brighter; and neither side suffered a cataclysmic defeat. That's not what a negotiation is.

Egypt and Saudi Arabia

Q. Correct me if I'm wrong, but it seems to be that Egypt and Saudi Arabia didn't help to persuade Arafat to make the necessary concessions to have an agreement. It seems to be that this—both allies of the United States in this crucial moment couldn't deliver the goods.

The President. Well, I think that the truth is that because this had never been discussed before between the two parties and because when we went into the negotiations, they were usually secret or sacrosanct, that I'm not sure, number one, that they thought they knew enough to know what to ask for, although I did my best to try to get them to help, in general terms, before the process started. But I'm not sure they knew enough to know explic-

itly what to ask for, which won't be the case if we meet again, because we're down the road enough now.

And number two, I do believe that the public opinion among the Palestinians, and throughout the Middle East, had not even sufficiently discussed all these issues. You can see it was still operating at the high level of rhetoric, you know. And at some point, there has to be a way of saying, "We have won by making sure the Israelis didn't lose." And the Israelis have to be able to say, "We have won by making sure the Palestinians didn't lose." And that's—it's harder to sell.

When you're dealing with something as involved as Jerusalem in these peace talks, the only person who's going to get cheered is the person that says, no, no, no. And that's an easy sell. You go out and say, no, and you can get up the crowd, and they'll cheer you. But if that is the attitude which prevails, then we won't get peace.

Palestinian Statehood

Q. There is right now in the Congress some proposal to eliminate or prevent the use, aid to the Palestinians if they decide unilaterally to declare about statehood. Hillary Clinton, your wife, is for this proposal. What is your approach?

The President. Well, the bill has just been introduced. We don't give a great deal of aid there, as you know. And a lot of it is—

Q. But it's very symbolic.

The President. Very symbolic. Well, let me just say this. I think there should not be a unilateral declaration. And if there is, our entire relationship will be reviewed, not confined to that. So I don't—I make it a practice normally, when the bills are first introduced and I haven't even reviewed them, not to comment. But I think it would be a big mistake to take a unilateral action and walk away from the peace process. And if it happens, there will inevitably be consequences, not just here but throughout the world, and things will happen. I would review our entire relationship, including but not limited to that.

Possible U.S. Support to Israel

Q. If there will be agreement, what kind of support the Israeli people can expect from the United States?

The President. I will do my best to get the maximum amount of support. One of the reasons I wanted very much to get the agreement this time is that it would give us more time to pass an aid package through Congress. But if there is an agreement, Israel will have further security needs. There will be human costs involved. There will have to be some sort of international fund set up for the refugees.

There is, I think, some interest, interestingly enough, on both sides, in also having a fund which compensates the Israelis who were made refugees by the war, which occurred after the birth of the State of Israel. Israel is full of people, Jewish people, who lived in predominantly Arab countries who came to Israel because they were made refugees in their own land.

That's another piece of good news I think I can reveal out of the summit. The Palestinians said they thought those people should be eligible for compensation, as well. So we'll have to set up a fund, and we will contribute. I went to the G-8 in Okinawa in part to give them a report, and I asked the Europeans and the Japanese to contribute, as well. And there will be other costs associated with this. So it will not be inexpensive.

Also, if there is an agreement and if the Palestinians set up a state pursuant to an agreement, Israel has a strong interest in seeing it be economically stronger and more self-sufficient, a better trading partner, not just a supply of labor but also a country capable of buying Israeli products in greater detail and growing together in the future. So there will be economic issues that have to be dealt with.

I will try to get as much support as I possibly can for the United States but also as much support as I possibly can from Europe, from Japan, and from other people in the world.

Middle East Peace Summit

Q. With your permission, Mr. President, can you take us inside Camp David and describe us one of the crucial moments, one of the crucial crises?

The President. Well, I think the only thing I can talk about without revealing the substance of the talks, which I have promised not to do, is the first time the talks almost broke up. Right before I went to Okinawa, I thought the talks were over. I even went by and said goodbye to Chairman Arafat. And I went by and said

goodbye to Prime Minister Barak. And I was walking around talking to the Palestinian and Israeli peace teams. And it was obvious to me that they did not want to go and that they feared that, if they left in the position the talks were then in, that there would be an enormous harshness and recrimination, and it could wind up being a net setback, if you will, for the peace process.

And then, all of a sudden, it became obvious to me that they didn't want to go, that they wanted to keep trying, that they thought it was still possible. So I went back around; I made two more visits. By then, it's very late at night, and I'm leaving at dawn the next day. It was like 1:30 a.m. or 1:45 a.m. I made two more visits to both Prime Minister Barak and his team and to Chairman Arafat and his team.

And I finally concluded that they really didn't want to quit. And so I invited them to stay. And I said that I had to go to the G-8 because the United States had some strong interest in Okinawa—it's a main base for a lot of our forces in the Pacific—and because I owed it to my partners to go there to my last meeting and because I wanted to ask them for money to help the peace process, but that if they would stay, I would leave Secretary Albright behind in charge, and they could keep talking, and they wanted to do it.

That was, I think, the pivotal moment which turned this from a negative result to a positive result, even though we didn't get an agreement. Because in the next few days, they relaxed; they began to talk. The Palestinians began to open up a little bit, and we began to get a sense that at least how we might get an agreement, even if the parties couldn't reach it this time. In my mind, looking back on it, I think that was a pivotal moment.

President's Legacy

Q. Finally, I wanted to ask you, many critics of yours are saying that you are looking desperately for the missing chapter of your legacy, and maybe you tried to overcome the impeachment process. Is the Middle East issue the missing chapter of this legacy?

The President. No. Look, you know, I'm not proud of the personal mistake I made, but I'm proud of what happened in the impeachment process. As far as I'm concerned, we saved the United States Constitution. And I think history will record it favorably to me and unfavorably

to those who did it. And I think I have a pretty good legacy here with our economy, with our social progress on crime, on welfare, on education, on health care for the elderly, for children. And I am proud of what I have done in the Middle East, in the Balkans, in Northern Ireland, in Africa, in Latin America.

This has nothing to do with my legacy. All my life, I have wanted to see peace in the Middle East, and I promised myself when I got elected President, I would work until the last day to achieve it. This is not about me. It's about the children who live in the Middle East. It's about whether those children will be living together or living apart, whether there will be fighting or learning together.

Q. And you're convinced it can be done?

The President. Absolutely. And if it doesn't happen while I'm here, I just want to know that I have done everything I possibly could to make sure it will happen as soon as possible. But I am absolutely convinced that we can do it and that we should do it before the end of the year, because the parties have committed themselves to this September deadline. The par-

ties came to Camp David; nobody had to come. Prime Minister Barak thought it was a good time, and I knew if we didn't do it, we would never get around to dealing with this.

We have a saying in America, this is like going to the dentist without having your gums deadened, you know? It's like having somebody pull your teeth with no painkiller. This is not easy. This was hard for these people. But if we hadn't started—you know, you never get to the end of the road unless you get out on the road and take the first step. And this was a huge, important thing.

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. You're welcome.

NOTE: The interview was recorded at 5:42 p.m. on July 27 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast and was embargoed for release until 3 p.m. on July 28. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe

July 28, 2000

A year ago in Sarajevo I joined leaders from Europe, other nations, and the international financial institutions to launch the Stability Pact for Southeast Europe in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict. Working closely with our partners in Europe and the region, I am proud of the progress that we have made. We have promoted political and economic reform, provided financial support for the region's economic development, and advanced the membership of southeast European countries in key international institutions.

Europe, appropriately, is leading this effort, joining international financial institutions in pledging over 85 percent of assistance to the region. The United States is doing its part by contributing to more than 50 Quick Start projects to improve infrastructure, attract investment, reinforce human rights, and fight crime and corruption. This week we established with the European Bank for Reconstruction and De-

velopment a \$150 million fund to promote small and medium businesses in the region. We also launched a \$150 million regional equity investment fund to invest in telecommunications, consumer goods, and other sectors in the region. Initial reforms have led to the beginning of renewed economic growth this year. Private investment is up, and inflation is down. Democratic values and structures are growing stronger. In Kosovo, the first democratic local elections will be held this fall.

While results since the Stability Pact summit are encouraging, the last aggressive dictatorship in Europe remains a threat to peace. We will continue to support the democratic opposition in Serbia and the people of Montenegro until they can take their rightful place among the free and prosperous people of Europe. With continued commitment by both the region and the international community, we can achieve our

common vision of building a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iraq

July 28, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C.1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the Iraqi emergency is to continue in effect beyond August 2, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The crisis between the United States and Iraq that led to the declaration on August 2, 1990, of a national emergency has not been resolved. The Government of Iraq continues to engage in activities inimical to stability in the Middle

East and hostile to United States interests in the region. Such Iraqi actions pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure on the Government of Iraq.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice of July 28 on continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iraq is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the National Emergency With Respect to Iraq

July 28, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to Iraq that was declared in Executive Order 12722 of August 2, 1990.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice of July 28 on continuation of the national emergency with respect to Iraq is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Reception in Boston, Massachusetts

July 28, 2000

Thank you very much. First, I want to thank Bob and Elaine, and Tess and Shane, who were with me a few moments ago, asking me questions. Where did Shane go? *[Laughter]* He probably thinks he's heard this speech before. *[Laughter]*

And I want to thank them, as Dick did, for the example they've set for all of us in their generosity and their giving. This year their taking off is only the latest example of a lifetime commitment to thinking about other people and drawing meaning from their lives by helping other people to have more meaning in theirs.

I want to thank all the Members of the House who are here; my good friend Joe Moakley. I always tell everybody, Joe is Hillary's favorite Congressman. She thinks that Joe Moakley will be waiting for her in heaven when she dies—*[laughter]*—thinks he'll be the gatekeeper there. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Patrick Kennedy for a magnificent job as the head of our Congressional Campaign Committee. We just went to Barrington, Rhode Island, today, before we came here, for an event for Patrick. There were several hundred people there, including his father and Senator Reed. I think he's all right. They haven't been able to find anybody to run against him yet—*[laughter]*—so I believe he'll survive.

I want to thank Congressman Markey for his leadership in the Congress and his friendship to me over these 7½, 8 years. And Congressman Capuano, I thank him for running when Joe Kennedy left the House and for his service. And most of all, I want to thank Dick Gephardt, who never got dispirited after we lost the House in '94, understood quite clearly that we lost it because we did the right things and the American people couldn't have known by 1994 whether we were right or not. They had been told for 12 years that there was such a thing as a free lunch while we quadrupled the debt, got ourselves in a deep hole, had high interest rates and a weak economy.

And we had to change. We took a cold shower, and we paid for it in '94. We also paid for it because we passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. And we lost a dozen

rural Democrats because the NRA convinced them we were going to end hunting and sport shooting and everything legal that ever happened. And by '96, they knew that they hadn't been told the truth, and we began our long climb back.

And in '98, thanks to Dick's strong leadership and the fact that we had a clear and unambiguous message, we picked up five more seats in the House of Representatives. And you should know, it was only the second time in the 20th century that the President's party had picked up seats in the House in mid-term but the first time since 1822 that it had happened in the sixth year of a President's term. And that is a great tribute to Dick Gephardt, to his leadership, to the trust and confidence that the men and women in our caucus in the House of Representatives have in him.

I said to myself, when he said he wanted to be like Tip O'Neill when he grew up, I wonder how many places outside Boston he's given that speech? *[Laughter]*

I can tell you this, I believe he will be the Speaker after these elections. And no one has ever worked harder, been more well-prepared, had better values, or deserved it more. And it has been an enormous honor for me to work with him, and I only hope when I leave town, he'll be holding the gavel, and I think he will. And I thank you for being here.

I told the people in Rhode Island today, and I will say again to you, I wish I could spend the rest of my Presidency only in places where I got over 60 percent of the vote. *[Laughter]* Then I would get to spend more time in Massachusetts.

Dick already mentioned Alan Solomont and the Schusters and so many others of you who have helped me over the years. I am very grateful to all of you, grateful for what you have been to Hillary and to me and to Al and Tipper Gore.

But I just want to take a couple of minutes to talk about the future. I think the single, most important issue in this election is, what do we intend to make of this moment of prosperity? What are the Sagers making of their moment

of prosperity? They're going around the world and helping other people. What are we going to do as a nation to do that?

I think, then, what we have to do is to make sure, first, that we answer it to our own satisfaction and, secondly, that we make sure that the American people believe that's what the election is about, and thirdly, they've got to know what the differences are between the two candidates for President and the House candidates and the Senate candidates.

I cannot even begin to convey the depth of my conviction about the importance of this election. It is every bit as important, maybe more important, than the 1992 election. Everybody knew then we had to change. The country was in the ditch. We were in trouble economically. We were divided socially. We had no clear mission of our responsibilities around the world that was kind of comprehensive. And the politics of Washington, DC, was like watching. I don't know, "Wayne's World" or something—[laughter]—to most of us who lived out here in the world, the real world.

So we've been busy turning it around, and I'm very grateful for the shape the country's in now, that almost all social indicators are going in the right direction, that we've got the strongest economy in history, that we've been a force for peace and freedom throughout the world. I am grateful. But all the best stuff is still out there if we make the most of this moment of prosperity.

And in order to do it, it is necessary for the American people to choose. That's what an election is. It's basically, democracy is handed back over to the bosses for a day, and you choose. And in order to choose wisely, you have to know what the differences are. And I've got this little mantra I tell everybody all the time. It says, only three things you really need to know about this election: One is, it's profoundly important; two is, there are big differences; three is, only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

And it's really true. After giving us 20 years or more of the harshest kind of mean personal attacks—right up through this Republican Presidential primary, I might add, where they attempted—the people who won attempted to perform reverse plastic surgery on Senator McCain—they did that. Now all of a sudden, they want to be sweetness and light. They say

they want a positive campaign. But what they define as a negative campaign is if we tell people how they voted. That's their definition of a negative campaign. [Laughter] Hillary has already had two ads run against her in New York saying, you know, "Oh, she's being so mean. She's telling people how I voted. How dare her do that?" [Laughter]

Now, we're all laughing. But you know I'm telling the truth, don't you? They're trying to blur the differences. We have to clarify them. Why? Because that's what elections are about; they are choices. And we may never have another chance like this to build the future of our dreams for our kids.

And there are choices. I'll just tell you what some of them are. I'm convinced, first of all, there is this huge economic choice. They have already passed a trillion dollars' worth of tax cuts, and they're going to Philadelphia to advocate another, what, \$1.4 trillion or something, all of the projected surplus and then some. Now, they're doing it in salami tactics so you don't know this. And they've got a good argument. "We've got this surplus. We're going to give it back to you. It's your money, and we're prosperous, and we'll give it back to you."

Our argument's more complicated. Our argument is, "Well, we can't give it all back to you because, number one, we don't have it yet; the surplus hasn't materialized. So we want to give about 25 percent of what they do, but 80 percent of the people will get more money out of ours than theirs." Most of you in this room tonight wouldn't, but most of the American people would. And we've got to save some, because we've got to invest in education, in health care, in research and technology, and the environment. And we have responsibilities around the world that we have to fulfill and not just defense responsibilities—responsibilities to help alleviate the burdens of the poorest people around the world and deal with a lot of the problems around the world.

And so we have to save some of this money, because we need to invest in our future because we don't have it yet. But our tax cuts are good. They're just smaller and better targeted toward education and child care and lower income working people with a lot of kids, toward long-term care and saving for retirement. You see, it takes me longer to make our side.

But here's what I'd like to tell you about it. Did you ever get one of those letters from

Publishers Sweepstakes in the mail, Ed McMahon letters, “You may have won \$10 million”? Well, if you ever got one of those letters and you went out the very next day and spent that \$10 million, you should support the Republicans. *[Laughter]* But if you didn’t, you had better help Dick Gephardt and the Democrats and stick with us, and we’ll keep this economy going. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Now, we’re all laughing. This is a profoundly serious issue. It’s not like we hadn’t had any experience. We tried it their way for 12 years; we tried it our way for 8 years. We had the lowest minority unemployment rate in history, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest rate of poverty among single-parent households in 45 years, the highest homeownership in history, 22 million jobs. Look, this is not rocket science. We tried it their way.

And in a very nice way, a little slice here, a little slice there, they’re saying, “Let’s try it again. Remember when we told you the Government was bad; it was your money; and we’re going to give it all back to you? Let’s try it again.” The country has been in good shape so long that a lot of voters have forgotten what it was like when we started here. This is very important.

The second thing you need to know is that we just have a totally different philosophy about how society ought to work. We believe that we are interdependent, that we have mutual responsibilities to one another. That’s why we’re for the Brady bill, and the previous Republican President vetoed it. That’s why we were for the family and medical leave bill, and the previous Republican President vetoed it.

That’s why we want to—right now—that’s why we wanted to ban assault weapons and the congressional majority now, they were all against that. It’s why we’re for a Patients’ Bill of Rights, and they’re against it. Why we’re for Medicare prescription drugs for all the people in the country, the seniors that need it, and they’re not for that kind of program. It’s why we believe we can grow the economy and improve the environment. And basically, they don’t believe that. They don’t approve of a lot of the environmental things that I’ve done. And their nominee promised that one of the things he’d do if he got elected President is to reverse my order creating 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. So these are important issues.

Now, if you want to reverse our environmental policy and if you want to go in that direction, then you should do it. But you shouldn’t let a single soul you know anywhere in America—I know I’m in Massachusetts now, but you have got a lot of friends around the country—you shouldn’t let anybody that you know cast an unknowing vote. If the American people—my objective in every race I ever ran—and I guess I’ve run all the ones I’m going to now—*[laughter]*—but my objective in every race I ever ran was to make sure everyone who voted against me knew exactly what he or she was doing, because I figured if everyone who voted against me knew exactly what he or she was doing, I could have no complaint. That’s democracy. If I lost, then the people had made a wise and considered choice, and I just lost. And if I won, I knew I had a mandate to act. Their objective in this election is to obscure the differences so that people do not understand the implications of the choice.

You never hear them talking about what they said in the primary, do you? You never hear any of that again. You never hear them explaining that, yes, we’re going to give you this big tax cut, but it’s going to take away all the projected surplus.

But you must understand that there are choices here and consequences to those choices. The next President is going to have between two and four appointments to the United States Supreme Court. Both candidates on the Republican ticket believe *Roe v. Wade* should be repealed. If you think it should be repealed, you should vote for them. If you don’t, you should think about it.

But you shouldn’t listen to all this sort of syrupy talk about how somehow they will—listen, I’m not saying bad things about them, personally. I think their convictions are there. I think this is an honest disagreement. I don’t believe in the kind of politics they spawned for 20 years trying to convince people your opponents are just one step above car thieves. I don’t believe that. I think these are honest differences. But do not be abused. When people get this job I just had for 8 years, they pretty much do what they say they’re going to do in the campaign, and they try to do what they think is right.

Now, just because they’re not talking about it doesn’t mean they’ve changed. So you have to consider these things.

The Republican Senate defeated the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. I was the first world leader to sign it, and they beat it. The first treaty that's been beat since the treaty taking America into the League of Nations at the end of World War I—unbelievable. Everybody in the world thought we had slipped a gasket. And a lot of the pundits said, "Well, they just didn't want to give Bill Clinton the victory." It's not my victory to protect our children from the dangers of nuclear war, number one. And number two, I'm telling you, a lot of those people don't believe in arms control. I'm not saying anything bad about them. They're good people. They honestly don't believe in it. But they won't be out there telling you about it. I bet you won't hear a speech at the Republican National Convention about how terrible the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is. But they beat it.

So what you have to decide is what you want America to be like. I know you're all here supporting these folks, but frankly, your support is not good enough. You've got to go out and talk to everybody you can reach between now and November and not just in Massachusetts but in States we might win or we might not win and congressional districts we might win or we might not win, and tell them this.

And the last thing I want to say is this, the most important thing of all. The longer I live, the more convinced I am that the most important thing in any great society is the sense of community, of interdependence that people have, the sense of mutual responsibility they have. I don't think it's possible to enjoy real freedom without responsibilities to the people in your community and without a sense of responsibility to the larger world community, increasingly.

We're for the hate crimes legislation. Their leadership isn't. We're for the employment non-discrimination legislation. Most of them are opposed to it. We want stronger civil rights enforcement. Most of them don't.

The Federal appellate court district with the most African-Americans in the entire country is the fourth circuit, comprising North and South Carolina. There has never been an Afri-

can-American on that court, ever. I have tried for 7½ years to appoint one. Jesse Helms said no, and all the Republicans said, "It's fine with me." It's never happened. We are different.

We don't have to have a bad campaign. I think we should posit it that Governor Bush and Mr. Cheney and all of their candidates are fine, good, decent people who just differ with us. But we should not let them get away with having this sort of smokescreen to try to play on this era of good feelings to convince people that there are no consequences to this election. They are big. They are deep, and they are profound.

And I can tell you, we lost our majority because we did what was right for America. There are Republican Congressmen now who will go out and campaign for reelection in their districts bragging on all the highway money they got or the things they voted for, for the schools or this, that, and the other thing. They could have done none of that if Democrats alone hadn't passed the economic plan of 1993, which turned this whole thing around.

These people deserve to be in the majority. It will happen if people understand it's a big election, there are real differences, and they understand what the differences are. We owe that to the kids. We owe that to the future. We may never have another time in our lifetime when America is in this good a shape. We cannot squander it. And if we build on it, the best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Robert and Elaine Sager and their children, Tess and Shane; Alan D. Solomont, former national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Gerald Schuster, former president, and his wife, Elaine, director of issues, Continental Wingate Company; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; and Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in Cambridge, Massachusetts

July 28, 2000

Well, Swanee, if I had a bell right now, I would certainly ring it. *[Laughter]* You've been ringing my bell for years now. *[Laughter]* She's been very great for my personal maturity, Swanee has, because I know every time I see her coming, she's going to tell me about something else I haven't done. *[Laughter]* And it takes a certain amount of grown-upness to welcome that sort of message—*[laughter]*—with the consistency with which she has delivered it over the years. *[Laughter]* Actually, I love it. You know, I mean, I sort of hired on to work, so somebody has to tell me what to do from time to time. It's great.

Let me say, first I want to thank Swanee, and thank you, Charles, for welcoming us in your home, for the work you did in Austria, the work you did in the Balkans. And Swanee, I want to thank you especially for the work you've done to mobilize women in the cause of peace in the Balkans and the work you've done with Hillary, with women all over the world in trouble spots. That's one of the things I think that Hillary is the proudest of, that she's done in the 8 years we've been in Washington, trying to mobilize women who are not part of political factions but interested in human beings and how they treat each other and how they raise their children to try to be forces for peace in the Balkans, in Northern Ireland, and lots of other places, and I thank you for that.

Even though I was in a hurry to go to Chelsea's ballet that night, you might like to know that that little piece of rock from St. John Mountain in Croatia, where Ron Brown's plane crashed, along with a couple of screws and a piece of metal from that airplane, is one of my most precious possessions, because I loved him like a brother. And it's on my little table in my private office in the White House, next to a miniature painting of my mother done by the famous Russian artist Tsereteli, that Boris Yeltsin gave me when I flew to Russia on the night that I buried my mother.

I say that not to be morbid but to kind of get into what I am doing here tonight. For one thing, I want to say, Congressman Gephardt and Congressman Kennedy and all the Massa-

chusetts Members that are here are taking a big chance on me tonight because I haven't been to bed in 16 days—*[laughter]*—and I, frankly, don't know what I'm saying. *[Laughter]* And tomorrow I won't remember it.

And the only thing I can think of that they allowed me to come here, after being up—you know, I've been up in the Middle East peace talks, and then I flew to Okinawa for 3 days and came back, over there and back in 3 days—and then I said, "Well, surely, you're going to let me rest." And they said, "No, you missed 2 weeks of work, and the Congress is fixing to leave, and we've got a big vote, and you've got to do this, that, and the other thing."

So the last 2 days I stayed up until about 2 o'clock at night working, too. So I'm not quite sure where I'm at. I think the only reason they're doing it is, I know Joe Moakley will call me next Monday and say, "I am so glad you committed another \$50 million to the Boston Harbor." *[Laughter]* Capuano will call with a commitment; Markey will call—Lord knows what Ed will tell me I committed to. *[Laughter]*

So I'm honored to be here, even though I'm a little tired. And I'm here because I think these people ought to be in the majority. I'm here because, in a larger sense, I think that everything I have done this last 8 years, in a way, has been preparing America for this moment. And now we're all dressed up, and as a country we haven't decided where to go.

What do I mean by that? Eight years ago you didn't have to be a genius to know that we needed to make a change. I mean, the previous policies had quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years and reduced our investment in our people and our future at the same time—that's pretty hard to do—increased interest rates to the point that the economy was stagnant and the political debate was sterile and hostile. The governing party in the White House had basically followed the politics of division.

So the American people took a chance on me. In the words of my predecessor, I was, after all, just the Governor of a small southern State. I was so naive when I heard him say

that, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do. [Laughter]

So we set about making changes. And what Dick Gephardt said is right. I do feel somewhat personally responsible for the fact that we lost the Congress in '94. Why? Because everybody could talk about getting the country out of the economic ditch, but it's one thing to talk about it and quite another thing to do once you get in as deep a hole as we were in. We had a \$300 billion deficit. We had quadrupled the debt in 12 years. And the Republicans had made taxes toxic, and we already cut a lot of spending—it's hard to cut more. And yet, we had to do both.

And so without a single vote to spare, we basically changed the economic and political history of America in August of 1993 by adopting an aggressive program to get rid of the deficit. We carried it by one vote in the House, and then we carried it by one vote in the Senate—Al Gore. As he always says, whenever he votes, we win. [Laughter] So we carried it by a vote in the House and a vote in the Senate. I signed it. And the Republicans, who now want you to give them the White House back and leave them in control of the House and Senate, said it would be the end of civilization as we know it.

And you ought to go back and read the stuff they said about our economic plan. "Oh, it would have another recession. It would lead to high interest rates. It would be horrible. Everything would be awful." It's unbelievable what they said. The same crowd that wants you to give it back to them now. And not a one of them voted for it.

And then in '94, we adopted a crime bill that banned assault weapons, on top of the Brady bill, which had been vetoed in the previous administration and I signed. And then the same crowd went out into the country, where all the hunters are, and told them that we were fixing to come get their guns. And we adopted the bill late in '94. And then we tried to do something on health care, and they decided, after promising me we would work together, that they didn't want anything to happen because they wanted an issue in the election. And those three things were enough to cost the Democrats the House in '94—and the Senate. And I feel personally responsible, because I drove them relentlessly to do as much as we could to turn this country around.

And then, since '95, we've actually had quite a lot of success working together to try to continue to do good things for our country. And one of the reasons that I think Dick Gephardt ought to be the Speaker is that he never thought about quitting. He never thought about giving up. He never walked away from his responsibilities to his people or to our country. And because he has done what he has done, we were able to stay together and work together, and we gained again in '96. And in '98 we picked up seats, the first time since 1822 the party of the President had gained seats in the House election in the sixth year of a Presidency.

So we're just like the little engine that could now; we're only five seats, six seats away from being in the majority. But I don't want it for them, in spite of everything. I owe it to them, but I want it for you and for the rest of this country. And that's why, believe it or not, we actually have a chance to win the Senate, too. And I believe that, notwithstanding the present polls, I expect Vice President Gore to be the next President.

But what I want to say to you is, we can win them all or lose them all, and it is hanging in the balance. I'm really grateful for everything Swanee said, but right now I don't care too much about my legacy. Somebody will take care of that down the road. And then it will be written four to five times, over and over again through the generations. I finally read a biography the other day claiming Ulysses Grant was a good President, and I think the guy was right. He said he was a pretty good President and a brilliant general and a greatly underrated person, and I'm persuaded by the historical evidence it was right and took 100 years to get it right, if that's true.

So you can't worry about that. The press thinks I worry about it, but—you know what I have on my desk in the Oval Office? A Moon rock that Neil Armstrong took off the Moon in 1969. You know how old it is? Three-point-six billion years. Somehow, I have the idea that 3.6 billion years from now, even George Washington may not be known to too many people. [Laughter] It's just all a matter of perspective.

And I keep it there to make me feel humble and uplifted at the same time, because what it means is that every second of time today is worth just as much as it was then, in fact, more, because they have a more interconnected, more well-developed society, but we're all just

passing through here. And what really matters is what we do and what's in our hearts and whether we act on it.

So I will say again, what I care about is not the legacy. The country is in great shape. We've got the strongest economy we've ever had. All the social indicators are moving in the right direction. We have no crisis at home or threat abroad that is paralyzing us. We have lots of national self-confidence.

But the only thing that matters is, what do we intend to do with this? That's all that matters. Nothing else matters. And here we have this millennial election, when the most disturbing thing to me is not today's or yesterday's or last week's or next week's polls or this or that race. The most disturbing thing to me is the repeated articles which say that the voters are not sure there's any significant difference in these candidates, and "they all seem pretty moderate and nice-sounding to me. And what difference does it make? Maybe I won't vote. Maybe I'll vote for the other guy. Maybe I'll vote for this one. Who knows?"

And what I wish to tell you is, this is the product of a deliberate strategy that you must not allow to succeed. There are three things—I say this over and over again—the people have heard me give this speech are getting sick of me saying it—there are only three things you need to remember about this election. It is a huge election. What a country does with unique prosperity is as big a test of its vision, its values, and its common sense as what a country does in adversity.

Number two, there are big, big differences, honestly held between good people running for President and Vice President, running for Senate, running for the Congress—big differences.

Number three, for reasons that you have to figure out, only the Democrats want you to know what those differences are. *[Laughter]* Now, you laugh, but it's true. Remember the Republican Presidential primary? Al Gore is still giving the same speech now as he was giving in the Democratic primary. They performed reverse plastic surgery on poor John McCain in that Republican primary. You don't ever hear them talking about that, do you? Oh, it's all sweetness and light now. *[Laughter]*

Now, I'm having a little fun tonight—*[laughter]*—but I'm dead serious. I am dead serious. There are real differences, and they matter to your life. It is very important that voters, when

they have a chance to vote, understand that they are making decisions. Elections are about decisions. Decisions have consequences. I'll just give you one or two examples. I made a list of eight or nine here. Maybe I'll give one or two. I have fun doing this.

Let's take the economy. There was a huge article in USA Today not very long ago saying, voters see very little difference between Bush and Gore on the economy. And I thought, "Oh my God, what am I going to do? Very little difference?" Every one of them opposed everything we ever did on the economy—until we were doing so well we then were able in '97 to get a bipartisan balanced budget signed because we had plenty of money, so we could satisfy the Republicans and the Democrats.

But let's look ahead: the economy. Here's their policy. Their policy is to revert to their old policy on the backs of our new prosperity. They say, "Look at this huge surplus that the Government has. That's not the Government's money. It's your money. Vote for us. We'll give it back to you." Sounds pretty good, doesn't it? I can give their speech as well as they can. *[Laughter]* "It's not the Government's money. They'd mess up a two-car parade. You pay. You earned it. Go vote for us. We'll give it back to you." *[Laughter]* I can sing that song.

We say over \$2 trillion in tax cuts over a decade is too much. It's the entire projected surplus, and then some. And frankly, too much of it goes to folks who can afford to come to events like this. Our plan costs less than 25 percent as much, gives more benefits to 80 percent of the people, and leaves us some money left over to invest in the education of our children and the health care of our seniors and lengthening the life of Social Security and Medicare and dealing with science and technology and the biotechnology revolution and our environmental responsibilities and our health care responsibilities and in getting this country out of debt by 2012, which will keep interest rates at least a percent lower than their plan for a decade, which is another \$250 billion effective tax cut and lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion dollars in lower student loan payments.

Now, it takes longer to say our position than theirs. But the difference is pretty great. And I always tell—and the most important thing—what they want to do is to spend next year, if they have the White House and the Congress,

the projected surplus. And as I said yesterday and I'll say this again: Did you ever get one of those sweepstakes letters in the mail from Ed McMahon or somebody, saying, "You may have won \$10 million"? Did you ever get one of those? Well, if you went out the next day and spent the \$10 million, you really should support them in this election. But if you didn't, you better stick with us so we can keep this economy going.

Now, this is—I'm dead serious. Who in the wide world—if I asked you to estimate your projected income over the next 10 years, how much money are you going to make over the next 10 years? Just think. Now, if I made you a very attractive deal to come in and sign it all away tomorrow morning, would you do it? Would you legally obligate yourself to all your projected income for a decade to do it? That's what they want us to do. That's what this tax cut deal is. It will mean higher interest rates. It will mean neglecting our responsibilities to the future. It will undermine the economy.

We have enough money in our tax cut to give you big incentives to invest in poor areas in America that haven't been developed yet, big incentives to have more money invested in school construction and school repairs all across America, and big incentives to help people send their kids to college, pay for child care, have retirement savings, pay for long-term care for the elderly and disabled. We can do this. We can have a tax cut. But this is crazy to give away all this projected income just because it sounds good at election time. "You made it. It's your money. I'll give it back to you."

And let me just say one other thing. It isn't like we haven't had a test run here. You just had a test run of 8 years, right? And you got a 30-year low in unemployment and 22 million jobs, and it's pretty good. Now, they had 12 years before. And they had a nice little economic runup there for a while when they were running all those bills up.

I used to have a Senator named Dale Bumpers from Arkansas, who said, "If you let me write \$200 billion worth of hot checks every year, I'd show you a good time, too." [Laughter] So, for a while—but what happened? It got to where we were so in debt that we got no economic stimulus out of that deficit spending; we got higher interest rates; we had to keep cutting back on the things we wanted to invest in; and

the economy was in the ditch by the time we took office.

Now, I am telling you, this is huge. We want to keep the prosperity going, and we want to extend it to neighborhoods and people in Indian reservations and poor rural towns where it hasn't reached yet. So it's huge. I'll give you just one or two other examples.

In education, they say they want to spend as much money as we do, but they don't want to spend it on what works. They don't want to have standards. They don't want to require people to turn around failing schools or shut them down. Dick Gephardt gave a passionate defense of education. I just want to give you—I'll just give you one example. I could keep you here all night with it.

I was in Spanish Harlem about 2 weeks ago in a grade school that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the children reading below grade level, doing math below grade level—2 years later, new principal, school uniform policy, high standards, accountability. In 2 years, there are 74 percent of the kids reading and doing math at or above grade level. Listen, these kids can learn; they can do fine. And you can turn these schools around, but you can't give them speeches and then not give them any money.

I will give you another example: crime. Everybody is against crime. The Republicans say we stole their issue when we started talking about crime. I didn't realize that you had to—I've never seen either a rap sheet or a report on a victim that had a box for party registration. [Laughter] This is our issue. Where I came from, it was a human issue.

Their deal about crime was, talk real tough and lock everybody up. You heard Dick talking about it. I thought we needed a more balanced approach, which included stopping people from committing crime whenever possible. And that's why we went for the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, the 100,000 police on the street. And by and large, they opposed everything we tried to do. They said it was no good, terrible, you know, the whole 9 yards.

Now, here in this election, the head of the NRA says if their candidate for President wins, they will have an office in the White House. I didn't say that. That's not a negative campaign. I'm simply repeating what he said. They won't need an office in the White House, because they'll do what they want anyway. They won't

have to go to that trouble, because they believe that way.

Now, we've had a test run. The previous administration vetoed the Brady bill, and the group that wants to win now in the House and in the White House and in the Senate, they don't want to close the gun show loophole. They don't want to require mandatory child trigger locks. They don't want to ban large scale ammunition clips from being imported. And they certainly don't want to do what the Vice President does, which is to say if you want to buy a handgun in America from now on, you ought to at least do what you have to do when you get a car. You ought to have a photo ID. You ought to have a criminal background check, and you ought to prove you can use the equipment you're about to buy.

Now, they just don't believe that. But it's not like we haven't had a test run. Gun crime has dropped by 35 percent in America since we passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban—35 percent. And that's with this gaping loophole. Half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers haven't been able to get handguns, and nobody has missed a day in the woods hunting. [Laughter] Now you laugh about it. They beat a dozen of our Members, didn't they, Dick? At least a dozen. They took them out. So you have to choose. The point I'm making is, this is a choice.

One other issue, both the candidate for President and Vice President—this affects the Senate, too, more than the House—say that they don't like *Roe v. Wade*, and they want to repeal it. And Vice President Gore said he likes it and thinks we ought to keep it. And you don't have to believe that anybody is a bad person. I think they just have an honest difference here. But there is going to be between two and four judges of the Supreme Court appointed next time, that the Senate will have to vote on. You have to decide how much that means to you. But don't listen to all this sort of let's, you know, pretend that there are no differences here. There are honest differences.

In foreign policy there are honest differences. We believe we ought to do more to relieve the debt of the poorest countries in the world. We believe we ought to invest more in AIDS and malaria and TB. And we're struggling to build bipartisan consensus for this. We believe we were right in Kosovo, and most of them didn't. And I still think we were right in Kosovo

and Bosnia, and I'm glad we did it. We believe we ought to have a comprehensive test ban treaty, and they don't. There are big differences. Now these are honest differences.

But I'm telling you folks, I know you may not want to have a serious seminar at this hour of the night on Friday night, but I am telling you this is a huge election. There are gaping differences. You cannot, in good conscience, permit anyone you know to vote without being aware of the differences and the consequences to the children of this country based on the choices that will be made.

What I believe is, if everybody knows what the deal is, then we ought to all be happy with the results. When Hillary asked me if I thought she ought to run for the Senate, I said, "It depends on whether you're willing to risk losing and whether you've got something to say that's bigger than you." The answer to both of those was yes, so off she went. And I'm really proud of her.

But when she calls in from the road or I call her, I say, "Remember, your objective in an election is to make sure everyone who votes against you knows what they're doing." You think about that. If everyone who votes against you, every vote you lose, knows what he or she is doing, then democracy has worked. And none of us have any complaints.

Now, you know and I know and they know that if the American people know what they're doing in this election, that is, if they understand what the real choices are, they will vote for the Democrats. They will make Dick Gephardt the Speaker. They'll make Tom Daschle the majority leader. They'll make Al Gore the President, because they know what I have told you is true. And that's why you have this attempt in the other party to create a collective amnesia about their primary and to blur all over these differences. I don't blame them. If I were them, I would do the same thing. It's their only shot.

But we ought to get a whoopin' if we let them get away with it, if you'll allow me to use a colloquialism from my small southern State. [Laughter] This is a big deal. I'm not even going to be here, but I have done all this work in the hope that if we could turn America around, we would be in a position to build the future of our dreams for our kids.

Why should we even be fighting about this? We ought to be saving Social Security and Medicare and adding a prescription drug benefit

for seniors who need it. We ought to be making sure that every kid in this country who wants to go to college can go. We ought to be making sure that there's economic opportunity for the first time on these Indian reservations and in the Mississippi Delta and the Appalachians and all these places, in the inner-city neighborhoods. There's plenty to do out here.

We ought to be figuring out how we're going to put a human face on the global economy so that those of us like me that believe we ought to have more trade will be able to prove it lifts people up and raises wages and creates jobs everywhere. We ought to be thinking about these big things.

What are we going to do about global warming? One of the reasons I'm for Al Gore for President, besides the fact that he's been my Vice President and the best Vice President in history, is, we need somebody in the White House that understands the future. That's what we ought to be talking about.

Al Gore was telling me about climate change 12 years ago. Everybody was making fun of him. Now, even the oil companies admit it's real. He was right. He sponsored legislation in the House to make the Internet more than the private province of physicists, and a lot of people in this room are making a pretty good living because of that.

And now all your financial and health records are on somebody's computer somewhere. Don't you think you ought to be able to say yes before somebody else gets them? Wouldn't you like somebody in the White House at least who understood that?

The other day we had this great announcement on the human genome—did you see it?—with the sequencing of the human genome. I had to read for a year so I would understand what I was saying in that 30 minutes. Do you think someone—when you get a little genetic map, and all of you that are still young enough to bear children, when your children come home from the hospital in a couple years, everybody will just have their little genetic map that will tell you, you know, what your child is likely

to be like, what kind of problems you're vulnerable to. It's scary and hopeful.

But do you think your little genetic record should be used by somebody else without your permission to deny you a job or a promotion or a pay raise or health insurance? Wouldn't you at least like to have somebody in the White House that understands that?

This is a big election, and all this great stuff is out there. And you must not allow people to take this casually. Dick Gephardt will be the Speaker if the people of this country understand what the issues are, what the differences are, what the stakes are. And that's why I've tried to be, even though I am in a semi-coma tonight and will not remember this tomorrow morning—[laughter]—I hope I have been somewhat persuasive.

The kids of this country deserve this. Look, in my lifetime, we've only had one other economy that was almost this good in the sixties. And we took it for granted, and we thought we didn't have to nourish that moment. And it fell apart in the national conflicts over civil rights and the war in Vietnam. And all of a sudden, it was gone. And now we've waited over 30 years for this chance again. We don't want to blow it.

And if we don't, believe me, the best is still out there. I've had a great time doing this. Massachusetts has been great to us. If you really want to tell me that you appreciate what I've tried to do, make him the Speaker, make Al the President, make Daschle the majority leader, and you will make America's best days ahead.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:23 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts former U.S. Ambassador to Austria Swanee Hunt and her husband, Charles Ansbacher; former President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson; and Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president, National Rifle Association.

The President's Radio Address

July 29, 2000

Good morning. This weekend marks the start of the summer recess for Members of Congress. Many are heading home to their districts, and most Republicans are meeting in Philadelphia for their party's convention.

But wherever they go, I hope they will be thinking of the millions of Americans for whom summer vacations are not an option, the millions who work all summer long, all year long, earning no more than the minimum wage.

I want to talk to you today about giving these hard-pressed Americans a much-deserved raise and helping them to live the American dream. The face of the minimum wage is the face of America. Every one of us knows at least one person who works for minimum wage. It might be a member of your family. It might be the person who cares for your children during the day or serves you lunch at the shop on the corner or cleans your office every night.

Seventy percent of the workers on the minimum wage are adults; 60 percent are women; and almost 50 percent work full-time. Many are their families' sole breadwinners, struggling to bring up their children on \$10,700 a year. These hard-working Americans need a raise. They deserve it. They've earned it.

I've always believed that if you work hard and play by the rules, you ought to have a decent chance for yourself and for a better life for your children. That's the promise I made when I first ran for President, and that's the basic bargain behind so much of what we've done in the years since, from expanding the earned-income tax credit for lower income working people to passing the Family and Medical Leave Act, from increased child care assistance to health care for children to helping millions and millions of Americans move from welfare to work.

That's also why, in 1996, we raised the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour over 2 years. It's high time we did it again. In fact, it's long overdue.

More than a year ago now, I proposed to raise the minimum wage by \$1 over 2 years, a modest increase that merely restores the minimum wage to what it was back in 1982 in real dollar terms. Still, it's no small change. For

a full-time worker, it would mean another \$2,000 a year—\$2,000 more to pay for a child's college education, to cover critical health care, to pay the rent. And for a year now, the Republican leadership has sat on that proposal.

Back in 1996, the last time we raised the minimum wage, some of these same Republicans called it, and I quote, "a job killer cloaked in kindness." They said it would cause—again, a quote—"a juvenile crime wave of epic proportions." Well, time has not been kind to their predictions, and neither have the numbers. Our economy has created more than 11 million new jobs since we last raised the minimum wage. And study after study shows that a raise in the minimum wage is good not only for working families; it's good for our entire economy, especially at a time of labor shortages when we want to increase incentives for all Americans who can, to find work.

So this time, unlike the last time, the congressional majority knows better than to speak against raising the minimum wage. This time, instead of arguing the facts, the leadership is playing legislative games, stalling action, and stifling debate. Already, these delays have cost the minimum wage worker more than \$900 in hard-earned pay. To paraphrase Shakespeare, they've come to bury the minimum wage, not to raise it.

For working Americans, the wait grows longer. As recently as this week, the majority in Congress was still talking about raising the minimum wage, but they couldn't bring themselves to actually do it. In the last hours before their recess, they were still working overtime to give tax breaks to the tiniest, wealthiest fraction of America's families and still doing nothing for the 10 million people who would benefit from a boost in the minimum wage.

This weekend Republican leaders gather in Philadelphia. From their seats inside the convention hall, I hope they'll stop a moment to think of Americans outside that hall—Americans working in the restaurants, the shops, the hotels of Philadelphia, working hard for the minimum wage.

If Republican leaders really want to make their compassion count, they ought to join me

in getting back to business and raising the minimum wage. I hope the majority will join the Democrats to seize this moment, to stop the delays, to work with me to help our working families.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:03 p.m. on July 28 in Room 606 at Barrington High School, Barrington, RI, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 29. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 28 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Hillary Clinton in New York City *July 29, 2000*

Thank you. First of all, I would like to thank all of you for making us feel so welcome. In particular, I thank you, Albert Kwok and John Ha and Gilliam Kim, for your words and your support. I would also like to thank those of you in the audience who worked so hard on this event, especially Janet Lee, thank you, and my good friend Tony George from Cleveland. I thank Lee Ho-Yeon for the song. Wasn't the song beautiful? Let's give her another hand for the beautiful singing. *[Applause]*

I want to say just a couple of things, if I might, today. First of all, I appreciate the previous remarks by Gilliam Kim about the relationship of the United States and Korea and South Korea during my time. I have been to Korea many times to see the people, the leaders, and the United States forces there. We have worked very hard to encourage the new direction in North Korea and to support President Kim as he has worked to break down the barriers of the past and to build a more peaceful future. And I certainly hope it will be successful.

I feel very good about what has been done, and I appreciate the support that this new direction has received from other nations in the area. So I hope you will all keep your fingers crossed and keep working for it, because it would be a very good thing to make the future in the 21st century safer for all of the children of the Korean Peninsula and all of Asia.

The second thing I would like to say is that I have worked very hard for these last 8 years to make America a place open and welcoming to all immigrants, a place of genuine opportunity that supported people who worked hard and took care of their families and contributed to their communities.

I have worked against discrimination against all people who come to America from other

countries, and I've tried to remind our fellow Americans that all of us came here from somewhere else. Even our native populations once crossed a landmass that no longer exists between the Northwest United States and the northeastern part of Asia. So I welcome you here, and I thank you for your participation in this event.

The last thing I would like to say is that I heartily endorse what was said earlier by Mr. Kim about hate crimes. You know, even though America has made great progress in overcoming our past of discrimination on the basis of race or ethnic origin or religion, we still have instances in our country where people are subject to discrimination. And we all know it. We can remember by name some of the victims: James Byrd, dragged to death in Texas; Matthew Shepard, stretched out on a fence in Wyoming. We know that a former basketball coach in Chicago was killed because of his race. We know that a young Korean Christian was killed walking out of a church by a fanatic who said he belonged to a church that did not believe in God but believed in the supremacy of his race.

We know, thankfully, these people are a very small minority in our country, but we know they have to be rebuked and stopped. And that is why we support the hate crimes legislation. Hate crimes are not like other crimes. People are singled out for victimhood simply because they belong to a certain race or a certain religion. In California not very long ago, a bunch of little Jewish children were shot at just because they were going into their school, and a Filipino postal worker was killed because he was Filipino and because he worked for the Federal Government.

There are very few of these people in our country, thank goodness, but we should pass

hate crimes legislation to make it clear that we will not tolerate discrimination against people simply because of who they are. And I hope all of you will support that.

Now, looking ahead to the future, let me say that I think that Korean-Americans can have a big impact on this election, in New York and in the United States, if you are willing to participate, not—yes by coming to fundraisers, and we thank you for that—but also by reminding Americans of what an important occasion this election is. In great democracies, people tend to make good decisions in times of crisis because they know that there is trouble all around and that change is required. In 1992 the American people gave me a chance to be President, because there was trouble all around and they knew we had to change.

But sometimes when things are going very well—when the economy is in good shape, when, as you said, there are fewer people on welfare, when crime is down, when we are moving toward greater peace in the world—people may think there is no consequence to the election; there are no differences between the candidates; everything comes wrapped up in a pretty package; and no one takes the trouble to open it to see what's inside in terms of what an election is about.

And the reason I say you can make a contribution is, it is the nature of immigrants to the United States from Korea, as you pointed out, to work hard, to try to strengthen family and community, and to always think about the future in good times as well as tough times.

Democracies tend to make some of their worst mistakes, if you look throughout human history, not in the tough times but in the good times—in the good times. Why? Because it's easy to stop concentrating. It's easy to stop working. It's easy to stop trying. It's easy to be fooled into thinking that there are no serious consequences to a choice.

So my message to you today is that I believe that Hillary decided to run for the Senate here because she knew how serious this election was, because she had spent all of her life as an adult working for children and families and better education and health care. She wrote a best selling book and gave away 100 percent of the profits to children's charities because she thinks that that's the most important issue for anybody's future and because she understood that we had worked for 8 years to turn the country

around. And we're moving in the right direction, but now we have the chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children.

The only thing I worry about in this election, the only thing, is that people will either believe it doesn't make much difference because times are going along so well—what difference does it make who gets elected President or who gets elected to the Senate or who gets elected to the Congress, or that because things are going along so well and our opponents are making such a determined and clever effort to blur the differences—that they simply won't understand what the differences are.

So I ask you not only to support us in this way, as you have today, and within the Korean-American community, but to talk to other people in this country with whom you come in contact and remind them that good times are great blessings that impose special responsibilities and that we may never have another chance to have an election where we can pick people and policies that will build the most brilliant future we can imagine, that elections are decisions by voters and citizens which have far-reaching consequences on how we will live and that the good times election are as big a test of our judgment and our values and our national character as the tough times election.

Let me just give you a couple of examples. Beginning with the Vice President, and including Hillary and all of our Democrats, we think our economic policy is pretty good. We think it works for America, and we think it should be continued and intensified in the years ahead. What do I mean by that?

We want to give the American people a tax cut that we can afford based on what we think our surpluses will be in the years ahead, to help people educate their children, pay for child care, pay for long-term care for the elderly and disabled, save for retirement. We want to save some money to invest in education and health care and scientific and technological research. And we want to keep paying down the national debt until America is out of debt, to keep interest rates low so people like you can borrow money to start businesses, to buy homes, to send your children to college at lower interest rates. That's our policy.

Their policy is to say to the American people, "We have a projected surplus over the next 10 years of \$2 trillion. It is your money. You

worked for it, and we are going to give it all back to you right now.”

Now, that sounds very good. What is the problem with it? It is a projected surplus. So if we cut taxes right now by the amount of money we think we’re going to have over the next 10 years, we will cut taxes whether the money comes in or not, and we will have no money for education, for health care, for investment in the future. And we will not pay this debt off, and then, if the projected income figures are wrong, we’ll be back in deficits, making the same mistakes we were making 8 years ago when the American people gave me a chance to change this country. That is the big economic issue.

Their policies will raise interest rates. Our policies will keep them lower. Our policies will give people an effective tax cut of hundreds of billions of dollars in lower home mortgage rates, lower business loan rates, lower college loan rates, lower car payment rates—clear choice; huge difference. Most people don’t know it yet. You can help.

We have differences in education policy, in health care policy. We want everybody to have affordable health insurance that they can buy. We want older people on Medicare to be able to buy prescription drugs. We want to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare so that when all of the people in the so-called baby boom generation retire, we do not impose a burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

We want to have a country where the streets are safe for people to walk. We have a much lower crime rate now than we did when I took office. But I’m sure you believe it’s still too high—huge difference in the two parties, from the Presidency to the Senate candidates to the Congress, on what we would do.

We believe there are still too many criminals and children who have handguns, and it leads to too much violence. We believe that we should strengthen our laws in that regard, to do more rigorous background checks on people who try to buy guns. We think if someone buys a handgun, they ought to get a license like you do with a car, that says you have passed a background check and you understand how to use the gun safely. They strongly disagree with it.

It’s a big choice. There is no point in pretending that there is not a difference here and that it won’t have consequences. So these are

just some of the issues that I wanted to bring up. We favor the hate crimes legislation, broad and inclusive. Their leadership is opposed to it—big difference.

So what I ask you to do is, number one, keep being a good example for all Americans with your work ethic and your strong families and your contributions to community; number two, thank you for being here to help Hillary; she will be the most outstanding advocate New York could possibly have for children and families, for jobs and health care and education; number three, remind your fellow Americans not to go to sleep this election year, that what you do in good times is just as important, maybe more important, as what you do in bad times in an election, that elections are choices with real consequences.

I am absolutely convinced if the American people and the people in New York clearly understand it’s a big election, there are big differences, and what the differences are, that Hillary will be the next Senator; Vice President Gore will be the next President; and America’s best days are still ahead. That’s what I believe.

Now I would like to introduce the First Lady, my wife, by telling you that, as far as I know, I have now run my last race. I will never be a candidate for anything again. I will spend my time helping other people to run for office and to serve our country.

I have had, since I was a very young man, the opportunity to work with literally hundreds of people in public life who were running for office, first helping them to get elected, then getting elected myself. Now I am returning to my original role as a citizen.

Of all the hundreds of people I have known, including many Presidents and candidates for President, I have never known anyone who had the same combination of intelligence and passion and knowledge and ability to get things done for children, for families, for education, for health care, than my wife does.

She has never presented herself for public office before. She’s spent 30 years working for other people and other causes before they were popular, when no one else paid attention to them. And I frankly am grateful that she has been given the chance by the people of New York to run for the Senate, and I hope for the sake of this State and the children of our country that she will have a chance to serve, because she can do things and she knows things

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that no one else now in our public life can do and know, just because of the life she has lived.

It is a very good thing that she is doing, although I'd just as soon we were out relaxing somewhere. *[Laughter]* I am glad that she wants to do it. I am glad that you're helping her, and I hope you will help her every day between now and November, because it's the best thing that could possibly happen for the people and the future of New York and for our country.

Please bring my wife up now to the floor.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:57 p.m. in the Empire Room at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon host Albert N. Kwok; Korean American Senior Citizens Society of New York president John Sehe Jong Ha; Korean American Association of America president Gilliam Kim; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Chicago, Illinois

July 30, 2000

Well, thank you all for being here today. I'm delighted to be in this beautiful new restaurant. One of the owners of this restaurant, Phil Stefani, is a good friend of mine, and in honor of my coming, he went to Rome. *[Laughter]* I don't know what it means, but it's probably a pretty good choice. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Senator Dick Durbin, one of the finest human beings and one of the bravest people and one of the most eloquent people who has served in the United States Congress in my adult lifetime, since I've been covering. He is an extraordinary human being, and I'm grateful that he is my friend, and I thank him.

Thank you, Mr. President Middleton, and thank you, Fred Baron, Leo Boyle, Anthony Tarricone, all the other members of the ATLA, for being here today. I want to thank all the candidates who have come here today. And I know—Fred told me he'd already introduced them, but this is a very interesting group of candidates. We have Ron Klink and Debbie Stabenow running from the House of Representatives for the United States Senate. And they can both win, and they should win if you help them. I saw earlier Deborah Senn and Ed Bernstein. I think Brian Schweitzer is here. We have a whole slew of House candidates. One of them, John Kelly from New Mexico, went to college with me, so I have a particular interest in seeing him make good. *[Laughter]* But he was also a distinguished U.S. attorney.

But we have this incredible group of people running for the House. They can win the majority. And now we have an extraordinary new Senator from the State of Georgia, Zell Miller, who will be running for election in November. And believe me, we can win not only the House but the Senate, as well, if you give them enough help.

And a number of you have helped the Senate candidate that I care the most about, in New York—*[laughter]*—and I want to thank you for that. And if you haven't, I hope you will, because it's a big old tough State. And they're trying to take us out, and I think she's going in, with your help. So I hope you will, and I thank you very much for that.

Let me say, normally I don't speak from any notes at these events, but I want to do it today for a particular reason. You make a living making arguments, persuading people, knowing what's on people's minds, understanding the predispositions that they bring to any given circumstance. And this is a highly unusual circumstance, so I want to talk to you about it today, because with the conventions of the Republicans in Philadelphia, the Democrats in Los Angeles, we're beginning to have this election in earnest.

The first thing I want to do is to say a simple thank you. You've been thanking me; I want to thank you. I want to thank you for being so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore for these 8 years. I want to thank you

for supporting the civil justice system and, when it was threatened, the Constitution of the United States. I want to thank you for supporting ordinary citizens, the people who can't afford to come to fundraisers like this but work in places like this, people who can't afford to hire lobbyists in Washington to plead their case. And I want to thank you again for supporting the candidates here and those who are not here who can help to give us a new majority in the Congress.

The second thing I'd like to say, with some humility, I guess, is that your support has been validated by the record of the last 8 years. This country is in better shape than it was 8 years ago. It's stronger than it was 8 years ago, and people are better off than they were 8 years ago.

And as Senator Durbin said, yes, part of it is economics. We have the longest economic expansion in history and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the strongest growth in 40 years, the highest homeownership in history, all of those statistics. But it's more than that as well. This is a more just society. We have the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rates in 40 years, the lowest single-parent household poverty rate in 46 years. We have rising scores among our students in schools, the first time in history the African-American high school graduation rate is equal to that of the white majority, the highest percentage of people going on to college in our history.

We have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food. We set aside more land in the lower 48 States than any administration in history except those of the two Roosevelts. And we proved that you could improve the environment and the economy at the same time. The welfare rolls have been cut in half. The crime rate is at a 30-year low. Gun crime has dropped 35 percent in the last 7 years. So it's about more than money. It's about who we are as a people and how we live together.

Many of you whom I met earlier mentioned my work in the last couple of weeks on the Middle East peace process. I've been very honored to be part of making a more peaceful world, from the Balkans to the Middle East to Northern Ireland, trying to reduce the threat of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and trying to build a positive set of relationships

with countries throughout the world. And America is better positioned than it was 8 years ago.

Now, here's the most important thing: Now what? What are we doing with this prosperity? That's my answer and your answer, but how do we get it to be America's answer? What are we going to do with this remarkable moment of prosperity? Will we use it as a precious, once-in-a-lifetime gift to meet the big challenges and seize the big opportunities of this new century? Or will we do what often happens in democracies, when things are going well, and break our concentration and sort of wander through this election?

The outcome of the election, who wins, depends on what people think the election is really about. Now, on our side, we've got people led by Vice President Gore who have brought America back and who have great ideas for keeping this positive change going. On their side, they have people led by their Presidential and Vice Presidential nominees who are speaking in very soothing, reassuring ways about compassion and harmony and inclusion. Gone are these harsh personal attacks that dominated their politics from '92 to '98.

You watch their convention. I bet butter wouldn't melt in their mouth for the next few days. [Laughter] It is appealing as a package and a terrific marketing strategy. But that obscures the differences between the candidates for President, the candidates for Senate and Congress, and, fundamentally, the different approaches between the two parties. And it is just what they mean to do, because on issue after issue, this ticket is to the right of the one that Al Gore and I opposed in 1996.

So this election—you just need to know three things about it. It is a big election; there are big differences; and only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for? [Laughter]

It is a big election, but a lot of people don't think so. Story after story after story that our friends in the press write indicate that people aren't sure what the differences are between the candidates for President. "Do they have different approaches to crime and gun safety? Do they have different approaches to the economy? Do they really have different approaches to health care? They both seem like compassionate people. Who could mess this economy up, anyway? I mean, it's so strong. And maybe there

aren't any real consequences, and so maybe we should give the other side a chance. We had it for 8 years."

Now, how many times in your own life—if you're over 30 years old, every person in this room over 30 at some point in your life has made a mistake, not because your life was so full of difficulty but because things were going along so well you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. A lot of you are nodding your head. That's true. You know that's true. If you live long enough, you'll make one of those mistakes.

And countries are no different than people. Things are going along well; they kind of relax, feeling good. I'm glad everybody is feeling good. But wouldn't it be ironic if, as a consequence of the good feeling of America now and our yearning to sort of have everything come out all right, that the people that made the decisions and paid the price were punished for the error they helped to bring about? Now, that's basically the issue in this election.

And so I say to you, I don't blame our friends in the Republican Party. If I were them, I would be trying to obscure the differences between us, too, because it's the only way they can win. [Laughter] I mean, it's a good strategy, and they're doing it very well. And they've got a great package, and they just hope nobody ever unwraps the package to look and see what's inside.

Now, this is America, and people should do whatever they think they can do to get elected. But if that happens and if the electorate goes into the polling place in November without knowing what the real differences are, that's our fault, not theirs. You can't blame them for trying to get elected. They want back in in the world's worst way. And all those interest groups that are behind them want back in in the world's worst way. And you know some of the things they want to do if they could get the White House and the Congress, don't you? And you can't blame them. They're just doing what they're supposed to do; they're trying to win.

And the American people almost always get it right, almost always—for over 220 years now, if they have enough time and enough information to make a good choice. That's our job. And that's your job, because you make arguments for a living, so you are uniquely positioned to influence the outcome of this election, not so much by your money as by your insight

and your persuasiveness and understanding. And you have to take it on.

Let me just give you an example. What you've got to convince people of is, "Look, an election is a decision. It's a choice, and choices have consequences. If you like the consequences of your choice, you should vote for that person. But let's just look at some of them. Number one, on economic policy, the goal ought to be to keep this recovery going and spread its benefits to more people, right? Okay. What's our policy? Our policy is: Stay with what works; keep investing in America's future, in education, in science and technology and health care; keep paying down the debt; get us out of debt, so the interest rates will stay low; save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation and add a drug benefit to Medicare, and give the people a tax cut we can afford and still do that stuff—for college education, for long-term care, for child care, for people with a lot of kids to save for retirement; have a tax cut but don't let it interfere with our obligation to invest in our children's education, to save Medicare and Social Security and get us out of debt."

What's their side? They can say it better. Their side is, "Hey, it's your money. We've got it. It's a surplus. We want to give it back to you. That's the problem with the Democrats. They never saw a program they didn't like. It's your money. We're going to give it back to you." And they propose to spend, at least from the taxes they passed in the last 12 months to the one that their candidate for President is advocating and is in the Republican platform, over \$2 trillion in tax cuts over the next 10 years. And they say, "Well, so what? We're supposed to have a surplus of \$2 trillion." Now, never mind the fact that that, number one, gives them no money for their own spending promises.

Did you ever get one of those letters in the mail from Publishers Clearing House, Ed McMahon? "You may have won \$10 million." Did you go out and spend the \$10 million the next day? If you did, you should support the Republicans this year. [Laughter] If not, you'd better stick with us. You better stick with us.

Folks, that money is not there yet. That money is not there yet. If we invest this year in education and we say we want to spend this much next year and the money doesn't come in, we don't have to spend it. But once you

cut taxes, it's gone, and it's pretty hard to get a bunch of politicians to come back in and raise them again because the money didn't materialize. So you've got to tell people that.

Look at your friends and say, "Listen, if I ask you to sign a contract right now, committing to spend every penny of your projected income over the next 10 years, would you do it? If you would, you should support them. If not, you'd better stick with us. Keep this economy going."

I got an economic analysis last week from a professional economist that said that Vice President Gore's economic plan would keep interest rates at least one percent lower—at least one percent lower—than his opponent's plan over the next decade. Do you know what that's worth?—\$250 billion in home mortgage savings, \$30 billion in car payment savings, \$15 billion in student loan payments. That's a pretty good size tax cut, and besides, you get a healthy economy, and you get America out of debt. It's a huge difference. People don't know it. It's up to you to make sure they do.

Let me just take one or two others. In health care, we want to lengthen the life of Medicare and Social Security. We want to add a Medicare drug benefit that all of our seniors can afford. We want a Patients' Bill of Rights. On those three issues they say, "No, no, no. No lengthening the life of Medicare and Social Security." Indeed, one of the tax cuts they passed this week would take 5 years off the life of Medicare. "No Patients' Bill of Rights with the right to be vindicated if you get hurt. No Medicare drug benefit that all of our seniors can afford who need it."

On crime, we say, "Put more police out there, and do more to take guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. Specifically, close the gun show loophole; mandate child trigger locks; don't import large capacity ammunition clips to get around the assault weapons ban." And the Vice President says—and I agree with him—"Make people who buy handguns get a photo ID license like people who buy cars, showing that they passed a background check and they know how to use the gun safely."

They say "No, no, no, no. Instead, have more people carrying concealed weapons—in church, if necessary." [Laughter] That's their record and their position. Now, that's a clear choice. People don't know that. Did you see that survey last week of suburban women voters who care a

lot about this issue? And they had no idea what the differences were.

Now, the chief political argument is that the head of the NRA said they'd have an office in the White House if the Republicans win. But what I want to tell you is something more profound. They won't need an office in the White House, because they'll do what they want to anyway, because that's what they believe.

Look, I think we have got a chance here to get away from this politics of personal destruction. We should say that our opponents are honorable, good, decent, patriotic people, and we have honest disagreements with them. The only thing we disagree with is, they're trying to hide the disagreements. So let's tell the American people what the differences are and let them decide. And whatever they decide, we can all go on about our business and be happy with our lives because democracy is working. But we can't if they don't know.

Let's look at the environment. We say we should have higher standards for the environment and deal with the problems of climate change, and we can improve the environment and the economy at the same time. And they don't believe that, basically. And one of the specific commitments made by their candidate in the primary—something they hope all you forget; they hope you have selective amnesia about the Republican primary—but one of the specific commitments made was to reverse my order establishing 43 million acres that are roadless in our national forests, something the Audubon Society said was the most significant conservation move in the last 40 years. Now, they're on record committing to repeal that.

So there's a difference there. People need to know what the differences are, and if they agree with them, they should vote for them. If they agree with us, they can vote for us. But they ought to know.

I'll give you a couple other examples. Hate crimes legislation: We're for it; their leadership is opposed to it because it also protects gays. Employment nondiscrimination legislation: We're for it; they're against it. Raising the minimum wage: We're for it; they're against it. More vigorous civil rights enforcement and involvement: We're for it; they're against it.

Now, all the big publicity is about, in the last few days, an amazing vote cast by their nominee for Vice President when he was in Congress against letting Nelson Mandela out of

jail. And that takes your breath away. But Mr. Mandela got out of jail in spite of that congressional vote. Most of the Congressmen voted to let him out. He became President of South Africa, and the rest is history.

I'm worried about the people now whom I've tried to put on the Court of Appeals who are African-American and Hispanic, who are being held in political jail because they can't get a hearing from this Republican Senate, and their nominee won't say a word about it—never.

The Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in the southeastern part of the United States has never had an African-American, but it has more African-American citizens than any other one. I've been trying for 7 long years to fix it, and they've blocked every one. They are so determined to keep an African-American off the court that they have allowed a 25 percent vacancy rate on the fourth circuit—just to keep an African-American off the court.

There are two now I've got up there. They could prove me wrong. Give them a hearing, and confirm them. In Texas, I nominated a man named Enrique Moreno from El Paso that the Texas State trial judges said was one of the best lawyers in west Texas, a guy that graduated at the top of his class at Harvard, came out of El Paso and did that. He got the highest rating from the ABA. And the Texas Republican Senators said he wasn't qualified. And by their likes, he's not qualified because he's not a guaranteed ideological purist vote.

And the leader of the Republican Party in Texas, now the leader of the American Republican Party, all he had to do was say, "Give this man a hearing. This is wrong." But not a peep. So let's worry more about Moreno—Mandela took care of himself just fine—and the people in the fourth circuit and the other people. This is a big issue.

Now, I'm sure they have principled reasons. They really want somebody on the Court of Appeals. They think it would be a better country if people toed the ideological line. I have appointed the most diverse and the highest rated group of judges in the last 40 years, and I didn't ask them what their party lines were.

Now, that leads me to the last point. I think the last place where there is a clear choice is, choice and civil rights enforcement and the civil justice system. The next President will make two to four appointments to the Supreme Court, almost certainly. The Vice President has said

where he stands on this. Their nominees are both avowed opponents of *Roe v. Wade*, and their nominee for President said the people he admired most in the Supreme Court were Justices Thomas and Scalia, those that are the most conservative.

Now, I'll bet you anything nobody gets up and gives a speech about this in Philadelphia. But it's a relevant thing. It will change the shape of America far beyond the lifetime of the next Presidency.

So I say to you—and I'm not attacking them personally. These are differences. And I don't even blame them for trying to hide the differences because they know if the folks find out, they're toast. [Laughter] I don't blame them. But I have worked so hard to turn this country around. I have done all I could do. And I don't want my country to squander the opportunity of a lifetime, the opportunity of a generation to build the future of our dreams for our children. That's what I want.

And I think what's best for America is Al Gore. That's what I really believe. That's what I believe. He's done more good in the office of Vice President than anybody who ever held it. We've had some great Presidents who were Vice President. None of them did remotely as much for America as Vice President as he has, from casting the tie-breaking vote on the budget to casting the tie-breaking vote for gun safety in this year; from managing our downsizing of the Government to the smallest size in 40 years to making sure that we pass an E-rate in the Telecommunications Act that can make sure all the poor schools in this country could hook up to the Internet; from managing a lot of our environmental programs to managing a lot of our foreign policy with Russia, Egypt, and other countries.

There has never been anybody who has had remotely as much influence as Vice President as he has. And therefore, he is, by definition then, the best qualified person in our lifetime to be President.

The second thing you need to know is, there is a big difference in economic policy. I've already said that, but if you want this thing to go on—everybody who wants to live like a Republican needs to vote Democrat this year. [Laughter] Now, if you want it to go on, you've got to do it.

And the third thing that you need to know about him is he understands the future. He

understood the potential of the Internet to carry the Library of Congress when it was the private province of Defense Department physicists. Don't you want somebody like that in the White House when we have to decide who gets a hold of your medical and financial records that are on the Internet?

He understands the potential of the human genome project and this whole biomedical revolution. Don't you want someone like that in the White House when we have to decide whether someone can deny you a job or a promotion or health insurance based on your gene map?

He understands climate change. People made fun of him 12 years ago. When we ran together in '92, they made fun of him. Now the oil companies acknowledge that climate change and global warming are real, and it's going to change the whole way our children live unless we deal with it. Wouldn't you like someone in the White House that really understands that? You need somebody that understands the future. It's going to be here before you know it.

And the last thing I'll say—it's what you already know or you wouldn't be here—this is the most diverse, interesting country we've ever had. We're going out into a world that's more and more interdependent, where we have obligations to people around the world that we must fulfill if we want to do well ourselves. And I want someone in the White House that will take us all along for the ride, and he will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. at the 437 Rush Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Richard H. Middleton, Jr., president, Fred Baron, president-elect, Leo Boyle, vice president, and Anthony Tarricone, member, board of governors, Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA); U.S. senatorial candidates Deborah Senn of Washington, Ed Bernstein of Nevada, and Brian Schweitzer of Montana; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson; and Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president, National Rifle Association.

Remarks to the Association of Trial Lawyers of America in Chicago July 30, 2000

President Middleton, after your remarks, if I had any sense, I wouldn't say anything. I'd just sit down. *[Laughter]* I want to thank you, and thank you, Fred Baron, my longtime friend, for inviting me here. There are so many of you here that I've had the honor of working with over the last 7½ years, sometimes even longer.

I am proud of the fact that this organization and its members have been standing up for the rights of wronged and injured Americans since 1946. Now, that was before we had the EPA or the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or the Clean Air or Clean Water Act. It's important to remember that those protections and many others were written into the law after years of lawsuits that highlighted the problems we faced and wrongs that were done.

What is the lesson of all this? That the public interest requires both reasonable access to the

courts and responsible action by Congress. We have done what we could in the last 7½ years to move toward accountability in the courts on three issues—tobacco, guns, and patients' rights—and to keep the American people's availability of a civil justice system alive and well.

But only Congress can pass laws that will hold tobacco companies, gun manufacturers, and health plans accountable for the choices they make and the consequences of those choices. So I hope Congress will also help us because I know that everybody in this room agrees that an ounce of prevention in law is worth a million dollars in curative lawsuits.

We've worked for 7½ years now to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, thanks in large measure to the leadership of Vice President Gore, and Senator Dick Durbin from Illinois, who has been with me through much of this day. Now the Justice Department is leading our efforts to get tobacco companies to repay

the Government for the costs of tobacco-related illnesses. But the Supreme Court has told Congress the ball is in its court. It must act to give FDA tobacco regulations the force of law.

I have asked Congress to do that and to support, not undermine, the Justice Department's lawsuit. I hope that the Congress, and especially the Republicans in Congress, will be able to break an addiction to the tobacco lobby and meet their responsibilities to the American people.

I am grateful beyond measure that the crime rate has dropped in this country to a 25-year low, that gun crime is down by 35 percent over the last 7½ years, but I don't think anybody in America believes that we're safe enough as a nation or that there's not more we can do—more we can do to put more police on the street in dangerous neighborhoods; more we can do to keep our kids off the streets in after-school programs, summer school programs, summer job programs, mentoring programs; and more we can do to keep guns out the hands of criminals and children.

I've asked Congress to give us commonsense gun legislation, measures to close the gun show loophole in the Brady background check law, to require child safety locks for all handguns, to ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips. I've also endorsed requiring people who buy handguns to get a photo ID license, just like a driver's license, showing that you passed the background check and you know how to use the gun safely. So far, no action in Congress, even on the first three measures.

We reached a historic agreement with the Smith & Wesson company to build safer guns, a truly astonishing step forward and a brave thing for them to do. But the rest of the industry and the gun lobby are trying to destroy them for doing it, and they're working hard to make sure that they can't keep up their end of the bargain.

I hope all of them will think again about where their responsibility really lies. After all, who honestly has an interest in selling a gun to somebody with a criminal record? Who has an interest in selling a gun that's not protected when it will be put in some place where a little child can find it and cause an accidental death? I hope that we'll see a change in attitude there, too, and I hope the American people will have the opportunity to make their position on these matters crystal clear in November.

Wherever I go, I heard heartbreaking stories about patients turned away from the closest emergency room. The other day I was in Missouri with the Governor of that State who signed one of the strongest patients' bill of rights in the country at the State level, and they still have about a million people in their State who aren't covered because of the way the Federal law works.

And there was this emergency room nurse speaking with us there—or it was an emergency nurse who had been also an emergency medical technician. It was a man who must have weighed 225 pounds and looked like he could bench-press me on a cold day. And this big old burly guy got up and practically started crying, talking about someone that he had just seen die because they were not permitted to go to the nearest emergency room.

I had a guy the other day tell me a story about getting hit by a car and saying that this health plan wouldn't approve his going to the nearest emergency room because he hadn't called for permission first. He said, "I was unconscious at the time. I didn't know how to make the phone call." [Laughter]

Now, all of you know these are—if you practice in this area, you know that this is not just some set of isolated anecdotes. And I believe that health care decisions should be made by health care professionals. I believe people ought to be able to go to the nearest emergency room. I don't believe that people should be forced to change physicians in the middle of a treatment, whether it's chemotherapy or having a baby. And I think if people get hurt, they ought to have the right to seek redress in our courts. That's what the Patients' Bill of Rights does.

Let me say, as I have said over and over again, this is not a partisan issue. Survey after survey after survey has shown that more than 70 percent of the American people, whether they identify themselves as Republicans or Democrats or independents, support the passage of a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. This is not a partisan issue. This is a special interest issue.

We passed with a bipartisan vote—a good number of Republicans voted for a bill called the Norwood-Dingel bill in the House of Representatives, and I am profoundly grateful to everyone who voted for that bill in both parties. And then, in the Senate, we came within a vote, really, of passing it. We lost it 51–49, and

if it had gotten 50 votes, then the Vice President could have broken the tie. And as he never tires of saying, whenever he votes, we win. [Laughter] He always kids me that he has a much better record of legislative success than I do. He never loses. Whenever he votes, we win.

And so I have some hope that we can do this. But this is a huge deal, and it goes to the core of what kind of people we are. And I feel that I have the right to speak passionately about this because I actually have always supported managed care in general. Let me remind you of something.

Your president was telling you about what things were like in 1992. In 1992, and for several years before that, health care costs had been going up at 3 times the rate of inflation. We were then and are now spending about 4 percent more of our national income, which is a huge chunk of change, on health care than any other country in the world; about 6 percent more than virtually all other advanced countries—Canada is 4 percent lower than we are—and yet we were the only one that basically had tens of millions of people without any health insurance.

So it was obvious that we needed to manage the system better because a lot of the money was just getting away from us. Having said that, you cannot allow the management of the system to overcome its fundamental purpose, which is to help people get healthy or stay healthy or deal with them when they're injured or sick.

Let me just emphasize, I've talked to a lot of people about this. I've talked to a lot of nurses and doctors and people who work in insurance companies. I've talked to the 14 representatives of the 14 HMO's that endorsed our Patients' Bill of Rights, because they desperately want to do this, but they don't want to be disadvantaged by having all their competitors able to run off and leave them and follow a different set of rules.

And the fundamental problem is, in a lot of these cases, particularly on specialist care, is that you have to go through three levels before a final decision is made, and the people at the first two levels know they'll never get in trouble for saying no. And whenever you have a system where someone never gets in trouble for saying no and not get in trouble for saying yes, even if yes is plainly the right answer, then there needs to be some way people can get redress

if they get hurt in a system like that. That's the issue. So a right without a remedy is just a suggestion. And I think we all know that.

So we've got to keep working. We might get there this year. We're chipping away at it. If we turn one or maybe two to be safe in the Senate, we'll be home.

Now, let me just say one other thing. I couldn't appear before an audience of lawyers without mentioning what I consider to be another threat to our system of equal justice under law, and that is the Senate's slowdown in consideration and confirmation of my nominees to our courts, especially to our appellate courts.

The judges I have appointed have the highest ratings the American Bar Association has given out in 40 years. They are also the most diverse group ever appointed to the Federal bench. We've shattered the myth that diversity and quality don't go hand in hand.

I also have bent over backwards not to appoint people just because I thought that every single ruling would agree with me. And I've probably appointed a person or two that some of you didn't like. But I've tried to find mainstream judges that would follow the Constitution and be faithful to the interest of individual litigants who have rights under the law and Constitution of the United States and to be fair and balanced to both sides. That's what I have tried to do.

Now, it is, therefore—because of that record, and there have been lots of legal analyses by respected, totally nonpolitical writers saying how I have changed the thrust of the court appointments, especially appellate court appointments, and my appointees are far less ideological, one way or the other, than those of the last two administrations. Now, a blue ribbon panel, however, recently found that during the 105th Congress, the nominations of women and minorities tended to take 2 months—2 months—longer to be considered than those of white males, and though they were just as qualified, according to the ABA, they tended to be rejected twice as often. I'll give you just exhibit A. I've talked about this all over America.

I nominated a man named Enrique Moreno, a highly regarded trial lawyer from El Paso, to the fifth circuit. The Texas State judges said he was one of the three best trial lawyers in the region. The ABA unanimously rated him well-qualified. He had broad support from local

law enforcement officials and from local Republicans and Democrats. Again, it was not a partisan issue. The guy came up out of El Paso, went to Harvard, made great grades, made something of himself. Everybody said he was qualified—everybody except the two Senators from Texas who said he wasn't qualified, no matter what the ABA said, no matter what the Texas State judges said, no matter what the local Republicans and Democrats said; he's not qualified. Nineteen years in practice isn't enough to qualify to make the kind of judgments they have to make. And regrettably, none of the other leading Republicans in Texas would even ask for him to have a hearing. And so he sits in limbo.

Look at the fourth circuit in the southeast United States. The largest percentage of African-Americans in any Federal circuit are in the fourth circuit; 25 percent of the judgeships are vacant. I've been trying for 7 years to put an African-American on that court because there has never been one in the district with the largest number of African-Americans in the entire country. I think it's wrong. And they have worked so hard to keep me from doing it that they're willing to tolerate a 25 percent vacancy rate.

Now, keep in mind I never sent anybody up there that wasn't qualified. We now have two fine, well-qualified African-Americans pending for that circuit, Judge James Wynn of North Carolina and Roger Gregory of Virginia. Neither has even gotten a hearing.

The Senate has 37 nominations before it now, and 29 of those folks have never gotten a hearing. Fifteen have been nominated to fill empty seats that the U.S. courts consider judicial emergencies, places where our legal business simply isn't being done; 13 of them, including well-respected litigators like Dolly Gee and first-rate jurists like Legrome Davis, have been waiting more than a year. Judge Helene White has been waiting for 3 years.

Now, if we want our courts to function properly, the Senate ought to vote these folks up or down. If they don't like them, vote them down. But is the question, can they be competent; will they run a fair and effective court if there are criminal trials; will the civil cases be tried promptly and fairly; do they believe justice delayed is justice denied; or is the problem that they are not sufficiently ideologically predictable?

This is a big issue and a serious precedent. We all want justice to be blind, but we know when we have diversity in our courts, just as in other aspects of our society, it sharpens our vision and makes us a stronger nation. That is a goal ATLA has always set.

Now, I was told that no President had ever addressed the full ATLA convention before, and since you were born in the same year I was, I thought I'd show up. [Laughter] I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kindness so many of you have shown me, the support that so many of you have given to our initiatives, to defending the civil courts and defending the Constitution. This is a year in which the American people will be given a chance to chart the course of the future for a long time to come. They'll elect a new President, a new Vice President, Senators, and Members of Congress. In the course of that, if all the predictions are true, they will also be shaping a new Supreme Court because the next President, in all probability, will make between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court. Choices will be made, and those choices will have consequences.

I think it is very important that you make up your mind what you think the choices are and what the consequences will be, and that you share them with others. The last time a President, nearly as I can tell from my research, talked to any ATLA group was when President Johnson appeared before your board of directors in 1964. And so I want to tell you a little story about 1964 to emphasize why I think this year is so important to all of us as Americans.

In 1964 I graduated from high school, and I, therefore, have a very clear recollection of that year. All of us were still profoundly sad over the death of President Kennedy, but fundamentally optimistic. America was then in the full flow of what was until now the longest economic expansion in history. Vietnam had not yet blown up, and no one really thought it would get as big as it did or claim as many lives as it did or divide the country the way it did.

There were—then we had about 10 years of vigorous activism in civil rights, but most people believed, given the White House and the composition of the Congress, that the civil rights problems of this country would be solved in the Congress and in the courts, not in the streets. And nearly everybody thought the economy was on automatic, and you couldn't mess

it up if you tried. We took low unemployment and high growth and low inflation for granted. And I was one of those bright-eyed idealistic kids that felt just that way.

Two years later we had riots in the streets. Four years later, when I graduated from Georgetown, it was 9 weeks after President Johnson said he couldn't run for President again because the country was so divided over Vietnam, 8 weeks after Martin Luther King was killed in Memphis, 2 days after Senator Kennedy was killed in Los Angeles. The next election had a different outcome. Within a few months, the previous longest economic expansion in history itself was history.

What's the point of all this? I don't know when we'll ever have a time like this again, where we have so much economic prosperity and all the social indicators from crime to welfare to teen pregnancy, you name it, they're all going in the right direction; where our country is in a position to be a force for peace and freedom and decency from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to the Balkans to Africa and Latin America; where we have the chance to build the future of our dreams for our children and protect the fundamental essence of American citizenship and constitutional liberty, even as we build a more united community amidst all of our diversity.

And I'm old enough now to know that nothing stays the same, and things change. And I say this to you more as a citizen than as a President, because I'm not a candidate this year. But I think it is profoundly important that the American people make up their mind what to do with this moment—this magic moment in our history. And I think we will not ever forgive ourselves if we let it get away from us.

In 1964, when LBJ came here, we let it get away from us. But the problems were deep and imponderable and difficult to move away from—the problem of Vietnam and the problem of civil rights. We are not burdened to the extent

that time was by anything of that magnitude. But we know what's coming down the pike. We know we have to deal with the retirement of the baby boomers. We know we're not giving every kid in this country a world-class education. We know that we have not done what we should do in terms of safe streets and health care. We know we're going to have to deal with the problems of climate change. We know this explosion in biotechnology that the human genome project exemplifies will change things forever and require us to rethink our whole notion of health and retirement. We know that we have responsibilities to people around the world if we want Americans to do as well as they can at home.

And at the core of it all is, what is our fundamental notion about what it means to be a citizen of this country, to have rights in the courts and on the streets and in our daily lives?—yes, but also to have responsibilities to one another and to our country and to the future.

I want you all to think about that. I've done everything I knew to turn this country around, to try to get things going in the right direction. And now all the great stuff is still out there just waiting for us to build a future of our dreams for our kids. That's all that matters, not the politics, not the injuries, not the hurts, not the barbs, not the bragging, not the plaudits.

There's an old Italian proverb that says, "After the game, the king and the pawn go back into the same box." It's well to remember. All we really have is our common humanity. But once in a great long while, we get an unbelievable opportunity to make the most of it. You've got it now, and I hope you will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:25 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Richard H. Middleton, Jr., president, and Fred Baron, president-elect, Association of Trial Lawyers of America; and Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri.

Statement on the Gun Buyback Initiative *July 30, 2000*

I am pleased that Secretary Cuomo and the Department of Housing and Urban Develop-

ment (HUD) are moving forward with their successful gun buyback initiative. By teaming up

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law enforcement, local authorities, and citizens in the fight to reduce gun violence, the HUD gun buyback program has already helped remove over 17,000 guns from our communities. Today's announcement that BuyBack America will continue will ensure the removal of thousands more guns, preventing an untold number of gun accidents, suicides, and crimes. Despite HUD's clear authority to carry out this important program, the gun lobby and other opponents of commonsense gun safety measures continue to challenge this initiative. We remain committed to carrying out BuyBack America, and I call on HUD to continue to offer this vital assistance to communities seeking our support in addressing their local gun violence problems.

HUD's gun buybacks are an important part of my administration's comprehensive strategy to reduce gun violence in America. While we are making progress in this fight, gun violence remains far too high. Congress can do its part by finally passing the stalled commonsense gun safety legislation to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children and fully funding my \$280 million gun enforcement initiative to crack down on gun criminals. Congress should put the public safety interests of American families above those of the gun lobby and support these efforts instead of working to undermine them. If we work together, we can continue to bring down gun crime, reduce gun violence, and save lives.

Remarks in Tampa, Florida, on Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China

July 31, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, let me say that I'm delighted to be back in Florida. I'm glad to be here with Jim Davis and my longtime friends Bill Nelson and Buddy MacKay, who is doing a wonderful job for the United States as our Special Envoy to the Americas. And he did spearhead the passage in the Congress earlier this year the Caribbean Basin trade initiative, which is one of the most important things Congress has done this year. It is something I know that will be of special benefit to Florida.

I want to just say a few words about this China issue. First of all, it is part of an overall strategy we have followed for almost 8 years now. When I became President, it was obvious to me that to turn the economy around, we had to do three things: we had to get rid of the deficit and get interest rates down and get investments up; we had to invest in the new technologies of the future and in the educational capacity of our people and to create a whole network of lifetime learning in America; and we had to expand trade.

Whether we like it or not, the economy of every country will become increasingly global, and we have to be in a position to take advantage of it. A lot of people who don't agree

with my position say that, well, we've still got a big trade deficit. That's true. And the reason we do is because our economy has grown so much more rapidly than that of our major trading partners. A 5-year economic slowdown in Japan has contributed to our trade deficit. The collapse of the other Asian economies for a couple of years, and the problems that Russia had, all contributed to our trade deficit.

But if you look to the long-term future, America has got—if we want to make things, we've got to sell them to somebody. We have 4 percent of the world's population and 22 percent of the world's income. So it's not rocket science to figure out that if you're going to produce this much wealth, you've got to sell it to somebody.

And so I believe that—we have now about 300 trade agreements we've negotiated over 8 years under the leadership of Charlene Barshefsky and, before her, Mickey Kantor. I think they've done a great job, and as I said, Buddy MacKay has done a great job. We have enjoyed strong support in a bipartisan fashion from the Florida legislative delegation, and Senator Graham in particular has been very helpful, and I'm grateful for that.

But this China issue is something special because it involves huge economics, but it goes beyond economics. And I'd just like to mention and make one or two points here. The agreement basically is not like other trade agreements. In all the other trade agreements, they really are trade—we get together, and we swap out. You give them something. They give you something, and you work out the best deal you possibly can. And not everybody's happy, but you do it because you think there will be more good than harm.

This is really a membership agreement, and it's important that it be understood as that. That is, in order for China to get into the WTO, the members of the World Trading Organization have to agree that China will get in on reasonable commercial terms. So in order to do that, they have to start with the world's largest economy, the United States, and we work out what the reasonable terms would be.

Since we have a very large trade deficit with China, which is typical for a country that's developing like that, their markets are more closed to us than our markets are to them. This agreement essentially involves opening China's markets for trade and for investment to an extent that would have been unimaginable even a year or a year-and-a-half ago. Phosphate fertilizer will be affected; citrus will be affected; automobiles and automobile parts and dealerships will be affected. It's all, in that sense, a one-way street in our favor.

Now, China will also be able to sell more things to us as it grows more economically diverse and more powerful. So it's a good deal for them because they can modernize their economy.

Beyond that, I have to tell you that, for me, while keeping this prosperity going is very important, and in some ways, and the great underlying issue that the American people have to decide in this election year, and I think a big part of it is paying off the debt, for example—we can be out of debt in 12 years. And if we do it, interest rates over the next decade will be at least a point lower than they otherwise would be, and that's lower business loans, \$250 billion in lower home mortgage payments, \$30 billion in car payments, \$15 billion in college loan payments. I think that's very important. But this trade issue must be at the heart of that.

Beyond that, as important as all the economics is, you should understand also that this is a big national security issue for the United States. In the last 50, 60 years, we fought three wars with Asia. A lot of blood was shed in World War II and Korea and Vietnam. Now we look to the future, and we don't know what the next 50 years will hold. And no one can guarantee the future, but we know this, that if we're trading with people and working with them, there's a lot better chance that we will find peaceful ways to work out whatever differences we have. And the more China is involved in the global economy, the global society, the more likely it is to change and become more democratic, to become more open, to become more transparent, and to become a better partner instead of a competitor with us in the Pacific region, and a better neighbor to all the other countries in that area.

So I really believe that there are lives at stake here. I believe our futures' at stake. And I believe if we can—if you look at the two largest countries in the world in population, they are China and India. And the Indian subcontinent together actually has about the same population as China. And if we could affect a peaceful transition in both those places that have greater trade at its core and greater communications back and forth, the world would be a very different place in the next 50 years and a much better place for all of our children.

So I want to tell you all, although I know your interest, properly, is in the benefits that will flow directly to your activities in this State and in this region, the truth is it's bigger than all that. And it's about what kind of future our kids and our grandkids are going to have.

I just want to make one last point, a very practical one. Jim Davis was appropriately modest, but the truth is we had to fight like the devil to get things in the House. And we carried—and we had a pretty good vote, as it turned out. But it was a very, very hard fight. And it was a harder fight for members of our party. And he showed great courage and great leadership, and you should be very grateful to him because he really stuck it out there. He was very strong, unambiguous, saying we should do this, and it's the right thing for our country. And I'm really proud of him for doing it.

Here's the practical issue. We got this bill through the House in a timely fashion. I had very much hoped that we would pass it through

the Senate, where it's an easier bill to pass. We've got way more votes than we need to pass it. But we couldn't get it through all the procedural and substantive business of the Senate before the Fourth of July and then before the August recess. That means that we have to pass it early in September, as soon as they come back, after both parties have their conventions and the August recess is over.

We had a very encouraging vote on procedure that got over 80 votes in the Senate, basically to take it up early. But it is absolutely imperative that this bill be voted in early September. The longer they take to vote on it, the more likely it could be caught up in procedural wrangling in the Senate. The people who are against the bill, and there are people in both parties that are against the bill, interestingly, though they tend to be, ironically, the most conservative members of the Republican caucus and the most liberal members of the Democratic caucus.

But the Senate is set up—the Senate is set up and was set up by the Founders to slow things down. And one Member can cause a world of trouble if there are a whole lot of other things going on at the same time. So this is not a done deal. We had 60 people who—I think there are probably 70 Senators for this. And I know that it may be hard for you to imagine that if that's the case that we would have some trouble bringing this up in early September. But in fact, it is true.

I am very grateful to Senator Lott, the Republican leader in the Senate, the majority leader, for his amendment to bring this up in early September. This is really an American issue. This should not be a partisan issue. It is a very

important economic and a national security issue.

But one of the things that I hope to come out at this meeting is that either as an organization or individually, you will make it clear both to your Senators, Senator Mack and Senator Graham, but also insofar as you can to the Senate hierarchy, that it is imperative that this be brought up early. The Senate—the Democratic leader, Senator Daschle, is also strongly in support of what we're doing.

But the only worry I have now is that with all the business they still have to do, with all the budgetary issues, and the controversy that inevitably attends the closing weeks of a congressional session in an election year, something procedural could happen that would delay this, and you just don't know what's going to happen. And I can tell you that it is profoundly important to our country.

So anything you can do to make your voices heard as ordinary Americans on behalf of voting this quickly in September, that's the key. If they vote it early in September, it will pass quick, and we will have a better future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. at the Airport Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Nelson, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida; and former U.S. Trade Representative Michael (Mickey) Kantor. The President's remarks were part of the "China: Florida's New Market of Opportunity" program. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the David Barksdale Senior Center in Tampa July 31, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, Sylvia made a better speech than I can for this program. [Laughter] Let's give her another hand. [Applause] Didn't she do a great job?

Paul Herrera, thank you and the Barksdale Senior Golden Age Club for welcoming me here. I'm delighted to be here. And thank all of you for coming out.

I want to thank Bill Nelson, your insurance commissioner, for joining me here and for the work he's done to protect Florida seniors from insurance fraud, and also the work he's done to help enroll children in the Children's Health Insurance Program. I thank him for that.

Mayor Greco, it's good to be back in your great city. I love it here. I'd also like to acknowledge the presence in the audience of your

former Lieutenant Governor, now our Special Envoy to Latin America, Buddy MacKay. Thank you for being here.

This center was founded in 1942. It was then a place where Army and Air Force personnel could enjoy it during off-duty hours. While the uses of the Barksdale Center have changed over the years, the purpose hasn't. It still serves those who served our Nation in uniform and in so many other ways. As Paul Herrera has said, the Barksdale Center has become a second home for many of Tampa's seniors and disabled citizens, a place to take music classes, to learn the two-step—maybe I'm not too old to learn that—to get a nutritious meal, and a bedrock of security, a place you can all rely on in good times and bad. I appreciate the work that is done here.

For our Nation, these are good times, remarkably good times, virtually without precedent in the history of America. Like the rest of America, Florida is on the move. When I came to Tampa as a candidate in 1992, the unemployment rate was over 7 percent; today, it's 2.7 percent. The Nation has created over 22 million jobs, with the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the longest economic expansion in history, with record deficits turned into record surpluses.

The question before the American people, as the Congress deliberates and as the voters deliberate, is, what are we going to do with this magic moment of prosperity? What is the best use of it? Will we think about short-term gains, or will we think about what we should do for our country over the long run for people of all ages, all races, and all backgrounds and all income groups. I believe one of the most important things we can do with our prosperity is to strengthen Medicare by adding a prescription drug benefit.

Thirty-five years ago, when President Johnson signed Medicare into law, he created a cornerstone upon which generations of Americans could safely rest. Since then, Medicare has been a remarkable success and a solid guarantee. Before Medicare, more than half of our seniors had no health care coverage at all. Serious illness often wiped away in an instant all the savings families had put away over a lifetime of hard work.

Today, nearly every senior has the security of basic health coverage. Poverty among elderly has fallen dramatically as a result, and Americans over 65 have the highest life expectancy

of all the world's seniors. Any American who lives to be 65 today has a life expectancy in excess of 82 years. People over 80 are the fastest growing group of people in America in percentage terms. I hope to be one of them one of these days. *[Laughter]* Yet, for all its success, as Bill Nelson made clear, Medicare simply has not kept pace with the growing miracles of modern medicine.

The Medicare law was created at a time when patients' lives were more often saved by a surgeon's scalpel than by pharmaceuticals, when many of the lifesaving drugs we now take for granted did not even exist, indeed, were not even thought of. Prescription drugs today can accomplish what once was done through expensive surgery, and no one—if we were creating the Medicare program today, starting from scratch, it would not even occur to anyone to create a Medicare program without a prescription drug benefit.

Adding a voluntary prescription drug benefit is the right thing to do, but it's also, medically, the smart thing to do. Today, fully half of Medicare beneficiaries don't have prescription drug coverage for part or all of the year. And the cost of prescription drugs is taking too big a bite out of the fixed incomes of too many seniors and people with disabilities. You heard that today in the remarks that were made before I came up here, in ways more eloquent than I could possibly express.

Sylvia's story, however, is not unique to her. I'll bet it's repeated among a lot of you in this audience, and I can promise you all across America, there are millions and millions and millions just like her. Too many people literally are forced to choose on a weekly basis between filling their prescriptions and filling their grocery carts.

A Family USA report released today shows that the cost of prescription drugs is continuing to increase. According to this report, older Americans now pay an average of more than \$1,200 a year for prescription drugs, up from \$559 in 1992. The amount is projected to increase to more than—listen to this—\$2,800 over the next decade. Here in Florida, hundreds of thousands of seniors lack the benefits of dependable prescription drug coverage. Thousands of others try to get coverage through private Medigap insurance plans and managed care. Some have succeeded only to be dropped later

by their private care plans and left with nothing more than an empty medicine chest.

In fact, just this year, nearly a million Medicare beneficiaries around America, more than 85,000 in Florida alone, were dropped by their managed care plans. For most seniors, that leaves only one alternative to drug coverage: They can buy into a private Medigap plan, which can cost hundreds of dollars a month for a benefit with a \$250 deductible and no protections against catastrophic drug costs.

Now, most of us tend to think of Medicare beneficiaries as seniors, but in fact, 5 million of them are people with disabilities under the age of 65. A quarter million of them live right here in Florida, too. As difficult as it is for seniors to get affordable and dependable prescription drugs, it's an even greater challenge for Americans with disabilities.

Today I'm releasing another report that documents how Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities are in poor health, require more prescriptions, and are less likely to have private prescription drug coverage. The report also shows that people with disabilities purchased 40 percent more drugs than the typical Medicare beneficiary. And like seniors who lack drug coverage, they, too, pay more for the drugs they do get.

On average, Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities who lack coverage spend 50 percent more out of pocket for 50 percent fewer prescriptions than those who have coverage. Let me say that again. People without coverage spend 50 percent more out of pocket for 50 percent fewer prescriptions than those who have coverage. These drugs aren't only lifesaving; they can help people with disabilities return to work and make even greater contributions to their communities, people like Patricia Fell, over here to my right who came up with me on the stage, from Clearwater. She suffers every day from a very painful hip condition. She has been a foster mother—listen to this—to 87 children. And her daughter is here with us today, and we welcome her.

She uses her disability check to pay her \$4,300 annual prescription drug bill. She would work full-time, but if she did, she'd lose her disability check. That's what pays for the prescription drugs she desperately needs. She told me that this is continuing to be an agonizing choice for her.

Now, people like her, who have done their part for our country and done way more than

most people have to help children in need, shouldn't have to make a choice between health and work. A Medicare drug benefit would give Pat the chance to be as healthy, active, and productive as she could possibly be.

That's why I have proposed a plan to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is voluntary and accessible to all seniors and all Americans with disabilities; a plan that ensures that all older Americans and other eligible Americans with disabilities, no matter where they live or how sick they are, will pay the same affordable \$25 a month premium; a plan that uses price competition, not price controls, to give seniors and people with disabilities the best price as possible; a plan that would cover catastrophic drug costs; a plan that provides beneficiaries the prescriptions they need at the pharmacies they trust; a plan that is part of an overall effort to strengthen and modernize Medicare and lengthen its life so that we will not have to ask our children to shoulder the burden of the baby boom generation when we retire.

Now, in response, the Republican majority in Congress has passed a private insurance plan that many seniors and people with disabilities simply will not be able to afford. You see that already with the Medigap plan. It won't offer affordable and accessible coverage to all seniors. It relies on a trickle-down scheme that provides a subsidy for insurers but not a single dollar for middle class seniors and people with disabilities. And let me say this: Over half the seniors and people with disabilities who lack affordable insurance coverage today have incomes above 150 percent of the poverty line, which is about \$12,600 for an individual senior, about \$16,600 for a couple.

Now, I'm President; I'm not supposed to say it's a bunch of baloney, like Sylvia did. [*Laughter*] But you might be surprised to know who agrees with her—the insurance companies, themselves. Even the insurance companies concede that a Medigap insurance model will not work for prescription drug coverage. This is very, very important.

Here's what one insurance company had to say, and I quote, "Private, stand-alone prescription drug coverage will not work. Such coverage would constitute an empty promise to Medicare beneficiaries." Insurance companies are refusing to participate in such a program. The State of Nevada tried to implement a private insurance model quite similar to the Republican plan

which passed through Congress. They could not find one single qualified insurance company even willing to offer the coverage, because they knew it couldn't be done at an affordable rate, and they didn't want to be accused of perpetrating a fraud on the seniors in the State.

It's clear that this plan that passed with the votes of the Republican majority is basically designed for the pharmaceutical companies who make the drugs, not the seniors who take them. Now, why would they do that? Because they believe that if we have a Medicare program, we will be able to buy these pharmaceuticals in bulk and get you a better price and because charging higher prices for Americans recovers all the research costs of these drugs, and that enables them to sell the drugs for a profit at much lower prices in other countries, which is why I'm sure you've seen all these stories about people taking buses to Canada to buy their drugs. Unfortunately, Florida is nowhere near North Dakota, so that's not an option for most of you. *[Laughter]* But that's what's going on here. And it's unbelievable to me.

What are we going to do with our prosperity? This week—and you may hear if you turn on the television, the Republicans when they meet in Philadelphia in convention talking about all their tax cut bills and how wonderful they'd be for you. But what they don't say is that if you take all their tax cut proposals in total, it spends the entire projected surplus of the country for the next 10 years. Congressman Davis just came in, your Congressman—he was nodding his head. So I want to acknowledge you. Thank you for being here, sir.

They spent—you know, they're trying to put the heat on him. They're trying to say, "Well, people in Tampa ought to be mad at him. He's not voting for all these tax cuts. Aren't they good?" It kind of reminds me of going to a cafeteria. When I go to a cafeteria, everything I see looks good. *[Laughter]* But if I eat it all, I'll get sick. *[Laughter]*

Now, that's what's going on here. So they talk about all these wonderful tax cuts. If they become the law, there will be nothing left from the projected surplus for a Medicare prescription drug benefit, nothing left to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, so when the baby boomers retire we don't break our kids and our grandkids, nothing left to invest in the education of our children.

There's something else I'd like to say that all of you can probably identify with. This is a projected surplus. This is what we think we'll get over the next 10 years. Did you ever get one of those letters from Ed McMahon? *[Laughter]* You know, it probably said, "You may have won \$10 million." Did you ever get one? "You may have won \$10 million." Now, if you went out and spent the \$10 million the next day, you should support their plan. *[Laughter]* But, if not, you ought to think again there.

When you cut these taxes, the money's gone. And I think it's wrong to spend it all. Just this week we released a report that showed that one of their spending proposals, the total repeal of the estate tax, would benefit only 4,300 families in Florida, with an average tax cut of \$434,000. Now, I think there ought to be some changes in the estate tax. I think the rate's too high. I think too many family businesses are burdened by it. And I'm all for changing it. I've offered to change it. But to completely repeal it without taking account of the need here for prescription drugs is a big mistake.

While 4,300 families in Florida would benefit from the estate tax repeal, the Medicare prescription drug benefit would provide affordable coverage to more than 2.7 million seniors and people with disabilities in Florida. Their average income is \$18,600.

Even by Congress's own optimistic efforts, I will say again, these tax bills leave nothing for Medicare, for lengthening the life of Social Security, and for the drug program, or for education for our children, plus which, they'd make it impossible for us to pay this country out of debt by 2012. One of the things I've been trying to do is get us out of debt. We quadrupled the debt of the country in the 12 years before I took office, and we're trying to get rid of it. If we get rid of it, interest rates will be lower; incomes will be higher; people will pay less for home mortgages—\$250 billion over 10 years, by our estimates—less for car loans, less for college loans. That's the equivalent of a big tax cut, lower interest rates. So I think this is very, very important.

Now, there is a better way. The budget that I gave the Congress continues our fiscal discipline. It would get us out of debt by 2012, for the first time since 1835, and it would put us in great shape for the 21st century. It would extend the life of the Social Security Trust Fund by more than 50 years. It would extend the

life of Medicare by over 30 years. Medicare was supposed to go broke last year when I took office.

It provides, believe it or not, tax cuts—affordable tax cuts—to help people send their kids to college, pay for long-term care for the elderly and disabled—a big deal—pay for child care, pay for retirement savings, allow people between the ages of 55 and 65 to buy into Medicare and give them a tax benefit to do so, because so many of them have lost their insurance, and provide marriage penalty tax relief. And believe it or not, our plan only costs one-fourth as much as theirs does, but it would provide more benefits to 80 percent of the people.

So there is a way to have a tax cut here and have the money to pay for the Medicare prescription drug program, to lengthen the life of Medicare and Social Security, to invest in the education of our children. And believe it or not, I still leave a lot of this projected surplus alone, in my budget, in case it doesn't materialize, or in case it does materialize, the next President and the next Congress can make a judgment about what to do with it. I just don't believe in spending all this money before it comes in. We've tried it before, and it didn't work out too well.

So I hope that all of you will raise your voices. This is not a partisan political issue in America. When you go to the pharmacist to fill a prescription, nobody asks you whether you voted Republican or Democrat for the last 40 years. Nobody asks whether you vote at all. You're just a person, and you need the medicine. It should not be a partisan political issue in Washington. We have the money. We can do it, provide a tax cut, invest in our children, and still get the country out of debt. All we have to do is decide what our priorities are, how much we care about it, how much people like the people on this

stage and in this room matter to us, and what kind of America we want to live in.

So I ask you all, because it's not a partisan issue out here, do what you can with your Senators and your Representatives. Raise your voices. Tell them it shouldn't be a partisan issue in Washington. You've got a lot of lives depending on it. And it's only going to become more and more important.

You know, we're on the verge of breakthroughs for Parkinson's, for various kinds of cancers, with the human genome project, which I'm sure you read about. We've now sequenced the human gene in its entirety. It won't be long; in the next 10 years, it's going to take your breath away what we learn how to correct in terms of human health problems.

I believe that these young children here will, themselves, have children that will have a life expectancy at birth in excess of 90 years. But if we want to do this—this is a high-class problem—I believe people with disabilities will find ways to remedy a lot of the disabilities, and they will be able to live longer and better lives and have more options. But all of that will require us to rely more heavily on medicine—not less, more.

We have put this off long enough. We finally have the money to do it. And I think, as a country, we're morally obligated to do it. So I ask you to raise your voices. Stick with us. Let's keep working on it until we get it done.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at noon in the activity room. In his remarks, he referred to Paul Herrera, president, Barksdale Center Golden Age Club; Bill Nelson, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida; Mayor Dick A. Greco of Tampa; senior citizen Sylvia Kessler, who introduced the President; and Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Luncheon in Tampa

July 31, 2000

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your warm welcome, and I want to thank Bill Nelson for his introduction. It's

amazing how, if you've sort of got one leg in the political grave, people think you're doing

a better job. [Laughter] Let me say how delighted I am to be here.

I remember well the first time I came to a fundraiser in Tampa in 1992—early, early, early, early. Some of you were there then. And I particularly appreciate it because at that time, my mother was the only voting American who thought I could win. [Laughter] And a lot of things have happened in the last 8 years and some odd months, and I have been very honored to serve. And I thank you all for coming today.

I first want to acknowledge Congressman Jim Davis. He's doing a wonderful job for you in the House, and he's a real treasure. He's been a standup guy. And for someone without a lot of seniority, he has both had a big impact, and he's been willing to cast brave votes, and I'm very grateful to him. And even though the light is blinding my weakening eyes, I think I see Sam Gibbons out there. And I thank you, sir.

I want to thank Mayor Greco for his warm welcome. I have loved my visits with him here. I'm like Jim; I like to see a person who likes his job. If there's anything I can't stand it's to hear somebody in public office complain. You know, nobody makes us take these jobs. You've got to work like crazy to get them, and as soon as you give one up, somebody else wants it. [Laughter] So he never made any pretense of the fact that he loves this city, and he loves his job, and he's been a dream to work with.

I'd like to thank Ben Hill Griffin and Chris Hoyer and Jim Wilkes for chairing this event and for harassing the rest of you to give money to it. [Laughter] I'd like to thank Buddy MacKay for coming over here with me today and for the brilliant job he's doing as our Envoy to the Americas, and the leadership that he showed in passing our trade bill on the Caribbean Basin earlier this year. We can be very proud of that.

I thank the other people here who are running for Congress. We just need five more seats to win the House, and maybe we saw a couple of them here today. And I thank Bob Poe for chairing the Democratic Party here. This is going to be a good State, I think, for us in November if we do the right things.

Most important of all, though, I want to say that I'm honored to be here for Bill Nelson. I've known Bill for, I don't know, years and years and years, a long time. And he and Grace have been friends of Hillary and mine for years. They and their children came to the White

House and stayed with us one night. And we stayed up later than we should have, talking. And we've had the opportunity over the years at various encounters to get to know one another, and I think the world of both of them. And I think that we need more people like them in Washington, people who are civil and decent and reasonable and caring, and not just in election season, not just as a part of a marketing strategy but because they think it's the right thing to do. And he's been an absolutely superb insurance commissioner, and he would be a superb United States Senator.

Let me say to all of you, it has been the great—obviously—the great honor of my life to serve as President. I can't believe all the time that's passed. When I ran for President, I did so against all the odds, when no one thought I could win, because I believed the country was going in the wrong direction and was coming apart when it ought to be coming together. And I thought that the Washington political system was never going to serve America well unless it got shaken up and changed.

And if we have had some measure of success up there, I think in no small degree it's because Al Gore and I went up there with a set of ideas for specific things we wanted to do, rooted in the values of creating opportunity for every responsible American and creating a community in which all Americans feel a part, in a world where we're still the leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity.

Now, even though we faced intense partisan opposition at almost every turn of the road, it turned out the ideas worked pretty well for America. You know, when I passed the economic plan in 1993, without a vote to spare, only Democrats voting for it, to bring the deficit down, Al Gore breaking the tie vote in the Senate. As he says, his record since we've been there is a lot better than mine; whenever he votes, we win. [Laughter]

I remember how our friends in the Republican Party said, oh, it would be the end of civilization as we knew it. My terrible, terrible economic program was going to bankrupt the country. It was going to weaken the economy. We'd have a terrible recession. The deficit would get worse. This was from a crowd that had quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years, telling me how bad I was. And then, lo and behold, it didn't work out the way they said it would.

By the time we got ready to pass the bipartisan balanced budget amendment in '97 all the hard work had been done. And we got more than two-thirds of both parties in both Houses to vote for that. And now we've had, as all of you know, the longest economic expansion in history. That's given us over 22 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, and the highest homeownership in history, and greater social justice—lowest child poverty rate in 20 years, lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest rate of single-parent household poverty in 46 years. So we're moving in the right direction. This thing is going as it should.

But the big question in this election is, what do we propose to do with our prosperity? That is the big issue. And I think that, as Bill Nelson goes out across this State between now and November, whether he wins or not—and I believe he will—depends in no small measure on what people believe the election's about. You might ask yourself just quietly, what do you think it's about? The only trouble we've got in this election right now, anywhere in America, is the confusion that exists about what the differences are between the candidates for President, Senate, Congress, and the two parties.

There was a big story in one of our major national newspapers the other day; the American people are not sure there's much difference in economic policy. A big story in one of the other newspapers about 4 days ago about an interview system with a lot of suburban women who wanted more gun safety legislation had no earthly idea what the difference between the two candidates was.

And I say that because I think there are three things you need to know about this election. One is, it's a huge, profoundly important election, just as important as the election in 1992. Why? Because what a country does with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment, its values, and its character as what it does with adversity. You didn't have to be a genius to know we had to do something different in '92.

I'll never forget when Hillary gave me that little saying that somebody gave us that said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. [Laughter] So you didn't have to be a genius to figure out we had to change.

So now we are at the time in our history, maybe unique in our history, when we had this unique combination of enormous economic prosperity, improving social progress, welfare rolls cut in half, crime at a 25-year low, teen pregnancy down, every social indicator going in the right direction. And we don't have a domestic crisis or a foreign threat sufficiently grave to distract us. What are we going to do about it? That's a big issue.

The second thing you need to know about the election is that there are big differences. And the decisions the voters make in all these races will have significant consequences in how we live our lives and what we do with our prosperity and what kind of people we are.

And then the third thing you need to know is that in this election year only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are—[laughter]—which is a pretty good indicator of who you ought to vote for.

Now, what do I mean by that? Well, on our side, led by Vice President Gore, we've got a group of men and women who want to keep our prosperity going by getting this country out of debt, continuing to invest in education and in the future of our economy, having affordable tax cuts, and providing drug coverage for our seniors on Medicare.

On their side, their main argument, as near as I can tell is, "We want to be inclusive and compassionate and spend the whole surplus on tax cuts, but be nice about it while we're doing it." And actually, their argument is easier to sell than ours. Their argument is, "Hey, this is your money. We're going to give it back to you. Wouldn't you like to have it?"

Now, then there are all these issues they don't talk about. So what I would like to tell you is what I honestly believe the differences are because I want you to share them with your friends and neighbors who would never come here. But it's very important. No point in having an election if the people don't know what the differences are and don't understand what the consequences are. And I'll just start with the economy.

Their side says, "We've got this big projected surplus, and we're going to give it back to you in tax cuts." And, as I said earlier today, every one of these tax cuts sounds good. And they're doing it—they're smarter this year—this year's tax cut—last year was just one big, omnibus

bill. This year they're doing it salami style, passing a little along so they all sound good. But when you add them all up, and especially you put the new ones they're committing to in Philadelphia, it's the entire proposed surplus. So every one of them looks good, but it's kind of like going to a cafeteria. Every time I go to a cafeteria, everything I see looks good. But if I eat it all, I'll get sick. Think about it.

So that's their position. Their economic policy is, "Let's do what we did before, Who cares if we go back to deficits?" And they'll spend it all on tax cuts before they even keep their own spending promises. Never mind what emergencies come up. Our position is different. It is, "Hey, let's remember how we got to this dance today. We got here by getting rid of this deficit, getting interest rates down, getting it where people could invest and grow the economy. So let's keep paying down the debt, save some money back to invest in education and to lengthen the life of Medicare and Social Security, so when the baby boomers retire they don't bankrupt their kids, and provide a prescription drug benefit for seniors on Medicare. Let's have a tax cut and focus it on paying for long-term care, for college, for child care, helping working people with a lot of kids, and helping people with their retirement. Ours costs 25 percent of what theirs does and does way more good for 80 percent of the people."

And then we say, "Then let's save several hundred billion dollars of this projected surplus and let the next President and the next Congress decide what to do over the next several years as we see whether the money comes in." Now, this—I can hardly tell you how important this is.

We've worked really hard to get this country turned around, to get this economy going. And their position is, "Let's spend all the projected surplus." Did you ever get one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon, you know, from the Publishers Clearing House? "You may have won \$10 million." [Laughter] Did you go out and spend that \$10 million the next day? [Laughter] If you did, you should support them in this election. [Laughter] But if you didn't, you'd better stick with us. If you want to live like a Republican, you've got to vote for the Democrats this year. [Laughter] This is important. This is a big deal.

Now, the second issue, education—what's our program? Our program is that we should take

the limited Federal dollars we have and spend it on more teachers in the classrooms, training those teachers better, modernizing and repairing schools—because you know here in Florida how many schools you have—right here in Tampa, I've been to a school, a high school right here in Tampa, just full of housetrailer behind, in back. We need to help deal with this issue.

We want to help people go to college. And we want to say to schools all over America, school districts, "You've got to turn these schools around or shut them down. No more failing schools."

Now, here's the good news: Student performance is going up. All over America failing schools are turning around. I was in Spanish Harlem in New York City the other day, in a school that 2 years ago had 80 percent of its kids—listen to this, now—80 percent doing English and math below grade level—2 years ago. Today, 74 percent of them are doing English and math at or above grade level, in 2 years.

I've been in schools in Columbus, Ohio, and rural Kentucky, all over America, that were failing that are turned around, without regard to the racial or economic backgrounds of the kids in the school. We know how to do it. That's our position.

Their position is, the Federal money investment in education should be spent on block grants and vouchers. I think we're right. You have to decide. But we have some evidence that our plan works. And in the economy, we've sure got all the evidence we need. All you've got to do—we tried it their way for 12 years and our way for 8 years. Compare our 8 years to their 12 and make up your mind.

In crime, let's talk about that. Our position is, more police on the street, do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. And they said when I signed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban—they terrified all these hunters and said I was going to take their guns away and how awful it was. I heard all that stuff all over America. It's one of the reasons we lost the House in 1994. When I went back to New Hampshire in 1996, where they beat one of those Congressmen, I said, "You know, you guys beat your Democratic Congressman up here because he voted for my crime bill. And if a person in this audience"—and I got all these hunters together—I said, "If one of you missed a day in the deer woods, I want

you to vote against me, too, because he did it for me. But if you didn't miss a day in the deer woods, they didn't tell you the truth, and you need to get even." And our margin of victory in New Hampshire went up by 12 percent in 4 years. [Laughter]

This country has a lower crime rate than we've had in 25 years. Gun crime has gone down by 35 percent. So what do we say? We say, "Let's put more police on the street in the high crime neighborhoods. Let's close the gun show loophole in the background check law"—which you voted to do in Florida, overwhelmingly—"have mandatory child safety locks, and stop importing these large capacity ammunition clips which allow the manufacturers to get around the assault weapons ban." That's what we say.

What do they say? Throw the book at anybody that violates the law and have more people carrying concealed weapons, even in church. Now, you have to decide which side you agree with. But it's not like you don't have any evidence here. We tried it our way, and we tried it their way. And crime goes down more our way.

Now, the third thing I would like to say something about is health care. I said we're for adding a voluntary prescription drug benefit to Medicare. They are for making people buy private insurance and subsidizing it for people up to 150 percent of the poverty line. The only problem with their program is, even the insurance companies say there is no way to have stand-alone health insurance for prescription drugs.

Nevada passed a program just like the ones the Republicans in Congress passed, and not a single, solitary insurance company would offer the drugs because it won't work, and they didn't want to participate in a fraud. Now, this is a huge deal in Florida, but it's a big deal all over America for the elderly, the disabled.

Our program is for the drug users; theirs is for the drug makers. It is not a complicated thing. You just have to decide how important this is and whether you're willing to pay the price of our seniors never getting it if you don't support the Democrats. And you need to go tell people in Florida we're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not.

Let's take the environment. I've worked real hard here on a program that would balance all the interests to save the Florida Everglades. I'm really proud of it. The Vice President worked

hard on it. We really have labored to try to support you in what you're doing in Florida. And we saved a lot of Yellowstone Park from a gold mine, and we set aside more land in perpetuity in the lower 48 States than any administration in history except those of the two Roosevelts. And we proved, I think, that you could have cleaner air, cleaner water, and safer food and still have a stronger economy, because we raised all the environmental standards. We just did it in a sensible way.

Now, what's their position? Their position will be to weaken that direction, to repeal—one specific commitment they've already made is to repeal my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. The Audubon Society says it's the most significant conservation move in the last 40 years. They say they'll get rid of it. And they'll allow oil drilling in some places where we haven't. And apparently, they're committed to weaker regulations on the chemical industry.

Now, I've done everything I could to create jobs and be pro-business. But I think we've got to be pro-environment and pro-business. And you just have to decide which side you want to be on and what you think the best thing is for America. And these are the kinds of questions people have to be asked.

The same thing is true with regard to one America. One of the things that I want to do is make sure that we're all going along for the ride here. We're for raising the minimum wage for people that can never afford to come to a dinner like this but may be serving it. I think it's unconscionable that it's still below what it was in 1982 in purchasing power terms when we've got 4 percent unemployment. It's just wrong. Nobody ought to work full-time for a living and have kids that are still below the poverty line. It's wrong. But they're not for it.

Now, they're sort of being quiet on it now because the last time they fought me on it 4 years ago, they said it would cost jobs, and we created 11 million jobs since we passed it. So they really don't have a justification anymore. They can't—they're kind of embarrassed to say they're not for it, but they're not for it yet. If we turn up the heat enough between now and election, they will get it. But it's a big difference.

We're for hate crimes legislation, and they're basically not for it. Oh, a few of them are, but the leadership is not, and the nominee is

not because it protects gays. Well, I think everybody ought to be protected from hate crimes, which is a crime, an assault on you just because of who you are. But you can decide whether you agree with that or not. But that's where we are.

And there will be a big impact on the courts. The next President will appoint two to four judges on the Supreme Court, and the Senate will have to decide whether to confirm them or reject them. This is a huge decision. Their nominee says his favorite judges are Justice Thomas and Justice Scalia, by far the most conservative judges on the Court. That's what he said. And so you have to decide, because there will be big consequences.

So if you just go back, here we are with this—a whole future before us, with all these opportunities out there, and you should be happy. We don't have to have one of these negative campaigns like we used to have for 20 years that were mostly brought to us by their side, trying to convince you that whoever their opponent was was just one step above a car thief. [Laughter] I recommend we just call timeout and say everybody running this year is a good, patriotic American. They are men and women who love their families and love their country and will do what they think is right, but they have honest disagreements. They disagree over economic policy and educational policy and health care policy and environmental policy and crime policy and civil rights policy, and what it means to be an American citizen and what kind of individual rights you should have as guaranteed by the Supreme Court. And we want to have a debate over that.

Now, their strategy is to blur all that. I'll be very surprised if you hear anybody say this week at their meeting what I just said to you, even though I have tried to be exceedingly faithful to the differences between the two parties. And their strategy is to talk about compassion and all. It's a brilliant strategy. It's a pretty package, and they're hoping if they wrap it tight enough, nobody will open it before Christmas. [Laughter]

And what we've got to do is try to make sure that the American people open the package in September and October, so they will know. I trust the American people. They almost always get it right. Otherwise, we wouldn't still be here after over 200 years. And if everybody understands exactly what the choices are and the Vice

President doesn't win or Bill Nelson doesn't win, we'd be all right about that. But the truth is, if everybody understands exactly what the choices are, Bill Nelson will be the next Senator; Al Gore will be the next President; we will win the House of Representatives. Why? Because our economic policies, our educational policies, our health care policies are right for the country. Because the idea of building one America, not just with words but with deeds, and giving everybody a chance to participate in this brilliant future of science and technology in this global economy is the right thing for the country and the right thing for our children's future. That's why.

I'm telling you, as much, as many good things that have happened in the last 8 years, believe me, all the great stuff is still out there. But there are big challenges. Look at Florida's school kids, how diverse they are. If you want this country to be where it ought to be, every one of them has got to be able to get a good education. We have to figure out how, when all us baby boomers retire and the average 65-year-old can look forward to living to be 83, we're going to manage that without bankrupting our kids and grandkids.

We have to figure out how to make the most of this scientific and technological revolution. One of the reasons I want Al Gore to be President, apart from my personal relationship with him, is that I have studied very hard the impacts of the information technology revolution, the impacts of the genome revolution, what's likely to happen over the next 10 years. It seems to me that you want somebody that can make the most of the computer revolution and still protect your financial and medical records and not let somebody get at them unless you say okay. It seems to me you want somebody who can help make the most of this scientific revolution without letting somebody deny you a job or promotion or raise or health insurance because of your little gene map. It seems to me we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands the future.

And I know we ought to have people in the Senate who have the values and the judgment and just the way of operating that Bill Nelson does. Believe me, I've done everything I could to turn this country around, and the only thing now we have to decide is, what is this election about? If people really say, this election is about what shall we do with this moment of prosperity,

how can we meet the big challenges and seize the big opportunities out there, Bill Nelson will be just fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:04 p.m. in the Audubon Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency

Westshore. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Nelson, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida, and his wife, Grace; Mayor Dick A. Greco of Tampa; former Representative Sam M. Gibbons; Ben Hill Griffin III, Chris Hoyer, and Jim Wilkes, luncheon cohosts; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Interview With Kelly Ring of WTVT Television in Tampa July 31, 2000

Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit

Ms. Ring. First of all, let's talk about why you came, and that's Medicare. And you know—I mean, this is something that's been important to you for a long time—getting Medicare, part of the prescription drug program included in Medicare. Talk about why that is so important to have that.

The President. Well, Medicare is a program that's 35 years old, and it's been a godsend for 35 years for a lot of our seniors. But when it was established, most of medicine was about doctors and hospitals and very little about prescription drugs. Now, the average 65-year-old has a life expectancy of 82 or 83 years, the highest in the world for seniors. And more and more, people need these drugs to stay alive and also to stay healthy.

Over and above that, America has about 5 million people on disability who are eligible for Medicare, and they need the medicine even more. So what we have been saying is, "Look, we've got this surplus. We have the money. We should add a voluntary prescription drug benefit to Medicare, because we have, all over America, seniors who are choosing every week between food and medicine because they can't pay their medical bills and because there is no other viable way to give them the medicine they need."

So I proposed this program, and I told the American people how we can add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare, still have a family tax cut, still invest in education, and keep paying us out of debt. I think that it is so critical to provide for the elderly and disabled in America.

Ms. Ring. Do you think it will happen before you leave office?

The President. I just don't know. I think the problem is the Republicans in the Congress believe that the program might be too expensive, although it's not nearly as expensive as their combined tax cuts, and they want—they also want a private insurance plan. But the bill they passed is just like one that got passed in Nevada, and not a single insurance company would offer the drug coverage because they knew they couldn't offer it at an affordable price. So the plan they passed is unworkable.

Now, what's really going on here is that the pharmaceutical companies that make the drugs, they have reservations about it because they're afraid that if you put 39 million seniors, including 2.7 million seniors in Florida and 5 million disabled people, if you look at all of them and a significant percentage of them get in one program, that the people buying drugs for that one program will have too much marketing power, and they'll get the drugs for too cheap.

Because what happens is, our pharmaceutical companies charge Americans more for drugs to cover all the research costs in America. Then they can sell them much, much cheaper in Canada or Mexico. You've seen all these press stories about people going there.

Now, I just think that's not a very good reason to deprive senior citizens of medicine, and I don't think it's a partisan issue outside Washington. I think out here in Tampa or in Arkansas or New York or California, nobody asks you what party you're in when you go to the drugstore to buy medicine. In Washington, it's become part of an issue because the drug companies are against providing prescription drug coverage for Medicare. It doesn't sound reasonable, but it's true.

Florida and the 2000 Presidential Election

Ms. Ring. Let's talk about the importance of Florida for this Presidential election. I know that you know how important Florida is. We have a Republican Governor—popular. His brother is running, but tell me what the Democrats are going to do to win Florida. Do you think they can?

The President. Well, absolutely. For one thing, I think we've worked very hard here for 8 years. We brought the Southern Command to Miami. We brought the Summit of the Americas to Florida. We worked on the plan to save the Florida Everglades. We have worked on trade policy. Our trade policy has helped a lot of Florida economic sectors.

I was just here with Congressman Davis meeting with people from the Tampa area who would benefit greatly from the opening of trade to China. So I think we've got a strong record to run on. If you look at Tampa when I became President, unemployment here was 7.1 percent. Now it's 2.7 percent. So, first we're going to run on our record. It's been good for America and good for Florida, and Al Gore will continue that economic policy, and I think that's important.

Then, the second thing I think is just what we have to do is get out the differences on the issues. For example, Senator Graham has a bill of his own to provide prescription drugs for seniors that is a little different from ours but essentially in the same ballpark. And I know how much credibility he has with the Florida voters. So we can talk about Medicare, and we can talk about education, and we can talk about paying the debt off.

I think when you see the Vice President and his running mate and Bill Nelson and all of these other Democrats out there just having a conversation with the people, we don't have to have a mean election this year. This year the economy is in great shape. The country is doing well, and we ought to have an old-fashioned citizenship lesson in this election. We ought to say, "Here are the differences. You choose."

Differing Visions of the Future

Ms. Ring. And it's like you said in the speech a little while ago, you're talking about the differences. The Democrats are, but the Republicans aren't. Elaborate a little bit on that.

The President. Well, I think it's because they know that there is a tendency in the country to give the other crowd a chance after they've been out a while, and they know that Governor Bush is an immensely charming, attractive man, and Mr. Cheney, Congressman Cheney, is a very nice man and has had Washington experience.

So what they want to do is to seem safe and reliable and compassionate and inclusive. So they're not going to be up there saying, "Vote for us. Our favorite Supreme Court judges are Justice Thomas and Justice Scalia, and we're going to repeal *Roe v. Wade*," but that's what's going to happen. But they're not going to say that. They're not going to be up there saying, "Vote for us. We want to weaken air pollution laws on the chemical industry," or, "Vote for us. We want to make sure that we don't have a Medicare prescription drug program that works," or, "Vote for us. We're going to give all your money away in tax cuts, and we'll have higher interest rates and a deficit."

But what I think is important is, they should be able to defend their policies, but what they want to do is to obscure the differences. I see this as I travel from State to State now. They accuse the Democrats of running negative campaigns if they have advertisements pointing out how the Republicans voted. It's like they're almost saying, "We have a right to obscure our record from the people if you want."

What I think the voters need is clarity of difference. There are honest differences between these candidates. Let them state the differences honestly, but don't pretend the differences don't exist, because an election is a choice, and choices have consequences. And the American people should know the choice, know the consequences, and then make up their mind.

And there are real differences on economic policy, on health care policy, on crime policy, on environmental policy, on policies relating to civil rights and individual liberty; profound differences, not just between the Vice President and Governor Bush but between these candidates for Senate, in this case, Bill Nelson and his opponent here—right around the country. And what we should do is to say, "Hey, this country is in great shape now, and we have a unique moment in history to make the most of our prosperity. So we'll bring our ideas; they'll bring theirs. Let's clarify the differences. Let's not say bad things about our opponents. Let's assume everybody is patriotic, loves their family,

loves their country, is honest, and would do what they have said they would do. But let's don't pretend that they didn't say they would do some of the things they said they would do. Let's just clarify the differences, and let the people make their mind up." That's my whole theory of the election.

Hillary Clinton's Senate Campaign

Ms. Ring. Sounds pretty good. But let me ask you: Now that you're in the last few months of your Presidency, your wife is just beginning her own political career.

The President. I'm very proud of her.

Ms. Ring. I know you are so proud of her. But on the other side, politics is mean-spirited. How do you feel about that?

The President. It hurts me. I get more nervous about her than I ever did about me, and everybody that always hated me all those years and were so mean to me, they've all transferred all their anger to her now. It's almost as if they've got one last chance to beat me. And then there are some people who voted for me that think they're mad at her because she's running in New York, and we just bought a home there.

All I can say to them is, it wasn't her idea. The New York Democratic House delegation came to her and asked her to run. And before she said she would do it, she said, "I'm going to go up there and look around, talk to people, and see if I could serve." She spent almost a year doing that, and then finally she decided that she would like to serve if they wanted her to.

So I think if we can get this election again in a position where they just look at who's got the greatest strength, who's got the ability to do more, and which candidate do they agree, I think she'll do fine. I'm really proud of her, though. It's a really brave thing to do.

Ms. Ring. It certainly is. As you said, it makes you very nervous thinking about what she's getting into.

The President. I guess when you're in a campaign, you don't have time to think about it. But I spend a lot more time worrying about her than I ever did worrying about myself when I was out there running. I feel like I just wake up every day wishing I could do something else to help.

President's Future Plans

Ms. Ring. What are you going to do when you leave office? Everybody's talked about all kinds of things, and I know you probably haven't decided yet. I mean, everything—

The President. Well, I'm going to build a library and a public policy center at home in Arkansas. I know I'm going to do that. And I'll be there a couple of days a week. And then I'll probably be with Hillary a couple of days a week in New York. And then, of course, she'll have to work in Washington if this election goes well, and I believe it will. So I'll just decide what to do.

There are a lot of things that I have in mind to do, but I don't think I really should make final decisions until after I leave here. What I want to do is to spend every last waking moment I can doing as much as I can for the people of America. And that's what this job is.

When I lay the job down, then I would like to rest a bit and have a clear head and decide what to do. I'll try to find something to do to be useful for the rest of my life. I think I'll be able to find something to do.

Chelsea Clinton

Ms. Ring. You're so young, so you've got so many opportunities.

You've got to be so proud of your daughter, Chelsea. I mean, we reported last week she's made a decision to take a break and spend time with you—that's wonderful—and to help her mom campaign.

The President. It's wonderful. When your children grow up—I can say, now that I have this experience—you're always mildly surprised when they still want to spend time with you and completely relieved and happy. So you know, she's lived 40 percent of her life in the White House. She's 20, and she was just, when we came here in '92, she was still 12 years old. She was actually—I mean, in '93 she was still 12 years old. She had her 13th birthday in the White House, in February.

So she's been here for 40 percent of her life, and she's got more credits than she needs to graduate from college, and she told me that she was interested in doing three things: She wanted to help her mother some; she wanted to be with me when I would otherwise be alone; and—like, she went up to Camp David with

me and stayed the whole 15 days and kept everybody in a good humor.

She flew to Okinawa with me, and she did a great job. And I think the third thing she wants is just to be in a place that has been her home for nearly half her life, every night she can be. Because she knows when she leaves, it's for good, you know, and she'll never be back, I mean, as a resident. So I think it's a very smart decision for her, and I'm thrilled.

Ms. Ring. Because I'm sure you must be, because here she was just a young girl, and now she's a young woman. It's been so wonderful. I mean, everybody's fallen in love with her. She's just a very special person.

The President. I think she's an unusual young woman, and we're very proud of her and very grateful. And I think it's great. You know, tomorrow she and her mother are going to Long Island together. They'll have a big time. I think it's great.

Middle East Peace Process

Ms. Ring. One more—can I ask about Middle East peace, because I know how important that is? You spent 3 tough weeks. Do you ever foresee a time when there is going to be peace in the region, and is Jerusalem the sticking point there?

The President. The answer to both questions is basically yes. I think—yes, I think there will be peace in the region; yes, Jerusalem is the most difficult issue. They did not agree on everything else, but they're close enough that I think that we can still get an agreement.

Just a few hours ago, before we sat down for this interview, the Barak government, Prime Minister Barak's government in Israel was confirmed in a no confidence vote; that is, they didn't vote him out of office. So I think now, we just have to see if we can get some movement from the Palestinians, as well, and see if we can put this thing together again.

If they want it, they can get it, because they're close enough now. They can get it. And I saw something after we had been there 2 weeks—sort of the body language that the Israelis and the Palestinians, the way they relate to each other. They know each other. They call

each other by their first names. They know they're neighbors, whether they like it or not. They know their future is together, whether they would always want it to be or not. And they know their children are going to have to be partners and hopefully friends; and I think they'll find a way. I do believe that.

I think it's just a question of making sure that we keep pushing them. When you deal with issues this difficult and this painful, it's like going to the dentist without having your gums deadened. You're not going to do it unless somebody herds you on, and you do it.

But the calendar is working against them a little bit, because they have pledged to finish by the 13th of September. And that puts all kind of pressure, especially on the Palestinians. So they've got to keep working right now. They've got to do everything they can to get as much as they can done over the next 6 weeks.

I think they will, and America's role is just to help. They've got to make the decisions and live with them, but we'll do everything we can to help.

Ms. Ring. Will you try to bring them back to Camp David?

The President. I can't say yet. It's too premature to make a decision. What I will try to do is do whatever I can to get the peace process up and going and to bring it to a speedy conclusion. But I do not know, honestly do not know, as we sit here and talk, what would be the most helpful.

Thanks.

Ms. Ring. Thank you very much for doing this.

The President. Okay.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3:30 p.m. in the Presidential Suite at the Hyatt Regency Westshore for later broadcast. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Bill Nelson, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida. Ms. Ring referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Debt Reduction

July 31, 2000

When I came into office, the debt had quadrupled since 1980 and was projected to rise even further. As a result of the 1993 and 1997 budget agreements and tough choices every year, we have been able to turn this situation around. Today the Department of the Treasury is announcing that the United States will pay off \$221 billion of debt this year—the largest one-year debt paydown in American history. This will be the third consecutive year of debt reduction, bringing the 3-year total to \$360 billion.

This positive news is further confirmation that we should stay on the path of fiscal discipline

and not endanger the longest economic expansion in history with a series of expensive tax cuts which would spend every single dime of our projected surplus. The Republican tax plan leaves nothing for strengthening Social Security and Medicare, nothing for a real voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, and nothing for education. And the Republican plan would take us off the path of paying off the entire national debt by 2012. This is the wrong approach for America.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Reception in Palm Beach, Florida

July 31, 2000

Thank you very much. I am so happy to be here. All of you know I love Florida. A good portion of my wife's family has lived down here for the last 15 years and more. I got my start in Florida twice, once in December of 1991—everyone knows about that—when the Florida straw poll came out with a majority for me against six opponents and got me started, and I'm very grateful for that. But once, maybe only one person in this room remembers, and that was in early 1981 when I had the distinction of being the youngest former Governor in the history of America, when I was defeated in the Reagan landslide of 1980, Bob Graham still invited me to come speak to the Florida Democratic Convention to explain how it was that I got my brains beat out in the hope that others could avoid a similar fate. *[Laughter]* I have never forgotten it, never stopped feeling indebted. And Bob asked me back three more times after that, and I think that had a lot to do with what happened in 1991, so I'm very grateful to him.

I'm grateful that both Bob and Adele and Bill and Grace Nelson have been friends of Hillary's and friends of mine for a very long time now. And Bill and Grace and their children have spent the night in the White House. And

Bill was making fun of me because his daughter used to call Chelsea, and from time to time I, like every father of a teenage daughter, I was the answering service. *[Laughter]* The Presidency doesn't alleviate some responsibilities in life.

We've had a great relationship, all of us, all six of us have now for such a long time, and I'm so honored that Bill is running for the Senate, so grateful.

I want to just—I'll be brief tonight because I know I'm preaching to the saved here. But Florida is very important. We have to win the Senate race, and you have to carry it for the Vice President, and you can. And I believe in 1996, early on election night, when I saw that we had carried Florida, I knew the election was over. And in 2000, early on election night, if the polls show we have carried Florida, the election is over. And I want you to understand that.

I have—Al Gore and I have spent a lot of time in Florida over the last 7½ years. We worked with many of the people here in south Florida to save the Everglades, to bring the Southern Command here from Panama, to bring the Summit of the Americas here, to work to expand trade. We just passed the Caribbean Basin trade bill which will be very good for

southern Florida. And I can't thank Bob Graham enough for the help and support and wise counsel he's given me over these entire two terms.

But here's what I want you to think about. What about everybody who's not here tonight? Do you believe that everyone you know who is a friend of yours knows what this election is about? Do you believe that everyone you know has a clear idea about what the differences are between Bill and his opponent, between the Vice President and Governor Bush and Mr. Cheney? Do you believe that? You know it's not true, don't you? They don't. Why is that, and what are we going to do about it?

There are three things you need to know about this election. One is, it is a very big election. It is every bit as important, maybe over the long run of our life, more important than the election in 1992. I'll come back to why. Two, there are profound differences between the two candidates for President, between the candidates for Senate and the House, differences that will have real consequences for how we live together in the years ahead. And three, only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. [*Laughter*] Now, what does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

What do I mean by that? First, it's a big election because we have an unprecedented moment of prosperity and it's not just economics. Crime is down. Welfare is down. Teen pregnancy is down. People are working together and dealing with each other as never before. We are a more just society than we were. Child poverty is down, minority unemployment the lowest ever recorded, female unemployment the lowest in 40 years, poverty among single-parent households the lowest in 46 years. This is a more just society. And we are more full of confidence. Moreover, we have no crippling domestic crisis or foreign threat.

So it's a big election because we have a chance, because of our prosperity, to build the future of our dreams for our children. But that's not automatic. That requires that instead of taking a relaxed view and sort of wandering through the election and wandering through the next couple of years, we have to say, "Hey, we might not ever have a chance like this again. We've got to seize the big opportunities and take on the big challenges that are out there."

And there are some big ones out there. You know them in Florida, and I'll just give you two of the biggest that you experience here to a greater degree than almost any other State. Number one, we've got the largest and most diverse group of students in our schools in history, and they're not all getting a world-class education yet. Number two, we're living longer than ever before. If you live to be 65, your life expectancy is almost 83 now. And when all the baby boomers retire, there will only be about two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. We have to lengthen the life of Social Security. We have to lengthen the life of Medicare, and we have to add a prescription drug benefit to the Medicare program.

And I might say, nobody has worked harder or more effectively to that end than Bob Graham. And everybody in Florida ought to know it and ought to be grateful for it.

Now, there are the challenges of the future—climate change. We worked so hard to save the Everglades. If we don't turn this global warming around, in 30 years a lot of it will be under water.

We've now sequenced the human genome. That's great. There are going to be unbelievable medical discoveries made. And pretty soon young women will bring their children home from the hospital with a little gene map, and before you know it, there are kids in this room whose children will have a life expectancy of 90 years or more when they're born. But do you think someone should be able to use your gene map to deny you a job, a promotion, a raise, or health insurance? I don't think so. We need someone in the White House and people in the Congress who understand science and technology.

The Internet revolution, people made fun of Al Gore over who invented the Internet, but he sponsored the legislation almost 20 years ago that took the Internet from being the private province of physicists and people involved in defense work to sweeping the world. And if it hadn't been for him, we wouldn't have gotten the E-rate in the telecommunications bill 4 years ago, which guarantees that every school, no matter how poor, can afford to have computers for their kids and be part of the Internet.

Now, there are big challenges out there. The outcome of this election will depend upon whether the American people believe what I

just said, that it's a big election with big challenges and not a time to lay down and relax. You can just book it. When this is over, you read the election analyses in the week after the election in November, and you remember what I told you tonight. The outcome of the election will depend upon what the American people believe the election is about, number one, and number two, whether they understand the differences.

On our side, we've got people like the Vice President and people like Bill Nelson, who did more with that insurance commissioner's job than anybody ever has, stopping fraud against seniors, enrolling children in the Children's Health Insurance Program, people who want to build on the progress of the last 8 years to make the changes of the future.

On their side, they've got their nominees for President and Vice President and others, who basically tell us that these are the best of times, and we're all going to have harmony and compassion and get along together, and the surplus that we've accumulated—that we're supposed to accumulate over the next 10 years—is your money, and they're going to give it back to you. And otherwise, they're kind of blurring the differences.

Bill's talking about how moderate his opponent sounds now. They're not bragging about shutting the Government down twice anymore or trying to shut the Department of Education down or having the biggest Medicare and education and environmental cuts in history. You never hear them talking about it anymore. Gone is the harsh rhetoric and the mean words of 1992 through 1999. Even the mean words of the 2000 primary against Senator McCain, that's all gone now. What are you to make of that? It's a very appealing package.

The first thing I want you to know is, I don't think this should be a mean election. I think we should say on the front end, we think our opponents are good, patriotic people, that they love their children, and they love their country. But they have honest differences. And this pretty package that they have presented is one they hope nobody will open until Christmas and certainly not before the November election. But there are real differences, and we want you to know what they are. And I'll just mention two or three tonight, but I want you to remember this because you've got to talk to people.

All these news stories that I've read say people don't know if there is any difference between the Democrats and Republicans, between our nominees for President on economic policy. There was a huge article in the press last week surveying lots and lots of suburban women who care a lot about gun safety and they asked—the Vice President was ahead like six points in this poll among women who cared about this issue—then the person doing the poll, who doesn't work for either campaign, simply read their positions, and the numbers went from 45 to 39, to 57 to 29. So you can understand why they wouldn't want you to know what the real differences are, but you have to do that.

Let me just mention one or two. One, on the economy, here's our position. Our position is the American people should get a tax cut, but it ought to be one we can afford, because we still have to invest in education and health care and science and technology in providing for the future, number one; number two, because we still have to lengthen the life of Medicare and Social Security to get past the baby boomers' retirement, and we've got to provide that drug benefit; and number three, we've still got to keep paying down this debt and get this country out of debt to keep interest rates low so the economy will keep going.

Now, we have tax cuts that we admit, they're only about 25 percent, 30 percent of what theirs are. But they do more good for 80 percent of the people, for sending a kid to college, for long-term care, for child care, for retirement savings, for alleviating the marriage penalty. Eighty percent of the people or more are better off under ours. Moreover, because we continue to pay down the debt and they can't, interest rates will be at least a percent lower. Do you know what that's worth in tax cuts over a decade?—\$250 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments.

Now, that took me a while to say, didn't it? Theirs is so much easier. "Hey, this surplus is your money, and we're going to give it back to you." And that's what they do. If you take the tax cuts they've passed in the last year plus the ones that are in their platform that their nominee ran on, it takes up the whole surplus, the whole projected surplus and then some, not a penny even for their own spending promises.

Now, quite apart from the obvious problems, like how do we spend 25 percent as much and

give 80 percent of the people more, there is this: It is a projected surplus, projected. Did you ever get one of those letters in the mail from Publishers Clearing House? Ed McMahon sends you a letter saying, "You may have won \$10 million." Well, if you went out the next day and spent the \$10 million, you should vote for them. But if not, you ought to stick with us to keep this prosperity going. [Laughter] Now, this is a big issue. No way to paper this over. This is a huge, gaping difference.

Secondly, on health care, we're for a Patients' Bill of Rights. We're for investing—I mean, a real one that means something—we're for investing whatever it takes—and it's not that much money—to lengthen the life of Medicare and to add this Medicare prescription drug benefit. We're for a not particularly costly tax break to let people between the ages of 55 and 65 buy into Medicare if they lose their health insurance. And we're for letting the parents of these—the low-income parents of these kids that are in our Children's Health Insurance Program buy into the program if they don't have insurance.

Now, what's their program? They answer no to all these—no, no, no, no. And their Medicare drug program basically says that they'll help you if you're up to 150 percent of the poverty line but not if you're over, and you've got to buy private insurance. What's the problem with that?

The insurance companies, after all the fights we've had together—against each other over health care—I've got to brag on the health insurance companies. I want to brag on them. They have been up front and honest. They say, "This is a bad idea. You cannot offer a stand-alone drug policy that anyone will buy." Nevada passed a plan just like the ones that the Republicans are backing, and not a single, solitary insurance company has offered drug coverage under it because they don't want to be labeled frauds.

Now, why do they do it? Because the drug companies don't want us to buy all these drugs for seniors. Now, that seems counter-intuitive. Normally, if you're in business, you want to sell as much as you can. But they fear that because we'll be buying a lot, we'll have a lot of bargaining power, and it will drive the price down, and people will only have to pay 25 percent more than they pay in every other country for American drugs. I just don't think it's a good reason. But it's a huge difference.

In education, we're for higher standards, requirements to turn around failing schools or shut them down, more teachers in the schools, more money for teacher training, more money for building or modernizing schools. Florida needs that bad, right? That's what we're for. They're for block grants and vouchers. That's what their program is.

In crime, we're for more police and closing the gun show loophole in the Brady bill, right? They have never supported the police program, even though it's given us the lowest crime rate in 25 years—never. And in the previous administration the President vetoed the Brady bill. Now, this group of people are against closing the gun show loophole. Their answer is, more people carrying concealed weapons, even in their houses of worship. Now that's not demagoguery, those are facts. That's their answer.

So the point I'm trying to make is you get to make a choice. And speaking of choice, that may be the biggest consequence of all. The next President will appoint two to four members of the Supreme Court, which is why it's important who's in the Senate because they have to confirm them. Al Gore is pro-choice and mainstream on basically preserving individual liberties and civil rights. And our judges are the most diverse group in history, but they have the highest ratings of the American Bar Association in 40 years. So they are confident, mainstream, and diverse.

Both their candidates on the national ticket are against the *Roe v. Wade* decision, and their nominee says his favorite judges are Justices Thomas and Scalia, the two most conservative on the Court. Those are his favorites.

Now, you have to—these are honorable people. I'll say again, they will do what they believe. How can you—you don't expect people to get elected President and not do what they believe. You have to assume that you can trust them to follow their conscience and their lifelong positions.

Now, there won't be any talk about it probably this week, but this is a huge deal. The composition of the Supreme Court will change. And that Court will shape America well beyond the term of the next President, and this is a consequence. So what you have to tell your friends and neighbors is, look, these are just four I've given you, but if you look at—or five—education, health care, the economy, crime, and choice. Those are five. We could talk about the

environment; I could give you lots of other issues, but you get the point.

Elections are choices that have consequences, and people must live with the consequences. So it is very important that they understand the choice. The American people always get it right if they have enough time and enough information. That's what you've got to believe. Otherwise, if they didn't nearly always get it right, we wouldn't be around here after 220 years.

So I say to you, this is a profoundly important election. There are big differences. You have to make sure people understand what their choices are. You don't have to say a bad word about our opponents. You can say that you, too, are sick of 20 years of negative politics, of trying to convince people that your opponent is just one step above a car thief. I know a little something about it. I don't like it very much. But that cannot be permitted to obscure the differences.

And I'll just say this in closing. I've lived long enough now to know that nothing stays the same forever. In my lifetime, we never had a chance like this. We can literally build the future of our dreams for our children. We can also be a more positive force around the world for peace and freedom and security and prosperity. But we can only do it if we make the right choices.

I want to say just one word about the Vice President. One of the things that bothers me is that the polls seem to say he gets no credit for our economic policy. Before I took office, we spent 2 months debating economic policy. You may remember I had a big national economic summit. When we had to decide whether we were going to make the brutally tough decisions to get that deficit down, Al Gore was the first one to say, "We've got to do it. Let's just take the lumps and go on." When he cast the deciding vote on the economic plan of 1993, without which we could not have done any of the things we've enjoyed since, he acted on his conviction.

He was instrumental in the Telecommunications Act, which had a lot to do with creating

hundreds of thousands of high-wage jobs. He supported all my trade initiatives. He has been there, an integral member of our economic team. He understands the future. That's important. You want a President who understands the future.

And finally, let me say the most important thing of all to me is he wants to take us all along for the ride. He is for a minimum wage; they are not. He is for employment non-discrimination legislation; they are not. He is for hate crimes legislation, and their leadership isn't because it also extends protection to gays. And I think that we need to be building an America where everybody that works hard plays by the rules and doesn't get in anybody else's way in a defensive way ought to be part of our America. That's what we think.

Now, people are free to think something else. But no one should be confused about the consequences. Now, I'm telling you, in my lifetime we've never had a chance like this. And I feel so good—in spite of all the good things that have happened in America in the last 7 years, I feel like we've been turning an ocean liner around in the ocean, and now it's headed in the right way, and it's about to become a speedboat. All the best stuff is still out there if we make the right choice. Bill Nelson is the right choice, and so is Al Gore.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Also, I want to tell you something else. When Grace got off the plane with Bill and I tonight, not a single soul saw either one of us. [*Laughter*] They said, "Who are those two old gray-haired guys with that beautiful woman in the red dress?" [*Laughter*] And she is also somebody that will do well in Washington.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:55 p.m. at the Colony Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Graham's wife, Adele, and their children, Nan Ellen and John, Jr.; Bill Nelson, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida, and his wife, Grace; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner
in Palm Beach
July 31, 2000

Thank you very much. This is the fourth time that Bill and I have done this today, and we're about to get the hang of it. *[Laughter]* I want to thank Eric and Colleen for having us in their beautiful little home tonight, in this fabulous, fabulous tent. This is exhibit A for the proposition that if you want to live like a Republican, you should vote Democratic. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank the Aaronsons for having us earlier at the reception. I want to thank my great friend Alcee Hastings for being here and for representing Florida brilliantly in the House of Representatives.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to Bob Graham, who has been my friend for more than 20 years now. He and Adele and Hillary and I have been through a lot of interesting times together. And I've told anybody who cared to listen that the only job I ever could really hold down for any period of time was being Governor of my home State. I did that for 12 years, and I didn't seem to have much upward mobility for a while. But I had the good fortune to serve with 150 Governors and to see probably another 100 or more since then, since I've been President, and without any question, Bob Graham is one of the two or three ablest people I ever served with when he was Governor of this State. And he's done a fabulous job in Congress. I'll say more about that in a moment.

And I want to thank Bill Nelson and Grace for making this race for the Senate. It isn't easy to run for major office today. You never know what's going to hit you. You never know how difficult it will be, and you can't predict the twists and turns of the campaign. And he looks great right now, but when he made the decision, it might not have worked out this way. He did it not knowing how it would come out because he believed he should serve.

And he and Grace have been friends of Hillary's and mine for a long, long time. They and their children have spent the night with us in the White House. I know them well, and I'm just so proud that people like that still want to serve, still want to give. Besides that, he's really been a good insurance commissioner. I

mean, he stopped insurance fraud against the elderly. He helped children to get health insurance. He's really done a good job.

I also want to mention my good friend, your former Lieutenant Governor, Buddy MacKay, who is here with us tonight, who has really been great as our Ambassador to Latin America. And we just got a special bill passed to increase trade with the Caribbean region, which will be immensely helpful to the people here in south Florida. And I thank him for joining us today.

I would also just—I'd like to thank the people that catered this dinner and the people that served it. They made our dinner very nice tonight. Most of the time, people don't say that. So I thank them.

Let me say that I never know what to say at one of these dinners because I always feel that I'm preaching to the saved, as we say at home. I mean, if you weren't for him, surely you wouldn't have written a check. *[Laughter]* But I have a real interest in trying to get you to do more than write a check, because everybody who can come here is someone who, by definition, has a lot of contacts with a lot of people. And I'm very interested in how this whole election turns out. I'm passionately committed to the election of the Vice President, and I will say more about that in a minute.

And there is one Senate seat than I'm even more interested in than the Florida election, in New York—*[laughter]*—where the best person I've ever known is running. And the thing I'm thinking about tonight—and I just kind of want to talk to you—is, what is it that I could ask you to do that might make a difference in the election? And here's what it is. You can understand exactly what it's about and convince everybody you know that that's what it's about.

My experience over many years now in public life is that very often the outcome of an election is determined by what people think the election is about. And it may seem self-evident, but it isn't. For example, when I ran in 1992 and James Carville came up with that great line, "It's the economy, stupid"—well, he's great, but you didn't have to be a genius to figure that

out. The country was in trouble, and we were going downhill economically. We had quadrupled our debt in 12 years. All of the social indicators were going in the wrong direction. Washington seemed paralyzed.

The political climate seemed to me in Washington, when I was way out in the country—at the time I was serving at what then President Bush called—I was the Governor of a small southern State. [Laughter] And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And you know, I still do. But anyway, it seemed to me like Washington, what happened in Washington was, that the Republicans and Democrats were saying, “You’ve got an idea. I’ve got an idea. Let’s fight. Maybe we’ll both get on the evening news,” which got a lot of people on the evening news but not much ever happened. And I didn’t think anybody else lived that way.

So it was obvious that we had to try to turn the country around, and I won’t go through all that. But I will say now we’ve had 8 years of the longest economic prosperity in our history, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, 22 million new jobs. But it’s not just economics. This is a more just society: Child poverty is down to a 20-year low; the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded; lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years; lowest single-parent household poverty rate in 46 years; welfare rolls cut in half; crime rate at a 25-year low; teen pregnancy down for 7 years in a row. The indicators are going in the right direction. This is a more just society and a stronger society.

And what I think the election ought to be about is this: Now what? Now, that may seem self-evident to you, but now what? What is it that we’re going to do with all this prosperity? Are we just going to feel good about it? Are we going to take our cut and run? Or are we going to recognize that this is something that happens once in a lifetime, and we had better think very hard about the chance we have been given to build the future of our dreams for our children, to seize the big opportunities, to meet the big challenges?

There’s not a person in this beautiful setting tonight over 30 years of age who cannot recall at least one time in your life when you made a big mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well you thought there was no failure to the penalty to concentrate—the failure to concentrate.

There was no penalty to that. If you failed to concentrate, you get distracted, who cares? Things are going so great, nothing can go wrong. And so you got to wandering around, and all of a sudden you made a mistake, something bad happened.

Now, countries are no different from people. So I say again—why am I telling you this? Because you read all the stories about this election—I read a huge story on the cover of USA Today a couple of weeks ago that said the voters had no idea that there was any significant difference between the Vice President and Governor Bush on economic policy. A big story in the New York Times last week on a survey, a national survey of suburban women voters who cared about gun safety legislation. They were for the Vice President only 45 to 39. Then the pollster, who doesn’t work for any of us, not a politically affiliated person, simply read their positions on the issues to the people, and the poll changed from 49 to 35 to 50—45–39, excuse me, to 57 to 29. Boom, like that, just with information.

So what have we got? We’ve got a team headed by the Vice President, including Bill Nelson and Hillary and a lot of others who say, “Look, we’ve got to keep the prosperity going. We’ve got to keep investing in education, expanding trade, paying down the debt. We’ve got to have a tax cut, but one we can afford, so that we don’t spend it all. And we’ve got to do some other things. We’ve got to lengthen the life of Medicare and Social Security so when the baby boomers retire, they don’t bankrupt their kids and grandkids. We ought to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare because it’s unconscionable that all these seniors and disabled people who need these drugs can’t get them, and we’d never create a Medicare program today without it. We ought to close the gun show loophole and do some other things to keep guns out of the hands of kids and criminals. We ought to do more to build one America. We ought to raise the minimum wage. We ought to pass employment nondiscrimination legislation. We ought to pass hate crimes legislation. We ought to preserve the fundamental individual liberties of the American people including the right to choose.”

Now, on their side, they’ve got a team that basically says, “We used to be real conservative, but now we’re moderate.” [Laughter] Don’t laugh. I’m not being cynical here. I’m being

serious. And they talk about inclusion and compassion and harmony, but they don't talk much about specifics. And it's clear that they are greatly advantaged by the blurring of the lines between the two parties and the fact that people don't know what the differences are. So that's what I want to ask you to do. I want you to let me tell you, as much as a citizen, as a President, what I think the differences are and what I think is at stake.

First of all, on economic policy, our policy is pay down the debt, keep interest rates low, keep the economy going, invest in education and health care and science and technology, and have a tax cut we can afford, that 80 percent of the people will get more out of than theirs, even though it's only 25 percent as expensive, but most of you in this room wouldn't get more money out of it. You would, however, get lower interest rates, which the economists say our plan would give at least one percent lower interest rates for a decade—at least—which is worth, among other things, \$260 billion in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, and \$15 billion in college loan payments, a pretty good size tax cut, not to mention, lower business loan rates, which means higher investment and greater growth and a stronger stock market.

Now, it took me a while to say that. Their case is a lot easier to make. Their case is, "Hey, we're going to have a \$2 trillion surplus. It's your money, and we're going to give it back to you." Doesn't that sound good? In the last year they passed over a trillion dollars in tax cuts, and they've been pretty smart this year. They passed some, sort of salami fashion, so each one of them has a huge constituency. I like a lot of them, and I like some of all of what they're trying to do. The problem is it's kind of like going to a cafeteria. Did you ever go to a cafeteria to eat, and you got the tray, and you're walking down the aisle, and all the food looks so good? But if you eat it all, you'll get sick. [Laughter] You think about it.

So they proposed to spend the whole surplus, the whole projected surplus—never mind what they promised to spend in money. Now, what's wrong with that? Well, we tried it before, number one. Number two, it's a projected surplus.

Now, if you propose to spend some money and the money doesn't come in, you just don't spend it. But once you cut the taxes, they're cut. So they want to spend the entire projected surplus that we have worked as a country for

7 years to accumulate to turn around the deficits and debt. Now, it's projected; I don't know if it will come in or not.

It reminds me of—I told people at the previous meeting. Did you ever get one of those letters from Publishers Clearing House in the mail signed by Ed McMahon? [Laughter] Did you ever get one? "You may have won \$10 million." You may have won it. Now, if the next day after you got that letter, you went out and spent the \$10 million, you should support them and their plan. [Laughter] But if you didn't, you had better stick with us. And that's what you need to tell people.

Nobody in their right mind—if I ask every one of you, whatever you do for a living, from the people who run the biggest companies here, the people that served our dinner, you think about this: What do you think your income is going to be over the next 10 years? What do you think it's going to be? Come to a very high level of confidence. Now, if I ask you to come up here right now and sign a binding contract to spend it all tonight, would you do it? If you would, you should support them. If not, you should stick with us. This is a huge difference, and all the surveys show the people don't know. You should help them know.

Let's take health care. We favor the Patients' Bill of Rights; they're against it. We favor a Medicare drug program that all our seniors can buy. They favor a private insurance program that, God bless them, the health insurance companies—I've fought them for 7 years, but I've got to take my hat off to them—[laughter]—they have been so honest. The health insurance companies have said, "Don't do this. It won't work. Nobody will do this. You can't offer policies."

In Nevada they passed a program like this, and not a single insurance company's even offered the policy. So they're not doing anything real for people who desperately need these drugs, the disabled people and seniors. And we've got the money now. It's unconscionable not to do it. If you live to be 65 years old now, your chance of your life expectancy is 83 in America. But it ought to be a good life. It ought to be a full life. If you're disabled in America today and you can get the right kind of medicine, it can dramatically increase your capacity to work and to enjoy life and to be a full person to the maximum extent of your ability to do so. But you need medicine.

This is a huge issue, especially in Florida, but throughout the country. They're not for it.

We say there are a lot of people who lose their health insurance when they're over 55 and they're not old enough for Medicare; we ought to give them a little tax break and let them buy in. They say no. So there's a big difference in health care policy.

Big difference in education policy. We say that we ought to have high standards, and people should turn around failing schools or have to shut them down, that we ought to have more teachers and more money for teacher training. We ought to spend more money to help places like Florida build new schools or repair old ones. They favor block grants and vouchers.

We say, on crime, we want more police in the high-crime areas, and we want to close the gun show loophole on the Brady background check law and require child safety locks on these guns and stop people importing these large capacity ammunition clips that allows people to convert legal weapons into assault weapons. And I say, and the Vice President says, you ought to get a photo ID license before you get a handgun, showing that you passed the background check, you know how to use the gun safely. That's what we say.

Now, they think we're all wet. They think we're wrong. They think that all of that should be opposed and what we really need is more people carrying concealed weapons, even in their places of worship. That's their record and their commitment.

We believe, as I said earlier, that we should raise the minimum wage; they don't. We favor the hate crimes legislation. Their leadership doesn't because it includes gays. I think that's one big reason we need it. I mean, how many people do we have to see get killed in this country because of who they are before we do that?

Same thing on employment nondiscrimination laws. And as Bill said in a delicate way—and I'll be more blunt—maybe the biggest thing of all is the fact that the next President is going to appoint between two and four members of the U.S. Supreme Court, and it will change the face of America, one way or the other, long after the next President's term is finished. And on the one side, you've got the Vice President, who believes in a woman's right to choose but also in the traditional commitment to civil rights and individual rights and responsibilities and the

idea that the law ought to be a place where the weak as well as the strong can find appropriate redress.

And on the other side, you have two candidates who are firmly committed to the repeal of *Roe v. Wade*, and their Presidential candidate says the two judges he most admires are Justices Thomas and Scalia, by far the most conservative members of the Court.

Now, what's the point of this? We don't have to have a negative campaign. We should say, we think they are honorable people with wonderful families who love their children, who love their country, who want to do public service. But as honorable people, we should say, we expect them to do exactly what they say they're going to do even if they're not talking about it in this election. We can't pretend that these differences don't exist and that they aren't real and that they won't affect millions of people's lives.

Look at civil rights. You know, they've gotten in a lot of—at least a little stir lately because Mr. Cheney, when he was in Congress, voted against letting Nelson Mandela out of prison, and a lot of people are horrified to learn that. Now, he's a friend of mine and, I think, one of the greatest human beings I ever met. But to be fair, he did get out, and he's made a pretty good job of his life since he got out. I'm not nearly as worried about Nelson Mandela 10 years ago as I am about some other minorities today.

I'll tell you about Enrique Moreno. You don't know him. He grew up in El Paso without a lot, and got himself to Harvard, graduated summa cum laude, went home, and became a lawyer. The judges out there in west Texas say he's one of the best lawyers in the region. I tried to put him on the Federal Court of Appeals in Texas. The ABA gave him a unanimous well-qualified rating. All the local folks were for him, the Republicans and the Democrats, they were all for him in the local level in El Paso.

But the Texas Republican Senators won't even give him a hearing. They say they don't think he's qualified. And the head of the Republican Party in Texas, now the head of the Republican Party in America, didn't lift a finger to get him a hearing. So I'd like to get Enrique Moreno out of this sort of political prison where he can't get a hearing.

In the southeast United States, more African-Americans live in the fourth circuit than any

other one. There's never been a black judge on the fourth circuit. I've tried for 7 years to put an African-American judge in the fourth circuit. And the Republican Senators there are so opposed to this that they have allowed a 25 percent vacancy rate on that court. Now, they make all the decisions that don't quite get to the Supreme Court. Twenty-five percent vacancy rate because they don't want—ask Alcee Hastings if I'm telling the truth. Look at him nodding his head. It's unbelievable.

I want every American to know this. I've got two African-American judges now I've appointed. So I'm more concerned about those guys than Mandela. Mandela made a pretty good job of his life because—thank God—nobody listened to the vote that was cast by the Republican nominee for Vice President. He did get out of jail, and he went on and made a great job as President of South Africa.

Look, what kind of country do you want, anyway? And again, what I want is a great election. I want people to be upbeat and happy and say, "Gosh, here we've got these perfectly fine people that are honorable, that are patriots, that want to serve their country, that have very different views. Here's what the differences are. Let's choose." If that's the way this election rolls out, you can book it. Al Gore will be the next President, and Bill Nelson will be the next Senator from the State of Florida.

But you cannot allow your fellow Floridians and any Americans you know anywhere else in the country to sort of sleepwalk through the election, sort of say, "Oh, well, this is just a fine time, and everything is great, and they all seem pretty nice. And this fraternity had it for 8 years, maybe we ought to give it to the other fraternity for a while." They've got a real pretty package here, the other side does, and they just hope nobody opens the package before Christmas. *[Laughter]*

And I say that not sarcastically. I don't blame them. It's a brilliant marketing strategy. It's the way they can win. But America is still here after 224 years because nearly all the time the people get it right if they have enough information and enough time. You can give it to them. You can go out and say, "Look, an election is a choice with consequences, and how a country deals with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its values, its judgment, and its character as how it deals with adversity. And we may

never get a chance like this again to build a future of our dreams for our children."

And let me just close with this very personal note and show my age a little bit. In February, when we broke the limit for the longest economic expansion in history, I asked my staff to tell me when the last longest economic expansion in history was. You know when it was? Nineteen sixty-one to 1969. I graduated from high school in 1964, before a lot of you were born, in the full flow of that longest economic expansion in history.

President Kennedy had just been killed, and we were all sad about that, but President Johnson was very popular. The country had a lot of confidence. We took the health of the economy for granted, low unemployment, low inflation, high growth. We thought the civil rights problems we had would be solved in the courts and the Congress, not on the streets. We never dreamed that Vietnam would get as big or as bloody or as divisive as it did. And we were just rolling along. Two years later we had riots in the streets all over America. Four years later I graduated from college in Washington, DC—9 weeks after President Johnson couldn't run for President anymore and told us so, because of the division of the country over Vietnam, 8 weeks after Martin Luther King was murdered in Memphis, and 2 days after Robert Kennedy was murdered in Los Angeles. And the election and the national mood took a different turn. And before you know it, the last longest economic expansion in history was history.

I've lived long enough to know now nothing lasts forever. I have waited 35 years for my country to be in a position to truly build the future of our dreams for our kids. This kind of thing just comes along once in a great long while. And believe me, when you think of the implications in the human genome project or the information revolution, all the things that are going out here, all the good things that have happened in the last 8 years, they are a small prolog to what is still out there. All the best things are still out there if we understand what our responsibility is in this election and if the voters understand what the choice is. Then we will not blow this, and when it's all done, we'll be very proud we didn't.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:12 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Eric and Colleen Hanson; Senator Graham's wife, Adele; Bill Nelson, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida, and his wife, Grace; Palm Beach County District 5 Commis-

sioner Burt Aaronson, his wife, Sheila, and son, Daniel; political consultant James Carville; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney.

Statement on the Colorado Initiative To Close the Gun Show Loophole *August 2, 2000*

I commend the citizens of Colorado who took an important step today toward reducing gun violence by submitting nearly twice the number of signatures needed to place an initiative on the State ballot to close the gun show loophole. Colorado voters can now do what Congress has failed to do: close a deadly loophole that allows criminals, juveniles, and other restricted persons to buy guns at gun shows with no questions asked.

With our Nation losing 10 children to gunfire every day, Congress should heed the voices of

millions of Americans concerned about gun violence—not those of the gun lobby—and follow the lead of States like Colorado. While Colorado's progress is encouraging, we should not have to rely on a patchwork of State laws when it comes to protecting our children's safety. Only Congress can pass legislation that protects children all across America. National legislation to close the gun show loophole and keep guns out of the wrong hands should be passed without further delay.

Statement on Signing the Cross-Border Cooperation and Environmental Safety in Northern Europe Act of 2000 *August 3, 2000*

Yesterday, I signed H.R. 4249, the "Cross-Border Cooperation and Environmental Safety in Northern Europe Act of 2000." This law endorses the administration's Northern Europe Initiative (NEI) and highlights the need for continued international efforts to address the environmental dangers posed by nuclear waste in northwest Russia. I want to express my appreciation to Representative Sam Gejdenson for introducing and ensuring the passage of this important legislation.

We launched the Northern Europe Initiative because we recognized, as the Congress does in this law, the importance of strengthening regional cooperation among the Baltic States, Russia, and all countries bordering the Baltic Sea. Only in this way can we create the stability and prosperity that will lead to full integration of northern Europe, including northwest Russia, into the broader European and transatlantic

mainstream. Our European friends, especially the Nordic countries and the European Union, are full partners in this effort.

The law also highlights the environmental dangers posed by military nuclear waste in northwest Russia. These dangers have been brought to light by the work of courageous independent environmentalists and nongovernmental organizations in Russia and elsewhere. Aleksandr Nikitin, a retired Russian Navy colonel, has made important contributions to the international understanding and study of environmental problems in this region. Both environmentalists and nongovernment organizations face increased challenges today.

We have been deeply involved in helping Russia and its neighbors confront the serious environmental risks that face the Barents Sea, the Baltic Sea, and the people who live around them. We look forward to increased cooperation

from Russia as we create a legal framework for our common efforts.

NOTE: H.R. 4249, approved August 2, was assigned Public Law No. 106-255.

Statement on the Death of Sister M. Isolina Ferre

August 3, 2000

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Sister Isolina Ferre. Her passionate fight, for more than 60 years, against poverty, violence, and despair earned her many awards and countless tributes from all around the world. Armed only with her faith, she taught gangs in New York City to solve their differences without violence. In Puerto Rico, her community service centers, the Centros Isolina Ferre, transformed ravaged neighborhoods by operating clinics and helping residents to empower themselves.

Almost a year ago today, I was honored to welcome Sister Isolina to the White House and present her with the Medal of Freedom. At that ceremony, I said, "Sister Isolina taught people to see the best in themselves and in their communities and made sure they had the tools to make the most of the gifts God has given them."

Her lifetime of selfless commitment to others will remain her greatest legacy. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family and many friends.

Statement on Action To Address Potential Electricity Shortages in California

August 3, 2000

Today I am directing all Federal agencies to take steps to reduce consumption of electricity in California to the maximum extent possible. As one of the largest power consumers in California, it is critical that the Federal Government take every possible step to reduce non-essential power consumption at Federal facilities in the State.

During power shortage emergencies, it also is important that we increase our generation of

power in the West, much of which is supplied to California customers. Therefore, I also am directing that Federal agencies that generate power, and the Federal Power Marketing Administrations, take all possible steps to maximize the amount of electricity that can be delivered to California.

These short-term measures will assist California utilities and consumers in meeting electricity needs during this critical period.

Memorandum on Potential Electricity Shortages in California

August 3, 2000

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Potential Electricity Shortages in California

The increased demand for electricity during summer heat waves can make it a challenge

for electric utilities to meet the demands of their customers. Currently, the supply of electric power is tight in California due to record demand for electricity. The State faces the possibility of rolling blackouts in some areas. These conditions put both consumers and businesses at risk.

The Federal Government is among the largest consumers of electricity in California. It is important that we lead by example in taking energy-conserving steps to reduce the risk and severity of power outages. Therefore, I direct that:

- Managers of Federal buildings in California take steps to reduce consumption of power to the maximum extent practicable consistent with the health and welfare of employees; and,
- Federal agencies coordinate with other State and local government agencies to minimize the use of electricity in all government buildings in California.

Further, although most of the electricity in the Western United States is generated and marketed by privately and publicly owned utilities, the Federal Government also generates and markets electricity in the region. For the duration of the current power shortage emergency, I direct that:

- Federal agencies that generate electricity take all possible measures, consistent with existing laws and regulations, to maximize

the amount of electricity that can be delivered to California; and,

- Federal Power Marketing Administrations take all steps necessary to maximize the availability of electricity in California.

I also direct Federal agencies to work with the State of California to develop procedures governing the use of backup power generation in power shortage emergencies.

Although these are important steps that can help reduce the risk of power shortages in the short term, we need a more comprehensive approach for the long term. I therefore further direct each of you to continue working towards the goals of Executive Order 13123, Greening the Government Through Efficient Energy Management, and to continue working with the Congress on comprehensive electricity restructuring legislation, which can promote greater investment in generation and transmission facilities, enhance the efficiency of the interstate transmission grid, and promote energy efficiency programs.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979

August 3, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On August 19, 1994, in light of the expiration of the Export Administration Act of 1979, as amended (50 U.S.C. App. 2401 *et seq.*), I issued Executive Order 12924, declaring a national emergency and continuing the system of export regulation under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*). Under section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), the national emergency terminates on the anniversary date of its declaration unless the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice of its continuation.

I am hereby advising the Congress that I have extended the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12924. Enclosed is a copy of the notice of extension.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 4. The notice of August 3 on continuation of the national emergency is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus *August 3, 2000*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the period April 1–May 31, 2000. The previous submission covered events during February and March 2000.

Following President Clerides' surgery in early May, the United Nations rescheduled the recommencement of Cyprus talks for July 5 in Geneva. Despite this delay, U.S. officials remained actively engaged in efforts to bring about a comprehensive Cyprus settlement based on a bizonal, bicomunal federation. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright underscored the United States commitment to a Cyprus solution

with her Greek and Turkish counterparts in early May.

Special Presidential Emissary Alfred H. Moses, Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas G. Weston, and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald K. Bandler reinforced these messages with the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leadership and urged all parties to support positive movement in the United Nations-sponsored talks.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 4.

Statement Announcing an Upcoming Visit and Further Assistance to Colombia *August 4, 2000*

I am pleased to announce I will travel on August 30 to Colombia to meet with President Andres Pastrana and to personally underscore America's support for Colombia's efforts to seek peace, fight illicit drugs, build its economy, and deepen democracy. I am delighted that Speaker Dennis Hastert and Senator Joe Biden, two longtime champions of peace and democracy in Colombia, will join me on the trip.

Colombia's success is profoundly in the interest of the United States. A peaceful, democratic, and economically prosperous Colombia will help to promote democracy and stability throughout the hemisphere.

I have also signed a Presidential decision directive ordering, as a matter of national priority, an intensified effort to aid the Colombian Government in implementing Plan Colombia—President Pastrana's bold plan to build a better future for his country.

The Presidential decision directive complements and supports the \$1.3 billion assistance package that I requested from Congress, and that Democrats and Republicans passed in a bipartisan spirit last month. The cornerstone of our Colombia initiative, this supplemental includes a tenfold increase in U.S. funds to promote good government, judicial reform, human rights protection, and economic development in Colombia. It will help Colombia strengthen its democracy while helping the Government staunch the flow of drugs to our shores.

This directive, along with the sharp increase in funding from Congress, will intensify our efforts to help the Colombian Government implement its comprehensive national strategy. It is the right way to advance America's interests in the region, and I am proud of the bipartisan effort that has made it possible.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Nantucket, Massachusetts August 4, 2000

The President. When Smith started that story I didn't know where it was going. [Laughter] I thought he was going to say he called a surgeon or something.

Let me say, first of all, I am delighted to be back here. I had a wonderful time last year, and Hillary and I came back. Chelsea came with us this year. Just took a tour of Nantucket, and it's a beautiful place. And I want to thank all of you for coming out here tonight to help.

You know, we just finished the Republican Convention, and now it's our turn. And one thing that we apparently agree on—they did agree that the country was in good shape. [Laughter] And I appreciated that act of uncommon generosity on their part. [Laughter] We disagree on how it happened—[laughter]—and on what to do with it. I say that—I like to hear you laugh. I like to hear them laugh more. [Laughter] I mean, we need to lighten up here. But on the other hand, we need to be more serious about the election.

I actually think this is a great opportunity for the American people because we don't have to say bad things about our opponents as people. And if I have anything to do with it, the Democrats won't do that. I don't like it. I've never liked it, and we don't need it. All we need to do is to give the American people the chance to have an honest debate over the issues, what are the differences and what are the consequences of the election.

But if I could just say three or four things. First, I am profoundly grateful for the chance that I've had to serve. It's been a joy. Even the bad days were good, and the fights were worth making—if I had to fight it all again, I'd do it all again. I loved it.

Audience member. Thank you.

The President. And secondly, when we ran in '92, we had a very clear strategy. I didn't have any idea if it would work or not. I mean, when I started, the incumbent President was at 70-something percent approval, but the country was not in good shape. And so I actually laid out to the American people in great detail what it was I would try to do if I were fortunate enough to be elected.

And I tried to make it a campaign of ideas, committed to change, but change rooted in endless American values, opportunity for everybody who is responsible, and a community in which all Americans can be a part. And it's worked pretty well. I mean, we voted in '93 to get rid of the deficit, and the lower interest rates led to a boom in the stock market and lower interest rates and getting rid of the—and more jobs, and you know the rest. It's worked pretty well.

Last year I couldn't say this, but now we've had the longest economic expansion in our history and over 22 million new jobs. So if it worked, and you have evidence, then the question is, which course is more likely to keep this going and to spread the benefits of the recovery to the people in places who still aren't part of it?

When I became President, the crime rate was going up. Now it's gone down for 7 years. We put 100,000 police on the street. We took assault weapons off the street. We passed the Brady background check law, and it plainly had a big impact on the crime rate. And so if there's a difference in crime policy, you have to decide, since America is nowhere near safe enough, which strategy is more likely to keep the crime rate coming down.

When we tried to do welfare reform, I had to veto a couple of bills first, but then we said, "Okay, able-bodied people ought to go to work, but the kids ought to be able to keep their guarantee of medical care and nutrition." And the welfare rolls have been cut in half, and all the horror stories that some people predicted haven't materialized because we went out of our way to give people, that we were requiring to work, the education, the transportation, and the support to be good parents so that it would work. And so you have to decide what you think is best for low-income people and how to empower them to go to work.

The same is true in health care; the same is true in the environment. Somebody came up to me tonight and asked me to sign a picture of the Grand Canyon, and I was saying we just set aside another million acres around the Grand Canyon to protect the watershed. And Al Gore

and I have now set aside more land in the lower 48 States than any administration in history except those of Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt.

And the other side is on record as to committing to repeal my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. The Audubon Society says it's the most significant conservation move in 40 years. So you get to decide which you think is better.

And I'd just like to say that for me—I'm not running for anything this year—[laughter]—and most days I'm okay about it. [Laughter] But I care a great deal about what we're going to do with this moment of prosperity. Let me just mention one other issue. In education, our theory was, have fewer regulations but higher standards; invest more, require more—more preschool, more after-school, smaller classes, better trained teachers—and a strategy to turn around failing schools; and then open the doors of college to everybody.

Well, test scores are up. The dropout rate's down. The African-American high school graduation rate equaled the white majority rate last year, for the first time in history. And we have record numbers of people going to college. So we have a strategy about that, and there will be differences, and you have to decide which you think is right.

But all this is just to say, the most important thing to me—all these races I've run since 1974, I used to have a simple theory which is that I wanted to make sure that on the election day, every person who did not vote for me knew exactly what he or she was doing. Because I always felt that if I lost, then I would have no complaint, that if the people who voted for you and the people who voted against you knew exactly what they were doing, I would have no complaint.

Therefore, I think it's important for people like you, who come here to help Hillary, to make a commitment that goes beyond writing a check, because you're obviously interested citizens. And what I think you should do is to go out between now and November at every conceivable opportunity and say, "Isn't it nice that we can have an election where we don't have to run down our opponents, where we can posit that they're good, patriotic people, that they love our country, that they will do what they believe in, and all we have to do is to

ask ourselves, what do we want to do with this moment of prosperity?"

It is literally unprecedented in our country's history that we would have at once so much economic prosperity, so much social progress, with the absence of crippling internal crisis at home or overpowering threat abroad. So what is it that we're going to do with it?

More than half the people in this audience are younger than I am, and a huge number of you have more years ahead of you than you do behind you. What is it that we propose to do with this? It is a huge question. And that—my experience is that very often the answer you get in an election depends upon the questions people ask in the first place. Or to be blunter, who wins the Presidency, who wins the Senate race in New York, who wins a lot of these other elections depends upon what the people really believe the election is about.

And we have a chance, literally unprecedented in our lifetime, to build the future of our dreams for our children. But it requires us not to be complacent with our prosperity but to look over the horizon, to take on the big challenges, to seize the big opportunities.

I tell everybody who will listen that there are four reasons I think Al Gore ought to be President. He's been the best Vice President in history and had more influence in that job than anybody ever had. He's got an economic program that will work instead of one that will spend the whole surplus on a tax cut today when the surplus hasn't materialized yet. I tell everybody that our proposal is, cut taxes but only to the extent that we can afford it and still invest in education, provide a prescription drug benefit for people on Medicare, and keep paying the debt down, because that will keep interest rates low, which is a de facto tax cut, and prosperity going.

And so if you have a tax cut that essentially takes the whole projected surplus away—I can make you a good speech for it. I can say, "We're going to have this big surplus, and it's your money, not the Government's. And we're going to give it back to you." Sounds good, doesn't it? Except it hasn't come in yet. It's kind of like—did you ever get one of those letters from Ed McMahon and Publishers Clearing House? [Laughter] Think about it. "You may have won \$10 million." Now, if you went out the next day and spent the \$10 million, you should support their program. But otherwise, you ought

to stick with us and keep this thing going. [Laughter] So that's the second reason that I think it's important.

The third reason that I'm for Al Gore is that he understands the future, whether it's information technology or the human genome project or global warming. They made fun of him in '88—I mean, when he wrote the book. They made fun of him in '92 when we ran. Now even the oil company executives say global warming is real. It could change the climate of the whole world. It could flood the sugarcane fields in Louisiana and the Everglades in Florida we've worked so hard to save, and change the pattern of agriculture in the United States. And already you see in Africa malaria at higher and higher altitudes because of the warming of the climate.

One of the biggest problems we've got—many of you mentioned the Middle East peace process to me. One of the biggest struggles we're going to have is to figure out how to provide water for all the people who live there, because of climate change. And I don't know about you, but if that's really a big issue, I'd like someone in the White House that understood it.

And that's not an insult; that's a plus for Gore. That's not a criticism of his opponent. There's nobody that understands that in public life as much as he does. That should not be interpreted as a criticism of his opponent; it's a plus for him.

Look, all your medical and financial records are on somebody's computer somewhere. Don't you think that we ought to have somebody in the White House that really understands what the privacy issues are? It's going to be wonderful—all the young women in this audience, when you start having babies, when you go home—and within 5 to 10 years, you'll take a little genetic map home with your baby. It will tell you: Here are the problems your baby has, but if you do the following five things, you will increase the chance that the child will have a great life.

There are young women in this audience tonight who will have babies with a life expectancy of 90 years. That's not an exaggeration. But it seems to me that we ought to have somebody there that understands whether somebody ought to be denied a job or a promotion or health insurance based on their gene card. We need somebody that really understands the future.

And the last thing is, we ought to have somebody that will take us all along for the ride. That's what the hate crimes bill, the minimum wage, the employment nondiscrimination bill—that's what all that stuff's all about. Should we all go along for the ride or not? And I presume that all of you believe that or you wouldn't be here. Otherwise—because the other guys are going to give you a bigger tax cut than we are. [Laughter] But we'll give you lower interest rates and a better stock market. You'll make more anyway. But I think we ought to all go along for the ride.

So now, that brings me to Hillary—[laughter]—and this reason: It is very hard for me to say anything that is not either sappy, or I'm always afraid I'll be over the top and ineffective here.

But let me just tell you. I've been President for nearly 8 years now. It really matters who is in the Senate. There is a gentleman here that I went to college with who is from South Dakota. We were bragging about Tom Daschle and how I couldn't have functioned the last 5 years without him, and it's really true.

Many of you came up to me tonight and said, "I'm so glad not only what you did but what you stopped—all the attempts to weaken the environment and all the attempts to weaken our economic policy or cut education or do other things, all the things that were stopped over the last 5 years." Well, it really matters who is in the Congress and, especially, who is in the Senate. They get to vote on the confirmation of judges, and if they don't want to bring them up, they don't. So I've tried for 7½ years to get an African-American judge in the southeastern part of the United States. There's never been one before. But their side doesn't want one, so we've got two perfectly well-qualified people that I still can't get confirmed.

There's an Hispanic-American who grew up in El Paso and graduated summa cum laude from Harvard. The ABA gives him unanimous high ratings. I can't even get him a hearing in the Senate because he's not part of what they think the bench ought to be about.

Senators make a difference. The next President will appoint two to four judges to the Supreme Court. The Senate will confirm them. And whether you like it or not, when you vote for President and you vote for Senate, you better think about that, because the balance of the Supreme Court will change. And you have

to assume that any President you vote for and any Senator you vote for will vote and appoint his or her convictions. You have to assume that.

The most important thing that I think that I could say to you about Hillary is two things. One is, this is just the last in a long line of lifetime public service for her. When I met her in 1971, when she wasn't old enough to vote, but I was—[laughter]—when I met her in 1971, she was already involved with the Yale Child Studies Center and issues of children's health care, children's education, family law. She took an extra year in law school to work at the Yale hospital in the Child Studies Center so that she would not have not only a law degree but a clear background in the legal issues affecting children's health and children's welfare, before anybody else was doing it—that kind of thing.

Her first job out of law school was at what became the Children's Defense Fund, where she later served as chair of the board. Her first project, when I was elected Governor of Arkansas, was to build a neonatal nursery at the Children's Hospital in Little Rock. And when I left office, in my little home State, that was the seventh biggest children's hospital in the United States of America, and she ran the fundraising drive every year. She founded an advocacy group for children and families when we were living in Arkansas, and then when she came up here, she took up the cause of children's health care, our education reforms. She led the way to a total revision of the laws affecting adoption, cross-racial adoption, and what happens to foster care kids and how to improve their welfare. Things at a level of details unheard of for First Ladies to be involved in. And along the way, she found time to host conferences on early childhood and brain development, children and violence, and a lot of other things.

And then this year, she ran our millennium program for the last 2 years, which the gentleman who is the head of the National Historic Preservation Trust told me that Hillary's millennium program, which has now gotten \$100 million for the preservation for American treasures, slightly over half public money, the rest private, was the largest, single historic preservation effort in the history of the United States of America.

So when Senator Moynihan announced he wasn't going to run again and all these Democratic House Members came and asked her to run, I can promise you, it had never occurred

to her before, because we assumed he was going to run, and we would support him.

And so she started traveling around New York. And she found out, A, she kind of liked it, and B—not liked New York; she kind of liked politics; she knew she liked New York; she liked politics—[laughter]—and B, she found out that people understood that what they needed in a Senator was somebody that would put their families first and think of their children's future and make the most of this moment of prosperity, which allows me to close this circle here.

I cannot tell you—again, I'll say, no American who has not been where I am can possibly appreciate the importance of every single Senate seat—nobody. And I can tell you this. I knew, and I told her when we started, that we would have a hard fight the first time. But if she wins in November—and I'm convinced she will—she'll never have a close race again, because she'll be the best Senator they ever had.

And I said something here last year I will say again. I have been privileged in my life, over, almost 30 years in public life now, to work with hundreds of people. I have known some magnificent leaders around the world; I have known some wonderful American public servants. I have never felt the kind of personal animosity for people in the other party that some of them seem to feel for us from time to time, because I wouldn't be able to get up in the morning if I was that torn up and upset all the time. [Laughter] And I basically like people in public life. I've found most of them are smart and honest and work hard and do what they think is right.

But of all the people I have ever known, bar none, she has the best combination of heart, compassion, brains, and just plain old stick-to-it-iveness, persistence. And you need that in a Senator. So you've helped her tonight, and if you can do anything between now and November, I'll be very, very grateful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Smith Bagley; Enrique Moreno, judicial nominee, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit; Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson; and Richard Moe,

president, National Trust for Historic Preservation. The President also referred to his memorandum of October 13, 1999, on protection of for-

est roadless areas (*Public Papers of the Presidents: William J. Clinton, 1999 Book II* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001) p. 1765).

The President's Radio Address

August 5, 2000

Good morning. Seven years ago this month we set out on a course to eliminate the deficit, invest in education, and open markets for American products overseas. By sticking to that path, we have turned record budget deficits into record surpluses and produced the longest economic expansion in history, over 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest minority unemployment rate on record. Income taxes for the typical family are the lowest now in 35 years, and we're on track to achieve something unimaginable a few years ago, a debt-free America by 2012.

Now, this is the right path for America. A path that allows us to pay down the debt, lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, keep investing in education, and cut taxes for middle class families. We can't retreat from this opportunity of a lifetime to keep our economy strong and move our country forward. That's why I'm vetoing legislation that represents the first installment of a fiscally reckless tax strategy.

Today's economic progress is the direct result of a commitment to commonsense, kitchen-table values, responsibility and fairness, putting first things first, not spending what we don't have, looking out for our children's future. To stay true to these values, I've consistently vowed to veto tax breaks that abandon our pledge of fiscal discipline. For without this commitment, we wouldn't have a surplus today; we wouldn't be paying down the debt; we wouldn't have lower interest rates, which have led to record business investment and an effective tax cut for typical families—\$2,000 in lower home mortgage payments, \$200 less in car payments, \$200 less in student loan payments.

Now once again, in spite of all this evidence, America is being asked to turn back. On Capitol Hill, the Republican majority has passed a series of expensive tax breaks to drain nearly a trillion

dollars from the projected surplus. On the campaign trail, they are proposing over another trillion dollars in tax giveaways.

If they support both the tax cuts this year and the tax cuts of their Republican Presidential campaign, they would drain over \$2 trillion from the projected surplus. And that's just what it is, projected; it's not money in the bank.

Even by Congress' own optimistic estimates, their total tax breaks would put us back into deficits. That means higher interest rates, which is like another tax increase on ordinary Americans.

So I asked the Republican leadership, do you really stand behind this \$2 trillion tax cut strategy? If so, how do you justify leaving nothing for Social Security or Medicare, nothing for a new Medicare prescription drug benefit or education? And how will we ever make America debt free?

Now let me be clear. I support tax cuts but tax cuts we can afford. We can't afford a \$2 trillion U-turn on the path of fiscal discipline and economic progress. That is not the way to continue our efforts to use these good times for great goals.

For 7½ years we've achieved those great goals in the economy, in education, in welfare reform, in health care, in crime, in the environment, in building one America. If we want to keep making progress, we've got to keep making good choices. And committing 100 percent of the surplus, that may or may not materialize, to tax cuts is not a good choice. There is a better way.

Earlier this summer, I made an offer to the Republican leadership that I would sign a marriage penalty relief law if they would pass an affordable, voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit available to all seniors and disabled Americans who need it. Unfortunately, they rejected my offer. They've got another chance, though. When they come back, we can work

together for a middle class tax cut to help Americans send their children to college, provide long-term care for elderly or disabled relatives, make child care more affordable, provide targeted marriage penalty tax relief. We can do that and still pay off the debt, strengthen Social Security and Medicare, create a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, and invest in education. We can do this. And that's what we ought to do. We ought to keep interest rates down and save the future for our children.

Let's not squander the surplus or this moment. Let's keep our economy strong, provide affordable tax relief, and extend our prosperity into the future. Let's do it together.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:18 p.m. on August 4 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 5. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 4 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Marriage Tax Relief Legislation

August 5, 2000

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 4810, the "Marriage Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2000," because it is poorly targeted and one part of a costly and regressive tax plan that reverses the principle of fiscal responsibility that has contributed to the longest economic expansion in history.

My Administration supports marriage penalty relief and has offered a targeted and fiscally responsible proposal in our fiscal year 2001 budget to provide it. However, I must oppose H.R. 4810. Combined with the numerous other tax bills approved by the Congress this year and supported by the congressional majority for next year, it would drain away the projected surplus that the American people have worked so hard to create. Even by the Congressional Budget Office's more optimistic projection, this tax plan would plunge America back into deficit and would leave nothing for lengthening the life of Social Security or Medicare; nothing for voluntary and affordable Medicare prescription drug benefits; nothing for education and school construction. Moreover, the congressional majority's tax plan would make it impossible for us to get America out of debt by 2012.

H.R. 4810 would cost more than \$280 billion over 10 years if its provisions were permanent, making it significantly more expensive than either of the bills originally approved by the House and the Senate. It is poorly targeted toward delivering marriage penalty relief—only

about 40 percent of the cost of H.R. 4810 actually would reduce marriage penalties. It also provides little tax relief to those families that need it most, while devoting a large fraction of its benefits to families with higher incomes.

Taking into account H.R. 4810, the fiscally irresponsible tax cuts passed by the House Ways and Means Committee this year provide about as much benefit to the top 1 percent of Americans as to the bottom 80 percent combined. Families in the top 1 percent get an average tax break of over \$16,000, while a middle-class family gets only \$220 on average. But if interest rates went up because of the congressional majority's plan by even one-third of one percent, then mortgage payments for a family with a \$100,000 mortgage would go up by \$270, leaving them worse off than if they had no tax cut at all.

We should have tax cuts this year, but they should be the right ones, targeted to working families to help our economy grow—not tax breaks that will help only a few while putting our prosperity at risk. I have proposed a program of targeted tax cuts that will give a middle-class American family substantially more benefits than the Republican plan at less than half the cost. Including our carefully targeted marriage penalty relief, two-thirds of the relief will go to the middle 60 percent of American families. Our tax cuts will also help to send our children to college, with a tax deduction or 28 percent tax credit for up to \$10,000 in college tuition

a year; help to care for family members who need long-term care, through a \$3,000 long-term care tax credit; help to pay for child care and to ease the burden on working families with three or more children; and help to fund desperately needed school construction.

And because our plan will cost substantially less than the tax cuts passed by the Congress, we'll still have the resources we need to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit; to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare; and to pay off the debt by 2012—so that we can keep interest rates low, keep our economy growing, and provide lower home mortgage, car, and college loan payments for the American people.

This surplus comes from the hard work and ingenuity of the American people. We owe it to them to make the best use of it—for all of them, and for our children's future.

Since the adjournment of the Congress has prevented my return of H.R. 4810 within the meaning of Article I, section 7, clause 2 of the Constitution, my withholding of approval from the bill precludes its becoming law. *The Pocket Veto Case*, 279 U.S. 655 (1929). In addition to withholding my signature and thereby invoking my constitutional power to “pocket veto” bills during an adjournment of the Congress, to avoid litigation, I am also sending H.R. 4810 to the House of Representatives with my objections, to leave no possible doubt that I have vetoed the measure.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 5, 2000.

Remarks at a Dinner for Gubernatorial Candidate Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland in Hyannis Port, Massachusetts August 5, 2000

Well, thank you very much. I've had a wonderful time. When I saw what a big crowd it was, I thought I had come to the wrong place. I thought you were just having a family reunion. [Laughter] I wanted to come here for a long time, and I'm honored to be here for Kathleen. I have said—every time I go to Maryland I say she is the finest Lieutenant Governor in America by a long stretch, but it is clearly true.

You heard Mark say this, but I came here not only because of my friendship for her and so many members of her family but because she did make Maryland the first State in the country to require community service for graduation from high school. That meant something to me. And she and Governor Glendening were out there on the frontlines fighting for gun safety legislation when the NRA was trying to beat their brains out and beat our brains out, and I haven't succeeded in Congress yet, but they did succeed in Maryland in passing sweeping gun safety legislation. And she deserves a lot of credit for it.

And I can say so much else about her, but I admire her so much. And she and her husband and her kids, they're the kind of family that

we ought to lift up in America. And I look forward to her elevation, and who knows, maybe someday I'll be knocking on doors for her when she's running for national office. I'd like to do that.

Now, let me say—Ethel, you may have to put me up tonight—[laughter]—and if so, that would tickle me, because Ethel's been sending me these raunchy Valentine cards for years. [Laughter] And I'm completely in love with her, and I keep trying to get some tabloid to write something sleazy about it, and I haven't been able to so far. [Laughter]

But the reason you may have to put me up tonight is, on the way out, Hillary said, “You're going to this fundraiser for Kathleen tonight.” I said, “Yes.” And she said, “And last week you went to one for Patrick.” I said, “Yes.” She said, “And a couple of weeks ago you went to one for Teddy.” She said, “But it's your wife that's running for Senator from New York in 90 days”—[laughter]—“where it costs \$30 million-plus to run.” She said, “Maybe they'll just put you up tonight.” [Laughter] And then she said she was glad I was going and wished she

could be here. But I thank you—thank you, Ethel, for being my friend all these years.

I want to thank Joe Kennedy. I miss him so much in the Congress, and I was reminded of how much I missed him when I saw him up here speaking tonight. And I'd say Mark has a good future, wouldn't you? *[Applause]* He did a great job over here.

When Ted and Vicki were taking me through the house tonight with Ethel, or all the houses, and Sarge and Eunice and Pat went with us, and Sarge told me in a couple of weeks he was going to be 85 years old, I thought, "Well, Mark, you've got another 40 years to run for office. You don't have to even be in a hurry. It's great." *[Laughter]*

Let me just say one word, too, if I might, about Senator Kennedy. He has been so good to me and to Hillary and to our family and so wonderful to work with. And when we suffered the terrible disappointment of losing the Congress in the 1994 elections, you know, a lot of people wanted to quit. Some people did quit, because the Democrats had been the majority for quite a long while, except for a 6-year interruption in the Senate. And the thing that I liked most about Ted Kennedy is that he doesn't understand the meaning of the word quit.

You know, he was sort of like me. I woke up the next day, and I said, "Boy, we got a terrible licking. We've got to figure out why it happened and go take it back and keep working for the things we believe in, and in the meanwhile, we could certainly stop them from doing what they're trying to do." And Ted thought it was a pretty good fight.

I cannot tell you what an inspiration he has been not only to me but to people in the Congress, just reminding them that nobody's got a right to be in the majority; nobody's got a right to be in office. But we do if we have the office, a responsibility—we have a responsibility to get up every day and make something good happen. And that's what he does. And I should tell you, I have said many times that there would be no way in the world any well-informed historian could make a list of the 10 greatest United States Senators from the beginning of the Republic in the 18th century without putting Ted Kennedy's name on it. That's absolutely true.

I also want to thank my old friend Brendan Byrne, the former Governor of New Jersey, for

being here tonight. And two of my former Ambassadors, Tom Siebert, who was my Ambassador to Sweden, and Elizabeth Bagley, who represented us in Portugal, are here tonight. I thank them for being here. The chairman of our Democratic Convention in L.A., Terry McAuliffe, is here tonight. He's probably the one who has really been copying your license number down. *[Laughter]*

Let me also say that I first came to this place—not to this compound; I've never been here before—but I first came here 32 years ago with my college roommate. And I nearly drowned, actually, swimming off the waters here. It was just a year after then-Senator Robert Kennedy had filled in for his brother at a meeting that my class at Georgetown sponsored, along with a Massachusetts club. And my roommate, Tommy Caplan, got him to come. And he came with me tonight, and I think that's pretty sweet that after 32 years we're still bumming around together. So I want to thank him for coming.

Now, I want to stop walking down memory lane for just a minute and tell you that I believe that Kathleen represents the best of what I want for the future. I'm really proud of my wife for running for the Senate seat once held by Robert Kennedy in New York. I am glad that there are devoted people who still believe public service is noble and worthy and worth spending your life on. And I'm always tickled when the people who run against them think they can't beat them head up, so they just try to breed personal resentment against them, as if public service were some sort of possession. Well, for some of them it might be, but for us, it's an opportunity to serve.

And all the memories that are piled high here, from President Kennedy and Senator Kennedy and Ambassador Joe Kennedy before, all the memories that are embodied in the wonderful pictures I saw in the house, and the sacrifice of their older brother in World War II, and all the things that this farflung network of younger people have done, really make a case for the primacy of citizenship.

What's that got to do with anything? Well, the Republicans just had their convention. We're about to have ours. Kathleen wants to run for Governor. A lot of the other young people here are going to run for things, themselves. Some of you may run who aren't even related to the Kennedys. *[Laughter]* And what I would like

to say to you is that what happens this year will have a lot to do with the world in which you grow, in which you raise your children, and if you're fortunate enough to be elected, the world in which you serve.

I have done everything I could do for 7½ years to turn our country around. We were in a time of economic distress, social division, political decline in 1992. And we not only have the strongest economy in our history, but this is a more just nation. We have the lowest minority unemployment we ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, the lowest single-parent household poverty rate in 46 years, a lower crime rate, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years—it's a more just society—the lowest child poverty rate in a generation.

But the issue is, what are we going to do about it? I was pleased that the Republicans said one thing at their convention I really like. They did acknowledge these were good times. [Laughter] And it was both perceptive and generous of them to do that. [Laughter] But of course, they differed about what caused it. I noticed it was a totally different take than they had back when Mr. Reagan was in office. And they differed about what we ought to do with it. That's good. That's what makes America a great and thriving democracy.

But what I want to say to you is that what you're about to do this year as citizens—and this election is every bit as important as the election in 1992. In fact, it may be more important. Why? Because you didn't have to be a genius in 1992 to know that the country was in the ditch, and if we were going to get out of it we had to change. But it takes some real thought and analysis and kind of hooking your brain in with your heart to feel your way and think your way through what we should do with this phenomenal time we're living in.

And one of the things that has concerned me, as President and as a citizen and as someone who is not on the ballot this year, is all the stories I read saying that people think the economy's gone along so well that it doesn't really much matter what happens in this election, or stories I read that say that there's really not much difference in the public's mind between the two candidates.

What I would like to say to you is, there are three things you need to remember about this election: one is, it is profoundly important; two is, there are huge differences; three is, only

the Democrats want you to know what they are. What does that tell you about who to vote for?

If you see the reports in the paper today, finally a kind of a reassessment of the convention that was just adjourned, and interviewing all these undecided voters and they said, "It was really nice. It was very appealing and all, but where are the specifics?" There's a reason they weren't there, because they can't do that—not and win. [Laughter] And the object is to win. So I say to all of you, if you believe in the spirit of public service and the piling high of sacrifice that is embodied by this magnificent piece of history that Ethel's made it possible for us to share tonight, you've got to go out and do your part in this election. I can tell you, it would be a lot easier for Kathleen to be Governor if Al Gore is President. It will be a lot easier if Dick Gephardt is Speaker. If Tom Daschle is the majority leader, it will be easier.

And let me just say, just very briefly, you have got to tell the people you know who are not here tonight—every one of you has friends who are not as political as you are. I hope you do. Otherwise, you'd all go nuts if everybody were like us. [Laughter] Every one of you do. What are you going to tell them about this election? The first thing I want you to tell them is, it is a really big election. What a country does with an unprecedented moment of prosperity may be a bigger test of its character than what you do in adversity.

There's not a person in this audience tonight over 30 who hasn't made at least one mistake in life, at a time—not because it was so tough but because things were going so well you thought there was just no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Isn't that right? Everybody—if you're over 30, that's happened to you. Now, that's all I'm worried about in this election. If we get that out of the way, the rest of it's fine.

What are the differences? What does it matter? Let me just mention two or three. I think this is a moment for laying before the American people the great challenges and great opportunities of the 21st century. I think we ought to say this is not a time for complacency. Who knows when we'll have times this good again. We have to think about the long term and do the big things.

We have to deal with the aging of America. We have to deal with the fact that we've got the largest and most diverse group of school-children we've ever had. We have to deal with our opportunities to spread this economy to people in places who have been left behind in our prosperity. We have to deal with environmental challenges. We have to deal with the challenges, as well as the opportunities, presented to us by the revolution in information technology and in biomedical sciences. We have to fulfill our responsibilities around the world to help people deal with the challenges of AIDS, of malaria, of TB, of crushing debt in the poorest countries in the world. We have to deal with new security threats. There's a whole world out there. We should be thinking big, big, big, big.

Now, let me just deal with two or three things. The economy, one of the reasons I think Al Gore ought to be President and Hillary ought to be in the Senate and Ted ought to be a committee chairman again is that we didn't quadruple the debt of this country in 12 years, and we got rid of the deficit in 6, and we're going to have \$400 billion of the debt paid down, and we still have the lowest average tax burden on average families we've had in 35 years, and we've doubled investment in education.

Now, it's a good economic strategy. But the American people have got a big choice to make here—huge. And they don't understand yet how different the two strategies are. Our strategy is, let's modernize what got us this far; let's keep paying down the debt, keep investing in education and science and technology and health care and the environment; give the American people a tax cut we can afford. In other words, do those things and then have a tax cut with the rest, and help people send their kids to college, pay for long-term care for the elderly and the disabled, increase tax benefits for lower income people with lots of kids, help people save for retirement, moderate the marriage penalty but don't, for goodness sakes, go back to the bad old days of big deficits and high interest rates.

Now, it took me a while to say that. Their plan is so much easier, and it sounds better at first. They say, "Hey, we've got this big surplus. It's your money. We're going to give it back to you." Doesn't take very long to say, and it sounds so good. Well, there's a few problems with it. The first problem is, they don't

save any money for their promises. If they do what they say they're going to do on Social Security, that will cost a trillion dollars. If they do what they say they're going to do on defense, that will cost another \$200 or \$300 billion. And then there will be emergencies along the way.

But forget about all that. Their tax program alone would take away the entire projected surplus. The big problem with their economic policy is, it's a projected surplus. You know, did you ever get one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon and the Publishers Clearing House? [Laughter] "You may have won \$10 million." That's a projected surplus. [Laughter]

You can use this, and you don't have to give me credit. [Laughter] You've got to clarify the choices. So tell people, say, "When you got that letter, if you went out the next day and spent the \$10 million, you should support them. Otherwise, you had better stick with us and keep this economy going." [Laughter]

Now, let me tell you. We got an economic study last week that said that the Vice President's plan, as opposed to the Republican plan, which would keep paying the debt down, would keep interest rates at least—at least—one percent lower over a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you in tax cuts effectively? It means \$250 billion less in home mortgage payments, \$30 billion less in car payments, and \$15 billion less in student loan payments. Never mind lower business loans and all that. This is a huge deal.

Let me give you another example. It's very important to Kathleen and to the whole Kennedy family and that affects the Governors big-time because it will have a big impact on the crime rate. Gun safety—what's our position? Our position is, I was right to sign the Brady bill, and the previous Republican administration was wrong to veto it. And since then, 500,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers haven't been able to get handguns.

Now, you know what they said to me when I signed the Brady bill—the "againners," the ones that were against it? They said, "This bill will do no good because all the real crooks buy their guns at gun shows or urban flea markets, so this won't do any good." Well, it turned out they were wrong. We've got a half million people that couldn't get guns.

So now, we want to close the loophole and apply to gun shows and urban flea markets and put child trigger locks on and stop these large

capacity ammunition clips from being imported into America and getting around our assault weapons ban. And the same crowd that once said that's where the criminals got their guns, they don't want us to do that now.

So our position is—and let me just faithfully repeat the Vice President's position—close the gun show loophole, mandate child trigger locks, ban large capacity ammunition clips, and establish a photo ID licensing system for people that want to buy handguns so they have to pass a background check and show they can use the gun safely. Now, that's his position.

Their position is, more concealed weapons, even in houses of worship. Now, it's not like there's no evidence here. This is like the economy. That's the last point I should have made on the economy. It's not like you don't have any evidence. We tried it their way for 12 years. We've tried it our way for 8 years. Just ask your friends to make a judgment on the evidence.

The same thing is true on crime. Crime has gone down for 8 years in a row. Gun crime is down 35 percent. Listen, this is a huge issue. There are people's lives on the line based on who the American people think is right here.

And I could go through every—I just want to mention one more, because it's really important to me, and Senator Kennedy talked a lot about it, and Kathleen did. If God came to me tonight when I laid my head down and said, "This is the last night of your life, and you're not going to be able to finish your term, but I will give you one wish for America," I would not wish to continue the prosperity. I wouldn't wish for zero crime rate. I would wish for us finally to be one America, to be undivided by race, by gender, by income, by sexual orientation, by all these things.

Because, you know, we all find in our personal lives and our public lives that most of life's greatest wounds are self-inflicted. America can solve any problem. We can meet any challenge. We can overcome any mistake, except the poison in the human heart. So I've worked hard for that. That's why Ted and I are trying to raise the minimum wage again. That's why I want to broaden the family and medical leave law. That's why we did have that event for people who are mentally retarded, but fully able to do so much, on the White House lawn. That's why I'm for the hate crimes legislation and the

employment nondiscrimination legislation and all the civil rights initiatives we've undertaken.

And you know, we're just different there. We're for the hate crimes bill, and their leadership's against it in Washington because gays are protected. We're for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act", and they're not. And we want to raise the minimum wage, and they don't. And I could just give you lots and lots of examples.

And you know, we really do believe that the people that served this dinner tonight ought to have as much of a chance to send their kids to college of those of us who ate it. That's what we believe. That's what we believe. So I ask you to think about that. And I want to make one last point.

Kathleen introduced my longtime friend Dr. Craig Venter there, who has done so much to break through the barriers of ignorance on the human genome. There's one other thing I think you ought to think about in this election. It is very important that people be elected to important positions who understand the future.

I used to joke that before Craig and the people from NIH came to the White House the other day for us to announce that the sequencing—the first rough sequencing of the human genome had been completed—I had to read for a year to understand what I was going to say for those 15 minutes. *[Laughter]*

But you know, there are a lot of issues that have to be faced. How are we going to deal with all the implications when young mothers get to bring a little gene card home with their babies? What would Ethel's life have been like? How would it have been different? How much more hope and less worry would there have been? And would there have been more worry, if when every one of those little Kennedy tots she brought home from the hospital, had been a little gene card there that said, "Okay, this is the things that—now, Kathleen, this is the things that are likely to happen to her that are good, and the things that are likely to happen to her that are bad"? That's going to happen. And some people will want to use that information to deny people employment or a pay raise or a promotion or health insurance. I think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands all that. And I think it's important.

Al Gore—I noticed the Republicans made fun of him on whether he invented the Internet

or not—which, by the way, if you read the New Republic, you'll see it's a totally bum rap, like a lot of the things they lay on him. But I'll tell you this. He sponsored legislation years and years ago when the Internet was the private province of a handful of physicists to make it broadly available to all people. And then in 1996, when we passed the telecommunications law, the Vice President said, "We can't do this unless we have an E-rate that guarantees that every single school and hospital in America can afford to hook up to the Internet so all of our kids can get a world-class education." I think we ought to have somebody that understands that in the White House—all these things, and what they matter.

So when you leave here tonight, another thing you'll remember most is seeing Ethel and Ted and all this younger generation, thinking that Mark and Kathleen have such enormous potential. But it's important that you do your job now. And it's important that we not sit on our laurels over the last 8 years.

Look, I'm grateful that I got a chance to serve as President. I listened to a lot of those guys at the convention. It sounded to me like they thought we had interrupted the ordinary flow of things when I got elected. [Laughter] I remember it being struck in '92 how they really thought there would never be anybody in our party elected President again. They kept referring to me as the Governor of a small southern State. [Laughter] And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do.

Listen to me now. I still do. Nobody is entitled to any of these jobs. If my life had taken one or two different turns I'd be home doing real estate deeds in some law office right now. So I don't feel like a lot of them do. I'm grateful for every day that I had here. I am very grateful. And I don't think—I don't believe—I don't think anybody's entitled to serve. But I think that before anyone serves, the people have to make sure they know what they're doing. Now, you hear me tonight, and you can go out and tell people this. Tell people what the economic differences are. Tell them what the law enforcement differences are. Tell them what the environmental, the educational, the health care differences are. Tell them what the differences are in terms of what kind of national community we're going to be. Talk to them about these future issues. Climate change is very real, folks.

I know it's cool tonight, and it's nice. If we don't do something, within 20 or 30 years the Everglades and the sugarcane fields in Louisiana will start flooding. The polar ice cap's already breaking up at an alarming rate. It's a big deal. I think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands it.

And I tell you, I've just tried to have a talk tonight. I haven't given much of a speech. But I know this: Things can get away from you. Ted said in a wistful way when he was talking tonight that—he didn't say it exactly this way, but I will say it exactly this way—before we broke the record for the longest period of economic expansion in history, the last longest economic expansion in history was between 1961 and 1969—the Kennedy-Johnson years. And I graduated from high school in 1964, and I thought, just like, apparently, a lot of voters today thought—thought, "Man, you couldn't mess this economy up with a stick of dynamite."

Unemployment was low; inflation was low; growth was high—no problem. I thought all the civil rights problems were going to be solved in the courts or in the Congress. I didn't dream Vietnam would get out of hand. I never dreamed we would have riots in the streets or that people I literally adored could be killed. But it all happened in 4 short years. And then, the last longest economic expansion in history was history.

You need to nourish and cherish this moment. I have waited for 35 years for my country to be once again in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children. I am grateful that this family has given so much to that end. But in the end, we rise or fall on the good judgment and the good service of the people. Do not blow this election. The best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris Glendening of Maryland; J. Craig Venter, president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corp.; Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson; Lieutenant Governor Townsend's husband, David; daughters Kate, Kerry, Meaghan, and Maeve; cousin, Mark Shriver; mother, Ethel Kennedy; uncles Sargent

Shriver and Senator Edward M. (Teddy) Kennedy, and his wife, Vicki; brother Joseph P. Kennedy III; and aunts Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Patricia Kennedy.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

August 6, 2000

Thank you. Well, first of all, I want to thank the Biondis for having us back at their home this year and for raising all this money. And I want to thank the Iscols and the others who helped them. And I want to thank all of you for helping Hillary.

I can hardly add anything to what Carol said; I thought that was great. I hope we got it on tape somewhere. *[Laughter]* But I would like to say just a couple of things about Hillary and about the election in a larger sense.

It is not often that someone runs for the Senate to do work that he or she has been preparing to do for 30 years. When I met Hillary, in 1971 in the springtime, wearing a yellow shirt—that's why I wore it tonight—*[laughter]*—I can't believe I said that. *[Laughter]* Anyway, she was working on children's issues. She wrote an article when we were in law school on the best interests of the child and what they really meant—one, I might add, that the Republicans attacked her for in 1992 when I ran for President, and one I was only too happy to defend.

She took an extra year when we were in law school to work at the Yale Child Studies Center in the Yale hospital, so she could learn more about children's biological development and the nature of child development and how it would impact on the law and what we could do to better give our kids—all of our kids, including those that grew up in the most disadvantaged circumstances—a decent shot at life.

In the 8 years that I have been President she, pioneered sweeping changes to make adoption easier, including adoption across racial lines, to take better care of foster kids and help them when they move out of foster care just because they're 18 years old, and before we passed the recent legislation in most States of this country, there was nothing for them. They were just out there on their own, abandoned, lost, forgotten.

She held the first conference ever at the White House on early childhood and brain de-

velopment. She worked on violence against children and so many other issues that I think are central to what kind of country we're going to be. And along the way, she did a lot of other things.

On the way in here tonight, she gave a White House millennial treasures designation to the tabernacle here on Martha's Vineyard and the work that's been done there.

When we started thinking about how we ought to celebrate the year 2000, because we knew it would be our last year in the White House, Hillary came up with this idea that we ought to celebrate the millennium by honoring the past and imagining the future. So she launched this unbelievable lecture series that some of you have probably seen or logged on to your Internet site or seen publicized, on all the major topics that will dominate the 21st century, and at the same time a massive attempt to save the historic treasures of America from every little community like this one, all the way to the Star-Spangled Banner, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. And we recently announced the designation of the cottage that Abraham Lincoln and his family used at the Old Soldiers' Home in Washington, which many other First Families in the latter half of the 19th century used as a summer home.

And Dick Moe, the head of the National Historic Preservation Trust, got up and said that Hillary's millennial treasures effort was the largest single historic preservation effort in the entire history of the United States of America.

And there's 50 other things I could have said, I have forgotten, or left out. *[Laughter]* But the main point is that you couldn't have anybody who knows more and who cares more and who has shown more consistency in the Senate.

Now, the other thing I want to say is, as somebody who is not on the ballot this year, I've worked as hard as I know how to turn this country around from where it was in 1992—

[*applause*]*—stop—[laughter]**—timeout—*and if I might, in the metaphors of our two campaigns, to put the American people first and to build a bridge to the 21st century. But every election is about the future, and this election presents quite a stern test to the American people, because we have to decide what to do with the most momentous prosperity we've ever had, when all the social indicators are going in the right direction, when we face an absence of flaming crisis at home and glaring threat to our existence from beyond our borders.

And it is very easy at a time like this for people to believe, A, that the election is not important, and B, that it doesn't make much difference who gets elected. And differences tend to get blurred. I don't want to do anything to undermine the happy feeling the American people have now, the upbeat and the positive feeling, but you can make a huge mistake in good times by thinking there's no penalty in failing to analyze your situation and acting on what's out there.

We may never have another chance in our lifetimes to build the future of our dreams for our kids. And there are profound consequences to this election. And I'll just mention two, because I want Hillary to talk and I want you to hear from her, but I want you to think about two things that affect the Presidential race and the Senate race. I could mention 10, but I want you to focus on the two.

One is, if you like the fact that we're becoming a more just society where there is less discrimination against people because of their race, their gender, their income, their sexual orientation, where the crime rates are going down, the welfare rolls are going down, the single-parent household poverty rate's at a 46-year low, the female unemployment rate at a 40-year low, the minority unemployment rate the lowest ever recorded, it is important if you want to keep that going not only to have good social policies but to keep this economy going and to make extra efforts to spread its benefits to the people in places that are left behind. The number one economic issue in this race, a huge difference between Hillary and her opponent and between the Vice President and his opponent, is what we intend to do with the economy and the surplus.

Their line is, "It's your money. We're going to give it back to you in a tax cut, all of it." Now, that doesn't give them any money left

to pay for their own spending promises. It gives no money left to pay for their Social Security promises. And I can tell you this: If you partially privatize Social Security and you guarantee the benefits that are there and the people who are about to be there, that costs another trillion dollars, at least, that you've just got to put in there just to protect the benefits. And Dr. Modigliani is up there nodding his head. I have a Nobel Prize-winning laureate here, backing up my budgetary figures. So you've already spent—just with the tax cut promises and the Social Security promises, you already spent 50 percent more than the projected surplus.

What happens? Interest rates will go up at least a point over a decade, taking away the benefits of any tax cut from 80 percent of the American people, undermining the health of the economy, undermining our ability to grow, and undermining the security the American people need to deal forthrightly with our social problems and to build one America. Plus which, the most important thing is, this is a projected surplus.

Some of you were at the Kennedy event last night over in Hyannis Port, and I said this is kind of like one of those letters you get in the mail from Ed McMahon and the Publishers Clearing House. [*Laughter*] "You may have won \$10 million." And you may have. But then again, you may not. And if you spent the \$10 million when you got that letter, you should support them. [*Laughter*] But if you didn't, you should support Hillary and Al Gore and keep this economy going.

The only other thing I wanted to say is, this election is also a choice about choice—for the White House and for the Senate. I hope that no one in the Democratic Convention will do what some in the Republican Convention did by illusion in what they used to do to make a living, which is to criticize our opponents as people. I think we should assume that they're honorable, they're patriotic, they love their country, they love their families, and they'll do their best to do what they believe is right.

They don't believe that we should keep *Roe v. Wade*. That's what they honestly believe in their heart, and they have a perfect right to believe that. But there will be two to four appointments on the Supreme Court next time. And I hope Al Gore will be making them. But it's something you need to think about in the Presidential race. But you should never forget

that no one gets appointed to a major position like that who is not confirmed by the Senate. So it matters. Every last Senate seat is of critical importance in this Presidential race. Those are just two issues. As I said, there are 8 or 10 others that are of profound importance.

But if you want to do something for Hillary in this election, and I'll get down to the last here, one of the things that really hurts me the most—and if you listen to the tenor of the campaign against her—is basically, “Don't vote for her because she's not from here. Don't vote for her because, why is she doing this? Don't vote for her—let me see if I can get you to resent her.”

And you know that old aphorism, “Whom the Gods would destroy, they first make angry.” If the voters in New York can get really confused, that's the only way she can lose. Because if they vote for the strongest person, for the best qualified person, for the person who can do the most, and for the person with whom they agree, she wins. They know that.

That's why you have seen the campaign unfolding the way it is. If ever anybody deserves a chance to serve in public life, she does. But

no one—no one—but the truth is, no one deserves public office—no one—[*laughter*]*—she, more than anybody I know, but nobody. The reason that people in New York ought to vote for her is, it's good for them and for their kids and their future. That's what democracy is all about.*

So the last thing I want to tell you is, when you leave here tonight, if you're from New York or if you know anybody from New York, the thing she most needs is for people like you to tell other people they know, “I know this woman. She is a good person. She is a great public servant, and she ought to be the next Senator.”

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Frank J. Biondi, Jr., and his wife, Carol; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; 1985 Nobel Prize in Economics recipient Franco Modigliani; and Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House spokesman.

Remarks on Signing the Oceans Act of 2000 in Martha's Vineyard

August 7, 2000

Save the bill! [*Laughter*] Another triumph for the Secret Service. Give him a hand. [*Applause*] That was great.

Let me welcome all of you here and thank you for joining me today. I want to begin by just thanking the people of Martha's Vineyard for once again making all of my family, Hillary and Chelsea and I, feel so much at home. We love coming back to this place year after year. And in the years that I have served as President, it's meant more to us than I can possibly say, to be able to come here for refuge, to enjoy this beautiful, beautiful place, and to have the contacts we've had with our old friends and meet a lot of new people, as well. So I want to thank you for that.

This year, because of the year it is and the activities of my wife and the things that I have to do, our vacation is a lot shorter than it normally is. But I think it's a wonderful thing that

we can do this today here on our last day. I want to thank the Coast Guard personnel for making this beautiful site available to us, in the shadow of this great old lighthouse.

I'd also like to mention a couple of people who can't be with us today that I want to pay homage to. The first and foremost is Senator Fritz Hollings of South Carolina. He sponsored the legislation that I am signing today, and he has been a champion of our oceans for his entire career. And Hillary and I want to thank him. Hillary and I and the Vice President and Tipper Gore were all part of our Oceans Conference in Monterey 2 years ago, and it was a very moving event which led to the passage of this bill today.

I also want to acknowledge the contributions of a sometime resident of Martha's Vineyard, my friend Ted Danson, who has also been a great champion of the oceans and who was a

part of our Oceans Conference—and, Mary, thank you for coming today—this is a good day for him, as well.

The secrets of the sea have forever captured the human imagination. We are drawn to the stories of exploration, navigation, and here in Martha's Vineyard, we're drawn to the tale of that not-so-little fish with the considerable appetite who was filmed here 25 years ago. [*Laughter*] After a quarter century, though, I think it's safe for us all to go back in the water, and Steven Spielberg said so.

I think it's important today to remember that oceans are more than a place for recreation. They have a central effect on the weather and our climate system. Coral reefs and coastal waters are a storehouse of biodiversity. They offer new hope for medicine and science. Oceans are also essential to our economy. Through tourism, fishing, and other industries, ocean resources support one out of every six jobs in the entire United States.

For more than 7½ years, Vice President Gore and I have worked to safeguard our oceans and our beaches. We've quadrupled funds for national marine sanctuaries, restricted offshore drilling, rebuilt threatened fisheries, protected coral reefs, and strengthened water quality standards along our coast to protect against pollution.

This year I sent the Congress a lands legacy budget that proposes record funding for ocean and coastal protection, and I hope Congress will pass it before they go home. But we must do more, and we must keep looking ahead.

Two years ago, on the Monterey Peninsula in northern California, we brought together scientists, conservationists, and business leaders for the first-ever Oceans Conference. I called on Congress to create an oceans commission to continue the important work we began there. Thanks to Senator Hollings, we're following through on that commitment in this bill that I will soon sign, the Oceans Act of 2000, legislation to help chart a 21st century strategy for the protection and sustainable use of our oceans and coasts.

The legislation establishes a national Commission to improve our stewardship of the sea. Above all, this bill is about setting a vision to ensure that our beaches are clean, our oceans are protected, our coastal economies remain strong.

We know that when we protect our oceans, we're protecting our future. It is now time to do that. It's been more than 30 years since the last oceans commission, the Stratton Commission, laid the foundation for Federal oceans policy, which led to the creation of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. But the pressures on our oceans and coasts continue to mount. Americans continue to be drawn to the oceans. More than half our citizens live in a coastal area. Nearly half of all new development occurs along the coast. But we know better than ever that oceans have limits. They can be overfished, overpolluted. Poisonous runoff from the Mississippi River alone has created a dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico that is almost as large now as the entire State of Massachusetts.

These are some of the challenges to be addressed by the new Commission. But they will also look for new opportunities in our oceans, exploring ways we can all benefit from new technologies and discoveries. For example, in recent years, we've learned that blood from the horseshoe crab provides a vital antibacterial agent. And a potential anticancer drug may come from a deep-sea sponge. This is just the beginning.

There's no better place to sign this legislation than here, because of the longstanding link to the sea the people of Massachusetts have. The maritime tradition stretches back over 300 years. Marine research was pioneered in nearby Woods Hole starting in the 1870's. Now we build on that proud tradition as we launch a 21st century course for our oceans policy.

President Kennedy once said, "We are tied to the ocean. And when we go back to the sea, whether it is to sail or to watch it, we're going back from whence we came." By going back from whence we came, we prepare a better future for our children. This is a good day for that, and I'm glad it's happening here.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:41 a.m. at the U.S. Coast Guard Station at West Chop Lighthouse. In his remarks, he referred to actor Ted Danson, president and cofounder, American Oceans Campaign, and his wife, actress Mary Steenburgen; and movie producer/director Steven Spielberg. S. 2327, approved August 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106-256.

Statement on Signing the Oceans Act of 2000

August 7, 2000

Today, I am pleased to approve S. 2327, the "Oceans Act of 2000." This legislation would establish a "Commission on Ocean Policy," to make recommendations to the President and the Congress for a coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy.

The United States is an ocean nation. Our ocean territory of over 4 million square miles is the largest and richest in the world. Over thirty years have passed since the Stratton Commission conducted a comprehensive examination of our Nation's ocean and coastal resources. The work of that Commission led to many significant achievements in the early 1970s, including enactment of major legislation to protect the oceans and coastal areas and creation of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. It is appropriate, especially in the wake of the many recent scientific and technological advancements and pressures facing the oceans and our coasts, to re-examine our Nation's relationship to the sea.

My Administration has undertaken several initiatives that will support the work of the Commission. In 1998, I, along with Vice President Gore and the First Lady, participated in the first-ever National Ocean Conference, which was attended by over 500 individuals representing all sectors of the ocean community, from government to industry, science to conservation. At that conference, I called on the Congress to create an oceans commission to help forge a new strategy to preserve the incomparable natural resources of our oceans and seas. The Vice President and I launched a series of new steps to restore coral reefs, rebuild marine fisheries, preserve freedom of the seas, and further explore the ocean. My Administration's Oceans Report Task Force is currently implementing several initiatives related to ocean exploration, coral reef protection, safe navigation, environmentally sound and economically viable aquaculture, improved fisheries enforcement, and the establishment of an international observation network to better understand the role of oceans in climate. The Task Force will be beneficial to the Commission as it begins its important work next year.

My Administration's Coral Reef Task Force has produced a National Action Plan to protect our Nation's precious corals and, earlier this year, I directed Federal agencies to establish an integrated national system of Marine Protected Areas. Most recently, I announced an Ocean Exploration initiative to develop a national ocean exploration strategy and work toward solving some of the mysteries of the ocean through the development of new technologies and newly discovered organisms with medical and commercial potential.

In approving this measure, I note that section 4(a) states that the President "shall submit to Congress a statement of proposals to implement or respond to the Commission's recommendations" concerning a national ocean policy, which may include recommendations for changes to Federal law. The Recommendations Clause of the Constitution provides that the President "shall from time to time . . . recommend to [the Congress] Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient," U.S. Const. Art. II, §3. That Clause protects the President's authority to formulate and present his own recommendations, which includes the power to decline to offer any recommendation. Accordingly, to avoid any infringement on the President's constitutionally protected policy-making prerogatives, I construe section 4(a) not to extend to the submission of proposals or responses that the President finds it unnecessary or inexpedient to present.

I am disappointed that S. 2327 restricts the President's appointment of 12 of the 16 members of the Commission to nominees of the leadership of the Senate and House of Representatives. Additionally, I believe the Commission should focus on domestic, non-military, ocean, and coastal activities.

I congratulate the congressional supporters of this legislation, especially Senator Hollings. I am pleased that there is a renewed national interest in the ocean, including a growing sense of the opportunities to utilize marine and coastal resources, and a sense of stewardship to manage these resources in a sustainable manner. As I have said before, I consider preservation of our living oceans to be a sacred legacy for all time

to come. S. 2327 will enhance our understanding of the ocean and contribute to shaping U.S. ocean policy.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 7, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2327, approved August 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106–256.

Exchange With Reporters in Martha's Vineyard *August 7, 2000*

Senator Joseph I. Lieberman

Q. What do you make of Gore's selection of Senator Lieberman?

The President. Well, first of all, this is a very important choice, and the Vice President is going to make his announcement tomorrow, so I don't want to comment on that. But I'll be glad to tell you what I think of Senator Lieberman. He's been a friend of mine for 30 years. I supported him when I was a law student at Yale, and he was running for the State Senate—he wasn't even 30 years old then—and I think he's one of the most outstanding people in public life.

I've worked with him for 15 years or more through the Democratic Leadership Council. He's a bold thinker. He's always full of new ideas, and he's supported the changes that we've made over the last 8 years that have turned America around and moved America forward. I think he's just an extraordinary guy. I like him. I know his family. I like his family members, whom I know. I just think he's an amazing person.

And we've talked a lot over the years about the Middle East peace process and every con-

ceivable domestic issue. He's an extraordinary, extraordinary human being, as well as a longtime friend of mine. So I think he's terrific.

I think that the important thing now is—I know you'll have a lot of questions you want to ask me and everybody else, but I'd rather not say anything else today. Let's let the Vice President make his announcement tomorrow, and then I'll be glad to answer any other questions you have.

But I think right now, you just need to know that I think he's wonderful, and he's been a wonderful friend to me, and he's been great for America these last 8 years with what he's done in the Senate. And he's been great for our party with what he's done through the Democratic Leadership Council. So I'm very happy about Joe Lieberman. But I think we ought to let the announcement be made by the Vice President. You guys ask the questions later. I'll be ready to answer all the questions.

NOTE: The exchange began at noon at the U.S. Coast Guard Station at West Chop Lighthouse. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on the Anniversary of the United States Embassy Bombings in Kenya and Tanzania *August 7, 2000*

I join all Americans in remembering the lives lost 2 years ago today in the bombing of our Embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. Twelve dedicated Americans perished on that day, together with 44 Kenyan and Tanzanian citizens working to support our diplomatic efforts, and more than 200 other innocent people.

The targets of this crime were doing so much good: helping Africans and each other to promote peace and democracy, to fight poverty and disease, to protect the environment, and to aid American citizens in need. I believe they were targets precisely because they were dedicated to principles of tolerance, understanding, and

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cooperation across frontiers. The terrorists took from us our colleagues, friends, and loved ones, but they have failed utterly to deter us from advancing these principles around the world.

Today we remember that, in many ways, the men and women who serve America in our diplomatic missions endure as much danger and

hardship as the men and women who serve America in our military. As long as the world is as it is, we cannot eliminate the risk. But we can and must give them the support they need to minimize that risk, and the backing they deserve to achieve America's goals in the world.

Remarks at a Lunch With Firefighters in Burgdorf Junction, Idaho August 8, 2000

Scott, I want to thank you for this. And I want to thank Dave Alexander for making me feel welcome here. And I just want to say I appreciate what you're doing. I could have used this about 7½ years ago, I think, when I got to Washington. There was a lot of underbrush that needed cutting there. [Laughter] I will treasure this for the rest of my life. Thank you.

I wanted to begin today, if I might, by thanking your Governor, Dirk Kempthorne, for coming out here with me, and Senator Larry Craig and Helen and Mike—both your Members of Congress are here from Idaho. And I'm very grateful to them for that. Let's give them a hand for being here and for the support they've given you. [Applause]

And of course, as Secretary Glickman said, our Secretary of Interior, Bruce Babbitt, came today, along with Louis Caldera, the Secretary of the Army, and Mike Dombeck, who is your chief of the Forest Service. And mostly we came here to say thanks.

I got to fly over at least some of the fires, and it was early morning, and I know they haven't reared their ugly heads yet, but I have some sense of what you're doing. I also got to see some places where you had succeeded in changing the course of the fire and limiting its reach, and I appreciate that very much. I know that Mother Nature will burn in our forests one way or the other, but it matters how it happens. It matters that people don't die. It matters that property is saved. It matters that precious and irreplaceable things are saved. And you're doing that.

I know a lot of the firefighters have been working here for weeks and weeks, and probably for months. Given all the problems we've had with wildfires this summer, you probably know

we've already lost 4 million acres, which is about twice the 10-year average, before this. So we're in for a rough summer, and I know how hard it is on you.

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation to the people from the military who have come up from Fort Hood to teach you that one loud word in the English language. [Laughter] And I heard there are some marines here, too, somewhere, doing some work in this area, and I thank them. But obviously, I'm especially proud of this group from Fort Hood because their leader, Lieutenant Colonel Dell Williams, was my Army military aide before he got a real job with you guys. I told him today I was glad to see him having to do real work after having that White House job for a good while. But it didn't do him any permanent harm.

So I thank you for your service. And I thank you for the work you're doing together. We're going to release today about \$150 million in emergency funds to help continue to fight the fire and to help restore the area afterward. And I hope that restoration work will also lead to some jobs for the people in this area who have been disadvantaged by this fire.

And I have asked the Secretaries of Agriculture and Interior to undertake an intensive 90-day study and report back to me about what can be done to minimize the impact of wildfires like this, because this thing was pretty well—thanks to most of you who have been doing this for years—this whole issue was much more in hand over the last 10 years. And this has been a difficult year. And most of the people I talk to think that the next 2 or 3 years could also be difficult years. So we want to do whatever we can to make sure that we take care of the people, as well as the natural resource.

But the main thing I did—I just wanted to get in the plane this morning and fly here and say thanks. I know this is hard, and I know a lot of you are a long way from home. I know some of you have to get, almost, permission to go back to where you come from just so you can pay the bills and keep them from turning off the water and the electricity.

But I want you to know that your fellow Americans appreciate it. These fires have been very well publicized, and the American people know how they're being fought and who is fighting them. And you need to know that we're proud of you, and we're grateful to you.

I know there was a terrible fatality, and there is a funeral today, and our prayers are with the family of the man who lost his life. This

is hard, and I know it. And the main thing I wanted to do was just hop on Air Force One this morning at 6 o'clock so I could come over here and say thanks. You've done a good thing for your country and a good thing for your fellow Americans.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Fire Incident Command Post in Payette National Forest. In his remarks, he referred to Scott Vail, incident commander, National Interagency Incident Management System Team One, who presented the President with a firefighter's axe; and Dave Alexander, forest supervisor, Payette National Forest.

Statement on the Decline in Teen Birth Rates

August 8, 2000

I am very encouraged by new data released today by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showing that teen birth rates in the United States have reached their lowest level since record keeping began 60 years ago. These preliminary data for 1999 show that birth rates among 15- to 19-year-olds dropped 3 percent from the previous year and 20 percent from the most recent peak in 1991.

This new information confirms that we continue to make impressive strides in addressing one of the most important social problems facing our Nation. By enacting welfare reform in 1996, taking executive action to require young mothers to stay in school or lose welfare payments, cracking down on child support enforcement, and launching a national campaign to prevent teen pregnancy, the Clinton-Gore administration has sent a clear message to young women and young men alike: Don't get pregnant or father a child until you are ready to take on the responsibility of parenthood. Working in partnership with States, communities, families, religious leaders, the media, and teens themselves, we have promoted innovative teen preg-

nancy prevention strategies that have contributed to the historic progress we witness today.

These encouraging trends cut across both younger and older teens, married and unmarried teens, all States, and all racial and ethnic groups. The sharpest decline last year was a 6 percent drop in the birth rate for American Indian teenagers. And since 1991, the African-American teen birth rate has decreased by 30 percent. Together, we are helping more young people make responsible choices and delay parenting until they are financially and emotionally ready.

However, we still have much to do, and I urge all sectors of society to continue their efforts to reduce teen pregnancy even further. To build on our progress in breaking the cycle of dependency, I call on Congress to enact my budget initiative to provide \$25 million to support "second-chance homes." These adult-supervised, supportive living arrangements for teen parents who cannot live at home offer parenting skills, job counseling, education, and other referrals that help reduce repeat pregnancies and improve the prospects for young mothers and their children.

Statement on Productivity Growth August 8, 2000

Today's announcement that productivity rose at a 5.3 percent annual rate last quarter is a remarkable confirmation of the continued strength and vitality of the U.S. economy. Over the past 3 years, productivity has grown 3.3 percent annually—more than twice the growth rate of the previous two decades. Rising productivity has been the key to the combination of strong growth, rising wages, and low core inflation underlying our record economic expansion. Today's news is further evidence that our commitment to fiscal discipline, opening markets, and investing in people has helped lead to an unprecedented era of business investment, innovation,

and technological advance that is providing new opportunities for millions of Americans.

This continuing productivity growth underscores the importance of maintaining the fiscal discipline that has been so crucial to this investment-led economic expansion. The majority in Congress continues to pursue a series of misguided tax breaks which, taken together, would bring America back to the era of deficits and knock us off the path of fiscal discipline that has led to this prosperity. Their approach is wrong for America. Let's work together to ensure that our strong economy will continue to grow.

Statement on Signing Legislation To Expand the Women's Rights National Historical Park August 8, 2000

I am pleased today to sign S. 1910, bipartisan legislation to expand the Women's Rights National Historical Park, in Seneca Falls and Waterloo, New York, with the addition of the home of Jane Hunt. In 1848 early supporters of women's rights, meeting at Hunt's home, resolved to convene the Nation's first women's rights convention. A century and a half later, the addition of the Hunt House to the historical park is a fitting tribute to all those who have engaged in the struggle for women's rights. With this

legislation, this historic home will be purchased by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and donated to the National Park Service. Jane Hunt made a tremendous difference in the lives of American women, and this legislation will ensure that her efforts are remembered and honored in the years ahead.

NOTE: S. 1910, approved August 8, was assigned Public Law No. 106–258.

Memorandum on the Impact of Wildland Fires to Rural Communities August 8, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture

Subject: Impacts of Wildland Fires to Rural Communities

We are a little over halfway through the 2000 fire season and all indications are that it will be the worst season in 50 years. As of August 7, 2000, 63,623 wildland fires have so far this

year burned more than 4 million acres at a cost of \$500 million in firefighting expenses. There are up to 300 new fires every day, and Federal, State, and local agencies are managing 50 fires over 1,000 acres in size. The current weather conditions following the prolonged drought in much of the west are drying out millions of acres of forest and rangeland, and

the National Weather Service's near-term forecast calls for continued hot, dry conditions with the probability of additional lightning-caused fires.

Over the last several years, the U.S. Forest Service and the Department of the Interior have increased their efforts to protect communities, watersheds, and threatened species from the risk of fire, including reducing hazardous fuels on at-risk public and private lands.

In the western National Forests alone, there are more than 56 million acres at risk. Since 1994 when the Forest Service treated approximately 385,000 acres across the United States, the Department of Agriculture has increased annual hazardous fuels treatments almost four-fold. Last year, almost 2 million acres were treated. But there is much more to be done. You are currently working to develop a long-term strategy to expand Federal efforts to protect communities in the urban-wildland interface and the underlying ecology of these areas. This long-term plan will set targeted funding priorities to reduce fire risk in fire-dependent ecosystems throughout the country. The plan will focus on protecting communities, watersheds, and species and is a critical component of any fire management program.

To help address this issue in the near term, today I am directing you to report back to me in 30 days with recommendations on actions that may be taken to respond to this year's fires; to reduce the impacts of these wildland fires

on rural communities; and to ensure sufficient firefighting resources in the future. First, the report should consider potential responses to this year's fires, including:

- A short-term plan for rehabilitation of fire-damaged ecosystems, including means to minimize the introduction of invasive species, reduce threats to water quality, and protect endangered species. The plan should also address the role of natural restoration processes in these efforts.
- An assessment of the economic impacts in affected areas.

Second, the report should focus on the short-term actions that Federal agencies, in cooperation with States and local communities, can take to reduce immediate hazards to other communities in the wildland-urban interface. As part of this effort, the report will examine how the Federal Government, in cooperation with State and tribal governments, and local communities, will prepare for anticipated extreme fire conditions in the future, by analyzing fire management planning and firefighter personnel and resources.

You should use this information to review firefighting and prevention needs and work with the Office of Management and Budget to determine whether there are additional FY 2001 funding needs so that the Administration may request, and the Congress may provide, additional resources before the end of the fiscal year.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Charlottesville, Virginia

August 8, 2000

Thank you very, very much. First of all, I want to thank Pat Kluge for having us here. Thank you, Bill. Thank all of you for coming tonight. Some of you, like Alan, are my old friends; some of you I met for the first time tonight; some of you we've met along the way over these last 8 years. I know the hour is late, and the main attraction of this dinner is coming to this magnificent house. I may ask for your permission to use this in an ad, the tag line of which will be, "If you want to live like a

Republican, you have to keep voting Democrat." [Laughter]

I'll be very, very brief. First of all, I thank you for your support of the DNC, and I thank you for—those of you particularly from Virginia who supported Senator Robb. But I want to ask you to think about what you should do now. The Republicans have had their convention in Philadelphia, and they presented themselves in a very appealing way. And we get our chance next week in Los Angeles, a place, I would

remind you, which 40 years ago this month launched John Kennedy on the New Frontier, and I believe will launch Al Gore as the first President of the new century.

But I want to be very brief, but I want you to just try to listen to me—even though it's late and I may not be very good because I got up very early to go to Idaho today—about what I hope you will say to other people about this election. I have always believed—always—no matter what the polls said, ever, I've always thought the Vice President would be elected President. I've always believed Chuck Robb would be reelected to the Senate, for a combination of personal and political reasons.

But the only thing that I'm concerned about this year is whether or not the very success that we've worked so hard to effect will put people in such a good humor—which I love, I want everybody to be happy, you know—not every President wants that—that people will be under the illusion that things are going along so well nobody could mess it up if they tried, and there aren't really any consequences to this election; and secondly, that everybody seems perfectly pleasant in this election year, and therefore, the differences between the two candidates for President and Vice President and the candidates for the Senate and the House and the two parties must not be very great.

Now, I am all for a positive campaign. Having been the beneficiary of some of the negative campaigning of the last 20 years, I think it would be a good thing if we called a halt to campaigns where the main strategy was to convince the voters that your opponent was just one step above a car thief. And I think we can do without that. The truth is, most of the people I've known in politics were honest, hard-working, and did what they thought was right. And I've been in it for a good while.

But it's very important that we go back to the main thing—I always tell people, there are just three things you need to know about this election. One is, it is a truly important election, a big election; two is that there are big differences between the candidates; and three is, we're the only side that wants you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

Now, let me just say on each point—why is it important? You can make a very strong argument that this election is just as important, if not more important, than the election of 1992,

which had an historically high turnout, where people were full of energy, and where there was a very good response to the message that I laid out and the specifics in our program, much of which was developed when I worked with Chuck Robb in our years as Governors and our years with the Democratic Leadership Council—which, I hasten to add, Joe Lieberman is now the chairman of. So Chuck and I and our whole crowd, we're elated by this because it proves that the Democrats are going to keep moving the country forward, looking to progressive new ideas, trying to be relevant and to reach out to all thoughtful people without regard to their background and their party.

But this year, you can understand why people would think that the election is not so important. We're in the middle of the longest economic expansion in history. We just—there's going to be an announcement tomorrow that the teen pregnancy rate is at a several-decades-low rate. All the social indicators are going in the right direction: crime at a 25-year low; welfare rolls at a 32-year low, cut in half in the last 7½ years.

But the truth is, this is the time which is even more important. Why? Because none of us have ever been in the position before where we could build the future of our dreams for our children because of our prosperity, first.

Second, we live in a world where change is the only constant and where we know we still have big challenges out there. What are we going to do when the baby boomers retire? How do we propose to give all of our children a world-class education? We have the largest and most diverse group of schoolchildren. How do we propose to keep the economy going and do something about climate change, which even the oil companies now say is real? Twelve years ago, and even 8 years ago, all they did was make fun of Al Gore for being the first one to tell us to think about it. And those are just three issues.

So you've got to convince people they need to pay attention, this is really important. What you do with your prosperity is at least as stern a test of character, judgment, and values as what you do with adversity. Because, really, if you've got any sense, if you're faced with adversity you only have one choice: change and work.

The second thing is, there really are real differences here. And we can posit the fact that our opponents are good people and patriotic

people and want to do what they think is right, but there are real differences. I just want to mention two or three, because they affect not only the President's race, the Vice President's race but Chuck Robb's race.

One, on economics. Our position is we worked hard for this surplus. It's kept interest rates down; it's kept this economy booming. From the minute—as Chuck said, the most significant vote for the economy cast in this administration was way back in August of 1993, when we said we were going to reduce the deficit by at least \$500 billion over the next couple of years, and we were going to do some very unpopular and controversial things to do it, and we were prepared to do it and take the heat.

By one vote in both Houses it passed. Not a single Republican voted for it. They said it would bring a recession, increase the deficit, increase interest rates; the sky would fall; the world would end. That was their basic position. And so it is fair to say that they are not to blame for the consequences of our economic vote.

Now, to be perfectly fair, a few years later they did come along, and we passed the balanced budget bill with big bipartisan majorities in both Houses. But that's because the hard work had been done by the Democrats alone, people like Chuck Robb, who put his neck on the line, knowing he was going to have to run for reelection in a very difficult environment, and he did it anyway.

So what do we do now? Our position is, yes, we have a big projected surplus, but we think it would be a big mistake to spend it all, because it's projected and because the truth is, the way it's done doesn't take account of a lot of things we know we're going to have to spend. We know there will be emergencies. We know Government spending will grow by more than they say because it doesn't take account of the population. So what do we say?

We say, let's give the American people a tax cut that we can afford and focus on things that we really need: universal access to college, access to long-term care, working families' access to child care, more retirement savings, relief from the marriage penalty. But let's keep it at a place we can afford.

And I want to be quite candid. It's only 25 percent the size of the Republican tax cut; 80 percent of the American people would get more money under ours than theirs. None of you

would; you'd all get more money under theirs. But why should you be for us? Because, among other things, you get at least interest rates a percentage lower for a decade, which is lower business loans, a stronger stock market, more jobs, higher profit, and for ordinary people, literally \$250 billion in mortgage payment savings, \$30 billion in car payment savings, \$15 billion in college loan savings.

What's their—now, it took me a while to say that. They've got a much more appealing position. Their position is, "Hey, it's your money; we're going to give it back to you. Why is the Government keeping your money? Vote for us; it's a \$2 trillion tax cut over 10 years." What's the problem with that?

Number one, they have said they want to partially privatize the Social Security system, which means those of you who are younger can take 2 percent of your payroll and invest it in the stock market. But in order to do it and keep everybody happy, they have to guarantee the benefits of everybody over 55 under the present system. Well, the thing is scheduled to run out of money in 2034 anyway. Under the Vice President's plan, it would go to 2054, which would take it out beyond the life expectancy of all but the most fortunate baby boomers. But if you lower the date of bankruptcy of Social Security from 2034 up forward, obviously that's a non-starter, so that costs a trillion dollars over 10 years just to keep it where it is. And then they promised to spend money and all that.

But the most important thing you need to know is, this surplus is projected; it may not be there. And as I've said all over America, now, this is kind of like getting one of those letters from the sweepstakes signed by Ed McMahon. [*Laughter*] You've all gotten them—"You may have won \$10 million." And you may. And when you got that letter, if you went out and spent the \$10 million the next day, you really should think seriously about supporting the Republicans this year. [*Laughter*] But if you didn't, you ought to stick with us and keep this prosperity going.

Now, this is important. You have to explain this to people. There was a big, big headline in *USA Today*, one of the big newspapers, just in the last couple of months, saying people didn't understand the differences. This is a gaping difference. They want to go back to the economic policy we had before we showed up here. And Chuck Robb sat there all these years

and voted for—took all these tough votes in a State that was anti-tax, stated it was conservative, put his neck on the line to get this country in the shape it's in now, and all of a sudden we're going to have an election and allow it all to be thrown away just because we don't understand the consequences? This is a huge deal, folks. This is not a casual conversation here. This is a gaping difference.

I'll give you another couple of examples. Crime—we supported 100,000 police, the Brady Bill, the assault weapons ban, and their leadership was against it—their past and present leadership. Now we want to put 50,000 more police on the street in the highest crime areas, close the gun show loophole in the background check law, mandate child trigger safety locks because a lot of kids die by accident every year, and stop the importation of these large capacity ammunition clips. They allow you to get around the assault weapons ban because you just get the clips from overseas legally, and then you add them to a weapon that you buy legally here because it's not an assault weapon, and presto, you've got an assault weapon. It's a huge loophole.

And the Vice President thinks that people who buy handguns from now on ought to have a photo ID license showing that they've passed the background check and they know how to use the gun safely. I agree with that. That's our policy.

Their policy is, they've never supported us on the 100,000 police, as Chuck will tell you, or the 50,000 more. We've had to just drag it out, fight for it every year. And their policy is, what we really need is to have more concealed weapons, and people should be able to carry them everywhere, even in houses of worship. [Laughter] No, they believe this.

I was on a townhall meeting the other day and I spoke to one of the advocates of this position in Texas; this is the Texas policy. And she made a very heartfelt, compelling case for why this was the answer to all the crime problems in America and why I was wrong. The point I want to make is you have to assume when people say they're going to do something, they believe it, and they get elected, that they'll do it. So there's a real difference here.

There are differences here on the Patients' Bill of Rights, on the minimum wage, on a whole host of other issues. There's a profound difference on the choice issue. The next Presi-

dent will appoint between two and four judges to the Supreme Court, in all probability. The next Senate will confirm or deny those appointments. The nominees of the Republican Party for President and Vice President have repeatedly said they believe that *Roe v. Wade* is wrong and should be changed. The nominees of the Democratic Party support it. And because they're honorable people, you have to expect them to do what they believe is right when they get these appointments.

And I think that this should be something we deal with soberly, not in slogans, and not by attacking people. People who—everybody has very deep feelings about this, but we should assume that they will do what they believe is right. And I know that Al Gore will do what he believes is right. And I know what Chuck Robb believes is right. And it's not just on this issue, not just the choice issue, but this relates to civil rights enforcement and how the ordinary citizens are treated in the courts of the land, and all these matters are very important.

So you need to think about this, and you need to tell people who tell you it doesn't matter who wins that they're wrong, that the rhetoric may have been similar at both conventions, and we're pleased by that, but that we have changed our policies—here's our policies; we tell you exactly what we're for. There's a reason that they didn't have as much detail at their convention, and that is that they hope you think there's not much difference here. There is a huge difference.

And I could give you lots of other examples. But I don't want to keep you any later, but you get the point. We may never have another chance in our lifetime.

And I want to say a couple of things about the Vice President, a couple of things about Joe Lieberman, and a couple of things about Chuck Robb, because I'm really proud to be identified with them.

Al Gore is the best Vice President this country ever had, by a good long way. We have had a lot of very fine Presidents who were Vice President, including Senator Robb's father-in-law, who gave us Medicare, the civil rights laws, and did a lot of other things of enduring value for America. Teddy Roosevelt was Vice President; Thomas Jefferson was Vice President; Harry Truman was Vice President. We never had anybody who in this job did anything remotely as much as Al Gore has done, to support

the economy, to advance the cause of education, to make sure all of our schools were hooked up to the Internet, to help us deal with the environmental challenges of the country in a way that was good for the environment, to downsize the Government in a way that didn't require us to put people in the street.

I could give you example after example after example. He is, therefore, the best qualified person in my adult lifetime to be President, to run. There's—not even close. No serious student of the Presidency, whether they agree with any of my policies or not, would seriously dispute this. There has never been a Vice President who did so much good for the country as Vice President and had this much influence and this much responsibility.

The second thing you need to know is he's got the right economic policy. And I think that's pretty important. I'd kind of like to keep this thing going a while. I've got to go out and be a citizen, earn a living here—[laughter]—and I'm going to be really steamed if after all these last 8 years it doesn't work out for me. It will be terrible. Think about my daughter and my continuing educational responsibilities and—I'm kidding, but it's serious—dead serious. It couldn't be clearer.

The third thing you need to know is, this guy really does understand the future. I saw Governor Bush took a shot at him on this whole Internet thing. That's another one of the many bum raps you get. If you stand around in politics enough, you'll get some bum raps. What Al Gore said he did and what he did—what he actually did is he sponsored legislation to turn the Internet from being the private province of a few physicists into a broadly available communications technology which is sweeping the world. Do you know how many sites there were on the Worldwide Web when I became President? Fifty—5-0—in 1993. It's now the fastest growing communications exchange in history. He did have a lot to do with that. He is the first person I ever heard say, "The Library of Congress will be on the Internet, and ordinary people will be able to get it."

And he did lead the fight for the E-rate, which means that all the poorest schools in America can now hook up to the Internet. When we started this thing, only 3 percent of our classrooms were hooked up to the Internet, only 11 percent of our schools. Today, over 90 percent of our schools and two-thirds of our class-

rooms are hooked up to the Internet. That's pretty good.

He understands climate change. Like I said, people made fun of him for years. I don't want the Florida Everglades to flood; I went to too much trouble to try to save them. I don't want farm fields in the Middle West to burn up. I want somebody who understands this.

He understands all our medical records and our financial records are on the Internet, and somebody ought to be able to say yes before somebody else can go get them. He understands the human genome issue and what we have to do to try to maximize its benefits without letting people lose the ability to get a job or health insurance because they got a bad little gene card. He thinks about these things. I want somebody in the White House that understands the future, and he does.

And the fourth thing that's most important to me of all is that he believes in one America. He thinks we all ought to go along for the ride. He thinks that the people who served this dinner tonight deserve the same chance to send their kids to college as the rest of us have.

And I'll tell you just a couple things about Joe Lieberman. When I was a first-year law student at Yale, he was a 28-year-old candidate for the State senate whom I had the honor to support. He's been my friend for 30 years. He believes ideas are serious. He was—Chuck will tell you, he's been an integral part of everything we've done with the Democratic Leadership Council over the last gazillion years—since we've been working on it, 15 years—and has firmly said that the Democratic Party is the party of the vital center and of tomorrow's ideas and we're going to keep changing in the right direction, which I think is very important. And I agree with what Chuck said, his wife will soon be one of the most quoted people in Washington. But I should tell you that we didn't mean that in a pejorative sense. She is a wonderful woman and will become, I think, terrifically popular around the country.

Now, the last thing I want to say is, one of the reasons I always love to come to events like this is I get to embarrass Chuck Robb. [Laughter] Here's a guy who never talks about his military service. Do you ever hear Chuck Robb give a speech about Vietnam? You'd think he was teaching college somewhere talking about it, because he thinks all he did was do his duty.

He never talks about the votes he cast in terms of putting his neck on the line. I'll never forget the night that he was sitting in the White House with me in 1993, and they were trying to literally eviscerate me over my gays in the military issue. And Chuck Robb—the only time I ever heard him talk personally about his record in Vietnam—and supported me on that, based on his personal experience, knowing he was going to have to face a terrible reelection battle in '94, knowing he was going to have to take a very tough vote on my economic plan, knowing that he was going to have everybody in the well-known groups in Virginia that don't agree with us about anything going after him and trying to basically politically decapitate him.

And this man is very modest and very restrained in what he says. But I do not believe there is a braver person in public life today than Chuck Robb. I do not believe it. And I've always thought he'd be reelected. The people of Virginia need to know what kind of Governor he was, what kind of Senator he's been, and what kind of person he is. You need to take care of that, too. This country needs him. This country needs him.

All that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman are saying, all the stuff that I've tried to do these last few years, he was out there in the early '80s, from then on, arguing that our party should take this course and our country should take this course. And I feel the same way I do about him and Joe and Al, all together: We must not let the people who did so much to bring Amer-

ica to this magic moment be punished in this election because times are so good people don't think it makes a difference. I'm telling you, if people know what the election is about, know what the differences are, I can go on vacation between now and November. But our job is to make sure they know that.

So I thank you for your contribution; I thank you for your support. But remember, you may not get a chance like this in your lifetime again. You may not ever get a chance when there's so much economic prosperity, social progress, the absence of crippling domestic crisis or overpowering foreign threat, to literally shape the future of your dreams for your children. It may not happen to you again.

You ought to carry that as a personal responsibility every day between now and November—for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, for Chuck Robb, for my favorite Senate candidate from New York, and from everybody else we've got running. It's worth fighting for, and we have to win.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:54 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner host Pat Kluge and her fiancé, Bill Moses; Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House Sweepstakes spokesperson; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; and Hadasah Lieberman, wife of Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom

August 9, 2000

The President. Thank you. Good afternoon. Welcome to the White House. I want to join Hillary in welcoming all those who have been acknowledged and all the other family and friends of our honorees today. And I want to thank her for many things but especially for the conversations that we had leading up to this day about people who should be selected and the reasons there. Some of them reflect, now that we've been here 8 years and been involved in public life for nearly three decades, a lot of personal experiences that we have had.

And we had a lot of good times talking about who should be here today and why.

More than 60 years ago, President Franklin Roosevelt said, "Freedom cannot be bestowed. It must be achieved." From the founding of our Nation, it has been the duty of each generation to achieve freedom all over again, to expand it, to deepen its meaning, to widen the circle of those who are included as full citizens.

Today we honor 15 men and women who have done exactly that. They have helped America to achieve freedom. It is my honor, on behalf

of a proud nation, to award each of them the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our highest civilian honor. In the words of our Constitution, they have helped us to secure the blessings of liberty by acts of bravery, conscience, and creativity. I am grateful for those who are here and for those who are being honored who are not here today.

When Jim Burke was just starting out in business, his boss called him into the office and told him to shut the door. He had just made a mistake, and he was convinced he was about to be fired. Instead, his boss congratulated him, saying his mistake meant he was making decisions and taking risks. Over the years, his willingness to make the tough call in times of crisis and to put the public interest above all else has placed a higher premium on candor and corporate citizenship in the business world.

In an age when many look only to the bottom line, he draws his values from a deeper well. Jim took a risk when he became chairman of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America. Most people think that's a problem you can talk about but not much you can do about. There are clearly few challenges tougher and few more vital than teaching our young people about the dangers of drugs, helping more to avoid them, helping more to overcome addiction, once they have become involved.

Like every other challenge in his life, he met it head on. Among other things, he's raised billions of dollars in private resources to help do the job. He has worked closely with administrations, both Democratic and Republican, with the Office of National Drug Control and Prevention.

Last year the teen drug use rate fell substantially, thanks in no small measure to years and years and years of passionate devotion by Jim Burke. Thanks to him, our families are healthier; our communities are safer; our Nation is stronger.

Commander, read the citation.

[Comdr. Michael M. Gilday, USN, Navy Aide to the President, read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. In the fall of 1951, in the mountains of North Korea, a young marine made himself a promise: Whatever he faced in battle, he would strive to act just as his commander would act. His commander's name: John Chafee.

Captain Chafee set the standard for bravery, decency, and integrity, not only in war but later in a long and distinguished career: first as Governor of Rhode Island; later, Secretary of the Navy; then in 1976, by election of the people of Rhode Island, a United States Senator, where he would serve with distinction until his death 9 months ago. All of us who love public service and believe in America still miss him very much.

Senator Chafee took on the tough issues, from health care to child care to, most of all, the environment, even when it meant that he had to take on people in his own party. He proved that politics can be an honorable profession. He embodied the decent and vital center that puts progress in the public interest above partisanship.

Today we offer this tribute to the man most people called Senator, but whose riflemen still proudly called Captain. His wonderful wife, Ginny, and his whole family are here on his behalf. We welcome them all.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. In March of 1999, as Slobodan Milosevic unleashed his army and police on the people of Kosovo, General Wesley Clark, NATO's Supreme Commander, was given the first military mission of its kind, directing the forces of a 19-nation alliance to end a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing.

The stakes were monumental. Almost a million people had been driven from their homes solely because of their ethnic and religious backgrounds. Success would save lives, strengthen NATO, advance the cause of freedom, democracy, and unity in Europe. Failure would leave much of the continent awash in a sea of refugees and end the 20th century on a note of helpless indignation in the face of evil.

Wes Clark well understood the perils of the Balkans, for he had already played a vital role in ending the war in Bosnia and beginning the long process of building a stable, multiethnic democracy in that country. He summoned every ounce of his experience and expertise as a strategist, a soldier, and a statesman to wage our campaign in Kosovo. He prevailed, miraculously, without the loss of a single combat casualty.

At the apex of a long and distinguished military career that goes back to his outstanding performance as a cadet at West Point over 30

years ago, he was assigned a challenge many experts thought was “mission impossible.” Instead, thanks to General Clark, we now can declare it “mission accomplished.”

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. As a young officer, Bill Crowe seemed to seize every opportunity for a non-traditional Navy career. He took a leave to earn a master's in education. He passed up an invitation to join the nuclear submarine program so he could earn a Ph.D. in politics at Princeton. A few years later, when Dr. Crowe found himself named Rear Admiral Crowe, he was quite surprised. Only later did he learn that Admiral Zumwalt that year had ordered all naval promotion boards to consider, and I quote, “iconoclasts.” *[Laughter]*

Bill Crowe has always been an innovative and independent thinker. He was the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs with a mandate to promote greater cooperation among the Armed Forces, along with the power to reshape their respective roles and missions. He used that power to build a military more agile and efficient for the global age.

From that chairmanship to his ambassadorship at the Court of Saint James in our administration, Bill Crowe has been the right leader for changing times. Even more, he has, himself, helped to change the times, to enhance our strength, advance the peace, and quicken the march of freedom. He is an iconoclast but an immensely patriotic one.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. Her namesake is Marian Anderson, one of the greatest American singers of all time. The power and range of this Marian's voice is even greater. It brought Robert Kennedy to Mississippi, helped to organize the Poor People's Campaign, inspired Hillary and thousands of other citizens, young and old, to join her through the years in the crusade that has become known as the Children's Defense Fund, the base from which she has changed the future for millions of America's children, by grassroots actions and successful lobbying in Congress, for health care, child care, education, and so much more.

Marian Wright Edelman has lived a life of giving. In the process, she has built a family of distinguished citizen-givers. She is a tireless advocate, a driving force, a crusader of conscience. Like her namesake, Marian's voice is always strong and true, singing that we are all children of God and, therefore, must protect all our children.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. The first thing you notice about John Kenneth Galbraith is neither his wit nor his intellect; those are the second and third things. First, you notice his height—*[laughter]*—which, like his passion for public service, is a legacy of his father. The elder Galbraith once told him, “We are obliged because of our enormous size to alter the world to our specifications.” *[Laughter]* That is just what Professor Galbraith has spent a lifetime doing. From the lecture halls of Harvard to wartime Washington to a diplomatic post in India, he has altered our world, making it better, nobler, more just.

It is ironic that John Kenneth Galbraith actually coined the term “conventional wisdom,” since he spent his entire life challenging it. *[Laughter]* He once said he always suspected President Kennedy sent him to India just to be free of his political advice and policy ideas. *[Laughter]* Actually, President Kennedy drew a lot from those ideas, as have generations of American leaders and thinkers ever since.

Professor Galbraith writes with such eloquence and clarity that his ideas are accessible to all of us, helping us not just to understand the economy but also to remember that it is the providence of more than a privileged few.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. Monsignor George Higgins believes in the dignity of work, and he's not shy about fighting for it. For more than 60 years now, he has organized, marched, prayed, and bled for the social and economic justice of working Americans.

He spoke a fundamental truth when he said, “Work is an important way in which we exercise our humanity. In return, society offers us not

only our daily bread but a sense that we, ourselves, are honored for the contributions we make.”

Today we honor Monsignor Higgins for his work, for defending the right of working Americans to organize in factories, foundries, and fields and to better their own lives through collective action. His faith and his courage have strengthened not only our Nation’s labor unions but our American Union.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. You are now about to witness one of the best things about this ceremony; for a change, I don’t have to follow Jesse Jackson. *[Laughter]* But the truth is, America has followed Reverend Jackson, as he marched with Dr. King, walked the picket lines, ran for our Nation’s highest office, instilling hope and inspiring millions, beginning with his own remarkable family.

From the streets of Watts to the hollows of Appalachia, as my Special Envoy to Africa and the leader of Rainbow/PUSH, he has walked the walk of freedom. When I think of Rainbow/PUSH, I think of two things: Rainbow means we’ve all got a place at the table; push is what Jesse does when he thinks I’m not doing right. *[Laughter]*

He has used his legendary prowess at persuading people to do things they are otherwise disinclined to do to free innocents imprisoned around the world, including American servicemen from the Middle East to the Balkans. With his Wall Street Project, he is forging the next frontier of freedom, economic freedom, reminding us that when we limit opportunities for some Americans, we limit possibilities for all Americans.

His work for years has been an inspiration to the new markets initiative that I have undertaken, along with the Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate, and when it becomes law, it will be in no small measure the result of the powerful example that he has set year after year.

Dr. King said, “Human progress never rolls on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts of those willing to be co-workers with God.” The cause of justice has no greater co-worker than Jesse Jackson. It’s hard to imagine how we could have come as

far as we have without the creative power, the keen intellect, the loving heart, and the relentless passion of Jesse Louis Jackson. And God isn’t done with him yet.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. As a Catholic schoolgirl, Millie Jeffrey dodged the stones of neighborhood bigots and watched as Klansmen marched through town with a burning cross. As a union organizer in Mississippi, she stood bravely as company men snapped bullwhips at her feet. Clearly, they didn’t know whom they were up against. She may be small in stature and humble in manner, but she is very strong.

She worked for Walter Reuther and counseled the Kennedys, influencing all with her courage and her unflagging commitment to social justice. To meet the need for more women in public office, she started the National Women’s Political Caucus and sparked the effort to nominate Geraldine Ferraro 16 years ago.

For countless women around the world, she remains an inspiration. Her impact will be felt for generations and her example never forgotten.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. Nearly 20 years ago, very few researchers even knew what AIDS was. Even fewer had the courage to speak out about it. Dr. Mathilde Krim was one of the first to grasp its terrible implications. But she was not content simply to raise the alarm. She marshalled others to establish the American Foundation for AIDS Research, raising awareness, raising millions for research, and raising the hopes of countless people bravely confronting this deadly disease.

Despite some promising scientific breakthroughs, we know the fight against AIDS is nowhere near won. As she reminds us, we must not grow complacent. She said recently, we’re about halfway on a long road. Thanks to her vision, her ability to inspire, her enduring compassion for those in need, we now travel that road united and determined to prevail.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. His roots lie deep in the South Dakota soil, in small-town farms, and the faith of his father, a Methodist pastor. After more than a half century in public life, George McGovern still draws on those teachings and traditions, and he still imparts them to the rest of us by the power of his example, the courage of his convictions, and his proud legacy of public service.

Long before he became a Congressman or Senator or a United States Ambassador, he became a hero. His brave exploits in the skies above Europe earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross and, more important to him, the gratitude of the men he brought safely to ground. Returning home, he taught history, and then set out to make a little history himself, first, winning a seat in Congress, then a few years later creating the Food For Peace program, one of the great achievements of the Kennedy era.

By the time he ran for President in 1972, Senator McGovern was not only a hero in war but a stalwart voice for peace in Vietnam. Hillary and I and several others in this room, including the National Security Adviser, Mr. Berger, and Eli Segal, who started AmeriCorps and our welfare-to-work partnership, were honored to embrace his conviction that we could move our country forward.

For decades, his conviction never wavered. Nor has his early commitment to bringing food to the hungry. Today, he serves as our Ambassador to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, and he has pledged to feed half a billion of the world's ill-fed. Senator McGovern and Senator Dole have come together to persuade me, along with Congressman McGovern and Senator McGovern's Senator, Tom Daschle, that the United States should lead the world to get one nutritious meal to every child in every poor country in the world. And I just announced a couple of days ago our first \$300 million contribution to that goal.

This initiative could not only feed hungry children but lead to the enrollment of millions of children not now in school, especially girls in poor countries. So, George McGovern's work continues.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. On the wall of his Senate office are two framed magazine covers. One says, "Moynihan: The Conscience of a Neo-conservative." The other says: "Moynihan: Neo-liberal." *[Laughter]* I think he suspects that a great deal of his success in life has come as a result of keeping the rest of us slightly confused. *[Laughter]* But whatever label is assigned to him, not a day goes by when Daniel Patrick Moynihan is not brilliantly, dynamically, uniquely himself.

He is Hell's Kitchen and the London School of Economics; a sailor in uniform and a professor in tweeds; a subtle, sophisticated wit, and a tough, blunt critic of social injustice; a man of ideas and a man of action. By this dazzling collection of qualities, Pat Moynihan has served and survived four successive Presidencies, the only American ever to have done so. Most of the people who work for me are glad to have survived one. *[Laughter]*

He represented American interests in India. He has stood up for our ideals powerfully in the United Nations. New York sent him to the Senate in America's Bicentennial Year, and in the quarter-century since, he has championed diversity and waged without relent the War on Poverty he helped to launch.

I was interested to learn, as Hillary said, that Senator Moynihan actually helped to create the medal he is about to receive. President Kennedy charged him with that task. And as the President decreed, the standard of achievement was set very high, indeed. I know that every American will agree that in the four decades since, Senator Moynihan has exceeded the standards set by every conceivable measure.

Commander, read the citation.

[Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.]

The President. Cruz Reynoso is the son of Mexican immigrants who spent summers working with his family in the fields of the San Joaquin valley. As a child, he loved reading so much, his elementary school classmates called him *El Profe*, the Professor.

Later, some told him to put aside his dreams of college, saying bluntly, they will never let you in. But with faith in himself and the values of our country, Cruz Reynoso went on to college and to law school but never forgot his roots. He worked for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and led the pioneering California Rural Legal Assistance Program. In 1976

he was appointed Associate Justice of the California Court of Appeals and rose to become the first Latino to serve on the State's highest court.

Today, he continues to labor in the fields of justice, serving as Vice Chair of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, opening new doors for Latino lawyers and teaching a new generation of students the world of law. Not long ago, the person his classmates once called *El Profe*, was voted by his own students Professor of the Year.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. In the New Testament Book of Romans, it is written: "And how shall they hear without a preacher?" The Lord may have had that passage in mind the day Gardner Taylor was born, or once again, years later, when a terrible car accident convinced him to abandon law school and enter the ministry. His eloquence has inspired generations, helping us to see the hard challenges of life in the revealing light of Scripture.

As founder of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Reverend Taylor helped to galvanize black churches all across America in the struggle for human rights. As a pastor in Brooklyn, he has worked to repair the breach, whether racial, political, or economic. He speaks not just from the Scriptures but from his soul. The gift God gave him, he, in turn, has shared with us.

For at least 20 years now, if anyone made a list of the five or six greatest preachers in America, Gardner Taylor would always be at the top. For those of us who heard him preach, and those of us whom he has counseled in his private wisdom, we know we have been in the presence of not only a man of God but a great American citizen.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. "When millions were murdered, why was I allowed to live?" For more than half a century, Simon Wiesenthal has asked himself this question again and again. To those who know his story, one of miraculous survival and of relentless pursuit of justice, the answer is apparent. From the unimaginable horrors of

the Holocaust, only a few voices survived to bear witness, to hold the guilty accountable, to honor the memory of those who were killed. Only if we heed these brave voices can we build a bulwark of humanity against the hatred and indifference that is still all too prevalent in this world of ours.

I'm struck by another question Mr. Wiesenthal once posed: How does one explain to a young person what freedom means when he has been born to freedom? Answering this question is our common moral responsibility and our enduring challenge.

Mr. Wiesenthal is 91 years old now, and he had a little fall last week and, regrettably, couldn't be here with us today. He's all the way over in Europe, in Vienna, but he is listening to us by telephone. Rabbi Marvin Hier will receive the award on his behalf. We thank him for a lifetime of service and example and reminder and for the astonishing work of the Wiesenthal Center. And after the citation has been read, I want you to have a little extra umph in your applause so he'll be able to hear it all the way over in Europe.

Commander, read the citation.

[*Commander Gilday read the citation, and the President presented the medal.*]

The President. You know, today's honorees come from an astonishing array of backgrounds. Their experiences and their service are remarkably different. Yet they share in common a devotion to freedom and its expansion, to being good citizens, to serving their fellow human beings. Everyone in our country has been enriched by the service of everyone on this stage.

President Johnson said when he first presented this award that no words could add to the distinction of the men and women being honored today; rather, their names add distinction to this award. Even more, I believe, that is true today. They have added distinction, richness, depth, and freedom to American life. For that, the rest of us are proud, ennobled, and grateful.

Hillary and I again want to thank you all for coming. We ask you to join us now in the State Dining Room for a reception. But first I ask you to express your support and gratitude once more for this remarkable group of citizens. [*Applause*]

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—

[laughter]—had the seventh biggest children's hospital in America.

And since she has been First Lady, she has taken an unprecedented role in issues affecting children and families, from lobbying for the family and medical leave law in 1993 to having the first White House conference on early childhood and brain development, dealing with issues of violence, working on the Children's Health Insurance Program, and a lot of the education initiatives we've done, to her, literally, nationally recognized work to make it easier for people to adopt children, to adopt across racial lines, to provide incentives to adopt children with disabilities, and to do better by the kids who are in foster care and especially children who age out of foster care. She has really done an amazing job, I think.

And then, for the last 2 years she has been running our millennial program, giving a wonderful series of lectures at the White House on the big issues of the future. We've brought in people from all over the world to talk about—and launching this Save America's Treasures program. The head of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Dick Moe, told me a couple of weeks ago, when we were saving Abraham Lincoln's summer cottage at the Old Soldiers' Home in Washington, he said that Hillary's millennial treasures program has now provided the impetus for over \$100 million for investment in historic preservation. That's 60 percent public money, 40 percent private money. It is the largest, single historic preservation effort in the history of the United States.

So what she recognized was that I've done everything I could to turn this country around, leave it in good shape, get us into the 21st century going in the right direction. But all the great stuff is out there still. And we need people to carry on the work. That's why she took what I thought was a personally brave decision, after 30 years of helping other people in every election, to try to run herself. I'm very proud of her. And the latest Quinnipiac College poll had her up 3 points today—it came out today. And I think she's going to do well.

But it's a very expensive election, and as you know, it has been heavily targeted, not only by the Republican Party but by their affiliate groups that didn't think much of anything we did. [Laughter]

So we like—we love our time in New York. We've got a wonderful house in Chappaqua.

It's a 111-year-old farmhouse. And I'm looking forward to the years ahead. I think she's going to win this race, but it's going to be quite expensive and quite controversial and quite difficult. But she's in good shape, and she has done an astonishing amount of work over the last year and a half to make sure that she is the Senate candidate that has actually been to all the counties in New York, that actually knows a lot about the upstate economy, the rural economy, the farm economy, the things most people who think of New York know nothing about. And I'm very, very proud of her.

I feel the same way basically—I want to make the same argument about Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, who has been my friend for 30 years, since I supported him when he ran for the State Senate in 1970, when I was a first-year law student at Yale and he was a 28-year-old graduate there. And we worked together for 15 years in the Democratic Leadership Council.

The issue is whether we're going to keep the change going in the direction of the last 8 years or take a U-turn. That's basically what the issue is. And I think that what we ought to do, those of us who agree with that, ought to take it as our mission from here to November to do two things. One is to make people understand this election is a very big deal.

Look, we had a huge voter turnout in '92, huge, because everybody knew it was a big deal. I mean, our backs were against the wall. We had high unemployment. We had exploding welfare rolls. We had high crime rates. We had all the sort of social division and acrimony and riots in L.A., and we had a sense of political paralysis here. And there was a lot of wedge politics, pitting one group against the other. And you didn't have to be a genius to figure out it was pretty important.

Someone gave me that great saying in 1992 that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over again and expecting a different result. So the people gave us a chance to serve. Now, however, I think you can make a compelling case that how you use your prosperity is just as stern a test of your judgment, your values, and your character as a nation as how you deal with adversity.

In my lifetime we never had a chance like this, so much economic prosperity, social

progress, the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat. We get to decide what kind of future we want for our children—huge, huge thing. So you have to go around and convince people of that, because all these surveys show that most people think, “Ah, things are going so well, who could mess it up? It’s not this an big election.”

The second thing that we have to say is, you have to bring clarity of choice to this election, because people have to understand there are real consequences and profound differences. I enjoyed the Republican Convention, and I was flattered by all the rhetorical devices which recalled, apparently, exact phrases and things I said over the last 8 years, and according to a news story I saw. And I don’t think we should minimize it. It’s a good thing for them to stop being harsh and mean-spirited in their rhetoric. That’s a good thing. But there was a difference between changing the rhetoric and changing the policies of the party.

We actually came out with policies that were new in 1992, different on the economy, on crime, on welfare, on education, on the environment—right across the board—foreign policy. So we have to bring clarity, because there wasn’t much clarity. If you saw at the end of the—all the news stories of interviewing undecided voters at the end of their convention said, “Well, we liked what we saw, and it sure felt good. But we don’t know what they’re going to do. We don’t have a sense of that.”

Now, there are profound differences on economic policy. Principally, they want to spend all the surplus on tax cuts, leaving nothing to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, leaving nothing to pay for their Social Security privatization programs or Star Wars or anything they promised to pay for. We want to spend much less than half—just a little over a quarter of what they do, but 80 percent of the people would get more money out of it, because we want to pay this country out of debt and keep investing in education and technology and health care.

We were just talking before we came up here about long-term care needs. The average person in America who lives to be 65 today has a life expectancy of 83. People over 80 are the fastest growing people in America, percentage-wise. We have to reimagine old age in America. It’s going to be totally different than it ever has been. And as I never tire of saying, the other reason

that they’re wrong on their economic policy is, besides the fact that they don’t leave any money for their own spending promises, the second thing is, if you spend all this, then you won’t pay us out of debt. And that will keep interest rates higher, and that will cost most Americans more money in higher interest rates than they’ll get in a tax cut.

I’ll just tell you what the numbers are. One percent for a decade on interest rates—one percent equals \$250 billion in home mortgage payments, \$30 billion in car payments, \$15 billion in college loan payments; never mind the impact on business loans, which affects business growth, employment, and income.

The other thing, as I’ve said over and over again, is this is a projected surplus. It’s not there yet. And if I ask you what your projected income is for the next decade, and you thought about it, and I said, “Now, be real sure. Be conservative. Be pretty sure. This is an optimistic projection, but you be conservative,” and I said, “Okay, right now I want you to contract, binding contract to spend it all right now”—if you would do that, you should actually seriously consider supporting them in this election. [Laughter] But if you wouldn’t, you probably ought to stick with us and keep this thing going.

Now, there are same differences on crime and gun safety, on health care policy, on education policy—I could go through them all—on choice and the question of who gets appointed to the Supreme Court, which is not just about choice; it’s about civil rights, civil rights enforcement.

So this is a huge election. And Al Gore understands what’s happened the last 8 years and has been an integral part of every good thing that’s happened. He has a keen understanding of the future. He understands the implications of the human genome project, not only the potential for it but the privacy issues that were raised. He understands climate change, and now nobody is making fun of him anymore, like they did in 1992 and 1988. It turns out he was right all along.

But still they took a dig at him at the Republican Convention on the Internet because, like a lot of things people said about me—he did not say he invented the Internet. There is an article in the Washington Monthly or one of those things, which was—he said, yes, he said he was instrumental in creating—he sponsored legislation that helped to create it. The actual

fact is, the Internet was for a long time a defense research project that was the private province of research physicists. There was a bill introduced and passed which essentially helped to make the Internet technology available to businesses and individuals, from which—growing out of that, it became worldwide, the fastest growing communications network in all of human history by a good long ways.

Do you know how many sites there were on the World Wide Web when I became President? Fifty, 5-0—50. You know how many there are today? About 15 million—7 years.

So we've got two people running for President, and the Vice President understands all this stuff. They've got the right economic policy. And the most important thing to me is, they want us all to go along for the ride. They want the people that worked here and made this dinner possible tonight to have the same chance we do to send their kids to college. They want employment nondiscrimination and hate crimes legislation, and they don't think gay people ought to be discriminated against, as long as

they show up for work every day and obey the law like everybody else. They believe in the minimum wage and Patients' Bill of Rights. They passionately share these things that I have worked so hard to advance.

So if you want to keep the prosperity going and keep America more justified and keep ahead of the future, I think it's an easy choice—for Al, for Joe, and for Hillary.

Thank you for your money, but remember, when you leave here, every one of you have great networks of friends and family. You need to make sure people understand. It is a big issue, this election. There are big differences. And clarity of our choice is our friend. If the choice is clear, our side wins.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Lisa Claire and Albert J. Dwoskin; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton *August 9, 2000*

Thank you. Thanks for the tie. You know, I got interested in ties when I realized that the older and grayer I got, the more it would be the only sort of fashion statement I could ever make for the rest of my life. Thank you, Tom; thank you, Pam; thank you, Brosim, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for coming.

I'll tell you what I would like to do. I'd like to just talk for a couple of minutes and then just have a conversation. If you have any questions you want to ask, anything you want to say to me, I will be glad to do it. We kind of started our dinner that way.

But I want to begin by thanking you for coming here and for helping Hillary. And I wanted to just give you a little background on that. I am immensely proud of her for making this race. And we just got a good poll today from Quinnipiac College, saying that she was ahead 46 to 43, which I think is quite good. And if you understand anything about New York democratic politics, if you go into election day

and you're two or three points ahead, you're going to be just fine.

So I feel good about that, and I'm very proud of her because, you know, we had actually been looking forward to this year and being able to relax a little bit. We knew we'd have to work hard for the Vice President and now for Senator Lieberman and for our crowd in Congress. But we also looked forward to the nights at the White House and enjoying our last year there and going to Camp David. And my wife gave up a lot of that because she understood that it was important to carry on the work that we have been about this last 8 years and because half a dozen or more New York House Members asked her to do it, and she got up and spent her time—she's been to every county in New York now, and she fell in love with it and figured out that what they needed and wanted was the same thing she had been working on for 30 years.

I can tell you this, for 30 years all she ever did was help everybody else, and I'm kind of proud of her for sort of venturing out on her own now and trying to do something for herself.

I wanted to mention just a couple of things, because I think it's quite important. I think it's important that the people of New York know, the voters know that what she did as First Lady and what she did before. So if you can help us with that, I'd appreciate it.

She had basically had an unprecedented level of activity in her present position over the last 8 years. She's been active in lobbying for specific pieces of legislation from the family and medical leave law to the Children's Health Insurance Program to the several bills we passed that dramatically expanded the availability of adoptions, gave tax credits to people who would adopt children with disabilities, did more for kids in foster care and for kids that are leaving the foster care system—which is the product of a lifetime of commitment for her.

She has been very active in promoting a lot of our education initiatives. She had the first-ever White House conference on early childhood and brain development, which is a very important issue; on violence against children, we had a big meeting on that that she put on. And the last thing that she did as First Lady that may have, ironically, one of the most enduring impacts was to basically run all of our millennial efforts. We came up with this slogan for the millennium that we would "honor the past and imagine the future."

And we've essentially done two things. We've had a series, probably 10 now, of lectures and dialogs at the White House on big issues that will define the next several years in the new century—the last one on exploring the ocean depths and exploring outer space and what's in those black holes. And they've been followed widely all over the world. It's been amazing. And it was just her idea to put it together. We had the famous scientist Stephen Hawking, who as you may know, has lived longer with Lou Gehrig's disease than anybody in history, still teaching at Cambridge, in England, came all the way across the ocean and gave us a lecture and talked on his little electronic machine about the whole concept of time and space and how it would change in the new century.

And then in terms of honoring the past, she set up this millennial treasures event to do ev-

erything from save the Star-Spangled Banner and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights to specific sites in communities all over America. We were just up on Martha's Vineyard. There is a 19th century tabernacle there that was used for a hundred years for Bible study in the first integrated event, racially integrated event, starting right after the Civil War in America, to Abraham Lincoln's summer home at the Old Soldiers' Home in Washington.

And last week when we were up there, 2 weeks ago, Dick Moe, the head of the National Preservation Historic Trust—Historic Preservation Trust, said that Hillary's millennium treasures effort was the single largest historic preservation movement in the history of the United States. So, she's done a good job as First Lady. She's made a difference in people's lives.

Before she ever got here, the whole—every year I was Governor and before when I was attorney general, she gave up huge portions of her income as a private lawyer to devote time to public service, just like she gave away all the money she made on that book, which was number one on the New York Times bestseller list, because she always believed in public service.

But she also served on corporate boards, learned a lot about economics, helped to bring jobs to poor areas in our State while she was trying to improve education and do all the things she's done. And along the way, she chaired the committee that rewrote all the education standards in our State. She's the best organized person I ever worked with, with the best blend of mind and heart and policy knowledge. She's perfect for the U.S. Senate, and I think she's going to win. She'll be great at it.

But all the people that are trying to beat her will spare no effort or no expense. Therefore, it's critical that you've done what you've done. If she has the resources, she'll do just fine. She won't let you down, and she'll be great in the Senate.

The only other point I want to make about that generally is, I've done everything I know to do to kind of turn our country around from the very difficult circumstances which existed in 1991 and 1992 when I was running. Our Nation has never had the present combination of economic prosperity, social progress, the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat, and national self-confidence we've got now. And it's very important that this work continue. And that

means that every Senate seat and every House seat is pivotally important.

It also means, from my point of view, that this national election is pivotally important. A lot of you have been going to these events that I do, and I had this little mantra. I'll say it again. I say I always tell people there are three very important things you need to know about this election: It is a big election; there are big differences; and our party is the only party that wants you to know what the differences really are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

But it's actually, in fact, true. If you saw what the undecided voter said after our friends met in Philadelphia, they said, "Gosh, we like those people. They look great, and they look like they're not being mean and rightwing anymore. They're being inclusive. But what do they stand for, anyway?" That's what they said. The undecided voters said, "I liked what I saw, but I didn't hear anything. I don't know what they're going to do if they get in."

And there are a lot of stories which say, "Well, people—pretty relaxed about this election. After all, things are so good in America. Why be—you know, sort of a don't-worry-be-happy election?" And then there was a huge story on the cover of—I think it was *USA Today* not very long ago, saying that the people didn't know if there was any difference between the two candidates on their economic policy—the two candidates for President.

So I just would say to you—in addition to this incredible generosity tonight to Hillary, and thank you for rescheduling this, because I was in the Camp David peace talks before when we were supposed to do it—every one of you has a big network of friends and co-workers and colleagues. Maybe they're people that share your politics but may not be as energized as you are. Maybe they're people who don't share your politics at all or don't think about politics much. But let me just say, I've lived long enough now to know that people often make mistakes, not because they're living under such adversity but because things are going along so well they just stop concentrating. And anybody who lives to be beyond the age of 30 can cite at least one time in his or her life when you have made a mistake because things were going so well you just stopped thinking.

And this is a phenomenal opportunity for us to basically decide what we want the future to

look like, and then go do it. And change is the only constant, particularly in today's economy. Nothing stays the same forever. We need to make the most of this.

The second thing is there really are just huge differences here. I mean, there are big differences in economic policy, in crime policy, in health care policy, in education policy, environmental policy, right down the line. And in our policy on building one America, whether we should have a minimum wage, hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, whether we should preserve or get rid of a woman's right to choose—all these things are at stake here. The next President will make two to four appointments to the Supreme Court. U.S. Senators will confirm them, or not. So there's a lot at stake.

And the only other thing I want to say is let me just briefly ask you to think about this economic question, because their line—you can say their line quicker than ours, and it sounds so much better. They say, "Gosh, we're going to have this \$2 trillion surplus, and it's your money, and we're going to give it back to you in a tax cut." And we say, "Now, wait a minute. You want a \$2 trillion tax cut, but that leaves you nothing to provide prescription drugs for Medicare people or deal with long-term care or deal with the baby boomers retiring on Social Security or Medicare. And if you want to partially privatize Social Security and protect the benefits of everybody who is on Social Security, that alone costs another trillion dollars. And you haven't paid for Star Wars yet or anything else."

So in other words, how can you give it all away with a tax cut? We say, "We'll only give about a quarter as big a tax cut as they will because we think we have to have money to invest in education, health care, the environment, and science and technology, and because we want to keep paying the debt down and get this country out of debt, and we're going to have to take care of all these baby boomers when they retire." Now, it takes me longer to say that, but let me put it to you in another way.

I asked the Council of Economic Advisers to tell me what the difference was between the \$2 trillion tax cut, being conservative and all—in other words, giving all the other side the benefit of the doubt—and the plan that I have embraced, that the Vice President and Senator Lieberman are now working on. They say that

the Gore plan will keep interest rates at least—at least—one percent below the Republican plan every year for a decade. That is worth \$250 billion in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, \$15 billion in college loan payments; never mind the fact that it means lower business loans, which means more business loans, more growth, more jobs, and a better stock market.

And I haven't even gotten to the main point, which is what are we going to do if the surplus doesn't materialize and we give it away in advance by giving it all away in a tax cut? I never thought—I'm up here—you may remember that during the primary I was actually attacked and, by extension, the Vice President was, for being so insistent on continuing to pay down the debt. I was attacked from the left. But the best social program is a job. And this is a more just country than it was 8 years ago because child poverty has dropped, income is going up in all quintiles, the female unemployment rate is the lowest it's been in 40 years, the single-parent household poverty rate is the lowest it's been in 46 years. The economy does that for you.

And I'm telling you, this is really—it's wrong for us to get off this path we've been on of driving this debt down, keeping the interest rates as low as we can, and letting the technology and the explosion in productivity, which was a 5 percent increase in the last quarter over the same period last year—keep taking this thing along until we bring everybody along in this economy.

And I know a lot of you have heard me say this before; what I want to tell you one more time is that their position, which is, "Let's give everybody a tax cut. It's your money, because we project it"—it really does remind me of these Publishers Clearing House, these sweep-stake letters you get from Ed McMahon. "You may have won \$10 million." You may have. And everybody that went out the next day and spent the \$10 million should seriously consider supporting the Republicans in this election. [Laughter] Every single one of them. But everybody else ought to stick with us and keep this thing going.

And that's just one difference. But I'm telling you, it is—there really is—I've dealt with a Republican Congress now for 5 years, and I've found a lot of common ground with Speaker Hastert. We're going to pass this new markets legislation, I think, this year. We passed the Africa/Caribbean Basin trade bill with the help

of the Republican and the Democratic leadership, where Senator Lott and Senator Daschle worked together. I work every which way I can. But I promise you, this is—it is a profound philosophical difference.

They actually believe it's okay to have tax cuts based on a hundred percent of the projected surplus. And I can tell you—people ask me all the time—Bob Rubin and I were together the other day at his portrait unveiling, and we were talking about how we started the economic team and Lloyd Bentsen was my first Treasury Secretary and all that. And all these guys came up to me—one guy says to me, he says, "Well, Mr. President, what was the principal economic reform you brought to Washington? What do you think was the principal thing you've done that led to all this incredible growth, and what was the main change?" And I said, "Arithmetic." [Laughter] "We brought back arithmetic. We stopped spending money we didn't have. We stopped projecting in a rosy way. We stopped acting like all this stuff falls from trees and the sky. And we started working in a disciplined way to make hard choices."

So I'm just telling you, Hillary needs your help; the Vice President and Senator Lieberman need your help; America needs your help. Every one of you has a network. We've got a chance to keep this economy going and spread its benefits. But the first and foremost thing we have to decide is, are we going to continue the disciplined path of the last 8 years, taking advantage of the fact that we can do more than we could when I came in because we've turned it around, or are we going to back to the policy which says all tax cuts are good whether you've got the money or not, give it away, and worry about the consequences later?

Now, we've tried it both ways. You had 12 years of one way; now you've had 8 years the other way. And you can add up the evidence either way and draw your own conclusion. But the only way we can get in trouble is if people don't think about it like that, if they don't really think it's a big election, if they think this thing is so strong you couldn't mess it up with a stick of dynamite, if they don't understand with clarity the choice there. Clarity is our friend.

You can be positive and upbeat, and you should be. You never have to say a bad word about any of our opponents. Just talk about the differences, and let people decide. We've been around here over 200 years now because usually

the people get it right if they have enough time and enough information.

The final thing I want to say is I want to thank Tom for what he said about Ireland and the Middle East. It's been the great joy of my life to labor for peace, which is the highest example of what Harry Truman said is the essential work of the Presidency, which is trying to persuade people to do what they should do without having to be asked in the first place. [Laughter]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner cohosts Tom Quinn and Pam and Brosim Ekpona; former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House spokesperson.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Higher Education in Chicago, Illinois *August 10, 2000*

The President. Thank you very much, Ken. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for this warm welcome. I didn't know if we could stir up so many students in the middle of the summer. [Laughter] But I'm delighted to see you all here.

I want to thank Representative Rod Blagojevich for joining me, and also, behind me, Representative Bobby Rush and John Stroger and Tom Hines. And there are a lot of other of my friends here, but I want to thank them all for coming. And I want to recognize that I have one special young man who works for me in the Department of Cabinet Affairs in the White House, Sean O'Shea, who is here with me. He's an alumnus of DePaul.

There's been a lot of talk in the press lately about this whole issue of legacy, and that means when you've got one leg in the political grave, that's what they start talking to you about. [Laughter] But I think I should note that DePaul educated two generations of Daley mayors. Now, that's a real legacy. And I congratulate you on that.

I also—I saw that Princeton Review survey saying that your students were the happiest. And I thought to myself, they're not happy because there are no academic standards here. That would be bad. [Laughter] They must be happy because of the atmosphere, the culture, the way people relate to each other across all their differences. And that is an enormous tribute, and you should be very proud of that. And maybe it has something to do with the basketball team, too. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, we are here because all of us know that when we open the doors of college, we open the doors of opportunity; we give people the chance to live out their own dreams. And in the process, we strengthen our Nation and our ability to contribute to the progress of the entire world.

I got to go to college because I had, in college and law school, scholarships, loans, and lots of jobs. And if I hadn't had all three of those things, I wouldn't have had a chance to go. And if I hadn't had a chance to go, I wouldn't be here today.

I think it is important to recognize that while a college education has always been profoundly significant for certain jobs, like the one that you've made it possible for me to hold over the last 7½, it's more important than it's ever been for all kinds of people in all kinds of ways.

The number of new jobs in the years just ahead requiring a bachelor's degree will grow twice as fast as those which don't. The three fastest growing occupations require at least a bachelor's degree, and all three pay much better than average wages. Twenty years ago college graduates earned about 40 percent more than high school graduates. In the new information economy, the gap has almost doubled. If we value opportunity for all, as we say we do here in America, we have to provide all Americans access to opportunity, and that means access to college.

From the very start, our administration has worked hard on this. I was telling our panelists

on the way out here, I got interested in this whole issue when I was Governor, and we basically got rid of State tuition for everybody in our State that had a certain grade average or above. And we increased scholarships and loan aids.

But I got into it because in the 1980's I kept running into young people who told me that they had started college and dropped out because they had become convinced they would never be able to repay all their loans, especially those, ironically, that we needed the most, the ones who wanted to be police officers, teachers, nurses, that wanted to be in the serving, helping, socially strengthening professions. And we can't allow that to happen.

I just talked to your president, Father Minogue, on the telephone over in Thailand, and he told me that 25 percent of the entering freshman class at DePaul will come from families with incomes of under \$40,000. Now, we have got to do something about it. I want to talk today about what we have done, what we're doing now, and what I think we ought to do.

I agree with what the Congressman said. To me, it is one of the proudest achievements of the last 7 years that we've done so much to open the doors of college to everyone. We have more than doubled student aid in 7 years. We've increased Pell grants by more than 40 percent. We rewrote the student loan program to make it easier and cheaper to get student loans and to pay back those loans as a percentage of your disposable income after you get out of school. By doing this, people don't have to choose between paying their loans and choosing a career that may not be right for them just because it gives them a big enough income to pay their loans back. The direct loan program that we started in 1993, and the competition that it has fostered, have already saved students over \$8 billion in loan repayment costs. It's made a big difference.

We expanded work-study slots by over 40 percent. We now have a million of them in colleges and universities throughout the country. We created AmeriCorps, which has now given 150,000—actually, more than 150,000 young people the chance to earn money for college while they serve in communities all across America in remarkable ways. We gave American families a chance to save for college in education IRA's, which meant the income wasn't subject to taxation while they were saving it, and then

if the money is taken out of the IRA for the purpose of college education, it's never subject to taxation.

And of course, in 1997 we created the \$1,500 HOPE scholarship tax credit, which effectively made 2 years of high school education—post-high-school education free in every community college in the country but was obviously available to people who went to 4-year universities as well.

We supplemented that with a lifetime learning tax credit that applied to the junior and senior years of college, graduate schools, and adult education efforts for people to upgrade their skills, to try to create a seamless thread of lifetime learning in our country. Since 1997, over 5 million families have already benefited from the HOPE scholarship tax credit.

Now, this is the biggest increase in college access and college opportunity since the passage of the GI bill right after World War II. As a result, we now have, for the first time, over two-thirds of our high school graduates enrolling in college. That's a substantial increase from 1993. But even with all the new forms of financial aid and even though the rise in tuition cost has slowed over the last few years, the vast majority of families with people in college still feel stretched. After all, over the past 20 years, the cost of college has quadrupled. Many parents still take second mortgages or second jobs to pay tuition bills.

That's why, to build on the success of the HOPE scholarship and the lifetime learning credits, I have proposed a landmark \$36 billion college opportunity tax cut that will benefit millions of middle class families. It essentially will allow them to deduct up to \$10,000 a year in college tuition costs, at a 28 percent rate, whether they're in the 15 percent income tax bracket or the 28 percent income tax bracket. It can be worth, in other words, up to \$2,800 a year if the students are in school at a place that has tuition of \$10,000 or more.

Today I came here to do two things—to talk to these folks and to announce two other steps to make college more affordable. First, beginning today, the Federal Direct Student Loan Program will reduce interest rates for students who meet their responsibilities and repay their loans on time. This could save more than 2 million students more than—and their parents—\$150 through an interest rebate on new loans and \$500 on refinancing existing loans.

Right now—I'm very proud of this—right now the student loan default rate is 9 percent. When I became President, when the interest rates were high and the system was not user-friendly, the default rate was 22 percent. So it's gone from 22 down to 9. By rewarding responsibility from borrowers who pay back on time, we can bring that default rate down even more.

At the same time, these two proposals I just mentioned will save students and parents more than \$600 million in the next 5 years alone. When you add it up, that will save college students, since 1993, an average of \$1,300 on their college loans and lower interest rates and then premiums for paying on time. You don't have to be a math teacher to know that's pretty good arithmetic. *[Laughter]*

Second, I am pleased to announce a new loan forgiveness program to reward those who teach in our most hard-pressed communities. The students in these communities need the most help from the best teachers. We know that one of the most important things in education, no matter what else we discover, is, has been, and always will be a trained, dedicated, talented teacher.

And through schools like DePaul, we're adding more and more. But we have to add more and more. We have the largest student population in our history, the most diverse student population in our history. We have all these schools that are bursting to the gills, overcrowded, either in old facilities that can't be modernized or in trailers out back. The largest number of trailers I've seen at any one school was a dozen. I was at a grade school in Florida where the school building had a dozen trailers out back.

And we know that 2 million teachers are going to retire over the next 5 or 6 years. This is a very important issue in Chicago, where you have worked so hard to turn your schools around, and the whole country is impressed by the efforts you're making. But it doesn't matter what steps you take. If the young people who are dedicated to teaching aren't there, the rest of the changes won't work.

Now, because of the teacher shortage, we already have too many people going into the classroom who haven't been properly certified to teach the classes that they're supposed to teach. A quarter—listen to this—a quarter of all our secondary school teachers don't have majors or minors in the subjects they teach, mostly in

math and science. Students at schools with the highest minority enrollment have less than a 50–50 chance of having a math or science teacher with a license or a degree in the field that the teacher is teaching. Many of those who are qualified end up leaving their classrooms before they can really make a difference because of the financial problems. Listen to this: One-fifth of all of our new teachers leave the classroom within the first 3 years of teaching.

Now, what we want to do is to put better teachers in the schools that need them most and help them stay there. This program would propose to forgive up to \$5,000 in loans for teachers who stay in the classroom for 5 years. They'll be paying it back by teaching our kids. It builds on our billion dollar budget proposal to improve teacher quality, help retrain and recruit teachers, and put 100,000 new teachers in the early grades to lower class size there.

This is an assignment we cannot afford to fail. And I hope that this loan forgiveness program will encourage more young people to get into teaching and to stay in more than 1 or 2 or 3 years. Taken together, these proposals will help to provide more families with the support they need and help to provide our economy with the workforce it needs.

There are lots of other things we need to do in education. There are lots of other things we need to do in terms of tax relief. But I think helping people to go to college is number one. And I've also proposed tax relief that we can afford for long-term care, for elderly and disabled family members, for child care, to help older workers who lose their health insurance on the job to buy into the Medicare program, to help lower income workers with lots of kids to get more tax relief so they don't pay any income tax.

And what I propose would bring a lot of benefit to Americans and still allow us to invest in education and health care and the environment and science and technology and get this country out of debt. I have some real hope that this proposal on college tuition can pass this year, when the Congress comes back. But in a larger sense, the American people will have to decide whether this is the way they want to go on tax cuts or whether they want big, sweeping tax cuts that take up all of our projected surplus.

I think that is a bad idea, because first of all, the money hasn't materialized yet, and most

of us can't spend money we don't have. And I don't think we ought to do it as a nation. And secondly, we still need to keep investing in education and other things that will make us strong.

So I wanted to come here and say this. We have got to keep working until there is not a single, solitary soul in America who stays out of higher education or drops out of higher education because of the cost. Anybody who is able to go, willing to work, willing to learn and make the grade ought to be able to go, stay, and succeed afterward without being unduly burdened. These steps we're taking today are a good step in the right direction. And if we can just get this tuition deductibility program passed, we can really say we have actually opened the doors of college to every American family.

Thank you very much.

Now, what I want to do—for most of you, you won't be surprised, those of you who are part of the DePaul community, perhaps by any of the stories that are told. But I think it's important to illustrate what we're trying to do in terms of real people's lives. And so we had four folks come here today, and they're going to talk, and I'm just going to start here and go around.

But I want to start with Pam McNeil, who is a dance instructor at Columbia College, and she has three children, ages 3 through 10. You heard that said before. Her husband is an advertising art director. And when their children enter college, she could be eligible to save, with her family's total income, up to \$1,500 for each freshman and sophomore, through the HOPE scholarship; up to \$2,000 a year for each junior and senior; and if the college opportunity tax cut is enacted, \$2,800 a year for each one in all 4 years if they go to colleges where the tuition is that high, which all will be by the time she gets there. *[Laughter]*

So tell us about what you're doing to get your kids thinking about your kids' college education, even though they're quite young.

[At this point, the discussion proceeded.]

The President. So you're going to benefit from the education IRA, because the money at least you can put aside not subject to taxation and take it out not subject to taxation. But if you could deduct \$2,800 a year from your taxes—keep in mind, this is a tax credit, not a deduction—you get—the effect of it would be a

\$2,800 a year reduction in your tax bill for every student in college. It would make a difference in your ability to send your kids.

[The discussion continued.]

The President. I want to put in another plug for something else we're trying to do. *[Laughter]* No one in my family had ever been to college before, and of course, in my generation that was not all that uncommon. But my family started talking to me about it when I was a little kid. There was never—it wasn't a question; it wasn't an option. If I had ever suggested anything to the contrary, I would have been denied dinner or something. *[Laughter]*

The reason I make that point is there's still millions of kids who grow up in this country who don't get that message from their parents. And that's another thing that I hope will come out of these programs. I want people who think they can't send their kids to college to hear this message today so they'll start telling their kids what you tell yours.

We started a program a couple of years ago that was developed originally in Philadelphia, that Congressman Chaka Fattah from Philadelphia sponsored, but the consortium of universities there were going out and mentoring kids in the schools and trying to convince kids in very low-income areas from very difficult family situations that they could all go to college if they learned their lessons.

And what they did was, they had a combination of mentoring the kids and actually showing them what the Pell grant was. A lot of kids think they can't go to college because they don't even know what's on the books now. So the Congress was good enough to pass this program on a nationwide basis. It's called the GEAR UP program. We now have college students all over America going into middle schools, mentoring kids.

They're also educated on what the whole range of student loan options are so they can actually sit down with a 12- or a 13-year-old student and say, "Here's what your family income is. If you go to college, here's what you can get right now. We can tell you right now, you'll be able to get at least this. It will probably be more by the time you get ready, but you've got to make your grades, and we're here to help you." And the message is very, very important.

So I think, in a funny way, what you're telling your kids is just as important as the money you're setting aside for them.

I'd like to now ask John Schoultz, who is the financial aid director here, to talk a little about how things have changed financial aid and access to college. He's been in this business for 30 years, so he has seen a lot of changes. That's almost as long ago as I started needing financial aid. [Laughter]

So what would you like to tell us about this? [The discussion continued.]

The President. I want to turn to Alicia Buie, who is exhibit A of the announcement I made today on loan forgiveness. This is the sort of person we need more of in America right now. She took a big pay cut and a big loan out to become a teacher in a high-need area with kids who need people like her, who are willing to do things for less money and more social return.

But she's got a husband and two kids; she's got a family; she still has to pay bills. I mean, when the electric bill comes, it doesn't say, "Here's your discount for being a good person." [Laughter] So I want her to talk about the decision she made, what she's doing, and keep in mind—and how she would be affected by these proposals.

So will you tell us a little?

[The discussion continued.]

The President. So under the present system, she would be—any out-of-pocket costs she has on the college would be subject to tax deductions. The loans under the direct loan program are less costly for the reasons I just mentioned. But she'll actually get now to write off almost a third of her loan for being a teacher. And I think it is a tiny investment for the rest of us as a nation to make, to reward and encourage people who make the kind of decision she did.

I hope we can—we started doing things like this—we have a little pilot program, actually, for younger people who just start their bachelor's degree, where they could teach off all their undergraduate loans. But it's not as big as I want it to be. And I want to keep—I hope when I'm gone that this thing will have enough life that other people will keep doing it.

We got the idea to do this because, when I was Governor of Arkansas, we had all these

rural places where no doctors would go. And there was a bill passed by the Congress back, I think, in the early seventies, maybe even in the late sixties, where doctors could, in effect, work off their very expensive medical school tuition if they would go to isolated, rural areas or inner cities where there were no doctors.

And now we have the equivalent shortage of teachers, especially in the areas of highest need, especially for the young kids, because that's where the classes are biggest—what you're doing—and in the area where it's hard to get certified people in science and math.

So I hope one of the things that will happen after I am no longer President is that somebody will come along and say, "Let's let them get rid of all the loans if they serve for 5 years or 6 years or whatever and do other things to try to get—[inaudible]."

Now I want to call on Heather Ely. She is a junior here, majoring in computer information systems. Now, there is a guaranteed future. [Laughter] She has borrowed a good deal of money from the student loan program and private sources to go to college. I want her to talk about it, and I want to illustrate how she could save some money just under the proposal I announced today.

[The discussion continued.]

The President. You actually got hurt by the prosperity of the economy in that, because what happened was, when the economy started growing so fast, interest rates went up because there was a lot of competition for money and because the Federal Reserve got worried about inflation. And that's why I've worked so hard to pay the Government's debt down to keep interest rates as low as possible, because it's a good thing to have growth without inflation, but if you have to get it by raising the interest rates, you have all these unintended consequences.

When people raise interest rates, they think, "I'm going to do this to try to slow down the economy, so I'll stop people from buying optional things, or I'll defer the business loan for expansion." But they don't think about people on flexible interest rates, home mortgages, college loans, and things like that—or credit cards, even.

Let me just sort of use you as an example. The direct loan program, as I told you before we came in here, will cut the cost of repayment rather dramatically on the part that you get from

the Government; then if you pay it off on time, you'll save another several hundred dollars.

One thing, though, I must say that you presented me today that I don't know the answer to is, if you did pay out of pocket right now for any of this money that you have borrowed—for example, if you paid up to \$1,500 a year, or since you're a junior or senior it would be up to \$2,000 a year—you would literally, if you had income tax liability or your family did, you'd get it right off the Government. That is, you could deduct up to \$2,000 in cash.

I don't know whether the subsequent repayment of private loans gets the same tax treatment, but it ought to. Logically, it ought to. So you've actually given me something to go back and look into. *[Laughter]* It will be something positive to occupy myself with, since I'm not a candidate this year. *[Laughter]* I need something good to do in September and October, and I'll do that. *[Laughter]*

But if you think about it, all these cases—you ask yourself, don't we have a national interest that we should address as a nation together, through the Tax Code and through investments like the Pell grants, in seeing that he doesn't have to say no to any qualified student; that she doesn't have to worry about whether her third child will have the same opportunities her first child did because of the accumulated costs; that if she wants to make a decision to give up probably half or more of her income, that we don't make it harder by the cost of the transition, which is basically what her education was; and that if this young woman is willing to go out, essentially, and finance her own education all by herself, that she ought to be rewarded for it and not punished? I mean, these are just four examples. And all around here, you look at all these students; a lot of them have been nodding their heads through this. There has got to be a story like this inside the life of every student sitting here.

So if you think about what you want America to look like in 10 years and you think about how wonderfully diverse we are, racially, ethnically, religiously, all kinds of ways, and how well suited we are to this global society we're in—here, your president is over in Thailand having a partnership today, right? That's a good thing. Before you know it, some of you will be taking a semester off to go to Thailand to study. It's a good thing. And the rest of you won't have to go, because by the time we get

all these Internet connections worked out and simultaneous transmissions with good screens, you'll just flip them up on the screen, and you'll be there in class anyway, in Thailand, and they'll be here.

Now, as good a shape as America is in today, all the real benefits of the work we've done together as a nation over the last few years are now out there to be reaped. But the absolute precondition is our ability to give all of our kids a globally competitive education from preschool through high school and opening the doors of college to everyone.

No one contests that we have the best system of higher education in the world. My daughter's friends and then the children of my friends, all of them, they go through this college application process, and they're all so nervous. And I tell them all that this is the highest class problem you can have because, believe it or not, there are at least 400 places in America—right, there are at least 400 places in America, maybe more—where you can literally get a world-class undergraduate education. It's an astonishing thing.

But if we don't get all of our kids ready to go, which means we've got to have more people like her, and if we don't open the doors of college to everybody, which means he doesn't have to say no, then we're never going to reach our full potential. On the other hand, if we do, however good you think things are in America today, believe me, it's just the beginning, and the best days are still ahead. But we've got to allow all these folks and everyone like them in America to succeed.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 11:35 a.m. in the Stuart Center Cafeteria at DePaul University. In his remarks, the President referred to Kenneth McHugh, executive vice president for operations, Rev. John P. Minogue, president, and John Schoultz, director of financial aid, DePaul University; John Stroger, president, Cook County Board of Commissioners; Tom Hines, committeeman, Chicago's 19th Ward; and Sean O'Shea, Special Assistant to the Cabinet Secretary, White House Department of Cabinet Affairs.

Remarks at a Discussion at the Ministers' Leadership Conference in South Barrington, Illinois
August 10, 2000

Rev. Bill Hybels. It wasn't as bad as I told you it was going to be. [Laughter]

The President. It's never been as bad as you told me it was going to be. [Laughter]

Reverend Hybels. You know, there are some cynics out there that think that I'm just going to ask you a bunch of softball questions. They don't know me very well.

The President. They obviously never sat in on any of our sessions. [Laughter]

Buddy

Reverend Hybels. So I'm going to start with a tough one: How's Buddy? [Laughter]

The President. He's doing fine. I'm not doing as well as he is. We took him up to Martha's Vineyard for a little family weekend, and we went swimming in the ocean. And he panicked and jumped on me, and I forgot to give him a manicure first. [Laughter] So it's a good thing I've got a suit on. [Laughter]

Ministers' Leadership Conference

Reverend Hybels. All right. These folks all know you and I have been meeting for many years. I'd just like to ask you, how would you characterize for these people what our meetings are like?

The President. Well, first of all, they all have certain things in common; then they're different from time to time. They all include you asking me point blank about the state of my spiritual life, and if you think I give you an evasive answer, then you do pointed followup questions. [Laughter] And then—and they all end with a prayer. Most of the time we both pray.

Before we came out here, we both prayed. I prayed that you wouldn't give me too tough a time for asking me to come here today. And then we talk about things. We talk about what's going on, what's going on at the office. You ask about the other people that work for me and how they're doing. If there is some particular issue in the news, we talked about that, or particularly if there's a big development involving war or peace, we talk about that.

And you've given me the opportunity to ask you questions about what you do. I mean, I was fascinated about how Willow Creek was

born and grew and how you got into this business that I think is so important, of trying to build up the strength of local churches throughout the country and throughout the world. And I've learned about how I do my work by talking to you about how you do yours. And I hope that the reverse is true on occasion.

But basically, they've been spiritual conversations, conversations between two friends. There are some things that are always the same, and then they change based on what's going on.

Reverend Hybels. Now, recently, you told me that you think more pastors should try to help politicians; they should make themselves available and offer to kind of play the role that I've played.

The President. Yes, I really believe that.

Reverend Hybels. Why?

The President. First of all, because we need it, and not just someone like me, who obviously does. But we do. In 1918 the German sociologist Max Weber wrote an essay. You and I never talked about this before; I just thought about it while you asked me the question. It's called "Politics as a Vocation." And Weber was a Christian Democrat, a devout Catholic. And he said politics is a long and slow boring of hard boards. And anyone who seeks to do it must risk his own soul.

Now, what did he mean by that? What he meant by that was, even in a democracy, where you draw your authority from the people, you have it for a limited amount of time, and it's self-circumscribed by the Constitution. You get the ability to make decisions which affect other people's lives, decisions which are beyond your own wisdom, often made under circumstances which are unimaginably difficult, either because you're under political or personal duress.

And I just think it's—most people who don't know any people in public life who have to make those kind of decisions may think, well, they're just—they don't have a spiritual life, or they're all automatons, or they're not this, that, or the other thing. I can tell you, most of the people I've known in 30 years of public life, Democrats and Republicans, have been good, honest, honorable people who tried to do what

they thought was right, and when they differed, it was because they honestly differed. Ninety percent of the time—plus that's been true. But if you're not careful, when you have this kind of job, it can overtake you. You can believe it's even more important than it is. You can let it take up even more time than it should. And it can crowd out all that other stuff inside you that keeps you centered and growing and whole.

And it's very important that everybody in public life has somebody who's talking to them who either has no interest in either playing up to them and telling them what they want to hear, no interest in getting something from them, and no interest in attacking them—that has anything to do with the fact that the person is in public life. And a pastor can do that in a way that, and you just sort of—you can't imagine how much time that I've spent with you and, over the last couple of years, the time that I've spent also with Gordon McDonald and Tony Campolo and Phil Wogaman—how much it means to me, because it sort of takes me out of all the stuff that's going on and forces me to look at it in a different way and to look at my own life in a different way. And it really kind of keeps me anchored. And you can—all of you can do that for somebody else.

1958 Billy Graham Crusade

Reverend Hybels. Something spiritual came into focus for you when you were just a young boy, about 10 years old. Tell us about that.

The President. Well, really, it had a lot to do with how I wound up in public life, I think. I became a Christian in 1955, when I was 9, went to Park Place Baptist Church in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The minister's name was James Fitzgerald. He's a great, good man.

Reverend Hybels. Now, did you like, hear a sermon and then—[inaudible]?

The President. No, I had been a regular churchgoer ever since I was about 6. But yes, I loved this man. I haven't seen him since. I haven't seen him in 45 years. But I have a very vivid memory of exactly what he looked like and the way he talked, and he touched my heart. He convinced me that I needed to acknowledge that I was a sinner and that I needed to accept Christ in my heart, and I did. But I was 9 years old, and I was trying to figure out what it all meant.

So then, when I was about 11 years old, maybe 12, the whole State was in an uproar. I guess I was 12; I think it was September of 1958. Billy Graham was coming to Little Rock to do a crusade in War Memorial Stadium, which is where the Arkansas Razorbacks play their football games when they're playing in Little Rock. And Billy Graham's the only person that could get a bigger crowd than the football team. [Laughter]

So the schools in Little Rock had just been closed in the Little Rock integration crisis. Some of you who are older will remember it. Perhaps if you're younger, you read about it. But 1957 was the first big crisis of the school integration movement, and the Governor closed the schools, called out the National Guard to keep nine black children out of the schools and then closed them for a year, and all the kids had to go somewhere else to school.

And the White Citizens Council was basically dominating the politics of the town. So Billy Graham scheduled these crusades years in advance, and he didn't plan all this. All of a sudden, he's supposed to step in the middle of this. And my Sunday school teacher was going to take me and a bunch of kids over to hear him. I never will forget it. And the White Citizens Council and a lot of the business people in Little Rock were worried about some sort of great encounter because the racial tensions were very high, and they asked Billy Graham to agree to give this crusade to a segregated audience.

And he said that if they insisted on that, he would not come, that we were all children of God, and he wanted to lead everyone to Christ. He wouldn't do it. And it really touched me, because my grandparents, who had no education, particularly, and were very modest people, were among the few white people I knew who supported school integration. And all of a sudden, to have Billy Graham validating this based on his Christian witness had a profound impact on me. And it got me to thinking at that early age about the relationship between your faith and your work, which, of course, has been one of the most hotly debated issues in Christianity for 2,000 years now. What does the Book of James really mean, and all that?

But I really—I can't tell you what it meant. And for a long time right after that I would send a little bit of my allowance money to Billy Graham. You know, I'm still on somebody's list

somewhere—[laughter]—for giving next to no money, but it was a pretty good chunk of what I had.

And he came back to Arkansas 30 years later to do another crusade. And I took him by to see my pastor, who was dying at the time and who had been his friend for decades, and we relived that moment, and I've never forgotten it. And I never will. It's just like it happened yesterday to me. Even now, I can hardly talk about it.

President's Church Attendance

Reverend Hybels. Now, you and Hillary have been churchgoers all the time in your public service. And some people think that's just an act. How would you respond?

The President. Well, at least, it's a consistent act. [Laughter] Well, I think I have given evidence that I need to be in church. [Laughter] To me, it's—you know, I don't talk about it a lot. I never sought to politicize it. But it was very interesting. I started off, and I went to church with great regularity until I graduated from college—high school. And like a lot of people, when I went to college, my attendance became more sporadic.

And actually, Hillary had been very active in her local Methodist church in Park Ridge, which is not too far from here, when she was growing up. And I remember when I was elected Governor, I had my dedicatory service in the church—this was 1979—in the church in Little Rock, which I'm still a member, Emmanuel Baptist Church. And Hillary said to me, "You know, we should start going to church again on a regular basis. We ought to do it, and you should join the choir. It would do you good to think about something besides politics."

So I talked to the choir director, and because I was Governor, I was out 3 or 4 nights a week, I couldn't go to practice. But I had been in music all my life, so I was a good sight reader, so he let me sing anyway.

So from 1980 until the year I became President, I got to sing in my church choir every Sunday, and it meant a lot to me. And then after we came here, we both, because we wanted to go together and with our daughter, we both started going to the Methodist church outside here in Washington, Foundry Methodist Church, that Dr. Wogaman is the pastor of, and you know him, of course. And we've gone pretty regularly for 7½ years now.

So I've been doing this a long time. I don't do it for anybody else; I do it for me. It helps me to go. It helps me—the same way it helps me to spend an hour talking to you. I'm sitting there in church, just like everybody else, except needing it maybe more, and it's one of the best hours of the week for me. I just let everything else go, take my Bible, read, listen, sing. I don't know; why does anybody go? It means something to me. It's a way of not only validating my faith but deepening it and basically replenishing it.

One of the things I like about my observant Jewish friends—and you've seen a lot about this in the last few days with all the publicity over Senator Lieberman becoming the Vice Presidential nominee—is that they take a whole day, and I mean they really take the day. They don't go to service for an hour. I mean for a day they shut down and shut the whole world out and think about what's most important in life. Anyway, in a very small way, that's what my church attendance does for me.

President's Spiritual Life

Reverend Hybels. Okay. So if we were having our regular meeting, this would be the time when I would ask the consistent question: What's the current condition of your spiritual life? Describe right now where you're at spiritually.

The President. Well, I feel much more at peace than I used to. And I think that as awful as what I went through was, humiliating as it was, more to others than to me, even, sometimes when you think you've got something behind you and then it's not behind you, this sort of purging process, if it doesn't destroy you, can bring you to a different place.

I'm now in the second year of a process of trying to totally rebuild my life from a terrible mistake I made. And I now see—I don't think anybody can say, "Hey, the state of my spiritual life is great. It's constant, and it's never going to change." I think I've learned enough now to know that's not true, that it's always a work in progress, and you just have to hope you're getting better every day. But if you're not getting better, chances are you're getting worse. That this has to be a dynamic, ongoing effort.

But you know, I had to come to terms with a lot of things about the fundamental importance of character and integrity. Integrity, to

me, means—is a literal term. It means the integration of one's spirit, mind, and body being in the same place at the same time with everything, doing what you believe is right and you believe is consistent with the will of God.

It's been an amazing encounter, you know, trying to rebuild my family life, which is the most important thing of all—and it took a lot of effort that I've never talked about and probably never will, because I don't really think it's anybody else's concern—and then to rebuild the support of the people I work with to try to be worthy of the fact that two-thirds of the American people stuck with me. That's an incredible thing.

So I wake up every day, no matter what anybody says or what goes wrong or whatever, with this overwhelming sense of gratitude. Because it may be that if I hadn't been knocked down in the way I was and forced to come to grips with what I'd done and the consequences of it, in such an awful way, I might not ever have had to really deal with it a hundred percent.

This kind of thing happens to—not, maybe, this kind of thing—but all kinds of problems come up in people's lives all the time, and usually they're not played out with several billion dollars of publicity on the neon lights before people. But they still have to be dealt with. And in a funny way, when you realize there is nothing left to hide, then it sort of frees you up to do what you ought to be doing anyway. I don't know if that makes any sense, but to me, I feel this overwhelming sense of gratitude.

I also learned a lot about forgiveness. I've always thought I was sort of a forgiving, generous person, you know, nonjudgmental in a negative sense, not that I don't have opinions. But I realized once you've actually had to stand up and ask for forgiveness before the whole wide world, it makes it a little harder to be as hard as I think I once was on other people, and that's meant something to me, too. I think I've learned something about that.

Reverend Hybels. A lot of people, when they learned that I was going to interview you, and a lot of people who know that we've been meeting, have said to me, "The guy never really apologized. The guy never really owned it and came clean about his mistakes, tried to hide it, said it didn't happen. He never came clean." Now, that's a little surprising to me, because we sent a staff member, one of our senior staff

members, to the White House the day in September of '98 when you gave one of the most clear confessional statements that I have ever heard.

I'm not going to ask for a hand raise or anything, but there's a whole bunch of people here who think you never really said it.

The President. No, I don't know why. I just—you know, to me—I had to come—there was a lot of things going on at the time, as you remember, that were unrelated, I think, to the fact that I did something wrong that I needed to acknowledge, apologize for, and then begin a process of atonement for. And there were a few days when I basically was thinking more about what my adversaries were trying to do than what I should be trying to do.

And finally, this breakfast we had—we're about to have it, actually. We're coming up on the second anniversary of the prayer breakfast I have every year for people of all different faiths in the White House that we sort of do at the start of school, because it's kind of a rededication period. And I've done it for 8 years, over and above the President's prayer breakfast, which is a—there's a whole committee that does that. Hillary and I just invite people to the White House, and we have breakfast, and we talk about whatever we're talking about that year. We pray together, and people get up and say whatever they want to say.

But I think I gave a clear, unambiguous, brutally frank, and, frankly, personally painful statement to me because I had to do it. I mean, I finally realized that I was—it would never be all right unless I stood up there and said what I did and said it was wrong and apologized for it.

But I think what happened was, I think anybody who was there thought so; I think anybody who read it thought so. I don't know what was covered by television, really, because I don't watch the TV news much, or what was written in the newspaper or who heard it. But I think that anyone who saw that and who observed what happened afterward would not doubt that there had been a full and adequate apology.

Reverend Hybels. You sent me the text of it right then, and I read it, and it was—I mean, I'm an elder at this church, as well as the pastor, and we've had many times where people have had to make confessions, and this was as clean. You said, "Not only am I"—you said, "There's no fancy way—there's not a fancy way to say

it; I have sinned.” And you went on and quoted from Psalm 51 and talked about the need for a broken and contrite heart, and you confessed that.

And you went on to say that it’s not enough just to say I’m sorry, there has to be the fruits of repentance and the gathering together of people who would hold you accountable for walking a new way. You announced that day publicly you were putting an accountability group together that would meet with you and help you stay on a new path. And you ended the speech by saying, “Let the words in my mouth, the meditation in my heart, and the work of my hands be pleasing to my God.”

It was about as clean as I have ever read something like that. And it must have been terribly frustrating for you to live on in the future with the sense that there’s a whole bunch of people who just continue to believe you never came clean.

The President. Oh, it was for a little bit. But I think one of the things you learn is that even a President—all you can do is be responsible for what you do, and what other people say about it or whether it gets out there—you have to work hard to get it out there, but—I suppose there was a time when I was upset about it. But then I realized that that was another form of defensiveness, that if I really thought about that, that was just another excuse not to be doing what I should be doing, which is to work on my life, work on my marriage, work on my parenthood, work on my work with the White House and the administration, and work on serving the American people.

So believe it or not, I haven’t thought about it in a long, long time now. I thought about it a little bit now because you asked me to do this, and I said, yes, and here we are in the soup together. But I don’t think about it now, because I realize that anytime you’re supposed to be doing something with your life and you get off thinking about what somebody else is saying or doing about it or to you or whatever, it’s just a crutch for not dealing with what you’re supposed to be dealing with. So I finally just let it go, and I hope people can see that it’s different. You just have to hope that and go on.

Leadership

Reverend Hybels. Let’s switch subject matters and go over to leadership. I mean, you know

a lot about leadership. And you’ve been the leader of the most powerful country in the world for almost 8 years now. So okay, leadership questions, are we all right on that, or is there anything more you wanted to say on other stuff?

The President. I thought you’d never change the subject. [Laughter]

Reverend Hybels. All right, then. When did you first recognize that you were a leader? It’s not a trick question. I’m just asking it. [Laughter]

The President. I know. I’m just trying to remember. When I was young—I don’t know, in grade school—I used to often be the person who sort of organized the games and got people to do things and all that kind of stuff. But I don’t know that I ever thought about it in leadership terms. And I began to get interested in all this when I got interested in politics as a kid.

We got a television when I was 9, I think, or 10. We didn’t have a television until I was about 10. I watched the 1956 Republican and Democratic conventions. I was just fascinated by it. And then by 1960, I began to think, “Well, maybe I could actually do this someday, because I’m real interested in people; I care a lot about these issues.”

But I think the first things I actually did were when I was in high school and I was the president of my class and the head of the band and I used to organize the State Band Festival with the band director. And one time I remember a young man came to school; he came to our school. He hadn’t been there very long, and he was in the band. And he had a fight with a teacher, and he said a very intemperate thing. At least, back then, you couldn’t do that kind of thing, and she suspended him.

So he was going to miss this big band trip we were taking over the weekend. And this kid had come to our town; he had no friends; he was all alone. Anyway, I decided that he ought to go. And the teacher, by blind coincidence, was a woman I very much admired. Her husband had been a plumber, and she was a housewife and a genius. And they both went back to school in their mid-thirties. And they lived across the street from me, just by coincidence.

So I went to her house, and I told her why she ought to reinstate this kid. And I said, “I want to bring him to you and let him apologize.” But, I said, “I don’t know what’s going on in

his life, but he's a decent kid. And he's absolutely in the wrong, and you're absolutely right to suspend him. But you ought not to do it anyway, because he just got here, and this will be good for him if he takes this trip; he'll make friends and everything."

So she agreed to let me bring this kid to see her. And he apologized and cried, and she cried, and they became—it was great. He went on the trip. I never saw him again after I graduated from high school until I ran for President in 1992. But that made me want to be a leader. I don't know if that meant I could be. I was about—I don't know—I was 15 or 16 years old. But it made me understand that you could do things that would make a difference in other people's lives if you just thought about it in the right way.

Reverend Hybels. All right. So you started realizing you had leadership skills or talents in you. But then at some point you said, "I'm going to direct this leadership toward the political arena." I mean, you could have been a leader in business; you could have been a leader in academia; you could have been a leader in ministry, probably. [Laughter]

The President. You will find this funny, in light of all that's happened. When I was about 11, I gave my grandmother a big speech about civil rights. I was just going on and on, waving my arms and everything. My grandmother looked at me, and she said, "You know, Billy, I think you could be a preacher if you were just a little better boy." [Laughter] True story.

Reverend Hybels. But anyway, you decided to choose—I'm not going to follow up on that one. I'm letting that one go.

The President. Thank you.

Reverend Hybels. I mean, that was a free shot for me, and I took a pass. [Laughter] So please acknowledge.

The President. I owe you one.

Well, like I said, I was about 16, I guess, that I really decided that if I could do this kind of work, I would like to do it, this political work.

And the only other thing I had—I had thought about being a doctor, and I was very interested in it. But I knew I wouldn't be great at it. I thought about being a musician, and I was really quite good when I was in high school. And I knew I would be very good. But I didn't think I could be the best. Especially then, you know, 40 years ago, if you were a

saxophone player, there weren't any saxophone players like there are up here on this church stage. And there was certainly nobody like Kenny G making a living just making records.

I mean, if you wanted to make a living doing that, you had to get your days and nights mixed up. You had to go to some club, stay up all night playing jazz; you'd sleep all day. How was I going to have a family? How was I going to have a life? And it certainly wouldn't be worth it unless you literally were the greatest person doing it.

And I knew I was real good but not great. I thought to myself, I can do this really well, what I'm doing now, and I love it. And it's like the only thing I could ever think of where every day you're getting up and peeling another slice off the onion of human existence. There's like an endless layer of exposure to different people and different problems and different dreams.

So I decided when I was about 16 that if I could do it, I would. And I would do it because I could do it better than I could do anything else. And I must say it was a great advantage to me in life. It's like there are all these great stories coming out now on Tiger Woods and how he's done things younger than anybody else has ever done and how he used to keep Jack Niklaus' golf records taped on his bedstead, you know. He decided younger than I did what he was going to do. It's a huge advantage.

You pay a little price for it, too. None of these decisions are free in life, but I think it is a big advantage. And I've always been grateful that I just knew when I was young.

Reverend Hybels. There's always that picture of you shaking hands with John Kennedy. Was that as momentous in your mind at the time as people have made it out to be since?

The President. Yes, but not in the way they make it out to be. I mean, that is, I think if I had never gone in and shaken his hand, I still would have tried to go into politics because it's what I wanted to do. But I admired him, and I supported him when I was 14. He was running for President—we used to have these great debates in my ninth-grade class. And my very best friend as a child, who is still one of my closest friends—we stay in touch all the time and he sends me an E-mail once a week. He's in the computer business in Arkansas and comes to see me and tells me when he thinks I'm all wet. But he was there. He came from

a Republican family, and I came from a Republican county. So he was for President Nixon, and I was for President Kennedy. And we'd have our little debates in the ninth grade.

And for me, it was basically about civil rights, which I felt very strongly about. So when I got to go to Boys Nation, the American Legion did a great thing for me. It was a huge deal for me—I was a 16-year-old kid from Arkansas—to get on an airplane, go to Washington, go to the White House, stand in the Rose Garden. And we all were standing there in alphabetical order by State, so Arkansas was near the front. And President Kennedy gave this little speech and complimented us on what we'd done in civil rights legislation, because it was a mock Senate program, this Boys Nation program. He said we were doing better than the real Senate, which is probably still true. [Laughter]

And anyway—Trent Lott will make me pay for that. [Laughter] Anyway, so then he comes down, and he starts shaking hands. I was the biggest kid from any of the States that started with A, so I just sort of muscled my way up there and got to shake hands. But he was kind enough to stand there for many minutes and shake hands with all the kids.

And I think in every year but one—this year, because I had an emergency, or a very important thing I had to do, and we had to slot the Boys Nation and Girls Nation people in—every year except this one, I've actually stood there and shaken hands with and had a picture taken with every one of those kids, because you just never know when something you do to some child from a small hamlet in North Dakota or an inner-city neighborhood in L.A., or anywhere else—just by taking a little bit of time, that the child might imagine that he or she could do something that otherwise they hadn't imagined.

So what Kennedy, meeting him, I think, did for me is it gave me—first of all, I was just touched that the President was seeing us and paying a little attention to us, but it gave me the ability to imagine that I might have this life that I knew I wanted.

Reverend Hybels. All right. Characterize your leadership style. Would you say like you're a visionary leader, a strategic leader, team-building leader?

The President. Well, you probably ought to ask the people who came with me today. They would probably say, an exhausting one. [Laugh-

ter] Let me try—first of all, I think the vision is the most important thing. I mean, to me, what you have to have, if you want to really lead in any endeavor you've got to say, "Okay, what is my objective? What are the facts here? What are the facts on the ground? Here's my vision." Then you need a strategy for how you're going to achieve your vision. Then you have to have all these tactics that explain it. Then you have to put together a team that can do what you can't do.

And so what I have tried to do is to focus on the vision thing, as some politicians say. I mean, it's not for nothing that the Scripture says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." I mean it is the most important thing. Otherwise you get—remember that great old Yogi Berra line, "I may not know where I'm going, but I'm making good time." I mean, that happens to everybody in life, and part of it is when you lose your vision.

But I also—I think that team-building is very important because a lot of the things that I get credit for, the good things that have happened have been done by somebody else that I empowered to act, consistent with an agreed upon plan that we started with. I mean, one of the things that frustrates me—it's no different from everybody else that's had this position, but Vice President Gore doesn't get near enough credit for a lot of the things that I've done that he was the main executor on.

I've been very fortunate. I've had one Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, the former Governor of South Carolina, and there's been a dramatic amount of improvement in the schools that we've been an integral part of because of him. I've had one Secretary of Health and Human Services; one Secretary of the Interior, Bruce Babbitt, who has probably made the greatest impact on the interior in a positive way since the days of Harold Ickes in Roosevelt's administration or Gifford Pinchot before that in Teddy Roosevelt's administration.

So the team is very important. If you don't have the people around you that are good, you can have the vision, and you can have the strategy, but if you're doing anything that requires more than one person to do it, if you're doing something besides writing a book, you've got to have somebody else to help you.

Reverend Hybels. When I first started seeing you, you had quite a few Arkansas folks in the early days or friends that you brought with you

in the early days into the office. And then my perception—and I don't think we've ever talked about this, actually—my perception is some of them found out that the job was over their heads, and eventually you had to ask some people who started with you to do something else.

The President. The truth is, though, most of the people that came with me from home have done very well. The most popular member of the Cabinet, I think, is James Lee Witt, the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. And he was the county judge in this little rural county in Arkansas where my stepfather was born. He was my head of the Emergency Management Agency, and the reason he's popular is we've had a lot of disasters since I've been President—natural disasters, I mean. [Laughter] We've had a lot of natural disasters, and he's the first guy that ever had that job that got it not as a political appointment. He really knows it.

The person who does all my appointments, Bob Nash, is from Arkansas. It's one of the most difficult and sensitive jobs in the Government. Nancy Herrreich, whom you know and work with, she's obviously from Arkansas. So I've had a huge number of people I brought up with.

The only two that I can think of just off the top of my head—some of the others have come and gone, but they came and went for the same reasons others come and go. The only two I can think of that really changed their jobs or that left their jobs under less than optimum circumstances, one of them, principally, was Vince Foster who, as you know, in a heart-breaking incident actually killed himself, apparently partly because of criticism he was receiving in the press that he thought was unfair and unjust and untrue.

And I must tell you, that had a big impact on me and my wife. I had gone to kindergarten with him. Everybody thought at home that he was maybe not only the best but the most ethical lawyer they ever knew. And he had this self-image of himself that was completely assaulted from day one in Washington, and he took it seriously. I'll never forget talking to him a day or so before he died. And I said, "You know, how can you take this seriously? These people, they don't know anything about you." And I said, "Everybody that reads this editorial page is against us anyway. None of these people are going to vote for us." And for me, I was

so used to being beat on, I was insensitive to the fact that a man that I had lived next door to when I was 4 years old was dying inside, literally.

And it's something that I think pastors—maybe this has happened to you before, and if it hasn't, I hope it never will, but it's something you've got to be sensitive to. I thought he was receiving all this incoming fire in the way that I was receiving it. And instead, he was receiving it the way Woodrow Wilson talked about when he was President. He said that words could wound more than bullets and that it took an extraordinary courage to bear up under it.

I'd been in public life and debates so long. I was so used to people saying things for whatever reason; I missed it. So I tried to joke him out of this, instead of being sensitive to it. He performed very well, but he didn't understand the Washington culture.

When Mack McLarty, who went to kindergarten with me and was a big time automotive executive, became my Chief of Staff, he didn't want to do it. He said, "You need somebody with Washington experience." But we had put most of those people that we had into the Cabinet. And so, I knew he was a good manager. It's interesting. So after a couple of years he moved on and became my Special Envoy to the Americas, where he helped to, basically, dramatically improve and broaden our relationship with all the countries south of our border and where he still does work for me, even though he's returned. He and Henry Kissinger have gone into business together. So McLarty has done very, very well. But he didn't want to be Chief of Staff. It's just that, at the time they were fixing to swear me in, and I had to have somebody. And I had to have somebody that actually knew how to run things.

And you might be interested to know that Bob Rubin—whom everybody considers sort of a consummate insider, you know, was my Secretary of the Treasury and, before that, head of the first National Economic Council and clearly one of the two or three most important architects of our economic revival—says that McLarty did more than anybody else to establish the spirit of teamwork that we've had.

In 1995, after we lost the Congress, I had a couple of Presidential scholars from Harvard come in. And one of these men—I didn't even know him—he said, "Don't worry. You're going

to be reelected.” No one thought I was going to be reelected in 1995. I said, “Why do you say that?” He said, “You have the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson’s second administration.” He said, “I never saw anything like it.” He said, “There’s no backbiting. They work with the White House. You all work together.” He said, “I don’t know how you all did it, but you’re all devoted to each other.” And he said, “Believe me, in the end, in ways that no one can quantify, it will work out.” So I think the guy’s a genius now, even though I never knew him before. [Laughter]

Polls

Reverend Hybels. Sometimes it appears as though you live by simply taking the pulse or looking at polling numbers. Other times you seem to step out and lead by conviction, deep conviction. Is that a fair characterization of your leadership?

The President. No. And I’ll explain why. First of all, the role of polls is widely misunderstood, so let me tell you a little about at least how I see polls. Let’s begin with a poll in a campaign. Who is ahead? Vice President Gore or Governor Bush, right? The Gallup poll says one day Bush is 19 points ahead. Vice President Gore names Joe Lieberman. The next day he’s 2 points ahead. Believe me, 17 percent of the people did not really change their mind in one day.

That doesn’t mean that Mr. Gallup’s organization didn’t tell the truth; that is, that they called what they thought was a representative group of people one day, and they called another representative group the other day. But the first thing you need to remember about every poll is, if it’s an election, it’s a picture of a horserace that’s not over. And if you’ve ever watched a horserace and you see the replays, they always show how it was at the first turn, how it was in the back stretch, how it was at the final turn. Every picture is a poll. That’s what—you should keep that in your mind.

So when you see the polls unfold in this Presidential race, you should remember that. And therefore, it’s like a horserace. How big is their lead? is one issue. Second is, what is it based on? Like if one horse is stronger than another, even he may just be a half—may be a head or even a nose ahead, but if he’s a stronger horse, he’s going to win anyway. But otherwise, there could be—if the horse has got a lot of

juice running third, the horse running third may win.

Now, on the issues, which is what Bill’s asking me about, there’s something else you need to remember about polls. First of all, they may be totally misleading. I’ll explain that. Second, they may change. I’ll tell you what I normally use polls for as President. If you go back and look at what I did—in 1992, I issued a booklet called “Putting People First” and said “If you vote for me, this is what I’m going to do.” In 1995, Thomas Patterson, the Presidential scholar, said that I had already kept a higher percentage of my commitments than the previous five Presidents, even though I’d made more commitments.

So what do I use polls for on the issues? What I primarily use polls for is to tell me how to make the argument that’s most likely to persuade you that I’m right about what I’m trying to do.

Reverend Hybels. Give us an example.

The President. Okay. I’ll give you an example where, according to the polls I have the unpopular position, okay? The Congress passes a repeal of the estate tax, an outright repeal. Now, I can—and I’m going to veto it if it comes to my desk, okay? Now, I can say the following. I can say, “I’m going to veto this because it only helps less than 2 percent of the people and half of the relief goes to one-tenth of one percent of the people, and it’s an average \$10 million.” That is a populist explanation.

I can say, “I’m going to veto it because we only have so much money for tax cuts, and I think it’s wrong to do this and say this is our highest priority, when we have done nothing to lower the income taxes of low-income working people with three kids or more or to help people pay for child care or long-term care for their elderly or disabled relatives or to get a tax deduction for college tuition.”

Or I could say, “I think there should be estate tax relief.” I do, by the way. “I don’t care if it does help primarily upper income people. The way so many people have made so much money in the stock markets in the last 8 years, there are a lot of family-owned businesses that people would like to pass down to their family members, that would be burdened by the way the estate tax works, plus which the maximum rate is too high. When it was set, income tax rates were higher, but there was a lot of ways to get out of it. Now the rates are lower, but

you have less ways to get out of it. You have to pretty much pay what you owe more.” So I could say that.

So it’s not fair to totally repeal it. Like even Bill Gates has said, “Why are you going to give me a \$40 billion tax break?” And he’s going to give away his money, and I applaud him and honor him for it.

So I could make either of those three arguments. It’s helpful to me to know what you’re thinking. I know what I think is right. I’m not going to change what I think is right. But in order to continue to be effective, you have to believe I’m right. So that’s kind of what I use polls for.

Also, if you know that you’ve only got time—let’s say Congress is going to be in session 3 more months, and you know you can get two things done, and there’s five things you want to do. And you like them all five more or less the same, but you just know you can’t get it all done, the system won’t absorb that much change at once.

It may help you to do a survey to see—for example, the Patients’ Bill of Rights that I’ve been trying to pass for 2 years. One of the reasons that I have felt good about trying to push it—and we keep making progress and the House of Representatives passed it—is that 70 percent of Republicans, Democrats, and independents outside Washington support it. It’s helpful to know that, because then you’re not asking if—in other words, the Congress is a majority Republican. So if I give them a bill that’s got 60 percent of the Democrats for it and 60 percent of the independents for it, when 60 percent of the Republicans are against it, I’m really asking them to make a sacrifice.

But if I give them a bill that Democrats, Republicans, and independents are all for, even though there may be some organized groups against it, I’m not asking them to hurt themselves to do something that I think is good for America. That’s how I use polls.

Now, let me just say one other thing. Polls can be misleading.

Reverend Hybels. He loves this stuff. I mean, just listen to this. *[Laughter]*

The President. No, no, but you need to understand it. Polls can be misleading. For example, the polls show that people normally support the positions I took on the Brady bill, banning assault weapons, closing the gun show loophole.

Does that mean it’s a good thing to do politically? Absolutely not; not necessarily.

One of the reasons the Republicans won the House in 1994 is that I got Democrats to vote for the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. Why? Let’s say people—I’ll exaggerate—let’s say people are 80 percent for my position and 20 percent for the NRA position. Okay? But if the 80 percent who are for my position are interested in a dozen issues, and it’s only a voting issue for 5 percent, and of the 20 percent of the NRA members who are against my position if it’s a voting issue for 10 percent, for 15 percent, it means you lose 10 percent of the vote. See what I mean?

So the polls can be totally misleading. Therefore, even though it looked like the public was for us, when we took on guns, when we took on tobacco interests, when we took on a lot of these other things, it was very risky.

And the final thing I want to tell you is, sometimes you have to do things that are unpopular because you know they’re right and you’re absolutely convinced time will tell. The most unpopular decision I made as President, at the moment I made it, was to give financial aid to Mexico when they were going broke. Remember that a few years ago? On the day I made that decision the polls said that by 81 to 15—81 to 15, you couldn’t get those numbers for the proposition that the Sun will come up tomorrow—*[laughter]*—by 81 to 15, the public thought that I should not do that.

It took me 5 minutes to make the decision to do it. It was not a hard decision. We did it right away. Why? Because I knew that no matter what you thought about whether I was doing something wrong, I couldn’t allow Mexico to go bankrupt if I could stop it because it was an important trading partner for us; because if they went down, then Argentina and Brazil might go down; countries half way around the world might down; we would be flooded with more illegal immigrants; we’d have more trouble on our border than we could say grace over; and that even if everybody got mad at me and wanted to vote against me, I owed it to you to do what I had more evidence and knowledge of than most voters and go ahead and do what I thought was right. So I did.

You should use polls and you should follow them, but neither those who follow nor those who use should take them too seriously or fail to understand their limits.

Race Relations

Reverend Hybels. If I asked you what are two or three issue-oriented convictions that you are going to stand for from here to the grave, you just go, “This one goes down into my soul”?

The President. The first is the whole question of race. You know, I’m a southerner; I grew up in the segregated South. The most important thing to me is that we learn to live together.

Let me say, for one thing, I’m quite sure that some of my positions are wrong. I’m quite sure some of your positions are wrong. That is, if you know enough and have enough opinions, some of them are going to be wrong.

In a way, one of my very favorite Bible verses is the 12th chapter of the—12th verse of the 12th chapter of First Corinthians: “Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are also known. Now abideth faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love”—or charity or charitable love or whatever. Why? Because we see through a glass darkly.

But I’m quite sure that what I am right about is our common humanity and that our common humanity is more important than the things that divide us. The human genome project has discovered that we are genetically more than 99.9 percent the same. Furthermore, it has discovered that if you take—let’s say we took four groups. Let’s say we take a hundred Chinese, a hundred Indians from South Asia—not Native American—a hundred Indians, a hundred Norwegians, and a hundred West Africans. That the genetic differences between the groups would be less than the genetic differences among the individuals within each racial group—stunning.

Basically, science is confirming what our faith has taught us. And so, to me, if I could have one wish for America it would not be that the economic recovery would go on another decade, it would not be even that the crime rate would be lowered or that we would all—that all of our children would have a chance at a good life. It would be that we would find a way to live together as one America, because we’ll figure out how to solve all the problems if we’ll stop getting in each other’s way. So that’s what I believe.

Reverend Hybels. It’s funny, when you start going in on this genetic thing—I went to Washington. I think it was a day after you had done all that reading. I walked in the door. You could

not wait—[laughter]—to tell me the findings of these genetic differences and similarities. And I was thinking, I flew all the way there, sat and listened for an hour and 15 minutes, flew all the way back, and never said a word. [Laughter]

The President. But somebody has got to do that to him, right? [Laughter]

Reverend Hybels. I think you’re two down now.

The President. Boy, I’ll pay for that, I’ll tell you. I’ll pay for that.

Influences on the President

Reverend Hybels. Yes, you’re two down now. [Laughter] Okay. Dividing your life into thirds, like zero to 20, 20 to 40, 40 until now, which leaders had the most important influence on you in each of those thirds?

The President. Well, when I was very young, my mother was a role model to me and for lots of reasons. She was a good mother, a good provider; she got up early, worked late, put us first—my band director, my high school principal, President Kennedy, a couple of my college professors. Between 20 and 40, I think I admired Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, a lot of people in public life. Between 40 and 60, especially after I got to be President, I spent more time studying Abraham Lincoln and Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. And I’ve been very influenced by Nelson Mandela, who is a good friend of mine and my family; and Yitzhak Rabin, the late Prime Minister of Israel, whom I loved very much and was very close to and, as you know, lost his life because he was working for peace in the Middle East, the same thing we’re still struggling with.

And I kind of drew something from each of them. But I would say those are the people that have really influenced me.

Presidential Decisions

Reverend Hybels. Okay. What are the toughest one or two decisions you’ve had to make during your Presidency? When did you just go, “Oh, my goodness gracious, there is no good way this is going to come out, but I’ve got to make the call.”

The President. Well, any time you put Americans into battle, you do, because you know the chances are some of them will die. And even if they don’t, they’re going to kill somebody

else. And you can't use all those big fancy weapons—I don't care how good the computers are, how accurate the weapons are—without some people getting killed that you didn't want to kill.

So the decision to go—the conflict in Kosovo—when I first got elected I had to take a military action against Saddam Hussein because he had authorized an assassination plot on President Bush. I don't know if you all remember that, back in 1993, after President Bush had left office, and he went to the Middle East, and they authorized an assassination squad. Thank goodness it failed. But I couldn't just walk away from that and pretend it didn't happen and pretend the people who were responsible for that thought they could kill an American President who had done something that we all—most of us supported in the Gulf war.

But every time you do that, every time you unleash a missile or send a pilot, and you know that it's life and death, you just have to pray you're right. We did it in actions—there were other times when we took actions over Iraq. There were other times we—more limited actions in Bosnia, because thank goodness, we brought them to the peace table. But I think those are the hardest things.

There were a lot of other things. It was very hard to put together the economic plan in 1993, because I knew the country was deep in trouble. We had quadrupled the debt in 12 years; the deficit was high; the interest rates were high; the economy was weak. And I knew it was going to take a real cold shower to turn it around. And it would take a combination of tax increases, which I wanted to have mostly on upper income people, and spending cuts, which would mostly affect middle and lower income people. But we had to do them both to try to get rid of this deficit. And I knew if we didn't do it, we'd never get there. But I also knew that I was asking a lot of Members of Congress to walk the line and to risk being defeated.

And when the Republicans announced that they would give no votes to it and it was going to be the first major piece of legislation in 50 years to pass with the votes of only one party, you know, I knew what I was asking them to do. But I also knew—I believed very strongly it would work, and I thought if we didn't do something about the deficit and the accumulating debt that we would never turn the country around. And so I did it. But it was very hard

for me, because I knew that the Congress would pay the price, because there was no way the economy could be that much better by '94 in the elections, and that if I was right and it worked, that I would be reelected in '96, and they would have, in effect, sacrificed for a decision that I made and got them to support.

And it's turned out that's how it was. That was one of my lower days as President, when that happened.

Reverend Hybels. Now, let's say that it's the night before you have to send troops into battle. Who do you have in the room with you? What process is going on? How do you make that final call to say, "Go"?

The President. Well, you have the national security team, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Director of Central Intelligence, and a number of other people would be there. And we would probably be meeting in the secure room in the White House that we have for such purposes.

And we would go over all the facts, all the options, what options we had other than going into combat, what our objectives were, what the likelihood of achieving our objectives are, and what could go wrong. And if the worst happens and something goes wrong, what are we going to do then? We try to game it all out and think about it in advance.

Then I go around the room, and whenever I have a big decision, I make everybody tell me what they think. And one of the things that I have tried to cultivate is to tell people I do not want them to tell me what they think I want to hear. And I must say, they have certainly taken that to heart. *[Laughter]*

But one of the problems that Presidents—one of the things that causes Presidents problems is they tend to pick people to be around them who are too much like them. This is not a negative thing. It's a hard job. You're under a lot of pressure. You like to be around people you feel comfortable with, who have the same interests you do, have the same strengths you do. But the truth is, you need to have people around you who see the world differently, who have different experiences, and who have different strengths and skills. So I tried to do that, too. And we just go around, and they all tell me what they think. And then when we have to make a decision, I make a decision.

Reverend Hybels. And would you try to gain consensus, or at a certain point, if you realize there is not consensus, you just say, "Well, men and women, we're going to do this"?

The President. I always try to get them to get a consensus because I know they're smart enough and their takes on things are different enough—the same thing is true in the domestic field. I do the same thing with economic policy.

But if they can get a consensus, more than likely, they're right, because they're not all rubber-stamp-type people, and they're in there really working it through. And they can present the arguments to me.

But if they can't make a consensus and we run out of time, I just make a decision. I make the best decision I can.

President's Best Moments

Reverend Hybels. All right. You're going to be leaving office in a few months, and you look back and you say—what were one or two of just the highest moments, just the greatest feelings, when you said, "It doesn't get better than this"?

The President. Well, I'll give you a couple. When we won the economic fight in August of '93, I knew it was going to turn the country around. I just knew it. Because the productive capacity of the American people and the fact that we were ahead in this information technology age anyway was beginning to assert itself. And I knew if we could just get the deficit down, get interest rates down, get out of the way of the economy, and then do some things that would speed it up, it would be great. That was a great day.

In September of '93, when Arafat and Rabin met on the White House lawn and I got them to shake hands for the first time in front of a billion people on television, it was an unbelievable day.

When I signed the AmeriCorps bill to give now 150,000 young people a chance to serve at their communities for a year or two and then earn money for college, and I did it with the pens that President Kennedy used to sign the Peace Corps and President Franklin Roosevelt used to sign the Civilian Conservation Corps, that was a great day. It was one of my dreams to do.

In December of '95 I went to Ireland. And our administration was the first American administration ever to become deeply involved in

the Irish peace process. And we had just about got a final peace in Northern Ireland. And my people are Irish; they were Irish Protestants from Fermanagh, right on the line between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. And to see 50,000 people in the streets in Belfast, to walk down the Shankel and the Falls, the Catholic and the Protestant neighborhoods, and see them there together, all these young people cheering for peace; see over 100,000 people in Dublin waving American flags and Irish flags, all because they thought America stood for peace.

The first time I went to Sarajevo after the war in Bosnia ended and all these people came up to me on the street and thanked me because America gave them their lives back. You know, that means—you forget the enormous capacity of our country to represent the best hope of humankind. And you realize, when you're President, you're just sort of the temporary steward of something that's so much bigger than you are. But if you use the power in the right way, how it can move the world, not because of you but because of America, because of 226 years of history, because of the values of the country, because of the way it works, I mean, it's unbelievable.

So those were some of the things. There were many more: standing in Nelson Mandela's prison cell with him was a pretty amazing thing. Listening to him tell me the story of how he let go of his hatred and resentment so he could be free to be a human being after being unjustly imprisoned for 27 years. You get a chance to have some pretty good moments in this job. [Laughter]

President's Worst Moments

Reverend Hybels. And then describe the lowest point, where you just said, "It doesn't get worse than this."

The President. Well, obviously, one of them was my personal crisis, but we've already talked about that. So if you go beyond that, let me just mention a couple.

Somalia, when we lost 18 of our soldiers in Somalia in a firefight, where somewhere between 300 and 500 Somalis got killed. When our soldiers were asked—we were there—remember we went there to help because people were starving, but this political conflict was going on. And the U.N. had troops there, not

just Americans. And a lot of you don't remember, I bet, what precipitated this. One of the factions in the Somalis fighting killed 22 Pakistani troops who were there with us for the United Nations. And the U.N. couldn't just walk away from that. I mean, they ambushed them. They bushwhacked them and killed them.

So only the United States troops had the capacity to try to arrest those who were responsible. And I remember General Powell coming to me and asking for my approval for us to try. And he said, "I think we've got only a one-in-five, one-in-four chance of getting this guy alive, but we've got a one-in-two chance of some success."

But the people on the ground decided the that best thing to do was to launch an attack in broad daylight on this hotel. And when they did it, it turned out to be an unbelievably bloody battle under unbelievably adverse circumstances, and 18 of our guys died, and several hundred of theirs did. And it wasn't the sort of decision made in the way it should have been made by me, with our involvement. And I felt the sickest I have felt since I've been here. And they were very brave, they fought very well. I gave a couple of them the Medal of Honor, who were killed. They were unbelievable. But it was a terrible moment.

It was a terrible moment when those people were killed in Oklahoma City, because, if you remember, it came—there briefly people assumed that it was some sort of foreign terrorist—remember that—where they were trying to arrest a gentleman who was an Arab-American who was traveling on a plane out of the country. And I thank God for whatever it was that made me think to say to the American people, "Well, don't jump to conclusions here. This may not be what's going on."

And then when we found out what did go on, there was this terribly twisted, disturbed young man who had been affected by all this rhetoric that had been kind of seeping through the underground of America, about how inherently evil the Government and anybody who worked for it was, I just felt sick. I felt, what can we do—I just—and one of those people, by the way, who was killed in Oklahoma City, when I went down there to see his family, they showed me a picture of him at my inaugural. And I was talking to all these victims, and every one of them had a story; people have stories.

If you ever get a chance to go to the Oklahoma City Memorial, if you're ever within a hundred miles of there, stop whatever you're doing and drive and go see it. It is the most effective memorial of its kind I have ever seen. But I just felt that there were forces at work in our society that made my words seem weak and inadequate. And I wanted to do something to try to heal the heart of the country, to go beyond sort of bigger than policies and bills and who was up and who was down. It was just unbelievable.

So those two things kind of stand out to me as really low moments. And I mention just personally, for my allies, I felt sick when the '94 congressional elections occurred, because I felt like those people bled for a decision that I got them to make. So I felt responsible for their losing their careers, even though I thought what we did was right for the country. And I think the future bore us out.

President's Legacy

Reverend Hybels. What would you like to be remembered for?

The President. I would like to be remembered for leading the country through a great period of transformation. This period is most like what happened at the turn of the last century, when Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson led America from an agricultural country into an industrial country and helped us to make the changes necessary in that context to reaffirm our commitment of opportunity for every responsible citizen and to realize, in that context, what our responsibilities to one another were, to have one national community.

And I would like to be remembered as the President that led America from the industrial era into the information age, into a new global society that reaffirmed the importance of our mutual responsibility to one another and the importance of guaranteeing an opportunity to everybody, and that I was a force for peace and freedom and decency in the world, that tried to bring people together instead of drive people apart, tried to empower poor people so they could have a chance like everybody else, and that tried to change the nature of our politics so we spent more time debating our ideas than trying to destroy our opponents and basically tried to lift us up and move us on. That's how I'd like to be remembered.

The Presidency

Reverend Hybels. One of the last times we were together, we were just taking a little stroll around the White House grounds, and you said, “Man, I’m going to miss this job.” What are you going to miss about it?

The President. People ask me all the time, what are you going to miss the most? Will it be living in the White House, which is the best public housing in America—[laughter]—or going to Camp David, which is a pretty good vacation home, or getting on Air Force One, which relieves me of all the kind of screaming tedium that tests your faith every time you walk in an airport? [Laughter] But the truth is—or having the Marine Band play “Hail To The Chief” every time you walk in a room? [Laughter] I’ve had a couple of my predecessors tell me you feel lost when you walk in a room the first 4 or 5 months, and nobody plays the song anymore. [Laughter]

But what I will miss more than anything else is the job. I loved the job. I love it every day. My biggest problem now is I hate to go to sleep at night. I go to bed, and I sit there, and I read for hours. I just keep working. I’m trying to get everything done I can do before I leave. I have loved the work.

I wanted to be President at a time when I was very happy being the Governor of my State, very happy with the life that Hillary and Chelsea and I had in Arkansas, because I wanted to make some specific changes in the direction of the country. I had a very clear idea of what I wanted to do. And it is the most rewarding work you could ever imagine.

And believe it or not, it’s a job like other jobs. I mean, it really matters how hard you work at it. It matters how smart you work at it. It matters whether you’ve got a good team helping you. I mean, it’s not sort of like—sometimes I think it assumes proportions, the Presidency does, that are both too mythical and too trivial, as if it’s all just positioning and politics. Not true. It’s a job, like other jobs.

It matters what you think you’re supposed to do. It matters whether you’ve got a strategy to get there. It matters whether you’ve got a good team. And it matters how hard you work. And problems yield to effort, just like other jobs. And the work—I will miss the work.

And the other thing I’ll really miss is the opportunity on a regular and consistent basis

to come in contact with every conceivable kind of human being. I hope that I can find something to do when I leave office which will at least keep me in contact with different kinds of people who have different interests and know different things, from whom I can continue to learn and for whom I can continue to contribute.

But it was the job that I loved. Every day. Even the terrible days, I loved the work. People ask me all the time, “How did you survive all that?” I said, “I remembered who hired me.” I got up in the morning and said, “At some level, Presidents aren’t supposed to have feelings. They’re supposed to be servants. They’re supposed to remember who hired them. And you get 24 hours in a day, and you have to sleep a little, and you need to take time for your family and renewal, but otherwise, you need to be there for the American people.”

And it’s just been a joy. I can’t even—I don’t even have the words to describe how much I love the work.

Mission of Church Leaders

Reverend Hybels. I just have a couple minutes left. There’s many, many thousands of pastors here and at the satellite sites. And if I said, what challenge, what words of inspiration would you have for pastors? Is what they’re doing important? How do you see it in the overall scheme of things?

The President. Well, first of all, I would say that I believe in what it is you’re doing here, because every one of us who has a job that anybody ever held before we did is normally reluctant to admit we don’t know everything we should know about how to do it. I mean, we think, well, everybody knows what the President does. Pick up a textbook. Everybody knows what a pastor does. I mean, you’ve got to pass the plate on Sunday; you’ve got to get enough money in to keep the church open; you’ve got to—[inaudible]. It’s not true. There are ways to imagine what you do that will dramatically increase your effectiveness in doing what God put you on Earth to do.

And what I would say is I think that—I wish I’d actually spent more time even than I have thinking about that in my work. And so I think—I’ll go back to what I said—I think basically America works best when it’s really strong at the grassroots. And that means that the role of community churches is pivotal.

The second thing I would say is, to everybody listening to me, we may have very different political views about certain issues, or maybe a lot of different political parties, but I think every church needs a mission that goes beyond its members. And I think that this church does, and I respect it very much.

I think that the words of Christ in St. Matthew about how we're all going to be judged in part by how we dealt toward the least of these is very important, especially in a time of extraordinary prosperity like this one.

And the final thing I would say is you asked me today about whether these pastors should minister to other politicians, and I said some things about politicians and their spiritual needs and me in mind. But that's really true of everyone.

One of the things I think that must be hardest—one of the most rewarding things I think about being a pastor, and yet one of the hardest things to remember, especially as you have some success, is that whether you have 20,000 members in your church or 200, they've all got a story, and they all have their needs, and they're all—they have a claim as a child of God to have a certain level of connection. And as you get bigger and more successful, you've got to figure out how to keep giving it to them, because nobody goes through this whole life without a slip or a turn or a scar or a challenge or something that seems just beyond their ability to cope with.

And so I think learning these leadership skills and thinking about what your job is—all I can tell you is that's what's kept me going for 8 years. I just kept thinking about the personal stories of all the people who touched me and

reminded me of why I was supposed to show up every day.

I think if you can do that and have a mission that deals with your members as individuals and that goes beyond your members, I think America will be better. And I know that all of us who are involved in these endeavors will be better.

The last thing I want to say is—I used to say this about Al Gore all the time; I used to say, when I was being criticized, he doesn't get enough credit for what we did together that is good, and surely no fairminded person would blame him for any mistake that I made. I hope you'll feel that way about Hybels. I've got to make up for these two cuts I took him. [*Laughter*] He didn't fail in his ministry because I did. And what he did was good for America, because I needed somebody to talk to, to brace me up, and make me think about things in another way. It was a gift. It's something I'll treasure all my life. And for those of you who have whatever political or personal differences you have, I hope you will still believe that he did the right thing, because he did.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:15 p.m. at the Willow Creek Community Church. In his remarks, he referred to Gordon McDonald, senior minister, Grace Chapel Congregation, Lexington, MA; Tony Campolo, associate pastor, Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, West Philadelphia, PA; Rev. J. Philip Wogaman, pastor, Foundry United Methodist Church, Washington, DC; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. Rev. Hybels is the pastor of Willow Creek Community Church.

Statement on a Report of the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics

August 10, 2000

Today I am pleased that a new study has been released that demonstrates that older Americans are healthier and prospering more than ever before. The findings of the Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics' report "Older Americans 2000: Key Indicators of Well-Being" shows that the life expect-

ancy for Americans has increased by more than 20 years since 1990—women from 51 to 79 years old and men from 48 to 74 years old—and that the number of older Americans living in poverty has decreased by nearly 25 percent since 1959.

These trends reinforce that our efforts over the last 7 years to strengthen Medicare and Social Security, while also paying down the debt, have been successful. However, there is still a tremendous amount to be done to ensure the well-being of all older Americans, which is becoming more critical as the baby boomers approach their senior years. By 2030, one in five Americans, 70 million people, will be 65 years of age or older.

We need to prepare for the inevitable health and financial challenges that confront Medicare

and Social Security. As an important first step in that direction, we should follow Vice President Gore's suggestion to take Medicare off budget. If we do, we will ensure that Medicare payroll taxes are only used for Medicare. We should also modernize and strengthen Medicare by making the program more competitive as well as providing for a long overdue and voluntary prescription drug benefit. I urge Congress to work this fall across party lines to improve our seniors' health security and pass these important reforms.

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in New York City *August 10, 2000*

First of all, I want to thank John and Margo and Dennis and Mike and Peter and everybody else that made this dinner possible tonight. And I'd like to thank Attorney General Spitzer and Comptroller McCall for coming. And all the rest of you, I thank you for being here for Hillary and for our country.

I can be quite brief, but I won't be. *[Laughter]* I will be. I will be. The only thing that I'm concerned about in this election is whether people really know what it is about and believe it's important. In over 200 years, the American people have almost always gotten it right when they had the facts and the time to digest them, and that's why we're all still around here, why it's still a great country. It's why we've done what we've done as a people and taken in wave after wave after wave of immigrants and met crisis after crisis, challenge after challenge. Democracy actually works.

And we have to trust the people, if they know what it's about. And the only thing—as I said, what's concerned me is I have repeatedly seen stories to the effect that many people didn't think this was such a big election. I mean, after all, things are going so well, and you couldn't mess up the economy if you tried, so is it really a big deal? And then the second thing that's bothered me is I've seen lots of stories which indicate that people don't have any idea what the real differences are between the parties, the candidates for President, the candidates for the New York Senate race and other things.

A big story in USA Today about 3 weeks ago: What's the difference in the Vice President and Governor Bush's economic policy? A story just 10 days ago interviewing suburban women who favored greater gun safety legislation—our candidate had a six-point lead. And then when this polling outfit just read the positions of the two candidates—and by the way, they had nothing to do with either party; this was an independent polling outfit—they just said, "Okay, here's their positions"—they went from 45 to 39, to 57 to 29.

So what I want to say to you—you came here tonight; you've helped Hillary. I am profoundly grateful, and I want to say a few words about that. But every one of you has friends who are less political than you are. Every one of you has friends who may not even be active Democrats. You have networks of people you contact. And what I want to ask you to do is to remind people that this is a big election. And how many times in your lifetime have you a chance to vote in an election solely on the basis of how we can use this astonishing prosperity and social progress and national self-confidence to build the future of our dreams for our kids? It may never happen again in your lifetime. So to pretend that this is like a no-consequence election because we don't feel like we're on the edge of a cliff about to be pushed off, I think is a grave error.

The second thing I want to say is, there are huge differences. And we mustn't be shy in pointing out to the best of our ability what we

think those honest differences are. We don't have to say bad things about our adversaries, but we do have to say what the differences are.

It tickles me—a lot of these folks that spent years kind of attacking their opponents, now act like the Democrats are being negative if they just point out what the voting record was. [Laughter] It's like, "How dare you do something so mean. I have a right to keep from the people what my positions are." [Laughter]

So we have to create a climate here where we have a good old-fashioned election: no personal destruction; no personal attacks; an honest effort to identify what the major issues are, what the stakes are, and what the differences are; and just trust the people.

And I can just tell you that there are massive differences on economic policy, on crime policy, on education policy, on the environment, on health care policy, on a woman's right to choose, and the appointment of judges and the ratification of judges, the approval in the Senate. And the American people need to know what they're doing here. And we just need to trust them. But you need to help us with clarity of choice.

The second thing I'd like to say in asking Hillary to come up here is that I'm actually very proud of her for doing this after all we've been through the last 8 years, and most of it's been quite wonderful. But all our friends who leave the White House and go back to private life tell us that they don't even get out of physical pain for about 6 months—[laughter]—that they had no idea how tired they were until they left. And we were looking forward to spending the last year making all these trips together, having people come into the White House. And it's wonderful to have our daughter home, and she can come campaign with Hillary and make a few trips with me. But we wanted to have this last year just to celebrate the millennial year and have more of these lectures that Hillary organized and celebrate the preservation of our natural heritage.

And instead, she decided, for the first time in 30 years, to actually get in and run for herself instead of help somebody else do it. And she did it after a half a dozen or so New York House Members came and asked her to consider doing it and then traveling all over the State and concluding that the work that she'd done all of her adult life is basically the kind of thing that New York needs and wants now.

And I just want to remind you of a few things. First of all, when I met her in 1971, in the springtime, she was already completely obsessed with the issues of children and families, and she took an extra year in law school to work at the Yale Child Study Center and the children's ward of the Yale University hospital, so that when she got a law degree she would actually have detailed knowledge about health, psychological, and other issues relating to children and their parents.

Secondly, the first job she ever had was for a group that became the Children's Defense Fund.

Thirdly, when she came home to Arkansas to be with me, she—and we helped Jimmy Carter get elected President—she became the youngest chair ever of the Legal Services Corporation to try to provide legal aid to poor people.

Then when I became Governor, she helped to establish a neonatal nursery at the Children's Hospital in our home State, what my predecessor affectionately, or not so affectionately, referred to as a small southern State. By the time we left—Hillary ran all the fundraising every year for the Children's Hospital, did all that. By the time we left office, the Arkansas Children's Hospital was the seventh biggest children's hospital in the United States of America.

And after she became First Lady, she has worked on dramatically improving the adoption laws, making it easier for people to do cross-racial adoptions, getting a \$5,000 tax credit for people who adopt children with disabilities, doing more for children who age out of foster care—a really big issue in New York State, a huge issue—doing more to give health insurance for children, doing more to promote child care and to deal with the challenges of early childhood.

There's really—I doubt very seriously that any person has ever been First Lady who's had the range of detailed involvement and interests she has. And along the way, she wrote a best selling book and gave 100 percent of the profits away to children's charity.

And in 30 years, all she ever did was try to help other people. Every year I was Governor, she gave away lots and lots of income to help other people. This is the first time she's ever, ever done anything where she was asking people to help her. And all I can tell you is, in the over 30 years now I've been involved

in politics in one way or another, I have worked with hundreds of people that I liked and admired, that I thought were gifted, patriotic, and devoted. There is no question, even though you can say, well, I'm biased, and I'll get a better night's sleep if I say this—[*laughter*—but I'm just telling you, I love my country enough to say that even though I'm kind of missing this last year that we had looked forward to, I'm glad she's doing it. Because of all the people I've ever known, I have never known anybody that had the same combination of mind and heart and knowledge and organizational ability and constancy—constancy—I'm talking about 30 years of constancy—that she has.

So if you will get her elected, she will be a magnificent Senator. And all these people who wonder whether they should be for her now because—why is she doing this now, and why is she doing it in New York—after she's been there about 60 days, they will never have an-

other question. They will never have another question.

So what you've got to do is get out here and stir around and tell people that. Tell people what the differences are between her and her opponent and what the two parties' differences are and personally validate what you see and know. And if you do, she's going to win. And it won't be long until everybody else will think they voted for her, too. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much. Please come up, Hillary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:07 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts John and Margo Catsimatidis; dinner cohosts Dennis Mehiel, Michael Sherman, and Panayiotis (Peter) Papanicolaou; New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Written Responses to Questions Submitted by the Arabic-Language Newspaper Al Hayat August 10, 2000

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Do you have any special message for the Arab world after Camp David?

The President. We have in the next few months an historic chance to resolve the Palestinian issue. It is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and we can and must resolve it on a basis that's fair, honorable, and lasting. Together, we need to seize this opportunity, or it will be lost. The parties cannot do it alone. We need the help of our Arab friends in the region. And we need an approach that resolves problems in a practical and fair way so that the principles that guide Arab-Israeli peace—comprehensiveness and implementation of United Nations Security Resolutions 242 and 338, including land for peace—can be realized in a way that meets the needs of both sides. What is fair and just for Palestinians and Arabs must also be fair and just for Israelis. There cannot be a winner and a loser in these negotiations. We must have two winners, or we will lose the peace.

I know that there is a deep sense of grievance in the Arab world, and through nearly 8 years of working for peace alongside Chairman Arafat, I understand the suffering and pain of the Palestinians. But I also know that the only pathway to realize Palestinian aspirations is through negotiations, through the process of give and take where each side can have its needs met and its hopes realized. I urge all those in this region committed to peace to join with me and to seize this historic moment.

The opportunity to work for a lasting peace between the Palestinian and Israeli people has been among the most meaningful and rewarding aspects of my Presidency. I am motivated in these efforts by the possibility of a better future for all of the peoples in the region. We must all remain focused on this better future, a future in which the Palestinian people might finally achieve through negotiations their aspiration of a Palestinian State recognized by and integrated with the world, at peace and working to address the needs of the Palestinian people.

U.S. Role in the Peace Process

Q. How would you characterize the American role during Camp David talks? Do you see that role evolving in the future, and if so, in what direction?

The President. The talks at Camp David were revolutionary in their detail, their directness, and their honesty about what each side needed to reach an agreement. I worked personally—sometimes all night long—with both sides to advance this process. Both sides, both Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak, worked hard and in good faith on difficult problems. Sometimes we proposed ideas, suggestions, even language. We made progress across the board. At the same time, our role was not and will never be a substitute for direct Israeli-Palestinian engagement. We will need both levels of interaction to reach an agreement.

U.S. Embassy in Israel

Q. You have repeatedly urged the two sides of the conflict not to take any unilateral action that could block progress in the peace process. However, you told Israeli television in your recent interview that you are reviewing the decision to move the Embassy to Jerusalem by the end of the year. Don't you consider this announcement a contradiction of the stated American policy and an impediment to your peace efforts?

The President. From the beginning of my administration, one factor has guided me: to take no action that I judged would harm the peace process. That still is my guiding principle. The 2 weeks I spent at Camp David underscores my commitment to doing everything I can to help both sides reach an agreement.

With regard to the Embassy, I stated that I would review the issue by the end of the year, and I will do so. It is my great hope that by then Israelis and Palestinians—with our help—will have reached an agreement on Jerusalem that meets their needs. Then I would also be able to inaugurate an American Embassy in the capital of a Palestinian State. I firmly believe that the Jerusalem problem can be resolved in a way in which both sides' national aspirations can be realized.

Jerusalem

Q. Many Arabs consider President Clinton as the most sympathetic to the suffering of the Palestinian people and their political aspirations

and the only leader in their history to have achieved breakthroughs in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Are you concerned that taking a position in the issue of Jerusalem at this stage would hurt not only Arabs but Muslims and Christians around the world?

The President. I have worked hard to understand the plight of the Palestinian people, to understand their aspirations, their losses, and their frustrations. My trip to Gaza and the opportunity to address the Palestinian National Council with Chairman Arafat was critical to this process and a great honor for me.

I am guided in my efforts by one central goal, the need to promote a fair and honorable solution to each of the core issues that both sides find acceptable. Jerusalem is a difficult issue because of its critical importance to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. It is a unique problem which requires a unique solution. In this regard, Jerusalem is really three cities: It is a municipal city like any other with problems of environment, traffic control, and city services; it is a holy city which embodies the values of three great religious traditions and which contains religious sites sacred to three religions; and it is a political city which symbolizes the national aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians. Resolving the issue of Jerusalem means dealing with all three of these dimensions in a way that harms no one's interests and promotes the interests of all. And I believe it can be done.

Q. The Camp David summit was a landmark in terms of tackling for the first time the core issues, and at the same time it did not produce the hoped-for final agreement. Are you worried that reducing your personal involvement in the process would lead to a speedy deterioration of the situation?

The President. One of the remarkable aspects of the Camp David experience was that Israelis and Palestinians engaged on the core issues in an unprecedented manner. They broke taboos and discussed issues seriously and not on the basis of mere rhetoric and slogans. I am ready to do my part. To do so effectively, both sides will need to be ready to make historic decisions and, on the most sensitive issues, recognize that both must be satisfied.

Confidentiality of the Peace Process

Q. Did you receive a letter from Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat recently? What can you tell us about it?

The President. One of the reasons Arabs and Israelis continue to look to the United States for help is that we protect their confidences. I have great respect for Chairman Arafat, and I'm sure you understand that I'm not going to start now by talking publicly about letters either from him or Prime Minister Barak.

Further Negotiations

Q. Are you willing to issue an unconditional invitation for Arafat and Prime Minister Barak to come to Washington and give peace another shot?

The President. I'm willing to do anything if it will help Israelis and Palestinians reach an agreement. At the same time, I know that the two sides need to reflect on what happened at Camp David and work together. Without an Israeli-Palestinian foundation on the substance of the issues, the United States cannot play its role effectively. That process got a big boost at Camp David. It needs to be continued now.

Both leaders must be ready to make historic decisions.

Egypt's Role in the Peace Process

Q. There has been criticism of Egypt's role. What is your view?

The President. The fact is that all that has happened since the original Camp David in September 1978, including Madrid and Oslo, is a vindication of the courageous and visionary policy of Egypt. Egypt was a pioneer for peace and continues to be a key partner for the United States. We agree on the fundamentals of the peace process, and we will not be able to reach an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on these core issues without close consultation with Egypt. We are engaged in such a process today.

NOTE: In his responses, the President referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. The questions and answers were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 11.

Statement on Electronic Transmission of Health Care Transaction Claims *August 11, 2000*

Every day, tens of thousands of health claims are submitted to insurers and other payers by our Nation's health care providers. These billing forms are often incomprehensible, inconsistent, and duplicative, frequently serving little useful purpose. They waste the time and financial resources of our talented health care professionals and can result in higher premiums and lower quality of care.

With today's release of new national standards for electronic claims for health care transactions, we are taking a major step towards eliminating burdensome, time-consuming, and wasteful paperwork that costs the Nation's health care system billions of dollars each year. In fact, the Department of Health and Human Services estimates that these administrative simplification regulations will achieve a net savings to the health care system of nearly \$30 billion over the next 10 years.

As we use our new technology to streamline our health care system, we will maintain our absolute commitment to protect the sanctity and privacy of medical records. The standards we are releasing today will be required to be implemented consistent with the privacy regulation that we will be finalizing later this year.

Today's action is a win for patients and health care providers alike. When we save money from the health care system, we succeed in keeping premiums down. When we reduce paperwork requirements on our physicians, they have more time to spend with their patients. Improving quality, eliminating wasteful spending, and maintaining our values should be the goals we strive to achieve in health care and every public policy we pursue. I believe that we are achieving all three goals with the release of today's new standard.

Statement on the Workforce Investment Act *August 11, 2000*

Two years ago this week I signed the bipartisan Workforce Investment Act (WIA), launching an historic initiative that Vice President Gore and I first proposed in 1992 as a way to streamline and bring greater accountability to our Nation's job training system. Today, with these reforms underway in all 50 States, we reach another key milestone by adopting the final rule implementing the major provisions of this landmark act. I congratulate our Federal partners, Congress, the States, local communities, businesses, and American workers on how far we have come.

Largely as a result of WIA's reforms, States now have established 1,200 One-Stop Career Centers to provide job seekers and employers in each community with a single, customer-focused point of entry to a wide range of employment services. Developed with extensive input from the many people with a stake in our job training system, the final rule provides additional direction to State and local partners while pre-

serving their planning and operating flexibility. The rule also gives State and local partners guidance on creating individual training accounts that allow workers to choose the training that meets their needs.

Unfortunately, currently proposed congressional funding for workforce development programs, including the administration's Fathers Work/Families Win initiative, falls far short of the amount needed both by American businesses to meet the growing demand for skilled workers and by working families to gain access to lifelong learning. WIA provides broad access to employment opportunities, often for people with disabilities or others who have been excluded, and it should be properly funded. I call on Congress to fully fund the bipartisan program it passed 2 years ago so that all Americans can participate in today's era of economic opportunity. With WIA up and running across the country, now is the time to invest in the system we built together.

Statement on Improving Access to Services for Persons With Limited English Proficiency *August 11, 2000*

Today I am issuing an Executive order to help people with limited English proficiency (LEP) access Federal services. Many people who are eligible for Federal services cannot effectively use those services because they are not proficient in English. The Executive order directs Federal agencies to improve the language-accessibility of their programs by December 11, 2000. This initiative complements our commitment to promoting programs to help individuals learn English.

I am concerned that language barriers are preventing the Federal Government and recipients of Federal financial assistance from effectively serving a large number of people in this country who are eligible to participate in their programs. Failure to systematically confront language barriers can lead to unequal access to Federal benefits based on national origin and

can harm the mission of Federal agencies. Breaking down these barriers will allow individuals with limited English proficiency to more fully participate in American society.

This Executive order directs Federal agencies to break down language barriers by implementing consistent standards of language assistance across agencies and among all recipients of Federal financial assistance. Under this flexible standard, agencies and recipients must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities, taking into account a variety of considerations. Among the factors to be considered are the number or proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population, the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program, the nature and importance of the service provided by the program, and the available resources.

NOTE: The Executive order of August 11 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Xavier Becerra in Los Angeles, California

August 11, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Let me say, first, how delighted I am to be here with Xavier and Carolina. Thank you, Fermin Cuza, for being here and standing up for him. I thank my good friend Luis Gutierrez from Chicago for bringing his family here today. We were laughing—when I was running for President in early 1992, he was out there running with me. We were standing by the entrance to the El in Chicago early one morning, shaking hands, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [Laughter] And 8 years later, it's worked out pretty well.

I want to thank Tom Umberg for the distinguished work he did in the Clinton-Gore administration, and I thank you for being here. And Councilman Pacheco, thank you. And Mike Feuer, who's gone, I have to mention him because he's one of the guys that voted to have the city make a contribution to our convention so we could be here today. [Laughter] And I want to thank him.

Let me say, I was profoundly honored to present Cruz Reynoso with the Medal of Freedom, and I thank you for coming here, sir, and for all you have done for civil rights and human rights over all these years.

I'm delighted to have the chance to start my stay at the Democratic Convention with all of you for Xavier Becerra. I am going on to a dinner for the host committee of the convention, to make sure we've nailed down every detail of what we're supposed to be doing here and what we have to do. And I'll have a chance over the next couple of days, over the weekend, to go around and meet with most of the various caucuses of our party and many of the State delegations, and then have a lot of them come to me, to say the most important message I have to say to the Democrats, which is, thank you. Thank you for me and for Hillary and for Chelsea and our family and friends and our administration, for giving me the chance to run

in '92, for sticking with me in '96, and for supporting a new direction for America.

Xavier talked about some of the results. I have tried to be a builder. In the first campaign, our slogan was "Putting People First," and our theme song was, "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow." In the second campaign, our slogan was "Building a Bridge to the 21st Century." And we built our bridge to the 21st century, but we still can't stop thinking about tomorrow.

And that's why I'm here tonight. I admire your Congressman and, obviously, for so many of you, your friend. Nothing I have achieved in the last 8 years would have been possible if it had just been me out there talking. I had a great team in the White House, led by the Vice President, and an unbelievable group of people in Congress who, in the majority, and later in the minority, stood strong for the things that we together believed would build America and stood against those things we thought would divide America or tear America down.

And so the simple message I have is, we've got to keep this progress going. We have to keep changing but changing in the right direction. We have a chance, because of all this prosperity and social progress, to build the future of our dreams for our children. We have a chance to make sure that not only the people who can afford to come to a fundraiser but the people who work for a minimum wage can all send their kids to college and have a chance to live the American dream.

So I have said all over America, I'll say again, you need to know the following things about this election. It is a huge election. It is maybe the only time in your lifetime you will be voting for President, Vice President, and Congress and Senate, with literally the chance to build the future of your dreams for your children in your hands, where there is so much economic prosperity and social progress, the absence of domestic threat or foreign threat, a great deal of

national self-confidence and great good feeling, which our friends in the other party tried to tap into in Philadelphia—[laughter]—but they wanted you to believe it all happened by accident, you remember? [Laughter]

My old daddy used to say, “If you find a turtle on a fencepost, chances are it didn’t get there by accident.” [Laughter] You know, I remember when they were in office and in charge of economic policy for 12 years, they took credit if the Sun came up in the morning. [Laughter] Now they want you to believe it all just happened by accident. “I have no idea where all these jobs came from.” [Laughter]

Well, what I want to say to you is, I think we ought to have a great, happy, positive election about the differences in our ideas. I don’t believe we ought to even allude to the fact that we think there is something wrong with them as people. We’ve had enough of that the last 20 years to last this country for the rest of its existence. We’ve had enough of the politics of personal destruction and division, but we’ll never get enough of the politics of honest debate and difference. That’s how we grow. That’s how we learn.

Nobody’s got a monopoly on the truth, and we ought to say we’re going to assume in this election that they’re all honorable men and women, from the candidates for President and Vice President to the Senate candidates to the House candidates. We’re going to assume they love their families, and they love their country, and they will do what they think is right. But we do believe they ought to tell the American people what they intend to do because, while this is a very important election and there are profound differences, I get the feeling most days that only the Democrats want the people to know what the differences are. And we see in some campaigns across America where they’re complaining that we’re running negative campaigns if we tell the voters how they vote and what they said. It’s almost as if they have a right to conceal their record and their positions and what they intend to do.

So all I want to say is, I posit that they’re good people, and I think we ought to forget about the recriminations against the kind of politics that so many of them have put us through for a long time. I don’t believe in negative campaigns. But I think we ought to have a debate here, because there are differences. Let me just give you a few examples.

If Xavier Becerra and Luis Gutierrez were in the majority rather than in the minority in Congress and if Tom Daschle were the Senate majority leader instead of the minority leader, along with Speaker Gephardt, this year we would have already signed into law the Patients’ Bill of Rights, the minimum wage, equal pay strengthening for women, hate crimes legislation, sensible gun safety legislation that mandates child trigger locks, closed the gun show loophole, stopped the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, hate crimes legislation—I don’t know if I said that or not—and school construction legislation to help places like Los Angeles which are being overrun by more and more school kids and where we need new buildings built, old buildings fundamentally adapted, and repairs done.

Now, those are just some of the things that I have proposed that our side is for that they’re not. So there are consequences to this election. It matters who’s in the House. It matters who’s in the Senate. And I am doing what I can to help our side in the House and the Senate.

I’ll give you another example. Every single year since our party has been in the minority, every year I have to fight against attempts to weaken the environmental laws of the United States. And every year, because enough of the Democrats stay with me, we say no.

So now you’ve got cleaner air, cleaner water; literally 43 million more Americans breathing air up to Federal standards than before we took office; cleaner water, 450,000 fewer instances of sickness a year because of polluted water; set aside more land than any administration except the two Roosevelts in the continental United States. We closed 3 times as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as they did in 12—3 times as many. And the economy got better, not worse. But every year we still had to fight efforts to roll back these environmental standards. So you have a choice. All I’m saying is, it really matters who gets elected to the House and who gets elected to the Senate. And, of course, the Senate also has to confirm the appointments of the President, including the appointments to the Supreme Court.

Now, you may have noticed that I have a particular interest in one U.S. Senate race. [Laughter] California has two women Senators; I think New York should have at least one. And I hope you will help.

Then we come to the Presidency and the Vice Presidency. This is the week that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman get to make their case to the American people the way their counterparts did in Philadelphia. And I'll make you a prediction—and I haven't seen either one of their remarks—I'll bet you they'll be far more specific about what they're for, because we don't have to hide what we're for. And I'll bet you Al Gore will say the same thing in the general election he said in the primary, because he doesn't want anybody to develop amnesia about what he said in the primary. *[Laughter]*

And all I want us to do is to actually flesh all this out and let everybody say they have differences. They have differences on education, on health care, on the environment, on what it takes to build one America, including equal pay, the minimum wage, hate crimes, employment nondiscrimination, and a woman's right to choose. They have differences. So let's just set them out there and let the people decide.

They have differences on crime policy. Were we right or wrong to put 100,000 police on the street? Are we right to try to put 50,000 more in the highest crime areas? Were we right or wrong to do the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban? And should we close the gun show loophole? And should we require child trigger locks? And should we ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips?

The Vice President thinks, in a gutsy move, and I agree with him, that we ought to say to people that buy handguns they ought to have a photo ID license like people that get cars that shows they know how to use it safely and they passed a background check. Now, who's right and who's wrong?

We trust the American people with our positions, those that are popular and those that aren't, those that rile certain powerful interest groups and those that don't. And the most important thing—I'll just say a little something about this in detail—there is a profound, yawning difference on economic policy and tax policy.

Now, I think that I've earned a right to talk a little bit about economic policy. And Al Gore has earned the right to be heard about economic policy because he cast the tie-breaking vote for the '93 economic plan that got interest rates down and business investment up and started this whole economy on this wild ride we've been on the last 8 years.

And so what I want to say to you is this: They say, now we've got a huge surplus. In Philadelphia—I got tickled listening to them—they have no idea where it came from. It just happened. *[Laughter]* It must have happened in spite of President Clinton, since he never did anything right. *[Laughter]* And he and Al Gore, they just rocked along for the ride, and the Democrats, they never did anything about it.

Back in '94, before they knew it would work, they didn't mind laying our House Members out on the cold slab of political defeat because they voted for it. They thought it was our responsibility in 1994, before the American people could see that it was going to work.

So now they say, "Okay, they got rid of the deficit, and we've got a little surplus, and so what, they paid \$400 billion off of the debt." *[Laughter]* "Who cares? It's just one of those things. But what we should do now," they say, "is, since we're going to have this big projected surplus over the next 10 years, enough to get us out of debt for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President"—and I want you all to follow this kind of close, because there's a reason why I'm telling you all of this. I know I'm preaching to the saved here. *[Laughter]* But all of you have friends who aren't as active in politics as you. All of you have friends who may not think this is such a big election. Every one of you has friends who don't understand what the differences are between the two candidates for President and Vice President, and the candidates for the Senate and the House—every one of you.

And it's not good enough for you to come here and give this man a contribution. He's already been chairman of the Hispanic caucus in Congress. He's already been recognized as a leader. But he needs a little wind at his back here. He needs to have all the things he's fought for validated. And that requires that you go out from this city and this convention and talk to everybody you know and say, "You've got to vote. Here's what the differences are. I want you to think about it."

So let me finish. What they say—it sounds so good. They say, "Okay, this surplus has materialized. We don't know where it came from." *[Laughter]* "We're quite sure that President Clinton and Vice President Gore had absolutely nothing to do with it. It just sort of appeared. And it's your money, and we're going to give

it back to you.” And it sounds good, right? “It is your money.” And so they say, “We’re going to give it back to you. We’re going to have”—“going” is the operative word—[laughter]—“over the next 10 years \$2.2 trillion. That’s a whole bunch of money, and it will be good for you if we give it back to you, and it’s yours, anyway.”

And we say, “But, wait a minute. We have to hold back enough money to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare so the baby boom generation can retire without bankrupting their children. We ought to add a prescription drug benefit that all seniors can afford. We have the largest and most diverse student population in our history; we’re going to have to invest more in education, with all these teachers retiring. And besides that, something might come up.” [Laughter] Either the money might not come in or an emergency might happen, like we’ve had 3 years of farm emergencies where we’ve taken the tax dollars people in the city of Los Angeles paid and given them to farmers all across America because we have an interest in preserving family farms and because agricultural income has been so distressed. Just like they gave their money to you when you had your earthquake and your other natural disasters. Something might come up. In California, you know that. Things come up—earthquakes, fires. [Laughter] I mean, I’ve been through everything but a plague of locusts with you folks. [Laughter] So we say something might come up.

And then we say, “We’re for a tax cut.” But we’re honest. Ours costs way less than half theirs, and it’s focused on what families really need—tax cuts for long-term care for their elderly or ill, disabled family members, tax cuts for the cost of college tuition, for the cost of child care, for retirement savings, for alleviating the marriage penalty. And even though ours costs way less than half theirs, about three-quarters of the American people would be better off under ours. They get more benefits.

Plus, ours allows you to still get us out of debt by 2012, which the Council of Economic Advisers said 2 weeks ago would keep interest rates a percent lower for a year, for 10 years—a percent a year lower for 10 years. Do you know what’s that worth to you? It’s worth about \$850 a year in lower home mortgages to the average family and lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower interest rates for

business loans so businesses can expand more, hire more people, and earn more money.

In other words, almost all the Americans—at least four out of five Americans would lose more in higher interest rates under their plan than they would get in tax cuts.

But the main thing is, I want to tell you—so it’s bad economics. And the Chairman of the Federal Reserve said over and over and over again, in this strong economy, if you have a huge tax cut, he’ll raise interest rates to keep inflation down. But the real big deal is, it is a projected surplus.

Now, you have a—I bet you in your mind, particularly if you’ve got to think about raising kids and sending them to college, you probably have a projected income. [Laughter] And what is your projected income for the next 10 years, anyway? Just think about it. You have a projected income. Now, if I ask you right now to sign a contract to give it all away today, your projected income for the next 10 years, on something you really wanted, would you do it? No new money for education or health care or rainy days or emergencies because you really want this thing I’m going to give you. All you got to do is give away all your income for 10 years. Would you do it?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. If you would, you should really give serious consideration to supporting them in this election this year—[laughter]—because that’s what they want to do. But it sounds so good. See, they say, “It’s your money, and I’m going to give it back to you.” I’m going to tell you something. We may never again be in this situation. We may never again be in this situation.

I remember the last time we had the longest economic expansion in history. You know when it was? Nineteen sixty-one to 1969. I remember when the American people thought the economy was on automatic and no one could mess it up—in the mid-sixties. I remember when the American people thought that all the big social problems of America then related to race and poverty, would be handled in the Congress and the courts and would never go to the streets in the mid-sixties, and that we would all—we would just keep up feeling good, and everything would be rocking along, and so we didn’t really have to concentrate.

Then we had the riots in Watts. Then Martin Luther King got killed. Then Bobby Kennedy

got killed here in Los Angeles. Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for reelection because the country was so divided over Vietnam. The country took a different course in the '68 election. Pretty soon the longest economic expansion in history was over. And I'll tell you something. I'm not as young as I once was, and I certainly have aides in the White House, but I have not lost my memory. [*Laughter*] I have waited—I'm not telling you this as your President; I'm telling you this as your friend. Los Angeles and this State have been wonderful to me and to my family and to my administration. I have waited 35 years, since the mid-sixties, for my country once again to be in a position where people with the values and skills and concerns that this man has could build the future of our dreams for our children.

You know, you will never find—and I want to say this about Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. I've known Joe Lieberman for 30 years. He helped me develop a lot of the ideas that I brought to the '92 campaign that we implemented. And he deserves your support. In every way, you will be more than pleased.

And I have worked closer with Al Gore than any other living human being outside of his family. He supported all the tough decisions I made, including the ones that were unpopular. I'll never forget the day he and I decided we had to give economic aid to Mexico because we couldn't let them go downhill and it would lead to a flood of immigration that was illegal. It would lead to all kinds of tensions on the border. It would make them even more vulnerable to narcotraffickers. It would cause the instability in the whole economy of Latin America. But there was a poll that day that said, by 81 to 15, the American people did not want us to help Mexico; it was a bad investment. We did it, and he was for it, and they paid the loan back ahead of schedule. It was the right thing to do, but it wasn't popular.

I remember—I remember when I had to decide whether to stand up against ethnic cleansing and slaughter in Bosnia and Kosovo, and it wasn't popular. But he supported me. He said, "You have to do it. It's the right thing to do. I'll back you."

I remember when we presented this economic plan in 1993, and everybody knew how hard it was politically. The deficit had gone up to \$290 billion. We were hooked on it. We were hooked on deficit spending. We quad-

rupled the debt in the 12 years before I showed up. We were hooked on it.

You know, when you get in a deep, deep hole and you want to climb out, there isn't any easy way. You're going to have to break your fingernails trying to get up that wall. There was no easy way. And he said, "Do it. We have to pay the consequences."

This is a guy that I know will do what he thinks is right. He will look to the long-term interests of the country, and he has the right economic program to keep the prosperity going and to extend its benefits to the people that are still left behind. This is a man who understands the future, the future of information technology, the future of the human genome, the challenge of climate change, the need to stay ahead in science and technology. All these things are important.

He understands that we're going to get a little gene card that tells all of our babies what their future is going to be. But we don't want anybody to be able to get ahold of that and deny our children health insurance or a job. He understands that we get a lot more efficient now because of the Internet and all of our financial and medical records are on it, but we don't want anybody to have them unless we say okay.

I think we need somebody in the White House who has spent a lifetime thinking about the future from the point of view of ordinary people who need someone to stand up for them.

And the last thing I want to say is the most important of all. It applies to Xavier, Congressman Gutierrez, everything I've tried to do as President, and profoundly it applies to Al Gore, who shares with me a history of growing up in the segregated South and a lifetime of commitment to civil rights.

The most important thing of all is not what is in our minds; it is what is in our hearts. The most important thing of all is that we believe that everybody counts, that we believe everybody deserves a chance, that we think we all do better when we help each other. We believe that it's not enough to say that you care; you have to act as if you care.

The reason I want Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to win this election is I know they'll keep the prosperity going. I know they'll keep us moving into the future, but most important of all, they'll make sure we all go along for the ride.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. in the Santa Monica Room at the Westin Century Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Becerra's wife, Carolina Reyes; Fermin Cuza, senior vice president of international trade, Mattel, Inc.; Tom Umberg, former Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy; Los Angeles

councilmen Nick Pacheco and Michael Feuer; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney. Representative Becerra was a candidate for reelection in California's 30th Congressional District.

The President's Radio Address

August 12, 2000

Good morning. These are good times for America, with the strongest economy we've ever had. And all across our country, Americans of every age and background are working together to strengthen the fabric of our communities.

Today I want to talk about some remarkable progress our society has made in the last 8 years: Crime is at a 25-year low; the welfare rolls, the smallest in 30 years; and a new report from the Centers for Disease Control shows that teen birth rates have fallen for the eighth year in a row, and now we have the lowest teen birth rate in 60 years. This is a remarkable achievement.

Consider this. If the teen birth rate had stayed at the same as its peak in 1991, teen mothers would have given birth to another 120,000 babies this year. That drop is wonderful news and further proof that together we can make real progress on social problems people once said were beyond our reach. This is a tribute to community and religious groups, to teachers and families, and of course, to our teenagers themselves.

From the start of our administration, we've endeavored to restore the sense that responsibility and opportunity are the foundations of a strong American community. Five years ago we called upon parents and community leaders to launch a national campaign to prevent teen pregnancy. The next year we worked across party lines to enact landmark welfare reform, which requires unmarried minor parents to stay in school and live under adult supervision. We also demanded that fathers live up to their obligations and have doubled child support collections. We've increased counseling, promoted abstinence, and paired children with mentors, doc-

umenting our achievements in a report to Congress this week.

Despite this progress, we know that too many of America's children still are having children. As friends and neighbors, we need to reach out and help these young people learn and grow.

Today I'm taking action to promote one innovative approach we all know will work. It's called, second chance homes, an idea that Vice President Gore and I have long supported and which was championed early on by Senators Moynihan, Kent Conrad, and Joe Lieberman.

These homes provide teenage moms and their babies with an environment that is safe, supportive, and supervised. The teens get the help they need to finish school. They learn how to care for their children and manage a budget. Some homes also work with teen fathers.

Experts say mothers in these homes are less likely to have another baby or go on welfare and more likely to get an education and find a job. I read of one young Massachusetts woman who got pregnant at 14 and soon was estranged from her family with no place to live. With the help of a second-chance home, she got back on her feet, trained at a community college, and has left welfare to become a proud working mother.

Second-chance homes are a good idea that enjoy bipartisan support. I've asked Congress already to provide \$25 million to start more of them across the country. Now let's take bipartisan action to give mothers and babies hope for a better future.

But many families shouldn't have to wait for Congress to act. That's why today I'm directing the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development to work together to help more communities across America open second-chance homes.

First, we'll make it easier for communities and faith-based groups to acquire vacant or foreclosed property to create these homes for teen mothers.

Second, we'll provide communities a blueprint for how to create second-chance homes, and a roadmap of Federal and State resources they can tap to get one up and running.

We extend this helping hand to these families because it's the right thing to do and because, over time, it will help the teen birth rate go down even more. With these steps, we'll do still more to make welfare what it was meant

to be, a second chance, not a way of life. Working together in a spirit of progress and respect, we can help everyone to make the most of their own lives.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:22 p.m. on August 11 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Second Chance Homes for Teen Parents *August 11, 2000*

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

Subject: Second Chance Homes for Teen Parents

My Administration has made it a key priority to promote personal responsibility, prevent teenage pregnancy, and to provide young people with the educational and employment opportunities necessary to break the cycle of dependency. We know the devastating effects on young people when they become parents too soon—nearly 80 percent of single teen mothers end up on welfare and only one-third receive a high school diploma or GED. We also know the impact that this has on their children, who are 40 percent more likely to have low birth weights; need 20 percent more health care; and are at greater risk of abuse and neglect. Moreover, girls of teen mothers are a third more likely to become teen mothers themselves and boys of teen mothers are nearly 3 times more likely to be incarcerated than boys of mothers who delayed childbearing.

Under my Administration, I have taken bold steps to promote responsibility and prevent teen pregnancy by taking executive action to require young mothers to stay in school or risk losing welfare payments, enacting welfare reform in 1996, strengthening child support enforcement, and launching a National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. We know that these efforts are having an impact: teen birth rates have

dropped for the eighth year in a row, falling by 20 percent since their most recent peak in 1991 to the lowest levels since we began collecting these data 60 years ago. But we also know that there are still far too many children having children, and we must do more.

To build on this progress and to reach out to teen mothers at risk of a repeat pregnancy, my FY 2001 budget includes a provision to invest \$25 million in the creation and expansion of "second chance homes." It is critical that we help teen parents who cannot live with their own parents or other relatives gain access to supportive, adult-supervised living arrangements—second chance homes—that offer parenting skills, job counseling, education, and other referrals to help reduce the chance of repeat pregnancies and improve the prospects for young mothers and their children. Where appropriate, these programs should also reach out to involve young fathers in responsible parenting, and to help reconnect these teens with their own parents. An early evaluation of the Second Chance Homes program in Massachusetts has demonstrated that second chance homes can reduce the number of repeat pregnancies. Moreover, this study showed that mothers served by second chance homes were more likely to become self-sufficient, complete high school, and to keep their children's immunizations up to date. With approximately 100,000 repeat pregnancies each year, we must do all

that we can to help improve the prospects for teen parents and their children.

Therefore, I direct the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development to work together to implement the following actions:

- (1) Within 60 days, issue guidance to non-profit organizations (both faith-based and other community-based organizations) and State and local governments to create awareness about the second chance home model, highlight States' responsibility to provide access to adult-supervised living arrangements for minor parents who cannot live at home, provide best practices concerning program design, and provide user-friendly information about existing funding sources for both facilities and services costs, for the creation or expansion of second chance homes;
- (2) Create a joint technical assistance effort to help communities interested in establishing or expanding second chance homes;
- (3) Use all available legal authority to provide organizations interested in establishing second chance homes access to foreclosed, underutilized, and surplus real estate or facilities at the maximum allowable discount. The Department of Housing and Urban Development should also explore opportunities to increase the availability of Supportive Housing Program funds to second chance homes for teen parents; and
- (4) Clarify that teen parents in second chance homes may be eligible for low-income housing vouchers and encourage second chance home operators to accept housing voucher holders into their programs.

The swift and collaborative implementation of these actions is vital to achieving our goal of helping teen parents take responsibility for their lives and their children's futures.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was embargoed for release by the Office of the Press Secretary until 10:06 a.m. on August 12.

Remarks at a Hollywood Tribute to the President in Los Angeles August 12, 2000

Thank you so much. I want to thank all the people Hillary mentioned, all the other wonderful entertainers who are here in the audience tonight, all of our friends and supporters. There are so many things—I'd like to say something about everyone. I do have a confession to make. When I was in Aachen, Germany, the other day to receive the Charlemagne Prize, the ceremony began in Charlemagne's Church, built in the 8th century. And you can actually sit in the place where Charlemagne sat, and you can actually see the throne on which Charlemagne was crowned. And at that very moment, I really thought Shirley MacLaine was sitting right next to me. *[Laughter]*

I would also like to thank the members of our family, some of whom are here tonight, some of whom, like my mother and Hillary's dad, aren't here anymore. I'd like to thank my mother-in-law and my stepfather, Dick Kelley, my brother and his family, Hillary's two brothers, our wonderful nephews, my wonderful sis-

ter-in-law, Maria. And all these times over the last 8 years, they shared a lot of the joy, which was their perfect right, but they also had to take a lot of the bullets, which they shouldn't have. And I'm really glad that they're here with us tonight.

I was looking at those movies up there, interspersed with all the entertainment and the wonderful, wonderful things that were said. And by the way, the people that produced this show and conceived it did a fabulous job, and we ought to give them a round of applause, too. *[Applause]*

And I was thinking how quickly it all passed and what an absolute joy it was. I want you to know that for me this was not only the greatest honor of my life but every day, even the bad days, were good days, as long as I remembered who hired me and what I was doing there.

There were some days when the cost of doing business seemed reasonably high at the end of

the 20th century, but it was still a joy. Because of you and the other Americans who gave me a chance to serve, I had a chance to save lives and lift lives. I hope I made some little kids and forgotten people think that they still counted. I hope that around the world, fewer people will die of AIDS, fewer children will grow up poor, fewer people will die in battle. I hope that here at home, now that we have this unbelievable prosperity, the American people will decide this year to make the most of it.

That's the last thing I'd like to ask you. I've often wondered why I love music and movies so much. And Franklin Roosevelt once said it was necessary for the President to be America's greatest actor. When I read it, I had no clue what he meant. Now I understand all too well. [Laughter] I think it is because public life and politics are more than reason, and progress is more than policy. It helps to have a pretty good mind. It helps even more to have a strong constitution and a reasonably high pain threshold. But in the end, the most important thing is to do the people's business from the heart.

For in the end, it is the life we share with people whom we'll never know, many of whom have to struggle every day, perhaps that get into a wheelchair to move around or to keep body and soul together or to keep their kids out of trouble. But the difference between them and us is actually quite small.

I used to tell people in some of the dark days, when they'd say, "Don't you sometimes regret that you ever got into this?" I'd say, "Lord, no. Just a few twists in the road, and I could be home doing real estate transactions in a musty loft."

This has worked out wonderfully, because America is better off. I want you to remember that for me it was an affair of the heart, that every slogan I ever used was something I believed. I still believe we should put people first. I still believe that everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; we all do better when we help each other. I still believe we ought to build bridges instead of walls. I still think we should never stop thinking about tomorrow.

And more than anything else, I feel gratitude. But more than anything else, you should feel, if you really believe what was said and what we celebrated, that the best is yet to be. It is a rare thing when a country has a chance to build a future of its dreams for its children.

When Hillary decided to run for the Senate after half a dozen New York Congressmen asked her to do it, and she stirred around up there and decided she kind of liked it and that she wanted to do things that still needed doing that she had worked on all of her life, I was really proud of her, because we could have spent more evenings like this, and we could have simply spent the last year celebrating and enjoying the good fortune that our country has had, perhaps in some measure because of our efforts.

But she took all those things I've been saying all these years to heart. So after 30 years of helping other people and fighting for good causes, she decided to run for office. I hope you'll help her win, and I thank you for your help tonight.

And I just want to say one thing about the Vice President and Joe Lieberman. I couldn't top what Red Buttons said. I wish I'd written it down. I might actually crib it Monday night when I speak. [Laughter] Al Gore is a good person, a brilliant person, a hard-working person. But the reason you ought to be for him is he understands how to keep this magical prosperity going and how to spread it to the people that, I regret to say, are still left behind.

He understands the future. He was talking about global warming when we ran in '92, and people were still making fun of him. Now even the oil companies admit that it's real. He understands the implications of the Internet because he helped to take it out of being a private province of a handful of physicists.

When we became President and Vice President, there were only—listen to this—50 sites on the World Wide Web. Today, there are 10 million or 20 million. He understands the magical promise of the human genome but doesn't want anybody to have a little gene map that costs them their health insurance or their job. And I want somebody in the White House that understands the future, because it's really unfolding fast.

And picking Joe Lieberman showed a lot of judgment, as well as a lot of character. Hillary and I met Joe Lieberman when he was 28 years old, running for the State Senate, not so long after he had been a Freedom Rider in the South, helping black people to register to vote, when it was still very segregated. I've known him a long time. He also is a brilliant man, who is a little bit of an iconoclast and not afraid to think differently. And we need some of that

in the White House, too, because it's awful easy to get hidebound there and to stay with the conventional wisdom.

But the most important thing is, to me anyway, they want to take us all along for the ride. And they think the people who worked this stage tonight whose names we'll never know deserve the same chance we have to send their children to college and to build the American dream for their families. They think in the arena of citizenship there are no backup singers, that everybody should have a starring role, and that's real important to me.

So that's the last thing I'd say to you. Whoopi said it right; I'm not going anywhere except to a different line of work. I'll try to be a useful citizen, and I'll try to hang around. But it's in your hands now. And the best thing you could do to honor me is to go out to everybody you can find between now and November,

through every network of influence you have, and say, "Hey, the best is still out there, and the problems are still out there, and the challenges are still out there."

And those of you who are at least as old as I am know that the kind of chance we have today to build the future of our dreams for our kids maybe—maybe—comes along once in a lifetime, and nothing stays the same.

So thanks for the honor. Thanks for the memories you gave me tonight. But don't stop thinking about tomorrow.

God bless you, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Shirley MacLaine, Red Buttons, and Whoopi Goldberg; and the President's brother, Roger Clinton, mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham, and brothers-in-law Tony and Hugh Rodham.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Brunch Honoring the Cabinet in Los Angeles

August 13, 2000

The President. Well, first of all, let me say I'm glad to see you here in good spirits. Are you ready to leave and win? *[Applause]* I want to thank Mayor Rendell and Mayor Archer and Congresswoman Sanchez, Joe Andrew, all the leaders of our Democratic Party. I want to thank all of you who have helped me over these last 8 years. I want to thank you for your commitment to helping Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

I want to say something—I hope we can be more positive and more specific than our friends were in Philadelphia. But I do just want to—I'm just standing up here on the stage thinking about one thing. You know, when they wanted to show harmony and inclusion and all that, they had to put their leaders in a closet and go scare up people off the street to get on the stage. *[Laughter]* When we want to show harmony and inclusion, all we have to do is bring our team up on the stage.

When they want to show harmony and inclusion, they have to use the people they've got on the stage to hide their policies. When we want to show harmony and inclusion, all we have to do is talk about what we've done, and

even more important, what Al Gore and Joe Lieberman are going to do. There's a big difference.

And so, I just want to say when I heard them talking about how we coasted through the last 8 years—*[laughter]*—I sort of thought, where did I get all this gray hair anyway? *[Laughter]* I sort of thought, where do they think those jobs came from, where do they think those educational statistics came from, where do they think the cut in the welfare rolls in half, and the decline in the crime rate, and the fact that over 40 million more Americans are breathing clean air? And I could talk here until dawn about it.

Do you remember when they were in? They took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. *[Laughter]* The Republicans are in, and "It's morning in America. The Sun came up again today." *[Laughter]* "Look at it. There it is in the sky. We did it. There it is." *[Laughter]*

Well, God made the Sun rise, not the Republicans or the Democrats. But President Kennedy once reminded us that "Here on Earth, God's work must truly be our own." That is what this

Cabinet has tried to do—has tried to make the work of making this a more decent, more just, as well as a more prosperous country, their work.

Let me just tell you one story. One night in a rather dark period for the administration, not long after the American people decided to give the Republicans a chance to run the Congress in the '94 election, in early '95, Vice President Gore and I invited a couple of Presidential scholars to come to the White House to talk to us in a very quiet way about where we were at this moment in history, what was going on, what we ought to be thinking about and looking at. And one of these scholars looked at me and the Vice President, and he said, "You guys don't have to worry. You're going to win reelection." And I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "I spent my whole life studying administrations. You have the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson's second administration."

Now, you may take that for granted, but you've got to understand, we live and work in a town where most of the people who write about things think loyalty is a vice, not a virtue—[laughter]—and where all the pressures are designed to get people to think about anything other than the work they're doing for the American people, to divert their attention, to break their concentration, to undermine long-term plans. It's about politics, not people.

This administration has been about people, not politics. And that's why these folks behind me have done so much good. A lot of them have been here the whole 8 years. Let me say to all of you—I don't want to give the speech I'm going to give tomorrow night—[laughter]—but I do want to say this—

Audience member. Practice on us. [Laughter]

The President. Practice on us. [Laughter] It's kind of like these singers who have been around a long time; they always sing their old songs. I once went to a concert where Tina Turner sang "Proud Mary," and she said, "I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I sing it." [Laughter] So there won't be any surprises. [Laughter]

What I want to say to you is this. Elections are about the future. And people get—the people who vote in elections are all of us, and they've been making pretty good decisions for over 200 years, or we still wouldn't be around here. But the world is growing ever more complex, and they have access to more and more

information than ever before, which is good on the one hand, but on the other hand, it means it may be harder to concentrate on and distill out the essential meat of any decision that has to be made.

When I was a boy coming up, we had three television stations, one for each of the networks, and we didn't have much option on what we watched at night in the news. Now you can watch news in seven or eight different formats, and if you just want to watch a movie and skip it altogether, you can. So there's more information than ever before out there, but it's also harder to get clarity.

And I want to ask you something seriously. All of us have done our best, and we've still got a little ways to go, and we've got a lot of things we think we can get done before we leave. But this is a political convention to nominate the next President and Vice President and to clarify for the American people the choices before them.

The modern role of the political convention is to get the American people, just for a few moments every night for 4 days, to stop, look, and listen. That's what it is. And in those 4 days the two parties get to say, "I know you're busy. I know you've got other things on your mind. You may think you already know what this is about, but we want you to know who our leaders are, what their values are, what their vision is, what they intend to do."

Now, I've said this all over America, and you've heard me say it until the cows come home, but we have a big mission this year, first to convince the American people how important this election is. We cannot allow the Democrats to be punished by the good job all these folks have done, by the good job Al Gore's done, by the good job Joe Lieberman and our Senators have done, by the good job Dick Gephardt and our House Members have done, because people will be in such a good humor that they think, "Well, everything is rocking along here. What could possibly be the consequences of these elections?"

So you have to say, "Hey, what a country does with its prosperity, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, is as big a hurdle, a big a test, and as important a decision as what we did in adversity in 1992." You have to get that out.

Now, that is not a case we had to make in '92. Everybody knew what the deal was, right? You didn't have to be as bright as a tree full

of owls to know we had to change the economy—[laughter]—and the social direction of the country. You didn't. But you've got—listen, this is serious. You have to do that.

The second thing you've got to do is to convince the American people that there are big, meaningful differences between the two candidates for President and Vice President and our Senate and our House candidates. And that will be harder because, as you saw from their convention, we're the only side that wants the American people to know what the differences are. Because if the other side—you know, they know if the American people figure out what the real differences are, we win. Right?

You don't have any doubt of that do you?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Do you have any doubt at all?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. If people know what Al Gore stands for and will do as President as compared with what his opponent will, the difference in Joe Lieberman's voting record in the Senate and Dick Cheney's voting record in the House, if people know the difference in what's in our vision for the future and what we're going to build on and what they intend to dismantle, do you have any doubt what the decision will be? Of course you don't.

Therefore, you should be of good cheer because we can turn around these polls. But it's not the work of a day. It's going to take every day between now and November, and you're going to have to go to every friend you have. And most of the people you know are not as political as your are. Isn't that right? Even the Democrats—they're not as political as you are. And you've got to go out of this convention committed to telling people, "This is a big election. There are big differences. In spite of all the good that's been done in the last 8 years, you haven't seen anything yet. You give Al Gore and Joe Lieberman 8 years and you will see that the best is yet to be." That's what we want you do to for us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at the Casa Del Mar. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Mayor Dennis W. Archer, general cochair, Representative Loretta Sanchez, vice chair, and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman; and Republican Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney.

Remarks at a Jewish Community Celebration in Los Angeles August 13, 2000

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Tim and Joel Tauber and Todd Morgan and Bill Dockser and all the leaders of the organizations that brought you all here together. Thank you for giving Hillary such a good reception. I am grateful for that.

I want to say, more than anything else, how profoundly grateful I am for the support I have received from the American Jewish community since 1991, when I first began running for President.

When Hillary and I were discussing whether I should make this race, way back in '91, well over 8 years ago now, one of the things that I hoped I could do was to bring whatever powers of persuasion and understanding of history, as well as human psychology, that I've acquired

over the years, to the process of peace in the world.

It seemed to me that the end of the cold war had imposed upon the United States a very special responsibility to reach out and build bridges to countries and regions that we had too often overlooked or seen through a limited lens during the period of the cold war and to try to be a special force for peace, from the Northern Ireland problem to the Balkans to Haiti and our own region, but especially in the Middle East.

And for nearly 8 years now, we have worked to be faithful to the commitment I made to the American people when I began, that we would make the United States the world's leader for peace and freedom, for human rights and

security wherever we possibly could. This has been the most rewarding thing, I think, in many ways I've been able to do as President. But it's a work that is—and by the very nature of the way we human beings are—it's a work that will always be, to some extent, in progress.

Hillary has done a lot, especially with her Vital Voices program in Northern Ireland, going to Israel and working with Mrs. Barak on the violence issue, and, before that, working with others who were in the Israeli Government.

I think I should tell you that the last person I talked to before my plane landed in Los Angeles was Leah Rabin. She's back here in the United States seeing her doctor. She said she got a reasonably good report. And I told her I was going to see you, and she asked me to say hello, so I'm doing it. And I want to get my brownie points with her for doing it.

Tim already mentioned the nomination of Joe Lieberman, but I want to say just a few words about it. I was at a dinner last night that a few of you attended, which honored the last 8 years of our administration. And one of the people who performed was the comedian Red Buttons, who must be—I don't know how old he is now, but he's not a kid. *[Laughter]* And he can say things the rest of us can't say. And the first thing, he got up and said, "Do you know that in Los Angeles the Democrats are changing their theme songs from 'Happy Days Are Here Again' to 'Hava Nagila?'" *[Laughter]* He also gave me a lot of other jokes, but I don't think I should use any of them. *[Laughter]*

Hillary and I have known Joe Lieberman—she may have said this—but we met him in 1970, when I was a first-year law student, she was a second-year law student, and he was a 28-year-old candidate for the State Senate. And I was especially impressed by the fact that he had been a Freedom Rider in Mississippi, or somewhere in the South, and was down there registering voters at a time when it wasn't easy to do and, frankly, anybody who tried to do it was in some measure of physical danger.

In all the years since, we've kept in touch. And about 15 years ago we were among those who started the Democratic Leadership Council. He's a brilliant man, a little bit of an iconoclast and always willing to think new thoughts, and I think we need more of that in politics. The world is changing very rapidly, and we need people who can think.

And most important of all, he will be a living embodiment—along with Hadassah, who, as all of you know, is the child of Holocaust survivors—they will be a living embodiment of America's continuing commitment to build one national community, to embrace people across all the lines that divide us. It's still the most important thing we can do.

I want to say just a few words, if I might, about the peace process in the Middle East. You'll hear enough of the election rhetoric elsewhere, and maybe a little from me tomorrow night. But I want to talk about that for a moment.

In the last 7 years we've seen the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the South Lawn, which reflected the direct engagement of the parties at Oslo; the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreement, a treaty leading to genuine peace between Israel and Jordan; the rallying of the world's leaders, including the leaders of the Arab world at Sharm al-Sheikh, to condemn terrorist attacks against Israel; the Hebron and Wye accords, which put the implementation of the interim agreement back on track.

In these years, both sides have recognized that whether they like it sometimes or don't like it sometimes, the Israelis and Palestinians are bound to live side by side. Throughout the process, however, the ultimate question of how they would live side by side has been continually deferred. I always thought that was part of the genius of the Oslo accord. Some people didn't like it; I thought it was a smart thing to do. Everyone knew how hard these final status issues were, and everyone knew there was absolutely no chance of resolving them unless the people, particularly those in responsible positions, lived together and worked together over a period of years and gradually began to implement other parts of the agreement so they could get a feel for each other.

However, they agreed that they would resolve all this by September, and we were coming up on the deadline. And they had never really had a formal, face-to-face set of official conversations about these final status issues. And I can understand why. It's kind of like going to the dentist without anybody to deaden your gums. *[Laughter]* I mean, if this were easy, somebody would have done it years ago.

But that is the context in which I brought them together at Camp David, not because I thought that there was a guarantee of success—

far from it—but because they needed a setting in which they could speak openly, think freely, protected from the competing pressures and constant scrutiny that is a part of political life in Israel and throughout the Middle East, perhaps even more than it is in the United States.

Now, I don't want to sugar-coat it. I wanted an agreement. We didn't get one. But I can tell you, significant progress was made at Camp David. One of the Palestinian negotiators said that these were truly revolutionary talks because on their side they entertained publicly—or, not publicly but in front of others—positions they had never before considered. It's almost as if we cracked open a sealed container and took out a set of problems that had been festering in a dark place for 52 years. They're now out on the table; the parties are talking about them—issues never before confronted in an official setting. How would a new Palestinian State be defined? What would its borders be? What should be done about refugees from 1948, not just Palestinian refugees but Jewish refugees, as well. And you might be interested in knowing that the Palestinians felt that their families should be entitled to compensation, as well. How do you protect Israel's security if it withdraws from the West Bank? What in the world do you do about Jerusalem? It is a holy city, but it has caused a hellish lot of problems. And we have to think it through in a very serious and sober way.

The process is not over, and therefore, it is inappropriate for me to discuss the specifics. I don't want to make a hard problem more difficult. But I can say one or two things.

First of all, everybody affected by the peace process is faced with a choice. We are now at a crossroads because of the calendar to which the parties themselves have agreed: Down one path lies more confrontation and conflict, more bloodshed and tears; down the other is an agreement, however difficult. By definition, agreements require compromise, which means no one gets 100 percent and neither side can be in a position to say that it has completely vanquished the other.

That means that, given the positions taken—and I talked about this at the end of the Camp David process—this is an excruciatingly difficult negotiation. The choices are painful and agonizing, but they have to be made. Otherwise, we will repeat the pattern of the past, and then, sometime in the future, another group of leaders

will come back to the same set of choices with the same history after more bloodshed and tears, more grievances to redress, more bitterness to overcome.

We may or may not be able to get an agreement, but we ought to keep trying, and I will keep trying every single day.

I want to emphasize some things I have said for 7½ years now, and I haven't changed my mind. We can come up with ideas. We can offer alternatives, but we must not, indeed, we will not attempt to impose any of our ideas. These choices must be freely made by people who must live with them.

In the meanwhile, we must continue to stand by Israel, as we have during my entire tenure as President and for the last 52 years. We will help Israel to maintain its strength. We will minimize the courageous risks the Prime Minister is taking for peace. We will improve our security relationship. We will do everything we possibly can to make this work.

One of the things I think you should know that struck me most at Camp David, and says something for the people who launched the Oslo process 7 years ago, is the difference in the way the negotiators relate to each other even when they were fighting. When I brought the parties together at Dayton after we and our NATO Allies ended the Bosnian war, they could barely stand to be in the same room together. When I went to Kosovo to see our soldiers and to meet with all the parties there, the wounds of ethnic cleansing and the battle we waged to reverse it were so fresh and raw that people could hardly bear to come into the same room and came only because I invited them and insisted that they come.

When I went first to Northern Ireland and walked down the Shankel and the Falls, the Catholic and the Protestant streets in Belfast, it was difficult for the most controversial of the political leaders who had to be involved in any resolution to even be seen talking to each other, much less for anyone to know they had shaken hands.

The Israelis and Palestinians, after these years, know each other by their first names. They know their spouses names. They know how many children they have. They know how many grandchildren they have. They tell jokes to each other, sometimes about their own leaders. They laugh, and they talk, and they have a feel for the humanity and the difficulty of the situation.

This is not to say that they are soft-headed. Indeed, I never saw anyone more resolute about the fundamental security interests of the State of Israel than the Prime Minister was in these negotiations. And for whatever it's worth, the security questions were the ones on which we made the most progress, which is something that should be encouraging to all of you.

I don't know what's going to happen. But I know this. The most heartbreaking moments of the last 8 years for me and for Hillary, for Al, and for our whole team, have been those moments when people were blinded by acts of hatred against others because they fit in some sort of category or another—that poor twisted boy that blew up the Federal building in Oklahoma City, his mind and soul polluted by this anti-government venom that was out there at the time; the schoolchildren who were killed by terrorist attack in Israel; the man who belonged to a church that he said didn't believe in God but did believe in white supremacy, murdering an African-American basketball coach in Chicago and killing a Korean Christian as he walked out of his church; people who shot the—the man who shot the Jewish children here going to their school and then killed a Filipino postal worker and thought he had had a double success—he killed an Asian and a Federal employee.

We see it within our country and beyond our borders. I have seen people who were literally ethnically indistinguishable in the Balkans killing each other because history made them Orthodox Christians or Muslims or Catholics.

It is ironic that at a time when we celebrate the triumph of the human genome and where the Internet is the fastest growing communications vehicle in human history—and, by the way, Al Gore did sponsor the legislation. *[Laughter]* Part of my job since I'm not running, you know, is to correct the record here. *[Laughter]* The Internet was, in the beginning, the private province of a few physicists. Al Gore saw—virtually before anybody else, certainly in Congress—that it could be transformed into a medium of communication and could hold information that could benefit all of human kind, that the whole Library of Congress would one day be on the Internet. That was the metaphor he said well over a decade ago.

Now the whole Encyclopedia Britannica is on the Internet. Pretty soon, my whole Presidential library will be on the Internet. There were only

50 sites on the World Wide Web when I became President—5-0. Today there are—I'm not sure how many—but way, way over 10 million, the fastest growing mechanism in human history.

But anyway, so you've got all this stuff happening, all this wonderful, modern stuff, and here we are bedeviled by the oldest problems of human society—the fear of the other, people that are different from us.

That's why it's a good thing that Al Gore put Joe Lieberman on the ticket, and other Americans will see that he is a brilliant person, that he is a good person, that he has a contribution to make. And I think more and more people will respect the fact that he gives up his entire Sabbath away from all work and politics on a day that coincidentally happens to be the best politicking day in the American political system. I think this will be a good thing for America.

And what I would ask you to do as we see the events of the coming weeks unfold, is to never lose your passion for peace and for reconciliation, to remember that America cannot do good works abroad unless we are a good country first here at home, that we have to purge ourselves of all traces of bigotry and hatred, and that we have to go forward together as one community, and that we have to do it not just with our words and our pictures but with our deeds.

It is one thing to say we want to build one America and another thing to do it, whether it's passing hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, raising the minimum wage, or doing the other kinds of things that show that we really believe that we're all in this together, and we all do better when we help each other.

The overwhelming fact of modern life is not the growth of the Internet, the growth of the global economy, the explosion of biotechnology, but what they all mean in a larger sense, which is that every single day, in breathtaking ways, many of which we cannot see, we are growing more interdependent. We need each other more. So we have to find a way not just to tolerate one another but to celebrate our diversity and take comfort from the fact that what we have in common is even more fundamental and more important. Yes, compassion is important, but enlightened self-interest is even better. We need to know we actually need each other,

and we need to do the right thing by each other.

So for me it's a great comfort to know that the Vice President and Joe Lieberman are running, that Hillary is running, and that we're moving in the right direction. I just want to ask you this. Spend every day you can between now and November reminding people that it matters and that there are differences. And if you do that, we'll all win, and America will be fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:20 p.m. at the Sony Picture Studios. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Wuliger, president, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Joel D. Tauber, executive committee chairman, United Jewish Communities; Todd Morgan, chairman, Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles; William B. Dockser, national chairman, National Jewish Democratic Council; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and his wife, Nava; Leah Rabin, widow of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; and Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman and his wife, Hadassah.

Remarks at a National Democratic Institute Luncheon in Los Angeles August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, you have just heard a stirring example of Clinton's first law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. *[Laughter]*

Secretary Albright, thank you for your great work as Secretary of State and, before that, as our Ambassador to the United Nations and for your constant friendship and support to Hillary and me.

Gary, thank you for hosting this today and for what you said and for all the good work you do. Mr. Mayor, thank you for putting on a great convention and sitting through all these speeches by Democrats. *[Laughter]* There's been a lot of talk in this convention about religion because Joe Lieberman is our first Jewish candidate on the national ticket. But I want you to know I am still a confirmed Baptist. We believe in deathbed conversions, and I'd like to have you switch at any time. *[Laughter]* We love you very much. You too—*[inaudible]*. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Paul Kirk, my friend of many years, and Ken Wollack and all the members of the NDI. Thank you, Senator Feinstein. And I'd like to thank all the members of the diplomatic community who are here, parliamentarians from around the world, and the people who have been or are now part of our diplomatic efforts: Vice President Mondale, who did such a brilliant job in Japan; and Reverend Jackson, our Special Envoy to Africa; Ambassador

Blinken; Ambassador Shearer; there are a lot of others here. But I thank them all for what they have done.

I'd also like to say how much I appreciate the work of the NDI, how much I've tried to support it, how grateful I am that we have a nominee for President and Vice President in our party who will strongly support you for a long time in the future.

Way back in the distant past of the last millennium, when I was first elected President, people were asking whether the end of the cold war would lead to a new birth of freedom or whether incipient democracies would be overcome by forces of hardship and hate. There were then perhaps as many reasons for fear as for hope.

In Russia, people faced breadlines and hyperinflation. Many were resigned to an inevitable backlash that would lead back to communism or ultranationalism. Southeast Europe was full of backward economies and battered people willing to be manipulated to wage war on their neighbors. In parts of Asia, leaders claimed democracy was an alien, Western imposition, that there was really no such thing as a universal conception of human rights or free people governing themselves. Never mind, of course, that people from Burma to the Philippines to Thailand were already struggling and sacrificing for freedom. Some still believed democracy only works for people of a certain culture or a certain stage of development.

Well, since then we've learned a lot about human nature and humanity's desire for freedom and self-government. Looking back, I think we'll all say that the 1990's were democracy's decade. With our support and with your support, democracies flourished in central Europe. Despite all the difficulties, it has endured in Russia, persevered in Latin America, and truly triumphed in Mexico. In 1999, thanks to the democratic transformations in Nigeria and Indonesia, more people won the right to choose their leaders than in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell.

In the Balkans, the cause of pluralism faced perhaps its greatest obstacles. Prime Minister Dodik and the head of Bosnia's leading multi-ethnic party, Zlatko Lagumdžija, are both here with us today. We welcome them, and we urge them to keep up their good work for freedom. Their success has proven that Bosnians of every ethnic background are turning to leaders delivering prosperity and hope, instead of exploiting human differences.

Last week I met with the new President and the new Prime Minister of Croatia. They're taking their country on a breathtaking journey to democracy. Their success says to all the people of the Balkans, where popular will overcomes authoritarianism and hate, the road to Europe is open.

With Kosovo holding the first free elections in its history later this year, the only vestige of the Balkans' undemocratic past is Serbia. We are encouraging the democratic opposition there to mount as unified a challenge to Mr. Milosevic as possible, so that even if he steals the coming Presidential election—he undoubtedly will try to do that—he will lose what legitimacy he has left with the Serbian people. But whatever may happen, he has utterly failed to build a greater Serbia based on ethnic cleansing and exclusion. All around him, instead, we are seeing the emergence of a greater Europe based on tolerance and democracy.

We also learned some lessons in democracy's decade of the nineties. It used to be said that unelected leaders were easier for America to deal with because they were free to make hard and unpopular choices. Well, it turns out to be one of those big ideas that just isn't true.

Consider the case of Prime Minister Barak. In pursuit of peace he has been able to make some of the hardest and most courageous decisions I, personally, have ever seen because he

knows he draws his mandate from the people. Consider Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. He overcame his country's economic crisis because he had the legitimacy to push through wrenching change, and he made a brave, brave step in reaching out to North Korea.

Ironically, unelected leaders tend to be more fearful of political opposition than elected leaders. That's a lesson I've had to learn the hard way. The first 3 or 4 years, when I heard that, I thought they were just making excuses for something they didn't want to do. And finally I realized that they really were afraid to take unpopular decisions, even if they might be able to sell a vast majority of their people on it because it was the right thing to do. Maybe it's because when dictators lose power, they lose everything; Democrats live to fight another day—or build Presidential libraries. *[Laughter]*

Another lesson that we learned is that democracy's success is in our interest. Our support can be critical to that success. Next week I'll be going to Nigeria, to a new, democratic Nigeria, a Nigeria that's a leader for peace and economic development and the struggle against AIDS. If democracy takes root in Nigeria, it will lift up an entire region. So we'll do our part to help with trade and investment, support for Nigeria's peacekeepers in its efforts to ensure that the vast wealth it has accumulated and squandered in the past finally benefits its people.

Now, a day after I come back from Nigeria, I'll be going to Colombia. There, people are struggling to keep one of the oldest democracies in our hemisphere alive in the face of terrible violence, fueled by a drug trade that threatens their children and ours. We have a national interest in supporting them, and now with strong bipartisan support from Congress—for which I am profoundly grateful—we have made a commitment to do just that.

We care about democracy in countries like Nigeria and Colombia because the success of freedom is contagious, and so is freedom's failure. One reason we can tip the balance is because of the work NDI does. Just about every time I travel to an emerging democracy, whether it's Nigeria or Ghana or Bosnia or Russia or Nicaragua or Bangladesh, I find that NDI is there before I land and, most important, after I leave. Thanks to you, America not only has a Peace Corps; it has a democracy corps. If the 1990's were democracy's decade, you had

a lot to do with it. And with your help, we can now start building democracy's century, a century that we can't stop working on until the most powerful, liberating, revolutionary idea in all human history touches every human community.

Let me just say in closing something that's not in my notes, and I'll probably get in trouble with all my staff for saying—[laughter]—but we have people here who devote your life to thinking about these things. I am gratified that in this very turbulent period, that we have been able to build in the United States a bipartisan commitment to democracy that has been manifested, for example, in Plan Colombia, manifested in the passage of PNTR with China, manifested in the passage of the African/Caribbean Basin bill, manifested in the common commitment both candidates for President have consistently made this year, to an expansive, embrative, farsighted trade policy.

But there are still challenges out there that, if we want to maximize our impact on, we have to internalize debate and resolve as a people. Because we have seen over and over and over again, it is very difficult for America to do anything big, good, profoundly long-lasting unless we are agreed. And let me just give a few examples.

I hope the commitment we have made to Africa will endure and be embraced in a bipartisan way. I hope those people who believe in the Congress and in the country that I honestly made a mistake—and they honestly believe this—those who believe that I made a mistake in committing our military resources and our diplomatic muscle, first in Bosnia, and then in Kosovo, will rethink, because I think if the cause of freedom had been lost in those countries and the principle of ethnic cleansing had been upheld, we would be paying for it along with free people across the world for a very, very long time.

I hope the next administration will continue the commitment that we have begun to a new stage in our relationship with India and that we will continue to be involved in trying to resolve the tensions on the Indian subcontinent. If you think about the 200 or so ethnic groups that we have in the State of California and in the United States of America, Indians and Pakistanis both rank in the top five in per capita education and per capita income. There is no telling what could happen for the good on the

Indian subcontinent in the 21st century that will open new vistas of possibilities, not only for people who are still desperately poor in those nations and in Bangladesh but, indeed, throughout the world, if they can just find a way to resolve their deep differences. So I hope that will happen, and I hope all of you will stay with us.

The other day when we said—our administration—that we felt that the worldwide spread of AIDS had become a national security threat to the United States, some people ridiculed that. But I hope we will have a broader notion of our national security and a broader sense of what tools we need to bring to bear against them.

I have done what I could in every year to support a strong defense budget, to support improvements in the quality of life for our men and women and families in the United States military, to modernize our weapon systems. But I think the work that we're trying to do this year in the Congress to fight AIDS, malaria, and TB is important. I think we should be doing much more than we are to help countries deal with the breathtaking breakdown in public health systems in a lot of the former Communist world and in a lot of the developing countries, things which really could just eat the heart out of democracy over the next 10 or 15 years unless people can at least find a way to keep babies alive and to stop children from dying prematurely.

I hope we will be very creative in the ways we fight terrorism and chemical and biological warfare, cyberterrorism, and what I think will be the most likely threat to our security over the next 20 years, which is that the miniaturization process that we see, inevitably, part of technology that now allows you to have a little computer in your palm with a screen and a keyboard that people with big hands like me can't use anymore—will also—you will see this with weapons. And it is far more likely that we will deal with those kinds of weapons in the hands of terrorists, with enormous destructive potential, even than we will have to fend off hostile missiles coming in. And I hope we'll have a bipartisan consensus about how to imagine the new most likely security threats of the 21st century.

I hope there will be even stronger support for relieving the debt of the poorest countries in the world. I hope there will be even stronger support for the initiative that Senator McGovern

and Senator Dole brought to Secretary Glickman, who is here. We have—we really believe that for a relatively modest amount of money, a few billion dollars, we could guarantee one nutritious meal to every poor child in the entire world every day at school. If we did it, it would dramatically increase school enrollment, especially among young girls, and do a lot to reverse the tide of trafficking in young women and of the abuse of the rights of young women. And it would change the whole fabric of society all across the world in a way that would be very good for democracy. We need a real consensus on those kinds of things that there has not been nearly enough talk about. And we need to look at all these things in terms of our commitment to democracy, our commitment to national security.

We have to have—and as I said, I don't think I have to take a back seat to anybody in my commitment to a strong national defense, but our national security and our advancement of democracy depends on far more than our military power. And as wealthy as we are now, as successful as we are, for a relatively modest increase in terms of the surpluses we're projecting, in the investments we make around the world in people problems and in building insti-

tutions and in giving people the capacity to fight off the demons of the 21st century, we will get a huge return in the advance of freedom.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Winnick, founder and chairman, Global Crossing, Ltd.; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Paul G. Kirk, Jr., chairman of the board, and Ken Wollack, president, National Democratic Institute; former Vice President and former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Walter F. Mondale; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson, Special Envoy to Africa; former U.S. Ambassador to Belgium Alan J. Blinken; former U.S. Ambassador to Finland Derek Shearer; Prime Minister Milorad Dodik of the Serb Republic (Republika Srpska) of Bosnia-Herzegovina; Social Democratic Party of Bosnia president Zlatko Lagumdžija; President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan of Croatia; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole.

Remarks at an American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association Luncheon in Beverly Hills, California

August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, first I want to thank Sandy and Bob and all of you with the AFT and the NEA for all these years of support and friendship and for what you have done in our schools over the last 8 years. It seems like only yesterday that I started this odyssey to become President in late 1991, in no small measure because I wanted to see the President and the National Government really, really take education seriously on a consistent, day-in and day-out basis, to care for our children not just in word but in deed.

And one of the best decisions I made the whole time I was President, I think, was to ask my friend of more than 20 years, Dick Riley, to become the Secretary of Education. He and Tunko are here today, and he deserves at least—

at least—50 percent of the awards and the recognitions that you have given to me.

I can't tell you how much it has meant to me to know that what we have done together has actually made life better for the children of America. Bob gave a little history lesson. I got tickled, actually, when I heard them talking in Philadelphia. It was really almost funny, you know. *[Laughter]*

You know, when they were in—remember that?—*[laughter]*—they took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. *[Laughter]* “It's morning in America.” *[Laughter]* But now they want you to believe that the turtle on the fencepost got there by accident—*[laughter]*—and that we just somehow just coasted along. Where do they think I got all this gray hair? *[Laughter]*

What I'd like to point out is that all the things that Sandy and Bob talked about have actually changed the lives of millions of Americans. In our schools today the math scores are up; the reading scores are up. Some of the biggest gains have come in some of the poorest schools, and I'll just give two examples for the public record here.

I was in Harlem the other day, in a school, celebrating the "Save the Music" program that VH1 is doing. And I was in this elementary public school in Harlem which 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading and doing math below grade level—2 years ago. So they get a new principal; the teachers all get together; they adopt a school uniform policy; they adopt real standards of measurement of what they're going to do; and 2 years later—in 2 years—they went from 80 percent of the kids doing reading and math below grade level to 74 percent of the kids doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years.

Then I was in western Kentucky a few weeks ago, at a school where well over half the kids are on the school lunch program. It was identified 3½, 4 years ago, under the Kentucky law as one of the failing schools in Kentucky. They got some more of our teachers we were talking about; they have smaller classes in the early grades and a dedicated, very well-trained young woman that I had the privilege of meeting, known in her school as the "Clinton teacher," which I like. [Laughter] So in 3 years, they went from 12 percent of the kids doing reading at or above grade level to 57 percent. Listen to this; it gets better—from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; from zero percent of the kids doing science at or above grade level to 63 percent. It's now one of the 20 best elementary schools in the entire State of Kentucky.

So what's the point of this? The teachers of America now have example after example after example to rebut the critics. They can say all our children can learn, number one. And number two, our public schools, all of them, can produce; they can educate our children; they can make the grade.

You know the argument for Proposition 38 out here, the argument for that proposition in Michigan? Their whole argument is that there is this sort of mindless bureaucracy out there grinding our children down. And the appeal really goes to people who really don't know

what's going on in the schools, don't understand how hard it is, and don't understand how much it's changing. Now, you have evidence.

And we say to our friends in California, our friends in Michigan, and throughout America, we don't have a dollar to spend on something besides the educational improvement of our public schools, and that's what we ought to be doing with that money.

Now, let me say—let me just go on a little bit. [Laughter] Sandy talked about the big expansion in college aid. We had a big increase in Pell grants. We went from 700,000 to a million work-study positions. We had the education IRA's. There are now 15 million families taking advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax cut. And the direct student loan program—listen to this—has already saved college students over \$8 billion in loan repayment rates.

So this is really good news. Why? Because the dropout rate in high school is down. The college-going rate is the highest it's ever been. The SAT scores are up, even though more people are taking it from more diverse backgrounds. And last year, for the first time in the history of our country, the high school graduation rate for African-Americans was about the same as it was for white American students. This country is moving in the right direction.

Now, who deserves the lion's share of the credit for that? The teachers, the other educators, the students themselves, and their parents. But it matters that we have a national policy that says: high standards, strict accountability, more investment, do what works, and empower these schools, put more teachers out there. Well, I just announced an initiative a couple days ago to let teachers who go into underserved areas or into underserved fields get more of their college loans forgiven for teaching. We need to do things that work.

Now, that brings me to the next point. I was given a note here before I came in, and I don't know if they're still here, that Congressman Earl Hilliard and Congressman Rush Holt are here, or at least they were here. I'm going to New Jersey for Rush Holt in a few days. He's got a tough race. He's the only physicist in Congress. [Laughter] Somebody told me the other day, he said, "Rush is not qualified to be in Congress. He actually knows something." [Laughter] Now, Earl has got no problem, but I want you to help him, too. [Laughter] But Rush Holt was the first Democrat from that

district in—I don't know—since the Civil War, and he deserves to be reelected.

And every one of these House and Senate seats is important. We still have to fight every year for that 100,000 teachers. Every year it's another battle. We still have not succeeded in getting Federal assistance to build or do major repairs on 6,000 schools and repair another 5,000 a year for 5 years, which is a desperate problem for our public schools all over America. It matters. Every one of these House and Senate seats matter.

And I hope you'll forgive me if I put in a little extra plug for the Senate candidate from the State of New York. I'll tell you, I am quite sure that there is no person running for the Congress this year, the House or the Senate, who was not previously a teacher, who spent as much time in school, listening to teachers, listening to principals, talking to parents and kids as Hillary has over the last 20-plus years. Even when she was younger, when she was a young girl, she would go door to door in Chicago trying to figure out why kids weren't in school and what it would take to get them there. Her whole life has been an obsession with the welfare and the proper development of our children.

And you know, the big question for the American people this year is whether to keep this progress and prosperity going. It's very, very important, every one of these House seats, every one of these Senate seats. And I can tell you, if the people of New York see fit to elect her, she will be one of the great Members of the United States Senate, now or ever.

I will also say that by far the biggest decision the American people have to make, obviously, is the race for President and Vice President. And you all know how I feel. *[Laughter]* But there is a big teaching job here, and I just want to say a few things about that.

I've known Joe Lieberman for 30 years, since I was a law student, still a student, and he was a young man running for the State Senate. I probably know Al Gore better than anybody outside his family now, because of the way we've worked together for 8 years. We had lunch once a week, every week for 8 years, until he got something more important to do. *[Laughter]*

You know, as your time runs out, you have little—it's sort of a gradual, your increasing humility; it doesn't just all hit you at once. *[Laughter]* One former President once told me it took

him 3 or 4 months to realize he wasn't lost every time he went in a room because nobody played a song anymore. *[Laughter]* Anyway, it'll be all right. *[Laughter]*

To get back to the main point, I know this guy. This is not politics. I know this guy. I have seen him when he was happy. I've seen him when he was sad. I've seen him when he was worried about his children being sick and when he was happy and elated about some achievement we had secured. I know him.

And I know how deeply he feels about equal opportunity for all people, because of his depth of conviction about the inherent worth of every person. And I know how that will play itself out in education policy. I know he will be a ferocious advocate of the children, the teachers, the schools, and the future of this country. And I think it's really important because—you know, I say this, and a lot of times people laugh. But sometimes it's better to get people to laugh; they'll actually listen to you then. One of the things I learned when I became President is, just because you're talking doesn't mean somebody's listening. *[Laughter]* I'm sure you've had that experience in the classroom. *[Laughter]*

But look, we need you. I know you're all well organized, and I know you've contributed your dues. And I know that you'll invest money in this, and I am sure you'll do your get-out-the-vote and everything. But we need you from now until election day to be teachers. We need you to do the kind of thing that Bob did here on the education record and throw it into the future.

Why is that? Because this is a really big election. And what we do with our prosperity is as big a test of what kind of wisdom and what kind of values we have, what kind of judgment we have, as what we do in adversity, maybe a bigger test. Because, when you're, you know, in the ditch, you don't have to be as smart as a tree full of owls to know you've got to do something different to get out. *[Laughter]* But when everything is just rocking along, you can just sort of bliss out and say, "Well, you know, what difference does this make? They all seem pretty nice to me."

So it's a big election. Most of you are younger than me, but those of you my age or older know that you maybe get one chance in a lifetime to build the future of your dreams for your kids, unencumbered by incoming fire. America has—the people of this country must

know how blessed we are now. You can help them understand that.

Then it's a big election because there are very large differences between the two candidates and their visions—the parties—which will have immense concrete impact on the lives of every American.

Now, does that mean this should be a negative campaign? No, this should be a highly positive campaign. I don't want anybody at our convention to say anything bad about them. I don't like that. We've had enough of that for the last 20 years, mostly coming out of their side, to last us a lifetime. I don't like that. We should posit that they are good, honorable, patriotic people who love their children and love this country and will do what they believe is right.

But then we ought to say, however, we disagree with them on a lot of things, and it seems like we're the only ones who want the American people to know what our disagreements are. Big election; big differences; only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. Who does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

Think about this. This is really true. I think we should compliment them for abandoning their mean and harsh rhetoric. *[Laughter]* We should. No, we should—wait, wait. Words are important. Woodrow Wilson said once, "Words could inflict more pain and damage than bullets." I wouldn't know, but he said that. *[Laughter]* So we're all having a good time, but you should welcome that. It's a good thing they did.

And everybody talks about—there was even a big article in one of the papers about phrases, verbatim phrases we had used in '92 and '93 and '94, verbatim were used by the Republicans in their speeches in Philadelphia. And I consider that both a compliment and an advance. *[Laughter]* Look, I'm being serious now. Don't laugh when—*[laughter]*.

But the difference in where we were in '92 and where they are today is that we actually had policies that backed up our rhetoric. We had a new education policy, a new welfare policy, a new crime policy, a new environmental policy, a new economic policy. We had policies that backed up our rhetoric. And Al Gore and Joe Lieberman can speak for themselves, but I just want to say one word about the economy because that affects how much we can help our schools. And I think I've earned the right to talk about economic policy.

People say to me all the time, "What great innovation did you and Bob Rubin bring to Washington to get this great economy?" And I always say, arithmetic. *[Laughter]* We stopped pretending that 2 and 2 was 6. We got rid of rosy scenarios and looked at the money that was coming in, and we had priorities for what was most important.

So we had this new economic policy. But it really was based on arithmetic. And that's what is at issue now. The Vice President says we ought to have a tax cut, but it ought to be one that we can afford, targeted to helping people send their kids to college, pay for long-term care, pay for child care, pay for retirement, easing the marriage penalty, helping low-income workers with a lot of kids. And we ought to save some money for education and to cover Medicare and Social Security out through the life of the baby boomers and add a Medicare prescription drug benefit. And oh, by the way, the money may not come in because this so-called surplus is a projected surplus.

So his policy is: Stay with what works; get us out of debt; keep the interest rates down; give a tax cut we can afford; save some money to invest in our future, in education, Medicare, drugs, lengthening the life of Social Security and Medicare. That's his policy.

Their policy sounds better the first time you hear it. Their policy is this: "Hey, we're going to have this big surplus. It's your money. We're going to give it back to you." That sounds good. There are several problems with it.

First of all, if you give all the projected surplus and more in a tax cut, it leaves you nothing to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare. It leaves you nothing to invest in education. It leaves you nothing to prepare for an emergency. We've had 3 years of big farm emergencies. And it leaves you no cushion in case the money doesn't come in.

Never mind the programs they have. If they privatize Social Security partially, like they say, that will cost another trillion dollars over a decade. So inevitably what they're really saying is—what they're saying is the sweet part of it, "I will give it all back to you in tax cuts." They're not playing the sour part, which is, "Now, of course, this will mean that we'll have higher interest rates, because we're going back to deficits, and we will have less money to invest in our future."

Our tax cut, the one our side has proposed, costs way less than half theirs and gives two-thirds of the American people more money. Plus which, by keeping interest rates at least a percent lower than they otherwise would over the next decade, you know what that's worth, a percent a year for 10 years? Two hundred and fifty billion bucks in lower home mortgage, 30 billion bucks in lower car payments, 15 billion bucks in lower college loan payments, all to middle class people, like school teachers.

Now, how is it that we could have a tax cut that costs less than half theirs, that gives two-thirds of the people more money? Because, like always, as Bob said, most of their money is going to people like I hope I'll be when I get out of here. [Laughter] But you know, that's not our way. We think the people that served this food to you deserve the same chance to send their kids to college that we have. That's not our way.

So you've got to think about it. And you've got to be teachers. You need to ask people who tell you, "Well, it's not a very important election,"—you have to say, "Oh, yes it is; here's why." "Well, they both seem pretty nice, and there's not any difference in them." Say, "Oh, yes, there are, big difference in crime policy, big difference in environmental policy, big difference in civil rights policy and over a woman's right to choose. Big difference in"—you just go down through all the things that will affect real people's lives. Anybody that writes a column in the newspaper saying there's not much difference between them is somebody that's already got everything they want in life and doesn't think anybody can take it away from them.

This is a big election. And you don't have to say one single, solitary mean thing personally about the people who are on the other side. Just be teachers.

But now this economics thing is big. Because if we put this country back in the ditch economically and we start running deficits again, there won't be any money for anybody to keep these education promises or to invest in our children. And you need to go out and ask people, say, "Listen"—just go up and ask people, be a teacher—say, "What's your projected income for the next 10 years? How sure are you that it's going to come in? Now, if I ask you to sign a binding contract today to spend it all, every last penny, even on something you

really, really wanted, would you do that and save no money for your family's health care or education or an emergency or just have a cushion in case you didn't get the raises you're counting on?" Of course, they wouldn't. Now, if they would, they should really consider supporting the Republicans. [Laughter] But of course they wouldn't, and America shouldn't either. This is dead serious. This is a huge difference, and so much else depends on that.

So I want you all to think about this. It's not enough to vote. It's not enough to work on election day or the weekend before. It's not enough to give your dues to the organization and have them invest it right. I am telling you, this election is going to be determined by what people think it's about. This is one of those deals where the answer you give depends on what you think the question is.

And if people really believe it's about how to keep the progress and the prosperity going and if they really understand the differences, then the Vice President and Senator Lieberman and Hillary and Rush Holt and our crowd—we'll be fine because we're on the side of the American people, and they agree with us. But we have to flush this out, and you have to be teachers.

The last thing I'd like to say is that I have no words to convey how grateful I am to you for what you do every day, for taking care of our kids. Almost a hundred percent of you could be making a lot more money doing something else. And you embody, to me, the best of American citizenship. Working with you has been a joy; knowing that we made it better has made it even more joyful. I'll be grateful for the rest of my life.

But remember, we are all citizens first, and our citizen duty now is to make sure the American people understand exactly what is at stake. If they do, trust me, the best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:34 p.m. at the Beverly Hills Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sandra Feldman, president, American Federation of Teachers; Robert F. Chase, president, National Education Association; Ann (Tunky) Riley, wife of Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley; and former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin.

Remarks to the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, California August 14, 2000

Thank you. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Isn't it great to be here in California together? [Applause] Forty years ago the great city of Los Angeles launched John Kennedy and the New Frontier. Now Los Angeles is launching the first President of the new century, Al Gore.

I come here tonight, above all, to say a heartfelt thank you. Thank you. Thank you for giving me the chance to serve. Thank you for being so good to Hillary and Chelsea. I am so proud of them. And didn't she give a good talk? [Applause] I thought it was great. I thank you for supporting the New Democratic agenda that has taken our country to new heights of prosperity, peace, and progress. As always, of course, the lion's share of credit goes to the American people, who do the work, raise the kids, and dream the dreams.

Now, at this moment of unprecedented good fortune, our people face a fundamental choice: Are we going to keep this progress and prosperity going? Yes, we are. But my friends, we can't take our future for granted. We cannot take it for granted. So let's just remember how we got here.

Eight years ago, when our party met in New York, it was in a far different time for America. Our economy was in trouble. Our society was divided. Our political system was paralyzed. Ten million of our fellow citizens were out of work. Interest rates were high. The deficit was \$290 billion and rising. After 12 years of Republican rule, the Federal debt had quadrupled, imposing a crushing burden on our economy and on our children. Welfare rolls, crime, teen pregnancy, income inequality—all had been skyrocketing. And our Government was part of the problem, not part of the solution.

I saw all this in a very personal way in 1992, out there in the real America with many of you. I remember a child telling me her father broke down at the dinner table because he lost his job. I remember an older couple crying in front of me because they had to choose between filling their shopping carts and filling their prescriptions. I remember a hard-working immigrant in a hotel kitchen who said his son was not really free because it wasn't safe for him to play in the neighborhood park.

I ran for President to change the future for those people. And I asked you to embrace new ideas rooted in enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans. You gave me the chance to turn those ideas and values into action after I made one of the very best decisions of my entire life, asking Al Gore to be my partner.

Now, first we proposed a new economic strategy: Get rid of the deficit to reduce interest rates; invest more in our people; sell more American products abroad. We sent our plan to Congress. It passed by a single vote in both Houses. In a deadlocked Senate, Al Gore cast the tie-breaking vote. Not a single Republican supported it.

Here's what their leaders said. Their leaders said our plan would increase the deficit, kill jobs, and give us a one-way ticket to recession. Time has not been kind to their predictions.

Remember, our Republican friends said then they would absolutely not be held responsible for our economic policies. I hope the American people take them at their word.

Today, after 7½ years of hard effort, we're in the midst of the longest economic expansion in history, more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, the lowest Hispanic- and African-American unemployment rate ever recorded, and the highest homeownership in history.

Now, along the way, in 1995 we turned back the largest cuts in history in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. And just 2 years later we proved that we could find a way to balance the budget and protect our values. Today, we have gone from the largest deficits in history to the largest surpluses in history. And if, but only if, we stay on course, we can make America debt-free for the first time since Andy Jackson was President in 1835.

For the first time in decades, wages are rising at all income levels. We have the lowest child poverty in 20 years, the lowest poverty rate for single mothers ever recorded. The average family's income has gone up more than \$5,000, and for African-American families, even more. The

number of families who own stock, in our country, has grown by 40 percent.

You know, Harry Truman's old saying has never been more true, "If you want to live like a Republican, you better vote for the Democrats."

But our progress is about far more than economics. America is also more hopeful, more secure, and more free. We're more hopeful because we're turning our schools around with higher standards, more accountability, more investment. We have doubled funding for Head Start and provided after-school and mentoring to more than a million more young people. We're putting 100,000 well-trained teachers in the early grades to lower class size. Ninety-five percent of our schools are already connected to the Internet. Reading, math, and SAT scores are up, and more students than ever are going on to college, thanks to the biggest expansion of college aid since the GI bill 50 years ago. Now, don't let anybody tell you that all children can't learn or that our public schools can't make the grade. Yes, they can. Yes, they can.

We're also more hopeful because we ended welfare as we knew it. Now, those who can work, must work. On that, we and the Republicans agreed. But we Democrats also insisted on support for good parenting, so that poor children don't go hungry or lose their health care, unmarried teens stay in school, and people get the job training, child care, and transportation they need. It has worked. Today, there are more than 7½ million people who have moved from welfare to work, and the welfare rolls in our administration have been cut in half.

We're more hopeful because of the way we cut taxes to help Americans meet the challenges of work and childrearing. This year alone our HOPE scholarship and lifelong learning tax credits will help 10 million families pay for college. Our earned-income tax credit will help 15 million families work their way into the middle class. Twenty-five million families will get a \$500 child tax credit. Our empowerment zone tax credits are bringing new business and new jobs to our hardest pressed communities, from the inner cities to Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta to our Native American reservations. And the typical American family today is paying a lower share of its income in Federal income taxes than at any time during the past 35 years.

We are a more hopeful because of the Family and Medical Leave Act, a bill that the previous

administration vetoed. They said it would cost jobs. It's the first bill I signed, and we now have a test. Twenty-two million new jobs later, over 20 million Americans have been able to take a little time off to care for a newborn child or sick relative. That's what it means—that's what it really means to be pro-family.

We are more secure country because we cut crime with tougher enforcement, more than 100,000 new community police officers, a ban on assault weapons, and the Brady law, which has kept guns out of the hands of half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers. Today, crime in America is at a 25-year low.

And we're more secure because of advances in health care. We've extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by 26 years, added coverage for cancer screening and cutting-edge clinical trials. We're coming closer to cures for dreaded diseases. We made sure that people with disabilities could go to work without losing their health care and that people could switch jobs without losing their coverage. We dramatically improved diabetes care. We provided health coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program to 2 million previously uninsured children. And for the first time in our history, more than 90 percent of our kids have been immunized against serious childhood diseases. You can be proud of that Democratic record.

We are more secure because our environment is cleaner. We've set aside more land in the lower 48 States than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt, saving national treasures like Yellowstone, the great California redwoods, the Florida Everglades. Moreover, our air is cleaner; our water is cleaner; our food is safer; and our economy is stronger. You can grow the economy and protect the environment at the same time.

Now, we're more free because we are closer today to the one America of our dreams, celebrating our diversity, affirming our common humanity, opposing all forms of bigotry, from church burnings to racial profiling to murderous hate crimes. We're fighting for employment nondiscrimination legislation and for equal pay for women.

We found ways to mend, not end, affirmative action. We have given America the most diverse administration in history. It really looks like America. You know, if I could just get my administration up here, it would be just as good a picture as anything you saw a couple of weeks

ago in Philadelphia—the real people loving it. And we created AmeriCorps, which already has given more than 150,000 of our young people a chance to earn some money for college by serving in our communities.

We are more secure, and we're more free because of our leadership in the world for peace, freedom, and prosperity, helping to end a generation of conflict in Northern Ireland, stopping the brutal ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, and bringing the Middle East closer than ever to a comprehensive peace.

We built stronger ties to Africa, Asia, and our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors. We brought Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO. We are working with Russia to destroy nuclear weapons and materials. We are fighting head-on the new threats and injustices of the global age, terrorism, narcotrafficking, biological and chemical warfare, the trafficking in women and young girls, and the deadly spread of AIDS. And in the great tradition of President Jimmy Carter, who is here tonight, we are still the world's leading force for human rights around the world. Thank you, President Carter.

The American military is the best trained, best equipped, most effective fighting force in the world. Our men and women have shown that time and again in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in Haiti, and Iraq. I can tell you that their strength, their spirit, their courage, and their commitment to freedom have never been greater. Any adversary who believes those who say otherwise is making a grave mistake.

Now, my fellow Americans, that's the record, or as that very famous Los Angeles detective Sergeant Joe Friday used to say, "Just the facts, ma'am." [Laughter] I ask you, let's remember the standard our Republican friends used to have for whether a party should continue in office: My fellow Americans, are we better off today than we were 8 years ago? You bet we are. You bet we are. Yes, we are. Yes, we are.

But—yes, we are—we're not just better off; we're also a better country. We are today more tolerant, more decent, more humane, and more united. Now, that's the purpose of prosperity.

Since 1992, America has grown not just economically but as a community. Yes, jobs are up but so are adoptions. Yes, the debt is down but so is teen pregnancy. We are becoming both more diverse and more united.

My fellow Americans, tonight we can say with gratitude and humility: We built our bridge to the 21st century. We crossed that bridge together. And we're not going back.

To those who say—and I'm sure you heard this somewhere in the last few days—to those who say the progress of these last 8 years was just some sort of accident, that we just kind of coasted along, let me be clear: America's success was not a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice.

And today, America faces another choice. It's every bit as momentous as the one we faced 8 years ago. For what a nation does with its good fortune is just as stern a test of its character, values, and judgment as how it deals with adversity.

My fellow Americans, this is a big election with great consequences for every American, because the differences, the honest differences, between our candidates and their visions are so profound. We can have good, old-fashioned election here. We should posit that our opponents are good, honorable, patriotic people, and that we have honest differences. But the differences are there.

Consider this, just this. We in America would already have, this year, a real Patients' Bill of Rights, a minimum wage increase, stronger equal pay laws for women, and middle class tax cuts for college tuition and long-term care if the Democratic Party were in the majority in Congress with Dick Gephardt as Speaker and Tom Daschle as majority leader. And come November, they will be. That has to be clear to people. And that's why every House and every Senate seat is important. But if you'll give me one moment of personal privilege, I'd like to say a word about Hillary.

When I first met her 30 years ago, she already had an abiding passion to help children. And she's pursued it ever since. Her very first job out of law school was with the Children's Defense Fund. Every year I was Governor she took lots of time away from her law practice to work for better schools or better children's health or jobs for parents who lived in poor areas. Then when I became President, she became a full-time advocate for her lifetime cause, and what a job she has done. She championed the family leave law, children's health insurance, increased support for foster children and adoptions. She wrote a best-selling book about caring for our children, and then she took care of them

by giving all the profits to children's charities. For 30 years—30 years—from the first day I met her, she has always been there for all our kids. She's been a great First Lady. She's always been there for our family. And she'll always be there for the families of New York and America.

Of course, we all know that the biggest choice that the American people have to make this year is in the Presidential race. Now, you all know how I feel. [*Laughter*] But it's not my decision to make. That belongs to the American people. I just want to tell all of you here in this great arena and all of the folks watching and listening at home a few things that I know about Al Gore.

We've worked closely together for 8 years now, in the most challenging moments. When we faced the most difficult issues of war and peace, of whether to take on some powerful interests, he was always there. And he always told me exactly what he thought was right.

Everybody knows he is thoughtful and hard working. But I can tell you personally, he is one strong leader. In 1993 there was nobody around the table more willing to make the tough choices to balance the budget the right way and take this tough stance against balancing the budget on the backs of the poor and working people of America. I have seen this kind of positioning and this kind of strength time and again, whether it was in how we reform welfare or in protecting the environment or in closing the digital divide or bringing jobs to rural and urban America through the empowerment zone program. The greatest champion of ordinary Americans has always been Al Gore.

I'll tell you something else about him. More than anybody else I've known in public life, Al Gore understands the future and how sweeping changes and scientific breakthroughs will affect ordinary Americans' lives. And I think we need somebody in the White House at the dawn of the 21st century who really understands the future.

Finally, I want to say something more personal. Virtually every week for the last 7½ years, until he became occupied with more important matters, Al Gore and I had lunch. And we talked about the business between us and the business of America. But we'd also often talk about our families, what our kids were doing, how school was going, what was going on in their lives. I know him. He is a profoundly good

man. He loves his children more than life. And he has a perfectly wonderful wife who has fought against homelessness and who has done something for me and all Americans in bringing the cause of mental health into the broad sunlight of our national public life. We owe Tipper Gore our thanks.

Al has picked a great partner in Joe Lieberman. There's the Connecticut crowd. Hillary and I have known Joe for 30 years, since we were in Connecticut in law school. I supported him in his first race for public office in 1970, when I learned he had been a freedom rider, going into danger to register black voters in the then-segregated South. It should not be a surprise to anyone that Al Gore picked the leader of the New Democrats to be his Vice President, because Joe Lieberman has supported all our efforts to reform welfare, reduce crime, protect the environment, protect civil rights, and a woman's right to choose and to keep this economy going—all of them. And he has shown time and time again that he will work with President Gore to keep putting people and progress over partisanship.

Now, it's up, frankly, to the Presidential nominee and the Vice Presidential nominee to engage in this debate and to point out the differences. But there are two issues I care a lot about, and I want to make brief comments on them, and I hope I've earned the right to make comments on them. One is the economy—I know a little something about that—and the other is our efforts to build one America.

First, on the economy, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will keep our prosperity going by paying down the debt, investing in education and health care, moving more people from welfare to work, and providing family tax cuts we can afford. That stands in stark contrast to the position of our Republican friends.

Here is their position. They say we have a big projected 10-year surplus, and they want to spend every dime of it and then some on tax cuts right now. That would leave nothing for education or Medicare, prescription drugs; nothing to extend the life of Medicare and Social Security for the baby boomers; nothing in case the projected surpluses don't come in.

Now, think about your own family's budget for a minute or your own business budget. Would you sign a binding contract today to spend all your projected income for a decade, leaving nothing for your families' basic needs,

nothing for emergencies, nothing for a cushion in case you didn't get the raise you thought you were going to get? Of course you wouldn't do that, and America shouldn't do it either. We should stick with what works.

Let me say something to you that's even more important than the economy to me. When Al Gore picked Joe Lieberman, the first Jewish-American to join a national ticket, to be his partner, and he joined with our Presidential nominee, who has, along with his great mother and late father, a lifetime commitment to civil rights and equal opportunity for all, even when it was not popular down home in the South, when they did that, we had a ticket that embodies the Democratic commitment to one America. They believe in civil rights and equal opportunity for everybody. They believe in a woman's right to choose. And this may be the most important of all, they believe the folks that you're buying your soft drinks and popcorn from here at the Staples Center should have the exact same chance they do to send their kids to college and give them a good life and a good future.

My fellow Americans, I am very proud of our leaders. And I want you to know that the opportunity I have had to serve as President at the dawn of a new era in human history has been an honor, a privilege, and a joy. I have done everything I knew how to do to empower the American people, to unleash their amazing optimism and imagination and hard work, to turn our country around from where it was in 1992, and to get us moving forward together.

Now, what I want you to understand tonight is that the best is still out there. The best is yet to come if we make the right choices in this election year.

But the choices will make all the difference. In February the American people achieved the longest economic expansion in our history. When that happened, I asked our folks at the White House when the previous longest economic expansion was. You know when it was? It was from 1961 through 1969. Now, I want the young people especially to listen to this. I remember this well.

I graduated from high school in 1964. Our country was still very sad because of President Kennedy's death, but full of hope under the leadership of President Johnson. And I assumed then, like most Americans, that our economy

was on absolutely on automatic, that nothing could derail it. I also believe then that our civil rights problems would all be solved in Congress and the courts. And in 1964, when we were enjoying the longest economic expansion in history, we never dreamed that Vietnam would so divide and wound our America.

So we took it for granted. And then, before we knew it, there were riots in the streets, even here. The leaders that I adored as a young man, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, were killed. Lyndon Johnson, a President from my part of the country I admired so much for all he did for civil rights, for the elderly, and the poor, said he would not run again because our Nation was so divided. And then we had an election in 1968 that took America on a far different and more divisive course. And you know, within months after that election, the last longest economic expansion in history was, itself, history.

Why am I telling you this tonight? Not to take you down but to keep you looking up. I have waited, not as President but as your fellow citizen, for over 30 years to see my country once again in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children. We are a great and good people. And we have an even better chance this time than we did then, with no great internal crisis and no great external threat. Still, I have lived long enough to know that opportunities must be seized or they will be lost.

My friends, 54 years ago this week I was born in a summer storm to a young widow in a small Southern town. America gave me the chance to live my dreams. And I have tried as hard as I knew how to give you a better chance to live yours. Now, my hair is a little grayer, my wrinkles are a little deeper, but with the same optimism and hope I brought to the work I loved so 8 years ago, I want you to know my heart is filled with gratitude.

My fellow Americans, the future of our country is now in your hands. You must think hard, feel deeply, and choose wisely. And remember, whenever you think about me, keep putting people first. Keep building those bridges. And don't stop thinking about tomorrow.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:52 p.m. at the Staples Center. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman. A portion of these remarks

could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Los Angeles August 14, 2000

[*The President was presented with an award from representatives of the housing industry.*]

The President. Now, I have one new house and two front doors. Well, let me say very briefly, I want to thank the Homebuilders, the Realtors, the Fannie Mae, the Freddie Mac people, everybody who was involved in this.

We had a serious policy right from the beginning to try to increase homeownership. And we have enjoyed working with all these folks that are presenting this award. I don't really feel that it's mine; I think it ought to go to our national economic team and to my Treasury Secretaries and my National Economic Adviser and all the people that have worked on this.

But one of the key things rarely noted by those who analyze our economic success over the last 8 years is the explosion in homeownership, which has been accompanied by an explosion in home building. It's one of the reasons we need to work hard to keep paying down the debt, keep the interest rates low, and keep creating jobs so there will be a pool of people to buy these homes when they get built.

These folks standing with me represent tens of thousands of our fellow Americans who played a major, major role in the economic boom that all the rest of us have been a part of. So I'm gratified to receive this award, but I kind of think I ought to be giving it to them.

Thank you very much.

[*At this point, Democratic National Committee general chair Edward G. Rendell made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you, Ed, and thank you, Joe Andrew, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

I wanted to come by to thank you for your support of this convention and our party and our efforts, and also to participate in an award, which I'll say a little bit about it in a minute. But you know, I think sometimes people tend to minimize the importance of political parties

in this day of mass media. We don't have the same kind of old conventions we once had, where we have 53 ballots before we pick a nominee. You know, that would be high drama. But these conventions are very important because they give our people from around the country—just as the Republicans got the opportunity in Philadelphia—to get together, to talk, to find common cause, to articulate what we believe to the American people, and also to reinforce one another in a profound way. I appreciated what Mayor Rendell said about the real people in the Pennsylvania delegation.

I think in some ways it's the most rewarding thing about having been President for over 7 years now. I was at a meeting about a week or so ago, and I was shaking hands with the people after I spoke. And two women were standing about 10 feet from one another, and they didn't know each other, and both were on welfare when I became President. One of them has a master's degree now; the other is a lawyer. And it was really moving to me. I was in suburban Chicago a few days ago, and I met with these police officers from three different law enforcement jurisdictions. And two out of the three thanked me for helping getting more police officers for their area. So if you hang around long enough and you work at it, you actually can get some things done.

What I would like to say tonight, very briefly, before I bring my friend Walter Shorenstein up here with me, is that a couple of years ago we were talking, the Democratic leaders and I, and I said, "You know, here we are coming to the end of the 20th century. And if you look back to the time of FDR, our party has played a major role in shaping our Nation and our world. And I still think that political parties are important. And I think the Democratic Party ought to have a national award for a lifetime of service to our party that clearly benefited our country." So the Democratic Party thought it was a good idea, and last year we gave the

first award to Walter. And tonight we're giving the second award to Lew Wasserman, who is here, and I want to thank him. And I'm going to bring Walter up in just a second and let him say whatever he wants to.

But I came to see Lew Wasserman the first time, oh, maybe 20 years ago, more or less, when I was the young Governor of Arkansas—with no gray hair, didn't even look as old as I was and probably wasn't old enough to do what I was doing—and I asked him for advice. I went to his office, and I asked him for advice—this was in the seventies; it was more than 20 years ago—about how to make more movies in my State.

And then in the early eighties, I came out here again to an event that was held at his home. And over the last, now more than 20 years, Lew and Edie have spent a lot of time with Hillary and me; they've always been very generous to take us into their homes. I told Lew tonight I've been to so many fundraising events at his home, I expected him to prorate this year's property tax and send me my share—[laughter]—and I would pay. But in a remarkable lifetime of personal and professional success, he has shown astonishing generosity to a wide range of causes but never stopped believing that one of the things that he ought to do is be an active citizen and an active supporter of his political party.

He has been a good Democrat without being a negative partisan. We've laughed in the past about how he supported the Presidential librar-

ies of Republican Presidents, for example. But he was, he is, and I think Walter is, in the best sense, people who believe in their party and believe they can be proud of it without having to run down people in the other party, people who can sit down across a table and have an honest discussion about honest differences. And that's really what I was pleading for in my speech tonight.

You know, I don't think anybody who participates in the electoral process can have a genuine complaint if, after the election, everyone who votes is fully aware of the differences between the candidates and makes a really informed choice. And no one can complain. And this country is still around here after over 200 years because people normally get it right.

But the political parties play a role in that. And I can tell you, as someone with some measure of experience now spanning a few decades, there are very few Americans in the entire 20th century that were any more effective in supporting their parties in a patriotic way and, therefore, fulfilling their fundamental citizenship responsibilities—very few who did it as well as Lew Wasserman.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:16 p.m. at Paramount Studios. In his remarks, he referred to Joe Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Walter H. Shorenstein, founder, Shorenstein Co. LP; and Lew Wasserman, chairman emeritus, MCA, Inc., and his wife, Edie.

Remarks at a "Tribute to the President" Reception in Los Angeles

August 14, 2000

First of all, thank you. Let me say on behalf of my family, we're honored to have this Oscar. [Laughter]

I want to thank the Governor and Sharon for welcoming us to California, for the wonderful reception that we've had, for the great convention we've had. And I want to say to all of you—I don't know if any of you saw my "Home Alone" video that I did. Do you remember that? [Applause] Well, in this "Home Alone" video, I was talking to myself in the mirror, and I had Kevin Spacey's Oscar. And he was

ungracious enough to come take it away from me, just because he won it, and I didn't. So now that I have one of my very own, I'll be able to lord it over him.

We have had a wonderful time. I want to thank the delegates who are here from every single State. From the places where we started to the places where we ended, it's been a great ride. I want to thank you for being so good to Hillary tonight. And you just remember what I told you. We had a good run tonight because we've had a good 8 years. But the best way

to validate all the work we've done is to win again and keep it going.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 p.m. at Paramount Studios. In his remarks, he referred to re-

ception host Gov. Gray Davis of California, who presented the President with an honorary Oscar statuette for "Best President." The President also referred to Governor Davis' wife, Sharon.

Interview With Ron Brownstein of the Los Angeles Times August 11, 2000

Republican National Convention

Mr. Brownstein. One of the things that was a little surprising at the Republican Convention was the extent to which they tried to characterize the meaning of your 8 years. Bush said you had coasted through prosperity. Cheney said these have been years of prosperity in the Nation but little purpose in the White House.

What is your response to that? How do you feel hearing that?

The President. Well, first of all, it was, on the facts, absurd. So I think what they're trying to do, their strategy seems to be to hope people think it all happened by accident. You know, when they had the White House for 12 years, they took credit every time the Sun came up in the morning. And also I think they did it because they fought so much of what we did.

You remember what they all said when they opposed the economic plan in '93, they said it would bring on another recession. They practically said it was the end of civilization as we know it. Then they fought the crime bill. They were against the 100,000 police. They were against the Brady bill. On welfare reform, we agreed that work should be mandatory and that the States should be able to design their own programs, but we disagreed on the requirements for national standards for nutrition and medical care and transportation and all that. So we just differed on so many things.

I think they were just trying somehow to get the American people to discount what's happened.

Economic Decisionmaking

Mr. Brownstein. In your mind—this is a legitimate debate—how significant a role did your economic decisions, the '93, the '97 budget, the other things that you've done, how important

has that been in the prosperity of the last 8 years?

The President. I think it was pivotal. Because if you remember when we just announced what we were going to do—we announced we would have a deficit reduction plan that would cut the deficit by at least \$500 billion. After the election, but before we took office, there was this huge boom in the stock market and interest rates dropped. And then when we passed it, it happened all over again.

And if you look at what's happened, Alan Greenspan said many times our fiscal responsibility in bringing the deficit down is what kept inflation pressures down and enabled him to leave interest rates lower so this whole thing would unfold. Otherwise, we would have had what had happened so long in the past—the productive capacity of the American people would lift the economy, then it would sag again, lift and sag, which is just what had happened before.

Social Indicators

Mr. Brownstein. A little bit on social policy, on crime, other social trends. Do you think that Federal decisions have been significant—

The President. Yes.

Mr. Brownstein. —in things we've seen on those areas?

The President. Yes. I think if you look at it, I saw a study the other day—and I'm sorry; I don't remember who did it—which said that about 30 percent of the drop in the crime rate could be clearly attributable to the improvement in the economy. But I think the rest is due to better policing strategies and to more sensible efforts to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

The crime bill that we passed in '94 basically was the product of law enforcement officers,

community activists, prosecutors, who were beginning to do things that were working at the neighborhood level. But since 1965, between then and 1992, the violent crime rate had tripled and the police forces of the country had gone up only by 10 percent.

So I don't think there's any question that putting 100,000 police in the streets, supporting more community prevention efforts, and doing the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban made a significant contribution. They don't think—the law enforcement people agree. I was in a suburban Republican community yesterday, outside Chicago, and I did what I always do when I leave, line up the police officers—and they had police officers from three different jurisdictions there—and two of them mentioned how important the COPS program had been to them and how much better they were doing as a result of it.

On welfare reform, I think starting with all the waivers we gave to States to experiment with welfare-to-work projects, right through the passage of the bill, and then getting 12,000 companies in the Welfare to Work Partnership to commit to hire people off welfare, I don't think there is any question that we have maximized the efforts. There again, some of the welfare decline has to be attributed to the improving economy. But the rest of it has to be attributed to changes in the law and the policies.

Choices in 2000 Election

Mr. Brownstein. So when you look at all of that, the economy, the social trends, to what extent do you consider this election, the November election, a referendum on your two terms, the good and the bad?

The President. I think it depends entirely on whether people understand what the choices are. And first, even before that, whether they think it's a significant election. I mean, the most troubling thing to me is—at least before the two conventions—there are a lot of people that are saying, "Well, things are going along well. This probably doesn't make much difference, and I don't know what their differences are—economy, crime, whatever."

I think if people understand with clarity what the choices are, they will clearly make a decision to keep changing in the right direction, because all the surveys show over 60 percent of the people approve of the economic policy, the crime policy, the welfare policy, the health care

policy, the general direction of the country—the people support us.

Policy Differences

Mr. Brownstein. So you're saying in your mind you do view this as a choice between maintaining the direction you've set out and reverting back to the previous, or what?

The President. Well, it's different. I think in some ways you could argue that the Republican ticket this year is more conservative than President Bush in '92 or Senator Dole in '96. They've been quite adroit in the presentation of it and adopted a lot of our rhetoric and our positioning. And I suppose that's a step forward.

But the difference is, when we started in '92 we actually changed the policies of the Democratic Party, the economic policy, the trade policy, the welfare policy, the crime policy, the education policy, right across the board. And I think that's important to emphasize that distinction.

So again, from my point of view, for example, their tax policies, when you slice them up salami-like, like they're doing now, which is better politics for them, there's a compelling argument for each one of them individually. But when you add them all up, you're basically back in the deficit suit. And that's a big difference.

So in my view, that would be a reversion. It would take a while to have effect, because we've built in a strong base. But once it was clear that we were going to get rid of the surplus right off the bat and then stop paying down the debt, I think the pressures for—well, Greenspan has said if there's a big tax cut, he'll have to raise interest rates more. So most people would lose more money in the interest rate increase than they'll get in the tax cut.

Democratic National Convention

Mr. Brownstein. Is defining the stakes in the election one of the goals for your speech?

The President. Yes. But I think primarily that has to be done by Gore and Lieberman. Now, I do that when I'm out on the stump, you know, with our groups, because I want them to be able to go out and talk to other people and communicate that. But I think the American—I can say a few things about what I think the choice should be. But this convention is very important that it belong to Al Gore and, to a lesser extent, to Joe Lieberman and that they define the choices.

I think that it should be the mission of this convention to have clarity of choice—first, to understand the importance of the election, then to have clarity of choice, then to make clear what our positions are. And that we're not—as I said, if somebody said, "Vote for me, I'll do just what President Clinton did," I would not vote for that person, because the times are very dynamic. There are still a lot of big challenges out there. But I think to keep changing in the direction we've taken is clearly what's best for America.

Choices in 2000 Election/Tone of Politics

Mr. Brownstein. In terms of defining the choices, when Bush and the Republicans define the choice, they put a lot of emphasis on changing the tone in Washington, changing the climate in Washington. When he talks about restoring honor and decency to the White House, do you feel as though he's talking about you, personally? Do you take that personally?

The President. Well, yes and no. Yes, he's talking about me personally; no, I don't take it personally. It's what they have to say. They're wrong on economics. They know the people don't agree with them on crime. They know the people don't agree with them on turning the environment back over to the polluters. They know the people don't agree with them on these issues. They know they can't make the case anymore that helping the environment hurts the economy. So they basically can't win any of the issues that affect the American people, so they have to divert the attention of the American people. So, no, I don't take it personally.

I think that what we have to do is talk about what we did for the people and the fact that we made specific commitments, and we honored them. Five years ago Thomas Patterson, the Presidential scholar, said I had already kept a higher percentage of my commitments to the American people than the previous five Presidents. And the number has gone up since then, and the ones that I haven't kept are ones that I tried and couldn't prevail on.

And the other thing I think is truly ironic, they're saying—they're responsible for the tone in Washington. I mean, I gave Bob Dole and Bob Michel the Medal of Freedom. I bent over backwards to work with Newt Gingrich and Dick Arney, and did, whenever I could. The truth is that the harsh tone in Washington, as

the American people know, was set by the far right. They got rewarded for it in 1994, when there was a high level of frustration. They overread their mandate. And they basically turned up the volume on a strategy they had really been pursuing in the far right since 1980 or before. And then the people didn't like it.

So now they say they want to change it. What they're basically saying is, "It's Republicans that do this, so put us in. If you let us rule, we'll be nice, and the Democrats don't do this sort of thing, so you'll have a nicer tone. So reward us for our past misconduct, and then everything will be sweet."

What I'd like to see the American people do is to say, we want you to work together. If they ratify this choice—what we call the New Democratic choice—if they ratify the choice of the Republicans when they vote with us on balanced budget and welfare reform, and when we work together on trade and foreign policy, then that's the direction the country will take.

I think it's predictable that if they essentially reward them for first being mean and now being nice, that they will think that as long as they're nice they can then implement the policies that they were going to implement anyway. And I don't think the American people will like that, and I don't think it's good for the country.

Bipartisanship

Mr. Brownstein. Are you disappointed or frustrated at all, though, if you think back from when you first ran against brain-dead politics in both parties in '92, and you—with really the exception of the '96-'97 period of welfare reform, Kennedy-Kassebaum, and in the balanced budget deal—it's been very hard to get bipartisan, significant bipartisan agreement. And there have been significant voices in the Democratic Party that have basically been cool to the idea, post the impeachment fight, very partisan atmosphere.

Is it tougher to bring the parties together than you would have thought?

The President. We got a lot done in '98. We got a lot done in '99—especially, mostly in the budget process; both times a lot of our education reforms went through. Even in 2000, we passed the Africa CBI bill with big bipartisan votes; we passed the China bill in the House; and the Senate, I think there will be probably more than half of both caucuses for the bill when they come back in September.

So I think it's important not to obscure the fact that things are still being done. And I wouldn't be surprised when they come back—if we do a good job at our convention, I wouldn't be surprised if we still don't get this year a Patients' Bill of Rights, a minimum wage increase, and maybe some of the other things we're working on.

So you know, it's harder, but I think we shouldn't obscure the fact that a lot of things still get done. I think we're going to pass a new markets initiative, thanks to the fact that the Speaker of the House has made it a priority in a bipartisan way. It got almost 400 votes in the House. It is a major, major piece of social legislation. It's basically the next big block on top of the empowerment zone program we adopted in '93.

So do I wish I could do everything? Yes. Do I wish it were less partisan? Yes. But that shouldn't obscure the fact that we're still getting quite a lot done.

Lieberman Selection/Tone of Politics

Mr. Brownstein. I asked you a moment ago if you thought that Bush was referring to you when he talks about honor and decency in the White House. The Lieberman selection as Vice President has been widely interpreted as signaling at once continuity with your policy, in terms of picking the chair of the DLC, but also an effort to separate from you, personally. Did you view it that way?

The President. Well, I think the far more important thing is the continuity of policy, because the thing that has always bothered me about these polls—until the last few days, where I think they are beginning to tighten up and firm up—is that the Vice President wasn't getting the credit he deserved for the role he played in the administration.

I never believed, not for a minute, that the American people were going to, in effect, vote against their own interests and their own values by holding Al Gore responsible for a personal mistake I made—for a second. The whole record here has been obscured. Joe Lieberman was the first Democrat to say it, but he didn't say anything different than Al Gore said. He certainly didn't say anything different than I said contemporaneously.

The issue is not—as a matter of fact, I think what he proposed was right. That doesn't mean that what they did was right. What they did

was wrong. And what Lieberman said was right, and that's what Gore said. That's all Gore said.

So you know, sooner or—the American people would figure that out and they—people are so much more fair than politicians and, sometimes, press pundits.

Mr. Brownstein. Right.

The President. And they're also—you know, they don't cut off their nose to spite their face very long. All these tactics, even going back to the '92 campaign, the Republicans knew that what we were doing was best for the American people and that, if the American people understood that, we'd win.

So what have they done from '92 on? They've tried to divert the attention of the American people to make them vote against something, vote on the basis of something other than their families, their lives, their kids' future, and the need to change America in a constructive way. So this is just the latest and most subtle incarnation of what I see as a very constant strategy, going back until '92.

Impeachment Process

Mr. Brownstein. I want to ask you one last question in this area. That rather extraordinary session you had yesterday, talking with the ministers, and you talked at great length about your personal feelings, about the whole controversy. You didn't say much about looking back and how you felt about the impeachment process itself.

Do you feel now that it was only partisanship at work, or could there have been legitimate reasons for some Republicans to feel the way they did?

The President. Well, first of all, some of them—I think Peter King gave the best speech on that. I'll use his words. Peter King said, "I'm voting against this because if it was a Republican President you'd be against it, too." It's basically what I think. But you know, the American people can evaluate that. The most important thing was not what I say; it's what those 800 or 900 constitutional experts said. Way over 90 percent of the people with an informed opinion about the history and the law said it was wrong. Two-thirds of the American people thought it was wrong.

But that's all behind us. What the American people need to vote, in my judgment, the way they nearly always vote—they need to vote based on what kind of future they want. And

if they believe that I have kept faith with the commitments I made and that we implemented those things and they had a good impact on the American way of life and our future and they understand what the choices are between the two candidates now and the two parties, I think we'll do fine.

Direction of Democratic Party

Mr. Brownstein. So it is the public record, in effect, the outward-looking record on which you think the judgment should be rendered and the vote should be based?

The President. Because that's the only thing that matters to them in their lives. And because, you know, if I were running again, they could evaluate me in whole, all my strengths and all my weaknesses. But I'm not running.

However, the things that we stood for—the reason I was thrilled about Lieberman's selection is that we've been working together in the DLC for years. It was a clear statement from Al Gore that he's going to continue this New Democratic course. It should be encouraging to independents and moderate Republicans that there will be a basis for bipartisan cooperation and that we're going to continue the kinds of change that have wrought so much good in this country in the last 8 years.

One of the things that will happen—as I said, I think Lieberman's selection will help the Vice President to get more of the credit he deserves for the good things that have happened the last 8 years.

Mr. Brownstein. You know, I wasn't planning to ask you this, but since you brought it up, one thing that's interesting about that, what you just said, though, is that the policy direction of the Vice President is quite similar to yours, overwhelmingly extending the kinds of things the administration has done, in some cases, literally, like CHIPS for adults or class size reductions through 12th grade or more police officers. But the music is a little different. He talks in a more traditionally Democratic language. He talks about big oil, big tobacco, whose side are you on, and some people feel that he's a more partisan—more comfortable in the Democratic Party, less comfortable reaching out across party lines.

Do you think there is a difference between the two of you and the extent to which you are comfortable challenging the party base and/or working with Republicans?

The President. Not really. I think that we're living in a time when the issues at hand and our frustration at not being able to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, for example, not being able to close the gun show loophole, having the NRA say they'll have an office in the White House if the Republicans are elected, have highlighted the differences between the special interests that dominate policy in their party and what we believe is in the public interest. And I think that accounts for some of the rhetoric.

I also believe, you know, when you're—if you go back to '92, the two New Democrats in the race were Tsongas and me, and Kerrey was, to some extent a New Democrat, we all had some pretty populist rhetoric. And there was reason for it then because people were suffering, really suffering. The reason for it now is that specific interest groups are holding up progress on issues even that a majority of the Republicans in the country favor.

For example, I think a majority of the Republicans clearly favor the Patients' Bill of Rights we're supporting. That's just one example. That's why I'm saying I think Lieberman coming on the ticket sends a clear signal. I also think he—Joe and I spent more years and just had the opportunity, for different reasons, to spend more time in the DLC than the Vice President did. If he hadn't become Vice President, I think one of these last 8 years he would have been chairman of the DLC. You think, if you have a chance to think about all this in a different way.

But I don't see it as a big substantive problem. I know how important it is to him, personally, to try to get bipartisan support for the work of a country. I know how important it is to try to get bipartisan support out in the country. I know how profoundly troubled he was in the last 2 or 3 years that even foreign policy began to get more partisan—the most amazing expression was the defeat of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the first time in 80 years the Congress had defeated a major treaty like this.

Electoral Fortunes of the Democratic Party

Mr. Brownstein. Let me ask you to sort of take a step back and think about the political ledger for a minute. You've become the first Democrat to be reelected since Roosevelt. The party was averaging about 50 electoral votes an election in the three elections before you. So

clearly, there has been a restoration of the capacity to compete at the Presidential level.

On the other hand, you've lost Congress, fewer Governors, and Gore is in this ambiguous position here as the campaign begins—or in the middle of the campaign. Do you feel that you are leaving the Democratic Party in a stronger position than, in effect, when you found it in the fall of '91?

The President. Oh, yes, I do. Because a lot of those congressional seats we held because we had a guy who had been there for a long, long time, while the districts had been changing, more Republican. I feel terrible about what I did to weaken our position in Congress and, by extension, probably in the governorships in '94, because we got all the downside of voting for the crime bill. That is, the NRA was out there telling all those people we're going to take their guns away, and they hadn't seen it work, and they hadn't seen that the fear tactics were wrong.

We got the downside of voting for the economic plan because people didn't feel the economy going better, and the Republicans were out there telling everybody we raised their taxes. In fact, you know, for most people, the vast majority, they didn't get their taxes raised. We had more tax cuts than tax increases. But there was this general sense of, well, nothing is really all that much better yet. And I felt terrible because—you know, I got the benefit in '96, and we began to win seats back.

But what I think now is, the '98 election I think was a true watershed election, because the President's party won seats in the House for the first time since 1822, in the sixth year of a Presidency. That was a long time ago. And even though we only won 5, they thought they were going to win 20 or 30, and they spent \$100 million more than we did. They thought they were going to win four to six Senate seats, and they didn't win any.

This year we're well positioned to pick up seats in the House and the Senate. In '98 Senator Hollings was reelected; we got a Democratic Governor in South Carolina; we got a Democratic Governor in Alabama; we got a Democratic Governor in Georgia; we got two African-American State-elected officials in Georgia. I think Zell Miller will be elected in Georgia in November.

So I think that the Democratic Party is coming back, and I think that it is a party reborn

in the direction that we have taken in the last 8 years.

Status of Democratic Party Changes

Mr. Brownstein. Do you think Gore has to win in 2000 to institutionalize that in the party? Or do you think it is cemented now, the big things that you have changed—on crime, welfare, the budget—are they—free trade—are these cemented, regardless? Or if Gore loses, or do we reopen the debates?

The President. First of all, I've always thought he would win, and I still believe he's going to win. I thought he would win when he was down 18 points. Vice Presidents have always had a difficult time winning, but I believe he'll win. And I believe he'll win in a positive way.

President Bush won, basically, by demolishing Mike Dukakis. I think Al Gore will win for the right reasons, because the country is better off than it was 8 years ago, and it's a stronger country. It's also a more just country. And I think when people understand where we were, where we are now, where he wants to lead us, I think after they see Al and Joe and Tipper and Hadassah and their families and they hear him talk, I think the comfort level will go way up. And I think they'll have what I believe this election is about. I think they have four fine people running for President and Vice President with very different levels of experience and very different positions on the issues about the future. And I think they'll choose him. That's what I think will happen. I've always thought that would happen.

Republican Strategy

Mr. Brownstein. And that question of experience—your comments the other night in Rhode Island, sort of the humorous comments about Bush that sort of sparked a little—let me just ask you, so we can interpret those correctly. In your mind, does he have sufficient experience and those personal qualities it takes to be President?

The President. First, let me say I was surprised by the reaction. It isn't true that I was trying to get him. And I think it came probably because sometimes when I'm talking without notes I lapse into southern talk. We don't mean anything disparaging by "daddy." I talk about my daddy all the time. I think if I had said "father," it would have had a different resonance with them. And I didn't mean to do that.

But the point I'm making is, Bush has been a Governor for, what, 5 years. And I was a Governor for 11 years when I took office, and had been involved in a lot of these things. The point I was trying to make was a different one. It's not that being Governor of a State, big State, for 5 years is not enough to be President. It is that the argument that they're making is based far more on atmospherics and the rhetorical positioning of the candidate than on specific positions on the issues. That was the argument I'm making.

In other words, you didn't hear anybody up there talking about, here's how I'm going to change the environmental policy; here's how I'm going to change the way I appoint judges to the Supreme Court; here's how I'm going to change the tax policy.

Oh, they talked about particular popular tax cuts, but they didn't say, here's the difference in my approach and theirs. That's the argument I was making. Their argument is: This economy is on automatic; nobody can mess it up; nobody was responsible for it; the Government doesn't have anything to do with it; we're going to give you the money back; let us govern. That's what I was trying to say.

It wasn't meant to be a personal barb in any way. I was actually complimenting their strategy, because it's the only way they can win. That is, the only way they can win is to take all the guys that really run the Republican Party—in other words, Mr. Armey and Mr. DeLay and all those guys, they still have their positions—if they took everybody that's really in control and they didn't show them to the American people, then they took their policies on—whether it was guns or the environment or health care or hate crimes or choice—and they put them in a closet for the convention, and they showed a whole different face to America to try to make people say, "Well, I feel okay about these guys. I'm going to give them job. You know, the other guy has had it for 8 years. Maybe we'll give it to them." That is their strategy. That's plainly their strategy and I—

Mr. Brownstein. Is it meant to deceive the American people about what they really intend?

The President. Well, that's your word, not mine. I just think that they would prefer not to talk about the issue differences. I don't think they think of it as deceit, because if you talk to any of them, they basically think they should always rule. They thought I was an historical

accident. They thought they'd never lose the White House again. They thought they had sort of a proven strategy for beating all Democrats, which is, basically, if you listen to all their campaigns from the beginning, that we're not like normal folks, and they are, so we ought to vote for them.

And I think they obviously have two candidates of enormous skill, enormous political skill, running. And I don't think they think of it as deceit. I think they think, if they get elected, they'll do the best job they can. But they ought to tell the American people what they're going to do in all these areas, and we ought to tell the American people what we're going to do. And that's what the debates ought to be about.

Qualifications of the Candidates

Mr. Brownstein. Let me go back to my question, though, from a moment ago. Even if you didn't intend anything to that effect in Rhode Island—let me ask you directly—do you think Governor Bush is sufficiently experienced to serve as President?

The President. Well, that's always a relative question. The point I've made about Al Gore is that he had a distinguished record in Congress, a distinguished record in the Senate. And he had the most extraordinary record of achievement in his present job than anyone in history. So he is much better qualified. He's also shown a peculiar qualification for this moment in history. That is, he's one of the most future-oriented people in American public life in the last 25 years. And he always has been.

Contrary to Governor Bush's jab at him, he never claimed to have invented the Internet. He did sponsor legislation which transformed what was called something else into the Internet, a public access means of communication that's the fastest growing one in history. And that's just one example. He understood all this genetic business before everybody else did. He was talking about climate change when they were still making fun of him in '92. Now the oil companies say it's real. So I think that he has had more relevant experience.

So compared to the Vice President, he's not experienced enough. If you think experience is important, the Vice President has much more than he does. So that's not an objective statement; it's a relevant statement. No disrespect to his service as Governor, but look at Al Gore's

experience and look at the results of that experience. I think he wins on that experience hands down.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Brownstein. Would you accept any kind of position—special ambassadorship—in a Gore administration? Do you have any interest in the Supreme Court?

The President. Well, I can't imagine that that would happen. I told Al once that if he got elected President my main goal would be to stay out of his way—because America can only have one President at a time. But if he ever wanted to talk to me, I'd be glad to talk to him. If he ever wanted me to do anything, I'd be glad to do it. If he just wanted me to go to funerals for him, I'd be glad to go. I will do whatever I can to be helpful to him, because I know what it's like to have that job and have to make the calls.

So my main concern as I look ahead is to try to find ways that I can use all the experience and the knowledge that I've acquired to be an effective citizen of America and to do some positive things around the world in ways that absolutely do not interfere in any way, shape, or form with his performance of his responsibilities, which are unique.

So if I ever did anything, it would be strictly within the confines of what I was asked to do. And I would guess if it ever amounted to anything, it would be one specific something that might come up in some area where I had a lot of involvement. But my main focus is on—I'm going to be a private citizen again, and I just want to be a good one, and that's what I expect to be.

Defining the Vice President's Role

Mr. Brownstein. In the last few minutes I have, I was asked by colleague Ed Chen to ask you a couple of questions for a profile of the Vice President that will be running during convention week. And I'm wondering if—this goes back to '92—but the first question he wanted me to ask was, when you talked with then-Senator Gore about the Vice Presidency, did he have any specific ideas of what he wanted the job to be? And how did they jibe with your view of what the Vice President—did you negotiate in advance about what the Vice Presidency would be?

The President. I don't know if I would say "negotiate." But yes, he did, particularly after we talked a second time. He knew that basically—that Vice President Mondale and Vice President Bush had had more institutional—had a more institutionalized partnership than any Vice Presidents before them. So he said, "You know, if I do this I want to know that we'll have lunch once a week," and we have, faithfully, until he got involved in more important things. "I want to know that I can be a part of any meeting and a part of all important decisions." And I said he would.

And then he said, "What do you have in mind? What do you want me to do?" And I said, "Well, I'm asking you to do this because I think you'd be a good President. I think you'd be a good partner, and because you know things I don't know—arms control, defense, the environment, technology, principally." And I said, "As we unfold this administration, I will want you to do specific things. I want you to have adequate staff to do it. I want you to have adequate support to do it, and I don't want you to have some separate satellite operation. I want us to have an integrated White House operation—you, the Cabinet, the staff—I want us all working as a team."

And I rather suspect that the model that we have established operationally will be followed by subsequent administrations, Republican and Democrat, because it's just crazy that other people haven't used the Vice President more. I mean, I think it doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Brownstein. It very well leads into question two, which was—the question is, how aware were you in the early days of the administration to resistance within the Presidential staff to the Vice President having an active role? And what did you do to let people—and here it says, like George or Harold Ickes—know that Gore had to be a central part of decisionmaking? Was there resistance, in your mind, originally, among some of the White House staff to this—what you describe as a kind of unique, new, and different integrated role.

The President. Well, I don't know if I would—let me just say this. I don't know if I would describe it in that way. But when we got started, we had to create a culture, and we had thousands and thousands of decisions to make. And the deal I made with him, which I initiated, I said, "Look, if you think we're not doing something right or if you feel you should be involved

in something you're not, the one thing I cannot tolerate, we'll never survive around here if this happens, is if you or anyone else sits around and fumes about something instead of bringing it out." I said, "If you think that we've messed up, you come and tell me, personally. And if I agree with you, we'll fix it."

So over the last 8 years maybe—maybe once a year something would come up where he'd say, "Look, this is how I think it should be, and we'd like to be more involved, and we're not," or, "This is something I think I should run myself." But it hasn't happened a lot. But in the beginning, you know, it took us a while to get this up and going. It's not easy. If you read these accounts of previous White Houses and how they operated, I mean, you would see—you've got a thousand different external pressures operating on you; you feel like you're in the fourth quarter of a game every day with the time running out. So it took us a while to work it out, but we did work it out, and I think on balance it's worked quite well.

Unfinished Agenda

Mr. Brownstein. My last question, so I'm going back to one of my own questions, instead of the Gore questions, which is: In the last few years, despite what we've talked about before, a lot of what you have proposed has been blocked. I mean, there has been, sort of, gridlock on a lot of things in Washington.

If you were going to look at one or two things, try to narrow it down, of the unfinished business of your Presidency that you think should be the top priority for the next President, areas or even specific proposals that you think are really right at the top of the agenda for a new Congress and a new President should focus, what would those be?

The President. Well, before they spend the whole surplus, in my judgment, they need to do the following things. There needs to be a long-term plan for what we're going to do on Social Security and Medicare that will require some more money and some substantive reform. I really regret—basically, neither party wanted to tackle Social Security this year, because we could have done it. So they need to think about that.

Then I think they need a longer term strategy—I would advise the Vice President when he becomes President to think about this—really longer term strategy for education, because

we're really beginning to see some improvement in these schools now. And we need to accelerate the pace of it, because now we know what works. And we're going to hit a roadblock when you have 2 million teachers retire over the next few years, really over the service of the next President, if the President is a two-termer.

Then I think—the third thing I think that really needs to be thought through is this whole complex of health care issues. I would recommend that we block out everything. For example, we could take a lot of the—the most vulnerable people without health insurance, we could take care of if we let all the parents of the CHIP kids buy into CHIP, if we let everybody over 55 who lost their health insurance at work buy into Medicare and give them a little tax credit to do it. And if then we let all young single people have access at least to some sort of catastrophic plan, along the lines of the slimmest plan offered by the Federal employees plan. And then we should beef up the public health network in America. I think that's important.

So those three areas, domestically.

Now, in foreign policy, I think that there are two things that need to be more work done. The one area, as you know, that I have failed to get a majority consensus in my party on is for the imperative of continuing world trade networks and to continue to have America benefit from the increasing interdependence of the global economic system. And I failed to get the Republicans to agree that you can't have an economic system that is interdependent without more of an interdependent social system. That's what the labor and environmental standards are all about. I think there ought to be a serious effort on that.

And then one other thing on foreign policy that I think is important. I've talked a lot about this, but we don't have the institutionalized commitment that I think we need to deal with the new security threats and the new opportunities in the 21st century. The Republicans made fun of me when we said AIDS was a security threat, but it is. The breakdown of public health networks all over the world and the rise of AIDS, TB, and malaria, but also just a breakdown of health care systems—in Russia, not just in Africa, in Russia and lots of other countries in the former Soviet Union and other places—it's a serious problem. And I think there should be

much more money spent in nonmilitary massive security, foreign policy areas.

We do real well on an ad-hoc basis, like we've got a great bipartisan commitment on Plan Colombia. I know it's controversial, but I think it's right. I think we're going to do it right, and I think my successors will do it right. But we're spending much less in nonmilitary foreign policy expenditures than we were at the end of the cold war. That budget has been cut in real dollar terms even more than the defense budget. The difference is that we could cut the defense budget because we didn't need 200,000 troops in Europe. We can cut back some other places and still have the dominant military in the world. And even now we're starting to replenish, rebuild the defense budget, which we have to, because we need more investment and readiness and weapons modernization and things like that. We have got to invest more money in development.

If we get a Middle East peace, the Congress, I'm sure, will do what we should do.

If time permitted, I could give you a dozen examples where the direct, long-term interests

of the United States are adversely affected by our inability to invest nonmilitary money in certain areas. And I'm not talking about just writing people a blank check and throwing the money away. But those are the areas, if I were in charge of a transition planning team for the new administration, those are the things that I would urge them to be looking at.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:43 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route from Washington, DC, to Los Angeles, CA. In his remarks, the President referred to former Senator Bob Dole; former Representative Robert H. Michel; 1988 Democratic Presidential candidate former Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman and his wife, Hadassah; newly appointed Senator Zell Miller, who filled the seat of the late Senator Paul Coverdell from Georgia; and former Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Political Affairs Harold Ickes. This interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks to the Community in Monroe, Michigan *August 15, 2000*

Thank you. Are you ready to win this election for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? [*Applause*] Let me begin by thanking Mayor Cappuccilli and his whole family for meeting me and Hillary and Al and Tipper. I thank you for coming out here today.

When we were riding in here, Hillary and Chelsea and I came in in a separate car from Al and Tipper, but we were looking at all the fields along the way, and then we looked at this really beautiful community that you live in. And it reminded us so much of all the places we visited on our bus tour in 1992, when we all got on the bus together and rode across America. The people who live here are the kind of people we ran to change the future for, the kind of people that work in our auto plants—and I thank Steve Yokich and the UAW for being here—the kind of people represented in Congress by John Dingell, who is recovering

from surgery, but his wife, Debbie, is here—and Marcy Kaptur over in Ohio.

And miraculously for us, the people of Michigan and the people of Ohio twice gave us a chance to serve. Al Gore and I have worked for nearly 8 years now to put you first, never to forget about you, to get the economy going again, and to get our society moving in the right direction, to make us a more united nation, a stronger, a better nation.

I got to talk about that a little last night, and say—I imagine there were some people out there in the country that didn't like it, because when they met a couple of weeks before, they didn't follow that old Joe Friday maxim. I just gave you the facts last night. And one of the facts that I want to reiterate is that every good thing that has happened, that came out of our administration in the last 8 years, Al Gore was at the heart of it. He has been a leader for the new economy, a leader for welfare reform,

a leader for education, a leader for lowering the crime rates.

The mayor talked about the brownfield program. That's a program that Al Gore took the lead in initiating that helped this community. You've got a community college here. We have 10 million Americans taking advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit, which makes community college virtually free in every State in the country. You got it, right? He got it right there, exhibit A. When we took office in January of 1993, the unemployment in this community was 8.8 percent. Today, it is 2.2 percent, one-quarter of what it was before.

Now, I want to make just a couple of points and bring on the Vice President. Number one, this wasn't a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice. Not just us—nothing we did in Washington would have amounted to anything if you weren't doing your part out here, the working people, the business people, the local leaders of all kinds. I know that. But our job was to create the conditions and give you the tools to live your own dreams and make your own future. And I think the record is clear. This country is better off than it was 8 years ago.

Here's the second thing, and I hope you'll take my word for this because I spent most of my adult life studying economics and the development of our country. The things that

have happened in the last 8 years, the good things, are nothing compared to the good things that can happen in the next 8 years—nothing.

But we've got to make the right choice. And you, all of you who came out here today, what you owe yourselves and your family and your future is to make sure that every single citizen you know in this country, all your friends and neighbors here, understand exactly what the choice is, what are the differences in the leaders and the parties, on the economy, on crime, on welfare, on civil rights, on choice, on all the issues that will shape our future.

I can tell you that as we move into the future, the nominee of the Democratic Party, my partner and friend for the last 8 years, understands where we are, where we're going, and how it will affect ordinary citizens more than any other public figure in this country over the last 20 years. He is the right person to be the first President of the 21st century, Al Gore.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. at Loranger Square. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor C.D. (Al) Cappuccilli of Monroe and Stephen Yokich, president, United Auto Workers. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Statement Announcing the Appointment of the Presidential Envoy for AIDS Cooperation *August 15, 2000*

Today I am pleased to name Sandra L. Thurman Presidential Envoy for AIDS Cooperation—the first U.S. Envoy to deal exclusively with a global health issue.

AIDS is now the leading cause of death in Africa and increasingly threatens Asia and the former Soviet Union. It is reversing hard-won advances in life expectancy and economic growth and imperils the stability and security of nations.

Sandy Thurman has joined the battle against AIDS in every capacity from community activist to national policy director to international policy advocate.

Since I appointed her Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy—a position she will retain—she has traveled repeatedly to Africa and met many leaders including former President Mandela of South Africa, President Museveni of Uganda, and President Obasanjo of Nigeria. She led the U.S. delegation to the International AIDS conference in Durban and cochaired its session on prevention.

Sandy will be an inspiring envoy. She combines the passion of an advocate with the skill of a diplomat.

One of her top priorities as AIDS Policy Director was to expand America's commitment to

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fighting global AIDS. Now Sandy will use America's growing efforts as leverage to encourage other countries to expand financial commitments, to step up prevention efforts, and to

increase access to care and treatment worldwide. Sandy has an extraordinary record of service on this issue, and I am proud to make her America's first envoy in the global fight against AIDS.

Statement on Signing Legislation Designating Wilson Creek in North Carolina as a Part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

August 18, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 1749, an Act "To designate Wilson Creek in Avery and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System."

Wilson Creek possesses all the remarkable values that distinguish the free-flowing rivers of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System: exceptional scenery; recreational opportunities; fish, wildlife, and botanical communities; and historic and cultural sites. The designation will protect and conserve Wilson Creek and provide continued opportunities for fishing, white-water boating, swimming, and hiking.

I applaud the efforts of the North Carolina congressional delegation along with the County Commissioners and residents of Avery and Caldwell Counties who have worked to preserve and protect this remarkable resource. Their indi-

vidual and collective efforts have preserved for the people of the State of North Carolina and all Americans a natural treasure that, together with the other rivers of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, will continue to add immeasurably to the quality of our environment and our national life.

Designation of Wilson Creek as a wild, scenic, and recreational river will finalize a nearly 20-year conservation initiative and will guarantee for future generations that the river and its values are conserved. I am pleased to sign this legislation, which will permanently protect Wilson Creek as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

NOTE: H.R. 1749, approved August 18, was assigned Public Law No. 106-261.

Remarks at a Picnic for the Democratic Parties of Franklin, Essex, and Clinton Counties in Saranac Lake, New York

August 18, 2000

Thank you. Well, let me thank all of you for coming out tonight. I thank the mayor and all of our chairs. And Phil Lalande and Anne Tubby, thank you for being with us tonight.

I think Hillary just about said it all, don't you? I thought that was great.

I want to say a few things and then ask you something from a little different perspective. First of all, I want to thank all the people of New York State for voting twice in 1992 and 1996 for Bill Clinton and Al Gore, and I'm very grateful to you. And I want to say a special word of thanks to you for 1996, when we carried 52 of the State's counties, including Franklin,

Essex, and Clinton Counties, by big margins, and I thank you. Now that we know you can do it, I hope you'll do the same thing for Hillary and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman this year.

I was thinking, when Chelsea and I were sitting there listening to Hillary talk, two things. First of all, I thought she was giving a great talk. *[Laughter]* And I thought she gave a great speech at the convention Monday night. And I want to echo what she said about the Vice President's speech last night. It was an extraordinary speech and a great roadmap for the country's future, and I'm grateful for that.

But I want to talk to you from a unique perspective, because my family has a new candidate and my party, as of last night, has a new leader. And so in this election, though I will be President and I have a lot I'm going to try to get done for you in the next 5 months, I am moving back to where I spent the first 20 years of my active life in politics, from the time I was 8 years old and my uncle was running for the State legislature at home, and I was passing out cards for him at the polling place. That is, I'm coming back to where you are. I'm going to be a citizen activist, and I'm going to try to be a good one. But I've had a unique opportunity to see what makes a country change and grow, and also to understand clearly the consequences of elections and the decisions made by the people whom we elect.

So I can't begin to add anything to what I said last Monday about what happened the last 8 years, what Hillary and Al Gore said about what ought to happen in the next 4 years. But I can tell you this: What the election rides on is whether the people of this country, the people of this State, and the people of this part of New York believe it's a big election, not a little election, and understand that there are differences and know what the differences are.

So as somebody who's sort of coming back your way, to citizen activism, I thank you for coming here tonight; I thank you for your support for all your local candidates. And Mr. Mayor, thank you for being here; and all the other local officials, I thank you for your support for Hillary. It means so much to me, and it will be good for New York.

But I want to ask you to leave here remembering what I said. I tried to make the argument last Monday night that for all the progress we have made in the last 8 years, the best stuff is still out there, because that's what I believe. That's what I believe.

If you just think about it, we had to work so hard to turn the economy around and get rid of the deficit. Now we can bring prosperity to the people and places left behind. We had to work so hard to get the crime rate going down instead of going up. Now we can focus on making America the safest big country in the world. We had to work so hard in getting in place the things that work in education. Now we can focus on making sure every child in this country can get a world-class education from kindergarten through college.

We are in a position to take advantage of all these scientific discoveries and all these technological developments in a way that has never been possible in this country and, as Hillary said, could bring great economic opportunity to upstate New York. But the people have to choose wisely.

And I can just tell you, as somebody who spent the first 20 years of my life working to try to persuade other people to vote for folks I thought ought to be elected; and then who spent 22 of the last 24 years as a public official trying to convince people I ought to be elected and reelected and what I was doing made sense; as someone who's looking forward to an election where I can support a man I believe in for President, a man I believe in for Vice President, and a woman I think would be one of the great United States Senators of our time for the Senate, I can tell you, not everybody thinks about this as much as you do.

Isn't that right? Whether they're Democrats, independents, or Republicans, not everybody sits around and thinks about this as much as you do. This is a massive crowd tonight. But there are more people from this area who aren't here than people who are, right? By definition. That's not a criticism. This is a huge crowd. It blew me away when I walked in here. But the point I'm trying to make is that between now and election day, each one of you will have a chance every day to say, "Look, this is a big deal here. You've got to take this seriously." The people you work with, the people you're in civic clubs with, the people you worship with, the people you run into on the street or drink coffee with, you can say, "Look, this is a big election. You remember where this country was 8 years ago?"

And those of you who are over 30 can make this point to younger people. You know, you get a time like this in a country's life maybe once in a lifetime, where you get the chance to build a future of your dreams for your kids. So once you convince people it's a big election and they have to take it seriously, you're halfway home in terms of persuading them to vote for our people.

And then the second thing you have to convince them of is that there are significant differences that will affect their lives, their children's lives, and the future of New York and the United States.

So as someone who is profoundly grateful to all of you—there's hardly a place in America

that's been more generous to me more consistently than New York has—I want you to know that the best thing I can give back to you is to do my dead-level best to get everything I can do done for America in the 5 months I've got left to be President and to persuade the American people that a chance like this comes along once in a lifetime.

I've worked hard to turn the country around, but all the best stuff is still out there. But the American people have to believe it's a big election, and there are big consequences because there are big differences. If you can take some time every day between now and November to talk to your friends, without regard to their parties, in a calm and open way—[laughter]—making those two points—making those two points,

say, “Hey, we’re not mad at these other guys. We don’t have anything bad to say about them. But look, it’s a big election, and there are big differences, and here’s what the differences are, and they’ll have consequences for your lives and your children and your future.”

If you will take some time to do that, then we’ll have a great night on November 7th, because Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary will be elected, and America will be better off.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:17 p.m. at the Saranac Lake Civic Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Thomas Catillaz of Saranac Lake; Saranac Lake Civic Center patron Philip Lalonde; and Saranac Lake resident Anne Tubby.

The President’s Radio Address

August 19, 2000

Good morning. During the recent political convention, we asked people all across our country to take stock of our Nation’s progress and the challenges that lie ahead. One thing is clear: We live in a moment of unprecedented peace and prosperity, and getting there was not a matter of chance but of choice.

When the Vice President and I set out to restore the American dream 8 years ago, we faced some tough choices. But with the support of the American people, we made those choices together. Today I want to talk about how far we’ve come and how we can use this historic good time to address our outstanding challenges at home and abroad.

We now enjoy the longest economic expansion in our history, turning record deficits into record surpluses, creating more than 22 million jobs with the lowest unemployment in 30 years, and average family income has jumped by more than \$5,000.

But more than just being better off, America is a better nation. We ended welfare as we knew it. With the benefits of job training, child care, and transportation, 7½ million Americans have moved from welfare to work. We’re turning our schools around with higher standards, more accountability, more investment. As a result, our reading, math, and SAT scores are going up,

and more students than ever are going to college. We made our communities safer by putting 100,000 new police officers on the streets, banning assault weapons, keeping guns away from a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers, and together, we brought crime to a 25-year low.

We’ve also extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by 26 years and passed the Family and Medical Leave Act, which over 20 million Americans have used to take a little time off for a newborn baby or a sick loved one. Our air and water are cleaner; our food is safer.

We’ve also stepped up our fight against AIDS, doubling AIDS research and prevention efforts. We’re working on the reauthorization of the Ryan White CARE Act to provide a lifeline to half-million Americans living with HIV and AIDS.

While we’re making real progress in the fight against AIDS here at home, we have to do more to combat this plague around the world. That’s why today I’m pleased to sign the Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Act. This bipartisan legislation authorizes funding for AIDS treatment and prevention programs worldwide and increases investment in vaccines for the world’s children, including AIDS vaccine research. I hope Congress will also approve our vaccine tax

credit to speed development of such critical vaccines for the developing world.

Fighting AIDS worldwide is not just the right thing to do; it's the smart thing. In our tightly connected world, infectious disease anywhere is a threat to public health everywhere. AIDS threatens the economies of the poorest countries, the stability of friendly nations, the future of fragile democracies. Already, HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death in Africa and increasingly threatens Asia and the states of the former Soviet Union. In the hardest hit countries, AIDS is leaving students without teachers, patients without doctors, and children without parents. Today alone, African families will hold nearly 6,000 funerals for loved ones who died of AIDS.

But we still have time to do a world of good if we act now. This bill is an important step in the fight against AIDS. It's also a symbol of the good we can accomplish when we work together in a bipartisan spirit. In that same spirit, Congress still has time to get important work done for the American people this fall. When they return in a few weeks, they'll still have time to put progress before partisanship to pass

a real Patients' Bill of Rights; affordable Medicare prescription drug benefits for all our seniors; to set aside the Medicare surplus so that it can only be spent to strengthen Medicare, not raided for tax cuts we can't afford; to pass tax cuts that help middle class families send their kids to college and provide long-term care for their loved ones.

We should also pass a strong hate crimes bill and commonsense gun legislation. We should rebuild our crumbling schools, hire the rest of those 100,000 teachers, and raise the minimum wage.

These are big challenges, but if we make the tough choices together, we'll keep our progress and prosperity going.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 1:57 p.m. on August 18 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 19. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Signing the Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Act of 2000 *August 19, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3519, the "Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Act of 2000," which represents the latest U.S. effort in the long-term global fight against HIV/AIDS and its related threat of tuberculosis.

In July 1999, Vice President Gore and I launched the Administration's interagency "Leadership and Investment in Fighting an Epidemic" (LIFE) initiative to expand our funding for global HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment in the worst affected developing countries. With bipartisan support, the Congress appropriated the additional \$100 million that we requested for FY 2000 to enhance these efforts. For FY 2001, my budget includes an additional \$100 million for the LIFE initiative.

While the LIFE initiative greatly strengthens the foundation of a comprehensive response to the pandemic, the United States clearly understands that there is much more to be done. The Joint United Nations Program on HIV/

AIDS has estimated that it will take \$1.5 billion annually to establish an effective HIV prevention program in sub-Saharan Africa and an additional \$1.5 billion annually to deliver basic care and treatment to people with AIDS in the region.

H.R. 3519 takes some of the additional steps to broaden the global effort to combat this worldwide epidemic. It provides enhanced bilateral authorities and authorizes funding for the Agency for International Development's HIV/AIDS programs; authorizes new funding for the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative; and authorizes the creation of a World Bank AIDS Trust Fund that is intended to create a new, multilateral funding mechanism to support AIDS prevention and care programs in the most grievously affected countries.

The United States, however, cannot and should not battle AIDS alone. This crisis will require the active engagement of all segments

of all societies working together. Every bilateral donor, every multilateral lending agency, the corporate community, the foundation community, the religious community, and every host government of a developing nation must do its part to provide the leadership and resources necessary to turn this tide. It can and must be done.

There is currently no vaccine or cure for HIV/AIDS, and we are at the beginning of a global pandemic, not the end. What we see in Africa today is just the tip of the iceberg. There must be a sense of urgency to work together with our partners in Africa and around the world, to learn from both our failures and our successes, and to share this experience with those countries that now stand on the brink of disaster. Millions of lives—perhaps hundreds of millions—hang in the balance. That is why this legislation is so important.

I wish to thank and congratulate our congressional partners who worked hard to make this bipartisan legislation a reality: Representatives Leach, Lee, LaFalce, Gejdenson, Gilman, Jackson-Lee, Maloney of New York, and Pelosi, and Senators Kerry, Frist, Biden, Boxer, Durbin, Feingold, Helms, Leahy, Moynihan, and Smith of Oregon.

While I strongly support this legislation, certain provisions seem to direct the Administration

on how to proceed in negotiations related to the development of the World Bank AIDS Trust Fund. Because these provisions appear to require the Administration to take certain positions in the international arena, they raise constitutional concerns. As such, I will treat them as precatory.

The United States has been engaged in the fight against AIDS since the 1980s. Increasingly, we have come to realize that when it comes to AIDS, neither the crisis nor the opportunity to address it have borders. We have a great deal to learn from the experiences of other countries, and the suffering of citizens in our global village touches us all. The pages of history reveal moments in time when the global community came together and collectively found “the higher angels of our nature.” In a world living with AIDS, we must reach for one of those historic moments now—it is the only way to avoid paying the price later.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 19, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 3519, approved August 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106–264.

Statement on Overcrowding of Schools *August 21, 2000*

This year a record 53 million children will enroll in American schools, according to a new report released today by U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. Over the last 10 years, our public schools have grown by 6.6 million students, resulting in overcrowded classrooms and strained school facilities. To meet the needs of America’s growing student population, we need to build new schools and modernize existing ones.

For too long, the Republican leadership in Congress has failed to act on tax breaks pro-

posed by my administration to build and modernize 6,000 schools. They have also failed to pass my proposal to fund urgent repairs such as leaky roofs, faulty fire alarms, and inadequate furnaces at 25,000 schools across the country. I remain strongly committed to working with Members of both parties to help create safe and modern places for America’s students to learn. Our children deserve no less.

Statement on Welfare Reform August 22, 2000

On August 22, 1996, I signed landmark bipartisan welfare reform legislation, transforming our Nation's welfare system into one that requires work for time-limited assistance. Four years later we see strong evidence that this historic change is working: Welfare caseloads have been cut in half; a record proportion of people on welfare are working; and the businesses in the Welfare to Work Partnership alone have hired more than one million people off welfare.

New data released today show that welfare rolls are just half of what they were 4 years ago, and the percentage of Americans on welfare is at the lowest level in 35 years. My administration will send a report to Congress today that shows all States have met the welfare reform law's overall work requirements in 1999. Moreover, individuals remaining on welfare are nearly 5 times more likely to be working than they were in 1992.

I am pleased that since its launch at the White House in May 1997, the Welfare to Work Partnership has enlisted more than 20,000 businesses who have hired an estimated 1.1 million former welfare recipients. As many of these companies have learned, welfare recipients are productive workers who want a hand up, not a handout. With Vice President Gore's leadership, the Federal Government has also done

its part, hiring nearly 50,000 former welfare recipients at a time when the Federal Government is the smallest it has been in 40 years.

In 4 short years, we have seen a new emphasis on work and responsibility, as welfare recipients themselves have risen to the challenge and made welfare what it was meant to be: a second chance, not a way of life. As we celebrate how far we've come, we must not forget that there is still more to do. Working together, we must build on our progress and help even more families become self-sufficient. That is why I am challenging the Welfare to Work Partnership to link even more welfare recipients, community-based organizations, and employers in communities around the Nation—helping more businesses find qualified workers and more welfare recipients and other new workers succeed in our booming economy. I urge State and local officials to use the resources and flexibility provided through welfare reform to invest in supports for both current recipients and low-income working families. And I call on Congress to join me in promoting work and responsibility by enacting my budget proposals to make work pay, encourage savings, promote responsible fatherhood, and expand access to child care, housing, transportation, and health care.

Remarks at a Reception for Senatorial Candidate Representative Debbie Stabenow in Bingham Farms, Michigan August 22, 2000

Thank you very, very much. I want to begin by saying thank you to Brian and Jennifer for opening their home. This is such a beautiful place. And the backyard is wonderful, and the weather has cooperated. It's an omen, Debbie.

I want to thank Senator Carl Levin for being here. I wish I could tell you all the times over the last 8 years that I have seen Carl Levin time and time again stand up on the floor of the Senate and do the right thing, not only for Michigan but for the people of the United

States. He is a magnificent United States Senator, and he deserves a good fight—[inaudible].

I don't know if John Conyers is here. I heard he was coming. Hello, John; it's nice to see you. Let me say that one of the corollary benefits of electing five more, six more Democrats to the House of Representatives is that John Conyers will be the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and it will be a credit to the United States. And I thank you.

Millie, I'm glad to see you. You look good in that Medal of Freedom. [Laughter] And you

earned it. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Doreen and David Hermelin for 9 years of friendship and support, for doing such a magnificent job in Norway, and David has made me laugh from Michigan to Washington to Oslo. And I suspect I'm not the only person in this crowd besides your family that feels deeply indebted to you for being a magnificent human being. And I thank you so much.

Now, this is an unusual election for me. It's the first time in 26 years they've had one that I'm not running for something. *[Laughter]* Most days I'm okay about it. *[Laughter]* My family has a new candidate, making Debbie my second favorite Senate candidate who is a woman running in America today. *[Laughter]* And I thank the Hermelins for helping her, as well.

My party has a new leader, and I thought he did a magnificent job last Thursday night. And Michigan is very, very important to what happens this year. It is not an accident that early Tuesday morning Hillary and I got up in Los Angeles and flew across the country to drive to Monroe, Michigan, for the symbolic handoff with the Vice President and Tipper Gore. It is profoundly important. It's also important because of this Senate race.

I admire Debbie Stabenow. I admire her for the work she's done in the Congress. I admire her for standing up for what she believes. I admire her for leaving the confines of a safe House seat and the prospect of being in the majority in the House of Representatives to take a step of challenging an incumbent Senator. I want her to win, and she can win, and she should win if all of you will do what you can to help her between now and November.

Now, as I said the other night in Los Angeles, this is a big election. And every Senate seat, every House seat is important, and obviously the White House is a profoundly important thing. But the only thing I'm worried about in this election is that we might get all the way to November, and people might not understand because things are going so well that it is a big election with big choices and big differences.

I am absolutely convinced if the people of Michigan understand what the choices are and what the consequences to them and their families are, that Debbie will be elected and that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will be elected. That's what I believe. I believe that, and so I thank you for your contributions; I thank you

for coming here. But I just want to take 2 minutes to say what I tried to hammer home last night and to make a couple of other points—or last week.

Number one, we started 8 years ago with a simple vision that America in the 21st century ought to be a place where opportunity is alive for every responsible citizen, where without regard to our backgrounds and our differences, we are coming together, not being driven apart, and where we're still the world's leading force for peace and freedom.

Now, we had a strategy: prepare people for this new era by creating the conditions and giving the people the tools to make the most of their own lives and giving everybody a chance. Get the roadblocks out of the way and give people a hand up who needed it. We just got fresh evidence today that that's working. Today we got the 4-year results on our welfare reform efforts. Welfare rolls now are at a 35-year low in the United States of America, something you can all be proud of.

But I want to reiterate something else I said. I believe all the best things—for all the good things that have happened in America the last 8 years, even greater achievements are out there if, but only if, we focus on the big challenges and make the right choices. And there's some big challenges out there. If we have the longest economic expansion in history, how are we going to keep the prosperity going and extend its benefits to people in places left behind? How are we going to get America out of debt for the first time since 1835? How are we going to meet the challenge of the aging of America? When the baby boomers like me are all over 65, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security.

How are we going to meet the challenge of the children of America, the largest and most diverse group of children we have ever had? Will they all get a world-class education, or not? How are we going to meet the challenge of balancing work and family in a world where most parents have to work?

How are we going to meet the challenge of staying ahead in science and technology and protecting our values? When all your medical and financial records are on the Internet, when all of us have a little gene card that says everything that's wrong with us, how are we going to protect our privacy and keep people from depriving others of health insurance or a job?

How are we going to meet the challenge of global warming and still keep the economy going? How are we going to deal with even greater racial, religious, ethnic, and other diversities? And what will it take for us to continue to lead the world toward the kind of peace I've worked so hard for, from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to the Balkans? What will it take?

Now, don't let anybody tell you there are no big issues in this election. This is big stuff. And how a country deals with its prosperity, its good times, is just as stern a test of its judgment, its values, its character as how you deal with adversity. After all, when I came to Michigan in 1992 and asked the people to vote for me, it didn't take a stroke of genius to understand that we had to do something different. As Al Gore used to say, "Everything that should be up was down. Everything that should be down was up." We couldn't keep doing the same things.

Now we have to think about how to meet these challenges. And I just want to mention two or three things that I think are profoundly important. I could talk about a dozen, but I'll just mention three.

First, on health care: This United States Senator would vote for, not against, the Patients' Bill of Rights, would vote for a Medicare drug program that all of our seniors who need it could have access to. That is important.

The second thing I want to talk about a little bit is the economy, and that relates to the attack that's been leveled against her by her opponent. I saw the other day—I was reading the papers, getting ready to come here, that her opponent says, "Well, you know, she'll go vote for that big drug program, she and Carl Levin. There's just going to be like a \$600 million tax or a billion dollar tax. It's just going to be terrible." I heard all that. It's like, we're going to spend too much money.

Now, I want you to listen to this because this is the most important distinction that will affect everybody that I think is not well understood. What are we going to do with our surplus, and how is it going to affect the economy? Here's our position. Our position is, we have a large projected surplus; we should, however, not spend it all today, first, because it hasn't come in; it's a projected surplus. So what should we do with it? Here's what we say. We say we want to give the American people a tax cut

we can afford that includes marriage penalty relief, college tuition deduction, help for child care, for long-term care for an elderly or disabled relative, for saving for retirement.

We think we have to save some money back to invest in education and in health care, including this Medicare prescription drug program. We think we have to save some money back so that we can lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, to get it out beyond the life expectancy of the baby boom generation, so that when we retire we don't bankrupt our kids and their ability to raise our grandchildren. And if we do it that way, we can get this country out of debt over the next 10 or 12 years, for the first time since 1835, a year before Arkansas and Michigan became States.

Now, that's our position. Their position sounds better the first time you hear it, and it doesn't take as long to say it. Their position is, "Hey, we've got this big projected surplus. It's your money. Vote for us. We're going to give it all back to you." Sounds great. Doesn't take as long to say. Here's the problem.

It is literally true that their combined tax cut promises spend all the projected surplus and then some, leaving nothing for education, health care, the environment, nothing for emergencies, nothing for their own spending promises, their Star Wars promise, their promise to partially privatize Social Security, which alone would cost a trillion dollars. And most important of all, the money is not there yet.

Now look, this is a big deal. The Council of Economic Advisers has estimated that even if all this money comes in, the plan that Debbie and Carl would vote for would keep interest rates one percent lower every year for a decade than their plan, if all the money comes in. In other words, best case. You know what that's worth to you? Two hundred fifty billion dollars in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. In other words, another \$300 billion tax cut.

Our plan costs way less than half of what theirs does and gives more money to two-thirds of the American people. Now, nearly everybody in this room would be better off under their plan the first year, because it helps people who can afford to go to fundraisers like this. [Laughter] And I hope I'll be one of them next year. [Laughter] But what's the problem? Every one of you will be worse off as soon as those interest

rates started going up and the stock market started going down and the economy started getting weaker.

This is a huge deal, not widely understood. You have to find a way to tell your friends and neighbors: We have worked too hard to get this country out of the ditch; we have worked too hard to get rid of this deficit; we can't show up next year and say, "Here's our projected surplus. Let's give it all away in a tax cut." And the drug program that she supports can easily be funded to help every senior citizen who needs it in this country and still have a tax cut and still get us out of debt. And if all the money doesn't come in, we've got a cushion built into ours.

Now, you've got to hammer this home. Think how hard we've worked together as a country to turn it around economically, to get interest rates down, to make investments pay off, to generate jobs and create hope and opportunity. And in some blinding flash should we just throw it away by giving away all of our projected income?

I say all the time, it really reminds me of these letters I used to get, back when I was a civilian, in the mail from the Publishers Clearing House, those sweepstakes letters signed by Ed McMahon: "You may have won \$10 million." That's what your projected income is: "You may have won \$10 million." Well, if you spent the money the next day, you probably shouldn't vote for her. [Laughter] But if you didn't, you should vote for Debbie Stabenow; you should vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and support Carl Levin and keep this prosperity going. This is a profoundly important issue.

The last thing I want to say is this: A United States Senator has to cast important votes that are more important than economics, that go to the heart of who we are as a people and how we live and whether we're going to be one America, whether we're going to respect everybody's privacy and everybody's rights and everybody's diversity—the hate crimes legislation, the employment nondiscrimination legislation, and maybe most important of all, ratifying or failing to approve Justices appointed to the United States Supreme Court.

Now, the next President of the United States will have between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court. I had two in my first term, and I'm proud of the job they're doing. And I never asked them to reflect every view

I had, but I do think it is important that we have a President who will appoint Justices that will stick up for basic civil rights, including the right to choose, and Senators who will vote to ratify such judges.

And if this is an important issue to friends and neighbors of yours and people you know, you cannot let them pretend that the vote in the Senate race or the vote in the President's race is not going to have an impact on this.

So I will say again, if you believe in the Patients' Bill of Rights and the Medicare drug benefits that all seniors can afford, you've got to vote for Debbie and Al and Joe. If you believe that we should get this country out of debt and keep the prosperity going and save some money to invest in education and health care and have a tax cut we can afford, you've got to vote for Debbie and Al and Joe. If you believe in a woman's right to choose and if you believe in the hate crimes legislation and building one America that we can all be a part of, you've got to vote for Debbie and for Al and Joe.

That is clear. And you have to do what you can. This is the most important thing of all. I know I am, if I might use an expression out of my faith, I know I am preaching to the saved today. But what I'm trying to say to you is, it is not good enough even for you to come here to this fundraiser. Every one of you, every one of you, has friends who may not even be Democrats, but they certainly aren't as interested in politics as you are. They never come to fundraisers like this. They don't think about this stuff all the time. But they're good citizens, and they will show up and vote. And they have to understand it's a big election with big choices, with big differences that have huge consequences to the lives our children will have.

So I implore you, if you believe in what you did in coming here today, go out there and tell people if they want to keep the prosperity going and extend it, if they want to get this country out of debt, if they want to see all our seniors have the medicine they need as more and more of us grow older, if they want to preserve a right to choose for a woman and the right to build one America without regard to all the differences that make this a great and interesting country, there is only one choice in this election: Debbie Stabenow, Al Gore, and Joe Lieberman.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:55 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Brian Hermelin, president, Active Aero, Inc., and his wife, Jennifer; former U.S. Ambassador to Norway David B. Hermelin and his

wife, Doreen; and political activist Mildred (Millie) Jeffrey, who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom on August 9. Representative Stabenow was a candidate for U.S. Senate in Michigan.

Remarks at a Dinner for Senatorial Candidate Representative Debbie Stabenow in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

August 22, 2000

Thank you. Well, first I'd like to thank Bill and Michelle for letting us come into their home while it's still new. *[Laughter]* It might have been built for this event, who knows? *[Laughter]* It's a really beautiful place, and they're really good people. They've been so good to me and Hillary and the Vice President and Tipper. And thank you for helping Debbie, and thanks for being my friend all these long years. I'm very grateful to you.

I want to thank all your officeholders who are here—Jennifer Granholm, whose husband was giving me some tips on how to be the spouse of a candidate. *[Laughter]* And I listened very carefully. I don't want to blow this. *[Laughter]* I thank Dale Kildee for being my friend and for working with us for 8 years for the interests of the families of Michigan and the United States. It's been really great.

And I can't say enough about Carl Levin. He and Barbara rode over here with us, and we were talking about the last 8 years, and I was thinking about all the things that he has educated me on. But I can tell you that he is one of the handful of people that is universally respected in the Senate by everybody, and when he talks, everybody listens.

I want to thank all of you who worked on this event. I see Peter Buttenweiser back there. Thank you, sir, and all the rest of you who helped to make this successful. And I'd like to say my special word of appreciation to Jane Hart for being here tonight. You know, when I was a young man in college, I worked for Senator Bill Fulbright, who was then the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, and it was a very long time ago. But I remember vividly when I was there, one of the most tumultuous times in modern American history. We had big struggles over civil rights, big struggles

over riots in the streets, big struggles over Vietnam. And I remember very vividly how Senator Phil Hart conducted himself, how he spoke, what he said, and how other people respected him.

And one of the reasons that Debbie Stabenow ought to go to the Senate, apart from the fact that she will vote more like Phil Hart would have voted and speak more like he would have spoken, is that we in the Democratic Party have tried our best to work in good faith with the Republicans, and we have tried to end the politics of personal hostility and negativism. And I think almost as important as anything else, Debbie will restore, along with Hillary and President Gore and Vice President Lieberman, a sense of real humanity to our national political life. The American people will say one more time, "We don't like that stuff. We sent you up there to do a job. We want you to treat each other with respect, and we want you to show up for work every day." That is the legacy of Phil Hart that I remember and one I will always remember. And I'm very honored that you're here tonight, Jane, and I thank you very much.

I'd also like to say at the last meeting—I don't even know if he's here tonight but—if he came over here—but I saw Matt Frumin, who was one of the original co-chairs of my Saxophone Club who is now running for Congress in the 11th district. *[Laughter]* And he's really doing a good job, and I hope you'll help him as well.

Now, if you heard what I said in Los Angeles, I don't know that I have much more to say about—*[laughter]*—about what I think this election is all about. But I will try to be briefer and more colloquial. First of all, I am profoundly grateful to the people of Michigan for

voting for me twice, by big margins, the last time by almost twice the margin by which we prevailed in the country. The people of this State have been good to me and have come to reflect the diversity and the success that has been the hallmark of America in these last 8 years. And I'm very, very grateful.

Secondly, this is the first time in 26 years they've held an election when I wasn't on the ballot. [Laughter] I used to have to run every 2 years. And as I've often joked, most days I'm okay about it, because I feel—my heart is full of gratitude, and I'm really rather looking forward to trying to figure out what to do in the next chapter of my life and how to be a good citizen. I have 5 months, and I intend to do a great deal in these last 5 months as President. But I speak today also as someone who for most of his political life was a citizen activist.

I was 8 years old handing out cards for my uncle who was running for the legislature. I spent 20 years working for other people before I spent 24 years scurrying around on my own behalf and also working for other people. And what I would like to say to you is, I have now lived long enough to know that sometimes you're most in trouble in political life when you think you're least in trouble. You're most vulnerable as a people when we think we're least vulnerable. And the big danger when things are going well is that you think you can go to sleep.

There are a lot of young people here. Bill and Michelle and their wonderful kids are here. A lot of the rest of you brought your kids here. And they, most of them, don't know this, but anybody who is over 30 years old has lived long enough to have made at least one whopper of a mistake in your life, not when times are going real poorly but when times were going so well you thought there was simply no consequence to the failure to concentrate. If you live long enough, you'll make one of those mistakes.

And so what I want to say is, if the people of Michigan understand the difference in Debbie's voting record and her opponent, if they understand the difference in her positions on the issues that are hanging fire today and her opponent's, if they understand the general difference in her approach to how America should go into the 21st century and her opponent's, she will win the election. I don't think any of you doubt that.

So wouldn't it be ironic if the big adversary of Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and the new

candidate in my family, Hillary—and some of you have already helped, and for that I am very grateful—and Debbie was the very success that all of us have worked so hard to help the American people create. Now, that is what I want you to think about.

And I don't want you to just think about it tonight; I want you to think about it every day between now and the election. Because, as much as I appreciate the money you have contributed to her campaign and as much as I hope you'll keep trying to help her and all the rest of our crowd's races, it's not enough, because America has to be thinking about this election in order for us to prevail. We can't sleepwalk through it. We can't sort of sidle into it. We've got to actually think, "Oh, my goodness, there's an election, the only time in my lifetime we've had this much prosperity with the absence of domestic crisis and foreign threat. We have the chance to build the future of our dreams for our kids. What is this about?"

And every one of you know lots and lots of people who are far less involved in politics than you are, people who are your relatives, people who are your friends, people with whom you work, people with whom you worship, people with whom you play golf or bowl or whatever you do. You know a lot of people that you really like and care about who aren't nearly as into this as you are. But they're good people, and they're good citizens, and they're going to show up on election day. They're going to vote, sure as the world. If they have to walk through the ice, they'll go vote. Don't you want them to know what this is about, and don't you want them to have at least the same framework you do?

This is the whole shooting match, folks. We have the chance to build the future of our dreams for our children. It's a big election. We will never forgive ourselves if we sleepwalk through it. It may not come around again in your lifetime.

If you heard my convention speech, you heard me talking about the late sixties. That's the last time we had an economic run this long. And I'm telling you, I finished high school in the middle of it, and if anybody had told me that within 2 years we'd have riots in the streets and within 4 years Dr. King and Bobby Kennedy would be dead and the President that I admired so much, Lyndon Johnson, wouldn't run for reelection and the country would be

split in two and then we'd have a divisive Presidential election, and then the economic expansion would be over, I would never have believed it. I would never have believed it.

Now, we're more fortunate this time. We don't have that level of internal crisis or external threat right now, but we have to concentrate. And you've got to go out and tell everybody you know that this is an important election with the opportunity of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams.

Then you've got to tell people, "Hey, there are real differences here that are big and have practical consequences for the lives of the families in Michigan—huge difference in economic policy." Do you really believe that right now we should say, "We've got a \$2 trillion projected surplus, and we ought to give it all away in a tax cut right now?" Right now, give it all away for the next 10 years, before the money comes in, before we see about the emergencies, before we set aside anything for education or health care or do anything to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare or give up trying to get the country out of debt to keep interest rates down, the stock market high, and growth going and jobs coming in?

This is huge. I promise you, most people don't know yet what the difference is in the economic policies of Debbie Stabenow and her opponent, and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and their adversaries. They don't know. You can tell them. It's a huge deal.

I got a report last month that said that interest rates—best case for the Republican plan—that is, if all this money actually comes in, interest rates would be a point lower every year for a decade under our plan. That's worth for most folks, totaled, \$250 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, and for those of you with kids in college, \$15 billion in lower student loan payments. This is a huge deal.

And never mind what happens if the money doesn't come in. We don't have to spend it if it doesn't come in, but I promise you, if they have a tax cut next year and give it all away, they're not going to turn around and raise taxes if it doesn't come in, and we'll be right back in the soup again. And a lot of you have heard my little joke, but it really does remind me—their position is like getting one of those letters in the mail from Ed McMahon—[laughter]—you know, the Publishers Clearing House,

the sweepstakes letter. "You may have won \$10 million." Wow! If you ran out and spent the money the next day, you should seriously consider supporting her opponent in this election. [Laughter] But if you didn't, I hope you'll stick with her and with Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and all the people that have been a part of the enormous effort to give you the chance to build the America we enjoy today.

There are huge differences in the environment. We believe you can improve the environment and grow the economy. I think we've got lots of evidence, don't you? We have 22 million jobs, cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up, 43 million more Americans breathing air that meets Federal air standards, and the best economy in history. If you do it right, you can do it. Now, they've got a commitment to weaken that. This is a serious choice. You have to make a choice.

And this Medicare drug issue, it's a big deal. The average 65-year-old in America has a life expectancy of 83. People over 65 in America have the highest life expectancy of any group of seniors in the world. But if you want people to live longer and live well, they have to have access to medicine. Our plan would give everybody that needs it access to it. It clearly can be paid for, notwithstanding her opponent's attacked her over this because it costs so much. Let me just tell you something; they have the Congressional Budget Office; they give us the cost estimates. By their estimates—by their estimates, not ours—we can pay for the drug plan she wants to vote for; we can have a sizable tax cut to help people with education, long-term care, marriage penalty relief, retirement savings; we can invest in education; and we can still get the country out of debt because we have a cushion in case the money doesn't come in.

Now, those are the facts. There's a huge difference here, big difference in the Patients' Bill of Rights. There's a big difference in gun safety legislation. You know, the previous administration, they vetoed the Brady bill. This crowd is against closing the gun show loophole. The congressional leadership was against putting 100,000 police on the street and another 50,000—this ticket says they'll get rid of the program that I've worked so hard for.

I mean, it's not like you don't have a test here. Crime is at a 25-year low. If you put

more police on the street, they stop people from committing crimes, if they're smart and they do it right. If you keep more guns out of the hands of criminals and children, you don't have as many people dying. It's not like there's no test here. There's a big difference. You've got to make sure people understand this.

They're committed to repealing *Roe v. Wade*. Al Gore is committed to continuing it. Debbie Stabenow will have to vote on who gets appointed to the Supreme Court. It's a big deal. You have to decide what you believe.

So I just want to say, I'm not trying to make you—everybody wants to be happy now because things are going so well, and I'm happy they're going well. But I'm telling you—and I'd like to sort of ride off into the sunset singing “Happy Trails”—[laughter]—but life doesn't work that way. Just because somebody's term is over, everything that needs to be done doesn't go away.

We've got a chance to go out and reach these—the Native American reservations, these inner-city neighborhoods, these poor rural towns that don't have any kind of economic recovery, and give them jobs and businesses. It will help all the rest of us. We've got all kinds of opportunities out there, but I'm telling you, there are huge choices. You just remember what I said. If somebody asks you what's the difference in

Stabenow-Abraham, Gore-Bush on economic policy, can you answer? What's the difference on the Patients' Bill of Rights? What's the difference on Medicare drugs? What's the difference on the environment? What's the difference on gun safety, closing the gun show loophole? What's the difference on choice? Can you answer?

You have got to be able to talk to other people between now and November and tell them it may be 50 years before we have a time like this again, and we can't blow it. And I want to tell you something. I worked with this woman for years now. She is special. She is strong. She has a good heart, a good mind, and she's a good politician in the best sense. And you'll be very, very proud of her when you put her in the Senate.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:53 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Bill and Michelle O'Reilly; State Attorney General Jennifer M. Granholm and her husband, Dan Mulhern; Senator Carl Levin and his wife, Barbara; philanthropist Peter L. Bittenweiser; and Jane Hart, widow of former Senator Philip A. Hart.

Remarks on the Electricity Shortage in California and an Exchange With Reporters

August 23, 2000

The President. Before I leave for New Jersey today, I want to make a brief announcement about some action we're taking to help consumers in southern California who have been hit very hard by skyrocketing electric bills. I want to thank Governor Davis, Senator Feinstein, Senator Boxer, and Congressman Filner for their leadership on this issue and their work with me.

The wholesale price of electricity has risen sharply in California this summer as a result of tight supplies and growing demand. This is having a particularly heavy impact where the price hikes are being passed on to consumers, as they are in the San Diego region. Many families and small businesses in San Diego have

seen their electric bills more than double. I've heard reports of senior citizens on fixed incomes being forced to choose between medicine and air-conditioning.

Today we're taking three new steps to help ease the burden. First, Secretary Richardson has asked the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to expedite its investigation of the wholesale power markets, so we can better understand what is happening in California and provide policymakers with the information they need to protect consumers in a timely fashion.

Second, I'm directing the Department of Health and Human Services and Secretary Shalala to release \$2.6 million in Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds for the

families of southern California. This doubles the amount of LIHEAP assistance in the San Diego region and will help to ensure that low-income families and senior citizens have the emergency help they need to pay their bills and stay cool.

Third, I'm directing the Small Business Administration to step up their efforts to inform small businesses about SBA loans to help cope with unusually high electric bills.

All of these are short-term steps to help families in southern California during the current power crunch. I also renew my call to Congress to work with us to build a better energy future over the long run, to take up my energy budget initiatives and the tax incentives to promote energy efficiency and conservation. I hope they will also pass a national comprehensive bill to foster a new era of the right kind of competition in the electric industry to establish a more competitive, efficient, and reliable electric power system for our Nation and to beef up efforts to prevent utilities from abusing their market power to raise rates above competitive levels. This legislation would save our consumers about \$20 billion a year in power costs. We ought to do it, and we ought to do it this year.

Let me say once again to the people of southern California, we'll continue to keep a close eye on the situation. We'll do what we can to help you get through this summer.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, do you think—[inaudible].

The President. Excuse me, sir?

Q. Mr. President, do you think the power companies are profiteering in California?

The President. Well, that's what FERC's going to investigate. Secretary Richardson and I talked about it. We want the FERC to look into it and see what the facts are. There is an unusual impact there, different from virtually any other place in America, and it needs to be examined, and I hope it will be. I hope the assistance we're giving in the meanwhile will help.

And again I will say, I believe that we could do an enormous amount if the Congress would pass the energy budget initiatives, the tax incentives to buy energy-efficient homes, vehicles, to retrofit businesses, and would pass the electric utility deregulation.

Let me remind you—some of you may remember this—I went out to the Inland Empire, east of L.A., I believe it was in San Bernardino, to dedicate a housing project that was part of an effort with the National Home Builders and

the Energy Department, for working people on modest incomes. And the homes that they built there lowered average electric rates by over 40 percent.

So we need to take some structural action here to empower the American people to solve this problem themselves, too. If we have deregulation and we give better incentives to people to build or retrofit their homes, their offices, and to buy other energy-efficient appliances, we could make a big difference here in almost no time. So I hope that will happen.

Go ahead, Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

1996 Campaign Fundraising

Q. Sir, what do you think of Janet Reno's decision not to name a special counsel to investigate Al Gore's fundraising? Do you think it may look to some people like a whitewash?

The President. I don't know any more about that than you do. I learned about it when I picked up the paper this morning.

Go ahead.

Meeting With President-Elect Vicente Fox of Mexico

Q. Well, what are you hoping for from your meeting tomorrow with President-elect Fox of Mexico in terms of U.S. business potential and potential for the U.S. economy?

The President. Well, first of all, I want to get to know him, and I want to reaffirm the support of the United States, which I think is bipartisan, for good strong relationships with Mexico, the need for us to work together to deal with the drug challenge, our common environmental challenges along the border, and to make our trade relationship work for both sides. And so, obviously, I hope that there will be long-term economic benefits.

I think he's quite serious about modernizing the Mexican economy and moving forward with our relationship. And I've been impressed with what I've seen and heard about him so far, and I'm anxious to meet him and do what I can to get our relationship off to a good start.

2000 Election

Q. Mr. President, a lot of State Democratic chairs would like you to come out and do some targeted campaigning to help get out the base in November. Do you think that's a good idea? Is that something you intend to do?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the most important thing is for me to do as much as I can for the American people in the job I have between now and January the 20th, and that's my main priority. The second most important thing is for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to go out and spread the message, engage in the debate, and make sure the American people know what the choices are before them. And I think they're doing quite a good job of that.

Now, if I can help, of course, within those parameters, I will do that. I went to Michigan yesterday. I'm going to New Jersey today. I will do some work within the limits of my ability to do it. But the main thing is that the candidates carry the message, and I think they're doing a fine job.

Colombia

Q. Mr. President, on Colombia, you signed a waiver yesterday so that the aid could start flowing. There are still some problems of human rights violations, and Congress has a lot of doubt. You're going to be there next Wednesday.

The President. I did sign the waiver, but the Congress also passed the aid package, and they expect it to go forward. I did it because I believe President Pastrana is committed to dealing with the human rights issues about which we're still very concerned. He has submitted legislation to the Colombian Parliament, for example, for civil trials, for allegations of military abuses of human rights. And we also have a system in place for specific case-by-case investigation of serious allegations.

So I think that we've protected our fundamental interest in human rights and enabled the Plan Colombia to have a chance to succeed, which I think is very, very important for the long-term stability of democracy and human rights in Colombia and for protecting the American people and the Colombian people from the drug traffic.

Q. Are you—[inaudible]—human rights in favor of the money?

The President. No. No. First of all, the money is designed to help combat the drug-trafficking and to help alleviate a lot of the social problems, to help to develop alternative economic development, and also to build the civil institutions in Colombia which will help to protect human rights.

So what I did was to permit Plan Colombia to go forward and be implemented because I'm convinced that the President is committed to the proper course in human rights—he submitted legislation which is evidence of that—and because we haven't given up our ability to look into case-by-case allegations of human rights violations dealing with specific military units who can be kept from getting any of this assistance if they have, in fact, committed human rights violations.

Human Embryo Research

Q. Mr. President, can you talk about your administration's decision to support federally-funded stem cell research, and are you worried about the controversy involved in that?

The President. Well, I believe if people will actually—Secretary Shalala and I had a long talk about this before we came out this morning—I think that if the public will look at, first of all, the potentially staggering benefits of this research, everything from birth defects to Parkinson's to Alzheimer's to diabetes—profoundly important there—to certain kinds of cancers, spinal cord injuries, burns, anything kind of regeneration of cells that's required, the potential to change the future, the health future for Americans and for people around the world is breathtaking.

Secondly, these guidelines were not put out without a rigorous scientific review. And human embryo research deals only with those embryos that were, in effect, collected for in vitro fertilization that never will be used for that. So I think that the protections are there; the most rigorous scientific standards have been met. But if you just—just in the last couple of weeks we've had story after story after story of the potential stem cell research to deal with these health challenges. And I think we cannot walk away from the potential to save lives and improve lives, to help people literally to get up and walk, to do all kinds of things we could never have imagined, as long as we meet rigorous ethical standards. And I'm convinced, and Secretary Shalala is convinced, that that has been done.

Meeting With President-Elect Fox of Mexico

Q. Mr. President, President-elect Fox has talked about open borders between the United States and Mexico. Generally speaking, sir, do you support that concept even over the long

term, and do you expect it to be a dominant part of your meeting tomorrow?

The President. Well, I want to hear what he has to say about it, and how we would go about dealing with the problems that we have with the trade arrangement we have now, whether they would be amplified. In general, I think there will be increasing interdependence of the world's economies over the next decade, increasing interdependence in our region.

I think—I believe we should have done more with South America. We've got the Caribbean Basin trade initiative, which I think is good. We've got the relationship with Mexico, which I think has been a net plus for the United States, both economically and politically. We didn't extend our trade agreements to the rest of South America, and I think that the Europeans have benefited at our expense. So I think there will be more interdependence, and the United States has to be a part of that.

But like everything else, the devil is always in the details here, so I want to talk to him about it and see what he has in mind. I would imagine most of this work would have to be done by the next administration.

Yes.

Oil Production

Q. [Inaudible]—U.S. doing to convince OPEC nations to increase output, and will you be discussing this issue with Nigeria when you go?

The President. OPEC nations? I'm sorry. Well, as you know, we have done what we could. I was actually—I was reviewing the situation last night, and yes, I will discuss it with Nigeria. But we have to look at where there is excess capacity.

Part of this is a question of whether the OPEC nations can increase their production.

Part of the problem is coming because there's now renewed economic growth elsewhere in the world. And it seems to me, just looking at all the numbers over the long run, we're going—we'll get some benefit out of that. That is, I expect you'll see a significant increase in American exports over the next 6 months to 2 years because of the increasing growth in other parts of the world, but as a result of that, it's putting more pressure on the oil supplies that are available.

So I'm going to do what I can to keep these prices moderated and to continue to argue to all the OPEC nations that, if the price gets too high, they will cause recession in other countries, and then the purchases will drop dramatically and for a longer period of time. They're much better off with a price that's below where it is now but one that can be sustained. They don't want to go down to \$13 to \$15 a barrel again, but we don't need it—it needs to be, I think, in the low twenties somewhere. I think that's—low to mid twenties is a more sustainable rate. And so I will clearly discuss it with President Obasanjo and with others in the weeks ahead.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, how—look for your legal defense fund?

Q. Are you back in the spotlight? [Laughter]

The President. I'm going to New Jersey.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House prior to departure for Monmouth Junction, NJ. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Gray Davis of California; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman; President Andres Pastrana of Colombia; and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

Remarks at Crossroads Middle School in Monmouth Junction, New Jersey August 23, 2000

Thank you. Please be seated, everybody. We all appreciated the standing ovation, but you're about to get tired. [Laughter] I am so glad to be here. Let me say, first of all, I thought Malaika Carpenter gave a terrific talk, didn't you? [Applause] I understand her parents,

Nancy and Lenny, and her brother Jerren are here. Where are they? Stand up there. You did well.

I'd like to thank Dr. Stewart for welcoming us here, and Dr. Warfel, the principal here. I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation

for this terrific band. Weren't they great, this jazz band? [Applause] I mean, they played "Hail To The Chief," and "On Broadway," and "Caravan," and lots of other things, and they did it very, very well. There aren't many middle school bands in America that are that good, I can tell you. And you should be very proud of them. They're really good.

And I'd like to thank the other students that met with me just a few moments ago. And I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to your Representative in Congress, Rush Holt, who is here with me. Since I'm at a school, I can say this. Rush was a university professor for about a decade, an educator, a trained physicist. When he got elected, we all used to kid him that he knew entirely too much to be a politician. We thought it would be a terrible burden. But I can tell you, from my point of view as someone who has worked for 8 years to improve the quality and the availability of opportunity in education, it has been a real joy to have someone like him with the depth of commitment to education that he has demonstrated these last 2 years. It's been wonderful.

Well, we're about to go back to school. And I've always thought of back to school time as sort of a new beginning. It certainly is for the students and the teachers: new students, new books, new school supplies, new faces in the classroom, a time when a lot of parents stop and think again about the role of education in their own children's lives and what they hope will be their children's future. I think it's a good time for our country to do the same. So today I'd like to talk a little bit about what we can do to prepare our schools and our children not just for the new school year but for the new economy of the 21st century.

We are very fortunate in America today to be living in the longest economic expansion in our history, to have 22 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years and the highest homeownership ever, a 25-year low in the crime rate, a 35-year low in the welfare rolls, with incomes going up and poverty going down. The great debate that I hope our country will have, not only in this election year but in the remaining weeks of this session of Congress, is what are we going to do with this good fortune?

You know, the parents here in the audience can empathize with this. One of the things you learn when you live long enough is that some-

times you make mistakes not because times are so tough but because they're good, and you kind of break your concentration, and you let moments pass by. And anybody that lives over 30 years can think of some time in his or her life when you made a mistake like that.

So this is a very important time for our country. What are we going to do with this good fortune, unprecedented in our whole history? I hope that we will use this time to dream about the future we want for our children and to literally make a list of what we have to do to achieve it. I hope we'll use this time to pay down our debt and get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835 to keep interest rates lower and keep the economy going. I think that's a good thing to do.

I hope we'll use this opportunity to create incentives for people to invest in the poor areas that still aren't participating in our recovery. Here in New Jersey, you might find it hard to believe, but there are several Indian reservations in America where the unemployment rate is still over 50 percent, even though the national rate is 4; and inner-city areas and small rural towns. So I hope we'll do that.

I hope we will take this opportunity when we have some money to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare, take it out beyond the baby boom generation so that when those of us who are baby boomers retire, we don't bankrupt our kids and their ability to raise our grandchildren, because they shouldn't be prejudiced by the fact that time has taken us into our later years. I hope we'll use this time to provide some needed health care advances, including prescription drug benefits for seniors on Medicare.

But there is nothing more important for us to do if we want to use this moment to build a future of our dreams for our kids than to make sure all of our children get a 21st century education. And that requires both investment and standards in accountability.

It requires us to invest more and demand more. It requires us to do what Vice President Gore and I have been trying to do for 8 years now. We have doubled our investment in education and training. We've expanded college opportunity by more than any time since the GI bill 50 years ago with the student loan program improvements and saved \$8 billion for our kids with the HOPE scholarship, which gives every family a \$1,500 tax credit on the cost of college

tuition—just about covers community college, makes it free in most States in the country. And we're now trying to get the Congress to allow taxpayers to deduct the cost of college tuition up to \$10,000 from their tax bill, which will be worth \$2,800 a year in lower taxes for families with kids in college.

With the help of the E-rate program, which the Vice President pioneered through Congress, we have worked with schools to connect 95 percent of our schools to the Internet. That's up from only 35 percent 5 years ago when we started. We're also working to help turn around failing schools with after-school and summer school programs and mentoring programs. I was in a school in New York the other day, an elementary school where 2 years ago 80 percent of the kids were reading below grade level and doing math below grade level. Today, 2 years later, 74 percent of the kids are at or above grade level in both reading and math. These schools can be turned around. The teachers can do the job. We've got to give them the support that they need to succeed, and we can do it.

We're working hard to put 100,000 more teachers in the early grades to have smaller classes because of all the research that shows how important that is. And I know that with all these kids coming into this school district, filling these trailers—now you've had to hire a lot of new teachers, and I understand that you've got some of your first-time teachers here, Mr. Superintendent, for their first day of orientation. So I'd like to ask all the new teachers, stand and be recognized. Where are the new teachers in this district? Raise your hands back there. Give them a hand. *[Applause]* Thank you very much.

I want to thank you for choosing a proud and challenging profession. When you made a decision to become a teacher, you knew you would never become wealthy—*[laughter]*—but you will be in the most important way of all because of what you're going to do for the children of this country and this community. And I thank you for that.

Now, that brings me down to what we're here about, what I think is a very important part of our long-term commitment to our children. All over America our faculties are better than our facilities—nice ring, don't you think? *[Laughter]* Why is that? Because we now have the largest student population in history, what's called the baby boom echo—53 million echoes

in our schools—shattering enrollment records for 5 years running. That's right, for the last 5 years, it's the first time since the baby boomers in school that we have a group of kids in our schools bigger than the baby boom generation.

Today I'm releasing a report from the Department of Education showing that New Jersey has its highest enrollment in 20 years. If you had a statewide rollcall, 1.3 million students would answer. That's a 20-percent increase in the last 10 years alone. I understand in this school district the increase has been more like 90 percent in the last 10 years.

Now, what's the problem? The problem is that you've got all these kids who are going into schools that were never built for this many kids. You have them in small towns—I was in a little town called Jupiter, Florida, a couple of years ago where there were 12 trailers out behind the school, a community much smaller than this one. You have the suburban areas that are swollen up. I was in a community in Queens the other day where the same thing was true, where there were 400 more children in a school than the school was built for.

So you've got the problem of the trailers, and then you've got the problem in our cities of so many old school buildings that either can't be or haven't been modernized, so that you've got whole floors in some of these schools that are shut down, even though the schools are filled to the gills, because the schools cannot afford the cost of modernizing these old buildings.

Philadelphia, the average school building is 65 years old; New Orleans, 68 years old. New York City, schools still being heated in the winter by coal-burning furnaces. So you have these two big problems. And I believe the Federal Government has a responsibility to help the States and the local school districts deal with it. And I believe that—this is the important thing, and you all have to think about this, whether you're Democrats, Republicans, or independents, because it is a new thing. This is virtually unprecedented except for a temporary amount of help the Government gave to school districts after World War II for the baby boom generation.

So the leaders of the majority party in the Congress in Washington say that we shouldn't do this because the Federal Government has never been in the business of school building.

In some States the States don't help school building; it's all local. I think we should do it for the following reasons—and I want you talk to your friends and neighbors about it, because you're living with it here.

Number one, education is the constitutional responsibility of the States and the operational responsibility of the localities, but it is a national priority, and it must be.

Number two, we've got some money now, and a lot of States and localities don't, and there's no better way to spend it than by investing in our children's future.

Number three, there are real practical problems with saying that this school district here should solve this whole problem. And you know what they are. Even though we've got the largest number of schoolchildren in our history, the actual percentage of property owners who have kids in the schools is slightly smaller than it has been at its largest time—first. A lot of you nodding your head, you know this. Secondly, there are a lot of States like New Jersey, New York, and many others which already rely very heavily on the property tax to finance their schools, and there's just a limit to how big it can be.

And I don't think we ought to let, in this sense, philosophy get in the way of practicality here. I'm not proposing to take over the schools. I'm not proposing to do anything except to have legislation that will give tax credits to communities to help them build or drastically modernize 6,000 schools, by lowering the property tax burden on you to do what you're going to do anyway. That's what I want to do.

And by the way, our bill would also provide grants and loans to repair another 5,000 schools a year, every year, for 5 years, to help with a lot of these problems with the old school buildings that need to be upgraded.

Now, I hope that you will talk to your friends and neighbors about this. Now, Congressman Holt is already a cosponsor of the legislation by Representative Rangel of New York and Nancy Johnson of Connecticut, a Democrat and a Republican. As I said, we have a bipartisan majority in the House for this, thanks in no small measure to the work of the teachers and the members of the Building and Construction Trades Union who are here today. And I thank them, the teachers and the building and construction people, for what they've done. I think

if we can get the bill up in the Senate, we'd have a bipartisan majority there.

But again, there is this debate: Should the Federal Government be involved in this? Now, the Congress is coming back. We've got almost all the major budget work still to be done. We'll be there a month, maybe 5 weeks, 6 weeks. We debated this for 2 years now. Nobody's in the dark about how it works. It's just a question of whether we can get over this philosophical objection that the Federal Government's never done this before.

And all I can tell you is, I was there looking at these wonderful children behind me, talking to me in their school, and these two young teachers, full of enthusiasm, thinking about all the good they're doing, and all the practical arguments for not putting them in a decent classroom just evaporated. There just are none. So, if people ask you why this is a big deal, first, you can cite what's going on in your school district. And then they say, but the Federal Government's not doing this anymore—is this setting a dangerous example? Remember, all we're proposing to do is spend some of the surplus to provide tax credits to lower the cost to local school districts and to States where they do this, of building these facilities, so that it eases the property tax burden and makes it easier to do that. And we're proposing to give direct loans and grants to repair another 5,000 schools a year for 5 years where there's a building that's not fully usable. And the need is enormous. It is national. And these children's education is a national priority.

Look, all over America today, the schools are working better: Reading scores are up; math scores are up. I was in a school in Kentucky the other day that 4 years ago was one of the worst schools in the State, where—listen to this; this is what they did in 3 years—over half the kids were on student lunches. Three years ago 12 percent of the kids were reading at or above grade level; today, almost 60 percent. Three years ago 5 percent of the kids were doing math at or above grade level; today, 70 percent. Three years ago not a single kid in that elementary school was doing science at or above grade level; today, nearly two-thirds. This is happening all over America. The schools are working better. We actually have learned a lot in the last 15 years about how to increase student performance—the teachers, the principals—it's breathtaking what's going on.

College enrollment's at an all-time high. But sooner or later, we're going to pay price after price after price, just like Malaika said, in describing this in very human terms, if we say our children are the most important things in the world to us, but we don't really care if they've got a decent place to go to school. We really want all these young people, like those enthusiastic young teachers that waved their hands back there, to go into teaching, but we don't care if they have a lousy place to go to work.

Now, sooner or later, we have to deal with this. This is not consistent. If we care about it, we need to put it beyond politics and put

our children first and get this done. So I'd like to ask you for your help. I need your help. Talk to your friends and neighbors who don't live here, who don't live in this congressional district. Tell them it is not a political issue; it's about the children.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:35 p.m. in the school parking lot. In his remarks, he referred to Crossroads Middle School principal Jim Warfel and graduate Malaika Carpenter, who introduced the President; and South Brunswick Schools superintendent Samuel B. Stewart.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Proposed Acquisition of Verio by Japanese NTT Communications

August 23, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Attached is a report on my decision to take no action to suspend or prohibit the proposed acquisition of Verio, Inc., a large U.S.-based Internet Service Provider (ISP), by NTT Communications Corporation (NTT Communications), a wholly owned subsidiary of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corporation, (NTT). NTT is a Japanese corporation that is owned and controlled by the Government of Japan (GOJ). I have taken this decision under the authority vested in me as President by section

721 of the Defense Production Act of 1950, also known as the "Exon-Florio" provision, 50 U.S.C. App. 2170. This report is submitted pursuant to subsection (g) of the Exon-Florio provision.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Rush D. Holt in Princeton, New Jersey

August 23, 2000

The President. Thank you. You know, if I had any sense of fairness at all, I'd tell them to turn this off. *[Laughter]* But I'm not going to. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Robert and Lisa Stockman for having us here at this truly beautiful, beautiful home and for getting us all together and for supporting Rush. I want to thank all of you for coming here tonight, the officials, the union

and teacher leaders, and other leaders, and just the citizens who believe in this good man.

I know you've been here a long time, and I won't keep you long, but I want to say two or three things. First of all, I really like Jon Corzine a lot. You know, when he was running in the primary and they kept carping about how much money he was spending, I thought, well, at least he's not spending all this money to give himself a tax cut. *[Laughter]*

The reason I really like him is that he thinks that these young people that served you tonight ought to have the same chance to send their children to college he has. That's what makes him a Democrat. And I think he will be a terrific United States Senator. He's got good ideas, and he's not afraid to tell you what he thinks, and he doesn't care if he disagrees with you, me, or anybody else. He's just out there telling you exactly what he thinks. And we need people like that in the United States Senate. I admire him.

Also, I want to tell you, I've got a lot of interest in these Senate races—one in particular, near here. *[Laughter]* I hope you'll help her, too.

I like Rush Holt. And I was in Princeton earlier this afternoon, and I was walking up and down the town, and I was shaking hands with people. And when I came out of the hotel after I went in and took about an hour to do a little rest and get some work done, I came out, and there was a couple hundred people out there. So I went over and shook hands with them, and we started talking about Rush Holt, and a couple people said, "I really want you to help him, and why are you here," and all that kind of stuff.

And I just started talking, and it occurred to me that I ought to say to you one of the things I said about him. I want to talk in a moment briefly about the big issues of the campaign, but I spent a lot of time thinking about the future, about what America will be like 10 or 20 years from now. If we had any success in the last 8 years, it was largely the credit of the American people. But the role we were able to play—we, the whole administration and our allies in Congress—I think it was in no small measure because before I asked the people to vote for me for President, I actually thought about why I wanted the job.

And that may seem—don't laugh, because a lot of people run without thinking about it. *[Laughter]* The White House is a nice place to live; Air Force One, you don't have all this airport congestion the rest of you are going through. *[Laughter]* But you're all laughing—Rush, that joke you told was really funny. *[Laughter]* But really, I think it ought to be told by somebody like me who is not running again. *[Laughter]* It was funny. *[Laughter]*

Anyway, so I actually—I thought about it. So I spent a lot of time thinking about the future.

And when we—my whole goal was, when I ran in 1992, was to have an America at the dawn of a new century where opportunity was genuinely alive for every responsible citizen, where we were more like a community coming together across all the lines that divide us, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, even party.

You know, if you think about it, as the world grows more and more interdependent, we have to find ways to work together. And we'll be more and more rewarded when we can find ways to work together where everybody wins, where we have honorable compromise, or we come up with heretofore unthought-of solutions that allow us to both live with our convictions and our interests and recognize the legitimacy of other people.

And if you look around this whole world today, a lot of the problems that exist out there are existing because people are still bedeviled by the oldest problem of human society, the fear of the other—people who are different from them—and the sense that we can only matter in life if somehow we've got somebody we can look down on, you know. "I may not be the smartest star on the planet, but at least I don't have a double-digit IQ like that guy." And how many times have you been guilty of that? I have. "Well, I did something I'm not particularly proud of, but at least I'm not like that guy," you know? *[Laughter]* Or, "at least I'm not a Republican," or, "I'm not a Democrat." *[Laughter]* How many times have you done that?

But the truth is, the world is growing more interdependent, so we have to find a way both to fight for what we believe in and not give up what we believe in and still find a way to respect the common humanity that makes all this worth doing.

So, against that background, what I tried to do when I came in was to get America to that point where we were once again leading the world for peace and freedom and prosperity and security, so that we could then take on the big challenges of this new era.

And the last two State of the Union Addresses I devoted to those big challenges, knowing that we could make some progress now. But for a lot of the greatest things that America could achieve, because we've turned the country around, it would have to be done by others after I was gone.

But if you think about it, I want us to stay on the far frontiers of science and technology, but I want us to protect our values. I want us to bridge the digital divide, but I want us to protect our values. I want everybody to have access to the Internet, but I think you ought to have to get permission before that means they have access to your medical or your financial records.

I want with all my heart for the human genome project to give every young mother a little card that had their child's genetic map so that—I predict to you within 20 years, newborns in America that don't die of accidents or violence will have a life expectancy of 90 years—maybe before then—because of the miraculous advances. And I want that. But I don't want anybody to be able to get ahold of your little gene card and use it to deny you a job or health insurance.

I want to maximize the development of all these scientific developments, but I know, in addition to all the good things that happen, the organized forces of destruction will take advantage of these same revolutions.

I was thinking the other day—I went to the show that they have in Chicago every year, the information technology people do, and they're showing all the new products. And the people from Motorola gave me a little hand-held computer that had a keyboard and a screen, and I could get the news, and I could send E-mail. My hands were too big to work the keyboard. And it was plastic, no metal in it, so it would go through an airport metal detector. Same thing may mean that terrorists will be able to have plastic bombs with chemical and biological weapons. I want someone who understands that.

What's the point of all this? What I was telling those people in Princeton today, in the town, is that Rush Holt is the only physicist in the Congress. *[Laughter]* And even Republicans who may not agree with every vote he cast ought to think long and hard before they replace him. Most people who get elected to the United States Congress are like me; they're lawyers. But we need somebody that really understands this stuff. You need someone who really understands all these big future issues, because I promise you, in spite of all the good things that have happened the last 8 years, the greatest benefits to America of the work we have done are still out there if we make the right choices,

both to seize the opportunities and deal with the challenges. And he has a unique contribution to make to you and to America. That's a big reason you ought to go out and fight for his reelection.

Let me make just one other point. I'm glad you came here, and I thank you for giving him your money. *[Laughter]* But it's not enough. Here's why. The great challenge in this election that will determine whether Jon Corzine is your Senator, whether Rush Holt is your Congressman, whether Al Gore and Joe Lieberman are elected, is really what the American people believe the election is about and whether they understand the differences on those subjects, between the choices they have.

So I say to all of you, every one of you has friends who aren't as into politics as you are, both here in this congressional district or in the State, or even beyond the borders of the State. Every one of you has friends who aren't diehard Democrats. Every one of you has friends who really haven't started thinking about this much yet, or have just kind of a vague notion of where all these candidates are. You work with them. You go out to dinner with them on the weekends. You worship with them. Maybe you play golf or you bowl with them, or you go to your kids' soccer games with them. Every one of you has friends like this. And I am telling you, the election will turn on what the people think it's about.

That's why Rush said this election is about the issues. Why did Vice President Gore do so well in his speech? Because he got up and he gave a version of a State of the Union Address. Yes, it was beautifully delivered, and yes, all the other things he said about his family, his values, and his role for the last 8 years, and all that was very well done. But the reason it worked is, he said, "If you vote for me, here's what I'm going to try to do for and with you."

Now, there are just a few things I want to say to you tonight to hammer this home. There are huge differences between our nominees for President, Vice President, our candidates for the Senate and the House, and our parties on a number of critical issues. And let me just mention three or four.

Safety—public safety: The crime rate is at a 25-year low; gun crime has dropped 35 percent since we passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. The leaders of the other party and most of their members opposed them

both. The previous administration vetoed the Brady bill. We lost a lot of Members of Congress in '94. We lost a dozen because they stood up and voted with me on these gun safety issues and because the gun owners, the sportsmen, the hunters, they hadn't had time to see that all these scare tactics were wrong.

Now, this is a huge issue. We also put 100,000 police on the street, which helps us to catch criminals but, more importantly, helps us to prevent crime in the first place. And now we're putting another 50,000 police on the street. Now, the leaders of the other party oppose that, too. The nominee of the other party said the other day he'd get rid of the 100,000 police program—and presumably means he certainly won't continue the 50,000 extra. *[Laughter]*

We want to close the gun show loophole where—and do background checks there. We want handguns to be sold with child trigger locks. We want to ban the import of these big ammunition clips that can then be put on guns here to get around our assault weapons ban. That's what we believe. That's what we believe. And we think more police in community policing situations will help lower the crime rate further.

I'm glad crime is at a 25-year low, but I doubt if there is a person in this room that thinks America is safe enough. And I won't be satisfied until this is the safest big country in the entire world. This is a huge difference. There are massive consequences to public safety. Their answer is, "punish people more"—which we've been doing pretty steadily for 25 years, but until we did what we did, the crime rate wasn't going down—"punish people more and have more people carrying concealed weapons, even in houses of worship." That's their position.

Now, this is different. This will have real consequences to you. And every person you know ought to know what the difference is. If they agree with them, they should vote for them. But they ought to know. And we shouldn't pretend now that both parties are talking about inclusion and reaching out to everybody—that's good. You know, the Democrats made fun of the Republicans at Philadelphia because they had to go gather up people off the street to look like we do normally—*[laughter]*—but I didn't do that. You may think I just did, but—*[laughter]*—look, I think that's progress. And I think we should thank them for it, that they no longer think that the way to get elected

is to demonize all of us—I think that's good—and to divide us. But there are still differences; so that's one.

Education: You heard Rush talking about a big part of our program. We want to hire 100,000 more teachers for smaller classes in the early grades. And we want to train teachers better. And we just announced a program to basically let teachers teach off a lot of their student loans if they go into fields where there's a shortage or areas where there's a shortage.

We want to help school districts like those in New Jersey with all of these house trailers, like the ones I saw today, get a discount so they can build 6,000 more schools and then repair 5,000 a year over and above that over the next 5 years. They don't think that's a national responsibility. They're not for that.

We believe that we ought to give more aid, but we're for higher standards. We say you ought to identify these failing schools and turn them around or shut them down and have a public school choice/charter school program. And we have lots of evidence. In Kentucky, where they've had this same system I'm trying to go national with—we did start requiring schools—States to identify failing schools 4 years ago. But Kentucky went all the way, and now—I was at a school the other day where over half the kids were on the school lunch program. It was a total failure 3½ years ago. Today, it's one of the 20 best grade schools in Kentucky. I've seen this all over the country.

I was in Harlem the other day in a school that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading and doing math below grade level. Today, 2 years later, 74 percent of the kids reading and doing math at or above grade level. You can turn this around.

Their view is, we're all wet about this, and we should just cut a check to the States and let them do whatever they want to with the money. This is a big difference here. This is not an idle difference, whether we have more money for teacher training, more money to get math and science teachers, whether we say, "Okay, we'll give you more money, but we want after-school programs, summer school programs, mentoring programs, every eligible kid in Head Start. Turn the failing schools around or shut them down."

This is not idle. This is a significant thing. If you believe, with the largest and most diverse school population we've ever had, that giving

all our kids a world-class education is a very big issue for America, we have different views of this, and that will have consequences to what kind of America you live in.

You already gave Rush his applause line on the Patients' Bill of Rights, but I'll just mention this again. The reason I feel so passionately about it is, I support managed care. Hardly anybody will say that anymore. But let me remind you what it was like in 1993. When I took office, for the previous 10 years medical costs had been going up at 3 times the rate of inflation. It was about to bankrupt the country. So to say we should manage our resources better—that's all managed care really means.

The problem is that we've gotten to the point where there's more managed and less care, because the companies have already picked what you might call the low-hanging fruit in the management system. That is, the easy decisions have been made. And so now, if you want to keep controlling costs, somebody comes up and they need to see a specialist, or you want them to go to only the approved emergency room or something, even if they've got to go past two or three other hospitals, which happens all the time in America, or they have to apply for a certain procedure that may or may not be covered, the people that work in the lower levels of the managed care companies know that they will never get in trouble for saying no.

If you're 30 years old and you've got a college degree and you're making a modest salary and you're a first-level reviewer, you know that nobody will ever fire you for saying no. Don't you? And you just hope that somewhere up the line, someday, somebody will say yes if that's the right decision. And so the practice of medicine has basically been subject to reverse plastic surgery here in a lot of these cases.

So that's why we're for this. This is not complicated. So if you vote for Jon and Rush and Al and Joe and Hillary, you get—you don't get people that want these managed care companies to go broke. You don't get people that say, "Throw all the money you want to. Don't oversee doctors and whether they're wasting your money." You don't get all that. What you get is people who say, "Any institution, if left without any limits, is capable of forgetting its fundamental mission. The fundamental mission is the health care of America. That's what this whole thing is about."

But it's a huge difference here. They think the ultimate nth decision should be left with the companies. We think it should be left with the physicians and the patients. And even when they change, they say, "Okay, we'll agree with you as long as the companies can't be held responsible for what they do." Well, that's not a Patients' Bill of Rights; that's a patients' bill of possibilities. *[Laughter]* This is a huge thing. This will affect the way millions of people live. We're not talking about something idle here. We're talking about millions of lives.

Last issue, the economy: It concerns me that basically—as Rush said, in '93 they all said my economic plan was going to wreck the country, and they wouldn't be held responsible for the results—absolutely not. And I hope the American people will take them at their word, as I said the other night. *[Laughter]* But now they say, "Oh, this whole thing happened by accident. You couldn't mess it up if you tried, and there are no consequences. Vote for me—vote for them. What difference does it make?" They say what really matters is, what are you going to do with the surplus, and they say, "The surplus is your money, and we're going to give it back to you." And that sounds good and doesn't take long to say. *[Laughter]* It's a good line. "It's your money, and I'm going to give it back to you."

Now, here's the problem with that. What do we say? What do they say? You heard Rush talking about it. We say, "Well, first of all, we've got to take care of Social Security and Medicare, because when all these baby boomers retire there's only going to be two people working for every one person drawing, and we don't want it to bankrupt our kids and their ability to raise our grandchildren. So before you just go plumb off the handle here, what are you going to do when the baby boomers retire? Make sure you're not going to have Social Security and Medicare in a fix so that their retirement doesn't burden their children and their grandchildren." And we say, "And by the way, if you do that, we'll also pay the debt off, which will keep interest rates low." And we say, "We ought to save some money to invest in education and health care and the environment and science and technology." We're for a tax cut, for marriage penalty relief. We're for changes in the estate tax. We're for things the Republicans say they want. We're for some changes there. We're for also helping people like the

folks that served us here tonight with college tuition tax deductions, child care increases, long-term care tax credit, savings for retirement.

But all of ours cost way less than half theirs because we've got to have some money to invest, because there might be emergencies we can't foresee, and oh, by the way, this is all a projected surplus. It has not come in yet. Their argument reminds me of those letters I used to get in the mail, back when I opened my own mail—[laughter]—those sweepstakes letters from the Publishers Clearing House. Ed McMahon writes you a letter saying, "You may have won \$10 million." [Laughter] You ever get one of those letters? [Laughter] Now, if you went out the next day and spent the \$10 million, you should support their economic program, because that's what it is. You should do that. [Laughter]

Ask Corzine; he knows more about the market than I do. I'm glad that the market has more than tripled. I'm glad that we've made more millionaires and more billionaires than ever in history, together, as a people. I'm glad of that. I hope it keeps on going, but this is projected income.

You think about how much money you think you're going to get over the next 10 years. Would you give it all away today, saving nothing for education, for health care needs, for family emergencies? What happens if you don't get the raise you anticipate or if your stocks don't get the return you think? You wouldn't do that.

That's their position. Spend it all now. It's your money. Take it back. [Laughter] Now, our plan costs less than half theirs and will keep—the Council of Economic Advisers says it will keep interest rates at least a point lower for a decade. Do you know what that's worth? Two hundred and fifty billion dollars in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, \$15 billion in college loan payments. In other words, it's worth another \$300 billion in tax cuts to keep interest rates low.

Now, you've got to explain this to people who haven't been thinking about it. We cannot give the entire projected surplus away in a tax cut. It's not there yet. It may not all be there. You can't know what the emergencies are, and it's wrong not to invest in education. It's wrong not to invest in health care and the environment, and it is certainly wrong not to prepare for the retirement of the baby boomers and

keep getting this country out of debt. And people have to understand that.

We've all had a good time tonight. But if you don't remember anything else I've said, remember this: Every day, you find one or two people, every day between now and November, if you have to call them on the phone halfway across the country, you find one or two people, and you ask them to support Rush and Jon and Al and Joe. And you tell them, look—

Audience member. And Hillary. [Laughter]

The President. —and Hillary if they live in New York. If they live in New York, you tell them that, too. [Laughter] And you tell them—and they say why—say, "Here's the difference in economic policy. Here's the difference in health care policy. Here's the difference in education policy. Here's the difference in crime policy." If we had another 30 minutes, I could go through 10 other things. But those things matter.

People have to understand. This will affect your life. This will affect your children. This will affect whether we make the most of a magic moment in our country's history. It will even affect whether we have the resources to continue to lead the world to a more peaceful place. I plead with you.

I'm coming back to where you are. This is the first time in 26 years I haven't been running for anything. [Laughter] I'm going to be a citizen activist. But I know one thing. We may not have another chance in our lifetimes to build the future of our dreams for our children. And if we make the right decisions, that's exactly what we're going to do. You've got to be committed personally to leaving here and making sure that every one you know understands exactly what the choices are. If you do, they will make the right decision, and it will be great for them and, even more important, great for America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:10 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Robert and Lisa Stockman; Jon S. Corzine, candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Representative Holt was a candidate for reelection in New Jersey's 12th Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Mayor Susan Bass
Levin in Cherry Hill, New Jersey
August 23, 2000

Thank you. Well, first, this place has wonderful memories for me. I remember when I came here in 1992, it was, I think, the Sunday evening before the election. The race was close in New Jersey and close in the country. And we had this great rally here. And then on election night, the people of New Jersey voted for Bill Clinton and Al Gore, and I'll never forget it.

Then in 1996 New Jersey went from giving us a 2-point margin of victory to giving us a 16-point margin of victory, one of the largest in the entire United States, and I will never forget that. So the first thing I'd like to say is, thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, New Jersey.

Now, the second thing I would like to say is, I thought Alexis Ettinger was gangbusters. Wasn't she wonderful? *[Applause]* To inspire the young is one of the most important responsibilities of any public leader. And if Susan can inspire Alexis, that's about as good a recommendation for her representation to Congress as anything I can think of, and I really think that's wonderful.

I want to thank Jon Corzine for being here. I know he's been out stirring up the crowd before I got here. But I like him. I admire him. I hope that he gets to be a partner with the new Senator from New York across the river. *[Laughter]* We were just up in Princeton together with Congressman Rush Holt, another good friend of mine, and I told somebody I love reading the press about Jon. You know, people were wailing away about the fact that he invested so much money in the primary. And I said, "I don't know what they're complaining about. He's the only rich guy that I knew who was spending that kind of money to avoid giving himself a big tax cut so he could give the rest of you a better tax cut, a better education, a better economy, and a better future." I hope you will support him and get him to the Senate. We need him.

And let me say, when Susan and I were walking down the steps tonight, I said—I looked at her, and I said, "I am so glad that you gave me a chance to do this for you tonight, because for more than 8 years now, you have been there

for me, every single day, in the good times and the bad, in every single way." I am so grateful to her.

And that's another mark of a good leader. If you live long enough and you stay in public life long enough and you take on enough issues and you make enough adversaries, you will have your bad days as well as your good ones. The mayor of Cherry Hill was always there for me and for our administration, for what we were trying to do for America, and I will never forget it.

So that brings me to why I am here tonight. Now, if you will let me use a colloquialism from my part of the country, I always wonder whether I can do any good at events like this because I know that in a way I'm preaching to the saved. I mean, if you weren't for her, you wouldn't be here. Either that, or you've got a lot of extra money on your hands. *[Laughter]*

But I want you to listen to me just for a few minutes tonight, because what I want to tell you is, number one, I believe she can win, and number two, I know she should win, and number three, the only way she can win is if you do more than give her money.

Every one of you—every one of you—has friends who live in this district who will vote on election day, people who think of themselves as good, upstanding citizens and wouldn't dream of not voting. But they don't spend nearly as much time as you do going to events like this. They may not know her as well as you do. They may not be living within 50 miles of here.

Every one of you has people that you work with, you go out to dinner with on the weekends, maybe you worship with, maybe you play golf with or go bowling with or your kids play soccer with, or some other way you come in contact with people. They will vote, but they don't know as much about this as you do. They don't know her as well as you do. They don't have as clear an understanding of what the differences between our parties, our candidates for President and Vice President, Jon Corzine and his opponent, as you do. And I am telling you—you know, I've been doing this a long time. *[Laughter]*

The first time I passed out cards at a polling place was in 1954 when my uncle ran for State representative. I was 8 years old. He served one term. His wife made him quit because she thought politics was too tough—ha! [Laughter] What did she know?

Every election is different. This election will turn, in my opinion, on what the American people, what the people of New Jersey, and what the people of this congressional district think it's about. I was so proud of Vice President Gore and his speech last Thursday because he gave sort of a mini State of the Union speech. He said, "Okay, here's who I am. Here's what I believe, but let's get to the meat of the coconut here. If the President is somebody who works for the American people, if you vote for me, here's what I'll do."

Now, you've got to be able to tell people why they ought to vote for them. You have to be able to put the election for Congress and the New Jersey Senate election in the context of what's going on in this country today. You clapped for all of Susan's issues, but I want to try to give some clarity to the ones she mentioned and then talk about ones she didn't, the one that may affect you most of all, that I'm afraid is least understood.

Look, if we started 8 years ago—I had this idea that if we could create an economic policy, a social policy, an environmental policy, and a foreign policy that would reward opportunity for responsibility, would create an American community that stopped dividing us by race, by religion, by gender, by sexual orientation, by whatever, and pulled us together—even by party, Lord knows I've tried to work with our friends in the Republican Party under somewhat adverse circumstances—that we could really go into the 21st century with America as the leading force for prosperity and peace, for human rights and freedom all around the world. And we are today. And I'm grateful.

But what I want you to understand is, all the best things are still out there. The good things that have happened in this country in the last 8 years are nothing compared to what all of us together could achieve in the next 8 or 10 years if, but only if, we make the right choices about our future.

Everybody in this room, at least who is over 30 years old—you can see a lot of nodding heads—everybody in this room over 30 years old can remember at least one time in your

life when you made an error, a mistake, not because things were going so badly but because things were going so well you did not believe you had to concentrate, think, or dream. You could just sort of wander through the day.

Now, our country has never been in a position like this before. And it may not be like this again in our lifetime, where we have so much prosperity and social progress, the absence of crisis at home and threat abroad, a projected surplus—we can build the future of our dreams for our children. So I will say again, how this race for Congress, how this race for Senate, how the Presidential race comes out, how Hillary does over in New York, it all depends on what people believe the election is about.

Are we going to build the future of our dreams for our children? If so, what do we have to do to give them all a world-class education? What do we have to do to deal with the aging of America, to preserve Social Security and Medicare in a way that when the baby boomers retire and there's only two people working for every one person on Social Security, people like me don't bankrupt our kids and their ability to raise our grandkids? How are we going to deal with the challenge of global warming and still grow the economy? How are we going to take advantage of these marvelous changes in medical science, the human genome project, and all the other biomedical revolutions that may allow people who are living with severed spines to stand up and walk, that may allow people who have Parkinson's disease to get over it, that may allow people who are certainly going to have Alzheimer's not to get it, that I believe will allow young mothers, girls in this audience today, by the time they have their babies, will go home from the hospital with a little gene card that will tell them how to maximize their children's health and minimize the problems, and within 20 years young women will be giving birth to babies with a life expectancy of 90 years, you can book it. It will happen.

Now, so how are we going to do all that and still make sure when you carry your gene card around, nobody can deny you a job or health insurance because of something that's on that card? How are we going to bridge the digital divide and hook up all of our schools and make sure everybody has got access to computers but nobody has access to your health and financial records on those computers unless you say yes?

These are big challenges. And there are clear differences. And Susan mentioned some, but I'll be more explicit. Let's just go back through the ones she mentioned. Education: Test scores are going up; the college-going rate is at an all-time high; the African-American high school graduation equals that of the white majority for the first time in history in the last few years. The schools are turning around. We had a very specific strategy to work with the schools: invest more money but demand more results; identify failing schools, have more preschool, summer school, after-school, mentoring programs, smaller classes in the early grades; hook all the schools, including the poor ones, up to the Internet.

Their strategy is, get rid of that stuff and just write a check to the State and hope they spend it right. Now, there's a very great difference. And don't give it all to the State; have some of it off in vouchers. So you have to decide whether you agree with our strategy or their strategy. It's not just this woman you like; it will affect people's lives how she votes. And you don't have to say anything bad about her opponent or anybody else. But you've got to know there's a consequence.

Health care, the Patients' Bill of Rights: Their leadership still won't let us bring it up because the HMO's either don't want us to cover everybody, or if we guarantee a Patients' Bill of Rights and somebody gets hurt, they don't want them to be able to sue and get any help if they get hurt. That's like a patients' bill of suggestion; it's not rights. *[Laughter]*

And look, I support managed care because we can't—I didn't want to have an explosion and inflation in health care costs, but "care" is even more important than "managed" in that phrase. And you can't take these medical decisions away from the doctors and the people.

In prescription drugs, I support, and Susan said she supported, Jon supports a Medicare prescription drug program that would allow all the seniors in this country who need it access to affordable prescription drugs through the Medicare program. They support a program that wouldn't cover half the seniors in the country who need it.

Now, I support the pharmaceutical excellence of America. I'm proud that we've got all these great drug companies in our country, a lot of them headquartered right here in New Jersey. And what they're worried about is, if Medicare

can buy all these drugs for the seniors, that maybe they'll buy them at such a low price that they'll be put in a tight—there's got to be a way to resolve that. The answer is not what the Republicans want to do, which is to make sure half of the seniors can't get the drugs they need. That is not the answer. There's got to be a good answer to that.

So, she says, he says, we say, Al and Joe say, "Take care of the seniors and the drug companies." Now, this is a big choice for you to make. This is not just another walk in the park here. We're talking about millions of people.

Crime—what's our position? Our position has been 100,000 police on the street, prevent as much crime as you can; the assault weapons ban, the Brady bill. And our position now is, close the gun show loophole on the Brady bill, mandatory child trigger locks, don't let them import all these big ammunition clips that you can then hook on to a rifle here and make it into an assault weapon. That's our position.

Now, what's their position? Their position is, "We were wrong when we passed the Brady bill. We were wrong when we passed the 100,000 police. We're wrong now in putting 50,000 more police on the street, and we're wrong trying to do all this." Their nominee said just a couple of days ago that if he were elected, he would get rid of the 100,000 police program, that that was not a national responsibility.

All I know is, crime is at a 25-year low. Gun crime's down 35 percent. We tried it their way. We tried it our way. Our way works. Now, they say what we should do is have even more vigorous prosecution, even though we increased prosecution. We've got a record number of people in jail. But when they tried it their way, it didn't work as well.

And what's their weapons position? Their weapons position is, more people should carry concealed weapons, even into houses of worship. That's their leadership position.

Now, they believe that. I'm not saying anything bad about them. That's what they believe. But it's not like we haven't had a test here. We tried it their way. We tried it our way. Our way works better. And America is not as safe as it needs to be. This will have significance. I'm telling you, every vote in Congress, every vote in the Senate matters. We're talking about the way the children in this room are going to have to live.

Now, so what have we done? We've got education, health care, and crime. Then, she said—and you clapped—she said, “I'm for preserving a woman's right to choose.” What she didn't say is—what she didn't say is, every year there is a wholesale assault on it in one way or the other through little riders in congressional legislation. So if you're in the House of Representatives, you actually have a chance to protect it.

And I don't know whether Jon said this or not, but the next President is going to appoint two to four members of the Supreme Court. And the United States Senate has to confirm those members.

And they have told us—and, again, I accept that this is their sincere conviction. This is not a personal criticism. Honorable people can have honest differences. But we can't claim we don't know that there is no consequence here. Their nominee is against *Roe v. Wade*. And you have to assume, being an honorable person, that he will act on his convictions. And you have to assume that their Members of the Senate are more likely than ours to vote to ratify those judges, because that's what is going to happen. So if this is important to you, either way—if it matters to you either way, you need to know that you can affect the outcome by the choice you make for Congress and for the Senate.

Now, this is the last point I want to make. And I want to say a little something about the economy, because I think maybe the differences in economic policy between the Republicans and Democrats today are the least understood. And yet, they'll have a huge impact on you.

Now, you all know that we have a large projected surplus. That's what we think we're going to get in over the next 10 years. They have a very compelling position. Their position is, “Hey, we had a deficit for years. Now we've got a surplus. It's your money, and we're going to give it all back to you in a tax cut.” It takes about 5 seconds to say, and it sounds so good. [Laughter] “It's your money, and I'm going to give it back to you in a tax cut, all of it. Why should the Government keep your money?”

Our position is, number one, you should get a tax cut, but it ought to be something less than half of theirs in total. Yes, there ought to be some marriage penalty and estate tax relief in there, but we ought to really focus on helping families who need it pay for college education, long-term care, child care, and retirement, to help people who need it, do that.

And by the way, we have to save some money for education and the environment and health care and science and technology. And there might be an emergency, and we've got to save some money for that. And oh, by the way, this is projected income. That means it's not in the bank yet. And if you cut the taxes now for all the projected income and the money doesn't come in, you've still got the tax cut.

I told somebody their position reminds me of those letters I used to get back when I was a private citizen from that—that sort of Publishers Clearing House sweepstakes letters from Ed McMahon. You've seen them. “You may have won \$10 million.” [Laughter] You may have. [Laughter] And when you got those letters, if you went out the next day and you spent the \$10 million, you should seriously consider supporting them in this election. [Laughter] But if you didn't do that, you better vote for Susan and Jon and Al and Joe and Hillary, if you live in New York. [Laughter] Jon Corzine made a lot of money in investments, ask him. Nobody would do this.

Let me tell you something else, this is before they spend their own money. Their Social Security privatization program, it's about a trillion bucks over 10 years, and the other things they want to spend money on, before they have to deal with emergencies. I'm telling you, folks, we don't want to go back to deficits.

Now, let me tell you one other thing. We have a study from the Council of Economic Advisers that says that if their plan were enacted, as opposed to the one the Vice President and Jon and Susan have endorsed, interest rates would go up by one percent a year for a decade. Now, if we keep interest rates one percent lower a year for a decade, would you like to know what that's worth to you? Two hundred and fifty billion bucks in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, and \$15 billion in college loan payments. In other words, one percent lower interest rates is a \$300 billion tax cut to ordinary Americans who desperately need it, and you get the benefit of getting the country out of debt, investing in our future, saving Social Security and Medicare.

Listen, it may take me longer to explain our economic program, but I'm sure now that I've done it, you can get the gist here. You've got to be able to do that.

Now, I'm going to close where I've started. It is not good enough for you to come here

for somebody you know and believe in and contribute and go home and forget about this. You've got to be like Alexis. You've got to be a volunteer, even if you don't go in the headquarters. Every day between now and November you need to go up to somebody you know who is not here tonight and say, "Listen, here is why I am for Susan Bass Levin. Here's why I'm for Jon Corzine. Here are the differences on economic policy, education policy, health care policy, human rights policy, crime policy"—boom, boom, boom, boom—"here's how it's going to affect your life, your future, our children's future."

And you've got to be able to answer those questions, and you have to feel comfortable. And you can remember the Ed McMahon story. I'm telling you, this is a big deal. I worked real hard to get our country out of debt and get this economy going. And I'm telling you, when I hear people say there is no real difference in economic policy, you know, I want to just sort of jump in the ocean. I mean, come on, here.

We've got poverty going down. All income groups have their income going up. All the things are going in the right direction. We cannot change our economic direction. We need to do more to bring in people who still aren't participating in this economic recovery, but we don't need to throw away the policy that brought us to this dance we're at, that we're enjoying so much. It would be a terrible mistake.

So think about this. When you go out of here, if you don't remember anything else, you remember, you've got to be able to say, "I am for Susan Bass Levin because she's my friend, because she's been a good mayor, but because she's right for me and you and our kids and our future on education and health care and choice and the environment and the economy and crime and our future." Look, I can hardly remember an election where the choices were any clearer. The rhetoric is not clear anymore because they understand now that people don't like all that hateful stuff anymore, so they chucked it. And they're talking about inclusion. And you're laughing, and we have all made fun of them about it, but actually it's a good thing. It's a good thing.

The words people use matter. And we should say, "Thank you very much for not being so hateful anymore and demonizing your opponents

and doing all"—we should say—it matters. We should say that. But I'm just telling you, the substantive differences are still there.

Now, I know this woman. I admire her. She will be a great, great Member of Congress. But when it's all said and done, it's not those of us who hold office that matters; it's those of you who hire us to serve and whether we do what you hired us to do.

I want to close with a little story. I'm surprised I'm going to say this, but I want to tell you something. I got off the plane today in New Jersey to do these events, and the first person I saw was a young businessman from San Francisco. I didn't know he was going to be in the line. I was amazed to see him. I hadn't seen him in 4 years, maybe more. His name is Steve Sposato. He was there with his beautiful daughter, Megan, and her very young little sister and his wife.

The first time I met Steve Sposato, he was a grieving young widower with an infant child whose wife was cut down by a crazed person with an assault weapon in an office building in San Francisco. You may remember that awful incident when it happened. He was a Republican, always had been. He was just a businessman. And he thought—he couldn't understand why the political system in Washington didn't want to stop people like this crazy guy from getting ahold of assault weapons and going into office buildings and shooting people like his wife.

He wasn't all that political. He just wanted to make sure there wouldn't be any other little girls like his gorgeous little daughter. And I met him. And he came and stood in the Rose Garden at the White House and talked about this in very moving terms. And he said, "You know, I'm not a politician. I'm not a speaker. I just don't want any more kids to be without their parents." And he stood and went through that rough fight with me in 1994. And thankfully, he met another lady, and they had another baby, and I saw beautiful little Megan today and her new little sister and her stepmom and Steve's mother who lives on Long Island. They all came out to see me. It changed his politics forever.

Why? Because in the most awful, agonizing way, he had to come to terms with the fact that what we do as citizens, whether we like it or not, affects how we live as people. And

that brave, good, fine young man is standing here.

Now, I hope to goodness not a single living soul in this audience has ever gone through anything like this. But I promise you, in some way or another, for every single one of you, what you do as citizens affects how you live as people. I tell people all the time, politics is not the most important thing in life, not even in my life. Being President is the second most important job I ever had next to being a father. When they get ready to lay you down, you don't think about all the time you should have spent at the office; you think about who liked you, who loved you, how the flowers smelled in the springtime, what it was like to be a child. But politics is supposed to create the conditions and give people the tools to shape their dreams, not tear their hearts out.

When it's all said and done, that's what it's about. In my lifetime we have never had this chance before like we have it now. I'm not running for anything, for the first time in 26 years. I tell you this as a citizen: Make sure Susan wins; make sure Jon wins; make sure Joe and Al win. Give this country its best chance.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 p.m. in the paddock area of the racetrack at Garden State Park. In his remarks, he referred to Cherry Hill High School East senior Alexis Ettinger, who introduced the President; Jon S. Corzine, candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Mayor Susan Bass Levin of Cherry Hill was a candidate for New Jersey's Third Congressional District.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President-Elect Vicente Fox of Mexico and an Exchange With Reporters

August 24, 2000

President Clinton. Let me just say very briefly what a great honor it is for me, personally, and for the United States, to have the President-elect of Mexico here. I have looked forward to this very much, for the chance to congratulate him on his election, and all the people of Mexico on a truly historic affirmation of genuine democracy in their country. I'm glad he's here, and I'm looking forward to getting to know him, hearing his ideas, and doing what I can to help him get off to a strong start in our partnership.

President-elect Fox. Well, the same here. I'm very glad to be here, sharing a few minutes with President Clinton, the opportunity to know each other, the opportunity to tell him about this great day, July the 2d in Mexico, and the opportunity to get to know experiences that you have lived in this 8 years in this excellent and growing relationship between Mexico and the United States, and also to thank you for all the support you gave to Mexico in difficult times.

When we were in crisis, we also got and saw the hand of a friend. And so that's something that we recognize in Mexico and I personally

recognize and thank you for in the name of all Mexicans.

Mexican Democracy

Q. Is Mexico considered a democracy example to *America Latina*?

President Clinton. Considered an example?

Q. Yes, to *America Latina*?

President Clinton. I think that what happened in Mexico is very impressive. I mean, we had a genuine, competitive, democratic election. And I think it's an example to people who are friends of freedom everywhere in the world.

Immigration Policy

Q. President Clinton, excuse me—President-elect Fox has brought up a whole bunch of new ideas on the relationship between Mexico and the United States, including plans concerning the border immigration. Are you going to discuss these in full length?

President Clinton. Well, I certainly hope so. I want to hear them. Obviously, we have borders, and we have laws that apply to them, and we have to apply them, and so do the

Mexicans. But I think over the long run, our countries will become more interdependent.

If you just look at what's happened in the relationship between the United States and Mexico since NAFTA, President-elect Fox had mentioned—made a reference to the assistance the United States gave to Mexico when they had a serious financial crisis. But I always like to remind the American people that our Mexican neighbors paid their loan back ahead of time and in the best possible way. They were good neighbors. We did the right thing. And everything that has happened there has validated the commitment of every genuine friend of an equal partnership in our country.

I think over time, you will see growing interdependence in our hemisphere. And I think the Canadians will be a part of that, and I very much hope our friends in Central America and South America and the Caribbean will be part of that. It will be the way of the world. And we will all have to deal with the enemies of organized society and the nation-state together, as well as taking advantage of all these opportunities. I regret that I won't be around for a lot of it. But I think it's a good thing.

Q. [Inaudible]—an idea to increase the number of legal visas for Mexico, up to a quarter of a million visas, in exchange for more cooperation and enforcement on the Mexican side to

stop illegal immigration from coming to the U.S. How do you see that? Is that doable?

President Clinton. Well, I want to talk to him about it. I think if you look at the United States, I believe we have the most generous immigration policy in the world. And as you know, I've been a very strong supporter of that. We were just talking on the way out about the various kinds of people that are in our administration and where they're from, and America has been made a better country because of that. But I want to talk about the details. Look, we just met. We have to go talk.

Do you want to say anything to him?

Q. Did you talk about border issues with Vice President Gore, and what did he say, Vice President Gore?

President-elect Fox. I will have a press conference later for that meeting.

[At this point, a question was asked and answered in Spanish, and no translation was provided.]

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:34 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Action To Support Firefighters Combating Wildfires August 25, 2000

The wildfire season this year is one of the worst our Nation has ever witnessed. We have marshaled our Federal resources so that the men and women fighting these blazes will have the tools they need to safely and effectively combat the spread of wildfires throughout the United States. Our Federal firefighters and management personnel are working under extremely dangerous conditions to protect the public and our lands from the threat of these wildfires.

Today I am announcing that the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, in conjunction with the Office of Personnel Management, will take immediate steps to make available as many as 2,000 Federal personnel for vital management and supervisory positions to support our fire-

fighting efforts. Additional managers and supervisors are needed to ensure additional firefighting crews have the proper supervision and management support that they need in the field. This action will immediately authorize individuals working long, stressful hours to be compensated appropriately. Our Nation owes a great debt of gratitude to these firefighters, managers, and their loved ones who sacrifice their energy and risk their lives in service to their country. It is our responsibility, in turn, to do all we can to protect and support them.

The President's Radio Address

August 26, 2000

Good morning. For millions of American children, this is the last glorious weekend of summer vacation. Ready or not, they're picking out new clothes and packing their school supplies for a promising new school year.

When that first bell rings on Monday, it signals not just the start of a new semester but also the highest enrollment in our Nation's history. This fall a record 53 million students will fill our classrooms. Unfortunately, thousands of school districts are struggling to find enough teachers to fill them.

Today I want to talk about this critical teacher shortage and the steps we're taking to address it. For nearly 8 years now, Vice President Gore and I have pushed to invest more in our schools and demand more from them. We've dramatically increased Federal investment in after-school and summer school. We've raised standards, strengthened accountability, and worked to turn around failing schools. Today, math, reading, and SAT scores all are up, and more students than ever are going on to college.

Because America needs good new teachers more than ever before, we've set out to hire 100,000 of the highest quality, and we're pushing hard toward that goal. Since 1998, we've helped local schools hire a third of that total, and this year we've asked Congress for funding to reach 50,000.

We've also provided housing discounts for teachers moving to distressed communities and the forgiveness of student loans for those who commit to stay. All across our Nation, school districts are looking for a new generation of dedicated teachers. In Cleveland, for example, administrators hired more than 200 teachers over the summer, but they're still looking for another 400. And Cleveland is not alone.

With a strong economy and such a tight labor market, it's hard to find so many qualified professionals, and the challenge is growing. Over the next decade, America will need to hire 2.2 million new teachers both to handle rising enrollment and to replace those teachers set to retire.

By working together as communities and a nation, we can meet the growing need for more teachers in our classrooms. Today I'm announc-

ing the first-ever national online teacher recruitment clearinghouse. By logging on to www.recruitingteachers.org, school districts can find qualified teachers, and teachers can find out where the jobs are.

I'm also directing Secretary Riley to notify every school district about this new tool and to provide them with information about how to make the most of it. This will transform what has been a hit-or-miss process into a more efficient, effective exchange of information. And over time, this site will help us to alleviate the national teacher shortage and to bring down class size.

Studies show what parents already know: Students perform better in smaller classes with more individual attention and greater discipline. In a few short weeks, Congress will return to Washington hot from the campaign trail, but America's families know this isn't just an election year; it's also a school year.

They want Congress to put progress before partisanship and to pass an education budget that reflects our national priorities. I urge Congress to pass my package of proposals to continue cutting class size and boosting teacher quality. These initiatives would provide \$2.75 billion to recruit, train, and hire teachers, to reduce the class size and to invest in teacher quality so we can make real progress toward our goal of having a qualified teacher in every classroom.

I also urge Congress to take prompt action on our proposal to help local school districts tackle the enormous challenge of modernizing old schools and building new ones. The average American public school was built 42 years ago, and decades of use have taken their toll. It is high time we get our children out of trailers and into 21st century classrooms.

At the start of this new school year, parents and teachers everywhere are telling students to do their best. In turn, their families have a right to expect that we, here, will do ours. So let's not make them wait another year for the resources they need.

With more teachers, smaller classes, modern schools, and faith in their future, our children

will do more than reach for their dreams; they'll achieve them.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:59 p.m. on August 25 in the Cabinet Room at the White

House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 26. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 25 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks Following Discussions With President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and an Exchange With Reporters in Abuja, Nigeria *August 26, 2000*

President Obasanjo. Mr. President, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, members of the press, let me say how pleased I am for this opportunity to welcome President Bill Clinton to Nigeria. I am confident that by now President Clinton must have felt from the personal meeting to the enthusiastic crowds that greeted him the extent of our delight to have him among us.

President Clinton and I have had very friendly and fruitful discussions covering all the items and subjects that make up the content of our joint declaration which we have just signed and exchanged, and even more. I just want to emphasize that for all the shared strategic interests between Nigeria and the United States of America, President Clinton and myself share a common view that is based on human welfare, human development, and human well-being in both our countries, our continents, and throughout the world.

Of course, whatever strategic interests, economic, political, or of a social nature, the essence is based on the fundamentals of humanity. Also deriving from this is the issue of Nigeria's role of peacemaking and peacekeeping in our sub-region, our region of Africa, and under the auspices of the U.N., the whole world. Needless to say that this goes for the United States, by virtue of her status as the number one world power today.

President Clinton has only just begun his visit, designed so far that it will be a memorable one, and we wish you a very pleasant day in Nigeria. We welcome you once again.

President Clinton. President Obasanjo, members of the Nigerian Government, members of the press, I think I can say on behalf of the Members of the United States Congress who

are here and the members of the American delegation, we are delighted to be in Nigeria.

Two years ago I came to Africa to begin building a new partnership between this continent and the United States, one in which Americans look upon Africa not simply as a continent with problems but also as a continent which presents the world's next great opportunity to advance the cause of peace, justice, and prosperity.

When I came here 2 years ago, one of the biggest obstacles to a new relationship with the entire continent was the fact that the democratic hopes of Nigeria's people were being smothered by military misrule and corruption, with your finest leaders being killed, banished, or in the case of President Obasanjo, forced to languish in prison.

My greatest hope then was that some day I could come to Africa again, to visit a Nigeria worthy of its people's dreams. Thanks to President Obasanjo and the people of Nigeria, I have the high honor today to visit the new Nigeria and to pledge America's support for the most important democratic transition in Africa since the fall of apartheid.

All of us in the American delegation know that after so many years of despair and plunder, your journey has not been easy. But we are also committed to working with the people of Nigeria to help build stronger institutions, improve education, fight disease, crime, and corruption, ease the burden of debt, and promote trade and investment in a way that brings more of the benefits of prosperity to people who have embraced democracy.

We are rebuilding ties severed during the years of dictatorship. I am very happy that last week the first direct flight since 1993 left

Murtala Mohammed Airport for the United States. Today we have signed our first open skies agreement.

With patience and perseverance, Nigeria can answer the challenge your President issued in his inauguration 2 years ago—a speech I got up very early in the morning in the United States to watch. I remember that he said, “Let us rise as one to face the tasks ahead and turn this daunting scene into a new dawn.”

With one-fifth of Africa’s people, and vast human and natural resources, a revitalized Nigeria can be the economic and political anchor of West Africa and the leader of the continent. We need your continued leadership in the struggle for peace. I am pleased we have begun this week to help to train and equip the first of five Nigerian battalions preparing for service in Sierra Leone. We also need your continued leadership in the struggle against poverty and infectious disease, especially AIDS. I thank President Obasanjo for his offer to host an AIDS summit in Nigeria next year.

Finally, we need Nigeria to keep leading by example as a successful democracy and a nation that has managed, despite many years of repression and strife, to prove that for democracies, our diversity can be our greatest strength.

These are just some of the issues we discussed today. Later, I will have the honor of speaking to the Nigerian Parliament, and I will speak in greater detail about the challenges ahead and the promise of our growing partnership. But let me just say, I begin this visit with enormous admiration for the progress you have made and the highest hope for the progress you will make in the future and the depth that our partnership will assume.

Thank you again, Mr. President, for making us all feel so welcome.

President Obasanjo. We will now take questions from the members of the media. I think we should go to our guests first.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, you’re going to meet with President Mubarak of Egypt. Can you give us an idea of what you’re going to discuss with him and whether this portends another Mideast peace summit?

And President Obasanjo, I’d also like to have your perspective on these efforts to reach peace in the Middle East.

President Clinton. Well, let me say, first of all, I think it’s inconceivable that we could have a peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians without the support of President Mubarak.

As you know, when I leave here, I’m going to Tanzania to support President Mandela and the peace process that he has been working on in Burundi, and then we have to make a refueling stop on our way home. I had hoped to see President Mubarak at the United Nations summit, which will be at the end of the first week of September, but he can’t come to that. And so we were having one of our regular telephone conversations the other day and decided that since he would not be in New York, that I ought to refuel in Cairo and we ought to reconnoiter on the peace process.

I don’t think you should read too much into it, other than that we are working with a sense of urgency, given the timetable the parties have set for themselves. And we don’t underestimate the continuing difficulties, but I’m pleased they’re still working, and working under enormous pressures.

President Obasanjo. I must take this opportunity to commend the efforts of President Clinton in the Middle East. I believe that the fact that the door is not completely closed and the fact that areas where, in fact, a few years back one would infer that there would be no advancement at all, whether Jerusalem could be negotiated on, is now an issue that can be put on the table to be negotiated—I believe that should give all of us some hope.

And as President Clinton just said, all the people that should be involved must be engaged, to be involved. And we should never be tired until we achieve success. And I believe success will be achieved. I have no doubt.

Third World Debt Relief

Q. President Clinton’s attitude to Africa and the poorer nations of the world is very well known. He is sympathetic to those nations. But America does not make up the West, only America does not. Now, at a—[inaudible]—in Ghana in April, a position was adopted on the issue of the strangulating debt burden in the poorer countries of the world. Now, President Obasanjo, as the chairman of the—[inaudible]—was given the mandate to present that position to the G-8 at the July Okinawa summit. Both President Obasanjo—[inaudible]—on that issue

came out at that meeting expressing disappointment at the lack of concrete commitment on the issues by the richest nations of the world.

Is there any indication that the contact today with a key member of the G-8 would open up new vistas on the issues of debt cancellation for the poor countries of the world? And America is perhaps the strongest supporter of democracy around the world, and we know that democracy turns on the face of the huge debt burden. What is the way out?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, first of all, what I believe the G-8 was saying. You may know that I, because of other commitments and because of the Middle East peace process, unfortunately, had to miss the first day of the G-8 summit and, therefore, I missed the President's presentation.

At Cologne, Germany, we got the G-8 to make a commitment to a debt relief program for the poorest countries in the world, and we had some problems implementing it, but the basic idea, I think, was sound, which was that we should give debt forgiveness in return for a commitment to spend the freed-up resources on human development and to have a responsible economic reform program. That was basically the agreement.

I strongly support that, and I would favor expanding the number of eligible nations once we've actually taken them in some proper order. Our Congress has before it now legislation that would pay America's share of the debt relief for the countries that have qualified under the program that the G-8 adopted.

My own view is that the G-8 would be willing to go beyond those 24 countries as long as it was clear that there was a commitment to economic reform and a commitment to democracy and a commitment to use all the savings for human development purposes, not for military purposes or other purposes that were inconsistent with the long-term interest of the countries.

But I think that the real issue is not whether they can afford the debt relief—in most of these countries, they actually have to budget the debt relief even if they're not going to get repaid. And to be fair, the United States does not have the same dollar stake in most of these nations in the multilateral forum as some other countries do. So it is a little more difficult for them than it is for us.

And I think that you are seeing the beginning of a process that I believe will continue, since I believe that we'll have more countries doing what Nigeria is doing: embracing democracy, having a program with the IMF, a commitment to economic reform that will commend itself to the creditor countries of the world for debt relief. And I think that you'll—it will happen.

But, you're right, we have been in the forefront of pushing this. But to be fair to the other countries the relative size of the American economy make our—makes it easier for us to do than for some of these other countries. And the real problem is not the money itself, because many of them don't expect to be repaid. The real problem is that they all have budget rules like we do that require them to budget that in their annual budgets—the forgiveness of debt—just as they budget for education or health care or defense or anything else, even though it's, arguably, an unnecessary thing since they don't expect to get the money back from the poorest countries.

But you need to understand that's the political problem that a lot of these leaders have. And since the European countries and Japan have a bigger percentage of their income tied up in debt than we do, it's a little more difficult for them to do. I think we have moved them in the right direction, and I think Nigeria, in particular, and other countries following behind will find a much more ready response. I think that what happened in Cologne, the call of His Holiness the Pope and others for debt relief in the millennial year, will lead to a process that I expect to play out over the next few years that I believe will result in significantly greater debt relief than we have seen, as long as it's coupled to maintenance of democracy, economic reform, and honest economies and using the savings from debt relief for the real human benefits and needs of the people in the affected countries.

Nigerian Debt Relief/Oil Prices

Q. Mr. President, would you urge President Obasanjo to reduce—to work within OPEC to reduce oil prices? And did you offer him any commitment on rescheduling or writing-off of debt for Nigeria?

And President Obasanjo, I was wondering if you can give your own views on—[inaudible]—situation.

President Clinton. Let me answer the debt question first, since it sort of follows upon the previous question. I reaffirmed the commitment that I had previously made to the President that, first of all, the United States would do all we said to get the entire Paris Club to do what the G-8 has now agreed to do and have a generous debt rescheduling, which will alleviate a lot of the cash flow requirements, at least, for Nigeria in the short run; and that now that there was an IMF program in place, once there was enough experience with this IMF program that we could argue to the other creditor nations that have a larger—as I said to the previous questioner, the gentleman before, that these other nations that have a bigger share of the debt than we do—that Nigeria has shown a commitment to economic reform, as well as a commitment to democracy, that I would support debt relief for them, that I thought they ought to have some debt relief in return for showing that they've got a commitment to a long-term political and economic reform. That's the position I've had for some time now.

On the oil prices, we talked about that, and Nigeria, of course, does not have the capacity to change the prices, because they're pretty well producing at full capacity already. So I asked the President to do whatever he could to encourage others to increase production enough to have the impact that OPEC voted to have at the last meeting.

At the last meeting, they voted for production levels that they felt would bring the price back closer to its historic average, somewhere in the mid-20's. And that has not worked out for a number of reasons, and so I asked him to do what he could in that regard.

President Obasanjo. I have always maintained that an excessive high price of oil is neither good for the oil producers nor for the oil consumers, particularly developing oil consumers. Neither is excessive low price of oil, neither is it good for the oil producers nor the oil consumers because you need certain amount of stability. I believe that that stability would be there when OPEC brought in the mechanism to trigger off oil if the oil price is above certain price level, to automatically go in and produce more, and if it's below certain levels to automatically go in and withdraw from the production.

Well, as President Clinton said, what has taken place so far has not worked. The OPEC will have a summit meeting in Venezuela next

month, and the price of oil will be one of the major issues to be discussed. And I will, by the grace of God, be at that meeting. And we will work to bring an element of stability into the price of oil. It is in the interest of all concerned that that should happen.

U.S. Issuance of Visas to Nigerians/United Nations Security Council

Q. My question is to President Clinton, and it concerns the U.S. visa policy of Nigeria. The policy so far has—[inaudible]—going to do to affect some concrete change in this direction. And the second question is will the United States support a Security Council seat for permanent participation in the United Nations?

President Clinton. Well, let me answer the first question first. I'm very concerned about some of the problems we've had in getting visas to Nigerians who have legitimate interests in coming the United States and should have a perfect right to do so.

If I might say something in defense of the people who have to issue the visas. Because of the worldwide concern—that has nothing to do with Nigeria—about terrorism and other problems, they have been given instructions to bend over backwards to make sure that all the documents that anybody from any country applying for a visa are in perfect order. Because of a lot of developments here over the last several years, that's not always possible. So what we've got to do is go back and take a hard look at this situation as it affects Nigeria, because we acknowledge that there are many Nigerians who have tried to come to the United States, who should have been able to come and, therefore, should have been able to get visas, who haven't been. And we have to try to find a way to solve that consistent with our law.

And I wish I had an answer for you today, but frankly, I was not aware of the dimensions of the problem until I was preparing to come here and preparing for my visit. And so I don't have a solution today. But I can—I make you a commitment that we will work on it, and we will try to work this out, because I'm quite concerned about it. When I saw the numbers and I saw the small percentage of those who had applied who had been approved, and it was obvious that many, many more had legitimate interests, perfectly legitimate interests in coming to the United States, I realized we had to do

something. And we're going to work with your government and try to work it out.

President Obasanjo. Thank you very much. President Clinton—[inaudible].

President Clinton. Oh, I'm sorry. Jet lag. [Laughter] The position of the United States is that the size of the Security Council should be expanded, that there should be a permanent African seat, and that the holder of that seat should be determined by the African nations, not by the United States and not by the permanent members of the Security Council. I don't think that's our business. I feel the same way about Latin America. I think there should be a permanent Latin American seat on the Security Council.

The analog to Nigeria and Latin America, of course, is Brazil. Brazil is the most populous nation in Latin America, just as Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa, and we have

very good relations with Brazil. But I think the Latin Americans should decide for themselves if they get the seat, and I think they should, who should hold it, and whether someone should hold it permanently or not.

But I strongly believe that Africa should have a permanent representative with a permanent representative's vote on the United Nations Security Council. If it makes sense for it to be Nigeria, then that's fine with me. But I think the African people should decide that—the leaders of Africa.

President Obasanjo. Thank you very much.

President Clinton. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2 p.m. at the Presidential Villa. In his remarks, he referred to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and Pope John Paul II.

Remarks to a Joint Session of the Nigerian National Assembly in Abuja August 26, 2000

Thank you very much. Mr. President of the Senate, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy President and Deputy Speaker, members of the Assembly, it is a great honor for me to be here with members of my Cabinet and Government, Members of the United States Congress, mayors of some of our greatest cities, and my daughter. And we're glad to be here.

I must say, this is the first time I have been introduced as President in 8 years speaking to parliamentary bodies all over the world, where they played a song before I spoke. [Laughter] I liked it a lot. [Laughter] It got us all in a good frame of mind.

Twenty-two years ago President Jimmy Carter became the first President ever to visit sub-Saharan Africa when he arrived in Nigeria saying he had come from a great nation to visit a great nation. More than 2 years ago, I came to Africa for the longest visit ever by an American President, to build a new partnership with your continent. But sadly, in Nigeria, an illegitimate government was killing its people and squandering your resources. All most Americans knew about Nigeria then was a sign at their local airport warning them not to fly here.

A year later Nigeria found a transitional leader who kept his promises. Then Nigerians elected a President and a National Assembly and entrusted to them—to you the hard work of rebuilding your nation and building your democracy.

Now, once again, Americans and people all around the world will know Nigeria for its music and art, for its Nobel Prize winners and its Super Falcons, for its commitment to peace-keeping and its leadership in Africa and around the world. In other words, once again, people will know Nigeria as a great nation.

You have begun to walk the long road to repair the wrongs and errors of the past and to build bridges to a better future. The road is harder and the rewards are slower than all hoped it would be when you began. But what is most important is that today you are moving forward, not backward. And I am here because your fight—your fight for democracy and human rights, for equity and economic growth, for peace and tolerance—your fight is America's fight and the world's fight.

Indeed, the whole world has a big stake in your success, and not simply because of your

size or the wealth of your natural resources or even your capacity to help lift this entire continent to peace and prosperity, but also because so many of the great human dramas of our time are being played out on the Nigerian stage.

For example, can a great country that is home to one in six Africans succeed in building a democracy amidst so much diversity and a past of so much trouble? Can a developing country blessed with enormous human and natural resources thrive in a global economy and lift all its people? Can a nation so blessed by the verve and vigor of countless traditions and many faiths be enriched by its diversity, not enfeebled by it? I believe the answer to all those questions can and must be, yes.

There are still those around the world who see democracy as a luxury that people seek only when times are good. Nigerians have shown us that democracy is a necessity, especially when times are hard. The dictators of your past hoped the hard times would silence your voices, banish your leaders, destroy your spirit. But even in the darkest days, Nigeria's people knew they must stand up for freedom, the freedom their founders promised.

Achebe championed it. Sunny Ade sang for it. Journalists like Akinwumi Adesokan fought for it. Lawyers like Gani Fawehinmi testified for it. Political leaders like Yar'Adua died for it. And most important, the people of Nigeria voted for it.

Now, at last, you have your country back. Nigerians are electing their leaders, acting to cut corruption and investigate past abuses, shedding light on human rights violations, turning a fearless press into a free press. It is a brave beginning.

But you know better than I how much more must be done. Every nation that has struggled to build democracy has found that success depends on leaders who believe government exists to serve people, not the other way around. President Obasanjo is such a leader. And the struggle to build democracy depends also on you, on legislators who will be both a check on and a balance to executive authority and be a source—[*applause*]. You know, if I said that to my Congress, they would still be clapping and standing. [*Laughter*]

And this is important, too; let me finish. [*Laughter*] In the constitutional system, the legislature provides a check and balance to the executive, but it must also be a source of cre-

ative, responsible leadership, for in the end, work must be done and progress must be made.

Democracy depends upon a political culture that welcomes spirited debate without letting politics become a bloodsport. It depends on strong institutions, an independent judiciary, a military under firm civilian control. It requires the contributions of women and men alike. I must say I am very glad to see a number of women in this audience today, and also I am glad that Nigerian women have their own Vital Voices program, a program that my wife has worked very hard for both in Africa and all around the world.

Of course, in the end, successful political change must begin to improve people's daily lives. That is the democracy dividend Nigerians have waited for.

But no one should expect that all the damage done over a generation can be undone in a year. Real change demands perseverance and patience. It demands openness to honorable compromise and cooperation. It demands support on a constant basis from the people of Nigeria and from your friends abroad. That does not mean being patient with corruption or injustice, but to give up hope because change comes slowly would only be to hand a victory to those who do not want to change at all.

Remember something we Americans have learned in over 224 years of experience with democracy: It is always and everywhere a work in progress. It took my own country almost 90 years and a bitter civil war to set every American free. It took another 100 years to give every American the basic rights our Constitution promised them from the beginning.

Since the time of our Revolution, our best minds have debated how to balance the responsibilities of our National and State Government, what the proper balance is between the President and the Congress, what is the role of the courts in our national life. And since the very beginning, we have worked hard with varying degrees of success and occasional, regrettable, sometimes painful failures, to weave the diverse threads of our Nation into a coherent, unified tapestry.

Today, America has people from over 200 racial, ethnic, and religious groups. We have school districts in America where, in one school district, the parents of the children speak over 100 different languages. It is an interesting challenge. But it is one that I am convinced is

a great opportunity, just as your diversity—your religious diversity and your ethnic diversity—is a great opportunity in a global society growing ever more intertwined, a great opportunity if we can find unity in our common humanity, if we can learn not only to tolerate our differences but actually to celebrate our differences. If we can believe that how we worship, how we speak, who our parents were, where they came from are terribly important, but on this Earth, the most important thing is our common humanity, then there can be no stopping us.

Now, no society has ever fully solved this problem. As you struggle with it, you think of the Middle East, Northern Ireland, the Balkans, the ongoing tragedy of Kashmir, and you realize it is a formidable challenge. You also know, of course, that democracy does not answer such questions. It simply gives all free people the chance to find the answers that work for them.

I know that decades of misrule and deprivation have made your religious and ethnic divisions deeper. Nobody can wave a hand and make the problems go away. But that is no reason to let the idea of one united Nigeria slip away. After all, after all this time, if we started trying to redraw the map of Africa, we would simply be piling new grievances on old. Even if we could separate all the people of Africa by ethnicity and faith, would we really rid this continent of strife? Think of all the things that would be broken up and all the mountains of progress that have been built up that would be taken down if that were the case.

Where there is too much deprivation and too little tolerance, differences among people will always seem greater and will always be like open sores waiting to be turned into arrows of hatred by those who will be advantaged by doing so. But I think it is worth noting for the entire world that against the background of vast cultural differences, a history of repression and ethnic strife, the hopeful fact here today is that Nigeria's 250 different ethnic groups have stayed together in one nation. You have struggled for democracy together. You have forged national institutions together. All your greatest achievements have come when you have worked together.

It is not for me to tell you how to resolve all the issues that I follow more closely than you might imagine I do. You're a free people, an independent people, and you must resolve

them. All I can tell you is what I have seen and experienced these last years as President, in the United States, and in working with other good people with similar aspirations on every continent of the globe. We have to find honorable ways to reconcile our differences on common ground.

The overwhelming fact of modern life everywhere, believe it or not, is not the growth of the global economy, not the explosion of information technology and the Internet, but the growing interdependence these changes are bringing. Whether we like it or not, more and more, our fates are tied together within nations and beyond national borders, even beyond continental borders and across great oceans. Whether we like it or not, it is happening. You can think of big examples, like our economic interconnections. You can think of anecdotal examples, like the fact that we now have a phenomenon in the world known as airport malaria, where people get malaria in airports in nations where there has never been an single case of malaria because they just pass other people who have it from around the world in the airport.

Whether we like it or not, your destiny is tied to mine, and mine to yours, and the future will only make it more so. You can see it in all the positive things we can build together and in the common threats we face from enemies of a nation-state, from the narcotraffickers, the gunrunners, from the terrorists, from those who would develop weapons of mass destruction geared to the electronic age, very difficult to detect and easy to move.

Now, we have to decide what we're going to do with the fundamental fact of modern life, our interdependence. Is it possible for the Muslims and the Christians here to recognize that and find common ground? Can we find peace in Jerusalem between the Muslims, the Christians, and the Jews? Can we find peace in the Balkans between the Muslims, the Orthodox Christians, and the Catholics? Will we ever bring an end to the conflict between the Catholics and the Protestants in Northern Ireland—I mean, finally ever really have it over with completely? Can the Hindus and the Muslims learn to live together in Kashmir?

Isn't it interesting, when I came here, in part to help you move into the information revolution more quickly, to spread its benefits to more of your people, that all over the world, in this

most modern of ages, we are bedeviled by humanity's oldest problem: the fear of the other, people who are different from us?

I'm sure there was a time in the deep, distant mists of memory, when everyone had to be afraid of people who were not of their tribe, when food was scarce and there was no means of communication. But all of us still carry around with us the fear of people who are different from us. And it is such a short step from being afraid of someone to distrusting them, to disliking them, to hating them, to oppressing them, to using violence against them. It is a slippery, slippery slope.

So I say again, the biggest challenge for people in the United States, where people still, I'm ashamed to say, lose their lives because they are different—not nearly as much as it used to be; it's a rare occurrence, but it still tears at our hearts, because we know everyone counts, everyone deserves a chance at life, and we all do better when we help each other and when we find a way for everyone to follow his or her own path through life, guided by their own lights and their own faith.

So I say to you, I come here with that in mind. The world needs Nigeria to succeed. Every great nation must become more than the sum of its parts. If we are torn by our differences, then we become less than the sum of our parts. Nigeria has within it the seeds of every great development going on in the world today, and it has a future worth fighting for. You are already a champion of peace, democracy, and justice. Last month in Tokyo, your President reminded leaders of the Group of Eight very firmly that we are all tenants of the same global village.

He said, and I quote, "We must deal with the challenges for development not as separate entities but in partnership, as members of the same global family, with shared interests and responsibilities." So today I would like to talk just a few minutes about how our two nations, with our shared experience of diversity and our common faith in freedom, can work as partners to build a better future.

I believe we have two broad challenges. The first is to work together to help Nigeria prepare its economy for success in the 21st century and then to make Nigeria the engine of economic growth and renewal across the continent. The second is to work together to help build the

peace that Nigeria and all of Africa so desperately need.

To build stronger economies, we must confront the diseases that are draining the life out of Africa's cities and villages, especially AIDS but also TB and malaria. AIDS will reduce life expectancy in Africa by 20 years. It is destroying families and wiping out economic gains as fast as nations can make them. It is stealing the future of Africa. In the long run, the only way to wipe out these killer diseases is to provide effective, affordable treatments and vaccines. Just last week I signed into law a new \$60 million investment in vaccine research and new support for AIDS treatment and prevention around the world, including Nigeria.

In the meantime, however, while we wait for the long run, we have to face reality. I salute President Obasanjo for his leadership in recognizing we can't beat AIDS by denying it; we can't beat AIDS by stigmatizing it. Right now, we can only beat AIDS by preventing it, by changing behavior and changing attitudes and breaking the silence about how the disease is transmitted and how it can be stopped. This is a matter of life or death.

There are nations in Africa—two—that have had a significant reduction in the AIDS rate because they have acted aggressively on the question of prevention. Tomorrow the President and I will meet with Nigerians on the frontline of this fight, and I will congratulate them.

Building a stronger economy also means helping all children learn. In the old economy, a country's economic prospects were limited by its place on the map and its natural resources. Location was everything. In the new economy, information, education, and motivation are everything.

When I was coming down here today, Reverend Jackson said to me, "Remind everybody that America, to help Nigeria, involves more than the Government; it's also Wall Street and Silicon Valley." That's what's growing our economy, and it can help to grow yours.

One of the great minds of the information age is a Nigerian-American named Philip Emeagwali. He had to leave school because his parents couldn't pay the fees. He lived in a refugee camp during your civil war. He won a scholarship to university and went on to invent a formula that lets computers make 3.1 billion calculations per second. Some people call him the Bill Gates of Africa. *[Laughter]*

But what I want to say to you is, there is another Philip Emeagwali—or hundreds of them, or thousands of them—growing up in Nigeria today. I thought about it when I was driving in from the airport and then driving around to my appointments, looking into the faces of children. You never know what potential is in their mind and in their heart, what imagination they have, what they have already thought of and dreamed of that may be locked in because they don't have the means to take it out. That's really what education is.

It's our responsibility to make sure all your children have the chance to live their dreams so that you don't miss the benefit of their contributions and neither does the rest of the world. It's in our interest in America to reach out to the 98 percent of the human race that has never connected to the Internet, to the 269 of every 270 Nigerians who still lack a telephone.

I am glad to announce that the United States will work with Nigeria NGO's and universities to set up community resource centers to provide Internet access, training, and support to people in all regions of your country. I also discussed with the President earlier today a \$300 million initiative we have launched to provide a nutritious meal—a free breakfast or a free lunch—for children in school, enough to feed another 9 million kids in school that aren't in school today, including in Nigeria.

We know that if we could offer—and I'm going to the other developed countries, asking them to contribute, and then we're going to nation by nation, working with governmental groups, working with farm groups—we don't want to upset any local farm economies; we understand their challenges here, but we know if we could guarantee every child in every developing nation one nutritious meal a day, we could dramatically increase school enrollment among boys and especially among girls. We don't have a child to waste. I hope we can do this in Nigeria, and I hope you will work with us to get the job done.

I have also asked the Peace Corps to reestablish its partnership with Nigeria as soon as possible to help with education, health, and information technology.

Building a strong economy also means creating strong institutions and, above all, the rule of law. Your Nobel laureate, Wole Soyinka, has written that he imagines a day when Nigeria is, quote, “an unstoppable nation, one whose

citizens anywhere in the world would be revered simply by the very possession of a Nigerian passport.”

I don't need to tell you that the actions of a small group of Nigerians took away that possibility, took away the pride of carrying the passport, stealing the opportunity from every decent and honest citizen of this country. But we will bring the pride and prosperity back by cracking down together on crime, corruption, fraud, and drugs.

Our FBI is again working with Nigeria to fight international and financial crime. Our law enforcement agencies are working to say to narcotraffickers, there should be no safe havens in Nigeria. As we do these things, we will be able to say loud and clear to investors all over the world, “Come to Nigeria. This is a place of untapped opportunity because it is a place of unlimited potential.”

This year I signed into law our Africa trade bill, and many of its champions are here with me from our Congress. It will help us to seize that opportunity, creating good jobs and wealth on both sides of the Atlantic. The challenge is to make sure any foreign involvement in your economy promotes equitable development, lifting people and communities that have given much for Nigeria's economic progress but so far have gained too little from it.

Neither the people nor the private sector want a future in which investors exist in fortified islands surrounded by seas of misery. Democracy gives us a chance to avoid that future. Of course, I'm thinking especially of the Niger Delta. I hope government and business will forge a partnership with local people to bring real, lasting social progress, a clean environment, and economic opportunity.

We face, of course, another obstacle to Nigeria's economic development, the burden of debt that past governments left on your shoulders. The United States has taken the lead in rescheduling Nigeria's debt within the Paris Club, and I believe we should do more. Nigeria shouldn't have to choose between paying interest on debt and meeting basic human needs, especially in education and health. We are prepared to support a substantial reduction of Nigeria's debts on a multilateral basis, as long as your economic and financial reforms continue to make progress and you ensure that the benefits of debt reduction go to the people.

Now, let me say, as we do our part to support your economic growth and economic growth throughout Africa, we must also work together and build on African efforts to end the conflicts that are bleeding hope from too many places. If there's one thing I would want the American people to learn from my trip here it is the true, extraordinary extent of Nigeria's leadership for peace in West Africa and around the world.

I hope our Members of Congress who are here today will tell this to their colleagues back home. Over the past decade, with all of its problems, Nigeria has spent \$10 billion and sacrificed hundreds of its soldiers lives for peace in West Africa. Nigeria was the first nation, with South Africa, to condemn the recent coup in Cote d'Ivoire. And Nigerian soldiers and diplomats, including General Abubakar, are trying to restart the peace process in Congo. In these ways, you are building the record of a moral superpower.

That's a long way to come in just a couple of years, and I urge you to stay with it. But I know, I know from the murmurs in this chamber and from the murmurs I heard in the congressional chamber when I said the United States must go to Bosnia, the United States must go to Kosovo, the United States must train an Africa crisis response initiative, the United States must come here and help you train to deal with the challenges of Sierra Leone—I know that many of you have often felt the burden of your peacekeeping was heavier than the benefit. I know you have felt that.

But there's no one else in West Africa with the size, the standing, the strength of military forces to do it. If you don't do it, who will do it? But you should not have to do it alone. That's what's been wrong with what's happened in the last several years. You have too heavy a burden. Because of your size, everyone expects you to lead and to do so with enormous sensitivity to the needs of others. But despite your size, you cannot lead alone, and you shouldn't have to pay the enormous price. I am determined, if you're willing to lead, to get you the international support you need and deserve to meet those responsibilities.

This week the first of five Nigerian peacekeeping battalions began working with American military trainers and receiving American equipment. With battalions from Ghana and other African nations, they will receive almost \$60 million in support to be a commanding force for

peace in Sierra Leone and an integral part of Nigeria's democratization. We think the first battalions will be ready to deploy with U.N. forces early next year. We expect them to make an enormous difference in replacing the reign of terror with the rule of law. As they do, all of West Africa will benefit from the promise of peace and stability and the prospect of closer military and economic cooperation, and Nigeria will take another step toward building a 21st century army that is strong and strongly committed to democracy.

Let me say to the military leaders who are here with us today that the world honors your choice to take the army out of politics and make it a pillar of a democratic state.

Last year President Obasanjo came to Washington and reminded us that peace is indivisible. I have worked to build a new relationship between America and Africa because our futures are indivisible. It matters to us whether you become an engine of growth and opportunity or a place of unrelieved despair. It matters whether we push back the forces of crime, corruption, and disease together or leave them to divide and conquer us. It matters whether we reach out with Africans to build peace or leave millions of God's children to suffer alone.

Our common future depends on whether Africa's 739 million people gain the chance to live their dreams, and Nigeria is a pivot point on which all Africa's future turns.

Ten years ago a young Nigerian named Ben Okri published a novel, "The Famished Road," that captured imaginations all over the world. He wrote of a spirit child who defies his elders and chooses to be born into the turmoil and struggle of human life. The time and place were modern Nigeria, but the questions the novel poses speak to all of us in a language that is as universal as the human spirit.

In a time of change and uncertainty, Okri asks us, "Who can dream a good road and then live to travel on it?" Nigerians, as much as any nation on Earth, have dreamed this road. Since Anthony Enahoro stood up in a colonial Parliament and demanded your independence in 1953, Nigerians have dreamed this road in music and art and literature and political struggle, and in your contributions to prosperity and progress, among the immigrants to my country and so many others.

Now, at the dawn of a new century, the road is open at home to all citizens of Nigeria. You

have the chance to build a new Nigeria. We have the chance to build a lasting network of ties between Africa and the United States. I know it will not be easy to walk the road, but you have already endured such stiff challenges. You have beaten such long odds to get this far. And after all, the road of freedom is the only road worth taking.

I hope that, as President, I have helped a little bit to take us a few steps down that road together. I am certain that America will walk with you in the years to come. And I hope you will remember, if nothing else, what I said about our interdependence. Yes, you need us today because at this fleeting moment in history, we are the world's richest country. But over the long run of life and over the long run of a nation's life and over the long run of civilization on this planet, the rich and the poor often change places. What endures is our common humanity.

If you can find it amidst all your differences and we can find it amidst all ours, and then we can reach out across the ocean, across the cultures, across the different histories with a common future for all of our children, freedom's road will prevail.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the House of Representatives Chamber at the National Assembly Building. In his remarks, he referred to Senate President Pius Anyim, Speaker of the House Ghali Na'Abba, Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu, Deputy Speaker of the House Chibudum Nwuche, and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria; novelist Chinua Achebe; musician King Sunny Ade; U.S. Special Envoy to Africa Rev. Jesse Jackson; and former Nigerian military leader Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar.

Remarks at a State Dinner Hosted by President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria in Abuja August 26, 2000

President Obasanjo, to the President of Niger, to the distinguished leaders of the legislative and judicial branches of the Nigerian Government, and all our friends from Nigeria who are here, I believe I can speak for the entire American delegation when I say thank you all for an unforgettable day.

And on a very personal basis, I want to thank you for enabling me to say something no previous American President has been able to say: It is good to be back in Africa for the second time.

I will say, Mr. President, I was very moved by your generous remarks, and I was very glad to have a Nigerian name. *[Laughter]* But now, you will have to give me a copy of your remarks so that when we go out tomorrow, I can introduce myself properly to the people of your country. *[Laughter]*

Mr. President, it's a great honor for all of us to be here. I wish that my wife could come, and your remarks indicated you understand why she could not. But I am grateful for her interest in Africa as well, and especially in the Vital

Voices program that so many Nigerian women have been a part of.

We meet at a pivotal moment in your history. The long-deferred dreams of your people finally can and must be realized. I spoke about it in detail to the members of the Senate and the House today. I will only repeat that it is a daunting challenge, requiring both rigorous effort and realistic patience.

Nigeria is poised to do great things for its own people and for Africa's democratic destiny. We in the United States have long known Nigeria as an economic partner and an important supplier of energy. But now, more than ever, we and others throughout the world will know and honor Nigeria for its greatest energy resource, the people of this great nation.

We have come to appreciate it in many ways: the musical genius of King Sunny Ade; the brilliant writing of Chinua Achebe; and your Nobel laureate Wole Soyinka. We also think rather highly of the basketball feats of Hakeem Olajuwon. And we're coming more and more to appreciate the football brilliance of the Super

Eagles. Indeed, every 4 years a growing number of people in the United States actually cheer for the Super Eagles in the World Cup. After all, the eagle is America's national bird, too. [Laughter] And more importantly, tens of thousands of Nigerians work and study in the United States, and we are honored to have them.

I was quite interested, Mr. President, in the presentation before your remarks showing all the similarities between you and me. I would also like a copy of that. [Laughter] I don't know if I could persuade people back home with a case without all that evidence.

For all our differences, even in a larger sense, we are not so different after all. Our Capital—Washington, DC—like yours here, was created as a compromise between North and South. Though I must say, ours took much longer to become a respectable city. And as I saw today when I addressed your legislative branch, your Government, like ours, often displays what might charitably be called a creative tension between its different branches. [Laughter] Finally, our greatest strength, like yours, comes from the fact that we are many peoples striving to work as one.

Mr. President, the hope we celebrate this evening owes much to you, for you have twice answered the call to restore civilian government. The United States will stand by a nation, any nation, and especially Nigeria, that faces its responsibility as bravely as the people of this nation have in the last few years.

We outlined today our commitments, and we will keep them, to help you economically, educationally, in the struggles against AIDS and other public health problems and the struggles to rebuild your infrastructure in our common cause to restore peace in Sierra Leone and to support Nigeria as a leader for peace throughout the continent. And we look forward to fulfilling those commitments.

I listened again to the case you made tonight, a case that I also heard from your legislative leaders this afternoon and first in our meeting

this morning and, of course, even earlier when you and I first met. I will do my best to help Nigeria succeed economically. You must do so.

When Nigeria became independent in late 1960, almost 40 years ago now, the American people were also quite happy, because it was a time of great hope for us at home and around the world. We felt it in the new beginnings of President Kennedy's election and the progress of the civil rights struggle in our own country and with the crumbling of colonialism here and around the world.

We were proud that some of your early independence leaders, like Nnamdi Azikiwe, studied in America. In 1959 this is what he told an American audience. He said, "We struggle toward the same ultimate objective: to revive the stature of man so that man's inhumanity to man shall cease. Your success shall be our success, and your failure shall be our failure."

Since he said those words to Americans, there have been great achievements and profound setbacks in both our nations. But those words are as true today as they were when they were spoken. And today, we have the best chance since the early 1960's to make them come true.

And so tonight Mr. President and all our distinguished Nigerian friends, let me repeat your hero's words back to you: Now and forever, your success shall be our success.

I ask you to join me in a toast to the President of Nigeria and to the people of Nigeria, to the success of the democratic experiment here, to the friendship between our peoples, and to our common commitment to seize the future together.

[At this point, the President offered a toast.]

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 8:30 p.m. at the International Conference Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Mamadou Tandja of Niger. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Obasanjo.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Addition of Nigeria to the
Generalized System of Preferences
August 24, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am writing to inform you of my intent to add Nigeria to the list of beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). The GSP program, which offers duty-free access to the U.S. market, was originally authorized by the Trade Act of 1974.

I have carefully considered the criteria identified in sections 501 and 502 of the Trade Act of 1974. In light of these criteria, I have determined that it is appropriate to extend GSP benefits to Nigeria.

This notice is submitted in accordance with section 502(f)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 27. The proclamation of August 27 modifying the Generalized System of Preferences to add Nigeria to the list of beneficiary developing countries is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting an Amendment of the
Generalized System of Preferences
August 27, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I hereby transmit a Proclamation in which I have determined that it is appropriate to grant preferential treatment for Nigeria as a beneficiary developing country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). GSP benefits must be granted to Nigeria before that nation can receive further trade benefits under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (Public Law 106-200).

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The proclamation of August 27 modifying the Generalized System of Preferences to add Nigeria to the list of beneficiary developing countries is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks to the Community in Ushafa, Nigeria
August 27, 2000

Well, thank you very much. Let me say, first of all, I want to thank your chief for making me feel so welcome, and all the elected officials. I want to thank the people who danced for us and played for us. They were very good, yes? [*Applause*] And I want to thank all those who made the gifts you gave to me and my daughter and our family. And I want to thank

the schoolchildren who walked down here with me and sang the beautiful songs.

I came to Nigeria to express the support of the people of the United States. We support your democracy. We want to help you build your economy, educate your children, and build a better life in all the villages of this country.

Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the main market square. In his remarks, he referred to Chief Alhaji Mohammadu Baba of Ushafa Village.

Remarks to Health Care Providers in Abuja, Nigeria *August 27, 2000*

Thank you very much. Mr. President, John, and Tayo, thank you very much. I would also like to acknowledge the presence here of the Minister of Women's Affairs Ismail; Dr. Agary, the director of the center; Dr. Resemane, who came to the White House last year and spoke movingly about her battle for women's health. I want to thank the members of the American delegation, and especially the Members of Congress, for joining us here, and say that I am particularly honored to be welcome by John Ibekwe because he is the leader of the Network for People Living With AIDS. That is—they have brought a lot of help and hope to Nigeria.

And let me say I want to thank Tayo again for telling us her story and speaking so powerfully for the young people of Nigeria. I'd like to hear them both on a regular basis again. I thought they were terrific, and I know you're proud of them.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions in particular of one Member of the American Congress who is here, Congresswoman Barbara Lee, who along with Representative Jim Leach—thank you, Barbara—along with Representative Jim Leach of Iowa, she sponsored the historic bipartisan global AIDS act I signed last week. And I thank her and the Congress for their support of the worldwide battle against AIDS.

This program today is a sober reminder that while it is wonderful that the people of Nigeria are finally free, to be free does not mean to be free of all burdens or all challenges. Indeed, there are challenges so serious that if they are left unmet, your democracy will not mean very much. The fight against infectious diseases is one such challenge.

Believe it or not, for all our modern medical advances, infectious diseases still account for one out of every four deaths around the world, and half the victims—that's why it's good this baby is crying; it will remind us of this—half the victims of infectious diseases are under 5 years

of age. Chiefly because of malaria, mosquitoes will be responsible for the death of more than one million people this year.

And of course, there is no greater challenge than AIDS. No child should come into the world with such a deadly disease when it could have been prevented. Yet that is happening to millions of African children. No community should go without a teacher, yet teachers are dying and schools are actually closing because of AIDS. No country should struggle to rise out of poverty while fighting a disease that can cut life expectancy by as much as 30 years. Yet that already had happened—already—in some countries on this continent.

It hasn't happened in Nigeria, thank goodness. But that should not be a cause for complacency but instead a call for action. Already there are almost 3 million Nigerians living with AIDS. President Obasanjo has spoken eloquently today and before today about the challenge and his determination to meet it. The only thing I can say to the rest of the people of Nigeria is that you must join with the President and with all the public health advocates and all the citizens' groups and all the people that are present here and the people you represent to help. AIDS can rob a country of its future. I know you are not going to let that happen to Nigeria.

I also want to acknowledge that this is not just Nigeria's fight or Africa's fight. It is America's fight and the world's fight, too.

I hope the wealthier countries will do their part, first by supporting our initiative to speed the development of vaccines for AIDS, malaria, and TB. Just a month ago, at the G-8 summit in Japan, at which President Obasanjo appeared, we mobilized billions of dollars to fight infectious diseases with the development of vaccines. In addition, we have to do more to support the efforts you have going now. This year the United States will provide \$10 million to support your efforts against AIDS, three times more

than last year; nearly \$9 million for polio eradication; \$2 million to help you protect your children from malaria by distributing bed nets. I must say, that bed net that I saw outside this building when I came up, it has to be the biggest one in the world—[laughter]—but it certainly made the point. And I congratulate you on it.

I'd also like to thank the president of the Packard Foundation, Richard Schlosberg, and the others who are here from the Packard Foundation. Where are they? Stand up here. [Applause] There you go. Thank you. Over the next 5 years, Packard will make \$35 million in grants to improve the reproductive health of Nigerian women, and I thank them.

We will also continue to support other education and development initiatives including microenterprise loans and greater access for technology and education that will help to develop the capacity and the willingness and the understanding among children and among women to do what is necessary to avoid the most dreaded diseases.

We know, as your President has just said again, that it will also take leadership from Africa. Last April President Obasanjo convened a malaria summit, bringing together 44 nations to Nigeria and mobilizing the private sector, and next year, as he said, he will host African leaders for the summit on AIDS. Later this year, Nigeria will join 17 African countries for three polio national immunization days. Millions of children will be immunized in the largest synchronized health event in the history of Africa. Thank you for that.

I'd also like to thank Rotary International, the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the U.N. Foundation, and most of all, the volunteers for helping in this cause. And I see we have a lot of people from Rotary here today; thank you very much. That is the kind of volunteer organized help we need in the fight against AIDS.

Someday a vaccine will come. We must help it come faster. Yes, there must be more done by the wealthy countries to get you medicines, especially those that will keep AIDS from being transferred from mothers when they're pregnant to their newborn babies. And we will help you do that.

But let's remember something. There is one thing quite different from AIDS and most killer diseases. AIDS is 100 percent preventable if we

are willing to deal with it openly and honestly. In every country, in any culture, it is difficult, painful, at the very least embarrassing, to talk about the issues involved with AIDS. But is it harder to talk about these things than to watch a child die of AIDS who could have lived if the rest of us had done our part? Is it harder to talk about than to comfort a child whose mother has died? We have to break the silence about how this disease spreads and how to prevent it, and we need to fight AIDS, not people with AIDS. They are our friends and allies.

I admire profoundly the strength of Nigeria's religious traditions. But the teachings of every faith command us to fight for the lives of our children. I would like particularly to thank the Muslim Sisters Organization for recognizing that and for their many good works in this regard.

Let me say that the good news is, we know this can be done. AIDS infection rates have dropped dramatically in our country, but they also have dropped dramatically in some places in Africa. If Uganda and Senegal can stem the rising tide of infection, so can Nigeria and every other African country.

I am amazed at the courage of the people of Nigeria in struggling against the oppression that you endured for too long until you got your democracy. I urge you now to show that same kind of courage to beat the tyranny of this disease so you can keep your democracy alive for all the children of Nigeria and their future.

You can do this. We will help you. We know we have to do more, but so do you. We must not let all the gains that have happened in Nigeria and throughout Africa be destroyed by a disease we can prevent if only we can get over our reluctance to deal with the uncomfortable aspects of it. These children's lives are at stake, and they are worth a little discomfort by those of us who have already lived most of our lives.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. at the National Center for Women Development. In his remarks, he referred to President Olusegun Obasanjo and Minister of Women Affairs and Youth Development Hajia Aisha Ismail of Nigeria; National Center for Women Development director general Timiebi Koripano-Agary and peer educator Tayo Akimuwagun; and David and Lucile Packard Foundation president Richard T.

Schlosberg III. H.R. 3519, approved August 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106-264.

Remarks to Business Leaders in Abuja August 27, 2000

Thank you. Thank you very, very much. I am delighted to be here. I want to thank Mr. Moorman and Mr. Ndanusa and Reverend Jackson for their remarks. I want to thank the First Lady of Nigeria for joining us today. Thank you very much. I thank the members of the American delegation who have joined me from the United States Congress, from local government, the leaders of our Export-Import Bank and our AID operations, and many others. They're all over here to my right, and they are a part of what we are trying to do. And I thank the members of the Nigerian and American business communities for being here.

As is usually the case when I get up to speak, everything which needs to be said today has already been said by the previous speakers—[laughter]—and I might add, said very well. I would just like to talk a moment about the American response and what I hope will be the Nigerian response.

After working so long to restore democracy and, in a way, to genuinely have it for the first time, there must be a dividend to democracy for the people of Nigeria. Now, what will the role of trade and investment be in that dividend? What will the role of the explosion in information technology be and communications on the Internet be? How will this totally new world change what Nigeria has been through in the last 30 to 40 years? And what things depend entirely on what the Nigerian people and business leaders decide to do themselves?

From the 1970's to the 1990's, developing countries that chose growth through trade grew at least twice as fast as those that were not open to the world. Nonetheless, there are clearly new challenges. What does all this mean for you? That is what I would like to talk very briefly about—first, what you have to do; secondly, what we have to do.

It really is a very different world now. For more than 100 years, we've been moving toward more global trade, but the information revolu-

tion has changed everything. In 1993, in January, when I became the President of the United States, there were, in total in the whole world, only 50—50 sites on the World Wide Web. Today, there are 20 million or so and rising—in 7½ years.

Even when we were having increases in trade, they were due largely to old, traditional sorts of things. You had oil; somebody else needed oil and didn't have it, so you would take it out of the ground and sell it to them, and they would send you the money. And the geographic facts dictated that. Or, you made beautiful cloth or pottery, and you sold it to somebody near you who made something else, and they sold that to you.

Now, if you have ideas and imagination, the information technology has virtually collapsed the meaning of distance, and it's made the human mind and ideas even more important than riches in the ground. So what does that mean? What does it mean for you? What does it mean for us?

Well, first of all, government policy still matters. So your government, any government of any nation that wants to grow wealthier, has to have the basics right: managing the economy well, keeping the markets open, establishing the rule of law, creating a good climate for investment. Reverend Jackson talked about that. President Obasanjo knows all that.

Look at the record. Nigeria has turned a fiscal deficit into a surplus. Its growth is up, and it is moving to cut tariffs. I also hope it will follow through with planned economic reforms, including some privatization that will encourage some investment from abroad and at home, and improve services for Nigerian citizens.

Now, if Nigeria does its part, then Nigeria's trading partners and the wealthier countries of the world, especially, must do their part, as well. You are America's important partner, and we are your largest trading partner. So we have

a special responsibility to act. I'm glad to announce today that we are making your exports eligible for duty-free treatment under our GSP program. *[Applause]* Thank you. Now, what does this mean?

Let me say something about this. I want all of you to—in spite of the fact that nearly everything has been said that needs to be said, here's one thing that hasn't been said. Along with the political tragedy of the last 20 years, you have had a colossal economic tragedy. You pumped a lot of oil out of the ground, got a lot of money for it, and somebody besides the people got the benefit of it. But let me just say this—looking forward, that's only one part of the tragedy. That's the real significance of what I said about duty-free treatment. In other words, if no one had stolen any money, if no one had kept too much to himself, you could still be in trouble if you didn't use the oil money to get into some business other than oil. That's the main point I want to make to you.

So it's important. Yes, I know you have to look at the past and you have to have accountability and all that. But let's not get too carried away about the impact of the past on the future. You have got to not only make sure that the money coming from the oil benefits the people; you've got to invest some of that money in a way that broadens the nature of the Nigerian economy if you really want people to get richer.

You've got to rebuild the agricultural sector. You've got to broaden the manufacturing sector. You can actually have dot-com companies in Nigeria. You can make money off the Internet here, just like people do everywhere. And there needs to be a lot of thought given to how you're going to diversify the economy. I hope the fact that you can sell us things now without paying imports will make it more competitive and that we can help.

Our Export-Import Bank—and I mentioned Mr. Harmon earlier, who's here—is signing—listen to this—\$1.2 billion in loan guarantees today. Our Trade and Development Agency is beginning a feasibility study that could generate projects worth hundreds of millions more.

We also signed the Africa growth and opportunity bill earlier, and every Member of Congress over here voted for it, and I'm grateful to them for doing that. That will provide even broader benefits than our GSP program for countries that are eligible. When we fully implement the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act,

Africa will have the most liberal access to America's market of any region in the world outside North America. I am very, very proud of that.

Now, so I will say again, we're committed to doing our part. But we have to reverse the practice that went along with the absence of democracy, not only because a lot of the oil money went to the wrong hands, but it wasn't reinvested. You could go around and just hand money out to everybody in Nigeria and be just as fair and equal as possible, and it still would all be gone in a month or two. We have got to diversify this economy.

Now, what does that mean? It means, among other things, you have to rebuild your infrastructure as well as a lot of your basic industries; half of the people don't have access to clean water. It means that you have to broaden access to education; your school enrollment levels need to be made more nearly universal. It means you have to dramatically broaden access to information technology; only 9,000 people have direct access to the Internet.

Let me tell you a story. I was in India, where the per capita income is not much higher than Nigeria, in one of the poorest states in the entire nation, in a little village not so very different from the lovely little village I visited here this morning. *[Laughter]* You know? And the ladies of the village were in their Indian costumes, and they were very beautiful, and they danced. The only difference was, there they threw petals of flowers all over me, and they buried me in a mound of flowers. It was nice. *[Laughter]*

But anyway, I went in to meet with the local government, and I was stunned. In this very old building that was not in very good repair, I was stunned to see this brand new computer. And I met a lady who lived in the village who had been trained to use the computer. And I saw a young mother come in and get on the computer, and she dialed in the information for the nation's health department. And up it came, in two languages, Hindi and English, with pictures of what young mothers should do to care properly for their babies for the first 6 months. It was just as good as anything the wealthiest woman in Washington, DC, could get from the most expensive doctor. And she punched a little button, and the printer printed it out, and she took the information home. And because there were so many pictures, even if you couldn't read very well, you could understand what you were supposed to do.

I went to another state in India, and every citizen could get a license for a car or any other kind of government permit over the Internet at common stations in all their cities, so that people learn to use the Internet who never would have learned to use it before just so they didn't have to go stand in line at a government office.

The point I'm trying to make here is, it's not true that poor people in poor countries can't make their lives better or make more money out of information technology or can't have access to better education. It is not true. You should look at this as an opportunity to move faster by maybe 10, 20, 30 years than you could have moved otherwise with your economic development. But you've got to spread it out. You've got to do what is now called—you have to bridge the digital divide. And we have to help you do that.

Now, I agree that we should help you with the debt burden, as long as you are going to spend the savings of the debt burden on the real human and economic long-term needs of the people of Nigeria. So, after all—and I think Nigeria has a compelling case because it was a very different government that ran up those debts, with very different priorities, so I think you've got a compelling case. But again, debt relief is just like oil money. You think about it. You could take it and go give it out to everybody, and in 2 or 3 months it would all be gone. *[Laughter]*

Your President has promised the whole world, as well as the people of Nigeria, he's going to stay on the path of economic reform. And if that happens, I believe that we will be able to persuade our partners among the other wealthy nations that we ought to move more aggressively to help alleviate Nigeria's debt service programs. I believe that. *[Applause]*

You don't have to clap for me. I'm not running for anything anymore. I'm not a candidate. You can totally ignore me. *[Laughter]* But keep in mind, if we take the burden off the government of having to make these debt service payments, then you must support the President and you must support your legislators, anybody with any influence over how this is done, to spend the money in a way that will grow the economy and strengthen the society of Nigeria over the long run.

It is not—yes, everything must be honest and fair, but it's not just a question of being honest

and fair. It's also a question of being smart about how this money is invested so that you are growing the economy over the long run in ways that benefit all the people. We have got to broaden the base of this economy.

Now, it has to be done. And you have got to support your President. And you have to be willing, as business people, to stand up and say when somebody says, "Well, why are we spending this on health care? Why are we spending this on education? Why are we spending this on clean water? Why are we spending this on a road in another part of the country?"—I'll hear that; I know about that—*[laughter]*—"Why are we building those roads in the other part of the country," all this stuff—the only test you should have is, if they do this, are we going to have healthier children, better educated young people, and a stronger economy and a better prospect for a more diverse economy over the future? That should be your test. And if the answer to those questions is, yes, you should support it.

So we have to do that. We also have to work together to keep infectious diseases from taking away your democratic dreams and your dreams of recovery. We just did an event on this whole issue, but one in four people in the world today who die every year, die from infectious diseases, in spite of all the advances in medicine. An enormous percentage of these people are under 5 years of age. AIDS threatens to lower the life expectancy of some African countries by 20 to 30 years. There will be countries on this continent within a few years who will have more people in their sixties than people in their thirties.

Now, you're going to have a million people die this year of malaria. Most of them could be saved by being less careless, taking precautions. And AIDS is 100 percent preventable.

Yes, we are spending a lot of money now, and I'm very proud of my Congress, the Republicans and the Democrats in our Congress, for voting to put the United States in the lead of developing a global effort for an AIDS vaccine, because that's the ultimate answer. And we're going to spend a lot of money on that. I think we should spend more money to give you the drugs that are available today at more affordable prices, and I'm trying to raise a lot of money from drug companies and others, and I'm trying to get the Congress to give the drug companies in our country a tax cut to make more of these

drugs available to you at a lower cost. We're trying to do that.

But we have got to have your help in prevention. Nobody has to get AIDS. But it's difficult, painful—as I said at the other meeting—it's slightly embarrassing, even, to have to talk about how you get the disease and how you stop it. But it's not nearly as painful as watching another child die who doesn't have to die. And I applaud the fact that your President and your Government are trying to get ahead of this.

Yes, there are 3 million Nigerians who have HIV or AIDS, and that's a terrible number, but it's nothing compared to the consuming numbers that are gripping other countries. And the fact that you are doing so much in an aggressive way on prevention is something that I hope everyone in this room will strongly support the President on and strongly keep working for, because otherwise, it can take away all these economic things that we're doing, and you have to be very serious about it.

We need to work to invest more in education. We are helping to establish some community resource centers in every region of Nigeria that will provide Internet access and training to students and teachers and small businesses, so that we can have more Nigerians gain access to information technology. And we will try to do more, too.

But you should try to think about anyone in the world you can ask to help you do more. You can't do what you want to do with this economy quickly with only 9,000 people with Internet access. You need 9 million people with Internet access, and you can do it in no time, and we'll help you. But you all should understand, it collapses time and distance; that's what the Internet does. And you need someone to help you collapse time and distance.

Finally, one other issue here that I wanted to mention. You don't have enough people in school. And one of the things we're trying to do—I've put up \$300 million, and I'm going around the world pleading with other rich countries to give us some money, to offer a world-wide program to any country who will take us up on it—and President Obasanjo said he's very interested—to provide one nutritious meal a day in school for every child that will show up for school.

Now, I'm convinced if we did that, we would dramatically increase school enrollment among girls as well as boys, where it's very, very impor-

tant. We don't want to upset local agricultural economies; we have to work with them. We know we have delivery difficulties. This is not a miracle program, but we are committed to it. And I'm grateful that the President said he was interested in having a pilot program here. But again I will say, I think you've got a big interest in getting all your children in school. And it will pay rich dividends for your economy, as well as having fewer social problems, fewer public health problems.

Now, the last thing I will say is that it really is important that there be an alliance between the Government and the people of Nigeria and the business interests that are investing in Nigeria, including those that are from other countries. I want more American investment in Nigeria—let me just say this—but I want it to be good old-fashioned, honest investment that benefits everybody who's willing to work for a living. And I want us to be good partners to this good new democracy you have.

I think the American companies will do that. We are creating a new position in our Embassy to work with the Nigerian Government, with the oil companies, with local communities to promote democratic and economic development in the Niger Delta. I think that's good.

This September the United Nations Foundation and several oil companies are going to launch the New Nigeria Foundation, to be administered jointly by the U.N. Development Programme and the U.S. organization Citizens International to help Nigeria create jobs by diversifying the economy, providing health care, fighting illiteracy, supporting small business. It's the first public/private partnership of its kind within the United Nations system dedicated to the well-being now of Nigeria's people. And I thank the U.N. and the oil companies that are funding it. This is a very, very important step.

I will just close with this point—and I want to thank all the Americans who are here and those who have been doing business here a long time and those who are thinking about investing here. The President and the First Lady and my daughter and I and Reverend Jackson, a lot of the Americans, went to church this morning at the First Baptist Church here. And the minister gave a good sermon, even for people who aren't Christians. He talked about the story in the Christian New Testament of the Good Samaritan. And many of you maybe know the story, but basically, there's a poor guy that gets

beaten up and robbed on the side of the road and left for dead. And a priest of the church then, in Judea and Samaria, sees him and averts his eyes and walks on. And then a man from a very prominent tribe sees him and diverts his eyes, and he walks on.

And then the Samaritan, who came from a sort of outcast people, people who were looked down on, thought to be alien and not friendly to the dominant peoples of the area, he saw him, went over to him, ministered to his wounds, made him better, took him to a local inn, asked the innkeeper to take the man in, paid money out of his own pocket, and said, "I want you to let him stay here until he's well enough to go, and the next time I'm through town, if I owe you more money, I'll pay you." Quite a wonderful story.

Now, here's what the preacher said. I mean, what's this got to do with you, you're asking. I'm getting to that. *[Laughter]* So the minister says, "Now, there are three kinds of people in this story. The first kind says, 'Whatever is yours is mine if I can take it away from you.' That's the person that beat up the poor man. The second kind of person says, 'Whatever is mine is mine if I can just keep it.' That's the priest and the man from the fancy tribe who turned their eyes away and walked away. And the third kind of person says, 'Whatever is mine is yours if you need it.' That was the Samaritan."

Now, the point I want to make to you is, from a religious point of view, whatever your faith, the third kind of person is the only sort of person worth being. But from a political and economic point of view, there's a fourth sort of person I want you to be. *[Laughter]* I want you to think about this.

We live in a world which is overwhelmingly more interdependent. A bunch of people in Nigeria get malaria, and they have to travel for a living—they're going to give it to Americans in airports. Think about it. People are now giving people AIDS all over the world. And yet good things are happening, too, in partnerships all over the world.

Therefore, if I want every child in America to have a future 20, 30, 40 years from now,

that will be as bright as possible, I should do something to help every child in Nigeria have a future that is as bright as possible, because it's actually good for the American kids. If you have more people making more money by selling products to Americans, it's good for us because then we'll be able to sell you some things.

So the Good Samaritan story is right for another reason. It's not just whatever is mine is yours if you need it, but if I give you a little of mine now, I'll get it back many times over—*[laughter]*—because this old world is like a boat in a sea, and sometimes the sea is stormy, and sometimes the sea is calm; sometimes the winds blow with us, and sometimes the winds blow against us; sometimes one of us is the captain of the ship, and then three or four decades later somebody else may be the captain of the ship. You can say all of that, but when it's all said and done, no matter what, we're all still in the same boat.

I believe that. That's really why I'm here. And that's why I want you to support the President, to support economic reform. I want the Americans to put more money in here. But I hope you will remember what I said.

Fairness is important, and honesty's important. But you have a country to rebuild here. So it's also important that you do the intelligent thing, and that we think about the Good Samaritan and realize that in the end, the Good Samaritan was better off. He got a lot more out of life than the priest and the other guy that walked by. Why? Because in the end, we're all in the same boat. So let's sail.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:50 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria and his wife, Stella; Edward L. Moorman, director general, General Motors Nigeria Limited; Alhaji U. Ndanusa, president, Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture; U.S. Special Envoy to Africa Rev. Jesse Jackson; and Israel Ikanji, minister, Abuja First Baptist Church.

Statement on the United Airlines Labor Agreement *August 27, 2000*

I am pleased that United Airlines and its pilots have reached an agreement at the bargaining table. I commend union and management for working together to resolve their differences in a way that will benefit the traveling public. I am also encouraged that over the last

week the aviation industry met with Secretary Slater and pledged to work with my administration to address the service related issues and the long-term outlook for quality customer service.

Statement on the National Crime Victimization Survey *August 27, 2000*

Today the Department of Justice released the 1999 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) which shows that last year the Nation's violent crime rate experienced the single largest one-year drop in the survey's history and is at its lowest level in over 25 years. This news is further proof that the Clinton-Gore administration's anticrime strategy of more police on our streets and fewer guns in the wrong hands has helped to create the safest America in a generation. Since the Vice President and I took office in 1993, every major category of violent and property crime has decreased significantly according to today's NCVS, with the overall violent crime rate down by one-third and the rates for rape and robberies and assaults with injuries down by more than one-third.

Despite our extraordinary progress, we can and must make America even safer. Every year our Nation loses nearly 30,000 Americans—in-

cluding 10 children every day—to gun violence. That is why I call on Congress to continue our success by funding our administration's proposals to put up to an additional 50,000 community police officers on the street and hire 1,000 new Federal, State, and local gun prosecutors and 500 ATF firearms agents and inspectors to crack down on gun criminals. Congress also must make passage of the long-stalled common-sense gun safety legislation a top priority as our children prepare to return to school. Together, we can continue to drive down the Nation's crime rates and improve the quality of life for American families for generations to come.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 25 but was embargoed for release until 4:30 p.m. on August 27.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Further Deployment of United States Forces to East Timor *August 25, 2000*

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On October 8, 1999, I reported to the Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution, the deployment of a limited number of U.S. military forces to provide support to the International Force East Timor (INTERFET). This multinational force, established by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1264, was

given a mandate to restore peace and security in East Timor, protect and support the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), and, within force capabilities, facilitate humanitarian assistance operations. The U.S. support to INTERFET consisted of planning and staff, communications, humanitarian, intelligence, and

logistics support (including theater and strategic lift).

The INTERFET was formally replaced in East Timor on February 23, 2000, by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Consequently, the U.S. personnel who were the subject of my October 8, 1999, report redeployed from East Timor. The UNTAET, which was established by Security Council Resolution 1272, has a mandate that includes providing security and maintaining law and order throughout East Timor; establishing an effective administration; ensuring the coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance; and supporting capacity-building for self-government. To implement this plan, the Security Council authorized UNTAET to deploy up to 8,950 military personnel, 200 military observers, and 1,640 civilian police.

The United States currently contributes three military observers to UNTAET. These personnel are assigned to the United Nations pursuant to the United Nations Participation Act (Public Law 79-264), and operate under U.N. operational control. During June and July 2000, the U.S. contribution to UNTAET also included one judge advocate officer.

As I reported to the Congress on February 25, 2000, the United States also maintains a credible and visible military presence in East Timor that is separate from UNTAET. This military presence consists of the U.S. Support Group East Timor (USGET), comprised of approximately 30 U.S. personnel who facilitate and coordinate U.S. military activities in East Timor, and the rotational presence of U.S. forces through temporary deployments to East Timor. These rotational presence operations include periodic ship visits during which U.S. forces conduct humanitarian and civic assistance activi-

ties in areas critical to East Timor's citizens. United States forces, whether assigned to USGET or conducting rotational presence operations, operate under U.S. command and control, and U.S. rules of engagement. The United Nations has indicated that East Timor has benefited greatly from U.S. military deployments to, and engagement activities in, East Timor and supports the continued U.S. presence there.

At this point, our rotational presence operations are envisioned to continue through December 2000. Future rotational presence operations will likely include rotation of naval assets and embarked aircraft, and small medical/dental and engineering civic action programs. Certain of these forces will be equipped with the normal complement of defensive weapons. The duration of our support depends upon the course of events in East Timor. At present, it is my intention to continue operations generally at the current levels to the end of the calendar year. It is, however, our objective to reduce the rotational presence operations, as well as to redeploy USGET as soon as circumstances permit.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I am providing this report as part of my efforts to keep the Congress fully informed, consistent with the War Powers Resolution. I appreciate the support of the Congress in this action.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 28.

Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the Tanzania-United States Open Skies Agreement in Arusha, Tanzania August 28, 2000

Mr. President, Secretary Slater, Minister Nyanda, members of the Tanzanian and American delegations, ladies and gentlemen. First, Mr. President, thank you for your warm wel-

come, and we'll save your speech. *[Laughter]* And thank you for your thoughtful and deep remarks.

I'd like to begin by also thanking you for the warm welcome that you gave to Chelsea and to Hillary when they were here. They both fell in love with your country, and Hillary asked me to give you her regards. Since you've just started a campaign, you will understand that she is otherwise occupied. [Laughter]

I am honored to be here in a place of peace, to visit a champion of peace. Tanzania's story is too often not the stuff of headlines. For that I say, congratulations. Think of the headlines you have avoided. Because you have avoided headlines about repression, famine, and war, and instead focused on the steady progress of democracy and development, being generous to your neighbors, and being a cause of peace and cooperation across the region, too many people in our country do not know enough about your country. I hope very much that my visit here, with so many Members of the United States Congress who are here with me, will help to change that.

I look forward, Mr. President, to joining you and President Mandela and the other regional leaders shortly in your efforts to bring a lasting peace to Burundi, just the last chapter in the distinguished history that you have already made in such a short time.

One of the tragic ironies of life is, sometimes the most terrible things happen to those who try to do the most good. You mentioned it was just over 2 years ago that the terrorist bombs went off at our American Embassies not far north of here in Nairobi, and not far south in Dar es Salaam. They claimed hundreds of Tanzanian, Kenyan, and American lives.

I believe the terrorists went after Tanzania, Kenya, and the United States precisely because we are dedicated to tolerance, understanding, and cooperation across frontiers and lines of division. They took a lot of our loved ones, but as you pointed out, they failed utterly to deter us from advancing our common principles.

So, 2 years later I would like to say again to the Tanzanian families and the victims who survived, we still share your sorrow and your determination to see justice done. But we are grateful that your nation has stayed on the course of peace and reconciliation.

We also want to continue to support you during the current drought. We have already provided substantial food assistance and will continue to do what is needed. We are also trying to help both Tanzania and Kenya deal with your

significant refugee problems, which we had a chance to discuss in our meeting just a moment ago. We will keep working with you, Mr. President, to promote education and health, to bring the benefits of the global information economy to your nation and to the developing world.

I am glad that we were able to support Tanzania as one of the first three African countries to qualify for debt relief under the heavily indebted poor countries initiative. So long as these economic reforms continue, they will be worth the freeing of \$100 million a year, which Tanzania can now invest in its greatest resource, your people.

And I might say, Mr. President, I was very moved by what you said in our meeting about how you intend to invest that money. And I hope that the Members of our Congress will take home the powerful example that you have set as a good reason for us to fully fund our part of the global initiative to relieve the debt of highly indebted poor countries.

I also want to do more to encourage foreign investment here. When I last met with you, Mr. President, you were just finishing a very successful tour of the United States to promote American investment here. It has doubled in the last 5 years. The Open Skies agreement, just signed, will strengthen our economic ties further, giving both our countries' airlines unrestricted international access from any airport to any airport in either country so that more people can travel and market their products to more places at lower cost. It was the first of six such agreements we have negotiated with African nations, and I am honored that the first was here in Tanzania.

We will keep working with you, Mr. President, on all these issues, not only because your success is important in its own right and because your people deserve a chance to live their dreams, but because you inspire all those around you who are struggling to achieve freedom and peace and reconciliation. I urge you to continue to inspire them.

I thank you for the power of your example. I support the work you do. And again let me say on behalf of all the American delegation, we are delighted and honored to be here.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:17 p.m. on a veranda at the Kilimanjaro Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Minister of Communications and

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Transport Ernest Nyanda and President Benjamin William Mkapa of Tanzania; and former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

Statement on the University of Arkansas Shooting

August 28, 2000

Hillary and I were shocked and heartbroken to learn of the tragic shooting earlier today at the University of Arkansas on the first day of fall classes. While our understanding of the facts in this case is still developing, we know that two more lives were taken on a day that should have been filled with hope and promise for students and faculty. Federal law enforcement officials are assisting local authorities with the investigation.

Today's shooting strikes a particularly sad chord for Hillary and me, who both had the privilege of teaching at this wonderful institution. We send our heartfelt thoughts and prayers along with those of the American public to the families, the university, and the entire Fayetteville community as they work through this difficult time.

Remarks at the Burundi Peace Talks in Arusha

August 28, 2000

Thank you very much, President Museveni, President Mkapa, distinguished leaders of the OAU and various African nations and other nations supporting this peace process. It is a great honor for me to be here today with a large delegation from the United States, including a significant number of Members of our Congress and my Special Envoy to Africa, Reverend Jesse Jackson, and Howard Wolpe and others who have worked on this for a long time.

This is a special day in America and for Reverend Jackson. I think I should just mention it in passing. This is the 37th anniversary of the most important civil rights meeting we ever had: the great March on Washington, where Jesse Jackson was present and Martin Luther King gave his "I Have a Dream" speech. I say that not because I think the situations are analogous but because everybody needs a dream, and I think whether you all decide to sign this or not depends in part on what your dream is.

I thank my friend President Mandela for coming in to replace the marvelous late President Nyerere, to involve himself in this process. After 27 years in prison and 4 years as President of his country—which some people think is another

form of prison—[laughter]—he could be forgiven if he had pursued other things. But he came here because he believes in peace and reconciliation. He knows there is no guarantee of success, but if you don't try, there is a guarantee of failure. And failure is not an acceptable option.

So I thank him; I thank the OAU and the Presidents who are here today. I thank the regional leaders, in addition to Presidents Museveni and Mkapa, President Moi, President Kagame, Prime Minister Meles, for their work. I thank the Nyerere Foundation, Judge Bomani, Judge Warioba, and I thank the people of Tanzania for hosting us here in a city that has become the Geneva of Africa, thanks to many of you.

I say again, I am honored to be in a place that is a tribute to the memory of President Nyerere, and I'm glad that Madam Nyerere is here today. I met her a few moments ago, and I thank her for her presence.

I thank President Buyoya and all the Burundians from all the parties who have come to Arusha and for the efforts you have made.

Peacemaking requires courage and vision—courage because there are risks involved and vision because you have to see beyond the risks to understand that however large they are, they are smaller than the price of unending violence. That you have come so far suggests you have the courage and vision to finish the job, and we pray that you will.

I confess that I come here with some humility. I have spent a great deal of time in the last 8 years trying to talk people into laying down their arms and opening their hands to one another—from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to the Balkans. I have had some measure of success and known some enormously painful failures. But I have not been here with you all this long time, and maybe I have nothing to add to your deliberations, but I would like to share some things that I have learned in 8 years of seeing people die, seeing people fight with one another because they're of different ethnic or racial or tribal or religious groups, and of seeing the miracles that come from normal peace.

First, to state the obvious, there will be no agreement unless there is a compromise. People hate compromise because it requires all those who participate in it to be less than satisfied. So it is, by definition, not completely satisfying. And those who don't go along can always point their finger at you and claim that you sold out: "Oh, it goes too fast in establishing democracy. Oh, it goes too slow in establishing democracy. It has absolutely too many protections for minority rights. No, it doesn't have enough protections for minority rights."

And there's always a crowd that never wants a compromise—a small group that actually would, by their own definition, at least, benefit from continued turmoil and fighting. So if you put the compromise on the table, they will use it like salt being rubbed into old wounds. And they're always very good. They know just where the breakpoints are to strike fear into the hearts of people who have to make the hard decisions. I have seen this all over the world.

But I know that honorable compromise is important and requires people only to acknowledge that no one has the whole truth, that they have made a decision to live together, and that the basic aspirations of all sides can be fulfilled by simply saying no one will be asked to accept complete defeat.

Now, no one ever compromises until they decide it's better than the alternative. So I ask you to think about the alternative. You're not being asked today to sign a comprehensive agreement; you're being asked to sign on to a process which permits you to specify the areas in which you still have disagreements, but which will be a process that we all hope is completely irreversible.

Now, if you don't do it, what is the price? If you don't do it, what is the chance that the progress you have made will unravel? If you come back in 5 or 10 years, will the issues have changed? I think not. The gulf between you won't narrow, but the gulf between Burundi and the rest of the world, I assure you, will grow wider if you let this moment slip away. More lives will be lost.

And I have a few basic questions. I admit, I am an outsider. I admit, I have not been here with you. But I have studied this situation fairly closely. I don't understand how continued violence will build schools for your children, bring water to your villages, make your crops grow, or bring you into the new economy. I think it is impossible that that will happen.

Now, I do think it is absolutely certain that if you let this moment slip away, it will dig the well of bitterness deeper and pile the mountain of grievances higher, so that some day, when somebody else has to come here and sit at a table like this, they will have an even harder job than you do. So I urge you to work with President Mandela; I urge you to work with each other to seize the opportunity that exists right now.

And I urge those groups, including the rebels who are not now part of this process, to join it and begin taking your own risks for peace. No one can have a free ride here. Now that there is a process for resolving differences peacefully, they should lay down their arms.

Now, if you take this step today, it is a first step. It can't restore the bonds of trust by itself. It can't restore the sense of understanding that is necessary for people to live together. So I will also acknowledge that success depends not only on what you say or sign in Arusha but also what you do in the weeks and months and years ahead in Burundi. The agreements you reach have to be respected and implemented both in letter and spirit. Again I say, if you decide to do this, everyone must acknowledge there must be no victors and no vanquished.

If one side feels defeated, it will be likely to fight again, and no Burundian will be secure. And after all, security for all is one of the main arguments for doing this.

Now, let me say something else. Of course, you must confront the past with honesty. There is hardly a Burundian family that has not felt the sorrow of losing a loved one to violence. The history must be told; the causes must be understood. Those responsible for violence against innocent people must be held accountable. But what is the goal here? The goal must be to end the cycle of violence, not perpetuate it.

So I plead with you. I've seen this a lot of places, and it's always the same. You have to help your children remember their history, but you must not force them to relive their history. They deserve to live in their tomorrows, not in your yesterdays. Let me just make one other point. When all is said and done, only you can bring an end to the bloodshed and sorrow your country has suffered. Nelson Mandela will be a force for peace. The United States will try to be a force for peace. But no one can force peace. You must choose it.

Now, again I say, I watched the parties in Ireland fight for 30 years. I've watched the parties in the Middle East fight for 50 years. I've watched the parties in the Balkans now go at it and then quit and then go at it again, and then I've watched—saw a million people driven out of Kosovo. And when we began to talk about peace in Bosnia, the three different ethnic and religious groups didn't even want to sit down together in the same room.

But when it's all said and done, it always comes down to the same thing. You have to find a way to support democracy and respect for the majority and their desires. You have to have minority rights, including security. You have to have shared decisionmaking, and there must be shared benefits from your living together.

Now, you can walk away from all this and fight some more and worry about it, and let somebody come back here 10 years from now. No matter how long you take, when it comes down to it, they'll still be dealing with the same issues. And I say, if you let anybody else die because you can't bring this together now, all you will do is make it harder for people to make the same decisions you're going to have to make here anyway.

So I will say again, if you decide, if you choose not because anybody is forcing you but because you know it is right to give your children their tomorrows, if you choose peace, the United States and the world community will be there to help you make it pay off. We will strongly support an appropriate role for the U.N. in helping to implement it. We will support your efforts to demobilize combatants and to integrate them into a national army. We will help you bring refugees home and to meet the needs of displaced children and orphans. We will help you to create the economic and social conditions essential to a sustainable peace, from agricultural development to child immunization to the prevention of AIDS.

I know this is hard, but I believe you can do it. Consider the case of Mozambique. A civil war there took a million lives, most of them innocent civilians. Of every five infants born in Mozambique during the civil war, three—three—died before their fifth birthday, either murdered or stricken by disease. Those who survived grew up knowing nothing but war. Yet today, Mozambique is at peace. It has found a way to include everyone in its political life. And out of the devastation, last year it had one of the five fastest growing economies in the entire world.

Now, you can do that. But you have to choose. And you have to decide if you're going to embrace that. You have to create a lot of room in your mind and heart and spirit for that kind of future. So you have to let some things go.

Now, Mr. Mandela—he's the world's greatest example of letting things go. But when we got to be friends, I said to him one day, in a friendly way, I said, "You know, Mandela, you're a great man, but you're also a great politician. It was quite smart to invite your jailers to your inauguration. Good politics. But tell me the truth, now. When they let you out of jail the last time and you were walking to freedom, didn't you have a moment when you were really, really angry at them again?" You know what he said? He said, "Yes, I did—a moment. Then I realized I had been in prison for 27 years, and if I hated them after I got out, I would still be their prisoner, and I wanted to be free."

Sooner or later, hatred, vengeance, the illusion that power over another group of people will bring security in life, these feelings can be just as iron, just as confining as the doors of

a prison cell. I don't ask you to forget what you went through in the bitter years, but I hope you will go home to Burundi not as prisoners of the past but builders of the future. I will say again, if you decide, America and the world will be with you. But you, and only you, must decide whether to give your children their own tomorrows.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. in Simba Hall at the Arusha International Conference Cen-

ter. In his remarks, he referred to President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda; President Benjamin William Mkapa of Tanzania; U.S. Special Envoy to Burundi Howard Wolpe; former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; President Daniel T. arap Moi of Kenya; President Paul Kagame of Rwanda; Prime Minister Zenawi Meles of Ethiopia; Tanzanian representatives to peace talks Judge Mark Bomani and Judge Joseph S. Warioba; Rosemary Nyerere, daughter of the late President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania; and President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Cairo

August 29, 2000

Middle East Peace Process

Q. What do you hope to accomplish in this meeting today, Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Clinton?

President Mubarak. We're going to do our best to find a solution for the problem in the Middle East between Israel and the Palestinians. We are making some consultations so as you could help the two parties to reach a framework. It's very important. We hope to finish it by September. We want that.

Q. Are you hopeful, sir?

President Mubarak. I'm always hopeful. And I think with the cooperation with the United States and their support, I think this will be reached.

President Clinton. I think the time is short for resolving this. And I think all the parties understand that without the involvement and leadership and support of Egypt, they won't be able to do it. President Mubarak has been critical to this process for nearly 20 years now, certainly in all the time that I've been here. So we're going to work together and see if we can find a way to help the parties get over this next big hump.

NOTE: The exchange began at 7:10 a.m. at the Presidential Terminal at Cairo International Airport. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Videotaped Address to the People of Colombia

August 24, 2000

Muy buenas noches. Tomorrow morning I will travel to your country to bring a message of friendship and solidarity from the people of the United States to the people of Colombia and a message of support for President Pastrana and for Plan Colombia.

I will be joined on my trip by the Speaker of our House of Representatives, Dennis Hastert, and other distinguished Members of our Congress. We come from different political parties, but we have a common commitment

to support our friend Colombia. As you struggle with courage to make peace, to build your economy, to fight drugs, and to deepen democracy, the United States will be on your side.

Some of the earliest stirrings of liberty in Latin America came in Colombia, as the proud people of Cartagena, of Cali, of Bogota rose up one after the other to fight for independence. Now, nearly two centuries later, Colombia's democracy is under attack. Profits from the drug trade fund civil conflict. Powerful

forces make their own law, and you face danger every day, whether you're sending your children to school, taking your family on vacation, or returning to your village to visit your mother or your father.

The literary genius you call Gabo, your Nobel laureate, painted a portrait of this struggle in his book "News of a Kidnapping." He presented me with a copy, and his book has touched my heart. Now I know why he said writing it was the saddest, most difficult task of his life. And yet, all across Colombia there are daily profiles in courage. Mayors, judges, journalists, prosecutors, politicians, policemen, soldiers, and citizens like you all have stood up to defend your democracy.

Colombia's journalists risk their lives daily to report the news so that powerful people feel the pressure of public opinion. Their courage is matched by the bravery of peace activists and human rights defenders, by reform-minded military leaders whose forces are bound by law, but who must do battle with thugs who subvert the law. There is also uncommon courage among the Colombian National Police. They face mortal danger every moment, as they battle against drug traffickers.

Tomorrow in Cartagena I will meet with members of the police and the military and also with widows of their fallen comrades. The people of Colombia are well-known for their resilience, their ability to adapt. But my friends, enough is enough. We now see millions rising up, declaring *no mas*, and marching for peace, for justice, for the quiet miracle of a normal life.

That desire for peace and justice led to the election of President Pastrana. In the United States, we see in President Pastrana a man who has risked his life to take on the drug traffickers; who was kidnapped by the Medellin, but who kept speaking out. As President, he has continued to risk his life to help heal his country. He has built support across party lines for a new approach in Colombia. The United States supports President Pastrana, supports Plan Colombia, and supports the people of Colombia.

Let me be clear about the role of the United States. First, it is not for us to propose a plan. We are supporting the Colombian plan. You are leading; we are providing assistance as a friend and a neighbor.

Second, this is a plan about making life better for people. Our assistance includes a tenfold

increase in our support for economic development, good governance, judicial reform, and human rights. Economic development is essential. The farmers who grow coca and poppy must have a way to make an honest living if they are to rejoin the national economy. Our assistance will help offer farmers credit and identify new products and new markets.

We will also help to build schoolrooms, water systems, and roads for people who have lost their homes and their communities. Our assistance will do more to protect human rights. As President Pastrana said at the White House, there is no such thing as democracy without respect for human rights. Today's world has no place and no patience for any group that attacks defenseless citizens or resorts to kidnapping and extortion. Those who seek legitimacy in Colombian society must meet the standards of those who confer legitimacy, the good and decent people of Colombia.

Our package provides human rights training for the Colombian military and police and denies U.S. assistance to any units of the Colombian security forces involved in human rights abuses or linked to abuses by paramilitary forces. It will fund human rights programs, help protect human rights workers, help reform the judicial system, and improve prosecution and punishment.

Of course, Plan Colombia will also bolster our common efforts to fight drugs and the traffickers who terrorize both our countries. But please do not misunderstand our purpose. We have no military objective. We do not believe your conflict has a military solution. We support the peace process. Our approach is both pro-peace and antidrug.

The concern over illegal drugs is deeply felt around the world. In my own country, every year more than 50,000 people lose their lives, and many more ruin their lives, because of drug abuse. Still, the devastation of illegal drugs in Colombia is worse. Drug trafficking and civil conflict have led together to more than 2,500 kidnappings last year; 35,000 Colombians have been killed, and a million more made homeless in the past decade alone.

Drug trafficking is a plague both our nations suffer and neither nation can solve on its own. Our assistance will help train and equip Colombia's counterdrug battalions to protect the National Police as they eradicate illicit drug crops

and destroy drug labs. We will help the Colombian military improve their ability to intercept traffickers before they leave Colombia. We will target illegal airstrips, money laundering, and criminal organizations.

This approach can succeed. Over the last 5 years, the Governments of Peru and Bolivia, working with U.S. support, have reduced coca cultivation by more than half in their own countries, and cultivation fell by almost one-fifth in the region as a whole.

Of course, supply is only one side of the problem. The other is demand. I want the people of Colombia to know that the United States is working hard to reduce demand here, and cocaine use in our country has dropped dramatically over the last 15 years. We must continue our efforts to cut demand, and we will help Colombia fight the problems aggravated by our demand.

We can and we must do this together. As we begin the new century, Colombia must face not 100 years of solitude, but 100 years of partnership for peace and prosperity.

Last year I met some of the most talented and adorable children in the world from the village of Valledupar. Ten of them, some as young as 6 years old, came thousands of miles

with their accordions and their drums, their bright-colored scarves and their beautiful voices, to perform for us here at the White House. They sang “*El Mejor*.” They sang “*La Gota Fria*.” Everyone who heard them was touched. Those precious children come from humble families. They live surrounded by violence. They don’t want to grow up to be narcotraffickers, to be guerrillas, to be paramilitaries. They want to be kings of Vallenato. And we should help them live their dreams.

Thousands of courageous Colombians have given their lives to give us all this chance. Now is the moment to make their sacrifice matter. It will take vision; it will take courage; it will take desire. You have all three. In the midst of great difficulty, be strong of heart. *En surcos de dolores, el bien germina ya.*

Viva Colombia. Que Dios los bendiga.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at 9:50 a.m. in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast in Colombia on August 29. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 29. In his remarks, the President referred to President Andres Pastrana of Colombia and author Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

The President’s News Conference With President Andres Pastrana of Colombia in Cartagena August 30, 2000

President Pastrana. Good afternoon. On behalf of all Colombians, it is my great privilege to welcome to Cartagena President Clinton, who has been Colombia’s steadfast friend and honors us enormously with his visit today. I would also like to welcome the distinguished members of his delegation, starting with the Republican Party, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, a very good friend of Colombia, Dennis Hastert; and from the Democratic Party, another great friend of ours, Senator Joseph Biden.

You, Speaker Hastert, are not foreign to Colombia given that you have defended our democracy for many years now and have guided the assistance package through the House. Colombia is truly fortunate to have you as a friend, sir.

Senator Biden, we’re also very pleased to have you once again here in Cartagena. Your understanding of the very complex issues related with Plan Colombia, from human rights to alternative development, have been crucial.

Senators Bob Graham and Mike DeWine are also with us today, two individuals who have led the way in the U.S.–Colombian relations, providing leadership in both trade and counter-narcotics. They are with their colleague Senator Lincoln Chafee, who is visiting Colombia for the first time. Gentlemen, we are very honored with your presence.

However, there is a notable absence, that hurts our hearts, of another friend of Colombia, Paul Coverdell. His passing last month was a deeply-felt loss, and I cannot imagine how we

would have gotten this far without him. We miss him, but what he did so bravely will allow us to—[inaudible].

I would also like to welcome our good friends from the House of Representatives Congressmen Douglas Bereuter, William Delahunt, Sam Farr, Porter Goss, Rubén Hinojosa, and Jim Moran. Each, in your own way, have worked for popular changes for our country.

I'd also like to welcome the members of the President's Cabinet: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Attorney General Janet Reno, leaders of the highest order who have visited us here before. You have taken the cause of burdensharing in the war on illegal drugs across the globe.

The same is true for General McCaffrey, who has worked tirelessly through very many complicated details of our bilateral strategy. And we're also proud to have with us Sandy Berger, National Security Adviser, and John Podesta, the White House Chief of Staff.

Two years ago I traveled to Washington with the high hopes of forming a new partnership with the United States. Today, it is clear, we have accomplished this gesture beyond our expectations. Today, there exists between our two countries a much closer commitment than at any other time in our history.

The United States Government and Congress have offered significant assistance to Plan Colombia, which is my government's strategy for national recovery. This package has been developed by Colombians, has been planned by Colombians, has been presented to the rest of the world by Colombians, and will be implemented by Colombia.

The very important resources support many of the central elements of the plan, including support of political negotiation, alternative developments for subsistent farmers, the battle against drugs, the strengthening of justice, humanitarian assistance, and the protection of human rights. The U.S. assistance is a recognition that the menace of illegal drugs is truly international and, therefore, requires a concerted global response.

We Colombians must address the many challenges our nation faces at this moment in history. We know that the solutions must be our own. Equally important is the understanding that Colombia's armed conflict must be solved by political means. We have asked the United States and the international community to pro-

vide us with new tools and additional resources to build the Colombia of the 21st century. We are grateful for the assistance you have provided.

Many times over the past decades, Colombians have felt alone in bearing the burden of the international drug war. Undoubtedly, this is an international presence, and your presence here today, Mr. President, as a representative of the American people, is a commitment that leads us to know that we're no longer isolated in this struggle.

I'm also pleased we have had the opportunity today to discuss our bilateral economic agenda. Peace in Colombia is tied to prosperity, to economic growth, and new opportunities for all our people, and this includes expanding bilateral trade.

I believe the time has come to move towards an agreement that allows better access for Colombian products into the U.S. markets. I am convinced that, at the end of the day, trade and investment will do more for Colombia and will be more decisive instruments in the battle against drugs given that they will have a sustainable impact for future generations and will contribute to a more prosperous Colombia.

Today is indeed an historic occasion. It marks a decisive moment in a time when two nations join forces to attain common objectives. I have no doubt, ladies and gentlemen, that we have the right policies and that we will be implementing them in the right way and with the right partners.

Finally, I'd like to say that Colombia is most fortunate to have friends as President Clinton, who has earned admiration around the world for his commitment to peace in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, Africa, and today here in Colombia. His legacy as one of his generation's most dedicated peacemakers is assured.

And now it is my privilege to invite the President of the United States to take over the microphone and the podium.

President Clinton. First, I want to thank President Pastrana, members of his government, and legislative leaders who have welcomed us so warmly here today. I'd also like to thank the members of the Colombian media who are responsible for the opportunity I had last night to address the people of Colombia about the commitment of the United States for the success of your democracy.

I'm pleased to be here with all the people the President mentioned: Speaker of the House

Dennis Hastert, Senator Joe Biden, other Members of Congress and the Cabinet and the White House, and I want to thank you, Mr. President, for your reference to Senator Coverdell, who was a friend of Colombia and a friend of our common efforts.

Together we come here to say that the United States—executive and Congress, Republican and Democrat, House and Senate—stand with Colombia in its fight for democracy.

In our meetings, I had a chance to thank President Pastrana for his truly courageous leadership, for a peaceful, prosperous, democratic country free of narcotrafficking. He has pursued this vision fearlessly, as has so many others. The 11 widows of those who gave their lives for the rule of law and human rights and a better future that we met earlier today are the most eloquent testimony of it.

The United States has a strong interest in Colombia, in your economic recovery of the country, in the conservation of your democracy, in the protection of human rights for the people of Colombia, and in your pursuit of peace, security, stability, not only for Colombia but for the whole region and, undoubtedly, in reducing the international drug trade.

Meeting those objectives, for us, is what Plan Colombia is all about. It takes aim at all the interwoven challenges facing Colombia both in the economy and in the civil conflict, fighting drugs, defending human rights, and deepening democracy. And as President Pastrana said, it is Plan Colombia: a plan made by the leaders of Colombia for the people and future of Colombia.

Our support of that plan includes a tenfold increase for social and economic development to help farmers grow legal crops, to train security forces to protect human rights, to help more Colombians find justice by extending access to the courts. This afternoon I will visit a new *casa de justicia* here in Cartagena that does just that. We've also made clear our confidence in President Pastrana's economic approach, and we're working closely with the international financial institutions to encourage their support of the Colombian economy.

Our assistance also makes a substantial investment in Colombia's counterdrug efforts. Drug trafficking breeds violence, breeds corruption, and drives away the jobs that could help to heal this country's divisions. It also supplies most of the cocaine and much of the heroin to the

United States. Our assistance will enhance the ability of Colombian security forces to eradicate illegal crops, destroy drug labs, stop drug shipments before they leave Colombia.

Let me make one point very clear: This assistance is for fighting drugs, not waging war. The civil conflict and the drug trade go hand in hand to cause great misery for the people of Colombia: 2,500 kidnappings in the last year alone; over the last 10 years 35,000 Colombian citizens have lost their lives; 1 million have been made homeless. Our program is antidrugs and propeace.

Forty years of fighting has brought neither side closer to military victory. The President himself has said that over and over. Counterdrug battalions will not change that, and that is not their purpose. Their purpose is to reduce the drug trade that aggravates every problem Colombia faces and exports chaos to the world, including the United States.

I reject the idea that we must choose between supporting peace or fighting drugs. We can do both; indeed, to succeed, we must do both. I reaffirmed to the President our support for the peace process. The people of Colombia have suffered long enough, especially in the area of human rights. No good cause has ever been advanced by killing or kidnapping civilians or by colluding with those who do. Insurgents and paramilitaries alike must end all human rights abuses, as must the security forces themselves.

The President is doing his part to hold the military accountable, and today we discussed his efforts to accelerate efforts to investigate, prosecute, and punish all offenders, whoever they may be.

What happens in Colombia will affect its citizens and this entire region for a very long time to come. There is a lot riding on this President and this Plan Colombia. We are proud to stand with our friend and our neighbor as it fights for peace, freedom, and democracy, for prosperity, human rights, and justice, and for a drug-free future. All these things should be the right of all Colombians.

Thank you.

[At this point, Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert and Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., members of the U.S. delegation, made brief remarks.]

President Pastrana. Let us begin with the round of questions.

Colombia-U.S. Trade

Q. President Clinton, the Colombian Government has been working in order to obtain tariff benefits with the United States. Mr. President, with what do you commit yourself in order to open the way so that Colombia will benefit from benefits which are granted to other countries? And specifically, will the treaty that benefits the Colombian textile makers, will it be extended?

President Clinton. Well, the short answer is, I hope so. But if I could, let me explain this issue not only to the Colombian press but to the American press, because it hasn't received a lot of attention.

We passed a very important bill this year to increase our trade with Africa, because we thought we had not done enough. And we have many African-Americans in the United States, as you do have citizens of African descent in Colombia and all over the eastern part of South America. In that bill, we also had legislation to give more duty-free access to goods from the Caribbean Basin, in the Caribbean. We did it because when we passed the NAFTA trade agreement back in 1993, benefiting our trade with Mexico enormously, it had the unintended consequence of putting a big burden on the Caribbean nations, mostly the little island nations, and it took us all this time to correct it.

Now, we know that this legislation could have severe unintended consequences on Colombia in ways that would undermine the impact of Plan Colombia. So Senator Graham, who is here on this delegation, and Senator DeWine and perhaps others who are here have sponsored a bill which would for one year, on the textile front, in effect, treat the Colombian textiles in the same way as those from the Caribbean island nations and the Central American nations. And that would prevent a mass migration of jobs out of Colombia, and it would give the next President and the new Congress a full year to debate what the next step in the economic integration of our region should be.

So I will say, I will tell you the exact same thing I told the President and the Government inside. We are a couple of months away from an election. The Congress will not be in session much longer. But I think this should be done. The Speaker thinks it should be done. And we don't want the Congress to be in a position of having—or the administration either—of hav-

ing to come up with over \$1 billion in aid that is partly designed to restore the Colombian economy and to move people out of coca production into legitimate earnings and then turn around and take the economic benefits away that were there before we started.

So it's a problem. There is a narrow legislative fix, which Senator Graham and others, Senator DeWine and others, have proposed, which—for the benefit of the American press—would not increase textile imports into our country over and above what they will be anyway over the next year but would keep massive migration of jobs from Colombia to other places in the Caribbean region from occurring. That's basically what Senator Graham's trying to do.

So I just—because it's so close to the end of the session, I wish I could promise you that this will happen. I cannot promise you it will happen. All I can tell you is I will try, and I hope we can do it.

Plan Colombia

Q. President Clinton, 10 years ago President Bush visited here with the same purpose as yours. And in the intervening years, the flow of drugs to the United States illegally has only increased. What makes you believe this new U.S. aid package, although it be part of a broader Colombian plan, can reverse that trend without drawing U.S. troops into a shooting war here?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think that there's a lot of evidence that the flow of drugs out of Colombia, per se, has increased, as Senator Biden said, because efforts in Bolivia and Peru and several other places have been relatively successful. But the overall problem in the United States is abating. Unfortunately, it's getting worse in some other parts of the world.

And I give a lot of credit to General McCaffrey, to the Attorney General, to the Secretary of State, and others. We have worked very hard on this. And I give a lot of credit to the Congress, including the majority party in Congress. There's been an enormous effort over the last 5 years to intensify our efforts to reduce demand in the United States and to more effectively deal with supply. So that's the first thing I would say. We have some evidence that we can succeed.

The second thing I would say is a condition of this aid is that we are not going to get into a shooting war. This is not Vietnam; neither

is it Yankee imperialism. Those are the two false charges that have been hurled against Plan Colombia. You have a perfect right to question whether you think it will work or whether you think we've properly distributed the resources. But I can assure you—a lot of the opposition to this plan is coming from people who are afraid it will work. So that won't happen.

The third thing you asked me—I believe this will work because I think that this President and this government are willing to take the risks necessary to make it work. I think that they're working on developing military forces and police forces that both respect human rights and know they'll be held accountable for abuses and are honest and competent enough to be effective in this battle if the rest of us will give them the resources, support, and training to do it on a level that, at least in our experience—you heard Senator Biden, he's been in the Senate a long time—we have never seen this before at this level in Colombia.

And the fact that the President understands, that he's willing to do something—and I hope the people of Colombia will understand it and be patient with him. He's trying to do two things that no one's ever tried to do at once. But without it, I don't think either problem can be solved. He's trying to fight the narcotrafficking and find a way to have a diplomatic solution to the civil unrest that has dogged Colombia for 40 years. It is a massive undertaking.

Anyway, to summarize, I believe this will work, number one, because we have some evidence that we can make a difference, in the last 5 years; number two, because we have an enormously courageous and I think thoughtful President and plan and team here committed to it; and number three, there won't be American involvement in a shooting war because they don't want it and because we don't want it, because what we have to do is to empower them and then, if there are problems on their borders, to empower their neighbors to solve this with our support.

President Pastrana. I think that the situation today is totally different from the situation 10 years ago, first of all, because we have an integral program to fight against drug trafficking—this is something we did not have before—and this issue was approached only from the police standpoint. But today, for the first time, we are investing in the people.

Plan Colombia, as we have discussed with President Clinton, is not a plan for war. It's a plan for peace. It's a social plan. Seventy-five percent of Plan Colombia will go to social investment, to capacity-building, alternative development. And this is why, for the first time, what we now see is a comprehensive policy so as not to work only from one side but to see how, in an integral way, you can better put an end to the drug issue.

This is why, in addition to Plan Colombia, we're now implementing *Impresa Colombia*, which means that all the social resources of the Colombian states of \$4 or 5 billion that were contributing to Plan Colombia, we're going to allocate it to earmark these resources. They'll be going to the poorest regions, and we'll be investing in infrastructure, alternative development, agricultural policies, social investment, particularly in those areas which are now being affected by violence and civil unrest.

Only a year ago, in Colombia simply because—with the assistance of Speaker Hastert and other Democrat and Republican Senators, the U.S. had given us \$230 million for military equipment. And last year we had the largest U.S. investment in Colombia. Last year it was \$230 million invested in helicopters, and these went to the police. And today, a large amount will be invested only in the social area. So this means that \$250 million will be invested in the people, in our social development, and the promotion and strengthening of human rights and alternative development.

And this is why I would like to highlight that for the first time the United States is investing not only—because it's not only military assistance—and I want to be very clear. The U.S. assistance is an assistance to fight against drug trafficking, and for this reason I say today that we Colombians must feel very pleased to see that this large amount—over \$250 million—will be invested in the marginal areas, in the poorest areas in Colombia.

President Clinton. Could I just follow up and just make one other point on this, again, just because I think it's important that what we do be clearly understood? We have received some criticism in the United States from people who say, well, a majority of the money we're giving is for military or law enforcement purposes. Even though the money we give, about \$300 million, for boosting government capacity and alternative economic development is a tenfold

increase over what we were giving before, it is true that a majority of our assistance is for increasing the capacity of the Colombia people to fight the drug war. But it is important to recognize that that is true largely because we have a unique ability to give those tools to the Colombian forces.

And I want to reiterate what President Pastrana said, because this is what he said to me when he asked us to do this. He said, "I promise you three-quarters of the total investment of the plan will be for nonmilitary, non-law-enforcement things: to build government capacity, to develop the economic and social capacities of the country."

And so the American aid package needs to be seen in the larger context. And I want to thank—the United Nations has given money to this; Spain has given money; Norway has given money; Japan has given money; the international financial institutions—and the Government of Colombia is going to contribute a majority of the \$7.5 billion. And anyone within the sound of my voice—we still need another billion or billion and a half, and we would be glad to have some more help. [Laughter] Thank you very much.

Q. President Clinton, is there a specific situation in which the U.S. Government might consider perhaps giving Colombia military support to fight the guerrillas?

President Clinton. Our involvement is laid out in the terms of Plan Colombia. The President has developed this plan with his team, and it does not contemplate that. And so, the answer is no. That's not authorized by what we did.

What we want to do is to increase the capacity of the Colombian Government to fight the narcotraffickers and, in so doing, to reduce anyone else's income from illegal drug trade and increase the leverage that the President has to find a peaceful resolution of the civil conflict. And that is his policy, not my policy. I'm supporting his policy.

President Pastrana. Once again, in order to make it very clear, while Andres Pastrana is the President of Colombia, we will not have a foreign military intervention in Colombia.

Plan Colombia and Human Rights

Q. Mr. President, several Democratic lawmakers and human rights organizations have criticized you for waiving six conditions, the majority on human rights, in order to release the

\$1.3 billion for this plan. How do you reconcile the waiver with your policy of protecting human rights around the world? And President Pastrana, how long will it take you to meet those conditions, and are they realistic?

President Clinton. First of all, let me say why I did the waiver and begin by saying I support strongly human rights, and I support the human rights provisions of Plan Colombia or, if you will, the human rights requirements for disbursing the aid under Plan Colombia. But there is a reason Congress gave me waiver authority here. Not because they didn't care about human rights, but because they knew that President Pastrana was committed to human rights. He was committed to human rights before he was President of Colombia. He was committed to human rights before he thought of Plan Colombia and before he ever asked us to help. And I would remind you that he has been the victim of perhaps the most severe human rights abuse of all.

So the Congress gave me the waiver authority because they knew there was no way, between the time that they appropriated the money and we needed to spend it, that he could meet every criteria in the legislation, but that if I thought he was committed to doing so and acting in good faith, I could give a waiver so we wouldn't wait another year.

I don't think anyone seriously believes that either the guerrillas or the narcotraffickers will be more careful with human rights than this President. And so creating another year of vacuum in which innocent people can be crushed I think would be a terrible mistake.

On the other hand, you heard what Joe Biden said. If there is to be continued support from the Congress and the next President, then Colombia must meet the requirements of the law. And the President said to me repeatedly that—and he just said publicly that he was. I think I should let him address that.

President Pastrana. As I have told President Clinton and many of my colleagues—journalists, the issue of human rights is not imposed on us by the U.S. Government or by President Clinton. It is the first commitment of the Colombian Government of President Pastrana to fight against the violation of human rights.

As of the moment when we proposed Plan Colombia, as I've had the opportunity of telling several of you, we knew that the eyes of the

world would be focusing on our country and particularly regarding the issue of human rights.

But we're also asking the rest of the world to understand the complexity of the problems that we have in our country. And many times it's difficult for people to understand that we have the illegal defense groups or the guerrilla drugtrafficking common criminals. But likewise, I think that we have made a lot of headway. We have greater alertness on the part of the members of our military forces, and we are demanding the insurgents and the illegal defense groups to better understand that they have to cooperate in terms of not violating human rights. And hopefully, the first agreements to be made in the negotiation peace talks will be related with international humanitarian law and human rights, so as to exclude the civil population and minor combatants from this conflict. Hopefully, we'll be able to arrive at this agreement.

And in addition, we've done a lot also on our part. We have passed the new criminal code; and issues which are very sensitive—such as forced disappearance, genocide, torture—will be dealt with by civil courts; and we have reformed the criminal and military code—we devoted a lot of years to this reform, but today it's a fact—and finally, the Government itself, via the Minister of Defense, has asked for special powers by Congress so as to reform our military forces—and these powers will expire in the future weeks. And this will allow us to get rid of people who are with the military and that might be linked to any human rights violation issues. And it's going to be very important, because in the past our laws did not allow us to do this.

And we gave this as a signal to the rest of the world. The Vice President of Colombia is the person in charge of this issue of human rights. Never before in Colombia has the Vice President and the Vice President's office been in charge of this very important topic in order to promote all our policies regarding human rights.

And I think that many of the proposals made by Congress in order to give Colombia certification for the purposes of Plan Colombia will be achieved in the future weeks. And hopefully, with these reforms that I have mentioned, we'll make headway. But this is a commitment of our Government, and we will support, of course, human rights.

Plan Colombia and Neighboring Countries

President Clinton. Because I expect this is my last trip here before the end of my term, there's one point I did not make in my opening statement that I should have. On behalf of the President and the people of Colombia, I would like to make a personal plea to the neighbors of Colombia and the leaders of those neighboring states—with whom I have worked closely for years, most of them—to be strongly supportive of President Pastrana and Plan Colombia.

There have been many reports that others are reluctant in Latin America to support this for fear that the Plan Colombia, as it succeeds, will cause the problem to spill over the borders into other states. Now, let's be candid: If it's successful, some of that will happen. But we have funds in Plan Colombia, in the American portion of it, that can be used, a substantial amount of money, to help other countries deal with these problems at the borders right when they start.

And I would ask the neighbors of Colombia to consider the alternative. If you really say Colombia can't attack this in an aggressive way because there will be some negative consequences on our border, the logical conclusion is that all the cancer of narcotrafficking and lawless violence in this entire vast continent should rest on the shoulders and burden the children of this one nation. And that's just not right.

And so, I understand the reluctance of the leaders of other countries to embrace this. It's a frightening prospect to take on this. But this man, more than once, has risked his life to do it. So I just want to assure the other countries the United States will not abandon you. We actually have specific provisions in this bill to provide assistance to neighboring countries that suffer adversely because of the disruptions. But this is something that the democratic leaders of this continent should do together, arm in arm, hand in hand. We will be as supportive as we can, but in the end, they'll have to do it together in order to succeed.

And again, Mr. President, I thank you, and I want to thank the leaders of our Congress from the bottom of my heart for doing what I think is a good thing for America to do. Thank you, sir.

Aug. 30 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

NOTE: The President's 193d news conference began at 3:05 p.m. in la Casa de Huespedes. In his remarks, the President referred to NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. President Pastrana referred to Vice President Lemas Gustavo Bell of Colombia. President Pastrana spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were

translated by an interpreter. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Senator Biden and Speaker Hastert. A portion of the President's remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Department of Health and Human Services Action on Federal Services for People With Limited English Proficiency

August 30, 2000

Today I commend the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for being the first Federal agency to respond to Executive Order 13166, which will help people with limited English proficiency (LEP) access Federal and federally funded services. The HHS policy guidance issued today will assist health and social service providers to ensure that LEP individuals can access critical health and social services, and will assist our efforts to eliminate health disparities between LEP and English-speaking individuals. The guidance outlines the legal responsibilities of providers who assist people with limited English proficiency and receive Federal financial assistance from HHS and provides a flexible roadmap to assist those providers in their efforts to meet the language needs of the Nation's increasingly diverse population.

On August 11, 2000, I issued Executive Order 13166, which directed Federal agencies, by De-

cember 11, 2000, to establish written policies on the language accessibility of their programs and the programs of those who receive Federal funds. Federal agencies and recipients of Federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency can meaningfully access their programs. Language barriers are preventing the Federal Government and recipients of Federal financial assistance from effectively serving a large number of people in this country who are eligible to participate in their programs. Failure to systematically confront language barriers can lead to unequal access to Federal benefits based on national origin and can harm the mission of Federal agencies. Breaking down these barriers will allow individuals with limited English proficiency to fully participate in American society.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Digital Computer Exports

August 30, 2000

Dear _____:

In accordance with the provisions of section 1211(d) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105-85) (the "Act"), I hereby notify you of my decision to establish a new level for the notification procedure for digital computers set forth in section 1211(a) of the Act. The new level will be 28,000 Millions of Theoretical Operations per Second (MTOPS). In accordance with the provisions of

section 1211(e), I hereby notify you of my decision to remove Estonia from the list of countries covered under section 1211(b). The attached report provides the rationale supporting these decisions and fulfills the requirements of sections 1211(d) and (e) of the Act. I have made these changes based on the recommendation of the Departments of Defense, Commerce, State, and Energy.

Section 1211(d) provides that any adjustment to the control level described in 1211(a) cannot take effect until 180 days after receipt of this report by the Congress. Section 1211(e) provides that the removal of a country from the group of countries covered by section 1211(b) cannot take effect until 120 days after the Congress is notified. Given the rapid pace of technological change in the information technology industry, I believe these time periods are too long. I hope that we can work together to reduce both notification periods to 30 days.

I have also directed the Secretary of Commerce to adjust the licensing requirements for Tier 2 and Tier 3 countries. The new level above which an individual license will be required for exports to Tier 2 countries is 45,000 MTOPS. In addition, I have decided to implement a single licensing level for Tier 3: the new level above which an individual license will

be required for exports to Tier 3 countries is 28,000 MTOPS. The aforementioned licensing adjustments will take place immediately.

I look forward to working cooperatively with the Congress on these issues.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Phil Gramm, chairman, and Paul S. Sarbanes, ranking member, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 31.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization

August 30, 2000

Dear _____:

I transmit herewith the 6-month report required under the heading "International Organizations and Programs" in title IV of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 1996 (Public Law 104-107), relating to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Senators Joseph R. Biden, Jesse Helms, Patrick J. Leahy, and Mitch McConnell; and Representatives Sonny Callahan, Sam Gejdenson, Benjamin A. Gilman, and Nancy Pelosi. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 31.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Cyprus

August 30, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Chairman:)

In accordance with section 13(b) of the International Security Assistance Act of 1978, Public Law 95-384 (22 U.S.C. 2373(c)), I submit to you this report on progress toward a negotiated settlement of the Cyprus question covering the

period June 1-July 31, 2000. The previous submission covered events during April and May 2000.

The United Nations resumed its efforts to bring about comprehensive negotiations between

the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities in Geneva on July 5. These proximity talks, which began in December 1999 in New York, are continuing. However, as my colleagues at the G-8 Summit in Okinawa and I agreed, the two parties need to intensify negotiations in order to bring about a just and lasting settlement. The United States remains committed to the United Nations process and efforts to bring

about a solution based upon a bizonal, bicomunal federation.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 31.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives Estate Tax Relief Legislation

August 31, 2000

Thank you very much. I want to thank Secretary Mineta and John Sumption and his wife, Margaret, for being here. Martin Rothenberg, thank you very much, and thank you, Sandra, for being here.

I was listening to them talk, wishing I didn't have to say a word. [*Laughter*] It made me proud to be an American, listening to those two people talk. Didn't they do a good job? [*Applause*]

Western Wildfires

Before I begin with the remarks I have on the estate tax, and since this is my only opportunity to speak to the American people through our friends in the press today, I need to make a statement about continuing efforts to combat one of the worst wildfire seasons in the history of America.

For months now, we have been marshaling Federal resources so that the men and women fighting these blazes out West will have the tools they need to protect our public and our lands. There are already 30,000 Federal, State, and local personnel engaged in the effort to fight the wildfires, including four full military battalions. Today I'm releasing another \$90 million to ensure that the Federal firefighters have the resources they need. Now a total of \$590 million has been spent on emergency funding to combat these fires. I want you to remember that for a point I want to make later in my remarks. These things happen.

There will be no shortage of human effort. Tomorrow we are dispatching a new marine bat-

alion from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, to help fight the Clear Creek fire in Idaho's Salmon-Challis National Forest. Last night we issued a disaster declaration for Montana and are expediting a similar request from Idaho.

There is a lot to be done out there. Those people are working hard. The Departments of Agriculture and the Interior have begun to move 2,000 Federal supervisors into the field to assist the firefighters and to get adequate compensation for people that are working long and very stressful hours.

Our Nation owes a great debt of gratitude to the firefighters, the managers, and their loved ones who are making extraordinary sacrifices. Many of them are literally risking their lives today in service to their neighbors and their country. Our losses this year in wildfires have been much, much, much greater than the 10-year average.

And I was out in Idaho recently, and I wish every American could see what they try to do with those fires and how fast they can move and how they can go from being a foot high to 100 feet high in no time at all. So we may have to do more out there, but they're doing their best to protect as much land and to protect the houses and lives of the people as possible.

Estate Tax Legislation Veto

Now, to the matter at hand. As Secretary Mineta said, 7½ years ago we charted a course for a new economy, a new course focused on giving the American people the tools they needed to make the most of the information age

and creating the conditions which would make sure that the hard work of our people would be rewarded. And we all know that since then, we've had the longest economic expansion in history, that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years; we learned last week, the lowest violent crime rate in 28 years; and the highest homeownership in history.

We also had these horrible deficits and a debt which had quadrupled in the 12 years I took office, over the previous 200 years, and we've begun to pay it down at a record rate. This has effectively worked as a tax cut. Why? Because all the economic analyses show that when we went from record deficits to record surpluses and started paying the debt down, it's kept interest rates lower over these last 8 years, much lower than they otherwise would have been.

What has that been worth in tax cuts? Well, the Council of Economic Advisers says that on average it's worth \$2,000 in lower home mortgages a year for the average home, \$200 a year in lower car payments, \$200 a year in lower student loan payments.

We have also supported tax cuts within the context of paying the debt down. For example, in the Balanced Budget Act, we had the HOPE scholarship tax credit and lifelong learning tax credits: the HOPE scholarship for the first 2 years of college, \$1,500; and the lifelong learning credits for the junior and senior year and lifetime education, which can be even greater. Ten million families are taking advantage of that to pay for a college education this year.

The earned-income tax credit, which we doubled, which goes to lower income working people, will help \$15 million families this year work their way into the middle class. The \$500 child tax credit, which was a part of the Balanced Budget Act, will now go to 25 million families. We gave upper income people tax credits to invest in poor areas in America in the empowerment zones, and it's worked to generate thousands of jobs in some of the most distressed areas of the country.

In 1997 we also reduced the burden of the estate tax for small-business owners and family farmers by raising the threshold at which it applies. The typical American family today is paying a lower share of its income in Federal income taxes than at any time during the last 35 years. That is a pretty good thing to be able to say, and yet we're healthy financially

because we have proceeded in a balanced and disciplined way.

Now, everybody knows there is a lot more hard work to be done, and there are differences of opinion about what we ought to do and how we ought to do it. That's why we're having another election this year. And that's up to the American people to decide.

But I believe that prosperity imposes its own difficult choices, because there are so many temptations to do things that seem easy that will have adverse consequences. And I believe it is our job to maximize the chance that America can make the most of a truly unique moment in our history to meet the big challenges that are out there: giving all of our kids a world-class education; making sure, when the baby boomers all retire and there are only two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare, that Social Security and Medicare don't go broke, and we don't bankrupt our kids or their ability to raise our grandkids; that we meet the big challenge of climate change and the other environmental challenges; that we stay on the forefront of science and technology; that we continue to be a force for peace and freedom around the world; that we bring prosperity to the people in America who still aren't part of it and give them a chance to work their way into a good life; and many other things.

Now, in order to do that, a precondition of doing all that is keeping the prosperity going and continuing to expand opportunity. I believe that the only way to do that is to build on what has worked. It's not as if we haven't had a test run here. We've seen now for almost 8 years that the strategy we have pursued of investing in our people but continuing to pay this debt down and doing it within the framework of fiscal responsibility and trying to be fair in the way we invest money and allocate tax cuts works. It works. It's good economics, and it's good social policy.

Now, I believe that this latest estate tax bill is another example where Congress comes up with something that sounds good and looks real good coming down the street on a tractor. [Laughter] But if you look at the merits, it basically would take us off the path that has brought us to this point over the last 8 years, and I don't think we ought to be kicked off that path. I think we ought to think about how to accelerate our way down this road.

I believe that this latest bill, this estate tax bill is part of a series of actions and commitments that, when you add it all up, would take us back to the bad old days of deficits, high interest rates, and having no money to invest in our common future, the kind of things that our speakers talked about in their commitment to education.

Now, let me give you an example. Last year the Republicans passed a huge tax bill in one quick shot, and it was like a cannonball that was too heavy to fly, and so it went away. But they're still committed to it—in fact, an even bigger version of the bill that I vetoed last year. This year they have a strategy that, in a way, is more clever. It's like a snowball, and every piece of it sounds good. But when it keeps rolling, it just gets bigger and bigger and bigger. And unless someone stops it, the snowball will turn into an avalanche, and you'll have the same impact you had before.

Today, a few moments ago, this bill suffered the inevitable fate of a snowball in August. [Laughter] I vetoed it not because I don't think there should be any estate tax changes—I do believe there should be some changes—not because I think that the United States Government should never respond to the legitimate concerns of people who happen to be in upper income levels and have been successful—I think they're entitled to fairness just like all the rest of us—but because this particular bill is wrong for our families and wrong for our future. It fails the test of the future both on grounds of fairness and fiscal responsibility. And I'd just like to lay out the facts in a little greater detail.

The cost of their bill is \$100 billion over 10 years. That sounds—in the context of a \$2 trillion surplus you may say, well, that's not all that much. But to get it down to \$100 trillion, they have to ever so gradually phase it in. In the second 10 years, when all the baby boomers retire and we need as much money as we can for Social Security and Medicare and to keep the burden of the baby boomers' retirement off the rest of you, the real cost of the bill appears. It's \$750 billion.

Now, this is \$750 billion for 54,000 families, 54,000 estates. We'll come back to the smaller number, \$100 billion for 54,000 estates. That's 2 percent of the estates. Now, if it's a farm or a small business, that can be misleading because they may employ lots and lots of people. There may be a lot of people riding on the

welfare of, the success of the small-business people and the farms.

And I've talked to a number of people who say, "You know, I don't want to have to sell my business," or "I don't want my daughter or my son to have to sell the business to pay the estate tax. Yes, they'll still have money, but the business won't be going. Somebody else will be running the business." So, should something be done to help them? Of course. But keep in mind, there are millions of businesses in America—we're talking about 54,000 here—and it's very important to note that over half of the benefits to these 54,000 estates go to less than 6 percent of the estates, less than one-tenth of one percent of the American people, 3,000 of the estates. So over half the benefit of that bill that came down here on a tractor goes to 3,000 people. And I'll bet you not a single one of them ever drove a tractor. [Laughter] I'll bet you if I had a tractor-driving contest with any of those 3,000 people, I would win. [Laughter]

And I say that not to build resentment against them but to say they have presented a picture of this bill which is not accurate. The average tax relief for those 3,000 families would be \$7 million a person. And it will do nothing for the farm families like those represented by our speaker. That is my problem with this bill. It doesn't really do what it says it's supposed to do.

And for the other 98 percent of the American people, literally get nothing out of this. That's another thing I think that is important. This was the first priority. This is the bill that was sent up before an increase in the earned-income tax credit for low-income working people that have three or more kids, before doing more on the child care tax credit, before a long-term care credit for people who have to take care of their elderly or disabled loved ones and long-term care, before doing anything to help average families deduct the cost of college tuition to send their kids to college, before increasing the incentives we want to give wealthy people to invest in the poor areas of America. This was their top priority.

So I say, it fails on grounds of fiscal responsibility; it costs too much; and it fails on grounds of fairness. And let me just mention something else that Martin alluded to when he stood up here. I have had at least two billionaires contact me and ask me to veto this bill. And one of

the reasons they cited is that it would lead to a dramatic drop in charitable contributions.

Studies show that charitable contributions could drop as much as \$5 to 6 billion a year—private contributions to charitable causes—if I were to sign this complete repeal: less money for AIDS research or cancer studies, fewer resources for adoption, fewer opportunities for troubled children, fewer new acquisitions for art galleries and historical museums and historic preservation. This is an element of this bill that has been discussed almost not at all in the public domain. But it is clear that it would be one of the unintended consequences of a complete repeal of the estate tax.

I say again, the estate tax repeal is part of a larger Republican strategy to have, now, over \$2 trillion of tax cuts over the next 10 years. Now, in other words, their aggregate proposals would spend all the projected non-Social Security tax cut.

That leaves nothing for continued improvements of education when the student bodies are just getting larger, more and more kids, and more and more diverse.

Nothing for a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, the biggest problem most seniors have. Nothing to extend the life of Medicare and Social Security beyond the baby boom generation.

Nothing to invest in scientific research and the environment.

Nothing to pay for their proposal to partially privatize Social Security, which itself would require the injection of a trillion dollars more into the Social Security Trust Fund over the next decade.

Nothing for emergencies. Remember, I told you we've already spent \$600 million this year on wildfires in the West. Things happen in life. Things happen in a nation's life just like they happen in your life. Emergencies happen.

Nothing to pay for low farm prices, bad crop years, or in this case, bad foreign policy, and no telling how many billion dollars we spent in the last 3 years trying to keep people like our family farmer here in business because we passed the farm bill in 1995 that made no provision for bad years.

And by the way, the \$2 trillion surplus is just an estimate, anyway. And anybody that knows anything about the Federal budget will tell you that there are just three or four technical reasons it is grossly overestimated.

So I don't think this is a fiscally responsible bill, and I don't think it is a fair bill. And therefore, I vetoed it. Now, does it mean there should be no estate tax relief? Actually, most of us Democrats believe there should be some. Why? Because of the success of the economy in recent years, we've had land values go way up for farmers in many places in the country, and many young people and not-so-young people have enjoyed a lot of success in a hurry in a booming stock market. So that there are a lot of ongoing enterprises that should be able to continue to go on, and you don't want them to have to be transferred in ownership just to pay the tax bill. That's really the unfairness issue that needs to be addressed here.

And we offered two different options to do that in this debate. Both of the Democratic bills in the House and the Senate would allow family farmers and small businesses to leave at least \$4 million per couple without paying any estate tax. That's up from \$1 million, where we're going today.

Unlike the Republican plan, which would make them wait 10 years to get the full benefits, so as to disguise the real cost of a total repeal of the estate tax, the Democratic plans provide immediate relief. The Democratic proposal in the Senate actually eliminated two-thirds of the families from paying the estate tax, covering virtually every so-called small business and family farm in the country, and leaving the people that Martin talked about, for which the estate tax was designed. The House plan left a few more families in the estate tax, but cut the rate for everybody, on the grounds that other rates had been cut in recent years.

The point I want to make is that our party is not against reasonable estate tax relief, nor do we think that people should use all claim for making a fairness case to their government just because they're in upper income levels. But this bill is wrong. It is wrong on grounds of fairness; it is wrong on grounds of fiscal responsibility. It shows a sense of priorities that I believe got us in trouble in the first place in the 1980's and that, if we go back to those priorities, will get us in trouble again.

So I say again to our friends in the Republican Party, John Sumption and Martin Rothenberg made a lot of sense today. They spoke for the best of America. We are not against wealth, and we are not against opportunity. If I were against creating millionaires,

I have been an abject failure in my 8 years as President. [Laughter] We are not against making it possible for farmers and small business people to pass their operations along so that their children do not have to sell the enterprise just to pay the estate tax. Everybody thinks that's wrong.

We are willing to work with you in good faith to modify this estate tax and to take a whole lot of people, including the majority of those now paying it, out from under it entirely if you're willing to work with us. But we are not willing to turn our backs on the rest of the American people who deserve tax relief, who have to have good schools, who have to have good health care, and most important of all, have to have a fiscal policy that keeps us paying the debt down, keeps interest rates low, and keeps the future bright.

And I will just leave you with this one last thought. We have a new study which shows that if we keep on our path and keep paying this debt down, instead of giving away all the projected surplus in tax cuts, it will keep interest

rates another percent a year lower for the next decade, which is worth another \$250 billion home mortgages, another \$30 billion in car payments, and another \$15 billion in college loan payments. That is a very big amount of relief to most people in this country.

So I ask the Republican Congress again, if you're serious about wanting to deal with the problems that estate tax presents, let's get after it and solve them. But we have to proceed on grounds of fiscal responsibility and fairness. And I will never be able to thank this fine farmer from South Dakota and this successful academic and businessman now from New York for giving us a picture of what America is really all about and what we ought to be building on for the new century.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:39 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to farm owner John Sumption and his wife, Margaret; and Glottal Enterprises founder Martin Rothenberg and his daughter, Sandra.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Estate Tax Relief Legislation

August 31, 2000

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 8, legislation to phase out Federal estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer taxes over a 10-year period. While I support and would sign targeted and fiscally responsible legislation that provides estate tax relief for small businesses, family farms, and principal residences along the lines proposed by House and Senate Democrats, this bill is fiscally irresponsible and provides a very expensive tax break for the best-off Americans while doing nothing for the vast majority of working families. Starting in 2010, H.R. 8 would drain more than \$50 billion annually to benefit only tens of thousands of families, taking resources that could have been used to strengthen Social Security and Medicare for tens of millions of families.

This repeal of the estate tax is the latest part in a tax plan that would cost over \$2 trillion, spending projected surpluses that may never

materialize and returning America to deficits. This would reverse the fiscal discipline that has helped make the American economy the strongest it has been in generations and would leave no resources to strengthen Social Security or Medicare, provide a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, invest in key priorities like education, or pay off the debt held by the public by 2012. This tax plan would threaten our continued economic expansion by raising interest rates and choking off investment.

We should cut taxes this year, but they should be the right tax cuts, targeted to working families to help our economy grow—not tax breaks that will help only the wealthiest few while putting our prosperity at risk. Our tax cuts will help send our children to college, help families with members who need long-term care, help pay for child care, and help fund desperately needed school construction. Overall, my tax program will provide substantially more benefits to

middle-income American families than the tax cuts passed by the congressional tax-writing committees this year, at less than half the cost.

H.R. 8, in particular, suffers from several problems. The true cost of the bill is masked by the backloading of the tax cut. H.R. 8 would explode in cost from about \$100 billion from 2001–2010 to about \$750 billion from 2011–2020, just when the baby boom generation begins to retire and Social Security and Medicare come under strain.

Repeal would also be unwise because estate and gift taxes play an important role in the overall fairness and progressivity of our tax system. These taxes ensure that the portion of income that is not taxed during life (such as unrealized capital gains) is taxed at death. Estate tax repeal would benefit only about 2 percent of decedents, providing an average tax cut of \$800,000 to only 54,000 families in 2010. More than half of the benefits of repeal would go to one-tenth of one percent of families, just 3,000 families annually, with an average tax cut of \$7 million. Furthermore, research suggests that repeal of the estate and gift taxes is likely to reduce charitable giving by as much as \$6 billion per year.

In 1997, I signed legislation that reduced the estate tax for small businesses and family farms, but I believe that the estate tax is still burdensome to some family farms and small businesses. However, only a tiny fraction of the tax relief provided under H.R. 8 benefits these important sectors of our economy, and much of that relief would not be realized for a decade. In contrast, House and Senate Democrats have proposed alternatives that would provide significant, immediate tax relief to family-owned businesses and farms in a manner that is much more fiscally responsible than outright repeal. For example, the Senate Democratic alternative would take about two-thirds of families off the estate tax entirely, and could eliminate estate taxes for almost all small businesses and family farms. In contrast to H.R. 8—which waits until 2010 to

repeal the estate tax—most of the relief in the Democratic alternatives is offered immediately.

By providing more targeted and less costly relief, we preserve the resources necessary to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit, extend the life of Social Security and Medicare, and pay down the debt by 2012. Maintaining fiscal discipline also would continue to provide the best kind of tax relief to all Americans, not just the wealthiest few, by reducing interest rates on home mortgages, student loans, and other essential investments.

This surplus comes from the hard work and ingenuity of the American people. We owe it to them—and to their children—to make the best use of it. This bill, in combination with the tax bills already passed and planned for next year, would squander the surplus—without providing the immediate estate tax relief that family farms, small businesses, and other estates could receive under the fiscally responsible alternatives rejected by the Congress. For that reason, I must veto this bill.

Since the adjournment of the Congress has prevented my return of H.R. 8 within the meaning of Article I, section 7, clause 2 of the Constitution, my withholding of approval from the bill precludes its becoming law. The Pocket Veto Case, 279 U.S. 655 (1929). In addition to withholding my signature and thereby invoking my constitutional power to “pocket veto” bills during an adjournment of the Congress, to avoid litigation, I am also sending H.R. 8 to the House of Representatives with my objections, to leave no possible doubt that I have vetoed the measure.

I continue to welcome the opportunity to work with the Congress on a bipartisan basis on tax legislation that is targeted, fiscally responsible, and geared towards continuing the economic strength we all have worked so hard to achieve.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 31, 2000.

Statement on the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse August 31, 2000

Today's 1999 national household survey demonstrates that we are continuing to move in the right direction on the problem of youth drug and tobacco use in America. The report released by Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey shows that last year illicit drug use by young people ages 12–17 declined for the third year in a row. Since 1997, overall youth drug use is down by more than 20 percent, and youth marijuana use has declined by over 25 percent. In addition, while today's report shows underage alcohol use is still at unacceptable levels, it also shows that tobacco use among young people is beginning to decline significantly, following a period of increases earlier in the 1990's.

These findings prove that we are successfully reversing dangerous trends and making important progress. However, none of us can afford

to let down our guard in the fight against drug, tobacco, and alcohol abuse—especially when it comes to our children. While we must continue to engage communities, parents, teachers, and young people in our efforts to drive youth drug and tobacco use down to even lower levels, Congress must also play an important role.

When Congress returns to Washington, I urge them to build on our success by fully funding my administration's substance abuse prevention and treatment initiatives, including the Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, which is sending a powerful message to young people across the nation about the dangers of drugs. Congress should also join Vice President Gore and me 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. Working together, we can give our children healthy drug- and tobacco-free futures.

Remarks at Georgetown University September 1, 2000

Thank you very much. When you gave us such a warm welcome and then you applauded some of Dean Gallucci's early lines, I thought to myself, "I'm glad he can get this sort of reception, because I gave him a lot of thankless jobs to do in our administration where no one ever applauded." And he did them brilliantly. I'm delighted to see him here succeeding so well as the dean. And Provost Brown, thank you for welcoming me here.

I told them when I came in I was sort of glad Father O'Donovan wasn't here today, because I come so often, I know that at some point, if I keep doing this, he will tell me that he's going to send a bill to the U.S. Treasury for the Georgetown endowment. *[Laughter]*

I was thinking when we came out here and Bob talked about the beginning of the school year that it was 35 years ago when, as a sophomore, I was in charge of the freshman orientation. So I thought I should come and help this year's orientation of freshmen get off to a good

start. I also was thinking, I confess, after your rousing welcome, that if I were still a candidate for public office, I might get up and say hello and sit down and quit while I'm ahead. *[Laughter]*

For I came today to talk about a subject that is not fraught with applause lines but one that is very, very important to your future: the defense of our Nation. At this moment of unprecedented peace and prosperity, with no immediate threat to our security or our existence, with our democratic values ascendant and our alliances strong, with the great forces of our time, globalization and the revolution in information technology, so clearly beneficial to a society like ours with our diversity and our openness and our entrepreneurial spirit, at a time like this, it is tempting but wrong to believe there are no serious long-term challenges to our security. The rapid spread of technology across increasingly porous borders raises the specter that more

and more states, terrorists, and criminal syndicates could gain access to chemical, biological, or even nuclear weapons and to the means of delivering them, whether in small units deployed by terrorists within our midst or ballistic missiles capable of hurtling those weapons halfway around the world.

Today I want to discuss these threats with you, because you will live with them a lot longer than I will. Especially, I want to talk about the ballistic missile threat. It is real and growing and has given new urgency to the debate about national missile defenses, known in the popular jargon as NMD.

When I became President, I put our effort to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction at the very top of our national security agenda. Since then, we have carried out a comprehensive strategy to reduce and secure nuclear arsenals, to strengthen the international regime against biological and chemical weapons and nuclear testing, and to stop the flow of dangerous technology to nations that might wish us harm.

At the same time, we have pursued new technologies that could strengthen our defenses against a possible attack, including a terrorist attack here at home.

None of these elements of our national security strategy can be pursued in isolation. Each is important, and we have made progress in each area. For example, Russia and the United States already have destroyed about 25,000 nuclear weapons in the last decade. And we have agreed that in a START III treaty, we will go 80 percent below the level of a decade ago.

In 1994 we persuaded Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus, three of the former Soviet Republics, to give up their nuclear weapons entirely. We have worked with Russia and its neighbors to dispose of hundreds of tons of dangerous nuclear materials, to strengthen controls on illicit exports, and to keep weapon scientists from selling their services to the highest bidder.

We extended the nuclear nonproliferation treaty indefinitely. We were the very first nation to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, an idea first embraced by Presidents Kennedy and Eisenhower. Sixty nations now have ratified the test ban treaty. I believe the United States Senate made a serious error in failing to ratify it last year, and I hope it will do so next year.

We also negotiated and ratified the international convention to ban chemical weapons

and strengthened the convention against biological weapons. We've used our export controls to deny terrorists and potential adversaries access to materials and equipment needed to build these kinds of weapons.

We've imposed sanctions on those who contribute to foreign chemical and biological weapons programs. We've invested in new equipment and medical countermeasures to protect people from exposure. And we're working with State and local medical units all over our country to strengthen our preparedness in case of a chemical or biological terrorist attack, which many people believe is the most likely new security threat of the 21st century.

We have also acted to reduce the threat posed by states that have sought weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, while pursuing activities that are clearly hostile to our long-term interests. For over a decade—for almost a decade, excuse me—we have diverted about 90 percent of Iraq's oil revenues from the production of weapons to the purchase of food and medicine. This is an important statistic for those who believe that our sanctions are only a negative for the people, and particularly the children, of Iraq. In 1989 Iraq earned \$15 billion from oil exports and spent \$13 billion of that money on its military. This year Iraq is projected to earn \$19 billion from its legal oil-for-food exports but can spend none of those revenues on the military.

We worked to counter Iran's efforts to develop nuclear weapons and missile technology, convincing China to provide no new assistance to Iran's nuclear program, and pressing Russia to strengthen its controls on the export of sensitive technologies.

In 1994, 6 years after the United States first learned that North Korea had a nuclear weapons program, we negotiated the agreement that verifiably has frozen its production of plutonium for nuclear weapons. Now, in the context of the United States negotiations with the North, of the diplomatic efforts by former Defense Secretary Bill Perry, and most lately, the summit between the leaders of North and South Korea, North Korea has refrained from flight testing a new missile that could pose a threat to America. We should be clear: North Korea's capability remains a serious issue, and its intentions remain unclear. But its missile testing moratorium is a good development worth pursuing.

These diplomatic efforts to meet the threat of proliferation are backed by the strong and global reach of our Armed Forces. Today, the United States enjoys overwhelming military superiority over any potential adversary. For example, in 1985 we spent about as much on defense as Russia, China, and North Korea combined. Today, we spend nearly 3 times as much, nearly \$300 billion a year. And our military technology clearly is well ahead of the rest of the world.

The principle of deterrence served us very well in the cold war, and deterrence remains imperative. The threat of overwhelming retaliation deterred Saddam Hussein from using weapons of mass destruction during the Gulf war. Our forces in South Korea have deterred North Korea in aggression for 47 years.

The question is, can deterrence protect us against all those who might wish us harm in the future? Can we make America even more secure? The effort to answer these questions is the impetus behind the search for NMD. The issue is whether we can do more, not to meet today's threat but to meet tomorrow's threats to our security.

For example, there is the possibility that a hostile state with nuclear weapons and long-range missiles may simply disintegrate, with command over missiles falling into unstable hands, or that in a moment of desperation, such a country might miscalculate, believing it could use nuclear weapons to intimidate us from defending our vital interests or from coming to the aid of our allies or others who are defenseless and clearly in need. In the future, we cannot rule out that terrorist groups could gain the capability to strike us with nuclear weapons if they seized even temporary control of a state with an existing nuclear weapons establishment.

Now, no one suggests that NMD would ever substitute for diplomacy or for deterrence. But such a system, if it worked properly, could give us an extra dimension of insurance in a world where proliferation has complicated the task of preserving the peace. Therefore, I believe we have an obligation to determine the feasibility, the effectiveness, and the impact of a national missile defense on the overall security of the United States.

The system now under development is designed to work as follows. In the event of an attack, American satellites would detect the launch of missiles. Our radar would track the enemy warheads, and highly accurate, high-

speed ground-based interceptors would destroy them before they could reach their targets in the United States.

We have made substantial progress on a system that would be based in Alaska and that, when operational, could protect all 50 States from the near-term missile threats we face, those emanating from North Korea and the Middle East. The system could be deployed sooner than any of the proposed alternatives. Since last fall, we've been conducting flight tests to see if this NMD system actually can reliably intercept a ballistic missile. We've begun to show that the different parts of this system can work together.

Our Defense Department has overcome daunting technical obstacles in a remarkably short period of time, and I'm proud of the work that Secretary Cohen, General Shelton, and their teams have done.

One test proved that it is, in fact, possible to hit a bullet with a bullet. Still, though the technology for NMD is promising, the system as a whole is not yet proven. After the initial test succeeded, our two most recent tests failed, for different reasons, to achieve an intercept. Several more tests are planned. They will tell us whether NMD can work reliably under realistic conditions. Critical elements of the program, such as the booster rocket for the missile interceptor, have yet to be tested. There are also questions to be resolved about the ability of the system to deal with countermeasures. In other words, measures by those firing the missiles to confuse the missile defense into thinking it is hitting a target when it is not.

There is a reasonable chance that all these challenges can be met in time. But I simply cannot conclude with the information I have today that we have enough confidence in the technology and the operational effectiveness of the entire NMD system to move forward to deployment. Therefore, I have decided not to authorize deployment of a national missile defense at this time. Instead, I have asked Secretary Cohen to continue a robust program of development and testing. That effort still is at an early stage. Only 3 of the 19 planned intercept tests have been held so far. We need more tests against more challenging targets and more simulations before we can responsibly commit our Nation's resources to deployment.

We should use this time to ensure that NMD, if deployed, would actually enhance our overall

national security. And I want to talk about that in a few moments.

I want you to know that I have reached this decision about not deploying the NMD after careful deliberation. My decision will not have a significant impact on the date the overall system could be deployed in the next administration, if the next President decides to go forward. The best judgment of the experts who have examined this question is that if we were to commit today to construct the system, it most likely would be operational about 2006 or 2007. If the next President decides to move forward next year, the system still could be ready in the same timeframe.

In the meantime, we will continue to work with our allies and with Russia to strengthen their understanding and support for our efforts to meet the emerging ballistic missile threat and to explore creative ways that we can cooperate to enhance their security against this threat as well.

An effective NMD could play an important part of our national security strategy, but it could not be the sum total of that strategy. It can never be the sum total of that strategy for dealing with nuclear and missile threats. Moreover, ballistic missiles, armed with nuclear weapons, as I said earlier, do not represent the sum total of the threats we face. Those include chemical and biological weapons and a range of deadly technologies for deploying them. So it would be folly to base the defense of our Nation solely on a strategy of waiting until missiles are in the air and then trying to shoot them down.

We must work with our allies and with Russia to prevent potential adversaries from ever threatening us with nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction in the first place, and to make sure they know the devastating consequences of doing so. The elements of our strategy cannot be allowed to undermine one another. They must reinforce one another and contribute to our national defense in all its dimensions. That includes the profoundly important dimension of arms control.

Over the past 30 years, Republican and Democratic Presidents alike have negotiated an array of arms control treaties with Russia. We and our allies have relied on these treaties to ensure strategic stability and predictability with Russia, to get on with the job of dismantling the legacy of the cold war, and to further the

transition from confrontation to cooperation with our former adversary in the most important arena, nuclear weapons.

A key part of the international security structure we have built with Russia and, therefore, a key part of our national security, is the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty signed by President Nixon in 1972. The ABM Treaty limits anti-missile defenses according to a simple principle: Neither side should deploy defenses that would undermine the other side's nuclear deterrent and thus tempt the other side to strike first in a crisis or to take countermeasures that would make both our countries less secure.

Strategic stability, based on mutual deterrence, is still important, despite the end of the cold war. Why? Because the United States and Russia still have nuclear arsenals that can devastate each other. And this is still a period of transition in our relationship.

We have worked together in many ways: signed an agreement of cooperation between Russia and NATO, served with Russian troops in Bosnia and Kosovo. But while we are no longer adversaries, we are not yet real allies. Therefore, for them as well as for us, maintaining strategic stability increases trust and confidence on both sides. It reduces the risk of confrontation. It makes it possible to build an even better partnership and an even safer world.

Now, here's the issue. NMD, if deployed, would require us either to adjust the treaty or to withdraw from it, not because NMD poses a challenge to the strategic stability I just discussed but because by its very words, NMD prohibits any national missile defense.

What we should want is to both explore the most effective defenses possible, not only for ourselves but for all other law-abiding states, and to maintain our strategic stability with Russia. Thus far, Russia has been reluctant to agree, fearing, I think, frankly, that in some sense, this system, or some future incarnation of it, could threaten the reliability of its deterrence and, therefore, strategic stability.

Nevertheless, at our summit in Moscow in June, President Putin and I did agree that the world has changed since the ABM treaty was signed 28 years ago, and that the proliferation of missile technology has resulted in new threats that may require amending that treaty. And again I say, these threats are not threats to the United States alone.

Russia agrees that there is an emerging missile threat. In fact, given its place on the map, it is particularly vulnerable to this emerging threat. In time, I hope the United States can narrow our differences with Russia on this issue. The course I have chosen today gives the United States more time to pursue that, and we will use it.

President Putin and I have agreed to intensify our work on strategic defense while pursuing, in parallel, deeper arms reductions in START III. He and I have instructed our experts to develop further cooperative initiatives in areas such as theater missile defense, early warning, and missile threat discussions for our meeting just next week in New York.

Apart from the Russians, another critical diplomatic consideration in the NMD decision is the view of our NATO Allies. They have all made clear that they hope the United States will pursue strategic defense in a way that preserves, not abrogates, the ABM Treaty. If we decide to proceed with NMD deployment we must have their support, because key components of NMD would be based on their territories. The decision I have made also gives the United States time to answer our allies' questions and consult further on the path ahead.

Finally, we must consider the impact of a decision to deploy on security in Asia. As the next President makes a deployment decision, he will need to avoid stimulating an already dangerous regional nuclear capability from China to South Asia. Now, let me be clear. No nation can ever have a veto over American security, even if the United States and Russia cannot reach agreement, even if we cannot secure the support of our allies at first, even if we conclude that the Chinese will respond to NMD by increasing their arsenal of nuclear weapons substantially, with a corollary inevitable impact in India and then in Pakistan.

The next President may nevertheless decide that our interest in security in 21st century dictates that we go forward with deployment of NMD. But we can never afford to overlook the fact that the actions and reactions of others in this increasingly interdependent world do bear on our security. Clearly, therefore, it would be

far better to move forward in the context of the ABM Treaty and allied support. Our efforts to make that possible have not been completed.

For me, the bottom line on this decision is this: Because the emerging missile threat is real, we have an obligation to pursue a missile defense system that could enhance our security. We have made progress, but we should not move forward until we have absolute confidence that the system will work, and until we have made every reasonable diplomatic effort to minimize the cost of deployment and maximize the benefit, as I said, not only to America's security but to the security of law-abiding nations everywhere subject to the same threat.

I am convinced that America and the world will be better off if we explore the frontiers of strategic defenses, while continuing to pursue arms control, to stand with our allies, and to work with Russia and others to stop the spread of deadly weapons. I strongly believe this is the best course for the United States, and therefore the decision I have reached today is in the best security interest of the United States. In short, we need to move forward with realism, with steadiness, and with prudence, not dismissing the threat we face or assuming we can meet it while ignoring our overall strategic environment, including the interests and concerns of our allies, friends, and other nations. A national missile defense, if deployed, should be part of a larger strategy to preserve and enhance the peace, strength, and security we now enjoy and to build an even safer world.

I have tried to maximize the ability of the next President to pursue that strategy. In so doing, I have tried to maximize the chance that all you young students will live in a safer, more humane, more positively interdependent world. I hope I have done so. I believe I have.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:23 a.m. in Gaston Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Georgetown University provost Dorothy Brown, president Leo J. O'Donovan, and School of Foreign Service dean Bob Gallucci; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; and President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Message on the Observance of Labor Day, 2000 *September 1, 2000*

Warm greetings to all Americans as we celebrate Labor Day and honor the millions of working men and women across our nation whose achievements have brought us to this moment of unprecedented economic strength and prosperity.

When I took office in 1993, I committed my Administration to putting in place an agenda to get America back on its economic feet while restoring the values of opportunity, responsibility, and community. I believed that we could create a strong economy that was pro-labor as well as pro-business; that was pro-family as well as pro-work. I am proud that we succeeded in raising the minimum wage, signing into law the Family and Medical Leave Act, and cutting taxes for millions of low-income working families by doubling the earned-income tax credit. And today, thanks to the hard work, creativity, and determination of the American people, our country is enjoying the longest economic expansion in our history, with more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, and the smallest welfare rolls in 35 years.

But there is still much to do if we are to build the future we want for our children. We must use this rare moment of peace and prosperity to protect Social Security, modernize Medicare, provide prescription drug coverage for our nation's senior citizens, and enact a strong and enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. We must raise the minimum wage again so that all our workers are able to earn a decent income. We must bridge the digital divide and encourage new investments in underserved regions so that every American community shares in the promise and opportunity of today's dynamic economy. And we must provide America's children with the quality education they need to reach their full potential.

The 20th century was a time of enormous growth and progress for our nation, in large part because of the skill, imagination, and dedication of America's workers. As we celebrate the first Labor Day of this new century, let us honor and thank the working men and women of our nation by building on their accomplishments to create a brighter future for all our people.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in Syracuse, New York *September 1, 2000*

Thank you very much. Well, first, I want to thank Duke and Billie for having us here. I want to thank the neighbors in the back for putting up the bathrooms. *[Laughter]* And I want to thank the neighbors across the street for putting up with the sound. Hello, folks! How are you over there? You get to hear my pitch for free. I want you to vote for Hillary, too. *[Laughter]*

We've all had a good time, and I want to hear the musicians some more. And we've got a magician, and I want to see this. I spent 8 years trying to be one. *[Laughter]* So I just want to say a couple of words here.

First of all, I want to thank the people of New York, including the people of Syracuse and central New York, for being so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore for the last 8 years. It's meant a lot to me. Secondly, I want to thank my buddy Terry McAuliffe and his family for being like a second family to Hillary and me. And little Jack is out there passing out Hillary stickers. He even gave me one. He wasn't sure who I was for. *[Laughter]* And he wanted to make sure I didn't go soft on him between now and election day, so I appreciate that.

I don't know what I can say to you, because you know where I stand on this election. But

I think there are a couple of points I'd like to make that I know. First of all, you should know that to an extraordinary extent, Hillary has played a substantive, positive role in the work we've done over these last 8 years. Everything we've done in education, health care, and helping people balance work and family and taking care of kids, she's had a hand in—from the family and medical leave law in 1993 to our efforts right through this year to promote adoption and to take better care of foster kids and to take care of those kids that go out on their own in the world with nobody to take care of them—and I'm really proud of that—to getting 2 million kids health insurance to all the things we've done to open the doors of college for all. We now have 10 million people getting tax credits for college education today. And she has fought for every single one of those things. I'm very proud of her.

The second thing I want you to know is, because economics is an issue in central New York and north of here, when I was Governor of Arkansas for 12 years, we had to completely turn the economy around. We did not have an unemployment rate below the national average, until I ran for President in 1992, for a decade. And we worked for 10 long years.

During that time, my wife went on the boards of three Arkansas companies—or two Arkansas companies and one other company—and learned what it would take to get people to invest money and to bring jobs to places that had been left behind. And I'm just telling you, of your choices in the Senate race, you've got one person that spent a serious 10 years working to redevelop the economies of places that aren't doing as well as they ought to be doing. And that's experience. It's money in the bank for you, and you ought to take advantage of it.

Now, the third thing I want to say is, I think she can have an enormously beneficial impact for New York all around the country and all around the world. She can help you in all kinds of ways. One of the reasons that I—I wanted her to run for the Senate if she wanted to—who am I to ever tell anybody not to run for anything? But I said, "You know, you've got to be willing to pay the price. I'm going to India and Pakistan, and you can't go. I'm going to Africa, and you can't go. I'm going to Colombia, and you can't go." So everywhere I go in the world, people I don't even know come to me and say—everywhere in the world—say, "I

am pulling for your wife. I'm sorry she can't be here."

At the state dinner the other night in Nigeria, the President of Nigeria, one of the most highly regarded leaders of any developing country in the world, a decorated army general, gets up in the state dinner and says, "I'm really sorry your wife is not here, but I'm glad she's home, and I hope she wins her election." Not normally said at state dinners.

I was in Bombay with my daughter, in India, and this woman who spends her life going out into villages trying to help millions, literally, of women who have been left behind figure out how to borrow money, start businesses, and take better care of their kids—all she talked about to me was Hillary.

And I'm telling you that because there is a reason that the people that are running against her spend all their time trying to run her down. Because they know if the people of New York ever figure out who she is, what kind of person she is, what she's done, and what she can do for them, she will win in a walk. That's what I want you to do in this election.

I thank you for your contributions, but the most important thing is that you realize that elections are decided by people who don't know the candidates, not by people who do. And she is running a campaign based on the issues and the honest differences between her and her opponent.

And you know, their campaign is basically try to paint a—try to do reverse plastic surgery on her. Right? I mean, let's face it. So you gave her the money, and I thank you for that. And she'll spend it well. But I want you to go out and take some time every day between now and November to tell people you came here; you saw this woman; you like her; you admire her; she'd be good for you, good for your kids, good for your future, and great for New York. If you'll do that, she will win on election day.

Thank you, and God bless you.

I've got to say one other thing. This is flat pander, but I'm not running for office, so I can get away with it. I have, for the last 27 years, eaten barbecue for a living. I come from a place where barbecue is not food; it is a way of life. *[Laughter]* It is a philosophy of human nature. I have rarely had any as good as this. These people are great, and I thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts John (Duke) and Billie Jean Kinney;

2000 Democratic National Convention chair Terence McAuliffe and his son, Jack; and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria.

The President's Radio Address

September 2, 2000

Good morning. On this Labor Day weekend, as we relax with our families, we honor the hard-working men and women who've helped build the strongest economy in our Nation's history. With more than 22 million new jobs, record surpluses, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, all Americans have a right to be proud.

But even at this time of unprecedented prosperity, millions of Americans still are working every day for the minimum wage. Today I want to talk about giving them a much deserved raise.

Every one of us knows someone who works for the minimum wage and often struggles to make ends meet, people like Cheryl Costas, a mother of four I met just a few months ago. Cheryl's from a small town in Pennsylvania. She works at a local convenience store for the minimum wage so she can support her four children and her disabled husband. As she said to me, \$5.15 an hour doesn't pay the bills. It doesn't put food on the table.

Seventy percent of all workers on the minimum wage, like Cheryl, are adults; almost 50 percent work full-time; 60 percent are women. In many cases, they are their family's sole breadwinners, struggling to raise their kids on \$10,700 a year. These hard-working Americans need a raise.

For more than 7 years now, our administration has sought to build an America that promotes responsibility and rewards work. That's why we nearly doubled the earned-income tax credit to cut taxes for millions of hard-pressed working parents; why we passed a children's tax credit for \$500 that 15 million Americans have taken advantage of; and why we provided for tax cuts for college tuition that 10 million families have taken advantage of; why we fought to pass the Family and Medical Leave Act that over 20 million Americans have taken advantage of to take a little time off when a baby is born or a parent is sick; why we've worked for better

health care coverage and more child care coverage; and why, in 1996, I signed legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour over 2 years.

It's long passed time we raised it again. In fact, more than a year-and-a-half ago, I proposed to raise the minimum wage by a dollar over 2 years. That's a modest increase that merely restores the minimum wage to what it was way back in 1982 in real dollar terms.

Still, that's no small change to more than 10 million Americans who work for the minimum wage. For a full-time worker, it means another \$2,000 a year, enough for a family of four to buy groceries for 7 months or pay their rent check for 5.

But month after month, even with bipartisan support in Congress, the Republican leadership has sat on our proposal to raise the minimum wage, costing the average full-time worker more than a \$1,000 in lost wages. So far it's been the victim of every legislative maneuver in the congressional handbook, from poison-pill attachments to special interest strong-arming.

Some Republicans have even reverted to the same old attacks they used back in 1996, the last time we raised the minimum wage. Back then, they called the increase, and I quote, a "job killer" that would, quote, "lead to a juvenile crime wave of epic proportions." Well, my fellow Americans, the only thing of epic proportions that's happened since 1996 has been the continued growth of our economy. Since we last raised the minimum wage, our economy has created more than 11 million new jobs, and juvenile crime has gone down every year. Study after study has shown that raising the minimum wage is not only the right thing to do for working families; it's the smart thing to do for our economy.

So my message to Congress is simple: Stop stalling. If the subject is tax breaks for the

wealthy or legislative loopholes for special interest, this Congress moves with breathtaking speed. It's now time for the Republican leadership to stop riding the brakes on the minimum wage.

In the last week, with the election fast approaching, we've seen signs that some Republican leaders may be willing finally to work with us. So when they come back to Washington next week, I urge them to send me a minimum wage bill as the first order of business. It should also include a moderate tax cut package that everyone can agree on, without harmful provisions that would threaten overtime protections.

Once we secure the victory for hard-pressed working families, we can get to work on other pressing priorities—on education, Social Security, Medicare, prescription drug coverage, a Patients' Bill of Rights, a middle class tax package

including deductions for college tuition, and paying down the debt. Now, raising the minimum wage isn't just about dollars and cents; it's also about fundamental values: everybody counts; everyone's work should be rewarded; we all do better when we help each other.

America's workers have kept their end of the deal, and let's keep ours and honor Labor Day the right way, by giving working Americans the raise they have earned.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:05 p.m. on September 1 at a private residence in Cazenovia, NY, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 2. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 1 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Cazenovia, New York September 2, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you for coming. I want to thank Christine and Patty and Les and Sandy and Sarah and everyone else who had anything to do with this event. But especially, I thank our hosts for welcoming us to this beautiful, beautiful home, and we should give them a big hand, I think. *[Applause]*

Thank you, Kelly. And the madrigals were great. Let's give them another hand. *[Applause]* And thank you, Kelly. You were great.

Well, we have had a great day. We just came from the State Fair, and there were tens of thousands of people. And after the other candidate for the Senate refused to eat a sausage sandwich there, this one did not. Let's get right down to the basic issues in this election. *[Laughter]*

Let me say, I want to be very brief because I want Hillary to make the speech tonight, but I want to just make a couple of points. First of all, we are very grateful to the people of New York State for being so good to us and to Al and Tipper Gore these last 8 years. New York has always been there for us. And I hope that you feel that America is better than it was 8 years ago and that it's worked out pretty well for us.

The second point I would like to make is an abbreviated version of what I said in Los Angeles at the Democratic Convention. This country is in very good shape. But how a country uses its prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment, its values, and its vision as how you deal with adversity. And I'm old enough to know now that we may never have another time like this in our lifetime. And in my lifetime, we have never had a time like this before, when we have at once so much prosperity and so little internal stress and external threat.

So we really have a chance to do some things we've never done before, including bring economic opportunity to places in upstate New York that aren't part of our prosperity yet, including giving all of our children a world-class education, including dealing with our long-term challenges from the aging of America, the long-term environmental challenges of the country.

I want Hillary to talk about all of this, but I tell you, how elections come out—I've been involved with them since I was—the first election I ever worked in, I was 8 years old, passing out cards at the polling place for my uncle who was running for State legislature. They had 2-year terms, and his wife made him quit after

one term because she didn't like politics very much. *[Laughter]* But the lesson did not spread to our branch of the family. *[Laughter]*

But I'll tell you what I've learned in all that long time: The winner is often determined by what the people believe the election is about. And I can tell you that for 30 years, from the first time I ever met Hillary, the first thing she ever talked about to me—the welfare of children, and how families cope with work and having kids and succeeded in both ways. I've watched her for 30 years work on foster care, on adoptions, on health care for kids.

And during the period when I was Governor, because of the adversity we faced in our home then in Arkansas, she went on a bunch of big corporation boards; she went out working on how to find—get jobs into places that had been left behind. And when I ran for President, as Governor, the whole thing had turned around, in no small measure because of a lot of the

work she had done in the rural areas and the small towns, in the left-behind areas of our State.

So I'll tell you two things. If you want somebody that understands how to try to create economic opportunity in places that have been left behind and if you want somebody that has spent a whole lifetime always sticking up for kids, for families, and for the proposition that every child matters, she's the best person in America New York could send to the U.S. Senate.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:30 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Leslie and Patty Woodcock and their daughter, Christine Woodcock Dettor, who introduced the President; dinner cochair Sandy Souder and Sarah Nichols; and Kelly McDonald, who sang a song for the President.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda September 5, 2000

Thank you. First of all, I want to thank Senator Daschle and Leader Gephardt for the work they have done and the statements they have made. And I also want to thank Senator Reid and Representative Bonior for their role in the leadership of our party in the House and Senate, and Mr. Podesta and Mr. Lew and Secretary Summers and others were in the meeting that we've just completed.

What we're trying to say is that we are committed to breaking the legislative logjam, but we have to move forward with fiscal responsibility, with responsible tax cuts, and with public investments that give all our people a chance and fuel our prosperity. For 7½ years now, we have followed that program, and it has worked very well for America. It has paid enormous dividends.

Unfortunately, the strategy pursued by the Republican leaders in Congress, I believe, would squander that remarkable success. Month by month and bill by bill, they are attempting to spend our projected surplus for years to come, an estimated \$2 trillion, on massive and reckless tax cuts for the privileged few. This isn't fiscally

responsible. It isn't fair, and it doesn't even take into account that cost that would follow on their plans to partially privatize Social Security, or any spending promises they have made to the American people in this election season.

I believe we owe it to our children to stay on course to pay off the national debt over the next 12 years. If we do it, interest rates will stay low; businesses can grow; generations will know that Social Security and Medicare will be there for them. And I might add, as the Council of Economic Advisers reported to me, it amounts to a tax cut, because paying off the debt, as opposed to spending it all, will keep interest rates, at a minimum—one percent lower a year, over the next decade—and that is worth \$250 billion to the average American families in this country in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, and \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. So that's a \$300 billion tax cut real people get, just by doing the right thing, and I think it's important that we never forget that.

As Dick said, the American people want us to address the pressing issues that affect their

daily lives. Yesterday we celebrated Labor Day. Today it's time to honor the labor of the American people who sent us here. We should do it by raising the minimum wage by a dollar. Congress should stop holding up the process and make it the first order of business.

We should also have sensible tax cuts in the areas of health care, college tuition, long-term care, the environment, and of course, the new markets tax cut, which is a tax cut that all of us support for upper income people to encourage them to invest in lower income people in lower income neighborhoods that have been left behind by our prosperity.

Congress should pass a strong Patients' Bill of Rights, and Senator Daschle, I hope we'll hear that comment that you said over and over again, that the Republican National Committee—the Senate Committee has now identified our bill as the real Patients' Bill of Rights, and I want to thank them for that and ask them to vote accordingly, now that we're back in business.

Americans and people with disabilities should not have to wait another year for an affordable voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit. The money is there. We ought to do this, and we ought not to be wasting a lot of time seeing how much we could parse down what is something clearly a life-or-death matter for so many Americans. Our Nation's 44 million uninsured citizens shouldn't have to wait for a significant expansion of health care.

We have a proposal on the table that would allow the States to enroll the parents of children who are eligible for our Children's Health Insurance Program. We have a proposal on the table that would allow people between the ages of 55 and 65 to enroll in Medicare if they lose their previous health insurance and give them a tax credit to make it affordable. Now, these proposals could take care of 25 percent, and I might say the most needy 25 percent of those 44 million Americans without health insurance. We have the money to do it.

We need to keep working to put 50,000 more police on the street. The 100,000 police program has worked very well. We have the lowest violent crime rate in 27 years now, and we need to keep doing what has worked. We should also pass commonsense gun safety legislation and, I hope, the hate crimes bill. I applaud the Senate for passing the hate crimes legislation, including the Republicans who joined our unani-

mous Democratic caucus in voting for it—or virtually unanimous—and I hope that the House will follow suit.

We need to strip out the anti-environmental riders and press for cleaner air and cleaner water. We need to pass the measures that will enable the American people to combat global warming, and we need to approve permanent conservation funding to protect our natural heritage. We also need to strengthen our laws for providing for equal pay for equal work, pass debt relief for the emerging democracies, normalize trade relations with China.

Most important, we should not forget that the Congress comes back at the beginning of the school year, and there are pressing educational needs for America. The children of this country need more teachers and smaller classes in modern classrooms. We need to continue to support 100,000 good new teachers to reduce class size, and we need Congress to determine finally we're going to do our part to help the school districts of this country replace broken-down buildings and trailers with modern classrooms. Again I will say, we believe in sensible tax cuts for middle class families that make education and long-term care more affordable, not cuts that threaten our prosperity.

Last week I vetoed the Republican estate tax repeal, not because I don't favor reform of the estate tax laws but because absolute repeal is not fiscally responsible, and it's not fair. It was a budget buster that ignored 98 percent of America's families.

Now, later this week, the Republicans say they are going to vote to try to override my veto of the estate tax repeal. Needless to say, the small number of people that are affected have an enormous amount of influence, especially if they can convince a lot of other people that they are affected by the law. But I think it's very important for the American people to remember something else about the estate tax repeal: It is not a bill standing on its own.

Many of these bills they've passed—it's very much—what they've done this year is better politically for them than what they did last year. Last year they sent me a bill down here that was obviously very big and unwieldy and ineffective.

This year, as Mr. Gephardt said, they're sending them down here in discrete bills. And every one of them appeals to some constituency or another. But when you add them all up, it's

still part of a \$2 trillion plan that would wipe out the entire projected budget surplus. And I will say again, that is before we agreed to take Medicare spending off budget, the Medicare taxes, before they had to pay for a privatization plan for Social Security, and before they had to pay for any of their spending plans. They take away all the money that the country would have in a balanced budget to invest in education and health care and the environment for a decade. It is wrong.

Now, they've got a right to try to override any veto that I make. That's the way that the Constitution works. But I wish they would try just as hard to muster up the two-thirds to raise the minimum wage for people that are working 40 hours a week, the students that are still sitting in crowded classrooms and trailers, the patients fighting for the health care they need, the seniors struggling to pay for prescription drugs.

You know, if my health holds up, I'll probably be one of those people that will be fortunate enough to have some estate tax to pay one day, or my heirs will. But I'd kind of like to see us spend a little time—we seem to spend all of our time fighting in Congress over what they want to do to help people who, like me, that America has been very good to. I think we

ought to spend a little more time working on the minimum wage, the schoolchildren, the people who need the Patients' Bill of Rights, the seniors who need the prescription drugs.

This is a great and good country. We should be fair to everybody. I'm for changes in the estate tax. All of us are. They all voted for it, but the Republicans wanted an issue. They want it to be an all-or-nothing thing, and I just don't think that the most fortunate people in this country should be the only ones that are considered here.

I think the folks that don't have anybody up here lobbying for them and the folks that don't have the ability to contribute to any of our campaigns, but to keep this country going day-in and day-out, their kids deserve a good education, too; their parents deserve medicine, too; and they deserve to have the protections that the Patients' Bill of Rights gives that the rest of us can buy. That's what I believe, and we've got 5 weeks to give it to them, and we ought to just saddle up and do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:07 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol to the Madrid Agreement on International Registration of Marks *September 5, 2000*

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to accession, the Protocol Relating to the Madrid Agreement Concerning the International Registration of Marks adopted at Madrid June 27, 1989, which entered into force December 1, 1995. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate are the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol and a February 2, 2000, letter from the Council of the European Union regarding voting within the Assembly established under the Protocol.

The Protocol will offer several major advantages to U.S. trademark owners. First, registration of trademarks internationally will be pos-

sible without obtaining a local agent and without filing an application in each Contracting Party. If the United States accedes to the Protocol, the Protocol will provide a trademark registration filing system that will permit a U.S. trademark owner to file for registration in any number of Contracting Parties by filing a single standardized application in English, and with a single payment in dollars, at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (PTO). The PTO will forward the application to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization (respectively, the "International Bureau" and "WIPO"), which administers the Protocol. Second, under the Protocol, renewal of a trademark registration in each Contracting

Party may be made by filing a single request with a single payment. These two advantages should make access to international protection of trademarks more readily available to both large and small U.S. businesses.

Third, the Protocol will facilitate the recording internationally of a change of ownership of a mark with a single filing. United States businesses experience difficulties effecting valid assignments of their marks internationally due to burdensome administrative requirements for recordation of an assignment in many countries. These difficulties can hinder the normal transfer of business assets. The Protocol will permit the holder of an international registration to record the assignment of a trademark in all designated Contracting Parties upon the filing of a single

request with the International Bureau, accompanied by a single payment. To carry out the provisions of the Protocol, identical implementing legislation, which is supported by my Administration, was passed by the House of Representatives and introduced in the Senate.

Accession to the Protocol is in the best interests of the United States. Therefore, I recommend the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to accession, subject to the declarations described in the accompanying report of the Department of State.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Protocol Amending the 1950 Ireland-United States Consular Convention

September 5, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the Senate's advice and consent to ratification, the Protocol Amending the 1950 Consular Convention Between the United States of America and Ireland, signed at Washington on June 16, 1998. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Protocol.

The Protocol expands the scope of tax exemption under the 1950 Consular Convention Between the United States of America and Ireland to provide for reciprocal exemption from all taxes, including Value Added Taxes (VAT) on goods and services for the official use of the mission or for the personal use of mission members and families. The amendment will provide

financial benefit to the United States, both through direct savings on embassy purchases of goods and services as well as through lowering the cost of living for United States Government employees assigned to the U.S. Embassy in Dublin.

Because the Protocol will achieve long-term tax exemption on the purchase of goods and services for our embassy and personnel in Ireland, I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Lithuania-United States Investment Treaty

September 5, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit

herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the

Government of the Republic of Lithuania for the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investment, with Annex and Protocol, signed at Washington on January 14, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to this Treaty.

The bilateral investment treaty (BIT) with Lithuania was the third such treaty signed between the United States and a Baltic region country. The Treaty will protect U.S. investment and assist Lithuania in its efforts to develop its economy by creating conditions more favorable for U.S. private investment and thereby strengthening the development of its private sector.

The Treaty furthers the objectives of U.S. policy toward international and domestic investment. A specific tenet of U.S. policy, reflected in this Treaty, is that U.S. investment abroad and foreign investment in the United States

should receive national treatment. Under this Treaty, the Parties also agree to customary international law standards for expropriation. The Treaty includes detailed provisions regarding the computation and payment of prompt, adequate, and effective compensation for expropriation; free transfer of funds related to investments; freedom of investments from specified performance requirements; fair, equitable, and most-favored-nation treatment; and the investor's freedom to choose to resolve disputes with the host government through international arbitration.

I recommend that the Senate consider this Treaty as soon as possible, and give its advice and consent to ratification of the Treaty at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Panama-United States Stolen Vehicle Treaty *September 5, 2000*

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Panama for the Return of Stolen, Robbed, or Converted Vehicles and Aircraft, with Annexes, signed at Panama on June 6, 2000, and a related exchange of notes of July 25, 2000. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of stolen vehicle treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to eliminate the difficulties faced by

owners of vehicles that have been stolen and transported across international borders. Like several in this series, this Treaty also covers aircraft. When it enters into force, it will be an effective tool to facilitate the return of U.S. vehicles and aircraft that have been stolen, robbed, or converted and taken to Panama.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and a related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Costa Rica-United States Stolen Vehicle Treaty *September 5, 2000*

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica for the Return of Stolen, Embezzled, or Appropriated Vehicles and Aircraft, with Annexes and a related exchange of notes, signed at San Jose on July 2, 1999. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of stolen vehicle treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to eliminate the difficulties faced by owners of vehicles that have been stolen and

transported across international borders. Like several in this series, this Treaty also covers aircraft. When it enters into force, this Treaty will be an effective tool to facilitate the return of U.S. vehicles and aircraft that have been stolen, embezzled, or appropriated and taken to Costa Rica.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and a related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 5, 2000.

Remarks to the United Nations Millennium Summit in New York City *September 6, 2000*

Madam President, Mr. Secretary-General, my fellow leaders, let me begin by saying it is a great honor to have this unprecedented gathering of world leaders in the United States.

We come together not just at a remarkable moment on the calendar but at the dawn of a new era in human affairs, when globalization and the revolution in information technology have brought us closer together than ever before. To an extent unimaginable just a few years ago, we reach across geographical and cultural divides. We know what is going on in each other's countries. We share experiences, triumphs, tragedies, aspirations.

Our growing interdependence includes the opportunity to explore and reap the benefits of the far frontiers of science and the increasingly interconnected economy. And as the Secretary-General just reminded us, it also includes shared responsibilities to free humanity from poverty, disease, environmental destruction, and war. That responsibility, in turn, requires us to make sure the United Nations is up for the job.

Fifty-five years ago the U.N. was formed to save succeeding generations from the scourge

of war. Today there are more people in this room with the power to achieve that goal than have ever been gathered in one place. We find today fewer wars between nations, but more wars within them. Such internal conflicts, often driven by ethnic and religious differences, took 5 million lives in the last decade, most of them completely innocent victims.

These conflicts present us with a stark challenge: Are they part of the scourge the U.N. was established to prevent? If so, we must respect sovereignty and territorial integrity but still find a way to protect people as well as borders.

The last century taught us that there are times when the international community must take a side, not merely stand between the sides or on the sidelines. We faced such a test and met it when Mr. Milosevic tried to close the last century with a final chapter of ethnic cleansing and slaughter. We have faced such a test for 10 years in Iraq, where the U.N. has approved a fair blueprint spelling out what must be done. It is consistent with our resolutions and our values, and it must be enforced.

We face another test today in Burma, where a brave and popular leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, once again has been confined, with her supporters in prisons and her country in distress, in defiance of repeated U.N. resolutions.

But most conflicts and disputes are not so clear-cut. Legitimate grievances and aspirations pile high on both sides. Here there is no alternative to principled compromise and giving up old grudges in order to get on with life. Right now, from the Middle East to Burundi to the Congo to South Asia, leaders are facing this kind of choice, between confrontation and compromise.

Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak are with us here today. They have promised to resolve the final differences between them this year, finally completing the Oslo process embodied in the Declaration of Principles signed 7 years ago this month at the White House.

To those who have supported the right of Israel to live in security and peace, to those who have championed the Palestinian cause these many years, let me say to all of you: They need your support now, more than ever, to take the hard risks for peace. They have the chance to do it, but like all life's chances, it is fleeting and about to pass. There is not a moment to lose.

When leaders do seize this chance for peace, we must help them. Increasingly, the United Nations has been called into situations where brave people seek reconciliation, but where the enemies of peace seek to undermine it. In East Timor, had the United Nations not engaged, the people would have lost the chance to control their future.

Today I was deeply saddened to learn of the brutal murder of the three U.N. relief workers there by the militia in West Timor, and I urge the Indonesian authorities to put a stop to these abuses.

In Sierra Leone, had the United Nations not engaged, countless children now living would be dead. But in both cases, the U.N. did not have the tools to finish the job. We must provide those tools with peacekeepers that can be rapidly deployed with the right training and equipment, missions well-defined and well-led, with the necessary civilian police.

And we must work, as well, to prevent conflict; to get more children in school; to relieve more debt in developing countries; to do more

to fight malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS, which cause a quarter of all the deaths in the world; to do more to promote prevention and to stimulate the development and affordable access to drugs and vaccines; to do more to curb the trade in items which generate money that make conflict more profitable than peace, whether diamonds in Africa or drugs in Colombia.

All these things come with a price tag. And all nations, including the United States, must pay it. These prices must be fairly apportioned, and the U.N. structure of finances must be fairly reformed so the organization can do its job. But those in my country or elsewhere who believe we can do without the U.N. or impose our will upon it misread history and misunderstand the future.

Let me say to all of you, this is the last opportunity I will have as President to address this General Assembly. It is the most august gathering we have ever had, because so many of you have come from so far away. If I have learned anything in these last 8 years, it is, whether we like it or not, we are growing more interdependent. We must look for more solutions in which all sides can claim a measure of victory and move away from choices in which someone is required to accept complete defeat. That will require us to develop greater sensitivity to our diverse political, cultural, and religious claims. But it will require us to develop even greater respect for our common humanity.

The leaders here assembled can rewrite human history in the new millennium. If we have learned the lessons of the past, we can leave a very different legacy for our children. But we must believe the simple things: that everywhere in every land, people in every station matter; everyone counts; everyone has a role to play; and we all do better when we help each other.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations. In his remarks, he referred to U.N. Millennium Summit cochair President Tarja Halonen of Finland; U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Vladimir Putin of Russia in New York City September 6, 2000

Russia-U.S. Relations

Q. Have you any expectations?

President Putin. Only positive expectations.

President Clinton. I agree with that. This is just part of our ongoing, regular consultation. We're going to have another chance to meet in Asia in a couple of months, and we have a lot of things to talk about. But it's part of our continuing effort to strengthen our relationships and to help our people.

[At this point, a question was asked and answered in Russian, and no translation was provided.]

President Clinton. Thank you. Let me just say one thing about the ABM issue. We have worked together on nuclear issues very closely for virtually the whole time I've been in office and, actually, for quite a long time before that, before I became President. The decision that I made last week on our missile defense will create an opportunity for President Putin and the next American President to reach a common position. And I hope they can, because I think it's very important for the future that we continue to work together.

When we work together, we can destroy thousands of tons of nuclear materials and lots of nuclear weapons and work together in the Bal-

kans for peace. I mean, we can get a lot of things done if we work together. So I hope that the decision that I made will enable my successor and President Putin to resolve this issue and to continue working together on all the arms control issues.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, the deadline set by Israel and the Palestinians is a week from today. Do you have any reason to believe that there might be something worked out by this time, or would you like the parties to discard the deadline?

President Clinton. Well, I haven't met with them yet, but I think that—I think we can work through that if there's a sense of progress—and one of the things I hope I have a chance to talk to President Putin about—but I think the main thing they have to decide is whether there is going to be an agreement within what is the real calendar, which is the calendar that is ticking in the Middle East against the political realities in Israel as well as for the Palestinians. There's a limit to how long they have, and it's not very much longer.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:25 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Joint Statement: Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative Between the United States of America and Russian Federation September 6, 2000

President William Jefferson Clinton of the United States of America and President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation met today in New York and agreed on a Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative as a constructive basis for strengthening trust between the two sides and for further development of agreed measures to enhance strategic stability and to counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, missiles and missile technologies worldwide. In

furtherance of this initiative, the two Presidents approved an implementation plan developed by their experts as a basis for continuing this work.

The Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative builds on the Presidents' agreement in their two previous meetings. The Joint Statement on Principles of Strategic Stability, adopted in Moscow on June 4, 2000, and the Joint Statement on Cooperation on Strategic Stability, adopted in

Okinawa on July 21, 2000, establish a constructive basis for progress in further reducing nuclear weapons arsenals, preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty, and confronting new challenges to international security. The United States and Russia reaffirm their commitment to the ABM Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability. The United States and Russia intend to implement the provisions of the START I and INF Treaties, to seek early entry into force of the START II Treaty and its related Protocol, the 1997 New York agreements on ABM issues and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and to work towards the early realization of the 1997 Helsinki Joint Statement on Parameters on Future Reductions in Nuclear Forces. The United States and Russia also intend to seek new forms of cooperation in the area of non-proliferation of missiles and missile technologies with a view to strengthening international security and maintaining strategic stability within the framework of the Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative between our two countries.

The Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative could include, along with expansion of existing programs, new initiatives aimed at strengthening the security of our two countries and of the entire world community and without prejudice to the security of any state.

START III Treaty and ABM Treaty. The United States and Russia have presented their approaches to the principal provisions of the START III Treaty and on ABM issues. The United States and Russia have held intensified discussions on further reductions in strategic offensive forces within the framework of a future START III Treaty and on ABM issues, with a view to initiating negotiations expeditiously, in accordance with the Moscow Joint Statement of September 2, 1998, the Cologne Joint Statement of June 20, 1999 and the Okinawa Joint Statement of July 21, 2000 by the two Presidents. They will seek to agree upon additional measures to strengthen strategic stability and confidence, and to ensure predictability in the military field.

NPT, CTBT, FMCT, BWC and Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones. The United States and Russia reaffirm their commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the foundation of the international nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime.

The United States and Russia will seek to ensure early entry into force and effective implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. They will continue to work to begin negotiations to conclude a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty and to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention. They will continue to facilitate the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones in the world, based on voluntary agreements among states in the relevant region, consistent with the relevant 1999 Report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as an important avenue for efforts to prevent nuclear weapons proliferation.

Discussions of issues related to the threat of proliferation of missiles and missile technology. The United States and Russia are prepared to expand their discussions of issues related to the threat of proliferation of missiles and missile technologies. These discussions will include annual briefings based on assessments of factors and events related to ballistic and cruise missile proliferation. Annual assessments will address potential threats to international security. With a view to preventing the proliferation of missiles and weapons of mass destruction, political and diplomatic measures will be discussed and undertaken, using bilateral and multilateral mechanisms.

Cooperation in the area of Theater Missile Defense. The United States and Russia are prepared to resume and then expand cooperation in the area of Theater Missile Defense (TMD), and also to consider the possibility of involving other states, with a view to strengthening global and regional stability.

The sides will consider as specific areas of such cooperation:

- Expansion of the bilateral program of joint TMD command and staff exercises.
- Possibility of involving other states in joint TMD command and staff exercises.
- Possibility of development of methods for enhanced interaction for joint use of TMD systems.
- Joint development of concepts for possible cooperation in TMD systems.
- Possibility of reciprocal invitation of observers to actual firings of TMD systems.

Early warning information. The United States and Russia, in implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement between the United States of America and the Russian Federation

on the Establishment of a Joint Center for the Exchange of Data from Early Warning Systems and Notification of Missile Launches signed in Moscow on June 4, 2000, intend to establish and put into operation in Moscow within a year the joint center for exchange of data to preclude the possibility of missile launches caused by a false missile attack warning. The Parties will also make efforts to come to an early agreement on a regime for exchanging notifications of missile launches, consistent with the statement of the Presidents at Okinawa on July 21, 2000.

Missile Non-Proliferation measures. The United States and Russia intend to strengthen the Missile Technology Control Regime. They declare their commitment to seek new avenues of cooperation with a view to limiting proliferation of missiles and missile technologies. Consistent with the July 21, 2000, Joint Statement of the Presidents at Okinawa, they will work together with other states on a new mechanism to integrate, *inter alia*, the Russian proposal for a Global Control System for Non-Proliferation of Missiles and Missile Technologies (GCS), the U.S. proposal for a missile code of conduct, as well as the MTCR.

Confidence and transparency-building measures. Bearing in mind their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the United States and Russia will seek to expand cooperation related to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) to

promote a mutually beneficial technical exchange that will facilitate the implementation of the CTBT after its entry into force. The United States and Russia are prepared to discuss confidence and transparency-building measures as an element of facilitating compliance with, preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty. These measures could include: data exchanges, pre-notifications of planned events, voluntary demonstrations, participation in observations, organization of exhibitions, and strengthening the ABM Treaty compliance verification process.

The Presidents of the United States and Russia have agreed that officials from the relevant ministries and agencies will meet annually to coordinate their activities in this area, and look forward with interest to such a meeting in the near future.

The United States and Russia call upon all nations of the world to unite their efforts to strengthen strategic stability.

The President of
the United States of America

The President of
the Russian Federation

New York City
September 6, 2000

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement. The release issued by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the Strategic Stability Cooperation Initiative Implementation Plan.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in New York City *September 6, 2000*

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. Security Council President; to the Presidents of Finland and Namibia, the Co-Presidents of this remarkable millennial summit. First, let me say again on behalf of the American people, we are deeply honored to host each and every one of you in this largest ever gathering of world leaders. For many of you, this has been a long and difficult journey, and I thank you for coming.

Mr. Secretary-General, I think I speak for all here when I thank you for your hospitality, your leadership, your vision, and your inspiration. A year ago at this luncheon you looked

ahead to the millennial summit and said the following: "It must go beyond a series of statements. It must make decisions, setting the agenda for the United Nations in the new century." You have helped to set that agenda by publishing your millennium report and the report on U.N. peace operations.

You have raised the hardest questions about the U.N.'s responsibilities in this new era and given some of the hard answers. And you have reminded us that the final answers must come from those with the authority and the resources to help the United Nations fulfill its mission.

In the final analysis, all of us in this room and those whom we represent must be up to the challenge if the U.N. is to succeed.

This morning I had the opportunity to address the Assembly in terms of the challenge of making peace and of making the U.N. a more effective instrument of peace. Peace always needs champions who will stand for it because it will always have enemies who will stand against it.

Cervantes once said, "Every man is as heaven made him, and sometimes a great deal worse." [Laughter] Mr. Secretary- General, you are a man as heaven made you, and sometimes a great deal better. You have made the United Nations a trusted champion of the values it was founded to defend on the rough terrain of the real world. Some have called your hope and optimism, your lofty goals, idealistic. I say, good for you. Unless

we first imagine the world we want to build, we cannot achieve it.

And so, Mr. Secretary-General, we thank you for your idealism. We are glad you are here in this position at this important time in history. The world needs you.

I ask all here to join me in a toast to the Secretary-General of our United Nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:02 p.m. in the North Delegates Lounge at the United Nations. In his remarks, he referred to President Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali, president, U.N. Security Council; and U.N. Millennium Summit cochairs President Tarja Halonen of Finland and President Sam Nujoma of Namibia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of International Aid Workers in West Timor *September 6, 2000*

I was deeply saddened to learn today of the death of three dedicated international aid workers, including an American citizen, Mr. Carlos Caseras. Mr. Caseras and his colleagues were employees of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees working on an international humanitarian effort in West Timor. They were killed, and several of their co-workers were injured by local militias who have been on a rampage of violence in West Timor. The United States has repeatedly called on the Indonesian Government to take the necessary actions to disarm and disband these militias. Only such

steps will create a security environment that enables provision of humanitarian assistance, resolution of the refugee problem, and a return to peace in Timor.

This tragedy gives added urgency to the Indonesian Government's obligation to turn words into actions on Timor. The Government of Indonesia must live up to its commitments to restore order and to ensure the safety and welfare of all refugees and foreign nationals.

I want to extend my personal condolences and that of all Americans to Carlos Caseras's family and to the families of the other victims.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Legislation To Establish a National Drunk Driving Standard *September 6, 2000*

Dear _____ :

I am writing to convey my strong support for a critical public safety issue under consideration by the Conference Committee for the FY 01 Transportation Appropriations bill. As you know, the Senate-passed Transportation Appropriations bill includes a provision sponsored by

Senator Frank Lautenberg and supported by Senate Transportation Subcommittee Chairman Richard Shelby to help set a national impaired driving standard at .08 blood alcohol content (BAC). Currently, 18 states already have .08 BAC in place as the legal limit for drunk drivers, and I strongly support making this the

nationwide standard. As the bill moves forward, I urge you to also address a number of other important issues that we have raised separately with the House and Senate versions of the bill.

The final 1999 Fatal Analysis Reporting System (FARS) assessment released today by Department of Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater shows that alcohol-related traffic fatalities are continuing to decline and have hit a record low. However, we are still losing over 15,700 American lives in alcohol-related crashes every year—one every 33 minutes. It is imperative that we do more to save lives and keep drunk drivers off our roads. Enacting a standard of .08 BAC across the country is the next logical step. Studies have shown that a nationwide limit of .08 BAC could save an estimated 500 lives a year.

That is why I strongly urge the Conference Committee to send me a final bill that includes this life-saving .08 BAC provision. The Congress missed an opportunity 2 years ago when confer-

encing the TEA-21 bill to make a .08 BAC standard mandatory, despite strong bipartisan support. Since that time, we have lost over 30,000 more Americans to impaired drivers on our nation's roads. We cannot afford to wait any longer to save more lives.

Along with the thousands of families that have lost loved ones to drunk drivers, I urge you to seize this opportunity to work with your colleagues on the Conference Committee and ensure this provision is in the final FY 01 Transportation Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. An original was not available for verification of the contents of this letter.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the International Air Carriage Rules Convention

September 6, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for Senate advice and consent to ratification, the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules for International Carriage by Air, done at Montreal May 28, 1999 (the "Convention"). The report of the Department of State, including an article-by-article analysis, is enclosed for the information of the Senate in connection with its consideration of the Convention.

I invite favorable consideration of the recommendation of the Secretary of State, as contained in the report provided herewith, that the Senate's advice and consent to the Convention be subject to a declaration on behalf of the United States, pursuant to Article 57(a) of the Convention, that the Convention shall not apply to international carriage by air performed and operated directly by the United States for non-commercial purposes in respect to its functions and duties as a sovereign State. Such a declaration is consistent with the declaration made by

the United States under the Convention for the Unification of Certain Rules Relating to International Carriage by Air, done at Warsaw October 12, 1929, as amended (the "Warsaw Convention") and is specifically permitted by the terms of the new Convention.

Upon entry into force for the United States, the Convention, where applicable, would supersede the Warsaw Convention, as amended by the Protocol to Amend the Warsaw Convention, done at Montreal September 25, 1975 ("Montreal Protocol No. 4"), which entered into force for the United States on March 4, 1999. The Convention represents a vast improvement over the liability regime established under the Warsaw Convention and its related instruments, relative to passenger rights in the event of an accident. Among other benefits, the Convention eliminates the cap on carrier liability to accident victims; holds carriers strictly liable for proven damages up to 100,000 Special Drawing Rights (approximately \$135,000) (Special Drawing

Rights represent an artificial 'basket' currency developed by the International Monetary Fund for internal accounting purposes to replace gold as a world standard); provides for U.S. jurisdiction for most claims brought on behalf of U.S. passengers; clarifies the duties and obligations of carriers engaged in code-share operations; and, with respect to cargo, preserves all of the significant advances achieved by Montreal Protocol No. 4.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification, subject to a declaration that the Convention shall not apply to international carriage by U.S. State aircraft, as provided for in the Convention.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 6, 2000.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea in New York City September 7, 2000

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, how did your Middle East meetings go yesterday? And are there any more meetings planned—did you make any progress?

The President. Well, I think they went basically well. They were good, constructive meetings. I think they both very much want an agreement, and they understand they have a limited time in which to achieve it. And we discussed a whole range of things, in terms of where we were and where we were going.

I don't know if there will be any more meetings while we're here. I worked until late in the night last night, and as you see, I'm here with President Kim, and I have a few other meetings, and then we'll see where we are and what, if anything, else should be done while we're here. But I'm confident there will be a serious effort to work through these things over the next few weeks.

Q. Would that include a summit, sir, before the end of October?

The President. Well, there's been no discussion of that.

Oil Prices

Q. Can you tell us a little bit about your meeting with the Saudi Prince yesterday, any discussion of oil production?

The President. Yes, we talked about it. You know, I told him that I was very concerned that the price of oil was too high, not just for America but for the world, that if it's a cause of recession in any part of the world, that would

hurt the oil producing countries, and there are other reasons why it was not in their interest. And he agreed with that. He's been very strong about that.

And I said I certainly hoped that when OPEC met, there would be an increase in production, because that was the policy they adopted. Remember, they adopted a policy that said if the price got outside the range—as I remember the range, it was \$22, \$28 a barrel—and they would take appropriate action. So I hope that they will.

Of course, in the United States, we had a particular concern because our inventories are at a 24-year low and because in this region, New York and up north, are so dependent on heating oil. And we're attempting now to fill our reserve and to look at what all of our options are, particularly for meeting the home heating oil needs of the American people. So we're working on all that.

I also will say it's not too late for Congress to pass the long-term energy agenda I've had up there for a couple of years, which will make us relatively less reliant on oil by increasing conservation and alternative technologies and energy sources. And I certainly hope that we'll be able to persuade them to pass that in this environment before they go home.

Korean Unification

Q. On Korean unification, do you see any prospects, sir?

The President. Well, I think you ought to ask President Kim. I think the main thing I would like to say about that is that I think he has done a brave and a good thing, not only for the people of his country and North Korea but for the whole stability of the region by taking this initiative. It has been very impressive to me, and I have strongly supported it. And I will continue to strongly support it. I think it's not only good on a human level but for the

long-term security of the Korean Peninsula and all of east Asia—I think it is a very, very positive goal. We will continue to be supportive.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:03 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria. In his remarks, the President referred to Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at a Reception for Leaders of African Nations in New York City September 7, 2000

Well, first of all, let me thank Congressman Jefferson. This reception was his idea, and I thank him for his work on it—and all the Members of the Congressional Black Caucus who helped him who are detained in Washington for votes this afternoon. I want to thank all the leaders of African nations who are here and the diplomats and the business leaders who have come.

There's a simple purpose to this event. We want to say that Africa matters to America. Or as Reverend Jackson, my Special Envoy, was just saying, we don't see Africa as a continent of debtor nations; we see Africa as a credit bank for America's future, an opportunity for a real and genuine and lasting partnership.

I just got back from Nigeria and Tanzania, where I was with some of you in Arusha. And that trip reminded me again of all the positive things that are out there to be built in the future. It also enabled me to say something no American President had ever been able to say: I was glad to go to Africa for the second time.

But I think, and I hope and pray, that no future American President will ever not say that, that we will take it for granted that we should have a broad, comprehensive, in-depth, consistent relationship with Africa. We have a shared interest in making sure that the people of Africa seize their opportunities and work with us to build a common future.

Of course, the governments of Africa have to lay the foundations—the rule of law, a good climate for investment, open markets, and making national investments that broaden the eco-

nomic base and provide benefits to ordinary people. These things will work.

Last year the world's fastest growing economy was Mozambique, and Botswana was second. Nigeria turned a fiscal debt into a surplus. So that will work. But we must also reach out through our Export-Import Bank, our Overseas Private Investment Corporation, our Trade and Development Agency to encourage more American investment in Africa.

We also should encourage the regional trade blocs to unite smaller economies into bigger economic units in more attractive markets. And as Bill Jefferson said, we're going to do our best to make the most of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, the trade act which the Congress passed earlier this year. When we fully implement it, Africa will have much greater access to American markets than any region in the world has to American markets outside North America, and I'm very proud of that.

We are also working to bridge some of the other divides, helping 20 African countries connect to the Internet, training more than 1,500 government and civic institutions to use it. We know we have to do more in communications in rural Africa. There are some rural areas where there is less than one phone line for every 500 inhabitants.

We don't want a digital divide between Africa and the rest of the world, but neither do we want a digital divide to develop within Africa itself, between cities that are connected and villages that are left out. So we will continue to do what we can for trade and technology. We know that is not enough.

A year ago I announced that we would support a global effort on debt relief and that we would completely write off the debts of as many as 27 African nations. Uganda has already used savings on debt payments to double its primary school enrollment—double. Senegal has used theirs to hire 2,000 teachers. Mozambique has used theirs to buy much-needed medicines.

I asked Congressman Jefferson to go back after meeting with all these leaders to influence the Congress to give us the \$435 million we need this year to fully fund our debt relief program this year and to continue to extend debt relief to other deserving countries who will take the savings and invest it in their people and their future.

I also believe we should do more to promote education in Africa. I have launched a \$300 million initiative, which I hope will be nothing more than a pilot program, to work with developing countries to provide free meals—nutritious breakfasts or lunches in school—so that parents will be encouraged to send 9 million more boys and girls to school in countries that desperately need to increase school enrollment.

We estimate that if our friends around the world will join us and if we can cooperate with countries to deliver the food in an appropriate way and to make sure we don't interrupt local farm markets—we don't want to hurt local farmers anywhere—we estimate that for about \$4 billion worldwide, we could provide a nutritious meal in school to every child in every developing country in the entire world. That could change the face of the future for many African countries and many countries in Asia and Latin America, as well.

Finally, we're trying to do more to fight infectious diseases, especially AIDS. I want to thank Sandy Thurman, my AIDS Coordinator, who is here, for all the work she and others in my administration have done to try to help Americans realize that this is a global crisis. Earlier this year, we declared that AIDS was a national security issue for America.

There were some people who made fun of me when I did that—some people who said, "What's the President doing? How can AIDS be a national security crisis?" When you think about all the democracies we want to see do well in the 21st century and all the people who will lose their freedom because they can't even keep their people alive, it is quite clear that AIDS is, in fact, a national security challenge

for the United States that we have to do more to meet.

Now, what are we doing in America? We, again—Bill Jefferson is here—we're trying to get Congress to approve a \$1 billion vaccine tax credit to give tax incentives to our big companies to develop vaccines that they otherwise would not develop because they know most of the people who need the medicine are not able to pay for it. So we are trying to cut the cost of developing it so they will still have a financial incentive to do it, and then, if they develop them, we'll find a way to pay for it and distribute it.

Even as we insist, however, on vaccine research and research for a cure, we should remember that AIDS is 100 percent preventable. We need to do more with education and prevention programs and to break the silence. We have a chance to take on this human challenge together.

One of the most moving experiences I have had as President—and I have been through a lot of interesting and profoundly emotional experiences the last 8 years—but one of the most moving things that's happened to me happened when we were just in Nigeria, and President Obasanjo and I went to this event in an auditorium with a lot of people to talk about what they were doing in Nigeria to try to prevent AIDS. So there were two speakers. The first speaker is a beautiful 16-year-old Nigerian girl who gets up and talks about what she's doing as a peer counselor to talk to her contemporaries to keep the children out of trouble. That was pretty good.

Then this young man gets up. I think he must have been about 30. And he talked about how he fell in love with a woman who was HIV positive and how his family and her family didn't want them to get married, and about how their priest didn't want them to marry, and they were deeply religious people, and how their love was so strong, they finally convinced the priest that they ought to get married. And he finally convinced the parents that it was all right, and so they did. And then he became HIV positive. And then his wife became pregnant. And he had already lost one job because he was HIV positive, and he was desperate to find the money to get the medicine for his wife so that there could be a chance that his child would be born without the virus. And finally, he got the money. His wife took the medicine. The baby was born

without the virus, and he basically was affirming the fact that he was glad he followed his heart, even though he contracted the virus. He was glad that he and his wife had had a child who was free of HIV, and he wanted the world to do more to get rid of this illness.

And then the President of Nigeria brought his wife up on stage and embraced her in front of hundreds of people, and it was all over the press in Nigeria the next day. It changed the whole thinking of a nation about how to approach this disease, to treat the disease as the enemy but not the people who are gripped with it. It was an amazing encounter.

So I just say to all of you, we're committed for the long run. We want to take on the great human challenges. We want to take on the great political challenges. There are some things that you will have to do, but I believe America is

moving inexorably to be a much better partner over the long run for Africa. It is one of the things that I was determined to do when I became President. I am more determined today than I was. And I am more convinced today that it is not an act of charity. It is an act of enlightened self-interest for the world that we should be building together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:50 p.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Jesse Jackson, U.S. Special Envoy to Africa; President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria; Tayo Akimuwagun, peer educator, Nigerian National Center for Women Development; and John Ibekwe, president, Nigerian Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS.

Remarks to the United Nations Security Council in New York City *September 7, 2000*

Thank you very much, Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, members of the Security Council. We come together in this historic session to discuss the role of the United Nations in maintaining peace and security. I thank President Konare for the moment of silence for the U.N. workers who died in West Timor yesterday and ask the Indonesian authorities to bring those responsible to justice, to disarm and disband the militias, and to take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of those continuing to work on humanitarian goals there.

Today I would like to focus my peacekeeping remarks on Africa, where prosperity and freedom have advanced but where conflict still holds back progress. I can't help noting that this historic meeting in this historic Chamber is led by a President and a Secretary-General who are both outstanding Africans. Africans' achievements and the United Nations' strengths are evident. Mozambique and Namibia are just two success stories.

But we asked the United Nations to act under increasingly complex conditions. We see it in Sierra Leone, where U.N. actions saved lives but could not preserve the peace. Now we're working to strengthen the mission. In the Horn

of Africa, U.N. peacekeepers will monitor the separation of forces so recently engaged in brutal combat. In Congo, civil strife still threatens the lives of thousands of people, and warring parties prevent the U.N. from implementing its mandate.

We must do more to equip the United Nations to do what we ask it to do. They need to be able to be peacekeepers who can be rapidly deployed, properly trained and equipped, able to project credible force. That, of course, is the thrust of the Secretary-General's report on peacekeeping reform. The United States strongly supports that report. It should be the goal of our assistance for West African forces that are now going into Sierra Leone.

Let me also say a word, however, beyond peacekeeping. It seems to me that both for Africa and the world, we will be forced increasingly to define security more broadly. The United Nations was created to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. War kills massively, crosses borders, destabilizes whole regions. Today, we face other problems that kill massively, cross borders, and destabilize whole regions.

A quarter of all the deaths on the planet now are caused by infectious diseases like malaria, TB, and AIDS. Because of AIDS alone, life expectancy in some African nations is plummeting by as much as 30 years. Without aggressive prevention, the epicenter of the epidemic likely will move to Asia by 2010, with very rapid growth rates also in the new independent states.

The affected nations must do more on prevention, but the rest of us must do more, too, not just with AIDS but also with malaria and TB. We must invest in the basics, clean water, safe food, good sanitation, health education. We must make sure that the advances in science work for all people.

The United States is investing \$2 billion a year in AIDS research, including \$210 million for an AIDS vaccine. And I have asked our Congress to give a tax credit of \$1 billion to speed the development in the private sector of vaccines against AIDS, malaria, and TB. We have to give the tax credit because the people who need the medicine can't afford to pay for it as it is. We've worked to make drugs more affordable, and we will do more. And we have doubled our global assistance for AIDS prevention and care over the last 2 years.

Unfortunately, the U.N. has estimated that to meet our goals, we will collectively need to provide an additional \$4 billion a year. We must join together to help close that gap, and we must advance a larger agenda to fight the poverty that breeds conflict and war.

I strongly support the goal of universal access to primary education by 2015. We are helping to move toward that goal, in part, with our effort to provide school lunches to 9 million boys and girls in developing nations. For about \$3 billion a year, collectively, we could provide a nutritious meal to every child in every developing country in a school in the world. That would dramatically change the future for a lot of poor nations today.

We have agreed to triple the scale of debt relief for the poorest countries, but we should do more. This idea of relieving debt, if the savings will be invested in the human needs of the people, is an idea whose time has long since come, and I hope we will do much more.

Finally, Mr. Secretary-General, you have called on us to support the millennium ecosystem assessment. We have to meet the challenge of climate change. I predict that within a decade, or maybe even a little less, that will become as big an obstacle to the development of poor nations as disease is today.

The United States will contribute the first complete set of detailed satellite images of the world's threatened forests to this project. We will continue to support aggressive efforts to implement the Kyoto Protocol and other objectives which will reduce the environmental threats we face.

Now, let me just say in closing, Mr. President, some people will listen to this discussion and say, "Well, peacekeeping has something to do with security, but these other issues don't have anything to do with security and don't belong in the Security Council." This is my last meeting; I just have to say I respectfully disagree. These issues will be more and more and more in the Security Council. Until we confront the iron link between deprivation, disease, and war, we will never be able to create the peace that the founders of the United Nations dreamed of. I hope the United States will always be willing to do its part, and I hope the Security Council increasingly will have a 21st century vision of security that we can all embrace and pursue.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:08 p.m. in the Security Council Chamber at the United Nations. In his remarks, he referred to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and President Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali, president, United Nations Security Council.

**Joint Statement by the Permanent Members of the United Nations
Security Council on the Millennium Summit
September 7, 2000**

We, President Jiang Zeming of the People's Republic of China, President Jacques Chirac of the Republic of France, President Vladimirovich Putin of the Russian Federation, Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and President William Jefferson Clinton of the United States of America have met in New York on 7 September 2000 and hereby state the following:

Mindful of the special responsibilities of the Permanent Members of the Security Council in regard to the maintenance of international peace and security, we share a solemn commitment to ensuring that the UN is stronger, more effective and more efficient than ever before as it enters the 21st Century.

The challenges facing the UN and the world community are daunting. To meet such challenges, the world community's response must be quicker, more targeted, and better coordinated than ever before. As the world's only truly universal organization—in terms both of its mandate and its membership—the UN has an essential role in the 21st Century.

The UN can only be as effective, as creative and as authoritative as its members will it to be. Moving into the next century, the Permanent Members of the Security Council pledge, together with the entire membership, to strengthen the UN, ensure the authority of the Security Council and uphold the Purposes and Principles of the Charter. Bearing primary responsibility under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council, in particular its Permanent Members, has an abiding interest in ensuring that the UN is equipped to meet the challenges it faces. We therefore commit ourselves to strengthen the operational capabilities of the Security Council in this area. Only by strengthening our dedication to the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter, and by endowing the UN with the means to deliver on its many commitments, can we fulfill our obligations to ensure that the UN can achieve its full potential.

To this end, we will focus our efforts on the following priority areas:

Enhancing Leadership for Peace and Security—The UN's leadership role, particularly in maintaining international peace and security, must be strengthened to reflect the organization's changing challenges and priorities. This evolution must take into account both the shifting face of the world community and the types of conflicts the UN must confront today. We commit ourselves to foster a more transparent and broadly representative UN Security Council to enhance its effectiveness as the leading body in the field of international peace and security.

Strengthening Peacekeeping—The nature and number of international conflicts demanding UN involvement has shifted fundamentally over the past decade, a change that has yet to be reflected in structural reforms to equip the UN to fulfill the array of mandates it now faces. We pledge to move expeditiously to endow the UN with resources—both operational and financial—commensurate to the tasks it faces in its peacekeeping activities worldwide. Enhancing the United Nations peacekeeping capacity should strengthen the UN's central role in conflict prevention and settlement. We look to the recommendations of the Secretary General's Expert Panel on Peace Operations as an important element to be considered in order to ensure the UN's effectiveness in this vital arena.

Revitalizing Management—The breadth, scope, and complexity of the UN's activities demand effective leadership. We pledge to support steps to empower the Secretary General with a mandate to modernize and streamline the Secretariat further, to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of programs, and to focus the organization's resources on priority areas, while bringing closure to activities that no longer warrant continued investment.

Replenishing Human Resources—The UN's most valuable resource is its people. The skill, vision, and dedication of the UN Secretariat staff have made possible all that the UN has accomplished to date, and will determine the organization's future. We pledge to support prompt steps to ensure that the UN's base of human capital, particularly in the field of peacekeeping, can be fortified through a process that is transparent,

equitable, and designed to attract the very best talent available from all corners of the world.

Reaffirming Financial Commitment—As enshrined in the Charter, the UN's financial base must accurately reflect the capabilities and responsibilities of every Member State. We pledge to support measures to broaden the resource base for this institution through financial structures that are equitable, transparent and reflective of current realities for the regular budget and the peacekeeping budget, and the financing of UN activities. We recognize the need to adjust the existing peacekeeping scale of assessments, which is based on the 1973 system, in light of changed circumstances, including countries' current capacity to pay.

Taking into account our special responsibilities as Permanent Members of the Security Council and the duty of all Member States to meet their financial obligations to the UN, we commit to creating a more stable and equitable financial foundation for current and future UN operations, including through adjustments to the peacekeeping scale of assessment to reflect the role of all Member States, and especially the

role of all Permanent Members in peacekeeping financing.

In each of these areas we pledge to work together in coming months and years to ensure that the UN is imbued with the resources, the vision, and the support it needs. As Permanent Members of the Security Council, we will continue to fulfill our obligations under the Charter and commit to making UN organization stronger and more effective. To that end, we agree to have more regular exchanges of views on important international issues at all levels.

We express our appreciation and support for the UN Secretary General for the role he plays in the service of peace, development and strengthening the United Nations.

As we move into the next century, we pledge to work with the entire UN membership to bridge differences and agree on new measures to build on the promise of the UN's first 55 years.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Child Support Legislation

September 7, 2000

I commend the House of Representatives for its broad bipartisan approval today of the child support distribution act. Vice President Gore and I are committed to promoting responsible fatherhood and making sure more child support goes directly to children, and this bill is an important step toward achieving these goals.

This legislation, which is similar in many ways to my administration's child support budget proposals, allows States to pass through more child support payments directly to families and simplifies child support distribution rules. Like our fathers work/families win initiative, this bill also

provides grants to help low-income fathers and families work, pay child support, and reconnect with their children. These initiatives build on our longstanding commitment to strengthen the role of fathers in their children's lives.

I encourage the Senate to take up this important legislation this year, and I look forward to working with the Congress across party lines to ensure that more fathers can honor their responsibilities and more children can receive both the emotional and financial support they need.

Statement on Retiring the Times Square National Debt Clock *September 7, 2000*

Today we reach a symbolic moment in the improvement of our Nation's fiscal situation that few could have imagined 8 years ago—the retiring of the national debt clock in Times Square. Thanks to Seymour Durst and his family, the debt clock helped shine a vital spotlight on America's mounting national debt, which quadrupled between 1980 and the day I came into office. The debt clock was a constant reminder of the enormous challenge we faced. Today, because of the hard work of the American people and the fiscal discipline that the Vice President and I have worked hard to maintain, we are on our way to eliminating America's publicly held debt for the first time since 1835.

This year we will pay off \$221 billion of debt—the largest one-year debt paydown in American history. This will be the third consecutive year of debt reduction, bringing the 3-year total to \$360 billion and leading to lower interest rates, mortgages, and car payments for American families. We should not be complacent, however, about our fiscal progress. Our record surpluses and the shutting down of the debt clock only underscore the importance of maintaining our commitment to the fiscal discipline which has helped create the longest economic expansion in history and will keep us on path to completely pay off the debt by 2012.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Estate Tax Legislation *September 7, 2000*

I commend the House Members who voted today to reject the majority's flawed estate tax bill. While I support estate tax relief that addresses family farms, small businesses, and principal residences, the approach taken by the majority in Congress is part of a \$2 trillion tax plan that would take us back to the days of deficits, high interest rates, and fiscal irresponsibility. This is a misguided bill that provides a huge tax cut for the most well-off Americans at the expense of working families. It is a key ingredient of a Republican tax plan that would leave nothing for Social Security, Medicare, education, or a voluntary, affordable prescription drug benefit.

This back-loaded bill explodes in cost from \$100 billion from 2001–10 to \$750 billion from 2011–20, just when Medicare and Social Security will come under strain. It benefits only 2

percent of all estates in America and provides half of its benefits to about 3,000 families annually, while more than 10 million Americans wait for an increase in the minimum wage and tens of millions of seniors lack dependable prescription drug coverage. Furthermore, studies by economists have found that repealing the estate tax would reduce charitable donations by \$5 billion to \$6 billion per year.

If the congressional leadership is serious about estate tax relief for small businesses, family farms, and principal residences of middle-class families that have increased in value, they should work with me in a fiscally responsible manner as Democrats in Congress have proposed. Together, we can strengthen Social Security and Medicare, invest in key priorities, and pay off the debt by 2012. This is the right priority for America.

Statement on the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in United States Seaports Report September 7, 2000

I am pleased to receive the report of the Interagency Commission on Crime and Security in U.S. Seaports. In April 1999 I directed the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Transportation to establish the Commission to undertake a comprehensive study of the nature and extent of crime in our seaports and the state of security in those seaports. I also direct the Commission to review the ways in which Federal, State, and local governments are responding to the problem and develop recommendations for improving law enforcement and crime prevention.

Seaports are a key component of our Nation's Marine Transportation System and serve as major gateways for international commerce. As barriers to trade and travel are reduced and volumes of international cargo and passengers continue to grow, opportunities for criminals to exploit or disrupt maritime commerce increase. It is thus essential that we maintain effective security and border control measures to thwart criminals seeking to use our seaports for ter-

rorism, fraud, theft, or smuggling of illegal drugs, migrants, weapons, and other contraband.

The Commission's report documents the current crime problem in seaports, identifies present and projected security threats, and recommends a number of useful measures aimed at reducing the vulnerability of maritime commerce and its supporting infrastructure. The Chief of Staff has initiated a review of the Commission's recommendations, with a view to implementing them as appropriate.

I would like to commend Secretary Summers, Attorney General Reno, and Secretary Slater for their leadership in this important initiative. I would also like to express my appreciation to cochairs Commissioner Ray Kelly of the U.S. Customs Service, Administrator Clyde Hart of the U.S. Maritime Administration, and Assistant Attorney General Jim Robinson, Department of Justice, to their fellow commissioners, and to the professional staff for their vision and hard work in carrying out this initiative.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in New York City September 8, 2000

Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China/ National Missile Defense System

Q. Can you offer any assurances to President Jiang on the China trade bill, that it will eventually be passed, and on the national defense system that you deferred last week?

President Clinton. I believe the legislation will pass, and I'm pleased at the progress it's making in the Senate. But of course, we still have some work to do. The missile defense issue will be resolved by my successor, although I hope we get a chance to talk about it a little bit today.

Human Rights in China

Q. Mr. President, will you make any requests of President Zemin on the question of human

rights as attached to the permanent normal trade relations bill?

President Clinton. We're going to discuss human rights issues, as we always do, but I feel very strongly that PNTR should pass. And I think, over the long run, it's good for the development of democracy and human rights in China, and I know it's good for America-Chinese relationships over the long run.

United Nations Security Council Summit

Q. Mr. Clinton, I know that yesterday you were present at the P-5 summit, which was a Chinese initiative. So as the President of the United States, also a permanent member of the Security Council, what would you say about the P-5 summit yesterday? And also, how do you

see the role of China for international peace and security in this century?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think it was a very good idea by President Jiang to have the P-5 meet. I was amazed that they had never met, or hadn't met in a long time. And I think it was a very good idea. And we actually made a specific decision to, as a group, help the Secretary-General implement his report on peacekeeping and to continue to explore what else we could do together.

I think it might be a forum in the future that would provide an opportunity for Chinese cooperation with the other members of the P-5 in a way that would be very helpful to the rest of the world, as well.

President Fidel Castro of Cuba

Q. Could you describe your encounter with Fidel Castro yesterday?

The President. What Joe said is right. It just happened. There were a whole lot of people in a line. I was talking to them. I turned around, and he was standing there. He apparently had come up and waited, and we must have—the encounter lasted just a few seconds. That's all that happened.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:40 a.m. at the Waldorf-Astoria. In his remarks, the President referred to White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on a Revision of the United Nations' Peacekeeping Costs Assessment Scale

September 8, 2000

I am pleased that so many nations have announced their support for a revision of the United Nations' peacekeeping scale of assessment, a revision that will better reflect the reality of peacekeeping costs in the year 2000. Much will depend on the outcome of this fall's deliberations, including the future of U.N. peacekeeping.

Specifically, I want to express my personal appreciation to the countries who have demonstrated leadership by agreeing to assume additional financial responsibility under the peacekeeping scale: Antigua and Barbuda, Bulgaria, Kuwait, Malta, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, and Slovenia. The formula used for funding

U.N. peacekeeping operations, the so-called scale of assessment, is long out of step with today's realities and is in pressing need of change.

Yesterday all permanent five members of the Security Council supported a revision of the peacekeeping financial structure. My team and I will be working on this important issue for the remainder of this administration.

The U.N. General Assembly will be debating revisions to the scale of assessments over the next few months. These deliberations will be guided and inspired by the example of the countries.

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in New York City

September 8, 2000

Thank you. First of all, I want to thank Jonathan for this incredible setting. It's a beautiful place. It makes me want to get in your line of work, so I can have a place like this. [Laughter] And I want to thank Jerry Colonna and Barbara and Fernando and Ann Espuelas

and Andrew Rasiej and all the people on the host committee and all of you who came tonight for Hillary and for a better future for this country.

I want to thank these Senators here. Nothing I was able to do in the last 8 years would

have been possible without them, both when they were in the majority and most of the time—and even especially—when they were in the minority. I want to thank them for being on our high-tech council and trying to put the Democrats on the side of positive change in this economy.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to Jay Rockefeller, who served with me as Governor for many years. And we used to sit together and ruminate together and fight for the same things together. And the socioeconomic profiles of West Virginia and Arkansas were the two most identical in the country. The real reason I'm glad he's here tonight is that he proved that you could go someplace else and represent them real well in the Senate. [Laughter] He is exhibit A for Hillary's campaign.

I want to thank Mark Green, the public advocate, for being here tonight. And he's my great friend of many years, thank you.

I would just like to make a couple of points in introducing Hillary. First of all, I am profoundly grateful that I've had the chance to serve and grateful for the opportunities that Al Gore and I and our whole administration had to help make America a better place.

I think it is important to point out something that you know because it's a part of what you do every day, and that is that the most important force in the world are ideas—forces in the world. And they have consequences. And if your ideas are good and you implement them, they have good consequences. And if they're not so good, you live with the consequences. We forget that sometimes in politics—when we vote, when we debate issues, we forget that in the end, it really does matter whether your ideas are right or not. And I remember when I went around the country in 1991 and 1992 and the economy was stagnant and inequality was increasing and all the social indicators were going in the wrong direction, I came to the conclusion that one reason was that Washington was being run on a set of ideas that were, if they were ever any good, their time had long since passed, and some of them never were right.

And we changed the economic policy, the welfare policy, the crime policy, the education policy, the health care policy, and the environmental policy and the foreign policy of this country. Ideas have consequences in public life just like they do in what you do.

And so, for me, apart from my extraordinary personal feeling about this race, the reason I'm going around the country now—the first time in 26 years when I haven't been on the ballot during an election—[laughter]—is because I've worked as hard as I could to turn our country around and move it in the right direction. But I honestly believe all the best things are still out there. And I think this is the first time in my lifetime that our Nation has had a chance to shed its baggage, to shed its racial baggage, to shed its homophobic baggage, to shed all of its divisive baggage. My party has shed a lot of its baggage that basically was rooted in our fear of change and has embraced change.

And I really believe that all the best stuff is still out there. You look at the last 8 years. It's a very impressive record. But basically what it did was lay the foundation for Americans together to be able to build the future of our dreams for ourselves and our children. Almost everybody in this room is younger than me, and most days, I'm okay about it. [Laughter] But you've got a lot more at stake in this election than I do.

And I believe that elections are determined, by and large, by what people think they're about. So that if people believe this is really about building the future of our dreams for our children, if they believe we have to empower everyone, if they believe we all do better when we work together, if they believe that the ideas that work are the ones that ought to be embraced instead of the ones that sound good in 5-second sound bites, then we'll win the White House, and we'll win the Senate, and we'll win the House, not because it's us but because of you and the future you want for yourselves and your children.

Martin Luther King once said, "The arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice." It's a wonderful, eloquent line, and a lot of people said, "It's a wonderful, eloquent line, but it may not be true. Look at all the horrible things that happened in the 20th century." There is a new book out by Robert Wright, called "Non Zero." Some of you may have read it. But essentially what he argues is that as societies become more complex and people grow more interdependent, all of us are forced to look more and more for non-zero sum solutions, for win-win solutions, not win-lose solutions, for things that bring us together and unite us and

lift us all up, not things that divide us so I can win at your expense.

And that basically has been the social and economic policy we have tried to follow. I'm very proud that more millionaires and even more billionaires have been created in the last 8 years than at any time in American history by a long stretch. But I'm also proud that the people that are serving and catering this event tonight have a better chance to send their children to college and make a better life than they did before. I think that's important.

I just got back from Nigeria, and I went into this desperately poor village, and I had all these little children dancing for me and giving me their village gifts. And I was looking at those children, wondering whether there was someone who had just as good a brain as I did, who could grow up to speak just as well, and whether that person would have the chance, that boy or girl, to live their dreams as I have.

And one of the reasons I've loved the sort of new, high-tech world, even in the areas that challenge me technologically—[laughter]—is that I think that it is so egalitarian, and I think it's so open to people and their ideas and their efforts. And I think it also has more non-zero action than most sectors of the old economy. That's the sort of politics I believe we ought to embrace.

And so I'm going all across the country trying to help Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and all of our candidates for the Senate and the House, because it's the right thing to do for America's future.

Now, that brings me to Hillary and this race. You have to pick the person who will succeed to the Senate seat of Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Robert Kennedy. You don't have to worry about whether she'll be the junior Senator. Senator Schumer's aggression will take care of that—[laughter]—and I say that with great admiration.

I do want to say one other thing about him. For all the good things he's done, the thing that I'll never forget is that he helped Al Gore and me and our administration stand up to the NRA and stand for gun safety.

But Senator Schumer already said a few things about Hillary. Let me say, of all the things that her adversaries sometimes say, the thing that steams me the most is that she wouldn't be doing this if she weren't the First Lady. What I want you to know is, if she weren't

the First Lady, she'd have been in a position to do this 25 years ago.

She will tell—when we first met and fell in love, I actually felt guilty about it because I thought I was robbing her of the career that I felt she should have. I thought she was better organized than me. I thought she was a better—I thought she understood things about public policy I didn't know. I thought she had more talent as a public servant than anybody I ever met. And I have watched her spend 30 years helping other people as a private citizen, all the way up until she came to the White House and she wrote a best-selling book and gave 100 percent of the money to children's charities that she earned; when she fought for the family and medical leave law; when she fought to insure millions more children under the Child's Health Insurance Program; when she fought for better treatment for breast cancer and diabetes and Parkinson's. And I could just go on and on and on.

I can tell you that when the record of this administration is written, one of the chapters will have to be how she fundamentally changed the scope, depth, and range of the role of First Lady.

I do think there ought to be one person in the Senate who is a recognized national lifetime advocate and expert on children's issues and on the relationship of work and childrearing and on education and health care. I think that's important. But the main thing you need to know is that I still feel the way I did almost 30 years ago: I've never known anybody that I thought had a greater capacity for public service, had a greater sense of mind and heart and operational effectiveness.

And I want to see this seat occupied by someone, yes, that I happened to have loved for three decades, but more important, whose love can change the future of America and New York in a positive way.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner host Jonathan Lidersdorf; dinner host committee members Jerry Colonna, Barbara Chang, Fernando Espuelas and his wife, Ann, and Andrew Rasiej; Senator John D. Rockefeller IV, who was Governor of West Virginia, 1976–1984; and Mark Green, New York City public advocate.

The President's Radio Address *September 9, 2000*

Good morning. This year our Nation is experiencing one of the worst wildfire seasons in memory. Extreme weather and lightning strikes have helped spark an estimated 250 fires every day. More than 6.6 million acres have burned already, and more than 35 large fires continue in 9 States. We've all witnessed the tragedy of family homes destroyed and admired the bravery of firefighters and citizens joining efforts to battle the blazes. I saw it firsthand in Idaho last month, and I'll never forget it.

Today I want to talk with you about important new steps we're taking to help communities recover and to ease the threat of fires in the years ahead. For months now, we've been mobilizing Federal resources to provide firefighters and communities the tools they need to combat the fires. More than 25,000 Federal, State, and local personnel have been engaged in the effort. We provided \$590 million in emergency firefighting funds, and recently I declared Montana and Idaho disaster areas, making them eligible for more Federal relief. But we must do more.

That's why I directed Interior Secretary Babbitt and Agriculture Secretary Glickman to prepare a report outlining a strategy to help communities recover from these fires and to ensure that others are spared from similar tragedies in the future. Today I'm accepting the recommendations contained in this report and announcing the first steps we're taking to implement them.

First, saving lives and property is and will remain priority one. Our Nation is blessed with the best firefighting force in the world. They're doing an extraordinary job in some of the most dangerous and difficult conditions imaginable. Some are finally returning home for well-deserved rest. But the fire season isn't over, and as long as the fires burn, our firefighters will continue to receive our strong support to get the job done as quickly and safely as possible.

Second, we're launching new actions to help hard-hit communities recover as the smoke clears. Once the fires are out, the threat doesn't stop. Rain, for example, could trigger mudslides, and dirty runoff threatens water quality. To help prevent further damage, we've dispatched more than 50 rapid response teams to work with local

communities to develop plans to repair damaged lands and protect precious water supplies.

In addition, we've just released nearly \$40 million for 90 restoration projects throughout the West. We'll also soon establish one-stop centers in Idaho and Montana, so that citizens can gain quick access to assistance, from unemployment aid to small business loans. We want to make sure the help gets to those who need it right away.

Finally, we must continue to take a long-range look to diminish the threats from fires in the years ahead. For almost 100 years our Nation pursued a policy focusing on extinguishing all wildfires. It was well-intentioned, but as a result, many of our forests now have an unnatural buildup of brush and shrubs. This excessive undergrowth fuels forest fires, making them far more dangerous and difficult to control.

Our administration has taken a new approach to protect communities and reduce wildfire risks by getting rid of the forest underbrush that has accumulated over the last century. We're reducing the risk of fire on more than 2.4 million acres a year, a fivefold increase since 1994. We want to work with communities to expand these efforts in an environmentally sensitive way, particularly in those areas at greatest risk of wildfire.

Today's report provides a blueprint for action, immediate steps to deliver assistance to hard-hit communities, new measures to build on our efforts to ease the threat of wildfires nationwide. The report recommends an additional \$1.5 billion to carry out this strategy, and I'm committed to working with the Congress to secure this critical funding.

Throughout this wildfire season, we've seen our fellow citizens come together to save lives and aid communities in need. That's the best of the American spirit. It's reflected in these new steps to help put out the fires today, help communities heal tomorrow, and help to reduce wildfire threats for years to come.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6 p.m. on September 8 at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September

Sept. 9 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Quality Child Care and After-School Opportunities September 11, 2000

Today the Urban Institute released a report highlighting the struggle working parents face in trying to provide supervised care for their children before and after school. The report found that over 4 million children of working mothers ages 6 to 12 were regularly without any adult supervision when they were not in school. While the report highlights that child care patterns for schoolchildren differ greatly from community to community, one thing is clear: Far too many children have no care when they are not in school. Millions of children without care in the hours after school are in harm's way—we know that crime and victimization rates among school-age children are highest in the after-school hours. The report also highlights research showing that high-quality after-school programs can give school-age children access to academic and enrichment activities that lead to improved student achievement and better behavior.

It is clear from this report that we need to do a much better job of providing working parents with access to affordable quality child care or after-school opportunities for their schoolchildren. That is why I call on Congress to respond to the needs of working parents for more help. I ask Congress to accept my budget proposal to invest \$1 billion in the 21st Century Community Learning Center program to provide over 2 million children with after-school opportunities. I also ask that Congress invest in child care options that can be used to provide child care for children up to age 13, expand the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit to help over 8 million families pay for child care, and boost the Child Care and Development Block Grant by an additional \$817 million.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 8 but was embargoed for release until 12:01 a.m. on September 11.

Remarks to the Community of Westchester County in Scarsdale, New York September 11, 2000

Thank you. Patty was really good, wasn't she? [*Laughter*] She did a great job. I want to thank her for being here, for the work she does as a parent and the work she does in her day job for our children.

And thank you Peggy Charren, a long-time friend of Hillary's and mine, and of all the children of America. Thank you, Andy Spano, for being here. And thank you, our great friend Nita Lowey. What a terrific Representative in Congress she is, and I hope you get a little help. Thank you.

I want to thank Eileen Lehrer and Ellen Lazarus and all the people here at the JCC

who made us feel so welcome today. I even got to walk downstairs and shake hands with some of the children and teachers and parents on what I understand is the first day of school—[*laughter*—which makes this quite appropriate.

This happens to me often—and I'm sure it will more and more now that Hillary is in politics as a candidate—but very often I get to speak last, and everything that really needs to be said has already been said. [*Laughter*] Everything that needs to be said has been said. But what does it all mean? And how can we distill it? So let me just try.

First of all, this is, in some ways, the newest of issues and, in some ways, the oldest of issues. Plato said, thousands of years ago, "Those who tell the story, rule society." Whenever a young person comes to me, interested in politics, wanting to run for office, dreaming of public service, and they ask me for advice, I always tell them two things: One is, you've got to have some reason to run bigger than yourself; and the second is, you have to learn to listen, to hear the music of other people's lives, because everybody's got a story.

Now, that's really what this is about. We live in a culture, and a lot of the stories our children have, the stories of their lives, come direct from the accumulated experiences and memories that they absorb from their parents, their grandparents, their extended family, the people of their faith, the people of their school, the people of their community.

And then there's all the stuff they get from a further reach. And more and more and more now, over the last 40 to 50 years, with the advent of television and then the computers and the video games and music video and, frankly, the 24-hour news cycle, and then the explosion of cable channels, you can get more and more and more of your story by indirection, from third party sources, at all hours of the day and night, from all kinds of sources, that parents have less and less direct control over.

Because what this is really about is, what will be the stories that shape these children, and how will they relate to it? And what specifically does this FTC report mean? It's already been mentioned that we've known now for 300 years, through some 300 studies, I might add—300—this is not something that's subject to debate—that regular, persistent exposure of children at young ages to indiscriminate violence tends to make them less sensitive to the real and human impact of violence in their own lives. It changes their story. That's what this is about. It shapes how they think about the implications and the impact of what they do and what other people do.

So we started working on this, I guess, Hillary and I did—well, she started working on it years ago—but from I think the first time I went to Hollywood to talk to people about this was December of 1993, I believe. And then we began to work about 5 years ago with the entertainment community on a ratings system for television programs and on the V-chip. And this

year will be the first year, I think, that all new televisions have to have the V-chip built in. Before, you had to get a little box to go with it.

And meanwhile, we've been working with the video game industry about kind of a ratings system and a little control over access to that. And we've done some more things I'll mention in a minute with movies. But the whole idea was, in the fight to save public broadcasting, to try to encourage more children's and educational programming on all networks, the fight to get the TV ratings system and the V-chip and deal with the video games and the movies—the whole idea was to try to give parents more control over the stories of their children's lives at their earliest and most vulnerable points, so that later on, the kids would be happier and more full and less anxiety-ridden, and the society would be more stable and less violent.

And it's a very old story. What Plato said a long time ago is still true today. So the problem is, this FTC report says that some entertainment companies are engaged in marketing practices that if not illegal are clearly wrong because they're trying to sell their movies and their other products to the very people that they, themselves, say shouldn't see them. "So here's my rating system. Here's what I hope the parents will act on, and while the parents aren't looking, I'm going to beam this advertising in and hope they'll come anyway."

This validates what Hillary has been saying for years. But the real issue is, what are we going to do?

I don't really think that there are a lot of people making these movies and video games that hope your kids turn out to be violent. Do you? I mean, I don't think that they want your kids to have a twisted story and our society to become ever more unstable. This is about the economics of the modern media: both the explosion of media outlets, the explosion of movies being made, the explosion of video games being made, the explosion of television programs being made, a gazillion channels on your television at night; the coming integration of all these media forces so that some day not too long from now you'll hang a thin little, very high-definition screen up on a wall, take it from wall to wall in your house, and you'll be able to have the Internet and your video games and your television, and sooner or later, we're going to beam direct in movies. You won't even have

to wait for the DVD. That's what's all happening. And there will be a gazillion options, and it will be 24 hours a day, and that's where it's going.

And what happens is—and these people face the same problems here, same challenges. All these folks are just giving us news. And what happens to them? You know, a very small percentage of these films make money directly in the theater. And interestingly enough, the R-rated movies, a smaller percentage of them than the G and the PG movies make money directly in the theater. So a lot of these movies are made for an after-market. But they've got to get as much money as they can. We're just talking about the movies now. And they turn around and sell the movies to television or sell the movies overseas or whatever. But that's no help to you. You've got children to raise. You don't care about their problems.

And we're working this out as a society. I'm very worried about it for a lot of reasons. It used to be all of the programming that only adults should see when we had three networks were on television at night, after a certain time. Now everything is on all the time, at least somewhere. I don't know when some people sleep at all anymore. [Laughter] The whole rhythm and pattern of normal life has been affected by this constant barrage of stuff.

Now, last spring I asked the movie industry to reevaluate the PG rating, to make sure that it was meaning something. And I asked them to keep guns out of the ads that kids might see. And I asked the theater and video owners to enforce more strictly the ratings system.

Now, I'm glad that the theater owners accepted this challenge, and the report shows that they're actually making progress. But according to the FTC investigators, underage children still frequently are sold tickets for R-rated movies.

So here's where we are on the specific issue at hand. We know that extreme, consistent, persistent exposure to violence of children at young ages desensitizes them to the impact of their own behavior and others. It disables them from having full feelings about violent conduct. We know this. This is not subject to debate.

We know now that we're making progress with a lot of good people in the entertainment industry. They're doing more to rate their shows and try to provide other kinds of shows. But we know that a lot of people are out there now—we know—today, advertising these very

programs to the people they say shouldn't see them and that some of the people who control children's access in theaters are still letting them in, in a very casual way.

So what do we do? Peggy said we don't want to get into first amendment censorship. I agree with that. I think we have to challenge and say, the American people, "I agree with what Hillary said." The American people will give, I think, the entertainment industry a period now to fix this, but something has to be done. You can't make a mockery of a system that you say has integrity. They say these ratings systems mean something. They can't turn around and advertise to people that shouldn't see this stuff. They can fix this. They can fix this. So I think it's very important.

Now, we will know whether they take appropriate action or not sometime in the next few months. Sometime in the next few months, I won't be President anymore. [Laughter] And I'll just be a citizen like the rest of you, and I look forward to that. But that's what makes these elections very important. Because one of the major factors—challenges, I think, facing this country over the next decade, with all of our prosperity, will be how to make it possible for more and more Americans to succeed at work and at their most important work, which is raising children. It's the most important job any mother or father does, raising children. It is society's most important work.

I don't know how many times I said that when I had an argument with my daughter over the last umpty-ump years—[laughter]—"At least I want you to know this. I consider you my most important job, even if you disagree with me. You've got to understand that." This is important, what are we going to do?

Now, that's where these elections are important. You heard Hillary talk about; you heard Peggy talk about it. Hillary has been working on this stuff for 30 years. You need somebody in the Congress who has a lifetime commitment and world-class expertise on these issues, somebody who doesn't go around just jumping at the latest headline.

I was kind of proud of her today. I didn't know exactly what she was going to say. She stood up here and said, "I'm not suggesting we ought to have censorship here, but we've got to have mutual responsibility in this society, and they have to do something about this. This

report says that people in the entertainment industry, not all of them but a lot of them, are doing things that are wrong, that they acknowledge are wrong. We've got to see what happens."

You need people like that in the Congress, and especially in the Senate because it's such a debating forum for America's hot issues. You need someone who understands that all these rating systems don't make a lot of sense to a lot of people, and it would be far better if there were one, uniform, unambiguous rating system for all forms of entertainment to which our children are exposed, something Hillary, I think, was the first and maybe the only person to forcefully advocate in the entire country.

And you need someone who sees in a larger sense that this media issue is tied to other issues: the need for gun safety legislation, the need for safe and drug-free schools, the need for after-school and summer school programs for kids, to give them positive things to do, so you won't have to spend all of your time just telling them what not to do. There needs to be things for children to do. It's very unproductive raising a child if you spend all your time saying no. It is a dead-bang loser strategy for any parent if all you have to say is, no. You've got to say something, yes. You've got to have something for the kids to say yes to, who understands that we need greater support for child care, for foster care, for adoptions, for family leave. The reason I think that she ought to be New York's Senator is that this media issue is another example of a lifetime of commitment to the whole idea of what our common responsibilities are for our children and for each other. It really does take a village, and that's her whole idea.

So I ask you to think about it. I want you to go home tonight and talk at dinner about this FTC report. I want you to talk to the peo-

ple you work with about it. And instead of just railing against the people out there, I want you to think about some of the things that have been said here today and what Patty said about what your responsibilities are.

And I want you to think about what kind of person you really want in the United States Senate when the chickens come home to roost on the whole question of the role of media violence in your children's and your grandchildren's lives and gun safety and whether the schools are open enough and have the right kind of programs for after-school and summer school and whether we're really doing what we need to on family leave and foster care and adoption.

All these issues have to be dealt with together, because I'm telling you there is no more important challenge for any society than maximizing the chance that good people can succeed at work and at their most important work, raising their children. There's nobody better prepared to do that than Hillary.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:07 a.m. in Henry Kauffman Hall at the Jewish Community Center of Mid-Westchester. In his remarks, he referred to Patty Cathers, director of program and volunteer services, Child Abuse Prevention Services of Roslyn, NY, who introduced the President; Peggy Charren, founder, Action for Children's Television; Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County executive; Eileen Lehrer, president, and Ellen Lazarus, cochair, board of directors, Jewish Community Center of Mid-Westchester. The President also referred to a September 11 report by the Federal Trade Commission entitled "Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children: A Review of Self-Regulation and Industry Practices in the Motion Picture, Music Recording & Electronic Game Industries."

Remarks at a Luncheon for Representative James H. Maloney in Danbury, Connecticut

September 11, 2000

Thank you. Wow! *[Laughter]* Well, first of all, that's the best talk I ever heard Jim Maloney give. It was amazing. *[Laughter]* I thought two

things when he was giving that speech: The first thing I thought is, that's the speech everybody ought to be giving around America this

year; and the second thing I thought is, if he keeps giving that speech, this election won't be nearly as close as the last one was, if you guys help to get the message out. Thank you.

Let me say, I'm honored to be here with Jim and Mary and what he referred to as the delegation from his family. I thought Lew Wallace gave a great speech, too. We ought to give him—[*applause*]—it was a very good speech. Thank you.

I want to thank your attorney general and my law school classmate and friend of 30 years Dick Blumenthal for being here, and Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz and Comptroller Nancy Wyman, thank you. Did I say it right?

And I want to thank the mayor of Danbury for making me feel welcome here. Thank you, Gene. Where are you? Thank you, Gene Enriquez. And Ed Marcus and John Olsen, John Walkovich, I want to thank all them. And I'd also like to, on a point of personal privilege, one of the most talented people who ever served on my staff and one of the most valuable to me, personally, is a young man named Jonathan Prince, who has now gone off to do well. But he's from Danbury. He and his parents are here today. Jonathan, where are you? Give him a hand. He did a great job. He's here somewhere. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I also want to thank my longtime friend Mayor Joe Ganim from Bridgeport for coming over here. He and Gene and I took a picture together. We took a picture together, and they whispered to me that most mayors, unlike Presidents, aren't term-limited. [*Laughter*]

Let me say to all of you, I am having a great day today. I started off today, Hillary and I were in Washington at the White House, and we went up to Westchester County, where we now make our home. And we did an event at a Jewish community center on the Federal Trade Commission report today on violence in the media, pointing out that a number of entertainment companies—by no means all of them; we don't want to paint with too broad a brush—but a number of them actually have been advertising these violent movies to the same kids that they say shouldn't go see them.

And Senator Lieberman and Vice President Gore talked about it yesterday, and I think Joe is going to testify before the Congress sometime this week, in the next few days, about it. But we had a wonderful time, talking about the future and the challenges that families at work

face, and succeeding at work and succeeding at raising their children, which is the most important work of all.

And then I came up here to be with you, and I'm going back to New York, and we're going to do, I think, three or four more things today. [*Laughter*] And I'm going to—Hillary and I are going to end up tonight at a dinner honoring the efforts that we made, along with several others in a bipartisan way, to deal with the so-called Nazi gold issues in Switzerland and get the wealth returned back to the people who needed it. So, it's a great day.

This is an interesting time in my life. My family has a new candidate. My party has a new leader, and I've become the Cheerleader in Chief of America. [*Laughter*] And I like it. [*Laughter*]

I guess what I would like to tell you is, as someone who is not running for office—for the first time since 1974, I'm not going to be on the ballot—I, too, believe what Jim Maloney said. And the most important thing to me to try to get across to the American people is, yes, we've had a great year. This has been a terrific run. And I'm grateful, not just for the economic prosperity but for the greater sense of unity that the country has, for the social progress we see in crime and welfare and teen pregnancy and a whole lot of other indicators, showing our country is coming together, for the change in the American political climate now, away from the kind of just dripping venom that dominated so many elections of the last 20 years. I'm grateful for all that.

So what I want you to understand and believe is that the best is still out there, because we have spent a great deal of time these last 8 years just trying to turn the country around, to dig it out of a mountain of debt, to dig it out so that the interest rates could come down and so that people just in their private lives could go about making America the success it ought to be, changing the crime policy, changing the environmental policy, changing the education policy, changing the health care policy. But a lot of the biggest, best things are still out there.

At least in my lifetime, we have never had a period where we had so much progress and prosperity with so little internal crisis or external threat. I think Jim told me when I came in that Theodore Roosevelt was the last President to come to Danbury and spend any time. And

I like Theodore Roosevelt. [Laughter] If he were alive today, he'd be a Democrat, too. [Laughter]

You know, Roosevelt governed at another magic time. He inherited the Presidency as the youngest man ever to be President, when President McKinley was assassinated shortly after his reelection in 1900 and was inaugurated in 1901, and shortly after that, he was killed. So Teddy Roosevelt inherited the Presidency and did, I think, a very good job with it, in dealing with a time that is probably more like this time in historical terms than any period in the middle, because we were moving from an agricultural to an industrial society and we had to redefine our sense of national community and what our obligations were to one another. How were we going to take in that huge wave of immigrants that came into America at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century; how were we going to deal with this huge influx of people who couldn't make a living on the farm anymore but wanted to make a living in the factory? But a lot of them were children, and a lot of them were working 12 and 14 or 15 hours a day, and there were all kinds of abusive conditions there.

And in the first Roosevelt era, we began to come to grips with our responsibilities to immigrant populations living in difficult situations in the slums, our responsibilities to end child labor in the most abusive labor conditions. And we began to be aware of the capacity of the industrial revolution to damage the environment. And Teddy Roosevelt became our first great environmental President by meeting the challenges of the moment.

And then when—ironically, there was a brief interruption because after he left office, his designated successor, William Howard Taft, was elected, the person he wanted to succeed him, but he turned out not to be a progressive. So Woodrow Wilson got elected, with a little help from Theodore Roosevelt, and we had 8 more years.

But then what we were trying to do was interrupted by war and then by depression and then again by war. And so Franklin Roosevelt had to build this sense of unity out of all this adversity. But in a funny way—I used to talk to my grandfather all the time about the Depression. One thing, it's almost a purging effect, total adversity has on you, because you don't—it's not like you have all the options in the

world. You got up in the morning. You tried to figure out how to keep body and soul together, and you know you've got to change something, because if you keep on doing the same thing, you'll be in the same hole.

However, when things are going very well, your opportunity for error increases because you have lots of options. And that really is what's going on in this election. You've got to decide what you want to do with the most truly astonishing moment of prosperity and social progress and national security in our lifetime. You have to decide.

And people ask me all the time, you know, for a year and a half or 2 years, "Do you really think that Al Gore is going to win?" And I always said, yes, and I always believed it, when the polls weren't nearly as good as they are today, because I knew the underlying conditions of the country were good. I knew that he was a good man. I knew he had played a terrific role in the building of what we have done. But I also knew that he was thinking about what we should do in the future. And when he picked Joe Lieberman to be on the ticket with him, it proved that he was thinking about what we should do in the future.

People ask me all the time if I think Hillary is going to win. I tell them, yes. And I do, and I always have, but I do for the same reasons.

But the truth is—I meant precisely what I said when I said, if Jim keeps giving that speech and you all keep giving him enough money to make sure people hear the message—[laughter]—and make sure people hear the message, the race won't be as close as it was last time, because that's where America is and where America wants to go.

But I'm telling you, this is not exactly your standard political speech, but the truth is, I've been doing this a long time now—[laughter]—and I have nearly got the hang of it. [Laughter] And I have observed that very often, an election is determined not so much by who the two candidates are but by what the people think the election is about. Now, I'll get serious a minute.

If the people believe the election is about how much they can get for themselves today, right now, never mind tomorrow and never mind my neighbor, we're going to be in a tough fix, folks, and especially if they talk nice about it, you know? [Laughter] "I would like to raise

the minimum wage, and I would like to have a Patients' Bill of Rights. And I know all the seniors need prescription drugs, and half of them will be left out if we only take people at 150 percent of the poverty line. I'd like to do all that, and I feel really terrible that I can't. But I've got to keep dishing out this tax cut money." [Laughter]

Now, you're laughing, but times are good. And a lot of people say, "Well, what could be wrong with that? I could use the money." So I'm telling you—you hear me now—it's good that you gave him a check, but it's not enough. You've got 60 days here, and every time you see somebody, you need to talk to them about this election. Every day, when you come home from work or when you end your day, if you are a homemaker or whatever you do, you ought to ask yourself if you've talked to one or two people about the decision that we have to make as a people in this millennial year.

Because I'm telling you, there are profound economic and educational and health care and environmental and criminal justice and what I call one America—how we're all going to live and work together—issues, that there are honest differences—big election, big differences. All the best stuff is still out there. The other side wants to blur over the differences and emphasize how appealing their tax cuts are.

We want to have tax cuts, too, very badly, actually, in the area of the marriage penalty or giving kids—families a tax deduction for their children's college tuition, long-term-care credit for elderly and disabled family members that you have to take care of, making it easier for people to save for retirement. We've got quite a nice tax package, but theirs is 3 or 4 times bigger than ours.

But there's a reason theirs is 3 or 4 times bigger—because we don't want to get rid of this whole surplus. We think it's a good thing that we're paying the debt down. We know that we need some money to invest in education and health care, in science and technology, in the future of America. We know we may have some emergency come up. We know we may have some defense crisis develop, where we need to give our military even more than we anticipate. We know that over 10 years we might have a recession and the money might not all come in.

So we can't make the expansive tax cut promises they can, and that may obscure the fact

to the voters that we actually have, as Jim said, quite a good tax cut package that we strongly believe we can still pass in this Congress, if they want to do it. But I think they'd rather have the issue, because they want it to look like we're sort of the, you know, the curmudgeons that won't give the average Joe a break, and the country's rolling in dough, and it's their money, and the other side is going to give it all back to them.

Let me just remind you, that rhetoric quadrupled the debt of the United States of America in the 12 years before I took office with Al Gore. And we have worked very hard—we've worked very hard to turn that around. A lot of Members of Congress gave up their seats after 1993 because they voted to turn it around. And we'd better think a long time before we play games with our fiscal discipline and our ability to pay down that debt.

Let me just give you one example. They talk all the time about tax cuts. If you did everything they're talking about, you passed all the tax cuts they've advocated and all the one's they're rolling out and all the one's their nominee for President rolled out and then you pass their Social Security privatization plan, which costs another trillion dollars, nearly—and that's before they pay for Star Wars or any of their other spending—no, seriously, before they pay for any of that—and you compare that to the Gore-Lieberman-Maloney positions—now, listen, hear me here—you can—interest rates under our approach would be one percent lower a year for a decade. Why? Because we're going to keep paying down the debt until we get America out of debt for the first time since 1835, and they'll have to stop doing that, because they're going to spend so much money on the tax cuts and the privatization program. They're going to spend all this projected surplus, and then some.

And when you do that, interest rates will go up, and the market will react accordingly, and the economy will be weaker. Everybody will have their tax cut. I don't know how much good it will be if the economy gets weak. But let me say this—I had a study done—you know how much a one percent reduction in interest rates for a decade is worth? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in home mortgages, about \$900 a year on a \$100,000 mortgage—I don't want to mess this up—\$30 billion in car payments, and \$15 billion in student loan payments. So that's a \$435 billion tax cut the American

people get for paying for a strong economy and getting rid of the debt and saving some money to invest in caring for the needs of all Americans.

You know, we believe, our party does, that all these people in these pretty uniforms that served our lunch here, we believe that they ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college that I have to send my child to college. We believe they ought to be able to make a living. And if they need child care, they ought to have it. And when the time comes to raise the minimum wage, we ought to raise it. And that's what we believe.

We believe the rest of us are going to make more money when the average Americans are all out there working, making a good living, and able to support their children. So I'm just saying to you—I realize I'm preaching to the choir, but what I'm really trying to do here is to drive home the imperative of your taking some time every day to talk to your fellow citizens.

Most of you are more interested in politics than most of your friends. Is that right? Isn't that right? Every one of you has friends who—even the Congressman's in-laws, I'll bet, have friends. *[Laughter]* I used to have an uncle—let me tell you, I had a great uncle I buried a couple of years ago. He was 91 years old, and I loved him like he was my own father. And he was my total barometer about how I was doing when I was Governor. This guy had about a sixth grade education and about a 200 IQ and total recall of events that occurred in the 1930's.

And I called him one time to ask about something. He said, "I don't care about politics." He said, "I wouldn't care about you if you weren't my nephew." *[Laughter]* And so whenever I needed to know how I was doing, I called him, and he was better than any poll I ever took. *[Laughter]* So I'm telling you, you all know people who—they think they're too busy. They're too preoccupied with their lives. They don't think about this all the time like you do. They've never been to one of these political fundraisers. They've never heard their Congressman give a speech like this, and they may never get a chance to.

And it may be that the only direct flesh-and-blood contact they ever have with anybody asking them to think about this is with you. Otherwise, it's just some secondhand experience

with the television ads or the debates for President or whatever.

Now, I've done everything I could to turn this country around. You know there are big differences in this election. I hope you believe me when I tell you, as good as the last 8 years have been, the next 8 years can be better. And we can keep building on this if we decide that we're going to use and not abuse what is a truly unique moment in our history.

But the members of the clergy who are here will tell you that throughout human history, people have been more likely to make a mistake when things were so good than when things were full of adversity and the options were clearer. So I implore you. This is a good man representing you in Congress. He is a good man, and he deserves to be reelected. And I want Joe Lieberman to be the next Vice President, and I believe he will be.

But believe me, you can make a difference here. You can make a difference if every day—you just look at how many people there are in this room—if every one of you talk to three people every day between now and November, it's enough to turn the entire margin—that would be far more, by the way—if every one of you talk to three people between now and November, that would be far more than the victory margin he had in the last election. Far more, right?

Now, I'm telling you, it's your country—and if you know anybody in New York, I wouldn't mind you talking to them either. *[Laughter]* If the American people really believe this is a magic moment, if they really believe that together we can build the future of our dreams for our children, if they understand clearly what we're for and what we're not, then Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, Jim Maloney and Hillary, the whole crowd, they'll win.

Clarity, clarity and focus are our friend. You've got to bring this message clearly into focus for people who might never come here but who are going to be just as affected by the decision we make as a people in November as you are. So you cared enough to come here for Jim. Care enough to talk for him, every day for the next 60 days, and help us build America's best days.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. in the Amber Room Colonnade at Western Connecticut

State University. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Maloney's wife, Mary; State Representative Lewis Wallace, Jr.; Edward L. Marcus, chair, Connecticut State Democratic Party; delegates to the 2000 Democratic National Convention John Olsen and Joseph Walkovich; former Special Assistant to the President and Presidential Speechwriter Jonathan Prince; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of

Texas. Representative Maloney was a candidate for reelection in Connecticut's Fifth Congressional District. The President also referred to a September 11 Federal Trade Commission report entitled "Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children: A Review of Self-Regulation and Industry Practices in the Motion Picture, Music Recording & Electronic Game Industries."

Remarks to the Community in Danbury *September 11, 2000*

Well, thank you very much. First, thank you, Mayor Eriquez, for your wonderful speech and for outlining some of the things that we've been able to do together to help the people of Danbury.

I want to thank all of you for coming. And President Roach, thank you for making us feel welcome at your wonderful school. And I want to say to all of you, I may be the first President to come and spend this much time in Danbury, but this is not the first time I've been to Danbury. I first came here in 1970, 30 years ago. That was when I met Joe Lieberman, who was running for the State Senate.

Then I came back to Connecticut as a Governor in 1980, when I met Chris Dodd. And then I had to become President before I met Jim Maloney. But I will say this, it has not been a disappointment. He is one of the best Members of the United States House of Representatives, and you need to send him back down there in November and reelect him.

You know, Jim made a very good case for himself and for our side. And you've been out here waiting a long time, and the last thing you need is another political speech. So I'm not going to repeat what he said. I'm just going to make a few very brief points that I want you to think about.

This election is profoundly important, because we're doing so well. What do I mean by that? Well, because we're doing so well, we have a chance to meet some really big goals for this country. We could get this country out of debt over the next decade for the first time since 1835—America debt-free, low interest rates.

We could take every child in a working family in America out of poverty by making sure we had a tax system that was fair to the working poor. We could provide health care to every single child and every working family in America that don't have it today. We can make sure that every child who needs it has preschool and after-school programs and mentors. We can make sure that every child in America, when he or she comes of age, could afford to go to all 4 years of college. We've already opened the doors, universally, to the first 2 years. We can do it for all 4 years.

We can meet the big environmental challenges of the 21st century, like climate change, and do it in a way that would create millions of new jobs here in America with the new technology of alternative energies and more efficient use of energy. It could mean a fortune of new jobs and wealth to Connecticut, just by doing the right thing to preserve the environment for our children, our grandchildren, and their grandchildren.

Jim talked about breast cancer. We now have identified the two genes which, when they are slightly bent in their structure, make it more likely for women to get breast cancer. We have now seen the first sequencing of the human genome. Within a matter of just a few years, young girls who are in this audience now, when they grow up a little, get married, and begin to have babies, when they come home from the hospital, they'll come home with a gene map of their children, and it will tell you everything that's good about their structure, and all the problems. And when that happens, Americans will have a life expectancy of about 90

years. Just in a few years, all this is going to happen.

Now, what's that got to do with this election? We have to make the right decisions now about what to do with our prosperity if we want to make the big goals for America for the 21st century come true. One I didn't mention is dealing with the aging of America. I'm the oldest of the baby boomers. Everybody between the ages of 36 and 54 was the biggest generation of Americans ever born, until this group that is in our schools right now.

And when we retire, for a period of about 18 years, there will only be about two people working for every one person eligible for Social Security. And I can tell you that everybody I know in my generation is determined that when we retire, our retirement will not bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. It doesn't have to happen. We can save Social Security and save Medicare and add this prescription drug benefit and take the burden off of our children and our grandchildren.

But it all depends on what the American people decide today, in a moment of great good fortune, great national optimism. All the mean and stinging rhetoric we used to hear from the other side for 20 years, why, it's gone away, and butter wouldn't melt in their mouths—[laughter]—and I appreciate that. It's a good thing. I never liked the politics of personal destruction. But there are real differences here which cannot be obscured.

And I would argue to you that it may be harder for a free people to make the right decision in good times than it is in bad times. After all, back in 1992, when you took a chance on me, it wasn't much of a chance. The country was in a ditch, and you knew we had to change. [Laughter] We were in terrible shape, and you knew we had to change.

Now, things are going along so well, there seem to be options. And often the debate is blurred about what the options is—are. I need to come back to college—[laughter]—about what the options are. We say "We're for the Patients' Bill of Rights that 200 health organizations are for," and they say, "We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights." The difference in "a" and "the" is a huge difference.

We say, "We're for a Medicare prescription drug program through Medicare, that all of our seniors who need it can afford to buy into." They say, "We don't know how much that's

going to cost. We want to give the neediest of our seniors a prescription drug benefit and let the others buy insurance." They don't say that there's never been an insurance plan designed to sell drugs that will work. It's already failed in one State, and their program would leave half the people out who need it.

They say, "We want to give you a tax cut. It's your money, and we've got this big surplus." They don't say that if they give it all to you in a tax cut, what are you going to do if the money doesn't come in and we're back into deficits? What are you going to do for investments in education? What are you going to do when we get rid of the surplus and we stop paying down the debt and interest rates start going up again?

Do you know how much Jim Maloney's position on giving you a modest tax cut, so you get a deduction for college tuition, a credit for long-term care for elderly or disabled members in your family, some means of saving for retirement income, and more for child care, an abatement of the marriage penalty but at an affordable cost—do you know how much money that will save you in interest rates, as opposed to the plan of their nominee and all their crowd for Congress? It will save you about one percent a year for a decade.

Do you know how much that's worth? That's worth \$390 billion in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, \$15 billion in college loans payments, a \$435 billion tax cut to ordinary Americans for car payments, college loan payments, and home mortgage payments, if we'll just keep paying off the debt, keeping the interest rates down, keeping the American economy strong and going. That's another reason you ought to be for him and Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

Now, let me say, I'm going to do my best, when the Congress comes back in, to work closely with them. I'm going to do everything I can to get as much done as I can for you in the next 5 weeks. But however much we get done, you remember this. There are real differences here: differences in economic policy, differences in education policy, differences in health care policy, differences in environmental policy, differences in criminal justice policy, differences in arms control and world peace policy, and differences about how we're going to live together across all the diverse cultures and races

and genders and all the differences in this society that make us up.

There are big differences. And what I think you have to do is to ask yourself, what do I want this election to be about? If you want the biggest check at the earliest point and never mind the consequences, you ought to be for them—if you're an upper income person. Actually, our tax cut gives two-thirds of you more money, even though it just costs a third as much. What does that tell you about it?

But if you would like a tax cut that helps you pay for the education of your children, the long-term care of your elderly or disabled family members, helps you to save more for retirement, helps with child care, helps with the marriage penalty, but saves enough money to keep paying this debt down and investing in education and health care and science and technology so that

we can keep going forward together, if you believe that we ought to make a future in which the most important thing is our common belief that everybody matters, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other, then you need Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Jim Maloney.

Thank you, and God bless you. And thank you for the Hillary sign back there. If you vote in New York, help her.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. in the Charles Ives Center for Performing Arts at Western Connecticut State University. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Gene F. Eriquez of Danbury and James R. Roach, president, Western Connecticut State University.

Statement on the Death of Representative Herbert H. Bateman

September 11, 2000

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Congressman Herbert Bateman.

For more than 30 years, Herb Bateman served the people of Virginia with honor and distinction. As a veteran of the Air Force and a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, he worked to support our Armed Forces and

was a strong advocate of fiscal discipline and a balanced budget.

Herb Bateman was a fine man and dedicated public servant who will be missed by many. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Laura, their family, and their friends.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Anthony D. Weiner in New York City

September 11, 2000

Thank you very much. First, I want to thank Richard and Maureen for their warm welcome here—[laughter]—for opening their home. This is a beautiful place and a beautiful gathering. And the reason we're all so warm is that you came out here to support Anthony in record numbers, and I'm grateful to you. [Laughter] So you should enjoy the temperature; you generated it by your commitment and your support.

I want to thank you for reminding me that you were in Little Rock on election night in '92. Hard to believe it was almost 8 years ago.

It's been a good 8 years, and I thank you for being there. I have a particular interest in this congressional district, because in 1992 I came to Chuck Schumer's home in Brooklyn, and I drove around this congressional district with him. I mean, I know we're not in it now, but I drove around the congressional district.

I drove to the synagogue where a swastika had been painted on the wall. And we began to see the evidence of the kind of intolerance and bigotry that we still see manifested from time to time in these terrible hate crimes

around our country. And I thought then that, you know, we could turn the country around if we had the right ideas, and we literally changed the economic policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the crime policy, the environmental policy, and the foreign policy of America. And I believe that the results have been pretty good.

Now, what I want to say today is, I'm here because, number one, I'm very grateful for the support that Anthony has given me over the last 2 years, and I appreciate it very much. Secondly, and far more important, I think he has enormous capacity to serve this district well and to continue to grow in stature and leadership and impact for the people of this district, this city, and this State, in the United States Congress.

And that's very important. You know, I've reached a point now where I was looking at him and thinking how young he was and trying not to resent it. [Laughter]. I realize, you know, I spent most of my life as the youngest person who ever did anything, and now I'm the second youngest person ever to leave the office of the President, the youngest ever to leave after two full terms. Theodore Roosevelt was a couple of years younger than me, also of New York, so I decided I'd come to New York to see if it was in the water and catch it. [Laughter].

But my concern now—this is the first time since 1974 I haven't been on the ballot, and most days I'm okay about it. [Laughter] My party has a new leader, whom I admire and support strongly, and his Vice Presidential candidate has been a friend of mine for 30 years. I was thrilled about Senator Lieberman's pick. And my family has a new candidate. So I have become the Cheerleader in Chief of America, and I'm very happy to do that.

I want to say one thing very, very seriously. A great people are more vulnerable to making a mistake when times are good than when they're difficult. The American people and the people of New York took a chance on me and Al Gore in 1992, but it wasn't much of a chance, because the country was in the ditch. We were in trouble. We had a bad economy, worsening social problems, an increasingly divisive political climate. Now, we have a good economy; all the social indicators are going in the right direction. We are without severe internal crisis or external threat. And there is a new sense of harmony in the country, at least among the strong major-

ity of American people, as evidenced by the different rhetoric that they have adopted in running this campaign, except in their mass mails. [Laughter]

That's the good news. The bad news is, it may be harder for people to tell the difference this year. I think it's quite important, just to make it clear. Anthony mentioned a few things. This is what you can do with what we have done in the last 8 years, and how these elections—whether he is successful, whether Hillary wins, whether Al and Joe win, depends in large measure on what the American people and the people of New York believe this election is about. And I think you should believe it is about making the most of a truly magic moment in the history of America.

We can get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835. We can take Social Security and Medicare out beyond the life of the baby boom generation, so that when those of us in the baby boom generation retire and there are only two people working for every one person eligible for Social Security, we won't bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

We can get rid of child poverty in this country. We can now afford to give working people a subsidy to buy health insurance and get rid of most of the uninsured people in America who are working for a living and their little kids. We can grow the economy and improve the environment. We can continue to see improvements in our education system, and there have been some substantial turnarounds in the last 4 years nationwide.

We can open the doors of 4 years of college to all Americans by adopting the bill that Senator Schumer and Hillary have so strongly endorsed to let people deduct up to \$10,000 a year in their college tuition. We can do big, great things. Yes—the college students clap. [Applause]

We can pass hate crimes legislation and continue to grow together at home, and we can continue to be a force for peace and reconciliation around the world. But it won't happen by accident. As Anthony said, I get tickled—you know, when the other crowd were in, they took credit when the Sun rose in the morning. [Laughter] And everything bad that happened was someone else's fault. Now they say it's just all an accident. We just stumbled through the

last 8 years. I only stumbled when I was tired. [Laughter]

So I want you to think about this. I'm glad you came here. I'm glad you gave him your money. I appreciate that. But it's not enough. Almost all of you have more friends who are less interested in politics than you are, than you have friends who are as interested or more interested than you are. Almost all of you have a lot of friends who would never come to an event like this or who at least have never been. And I just want to urge you, in the next 60 days, to try to take a little time everyday for citizenship. Tell people we may never get another chance like this, when there's so much progress at home and the absence of so many threats to us abroad and so much opportunity to do good for our children and our grandchildren, to build the future of our dreams for them. And tell them we can't blow it. Tell them there are real and significant differences between the two parties and the candidates in every race—in the U.S. Senate race in New York and the House race here and certainly in the race for President and Vice President.

And there is evidence here. We've tried it their way; we've tried it our way. You have a track record here. And I think it's really worth some of your time and effort. If you went to the trouble to come here and stand in this hot room because you believe you ought to be here and you believe you ought to support this fine young Congressman, then it is worth some time in the next 60 days to talk to your friends and neighbors who don't come to things like this, who don't normally take the same position you do or activity you do in politics, and try to convince them that you came here for a reason, and they ought to vote with you in November.

I'm telling you, if people believe this election is about building the future of our dreams for our children, he will win; Hillary will win; Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will win; and we will have a great celebration on election night.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Richard Medley and his wife, Maureen A. Murray. Representative Weiner was a candidate for New York's Ninth Congressional District.

Statement on Proposed Tobacco Legislation

September 11, 2000

Today researchers are releasing two important studies that remind us why we must act quickly to protect young people from the dangers of tobacco.

According to an NIH-funded study in the September issue of Tobacco Control, children become addicted to nicotine more readily than researchers previously suspected. The study shows that kids do not need to smoke every day before they become dependent on nicotine—even adolescents who smoke as little as once a month experience symptoms of addiction. And because we already know that at least one third of the children who get hooked will have their lives cut short as a result, the national consequences are devastating. Another study released today in the September issue of Preventive Medicine underscores the effectiveness of price increases as part of any comprehensive effort, especially among young people—up to

2.3 million lives could be saved over the next 40 years by a \$1.00 per pack inflation-adjusted price increase alone.

These studies today show why Congress must join Vice President Gore and me in making the health of our children a priority. Today I renew my call to Congress to affirm the FDA's authority to limit tobacco marketing and sales to youth and fund the Clinton-Gore administration's tobacco-related budget proposals. I also urge Congress to reject special interest protections for big tobacco by letting the American taxpayers, who have spent billions in tobacco-related Federal health costs, finally have their day in court. By working together, we can improve our Nation's health and save children's lives.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release until 7 p.m.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in New York City September 11, 2000

Well, if I were showing good judgment, I would say nothing after that. *[Laughter]* First, let me thank our host and hostess for making us feel so welcome in this beautiful, beautiful place.

I would like to thank all of you for the contributions you have made to America in these last years that I've been privileged to serve as President, because I sometimes think that most of what I did was to get the stumbling blocks out of your way. You did the rest—every one of you, each in your own way.

One of the things that bothers me as I travel around the world today is, I see everywhere I go, in the poorest village in Africa—I can sit with children for 10 minutes, and I see the light of intelligence in people's eyes. I see the energy, the belief, the hope. And I realize that so many times, people like me in positions of responsibility just mess it up for them, if people play games with power and create illusions in the minds of people about false values, and all of a sudden, all these brilliant children grow up and there's nothing for them to do; there's no education for them to get and no dreams for them to fulfill.

And so if I've had anything to do with what any of you have achieved in the last 8 years, I've just tried to make sure that we were doing the right thing so that you would be able to do what you do so well.

And I have to tell you, I think America is profoundly indebted to all of its immigrant people, and there are many people who came here from other countries, not from India, here in this room tonight, and I thank them as well.

But I think I should say a special word of appreciation to the Indian community in the United States which, of all of our more than 200 ethnic and religious groups, ranks first in education and in income, a great tribute to your efforts and to your values.

I loved my trip to India. And when Hillary and Chelsea came home, they told me that if I didn't go to another country before I left the Presidency, I had to go to India. So I did. As you know, I visited more briefly the rest of the subcontinent. I regret that I was not more

help to you in the cause of peace, but I will keep trying.

I had to confess to a reporter the other day—I say this out of deference to my good friends John and Margo Catsimatidis, who are here, who have more than a passing interest in Greece and the relationships between Greece and Turkey and the problems in Cyprus. I do believe when I leave office, I will have made progress on every problem I tackled around the world except, so far, I can't say I moved the ball forward on the Indian subcontinent or in Cyprus. But I have tried, and I will keep trying. I promise you that.

I just want to say a couple of words about this election and about Hillary in particular. So many of you were kind to say things when you went through the line, and you wished I could run for a third term and all of that. But this is a country of citizens, and this has always been a country in which the citizens were the most important people.

When Harry Truman went home to Missouri after an enormously important period in our country's history, when he basically organized our world to deal with the cold war, he said that he was resuming his most important title, that of citizen. And so now that my party has a new leader and my family has a new candidate—*[laughter]*—I suppose my official title should be Cheerleader in Chief instead of Commander in Chief. *[Laughter]*

But I will say this because I think all of you who have enjoyed great success in our country will identify with it. If you work hard, you also have to work smart. Ideas have consequences. If you have a bad idea, it doesn't matter how hard you work with it; you still won't get good consequences out of it. And the important thing that I think that has been at the core of all my concern about this election is that I think it is easier for a free people to make a mistake when times are good than when times are bad.

The American people took a chance on me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore in 1992, but it wasn't much of a chance, because we were in trouble, and everybody knew we had to change and try something new. So they gave

us a chance. But we changed the economic policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the environmental policy, the criminal justice policy, and big parts of the foreign policy of our country.

You now have had a test run. And so, yes, I feel especially strongly, obviously, about Hillary. But the thing that matters to me as an American is that we keep changing but that we keep changing in the direction in which we are going, because we still have big challenges out there. There are still too many children living in poverty in this country when they should not be. There are still too many children that don't have excellence of education that they should have. There is still inadequate preparation for the aging of America when the so-called baby boom generation retires. And under present estimates, there will only be about two people working for every one person retired and on our Social Security system. We must not let the aging of America impose a burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

So we have these big challenges. We also, as Americans, have not fully recognized the extent to which we are interdependent with the rest of the world. We should be doing more to develop the capacities of Indians within India and other peoples around the world and building trading and other ties with people and working with people more. That's why I came up here and spent 3 days last week at the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, meeting with leaders from all over the world, doing my best to try to create the impression that America does not wish to dominate the world but to work with it so that we can all win together.

There is a very interesting book out today called "Non Zero," by an American writer named Robert Wright. But it might have had some roots in Oriental philosophy. The basic argument of the book, the "Non Zero" book, is that as societies grow more advanced and complex, people inevitably grow more interdependent, both within nations and across national boundaries.

And therefore, notwithstanding the terrible things that happened in the 20th century and the World Wars and the oppression of the dictatorships, the world essentially has continued to grow more interdependent, which means that

wisdom dictates that we look for more and more human interaction where everyone wins, which are not, in the parlance of game theories, zero-sum solutions, but win-win solutions, where we look for non-zero solutions.

The reason that I think it is important for Hillary to be in the Senate is that for 30 years, starting with the welfare of children and their families, with the need for people to balance work and childrearing with the understanding that the most important work of any society is raising children well, she has spent a lifetime looking for solutions in which everyone comes out better.

Now, the book is not naive, and neither am I. There is a race for President. One person will win, and one person will lose. There's a race for this Senate seat. One will win, and one will lose. But we should vote for the person who will make us all win more, who realizes that we all do better when we help each other and when everyone has a chance. And for all the advances in this country, we can't yet say that is the truth.

One of the things that upsets me from time to time is when some of our critics—and I say it because, regrettably, she's inherited most of my enemies—[laughter]—and probably, maybe she's made one or two on her own, but not many—[laughter]—they'll say, "Well, she wouldn't be up here running for the Senate if she weren't the First Lady." The truth is that if she hadn't been married to me and spent 30 years trying to help other people and do things for other people, she might have been doing this 20 years ago.

So I want you to understand that, yes, I'm biased, but New York could not pick a person who is better suited for the genuine challenges that our State, our Nation, and our world face in the new millennium than Hillary. And I thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:43 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Sant and Daman Chatwal; and John A. Catsimatidis, former president, U.S. Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council, and his wife, Margo.

Remarks at the Partners in History Dinner in New York City September 11, 2000

Thank you very much. Let me say, first of all, Hillary and I are delighted to be here with all of you, and especially you, Edgar, with all of your family, including Edgar, Clarissa, and the about-to-be 22d grandchild here. They are probably an even more important testament to your life than this important work we celebrate tonight.

I thank Israel Singer and the World Jewish Council leadership, Elie Wiesel, my fellow award recipients, especially Senator D'Amato and Congressman Leach, without which we could not have done our part, and Stuart Eizenstat, without which I could have done nothing. And I thank you all.

I thank the members of the Israeli Government and Cabinet who are here and those of you who have come from around the world. But I would like to say, not only as President but as an American, a man who studied German as a child and went to Germany as a young man in the hopes of reconciling my enormously conflicted feelings about a country that I loved which had done something I hated.

Foreign Minister Fischer, I have rarely in my life been as moved as I was by your comments tonight. And I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Edgar once said that, "in forcing the world to face up to an ugly past, we help shape a more honorable future." I am honored to have been part of this endeavor, and I have tried to learn its lesson. Within our country, I have been to Native American reservations and acknowledged that the treaties we signed were neither fair nor honorably kept in many cases. I went to Africa, to Goree Island, the Door of No Return, and acknowledged the responsibility of the United States in buying people into slavery. This is a hard business, struggling to find our core of humanity.

As Edgar said, we are here in an immediate sense in part because Edgar buttonholed Hillary back in 1996 and said I had to see him the next day. And that night, she told me I had to see him the next day, because the time for redress was running out. And I did, as he said.

I do want to thank Hillary for more than has been accounted, because I can't tell you

how many times she reminded me of her meetings with elderly survivors all around the world, and how many times she tried to shine a light on the quest for material and moral justice. So thank you for helping me be here tonight.

I would like to say again what I said before, Senator D'Amato and Representative Leach made it possible for us to do what we did together as Americans, not as Republicans or Democrats but as Americans. Governor Pataki and Alan Hevesi marshal city and State governments all across America, not as Republicans or Democrats but as Americans. People like Paul Volcker, Larry Eagleburger, and Stan Chesley, all of whom could choose to do pretty much whatever they like, chose instead to spend their time and their talents generously on this cause.

And I would like to thank Avraham Burg, former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, and the current Prime Minister, Ehud Barak, and the members of his government who have supported this cause after it had begun earlier under a different administration of a different party, not out of party reasons but because of humanity. And again, let me say how personally grateful I am to the dedication of Stu Eizenstat, who is literally unmatched in his commitment to doing the right thing and his skill in actually finding a way to get it done.

I would like to echo what Foreign Minister Fischer said about the German *Bundeskanzler*, Gerhard Schroeder. He showed remarkable leadership. He showed a generosity and a courage of memory, and no little amount of political prodding could do what his country has done. And we are grateful to him, as well.

Thanks to all of you, humanity begins this new millennium standing on higher grounds. Of course, we can never compensate the victims and their families for what was lost. It is beyond our poor power to restore life or even to rewrite history. But we have made progress towards setting history straight and providing compensation for lost or stolen assets and forced or slave labor.

We have an especially sacred obligation to elderly survivors, particularly the double victims who endured first the Holocaust and then a half century of communism. For their sake,

there can be no denying the past or delaying the compensation.

We must also meet our obligations to the future, to seek the truth and follow where it leads. That's why it is so terribly important that your efforts have led to commissions in the United States and a dozen other nations examining their own involvement in the handling of assets that rightfully belong to victims of the Holocaust, and why it is so important that the horror of the Holocaust never fade from our memories and that we never lose sight of its searing lessons.

We're at the beginning of this new century with all of its promise. We still are beset by humanity's oldest failing, the fear of the other, the fear that, somehow, people who are different from us in the color of their skin or the way they worship are to be distrusted, disliked, hated, dehumanized, and ultimately killed. It is a very slippery slope, indeed.

This fear makes us vulnerable in two ways. It makes societies vulnerable, as ours have been, to individual crimes of hate by people who cannot come to grips with their own sense of failure or rage or inadequacy, and so, blame someone else.

Not very long—a poor demented person blamed a Filipino postal worker and killed him dead in California shortly after he tried to blame innocent little Jewish children going to their school. A little before that, a demented person in the United States, who said he belonged to a church that did not believe in God but believed in white supremacy, killed an African-American basketball coach walking in his neighborhood in Chicago and then shot a young Korean-American Christian walking out of his church; James Byrd, dragged to death in Texas because he was black; Matthew Shepard, stretched out on the rack of a fence to die because he was gay. People still can be quickly brought into the grip of that kind of poison hatred. And even more troubling, whole societies still can be exploited in their fears by unscrupulous leaders who seek to convince them that they should blame their problems on groups within or beyond their midst.

It is unbelievable to me today when German and American and Russian and French troops serve together for peace in the Balkans, when Israeli rescue teams travel the world to help people of every faith, when Greeks and Turks help to dig out one another's dead amid the

rubble of earthquakes, when the latest breakthrough in genetic science tells us that we are all genetically 99.9 percent the same, and that within any ethnic group, the genetic differences are greater than they are from group to group—still, we have not completely learned this lesson. And still, when you strip it all away, at the root of the not-quite-finished peace process in Ireland, at the root of the ethnic and tribal wars of Africa, at the root of the uprooting of almost a million people in Kosovo, and at the root of the hard, unresolved questions in the Middle East, is the fear of the other.

Here in our country, we have tried to make great strides, but we have a lot to do. One of the reasons I have so strongly supported the hate crimes legislation that is pending in the House is that it gives us another chance to say in America we are going to let go of the fear of the other. And if anybody can't let it go, we are going to take a strong and unambiguous stand against it so it will never infect us as a people again.

I just came back from Africa where I went to Arusha, Tanzania, to the Peace Center to meet with Nelson Mandela, to meet with all the parties, some 20 of them, in the Burundian peace process where, at the beginning of the last decade, somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000 people were killed in the ongoing ethnic struggle between the Hutus and the Tutsis, which cost over 700,000 lives in neighboring Rwanda just a couple of years later.

The point I'm trying to make is, it is not enough for us to do everything we can to make whole the Holocaust victims, survivors, and their family members. What we have to do, all of us, to merit the forgiveness of the Almighty, is to root out the cancer, which gave it life, wherever we find it. For it is not something that was localized in Germany. How many nations can thank God that at a particularly vulnerable point in their history, they did not produce a Hitler or—God forbid—they might have done the same thing?

And so I say to you, we have to fight this everywhere. We can't give up on the Balkans and let them go back to slaughtering each other because some are Muslim and some are Orthodox Christian and some are Catholics. And we cannot give up on the Middle East until the whole thing is done.

Several of you have come up to me tonight and said, "Well, what do you think now? What's

going to happen?" I say, "Well, I'm pretty optimistic." The Speaker of the Knesset said, "Ah, yes, but that's your nature. Everyone knows it." [Laughter] The truth is, we have come to a painful choice between continued confrontation and a chance to move beyond violence to build just and lasting peace. Like all life's chances, this one is fleeting, and the easy risks have all been taken already.

I think it important to remind ourselves that the Middle East brought forth the world's three great monotheistic religions, each telling us we must recognize our common humanity; we must love our neighbor as ourselves; if we turn aside a stranger, it is as if we turn aside the Most High God.

But when the past is piled high with hurt and hatred, that is a hard lesson to live by. We cannot undo past wrongs in the Middle East, either. But we are never without the power to right them to some extent. And the struggle you have waged and won here for restitution, the struggle we honor tonight, shows that the effort is always worth making.

I thank you for supporting that good work. I salute you for what you have accomplished. But I remind you, the demon that has driven

so much darkness since the dawn of human history has not yet quite been expunged from the human soul. And so we all still have work to do.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:38 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Pierre Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Edgar Bronfman, Sr., president, World Jewish Congress, his son, Edgar Bronfman, Jr., president and chief executive officer, Seagram and Sons, and his daughter-in-law, Clarissa Bronfman; Israel Singer, secretary general, World Jewish Congress; Nobel Prize winner and author Elie Wiesel; former Senator Alfonse M. D'Amato; Vice Chancellor Joschka Fischer and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; Alan G. Hevesi, New York City comptroller; Paul A. Volcker, former Chairman, Federal Reserve Board; former Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger; attorney Stanley M. Chesley; Speaker Avraham Burg, Israeli Knesset; Prime Minister Ehud Barak and former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa.

Remarks on Proposed Education Appropriations Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

September 12, 2000

The President. Good morning, everyone. I'm looking forward to a meeting this afternoon with congressional leadership that will be an important part of our ongoing efforts to resolve the budget differences that we still have in these last few weeks on the basis of good policy, not politics or partisanship.

Perhaps the most important issue is education, where politics always should stop at the schoolhouse door. We've worked very hard for 7½ years now for higher standards, more accountability, reforms that work, and greater investment. The results are coming in, and it's clear that this strategy is working, thanks to the efforts of our educators, students, and parents.

Today I'm releasing a report showing that American students in schools are making steady gains in almost every category. I urge Congress

to invest more in the priorities that work well for our students, in smaller classes, good teachers, modern schools, more after-school programs and preschool programs, and accountability for results. The Vice President is also talking about this important issue today in Ohio.

In 1996 only 14 States had statewide academic standards. Today, with strong Federal incentives, 49 States have them. The results are measurable. Reading and math scores are up across the country. The number of African-American students taking advanced placement courses has nearly tripled, and for Hispanics the number has jumped 500 percent.

Over 90 percent of our schools are now hooked up to the Internet. Overall, SAT math scores are the highest since they've been since 1969, the year Neil Armstrong landed on the

Moon. And thanks in part to the HOPE scholarships, bigger Pell grants, and more affordable student loans, more students are going on to college than at any time since the GI bill.

We've also been working hard to help more low-income students go to college, expanding the TRIO program, and pushing our new GEAR UP initiative. GEAR UP is a partnership with low-income kids that says if you'll aim high and aspire to college, we'll help you get there with counseling, mentoring, tutoring, and financial aid. It sends a message that with hope, hard work, and high hopes, high expectations, you can go as far as your abilities will take you.

Today I'm releasing \$46 million in GEAR UP grants to create even more college opportunities. With existing funding, these grants will now enable more than 700,000 of our students to study hard, graduate, and get ahead. But we need to do more. For every student participating in GEAR UP, many more were turned away.

In fact, just a few days ago, I received a letter, signed by more than 100 college presidents, underscoring the need for more GEAR UP funding. That's why I'm asking Congress to increase next year's support to \$325 million, which would give another 600,000 students the chance to succeed.

Making sure these students get the attention and instruction they need is even more vital in the early grades. That's why we're working so hard to reduce class size by putting 100,000 good, new, well-trained teachers into our classrooms. Over the past 2 years, we've helped our schools to hire nearly 30,000 of these teachers, and this year we're asking Congress for the funding to make that 46,000.

And we can't act fast enough. This fall, our schools are overflowing with a record 53 million students. Around the country, school districts are struggling hard to find good teachers. They shouldn't have to shoulder this burden alone. That's why we've requested a billion dollars for recruitment and training to help to put a qualified teacher in every classroom.

We also need to ensure that the classrooms themselves make the grade. The average American public school was built 42 years ago. Time has taken its toll. Congress should act quickly to help districts modernize old schools and build new ones. It's high time we got our children out of trailers and into 21st century classrooms. As you know, our initiative would help to build or dramatically overhaul 6,000 schools and to

repair another 5,000 a year over the next 5 years.

Yesterday the Urban Institute reported that at least 4 million American children between the ages of 6 and 12 are latchkey kids, fending for themselves every day after school, until a parent gets home from work. Experts tell us this is precisely the time of day when young people without adult supervision get into the most trouble. That's why after-school programs are so important.

We had the beginnings of our after-school program with a \$1 million demonstration program back in 1997. Now, it's a critical program providing a safe learning environment and extra academic support in the after after-school hours to students all across the country. Last year the 21st Century Community Learning Centers provided after-school and summer school opportunities to 850,000 of our students across the country.

This year our budget would more than double that program to a billion dollars. If we more than double the 850,000, that will make a significant dent in the number of those kids who are latchkey kids.

These are just some of the education priorities that we need to address this fall. There are a number of others included in our budget. I hope they'll be in the final agreement. But we need to do this, again I say, based on good policy. We need to do right by our children, make smart choices, and give them and our Nation a better future.

Thank you very much.

Firestone Recall

Q. Mr. President, do you think that the Government dropped the ball in detecting the Firestone tire problem and was aggressive enough in ordering a recall?

The President. Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press], I honestly don't know. I have been following the congressional hearings, and as you know, I've been otherwise occupied for the last several days. So before I can give you an informed opinion, I need to be fully briefed, and I haven't been.

United Kingdom Petroleum Protests/OPEC Production

Q. Mr. President, do you have any reaction on the situation in Britain, where they're protesting they don't have enough oil? Even though

OPEC has promised to increase output, there are still problems.

The President. Well, all I know about it is what I read this morning in the press. And I couldn't tell, frankly, whether the protest was over high prices, where 76 percent of the price is in fuel taxes—their gasoline prices, I think, are about more than 2½ times what ours are—or whether they're worried about short supplies.

But I don't think blocking the way to the refineries is a way to deal with the short supply issue. I'm just not sure I know enough about the facts there.

I think what we need to be concerned about is what we're doing here. We're working very hard to make sure our home heating oil reserve is filled for the Northeast by the end of October. And I think we'll get there. The Secretary of Energy has let the contracts, and we're watching very closely what the market will do on prices, as a result of the recent OPEC initiative. And we're also examining what other options we might have in the event we have a tough winter.

So I think we need to look at that, and we need to make sure we do everything we can to get through this winter. The fundamental challenge here is that the economies are now strong in Europe and the United States; they're picking up in Asia. So oil price consumption is going up, and it has been above oil price production.

Oil price production can get above consumption again, and we can replace some of our depleted inventories, which are quite low in the United States, and I hope that will happen. But I also hope that the American people and the Congress will look at the long-term implications. I believe we can get through this winter, and we can get through another couple of years,

by continuing to push production above consumption.

But it's clear, if you look at the United States and North America, where the population is just a little over—well, our population, combined with Canada's, is about 80 percent of Europe's, and our fuel, our oil usage is about 50 percent more than theirs. So I think that we have lots of low hanging fruit here for energy conservation that will create jobs, increase incomes, and reduce our vulnerability to the tight oil markets.

I have, for the last several years, asked the Congress to adopt some vigorous tax incentives to encourage both businesses and individuals to buy energy conservation supplies and appliances. I hope that Congress will consider them this year, favorably, and I hope that we will also increase our investments in high mileage vehicles and alternative fuels. We're on the verge of some very, very promising discoveries, and now is not the time to weaken our commitment to the partnership for the next generation vehicles that the Vice President has supported so strongly, and to developing these other alternative sources of fuels and other means of getting high mileage vehicles.

We've got to deal with the long term and the short term and recognize that, at least over the long term, we're going to have to have a combination of alternative energy sources and greater conservation. And it can be a great job boon to our country, and it can save money for ordinary Americans if we do it right. So I'm hoping we'll have a short-term and a long-term resolution.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters September 12, 2000

The President. I'd like to make just a couple of brief remarks and then ask the congressional leaders to speak. Let me, first of all, thank them for coming here. I'm looking forward to our meeting and to these last few weeks of working together before they adjourn for election season.

I'm hoping that we can resolve our differences over the budget, especially in the area of education, and I made a more detailed statement about that earlier today. I'm also hoping that we can pass a Patients' Bill of Rights and hate crimes legislation and a minimum wage agreement that will have some small business

tax relief in it and perhaps some other things that I think there is bipartisan support for, like the long-term-care credit.

I hope that we can reach agreement on the new markets legislation that passed the House overwhelmingly in a bipartisan fashion and, I think, has big bipartisan support in the Senate. And I still have some hope we can reach agreement on this Medicare drug issue, and I'll keep working.

But the main thing is that we're here meeting, and we'll see what we can do together. And I think we ought to do just as much as we possibly can, and I'm looking forward to the meeting.

Mr. Speaker.

[At this point, Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Senate Minority Leader Thomas A. Daschle, and House Minority Leader Richard A. Gephardt made brief remarks.]

Q. Mr. President, is the 90 percent of the surplus set aside, is that acceptable for you? And given the proximity of the election and the major philosophical differences over a Patients' Bill of Rights and how to do a drug benefit, any realistic chance in your view of getting that done?

The President. Well, let me answer the two substantive questions. Then I'll talk about the budget.

I think the—we have honest differences over the Medicare drug issue and how to achieve it. Whether we can bridge them or not, I don't know, but we ought to try.

Secondly, on the Patients' Bill of Rights, I think we're almost down to one issue—one or two issues—and I think we could get a majority for a good bill if we really work at it. I think the chances of that are reasonably good, still, and I'm prepared to do everything I can to keep working on it.

Now, on the budget, let me say, I presented a budget back in January which saves 90 percent of the surplus for debt reduction. And obviously, I agree with that. I think the most important thing is whether we're on a glide path to pay the debt off over the next 10 to 12 years, which is what I think we ought to do, because I think it will keep interest rates lower, and that will save people money. That amounts to a huge tax cut. If you keep interest rates a point lower for a decade, that's \$390 billion in lower mort-

gage payments alone. So I think that's important.

Whether we can do it this year or not depends upon what the various spending commitments are. I'd have to—I've got to add them all up. Senator Lott mentioned some. We've got a pretty large bill on wildfires in the West that we have to pay. We have to see where the farmers are with the farm prices and what we're going to have to pay. We're back on a glide path toward increasing the defense budget, and we've got to keep the pay up. The military expects to meet its recruitment bills this year and all major services for the first time in a few years, and it's in no small measure because the Congress voted to raise the pay.

So we've got to add all this up. Then we still have to decide which tax cuts we're going to be for and how much does that cost in this year. The most important thing is that over a 5-year period, over a 10-year period, are we paying down enough of the debt to get the country out of debt by at least 2012? And I think if we can get a commitment to that, then we can work out the details in this budget year in a way that everybody can go home and say, "Well, this is what we did. I like this. I didn't like that, but we're still on the right path, and we're going to get there." That's the most important thing.

Federal Death Penalty

Q. Mr. President, is it time for a moratorium on the Federal death penalty, in light of the racial disparity and the way it's administered?

The President. Well, first there was a racial disparity; then there is a rather astonishing geographic disparity, apparently, which, since we're supposed to have a uniform law of the land, raises some questions.

I think it's important, first of all, for the Attorney General to be able to comment and make some kind of report and recommendation to me before I say anything else about that. I want to wait and hear from her and consult with others.

There has been no suggestion, as far as I know, that any of the cases where the convictions occurred were wrongly decided. That is, there has been no DNA type questions or ineffective-assistance-of-counsel type questions raised. There has been a bill in the Senate that seeks to address those issues nationwide, which I think is a very good thing to do.

So I think if—anyone like me, who supports capital punishment and has actually presided over executions, I think has an extra strong responsibility to make sure that there's nothing wrong with the process. And so I want to wait and hear from the Attorney General, but I don't think I should make a judgment one way or the other today based on just what I've read in the press, and that's really all I know right now.

Vietnam Trade Legislation

Q. Mr. President, have you decided not to send the Vietnam trade agreement to the Hill? And if so, why not?

The President. I do not believe that I have made that decision. Maybe someone in the administration has, and you may know it, and I don't—[laughter]—because last week I was occupied, as you know, at the United Nations with a whole wide range of issues.

To the best of my knowledge—if I don't send it up there, it'll be only because I believe that the Senate and the House couldn't deal with it at this time. And I don't believe there is substantial opposition to it. It's just a question of whether we can get it up on the calendar. But to the best of my knowledge, we haven't made a final decision on that.

Legislative Agenda

Q. Mr. President, this is your final time through this. Some of these gentlemen will most likely all be here next year, although some might like to be in different seats. [Laughter] This is your last time through this. Any one thing that you want to come out of this budget fight with?

The President. Well, I'd like us to be faithful to the progress we've made since we really started working together. I mean, since 1996, we've had all—every year we've had a fight with—both sides have honestly said what they thought. And then at the end, we found a way to come together and pass a budget that was good for the American people.

And my overwhelming hope is that we'll do that again. And the only way to do that is, we've got to take some of their ideas, and they've got to take some of ours, and maybe we'll come

up with a third way. But what I always believe is that no matter how much progress we make, there will be enough honest differences for the people, for the voters to make a judgment at election time on whom they would choose for President, Vice President, Senate, Congress.

So what I'm just hoping is that we'll find a way to do what we've done ever since '96, and we'll find a way to do some things together that are quite important. And we have done some important things. We did welfare reform together. We did the Balanced Budget Act of '97 together. We did the child health insurance program together. We made some remarkable steps forward in education in '98 and '99. We had—4 years ago, this after-school program was a \$1 million experiment. Now there are 850,000 kids in after-school programs in America.

There was a study yesterday in the paper by the Urban Institute that said, I think, 4 million more children that go home alone after school, between the age of 6 and 12. This budget would put another 850,000 to a million of those kids in after-school programs.

So every year we've been able to do some things that are—that every one of us, without regard to party, could be proud of. And we've kept this deficit coming down, and now we've got a surplus, and we're paying the debt off.

So that's my goal, that within that framework we'll just keep on trucking, and we'll do the best we can. And the American people will make their judgment in November, and the country will go on and be just fine.

Bush Campaign "Rats" Ad

Q. What do you think of the "rat" ads, sir?

The President. I think you can deal with that one without my help. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House prior to a meeting with congressional leaders. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of House Speaker Hastert, Senate Majority Leader Lott, Senate Minority Leader Daschle, and House Minority Leader Gephardt. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Housing Vouchers *September 12, 2000*

I am pleased that today Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Andrew Cuomo is announcing a plan to increase payment levels for Section 8 housing choice vouchers. Raising the fair market rent level in certain difficult housing markets across the country will increase the pool of apartments affordable to low-income renters by more than 1.4 million units nationwide. This important initiative builds on the significant progress the Vice President and I have made on affordable housing—boosting homeownership to record levels, transforming public housing, stemming the losses of privately assisted housing, expanding the role of secondary markets, and enlarging the supply of housing vouchers for hard-pressed working families.

This decision to change rent guidelines to reflect a changing market complements the 110,000 new housing vouchers secured through the efforts of my administration working with Congress in the past 2 years. These housing vouchers subsidize the rents of low-income Americans, enabling them to move closer to job opportunities—many of which are being created far from where these families live. The new

rent rule will give voucher holders more choice and mobility than they have under current regulations.

I urge Congress to again join us in making more housing available to hard-pressed working families, including those moving from welfare to work, by funding my FY 2001 budget request for 120,000 new housing vouchers. In addition, our proposal for an innovative \$50 million Housing Voucher Success Fund would enhance the effect of this fair market rent increase by helping families pay for the cost of transportation and other housing search services they need to access a wider range of available units. These budget proposals would expand the supply of affordable housing for the 5.4 million very low-income families who pay more than half their incomes for housing or live in severely inadequate units, including a growing number of families working full time.

More than 50 years ago, the Nation committed itself to the goal of a “decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.” Today’s action brings us a step closer toward that goal.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Azerbaijan-United States Investment Treaty *September 12, 2000*

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan Concerning the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investment, with Annex, signed at Washington on August 1, 1997, together with an amendment to the Treaty set forth in an exchange of diplomatic notes dated August 8, 2000, and August 25, 2000. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to this Treaty.

The Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) with Azerbaijan is the fourth such treaty signed between the United States and a Transcaucasian or Central Asian country. The Treaty will protect U.S. investment and assist Azerbaijan in its efforts to develop its economy by creating conditions more favorable for U.S. private investment and thereby strengthening the development of its private sector.

The Treaty furthers the objectives of U.S. policy toward international and domestic investment. A specific tenet of U.S. policy, reflected in this Treaty, is that U.S. investment abroad and foreign investment in the United States should receive national treatment. Under this

Treaty, the Parties also agree to customary international law standards for expropriation. The Treaty includes detailed provisions regarding the computation and payment of prompt, adequate, and effective compensation for expropriation; free transfer of funds related to investments; freedom of investments from specified performance requirements; fair, equitable, and most-favored-nation treatment; and the investor's free-

dom to choose to resolve disputes with the host government through international arbitration.

I recommend that the Senate consider this Treaty as soon as possible, and give its advice and consent to ratification of the Treaty at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 12, 2000.

Message to the Senate Transmitting a Protocol Amending the Panama-United States Investment Treaty *September 12, 2000*

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Protocol Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Panama Amending the Treaty Concerning the Treatment and Protection of Investments of October 27, 1982. This Protocol was signed at Panama City, on June 1, 2000. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to this Protocol.

The 1982 bilateral investment treaty with Panama (the "1982 Treaty") was the second treaty to be signed under the U.S. bilateral investment treaty (BIT) program. The 1982 Treaty protects U.S. investment and assists Panama in its efforts to develop its economy by creating conditions more favorable for U.S. private investment and thereby strengthening the development of its private sector.

As explained in the Department of State's report, the Protocol is needed in order to ensure that investors continue to have access to binding international arbitration following Panama's 1996 accession to the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes Between States and Na-

tionals of Other States, done at Washington, March 18, 1965 (the "ICSID Convention"). The Protocol provides each Party's consent to international arbitration of investment disputes under the 1982 Treaty before the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes, established under the ICSID Convention. The Protocol also provides for arbitration in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. The Protocol thus facilitates the use of such procedures by investors of the Parties to resolve investment disputes under the 1982 Treaty. The Protocol also sets forth each Party's consent to ICSID Additional Facility arbitration, if Convention Arbitration is not available. Convention Arbitration would not be available, for example, if either Party subsequently ceased to be a party to the ICSID Convention.

I recommend that the Senate consider this Protocol as soon as possible, and give its advice and consent to ratification of the Protocol at an early date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 12, 2000.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Eddie Bernice Johnson September 12, 2000

Well, that's not really why we're here. [*Laughter*] But if you want to change the Constitution in any way that's good, you're going to have to change the Congress first. [*Laughter*] And if you change the Congress and you have the right outcome in the Presidential election, you won't need to change the Constitution. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first of all, to Bob and Sheila, how glad I am to be back in their home. They have been so phenomenally generous to so many people who have devoted their lives to public service, who, therefore, have to have the help of people like them to continue to serve. But I'm grateful to them because a lot of people wouldn't do that, and I thank them.

I will say to you publicly what I said to them privately a few moments ago. They've enjoyed a great deal of success in life, and God's been good to them, and they've worked hard to help God along—[*laughter*—and they've done right well. It's a long way from Mississippi. [*Laughter*]

But I think their greatest glory is in their two children. And I expect Brett, one day, to win the U.S. Open in tennis—[*laughter*—and I think his sister will one day win the gold medal in the Olympics for her equestrian skills. Whether they do or not, they're really good people, and that's the ultimate tribute to Bob and Sheila, because they take all this good fortune they've had and instead of just thinking about themselves, they think about their children, and they think about our children, which is why they're helping Eddie Bernice and why they've helped so many other people, and I want to thank you for that.

Now, I got Eddie Bernice in a sentimental mood tonight, because we were in the living room visiting with a few people. I put my arm around her, and I said, "Let me ask you something. Do you think there is anybody here who has known you as long as I have?" [*Laughter*] She said, "You know, come to think of it, I don't believe there is."

And 28 years ago, when we were working together, it was a pretty interesting experience. Senator McGovern got 33 votes—percent of the vote in Texas. I never will forget, one day I was on a plane from Dallas to Little Rock with

a young businessman from Jackson, Mississippi, and he said, "What are you doing?" And I told him what I was doing. He said, "You're doing what?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Yes, I'm working for McGovern in Texas." And he looked at me—he didn't crack a smile—and he said, "You know, you're the only white man I ever met for McGovern." [*Laughter*] It's a true story. It's a true story.

Two years later, when Sam Ervin was having his hearings, the phone rang in my house in Little Rock one day, and it was this guy on the phone. He had kept my card, and he said, "I just called to tell you, you were right, and I was wrong." [*Laughter*]

Well, Eddie Bernice was right on so many things. Look, I can be very brief. This woman has been a friend of mine for 28 years, and she still pretty much looks exactly like she did 28 years ago. And since I don't even look like what I did 8 years ago, I resent that. [*Laughter*]

But she's the sort of person that I think we need in positions of leadership in the country and in our party. She is a passionate proponent of equal rights for everybody. She cares about health care. She cares about giving everybody a chance, but she also understands how to run the store. She's fiscally responsible. She's committed to the global economy. She wants America to run toward it, not run away from it. She's taken a lot of tough votes to stick with me when I tried to modernize this economy. When even members of our own party thought I was wrong, she always stood with me—sometimes when it wasn't easy. And she understands that if you want to really help working people, you also have to help business, too. And there's a lot of you here tonight because of that.

So I think the country would work better if everybody believed that you could be pro-business and pro-labor, pro-growth and pro-environment, pro-civil rights and pro-individual opportunity. I think the country would work better.

So I would have come here regardless, because she's been my friend for 28 years, but I'm telling you, she is a great Member of Congress. And she believes the things that I think are important for Americans to believe and to live by and to work by together if we're going

to make the most of the phenomenal opportunities that are before us.

You know, I just had an interview with *Wired* magazine. You all ever read *Wired* magazine? [Laughter] And these two young women came in and interviewed me, and they're miles ahead of me on a lot of this operational technology. But they think I've been a fairly good friend of the high-tech sector, and we were talking about it. And they said, "You know, it might even be more interesting to be President in the next 8 years than it was in the last." [Laughter]

And I just would say this. One of the reasons that I'm so interested in this election for—I've got a lot of personal stake in this election. As you know, I voted in New York for my wife for the first time in my life today. It was a big kick, one of the greatest thrills I ever had. I loved it. And obviously, I feel a deep personal commitment to Al Gore because he's been the best Vice President the country has ever had. And I have—Joe Lieberman and I have been friends for 30 years. I met Joe Lieberman 2 years before I met Eddie Bernice, when he was 28 years old, running for the State Senate.

So it's funny how life goes in circles, you know? None of us ever could have known that we would be where we are today doing what we're doing today. In spite of what she says, I don't believe that even my mother thought I could be President in 1973. [Laughter] Most people I knew just wanted me to get a haircut. [Laughter]

But you know, when Harry Truman went home to Independence, Missouri, he said he was reclaiming the most important title any American can have, that of citizen. And I believe that. I've worked as hard as I could to try to turn this country around, and we're in better shape than we were 8 years ago.

I think if you listen to the political rhetoric today and compare it to the rhetoric of 8 years ago, or even 2 years ago, the people have sent the politicians a clear message: They're tired of hate-mongering and division; they want to hear people talk about the issues. And they have figured out again that elections are job interviews. All these things are jobs. It really matters if you get up and go to work every day. It matters if you're doing the right things. It matters if you've got good people around you. It matters if you're not embarrassed to say, "I don't know, but I'd sure like to learn."

And I take a lot of pride in that. But what I want you to understand is that as a citizen, just like I said when I spoke in Los Angeles, I've waited for 35 years for my country to have the chance again to build the future of its dreams for our children. All of the best things are still out there. In spite of every good thing that's happened to us in the last 8 years, the best is still out there. But we have to make good decisions, and we have to hire good people for President and Vice President, for Senator and Representative. And then we've got to make up our mind we're going to go forward together.

The basic reason I'm a Democrat is because when I was a little boy, my grandfather told me a story about how he cried one Easter in the Depression because he couldn't afford \$2 to buy my mother an Easter dress. And when I was a kid, everybody had to have a new outfit at Easter. And my mother made me get one whether I wanted one or not. And if you remember the fashions of the fifties, it was fairly painful for me sometimes to wear some of the things that were mandated just because my granddaddy had a tough time in the Depression. [Laughter]

But anyway, my grandfather believed everybody deserved a chance without regard to their race. And he believed that we all do better when we help each other. I still believe that. And I'm proud to be a member of the oldest political party of any democracy in the world, and I'm proud for whatever contribution I was able to make to those two goals. But the best is still out there.

And so I'm crazy about our candidates for President and for Vice President. I love my wife more than life, and I've been nuts about Eddie Bernice Johnson for 28 years. But the real reason we ought to be helping them is, it's the right thing for America.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Robert L. and Sheila Johnson, their son, Brett, and their daughter, Paige. Representative Johnson was a candidate for reelection in Texas' 30th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Mike Ross September 12, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Well, this is a special way for me to end what has been a special day, here in the home of my oldest friend in the world. The older we get, the more we want to say, longest standing—[laughter]—or some phony substitute. Mack and Donna Kay have been so wonderful to me, and I'm very grateful that they did this for Mike, because it's particularly important, and I want to say a little more about that.

I want to thank Senator Bumpers and Senator Lincoln and all the Members of Congress who are here from Arkansas and throughout the country and former Members who are here and all the members of my administration who are here and all of you who are here without whom I would not be here myself and those of you who have worked so hard to make our last 8 years successful for America.

You know, Mack was my first Chief of Staff, and then he was my Envoy to the Americas. And I think he now feels as at home in any South American country as he does in south Arkansas—[laughter]—because he's done such a great job for our country, and I'm very grateful for that.

And I'm grateful for all of you who've served in this administration, one way or the other—those of you still here to the bitter end and those of you that got out when you can still make some money. [Laughter] Look at old Billy laughing. [Laughter]

Now, I want to say a few things about this race. On the way down, Mack looked at me, and he put his arm around me, and he said, "Now, you know, you can't go down there and say what you really think." [Laughter] "Show a little restraint." So I'll try.

I want you to know a couple of things about Mike Ross and a couple things about south Arkansas. This district runs the whole length of the southern part of our State. It includes not only Hope, the place where I was born, but Hot Springs, the place where I grew up.

It includes a big chunk of the Mississippi Delta, one of the poorest parts of America. In fact, it's the poorest part of America, outside of the Native American reservations. It is an unbelievably wonderful place. I don't know that

I ever had so much fun in my life as I did campaigning down there. It's a place where personal contact matters a lot, and it's a place where I got 63 percent of the vote in the 1996 Presidential election. It is, therefore, the most Democratic seat in America presently held by a Republican, a genial person and a person who, wherever two or more gathered, was always happy to go, and that's good politics in south Arkansas. I know. I've been there. I never lost since they stood with me through thick and thin.

And it's a long way from Washington to the piney woods of south Arkansas, a long way from those soybean fields. And it's sometimes hard to get the message clear over the transom that exists between here and there. But all I can tell you is, I think that part of our State and our entire State are better off because of the economics, the education, the health care policies we've pursued, and whenever the chips were down, the Representative from south Arkansas was always on the other side.

Whenever the people down there needed one thing and the party leaders up here of the Republican Party said another, another always won. Over and over and over again, for 8 long years. It was just as hard politically for Blanche Lambert to stand up there 8 years ago and vote for that economic plan, as it would have been for the Congressman from the Fourth Congressional District. She did it, and he didn't, because they told him not to.

And when they said, "Now, here's this budget with the biggest education and environmental and health care cuts in history, and, oh, by the way, we're going to abolish the Department of Education," he stood up there and said, "Yes, sir, count me in."

And I'll bet you there never was a speech given about it at any country crossroad in south Arkansas. More to the point, when they—when we finally got out of debt and started running surpluses and started paying down an accumulated national debt which had quadrupled in the 12 years before we came here, when they controlled the economic policy of the country, then they were up here voting for tax cuts, most of which would go to a lot of people in this room that don't need it as bad as they

need—[laughter]—as bad as you need lower interest rates in a strong economy and a good stock market that will give you a better future.

[At this point, a member of the audience collapsed.]

The President. We've got a doctor here. It's just hot. Can we get my doctor back there? Yes, open the door. Get the air in here. Oh, Vic's back there. Doctor Prince is there. Well, we should have opened that long ago; look how breezy it is. You can't do any good by staring, so just come back here. Let him go to work.

Now, let me tell you just two other things that are more important. All these elections are always about the future.

Can you get through? We now have three doctors. [Laughter] We observe the Patients' Bill of Rights in practice, even though it's not law yet. [Laughter]

I want to tell you just two other things. I've known Mike Ross, as he told you, since he was a teenager. And when I heard he wanted to run for Congress, I told everybody that would listen that he could win if he won the nomination. You know why? Because he'll go to every country crossroads, too. He'll be working when his opponent quits, and when he gets elected, he'll actually vote for the people that he said he was going to try to help.

This is not a complicated deal here. This is simple, straightforward, but hard. The reason he needs your money is, the people have got to understand what the consequences of their vote is, not in south Arkansas but in Washington.

I can't help just making one other point. You know, I can't believe—the other day I got questioned by a reporter from a paper that had always opposed me when I was down there, asking me if I didn't feel bad that I hadn't delivered more pork barrel to Arkansas like Lyndon Johnson did to Texas. And I thought to myself: Well, if we had a Democratic majority in Congress and all the Representatives and Senators from Arkansas were Democrats, we could have done a lot better on that one, once the economy turned around.

The last thing I want to say is, elections are always about the future. I worked really hard to turn this country around, and we're in better shape than we were 8 years ago, but I believe what I said at the convention. The best is still out there. I've waited since I was a boy for

my country to be in a position to build the future of our dreams for our children. All the best is still out there.

So even though my party has a new leader, whom I believe will be the next President, and his Vice Presidential partner is a man who's been a friend of mine for 30 years, and a very, very good person; even though my family has a new candidate—and I had one of the great thrills of my life voting for her this morning for the first time—I have decided to assume the role of Cheerleader in Chief in this election. [Laughter]

What I want you to know is, the best is still out there, but it depends on what decisions the American people make for President and Vice President, the Senate races and the House races. I'm just telling you, you need—those of you from Arkansas need to go home and lay the bacon down to all those people.

When I passed that economic plan by a single vote, they said it was going to wreck the economy. Like Mike said, time has not been kind to their prediction. When I signed the Brady bill, when Mike and I got that done, I thought half the hunters in Arkansas were going to write us off the list, and the Congressman from down there was telling everybody, "Oh, this is going to end hunting, and it's going to end the way of life in Arkansas." I want every hunter that missed a single day, an hour in the deer woods, to vote against Mike Ross for Congress, and every other one ought to vote for him, because the crime rate has gone down for 7 years in a row in this country, because we put 100,000 police on the streets.

If you look ahead—let me just mention two or three of the issues. If they win, they're going to give those of us who are in good income groups—and finally, maybe I'll be making at least half what Mack does next year—and we'll get some sort of short-term satisfaction, but they'll put this country back in debt.

I'm telling you, by the time you add up all the taxes they passed last year—this year, that they promise to pass again and all the ones their nominee promised to pass and the trillion dollar cost of partially privatizing Social Security—\$1 trillion—and all their other spending policies, you're back in deficits again.

If you want to know—you know what it would mean—I just got an economic analysis that said that if the Vice President's economic program passes and we keep on track to get this country

out of debt in 12 years for the first time since 1835, it will keep interest rates one percent lower for a decade than it would if the other nominee's program and the program of this Congress, the congressional majority, passes.

Do you know what that's worth? Listen to this: \$390 billion in 10 years in home mortgages; \$30 billion in car payments; \$15 billion in college loan payments. In other words, a \$425 billion tax cut to ordinary working families, like the people that live in south Arkansas.

Now, that's just one example. They promised to get rid of the 100,000 police program, and the other 50,000 we're putting on, even though crime has gone down 7 years in a row because we're preventing more crime. There are consequences to this.

They're not for a Patients' Bill of Rights, because HMO's don't want it. I don't know about you, but I want more young people not only to run for Congress but to want to be physicians, want to be in general practice, and want to know if they'd make a referral to a specialist, because somebody desperately needs it, they're not going to be second-guessed.

I don't like the fact that most health care plans won't let people who aren't in so-called high risk groups get tests for colon cancer, when we know that if 100 percent of us, after we got over 50, did the test, we'd cut the death rate by 50 percent in 2 years. I don't like that. There are consequences to this.

They talk about how they're for Medicare drugs, and they want to help the poor people first because this plan might be so expensive. My Medicare drug program—and they've got that ad on, talking about how we want the Government to take over health care. We want Medicare to run a drug program. Medicare has lower administrative costs, by far, than any HMO in America.

Even the insurance companies—God bless them; I've got to give them this—even the insurance companies have tried to tell the Republicans they can't offer drug insurance at affordable rates, and nobody will buy it. And in Nevada, they tried it, and they couldn't get a single company to offer it. And the Republican majority says, "I don't care. They're going to offer it, or you can't have your drugs. But we're going to give it to the poor people."

What they don't say is, half the people in this country, half the senior citizens who need medicine and can't afford it and don't have in-

surance, are not covered by their program. They're above 150 or 175 percent of the poverty line. Do you know what 175 percent of the poverty line is? Fourteen thousand seven hundred dollars for a senior citizen. So if you make \$14,800 and you've got a \$200 drug bill a month, which is small compared to what some people in that age group have, you get nothing.

Now, there are consequences to this, and what you are doing here, if you're not from Arkansas, is giving him the money to make sure that we can run ads down there, so that people understand when he shows up at the country store, they'll get somebody who'll come home every weekend and work for them but who will go back to Washington and work for them, too.

I've talked longer than I meant to, but I think—I think that in these 8 years, I've earned the right to say what I think about the next 4 years. *[Laughter]* So I'm telling you, all of you that come from Arkansas, or any of you that have any friends down there, we needed your money, and we're glad you gave it. But it's not enough.

Clarity is our friend in this election. Why did Vice President Gore move up and stay up after his speech? Governor Bush gave a beautiful speech in Philadelphia. It was beautiful. It was very well written. It was eloquent. It was compelling in a personal way, and people liked it. But it didn't have any legs. Why? Because they couldn't afford to say, "Hey, we're not for a real Patients' Bill of Rights. We're not for real Medicare drug benefits, and we do want to have tax cuts so big that when we privatize Social Security, we'll be back in debt." They couldn't say that. *[Laughter]* So they had to sort of blur everything over. Believe me, old Mike's in there running against the guy that's a master at that blurring. This seat was held by David Pryor and Ray Thornton and Beryl Anthony. This seat should be held by Mike Ross.

I'm just pleading with you. The other side is going to pour a lot of money into it, and there's going to be a lot of good backslapping and a lot of people remembering when I showed up at your chicken supper or this, that, or the other thing. And I care a lot about that. But I know this district. They're mostly just hard-working, small business people, factory workers, farmers, people doing their best to obey the law, keep body and soul together, and figure out how to live together.

The district is about a third African-American. It is a beautiful, wonderful place. It deserves to have a wonderful Congressman. If you can give him some more money for the election, you ought to do it. If you can't, you ought to call somebody down there or go home and work. I'm telling you, clarity is our friend. If the people know what the choice really means for them in their lives, he will win this thing in a walk. But he's not going to win it in a walk, because they've got a lot of money for—[inaudible]—but we've got to go down and fight for clarity for 56 more days. He's been out here

for 15 months. The rest of us ought to do whatever we can for him for 56 days.

Thank you very much. God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Thomas F. (Mack) and Donna Kay McLarty; former Senator Dale Bumpers; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Mike Ross was a candidate for Congress in Arkansas' Fourth Congressional District.

Remarks on Hate Crimes Legislation *September 13, 2000*

Mr. Holder, thank you for your leadership. Commander O'Malley, thank you for coming back and for being the embodiment of someone who has changed his position on this and been courageous enough to say so.

And Mrs. Byrdsong, I cannot even imagine the courage it must take for you to have made this journey from your home, to stand up in front of us, to say what you have said. I thank your pastor for joining you here. And I think I speak for all of us and for all Americans: We thank you for trying to turn your pain into a positive gain for America. We thank you.

I'd like to thank Justin Dart and Mary Frances Berry and so many other advocates of human rights and civil rights for being in this room today. I would like to thank the members of the Interfaith Alliance who are here and, of course, the members of our DC city council.

Many Members of Congress wanted to be here, but they are actually voting now, and in the House they're voting on this, on amendments to this very proposal. So we're here at a very important time. The first-ever vote on comprehensive hate crimes legislation is scheduled in the House of Representatives for later today after the amendments have been dealt with. That would enable us to clear the last legislative hurdle to final passage of hate crimes.

In June, with the Vice President standing watch in case a tie had to be broken, the Senate passed a strong bipartisan hate crimes bill. I was very moved by many of the things that

were said there, but I want to say a special words of thanks publicly to Senator Gordon Smith from Oregon, an evangelical Christian Republican, for the speech that he gave on that occasion, reminding us that this is not a partisan issue. I hope the House will follow suit.

As I have said many times over the last couple of years, it is for me a sad and painful irony that at the beginning of a new century I have done so much to try to fill with opportunity for the American people and to bring full of hope to the rest of the world, with all the modern gadgets we enjoy, we are still bedeviled by mankind's oldest failing, the fear of the other, which so quickly can lead to distrust, then to dehumanization, then to the kind of violence that ended the lives of Matthew Shepard and Ricky Byrdsong far, far before their time.

We may not ever fully conquer the disease that seems to afflict human hearts everywhere, the compelling need to define ourselves up by defining someone else down. But at least we can do more to make sure that no one in our country is violated simply because of who they are. That's why we're here today. I would also like to point out that there is a connection between the two ways that throughout history, and if you just look at the last century, hate crimes have manifested themselves.

Here we talk about sad people, twisted inside, who somehow felt they could fill a hole in their own lives by taking the lives of other people away, people who had somehow been convinced

that they were so superior to other people, they could shoot at them, kill them. What possessed that person in California to shoot at all those little kids walking into the Jewish community school?

I saw—one person said that when he killed a Filipino postal worker, he thought he had a double success; he'd killed an Asian and a Federal employee. What makes people think that way? There are all kinds of explanations, but we know that it's profoundly wrong to believe that you can ever lift yourself up by putting someone else down.

The point I want to make, just briefly, is that it's not very far from there to the awful examples we've seen in our time of political leaders who try to get one group of people in the majority in the country to blame all their problems on another group of people in the minority. And then you have a Holocaust, or you have a Kosovo, where a whole country is just flushed out.

So this is very important. It is just not true that hate crimes are like other crimes. It is not even true that every crime is a hate crime. And that is fundamentally at the heart of this debate.

We had the first-ever conference at the White House on this 3 years ago. Since then, we've increased the number of Federal agents working on these cases, prosecuted successfully a number of quite serious ones, formed local hate crimes groups with local U.S. attorneys' offices around the Nation, and worked with more and more police officers to identify the signs of hate crimes.

This coming year, one of the things in our budget I hope the Congress will adopt involves funds for extensive training for local law enforcement officials in this area. But we have to do more. The Deputy Attorney General told you quite eloquently, precisely, and clearly why we need a Federal hate crimes law that allows the Justice Department to do so much more than it can now. Commander O'Malley told you the devastating financial consequences that can come to local law enforcement from simply trying to do the right thing without the necessary Federal support.

But underneath it all, and far more important than everything else, are the stories: the life young Matthew Shepard had and the one he might have had; the wonderful life Ricky Byrdson had and the one he might have had.

Last year, or in 1998—that's the last year we have figures—there were—listen to this—7,755 reported hate crimes, nearly one every hour of every day.

More importantly, we know this is only the tip of the iceberg. Today we have new evidence that confirms what many have long suspected, and that is that hate crimes are underreported. A survey conducted by Northeastern University found that as many as 6,000 law enforcement agencies may have encountered hate crimes over the past year but failed to report them to the FBI.

We also learned that 85 percent of law enforcement officers responding to the survey agree with Commander O'Malley's belief that hate crimes—hate-motivated crimes are more serious than similar crimes not motivated by bias.

That's why I'm directing the Justice Department today to work with local authorities to develop a plan within 120 days to make sure we report all hate crimes so we'll know what the scope of the challenge is. It will examine a number of strategies, from pilot programs in States suspected of underreporting, to increasing training to help local officials identify such crimes.

This is all very important, but only Congress can do what really should be done here. That's why the House must vote yes on the hate crimes legislation offered by Congressman Conyers today, and yes on sending me the final hate crimes legislation before they adjourn for the year. Both yeses are important. *[Applause]* Thank you.

I also ask Congress to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act before it's too late, so that we can continue to build on its success.

You know, over the last several decades, over and over again, when it came down to protecting the lives of innocent Americans, Congress has been willing to take bipartisan action to do the right thing. I hope and believe it will do nothing less with hate crimes legislation and the Violence Against Women Act.

Let me just close with this. One of the cruelest aspects of the systematic hate crimes that were perpetrated by the Nazis is their attempt to prove that somehow it was justified by science, by some sort of innate superiority. One of the happiest aspects of most recent scientific developments in biology is that we can now scientifically confirm what faiths have always

taught, that the most important fact of our common existence on this Earth is our common humanity.

The human genome research project has documented that we are genetically 99.9 percent the same. Furthermore, that the differences among people within the same ethnic or racial groups are greater than the genetic differences between profiles of different racial groups.

Now, this is a stunning thing. In other words, this is not an affair of the body. It is an affair of the heart, of the spirit. It is, therefore, an even more dangerous kind of infection. I don't think any of us believe we can ever root it out just by punishing people. But the most important thing is that we do have the tools we need to take a strong stand before these things spread even wider. That's what Sherialyn said, and that's why she came.

We've got a chance here to reaffirm America at its best. And I hope we can do it, because the most important thing, if we want to make the most of all this modern, wondrous economy we have, is to get rid of our oldest demons and build one America.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:48 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Commander David O'Malley, Laramie Police Department, WY, who investigated the murder of Matthew Shepard; Sherialyn Byrdsong, widow of Ricky Byrdsong; Justin Dart, Jr., chairman and founder, Justice For All; and Rev. David S. Handley, senior pastor, First Presbyterian Church of Evanston, IL.

Statement on Reauthorization of the COPS Program

September 13, 2000

Six years ago today I signed the historic 1994 crime bill into law with a vision of bringing communities and local law enforcement together to take back our streets and win the war against crime. Since enactment of this vital law, crime has dropped every year to its lowest level in over 25 years, and America is the safest it has been in a generation. One of the most important factors in our success is the Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS) program, which has funded over 105,000 police officers for our streets. Today Attorney General Janet Reno will release a report to Congress on the positive impact the COPS program has had on communities of all sizes and regions across America. By building partnerships and trust with residents, COPS officers are not only helping reduce crime but the fear of crime, as well, restoring hope and promise for the future in neighborhoods across America.

The Attorney General will also announce over \$55 million in community policing grants to more than 700 communities to hire or redeploy of over 1,600 police officers, to develop 311 non-emergency hotline programs, and to install cameras in over 2,900 law enforcement vehicles to improve officer safety and promote officer integrity. Although the COPS program continues to make progress by giving communities the tools they need to fight crime, we must do more. I urge Congress to make the 21st century the safest yet by reauthorizing the COPS program for another 5 years and fully funding my \$1.3 billion budget request to help put up to an additional 50,000 officers on the street and provide law enforcement and communities with more resources than ever to keep American families safe. Together, we can make America the safest big country in the world.

Statement on Action Concerning Japanese Whaling Practices *September 13, 2000*

Following Secretary Mineta's certification that Japan is undermining international whaling protections with its expanded whaling program, I am today directing that Japan be denied future access to fishing rights in U.S. waters and directing members of my Cabinet to consider additional steps we might take, including possible trade sanctions.

Strong international cooperation has allowed the recovery of many whale species once pushed to the brink of extinction. We must work to ensure that these protections are upheld. I hope that the steps we take today will encourage Japan to reverse its actions and respect the strong international consensus that has helped bring back some of Earth's most majestic creatures.

Statement on the Northern Ireland Peace Process *September 13, 2000*

I was encouraged by today's historic first visit to the White House by the leaders of Northern Ireland's new Government, established under the Good Friday accord. First Minister David Trimble and Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon conveyed to me their absolute commitment to make the new political institutions work for the benefit of all the people of Northern Ireland. Although the institutions have only been fully operating for a matter of weeks, elected representatives from across the party spectrum are working together on issues—from economic development to the environment to health and education—that hold the key to a better life for their constituents, who now hold them accountable under devolution of power.

While difficult issues relating to implementation of the Good Friday accord remain, I am convinced following today's meeting that all the parties can work together to overcome their dif-

ferences and that they fully recognize the importance of doing so to ensure that these historic achievements are not lost. The ongoing violence reminds us of the need for all parties to carry out their obligations under the accord, and for those with political aims to pursue them through exclusively peaceful means.

I am grateful for the invitation extended to me to visit Northern Ireland. I reaffirm my desire to continue to support the peace process in any way we can.

Thanks to courageous and determined leadership, the people of Northern Ireland face a brighter future now than at any time in the last three decades. As those in zones of conflict around the world search for hope, they need look no further than Northern Ireland, whose leaders have proved that risks for peace are worth taking.

Statement on the Congressional Effort To Override the Veto of Marriage Penalty Tax Relief Legislation *September 13, 2000*

Through 7 years of tough choices and fiscal discipline, we have changed record deficits to surpluses, paid down the debt for 3 years in a row, and put America on course to be debt-free by 2012. As today's vote demonstrates, the

majority in Congress still seems to be determined to knock America off this path of fiscal discipline with a 10 year tax plan that will drain nearly \$2 trillion from the surplus and drive us back into deficits.

I urge Congress to work with me on a middle-class tax cut to help Americans send their children to college, provide long-term care for elderly or disabled relatives, make child care more affordable, and provide targeted marriage penalty tax relief. If the majority in Congress is serious about paying down the debt, they should abandon the failed tax plan they continue to advocate and work with me to pass tax cuts targeted to America's families, strengthen Social

Security and Medicare, create a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, invest in education, and keep America on course to be debt-free by 2012. This is the best approach for America.

NOTE: The President vetoed H.R. 4810, the "Marriage Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2000," on August 5.

Memorandum on Improving Hate Crimes Reporting September 13, 2000

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Improving Hate Crimes Reporting

Unfortunately, each year our country experiences a number of hate crimes. We have all heard about the heinous incidents such as the dragging death of James Byrd, Jr., in Jasper, Texas, in June 1998. In October of that same year, Mathew Shepard, a gay college student, died after being beaten and tied to a fence. In July 1999, Benjamin Smith went on a racially motivated shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana. At the end of this rampage fueled by hate, Ricky Byrdson, an African American who was a former basketball coach at Northwestern University, and Won-Joon Yoon, a Korean graduate student at Indiana University, were killed, and eight others were wounded. In August 1999, Joseph Iletto, an Asian American and U.S. postal worker, died at the hands of a gunman in Los Angeles. This same gunman also injured five persons, including three children, at a Jewish community center. Finally, this year there were two rampages in Pennsylvania in which several people of various ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds were killed or injured. These crimes affect the entire Nation, the communities in which they occur, and the victims and their families in ways fundamentally different from other crimes. People are targeted simply because of who they are—whether it is because of their race, religion, color, sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

During my Administration, we have worked hard to fight hate crimes. I established the National Church Arson Task Force in June 1996 to oversee the investigation and prosecution of

arson at houses of worship around the country. I held the first-ever White House Conference on Hate Crimes in November 1997. At the conference, I announced that the Department of Justice would establish Hate Crimes Working Groups in the U.S. Attorneys' districts across the country. These working groups, essentially Federal-State-local partnerships, typically include representation from the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), State and local law enforcement and prosecutors' offices, educators, and community groups. The groups work to ensure close coordination on hate crimes investigations and prosecutions among responsible law enforcement agencies; promote training of police, investigators, and prosecutors in identifying and dealing with hate crimes; encourage victims to report hate crimes; and educate the public about the harm they cause. In April of this year, I held a strategy session with some representatives of these Hate Crimes Working Groups at which law enforcement officials—at the Federal, State, and local levels—reported that they coordinate closely on hate crimes investigations and prosecutions.

In 1998, the last year for which FBI figures are available, 7,755 hate crimes were reported—nearly one hate crime every hour of every day. Of these hate crimes reported, 56 percent were motivated by race, 18 percent by religion, and 16 percent by sexual orientation. However, there was certainly an underreporting of hate crimes.

Today, I announced a new report, "Improving the Quality and Accuracy of Bias Crime Statistics Nationally: An Assessment of the First Ten

Years of Bias Crime Data Collection,” which was funded by the Department of Justice. This report noted that over 10,000 city, county, and State law enforcement agencies now participate in the FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Hate Crime Data Collection Program. Although 83 percent of participating agencies reported that no hate crimes had occurred in their jurisdiction during the previous year, follow-up surveys with line officers showed that 31 percent of those agencies had investigated one or more incidents of hate crimes. These data indicate a disconnect between what line officers believe are hate crimes and what is reported to the FBI. Extrapolating from this data, the report estimates that between 5,000 and 6,000 additional agencies may have encountered hate crimes that were not reported to the national program. In addition, the report noted that 85 percent of law enforcement officers responding to a survey believed that hate-motivated crimes are more serious than similar crimes that are not motivated by bias.

Based on the results of this report, I hereby direct the Department of Justice to work with State and local law enforcement agencies, as well as relevant law enforcement organizations, to come up with a plan to improve hate crimes

reporting, within 120 days. I understand that the Department already plans to meet with representatives of State and local law enforcement organizations later this month. In addition to this meeting, the Department should consider in its plan whether various actions, such as the following, would improve hate crimes reporting:

- Pilot programs in jurisdictions where law enforcement agencies reported zero incidents of hate crimes;
- A study to analyze the role that juvenile offenders play in the number of hate crimes committed each year;
- Training sessions by Federal law enforcement on identifying and reporting hate crimes; and
- Activities by the U.S. Attorney Hate Crimes Working Groups to work with community groups and local law enforcement to improve hate crimes reporting in their areas, including helping to bring more victims forward to the police.

In carrying out these activities, I know that you will continue your leadership on fighting and preventing hate crimes in order to make this country a safer place for all Americans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Interview With John Harris of the Washington Post August 8, 2000

Perspectives on the Final Year

Mr. Harris. Have these guys told you what I’m up to? I’ll give you the quick version.

The President. Yes, give me the quick version.

Mr. Harris. It’s a piece about year 8 of the Presidency. It’s not a legacy piece, looking back at the 8 years. It’s a piece about this year and sort of what you’re doing on the policy front, on the political front, on the personal front.

The historic pattern in, you know, basically since World War II has not been last years of Presidencies. Most people have sort of slunk to the finish line, if they made it at all. And it seems to me that you are defying that pattern, and the China vote showed that you have continued policy relevance. I think there’s a lot of interest in what you’re doing politically for Democrats, particularly for the First Lady.

And I think there’s a lot of interest in how you’re doing personally, after—you know, by any definition the ordeal of ’98, ’99, sort of how do you come back and have, by any sort of objective measure, this very energetic final year?

So those three dimensions are all things that I’m interested in.

One thing I’m curious about is to what extent—how self-conscious you were at the end of last year, at the start of this year, that, look, we’ve got a very limited window, and was there sort of a methodical approach to organizing the limited amount of time you had left, or was it just sort of, you know, a race to the finish line? In other words, was there an acute sense of the window closing?

The President. Well, let me back up a minute and say I have—I was aware, I suppose, at some

level, from the moment I got here, although I didn't have much time to think about it, that generally, Presidencies seem to wind down. And normally, it starts sometime not just in the last year but in the year before that. And occasionally, something pops up that happens that's good, but normally there is kind of a decline.

I didn't think that that was necessary but that it was something you had to have a definite strategy to avoid, because it's just not right for the country. You know, they pay us to show up for 4 years, and there's always a lot of business to be done.

And even in the political context of an election and even, clearly, the change of administration—as I always remind all my colleagues in the Congress, on both sides—no matter how much we get done, there will still be plenty of things that won't be resolved, over which there will be genuine differences, and therefore, you can have a meaningful election. So we all had a job to do. So if you just want to focus on the last year, let's start with that.

I essentially organized this year the way I have every year from the beginning. And that is, you begin by laying out a strategy consistent with the vision we started with, based on what has been achieved already, what hasn't been achieved, and what has come up. And you articulate that in the State of the Union Address with as much clarity as possible.

Now, this year what I did was to try both to articulate what I would try to do this year and to look—in terms of not just what had been achieved over the last 7 years but in terms of the remaining long-term challenges for the country. I laid it out with great specificity. And the good thing about that is, it serves as a real organizing principle for the White House staff and for the Cabinet, for how I spend my time, both in the office with the Congress and in the country.

And it really has worked. I think one of the things that has gotten—that has led to some Presidents and some White Houses to get less than they might have out of all their days is the tendency to become overcome with the politics of the political environment or the conventional wisdom. A lot of being President is a job like any other job, and you have control over your attitude toward it, your priorities, and what you work on. And if everybody is working on the same page and full steam ahead, a lot of things happen.

So you start with a strategy and with as many specifics as possible in the State of the Union, and then you just try to execute it. And we've had some success, as you pointed out.

Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China

Mr. Harris. Did you ever feel that the China vote was lost? I was talking to somebody, one of your advisers, who said they had come back from a meeting with one of the organized labor leaders who told him, "Look, we've got the votes. We're jamming you on this. Sorry about it."

The President. I knew that they thought they had us beat. But I didn't think so because I thought that in the end, the vote was so clearly in the national interests, and the consequences of defeat—where somebody says, "Well, let's just put it off," or, "Maybe we'll come back to it next year," or something like that—were so clearly adverse to what was good for America's future that I thought in the end they'd come around and do the right thing.

Accomplishments in the Early Years

Mr. Harris. How much easier do you think this job is in year 8 than in year one? I mean, is there a sense of, like, "Look, there's no kind of curve ball that's going to get thrown at me that's going to be one I haven't seen before?"

The President. Well, at one level, it's much easier because I had never worked in the Washington environment before, and as you remember, the strategy of the opposition was that I would have no honeymoon—[laughter]—and I didn't. And I also had a country with a lot of big problems when I started, and we had to get a lot of big things done. And I tried to—maybe even too much—I tried to put a lot of things through the system in the first 2 years.

We got three of the four big things I wanted to do done. We got the economic plan that—eventually we got welfare reform, but I could tell we were going to get it. And we got started with executive actions, and we passed the crime bill. But we couldn't do health care. And then there was all this, you know, a lot of—and we were also, at the time, putting together a team in the White House, in the Cabinet, working together, and working with all the others, which the White House and the whole administration—with whom the White House and the whole administration had to work. So to try to

get stuff done and put the thing together, it was very difficult.

Since then, every year I think it has gotten a little easier from that point of view. On the other hand, there are always—it never ceases to be challenging or interesting. And if you're trying to do meaningful things, there are always going to be things that are very, very hard to do. For example, one of the toughest things we're working on now is the Middle East.

But that's another thing. I think it's a mistake, just because you're near the end, rather than the beginning of an administration, not to try to do the big things, especially if they really need doing within the time frame that you have.

1994 Election/Whitewater

Mr. Harris. One of the early themes when I showed up on this beat, which I guess was '95, '96 period, was a sense among a lot of your advisers, and I think it reflected your view, that you were not getting credit for what had been done the first couple of years, either from the press or from the public, more broadly.

Do you think you'll get credit for your Presidency, at this point? Do you feel adequately appreciated?

The President. Yes. I don't worry about it as much anymore. The only reason I worried about it in those years was that I felt that Congress—

Mr. Harris. —those people reported back you were feeling really angry about this.

The President. Well, you know, I don't think it's possible for me to convey how terrible I felt for other people that we lost the Congress in the '94 election. And all those people that put their necks on the line and were defeated, primarily because they voted for the economic plan—and the voters hadn't felt the positive impact of it yet—and they voted for the crime bill. And they had all these fear arguments out there on what we did on assault weapons and the Brady bill—and that was really in the election cycle, and that passed—and there was no attempt to see that the 100,000 police and the gun safety measures would work. But the fear was out there—and then, of course, when we were unsuccessful in getting even a compromise initiative on health care that deflated our side's vote a little bit. And those three things together caused a lot of very good people to lose their seats, and I felt badly about that.

I never felt that—as so many people did at the time—that it meant that the administration couldn't get reelected, because I always believed that the country had serious problems, and we had to tackle them early and brave the controversy early and that if I turned out to be right about our economic strategy and we continue to make progress and we passed our education program, the beginning of it, in '93 and '94, that it would work out fine. And it did.

But I was frustrated more by what I thought was the preoccupation with other things, which seemed to me anybody who looked at the evidence would see didn't amount to anything. And now we know, after all this time, that Whitewater thing was a total sham. It was a sham from the beginning. It was a put-up deal, and everybody knows it now. But it seemed to me everybody should have known it years before they did.

So I was frustrated by it, just because I felt that the most important thing was to keep moving the country forward. In terms of personal credit, I think that—you know, Presidencies go through several incarnations, many of which occur after they're long gone. I have had the opportunity just in my service as President to read about administrations, through a lot of American history reading, including about administrations that most Americans don't know much about. And I see all the time there is this sort of constant process of reassessment about every period in our history. So I'll have to leave that to history. People will be reassessing this period after I'm not even alive anymore.

The only thing I ever wanted enough credit to do was to keep elected, to stay in office, and to keep pushing the country in the direction I thought was important and to get enough support in the Congress to do the things we had to do.

Reforming the Republican Image/Team Flexibility

Mr. Harris. When you see Republicans borrowing at least some of the image of your political model, if not necessarily the content, do you take that as a compliment in any way?

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Harris. Or does it tick you off, or do you feel like, "How dare they steal my playbook?" What is your reaction to that?

The President. No, I'm complimented by it, because I think it shows that what we did was right, you know, to change the whole nature of our political rhetoric in the Democratic Party, and that it resonates with the American people. This country has always worked best when there was a dynamic majority for change. And it always operates out of the center, but it's not the center, a split-the-difference center. It's a center that reflects the commonsense judgment of the American people that the time has come to change, and we ought to change in this direction. So I take that as a great compliment.

It's an important beginning for them to say, "Okay, we know we can't be and we shouldn't be mean, extremist, and sanctimonious in our political rhetoric anymore." I think that's a positive thing for them.

Now, I think there is a big difference, however, which is that when I ran in 1992, I didn't just say we're going to change our party so we can say to change the country. I said, "Here's my economic program. Here's my crime program. Here's my welfare reform program. Here's my environmental program. Here's my education program. Here's the way I'm going to do Government. Here's the way we're going to change the way Government works." And we had—you know, people used to make fun of me and Paul Tsongas, in New Hampshire, because we put out these long, detailed booklets about what we'd do, and then all of a sudden, there were more people showing up for our town meetings than anybody else.

Maybe it's because I'd been a Governor for a dozen years and because I'd been through a lot of these—the policy debates, as well as the political debates. But I think one of the most important reasons that we've had some success in our Presidency was that we actually laid out in 1992 a vision and a strategy for achieving it.

There is a lot of difference between changing the rhetoric and the political positioning of a party and changing the substance of the issues. And one of the things that I thought was interesting, just reading the aftermath of the Republican Convention and what a lot of the swing voters are saying, is that I liked what I saw. They seemed like very nice people, and I'm glad they're being more inclusive, but what are they going to do if they get the job?

And I think the reason there may have been some tactic there—they said, "Well, we're

ahead. We don't have to say that"—some of it was, "We haven't really changed our policies, so we can't say what our policies are. But I think that it's really important."

One of the things I think is great about Al Gore's selection of Joe Lieberman is, it sort of ratifies this kind of New Democratic direction we've taken, where we say we'll continue to have policies that are pro-business and pro-labor, that are pro-growth and pro-environment, that are for individual responsibility and a broader, inclusive American community.

I don't want to beat this to death, but I think this is very important. There is a scholar named Thomas Patterson, who used to be at the Maxwell School at Syracuse, used to do a lot of work on the media and the Presidency, who said that in 1995—

Mr. Harris. He's a Ben Bradley professor at Harvard, by the way.

The President. Is he there? Well, he put out a—I had never met him at the time. I have since actually met him once or twice now, but I did not know him at the time. In 1995, when our fortunes were not exactly high, he was quoted in a newspaper article saying that my administration had already kept a higher percentage of its promises to the American people than the previous five Presidencies, even though we made more commitments, more specific commitments.

All I can say is, I think that's very important. These State of the Unions have been very important. State of the Unions for us have been the equivalent of that first booklet I put out in New Hampshire. They're a guidepost, and we do the best we can on it. But you also have to take other initiatives that come up that are consistent with it.

You know, all the things we did with Executive orders, setting aside the national monuments or including making sure seniors could be in clinical trials because Medicare would cover it, all those things that they—those are things that may come up, where we've got an idea factory here, where the staff is encouraged to come up with ideas, the Cabinet is encouraged to come up with ideas. It's all consistent with that. And even then when we're reacting—you know, sometimes things just happen, and you have to react to it. You can't be so rigid in your organization that you can't change. That's the sort of whole essence of the new economy.

Hillary Clinton's Senate Campaign

Mr. Harris. Can I ask you about the First Lady's campaign? There is this sort of universal consensus that, you know, you're aware of great details, or the ins and outs of that campaign, even though you're not running it or trying not to run it. But I'm not really sure I know what you do, do. Like, what is the sort of the nature of your involvement or at least awareness of the campaign? How often are the two of you talking? What kind of input can you give? She spent a quarter century being a, sort of, contributor to your political career. Now the shoe is on the other foot. What do you do?

The President. Well, first of all, I bend over backwards not to get too involved in it. Sometimes a week or 10 days will go by, and I won't talk to the people that are running the campaign. But obviously, I talk to her every day, usually more than once a day. And I ask her how it's going, what she did. We discuss it, talk about her day, talk about how it's unfolding. I give her my best thoughts.

And then if they ask me to come to a meeting and sit and listen, I do it. But it's no—there is no organized part to it, except that we talk every day, and we talk about it.

Mr. Harris. Were you an important voice in having her hire Mark Penn, not just as the pollster, but also helping run the media strategy? At one point there was an expectation, like, David Axelrod in Chicago was, you know, almost had that job. Then it ended up being Penn. And some people attributed that to you, saying you thought that was really important because he had sort of the right formula down for Democrats to get elected.

The President. Well, I do think that, and I have a high regard for him. But I also think Axelrod is very good. Axelrod helped me in '92 and has done things for us since then. And it seemed to me that she got the best of both worlds, because Axelrod works with the New York Democratic Party and does their party thing. So I felt that the decision she made—and it was a decision she made. She came to me and she said, "What do you think about this?" And I said, "It sounds good to me." She thought it through because she wanted to find a way to have both of them involved, and because of our relationship with Mark over the years, she felt very close to him.

I think that there are a lot of good people, pollsters and political strategists, but it's important to have someone that you feel really comfortable with. And he basically—Mark has basically been a part of our whole kind of New Democrat movement. And I think she just felt a high comfort level with him.

Mr. Harris. I am curious how you—where sort of the loyal spouse ends and where the—you know, you try to help politically begins? The call you made to the Daily News was one thing. I didn't know if that was you sort of acting sort of impulsively, as a husband who was angry about that; or whether that was you saying, "Look, this is potentially a problem. I better see if I can help blunt that as a political matter." What was that about?

The President. Well, first of all, I did it—it may not have even been the right thing to do, because all it did was sort of give more visibility to a charge that was hokum, but I think hurt her for—

Mr. Harris. Most people knew—

The President. Most people knew it was hokum. But I think it hurt her for a few days only because it happened fortuitously—fortuitously for her adversaries—right at the opening of the Middle East peace talks, when anxiety was very high in the Jewish community. So I think that I may have been in error.

But what actually—I just wanted to make sure that since they were working the story, and I knew Mort Zuckerman and Michael Kramer quite well, and that since I had been injected into the story, that I had a very clear memory of it, and I wanted to know what did and didn't happen and what the whole background was. And so I told him.

But you know, by and large, I try to stay out of it. Congressman Lazio actually featured me in an ad or two, which I thought was—

Mr. Harris. He's got moxie.

The President. Yes, well, at least that. Senator Moynihan was really angry when he was used and said what he thought about it. But I figure the voters of New York are smart enough to figure out that I'm for her and not him. [Laughter] But I haven't been harshly partisan—so, you know, Tom DeLay could do the same thing because there is one issue that Tom DeLay and I really agree on, and I bragged on him. He came to the White House, and I bragged on him. I think that's what we ought to do.

I think we can argue with each other in elections without demonizing each other, and I think when they do that, they're wrong. But I think the voters are smart enough to figure that out without my help.

Whitewater

Mr. Harris. You mentioned the Whitewater thing a little earlier, which leads to a question I wanted to ask about. Remember in September '98, when you spoke to your Cabinet, and many of them afterwards spoke to us? They said that you had said you had been—you realized, had been angry for many days of your Presidency. And I remember that struck me quite a lot, because, you know, to cover you, you do not seem most of the time like an angry person or somebody filled with——

The President. I'm not by nature an angry person.

Mr. Harris. So I was sort of astonished to learn that description. And I'm wondering to what extent do you still feel that way? Or do you think that's changed?

The President. I work on it all the time. But I think that this whole Whitewater business will be looked upon by any rational observer in history as an absurd episode in American history which didn't amount to a hill of beans—if there had been any special council law on the books at the time it came up, it wouldn't have triggered a special council—and that the coverage of it as if it were serious required people essentially to suspend all ordinary notions of proof and common sense. That's what I really believe.

And as a consequence, scores of innocent people got hurt. A lot of people got charged with criminal offenses, simply because they refused to lie, and it did a lot of damage to our political system for no good end. And I think it will be viewed as an absurd aberration in American history. I felt very badly about it. I felt very badly about the way everybody involved was treated about it. I still do. I think it was—the whole way it was done was just wrong.

Mr. Harris. Terry McAuliffe and other people who are friends of yours—I was out in Arkansas last week and saw David Leopoulous and Jim Blair, everybody——

The President. Did you see Jim?

Mr. Harris. I did, yes.

The President. How do you think he's doing?

Mr. Harris. He seemed great. I don't know him well.

The President. Did he tell you how he did in his tennis tournament?

Mr. Harris. He told me he was playing that weekend.

The President. Oh, so you saw him right before? Yes, because I haven't talked to him since then.

Mr. Harris. And I was reluctant to see him. But I said, "Look, you know, it never hurts to call," and I said, "If you don't want to, it's fine." He goes, "No, come on." I went out to dinner with him and his daughter.

The President. Which daughter?

Mr. Harris. The one that lives here, in Maryland.

The President. That's Susie.

Mr. Harris. Yes, up in Columbia, Maryland.

The President. A computer genius. She made millions of dollars and now spends all her time—she spends all her time tutoring inner-city kids in math. It's unbelievable.

Mr. Harris. She's only a year or two older than me and she's——

The President. All of his kids are wizards. They're all in computers somewhere or another. One of them has a Ph.D. in philosophy, but she does all the data processing for a big hospital network in Chicago. And the other one works in Texas, his son.

Mr. Harris. He showed me his art, Peruvian art collection.

The President. Great stuff.

President's Current Perspective

Mr. Harris. It's amazing. Anyway, everybody is sort of the mind that you seem more relaxed, sort of more at peace than you have previously. I'm just wondering what—you know, to what extent that's the result of you seeing the pastoral counsel once a week; to what extent it's just—in some ways, it seems to me——

The President. In a funny way, I think I am. And I think part of it is, when you go through any difficult period, it either breaks you or makes you better. I just wake up every day with this enormous feeling of gratitude. I'm grateful. I'm grateful to my wife and to my daughter. I've got my family back. I'm grateful to the people who work with me, who stuck with me. And I'm enormously grateful to the American people for continuing to support what

I was trying to do for them. To me, every day is a gift now.

I still get mad and frustrated and angry. And one of the things that I am doing, that I have to work on, frankly—I'll make a little confession. The only thing that I'm feeling about this last year is that I just want to keep working. I never want to sleep. My mind is working more than ever before. And when Hillary is gone, particularly, in New York, you know, I go to bed with a pile of stuff that I want to do, and I just read and read and read and read. I just want to keep going.

Mr. Harris. It does seem like you're in a sprint, you know, traveling here, fundraiser tonight, fly to Japan and then back, land here today, down to Charlottesville. Is that a conscious strategy? "Look, I've got 6 months to go or whatever. I'm just going to race to the finish line." Is that what it's about?

The President. Yes. And also, I think of it in a different way. I think, you know, I don't have a campaign to do. I don't have to live with those pressures. And if there is something out there to be done that's good for my country or that I think is the right thing to do, even if it puts a big strain on me physically, I know that I won't be under the kind of stress that I would be in if I were trying to manage a campaign and manage the Presidency; and I ought to resolve down in favor of making the effort. Because I ought to do everything I can for America as President that I can do and still function at a high level, and I can rest starting at noon on January 20th. And that's what I intend to do.

Chief of Staff John D. Podesta. Me, too. [Laughter]

The President. We're all going to a rest home together. [Laughter] You know how the President gets to take one last ride on Air Force One, and you wave to everybody, on the helicopter, and then you get on Air Force One, and you wave to everybody? I'm thinking of loading the whole White House staff and the whole Cabinet on and going to Bermuda. [Laughter]

The President and the Republicans

Mr. Harris. How much progress have you made in figuring out—to me, one of the big mysteries of the Clinton year, which is, you're a centrist President, not a leftwing President—I think your basic instinct is to try to get along

with people—and yet, you have this intense antagonism that you excite on the right? And I've never seen that it could be entirely ideological, because you haven't fundamentally been an ideological President. Do you have a theory on it?

The President. I think I have not been conventionally ideological. That is, I haven't been—but I think there are two or three reasons for it. And I guess I should start with a little humility. You can't be liked by everybody. You know, my favorite story that I tell at least 10 times a year is about the guy that's walking along the edge of the Grand Canyon, and he slips. He says, "God, why me?" And He says, "Son, there's just something about you I don't like." [Laughter] So you've got to allow for that.

But I think, first of all, I have some insight into this because I was a Governor for a dozen years, so I knew all these guys. I knew the people that were engineering the campaign in '91 on. And periodically there have been stunning flashes of candor coming out of various actors on the other side.

I think, first and overwhelmingly, you have to understand that basically the Republicans believed that they had made a marriage between the establishment Republicans and the far right, the religious right, and other ultraconservative elements like the NRA and all those folks. And they thought that that coalition, particularly when it came back and gave President Bush a resounding victory over Governor Dukakis, they basically believed that they would always beat Democrats, that they would never lose the White House until a third party came along. That's what they believed. They thought they had found a formula and that they would put us in a certain box, and we would be there, and they would make us, in the inimitable words of Newt Gingrich, the enemy of normal Americans, and it would always work.

And it didn't work. I think one of the problems that their party had was they developed a sense of entitlement to the White House. They railed against entitlements, but they thought they had an entitlement to govern, and I think it caused them a lot of trouble. You've got to give Gingrich some credit. They don't want to anymore, but the truth is that he figured out that if they came back in '94, before people felt better about what we did with the economy or what we did with crime or whether they saw any progress on welfare, with a specific

plan that could both mobilize their right and hold their establishment, Republicans, they could make some gains. And they did.

And what we did in '96 and '98 is, we came back with better plans and better ideas. But a great debate was joined in America about the future of the country, and we were winning it. So I think that—but they got back in the game, and they stayed in the game, even though what we did in '98 was truly historic, what the Democrats did—and I give Gephardt and Daschle a lot of credit for it—and what our people do, because we had a program, and we ran on it. And we said, "We're interested in what we can do for you, not what we can do for ourselves."

So I think part of it was they—secondly, what were their options? If they knew the American people agreed with my political philosophy more than theirs, if they knew the American people agreed with the specifics I was advocating more than theirs, then what was left? Personal attack, discredit, delegitimize. And they never stopped, not from '91 through the '92 campaign. Then they just started the day after I took my hand off the Bible taking the oath of office; they kept on going. And it was not totally unsuccessful. That is, they succeeded in hurting me but not helping themselves.

So now—they're in a different place now. They're trying to change their image and their rhetoric. But to be fair, too, I think that there are—a lot of the whole movement of the Republican Party, even beginning with President Nixon and the Silent Majority campaign, to what President Reagan said, right up to the present day, was based on a certain critique of the sixties, and what the Democrats were. You know, our notion of inclusiveness was, to them, accepting things that—even now, the leadership, we can't get them to embrace the hate crimes bill because it includes gays—and the whole idea of opposing the Vietnam war and all that.

And I think they thought—I think a lot of them genuinely felt that I represented a lot of things in the culture that they didn't like. I don't think it was all politics. I think a lot of them didn't like that.

President's Perspective on the Press and Politics

Mr. Harris. A different question, but maybe a little bit related one. Have you figured out—I mean, I think it's fair to say you had a certain

amount of scratchiness in your press relations over the 8 years. Is that your view of it?

The President. Yes.

Deputy Press Secretary Jake Siewert. Last question. [Laughter]

Mr. Harris. And I've got a theory about why that is, but—

The President. What is your theory?

Mr. Harris. I think—if you leave Whitewater aside, because I know you have very specific grievances about that, we've talked about—that modern political journalism makes its business sort of first and foremost to go to what are motives behind what somebody says. What's the real agenda? If this is, sort of, their reality, what's the, maybe not the contradictory reality but at least, sort of, the alternate reality? And I think that kind of reporting felt like whenever your motives are questioned or not taken at face value bugs you a lot. That is my theory.

The President. It used to bug me a lot. It doesn't bug me so much anymore. One reason is that I found that that's different from who I am. That is, I don't make a big habit of questioning the motives of people who are on the other side of arguments from me. And I have learned enough from my own mistakes in life and also from misjudging other people to know that an analysis based solely on what other people's motives are—you need to try to understand them.

But in the end, what matters in public life is what is done and does it advance the American people's—does it advance the ideals of our country, the values of our country, the interest of our people? And so, I think it's a rather hazardous thing to do.

Also, I did feel that, in a certain way, I got a little more of that than most, maybe because I was the first person of my generation to win the Presidency, and maybe because I was, in the stirring phrase of my predecessor, just the Governor of a small southern State, not really known to a lot of people, and also the fact that I had basically carried this New Democrat DLC banner. And there was, I think, a lot of suspicion to that, because there was a certain paradigm, I think, for reporters about, "Here's what the Republicans are. Here's what the Democrats are. Here's what the Republican issues are. Here's what the Democrat issues are."

And I think when you challenge that paradigm, it was easy to say, "Well, that's just a

political stratagem. It's a motive for getting elected. It's not serious." But out there in the country, I don't think those paradigms ever worked very well.

I was talking to Dirk Kempthorne today, who's a Republican I admire a lot and like very much and a man I worked with on a couple of fairly important pieces of legislation when he was a Senator. And he said he really liked being Governor, and I told him he would. He asked me one time if I thought he should run for Governor. I told him I thought he would like it very well because he is a guy who thinks, and you know, we're really different on a lot of issues. If I were running against him, it would be an honor. I admire him. I like him. We could have an honest difference. And then we could make a lot of agreements and do a lot of things. That's the politics that I grew up with.

And to be fair, I also grew up with a lot of the other, of the race issue in the South; there was always a lot of politics and personal destruction around that. So I wasn't unfamiliar with the kind of things I had been exposed to.

But I think, to me, motive analysis at least has to be undertaken with a certain amount of humility.

Arkansas

Mr. Harris. That reminds me of a question I've got. What is your view of Arkansas? Are you going to go home there, at least part of the time? Skip Rutherford showed me the site where the library is going to be. I hadn't been there in a while, that whole new shopping center there.

The President. It's great. That's an important part of my life, that whole area, because it's very close to the old State House, where I declared for President and had my two election nights, a building that I basically restored to its historic—that was one of my projects as Governor, to take it back to the way it was between right when it was opened in 1836, the year of our statehood.

Mr. Harris. When you look at Arkansas, it's a place with all this sort of sentimental attractions for you. And a lot of your friends are still there. I would think, on the one hand, it's a very positive association. And it's also the place where it seems like somebody is always crawling out from under some rock. You've got this dis-

barment thing. Jim said, "If I were him, if they do that, I'd pull the damn library out of there and put it in Georgetown."

The President. A lot of my friends in Arkansas think that. But see, I don't have a—look, I always had adversaries in Arkansas. And when Dale Bumpers and David Pryor and I retire, they got the upper hand, because a lot of the people that we thought were coming along behind us, like David Matthews, whom you know, decided for personal reasons not to run for Governor, not to run for Senator. If David Matthews had run when Senator Hutchinson did, he'd be Senator today.

And Arkansas, I believe, was hurt by the fact that the Arkansas Gazette couldn't go on. It was one of the great progressive newspapers in America for decades. And it got in this newspaper war, and the man that won is a hardcore conservative Republican with a longstanding opposition to me. They basically intimidated all the good people off that committee. Blair probably told you what happened.

But you know, that's all true. But I think it's a great mistake to analyze a situation only in terms of the adverse factors. I mean, look at this—this State, they elected me Governor five times; they stuck with me through thick and thin; they voted for me twice, even after the Democratic Party had lost a lot of its leverage there, and the main newspaper was in a tirade daily against us. They hung in there.

And if it weren't for them, I wouldn't be sitting here talking to you today. You know, our crowd will come back because—and we have come back. We've got this very progressive—my Congressman, Vic Snyder, is a great, progressive Congressman. He's one of the few people in Congress—he's a lawyer and a doctor, a very interesting fellow. Marion Berry, who worked in the White House for me, is our other Democratic Congressman from there. I think we've got an excellent chance to win a third seat down there. You know, you can't let the politics get—but all these rocks that turn out, you've got to understand the kind of people that they've turned up. I made enemies in my years in politics, and there are people who are disappointed. What they learned was, they got a certain set of signals here. People will assume it's true, unless you can disprove it. And you'll be rewarded for that sort of stuff.

So I think that, with all of that, the great majority of the people there just hung in there.

2000 Election

Mr. Harris. One last question. I often get the sense at these fundraisers that you are—you hear it when you're talking at these fundraisers. It's almost like, well, you wish you could make the argument or grab the Vice President or other Democrats by the lapels. "No, say it this way. This is the way to frame the argument. This is the way to frame the question." How often are you sort of befuddled by the inability of other Democrats to articulate the case the way you feel it should be articulated?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that in '96 and '98 we pretty well sang out of the same hymnal, and we did a very good job. As I said, I think you have to give Gephardt and Daschle enormous credit, and their colleagues, for what happened in '98. Only a few people understand the truly historic significance of that election. I mean, we could have lost six Senate seats and didn't lose any. And it was the first time since 1822 that a President's party had won seats in the sixth year of a Presidency, in the House.

And what I think has happened this year is, you know, we had a primary, a Presidential primary; then other things happened. And I think that one of the reasons I'm really excited about the Lieberman selection is, I think what you'll see now is a clear commitment to build on the future. We'll be able to distill it in the congressional races around three or four issues. And then I think the Vice President and Lieberman will do a great job at the convention.

I don't think that's quite fair that I'm frustrated there. I think my job is to try, in these fundraisers—the reason I talk the way I do at these fundraisers is that all these people who come to our fundraisers know a lot of other people who don't come to them and who aren't as political or maybe even moderate Republicans or whatever. And what I try to do, that I think I'm in a unique position to do because I'm not running, is to analyze the choice before the American people today in terms of what's happened and what's going to happen.

The frustration you pick up in my voice is not what the others are not doing; it's what I think is the only risk for us in this election—which I, by the way, if you've been talking to our people, you know I've always believed that Al Gore will be elected. I still do. I have always believed it. I never stopped believing it when

he was 18 or 20 points behind a year ago. I always believe it. I think he's easy to underestimate because he's a very serious man who doesn't think only about politics all the time.

But if you look at that sort of bouncy, bouncy Gallup poll that's in the *USA Today*, today—you know, 19 down, 2 down—it shows you that the people are looking for a little meat here. They want to know what the real deal is. That's the most encouraging thing I've seen, because the thing that I've been frustrated about is when times are really good and people feel good—and nobody wants to bring them down, least of all me—everybody has got other things going on in their lives. So the temptation, first of all, is to think, well, things are rocking along here, and this is not the biggest election I've ever had to face here, because things are going so well; and then to feel, well, because of the strategy adopted by Governor Bush and by the whole group, well, there's maybe not that much difference anyway, which reinforces that it may not be important, and it clouds everything up.

What I want to do is to have people stay up but understand that what you do with all this prosperity is as big a decision as what we had to in '92 and maybe more difficult because you have to create something. You have to imagine: What is it you want America to look like in 10 years? You actually have the ability to do it now. It's not like you've just got to turn the ship of state around. What do you want to do? And then, what are the choices?

So I think that I'm in a unique position to sort of talk to the American people about it like that, and that's what I do at these fundraisers. I try to say, this is what I honestly believe the choices are. I don't want the Democrats to be in a position of personally attacking the Republicans. I don't want us to get in the position that the other guys have been in for so much the last 8 years. I don't think we should say bad things about them. I think we should posit that they're patriots, that they love their country; they love their families; and they can do what they think is right.

But we shouldn't be fuzzyheaded here that there aren't profound differences that won't have profound consequences for how we live and how we go into the future. And I believe that, after we have our chance at the convention and then we'll have the debates unfold, I think that we'll have some clarity of choice, and then we'll see what happens.

When young people come to me and say they want to run for office, what should they do, I always give them two pieces of advice. Number one, you've got to have a reason that's bigger than yourself for wanting this job, and you've got to be able to tell people what it is in fairly short order. And number two, you have to adopt a strategy in the campaign with the following goal: On election day, everybody who votes against you will know exactly what they're doing. Because if everybody who votes against you knows what they're doing, then you don't have any gripe if you lose. Now, if everybody that votes against us this time, votes against the Vice President and Joe Lieberman, knows what they're doing, we'll have a majority of the vote.

Atonement

Mr. Harris. Can I ask a one-sentence answer, or will I be in the doghouse? One sentence?

The President. What?

Mr. Harris. Do you think a strong year, finishing up 2000 in a sprint, can that cleanse the mistakes of 1998 to some degree?

The President. No.

Mr. Harris. No? And you don't view it that way?

The President. No. For one thing, I think that the only thing that can cleanse a mistake, ever, is an apology and an atonement. And I think that my—to the extent that the promise I made to the American people to work like crazy for them every day I was President is a part of that, I think that the answer to your question may be yes.

But the reason I said no is, I think the American people accept that—you know, they know what happened. Well, they think they know

what happened. They know that I did something I shouldn't have done, and I apologized for it. But I have tried to atone for it both in a deeply personal way with my family and my coworkers and friends but also in a larger sense by serving the American people. And I think they have long since been a framework of putting it behind and of looking to the future and seeing whether what I'm doing makes sense for them and their families and their future. That's why I said no.

But it is, for me—I have felt a renewed sense of rededication to the business that I have been elected to perform because they stuck with me, and it's something I'll never forget and always be grateful for.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 7:30 p.m. on August 8 aboard Air Force One. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 14. In his remarks, the President referred to political pollster Mark Penn; media consultant David Axelrod; Mort Zuckerman, publisher and chairman, and Michael Kramer, reporter, New York Daily News; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; David Leopoulous, longtime friend of the President; Gov. Dirk Kempthorne of Idaho; J.L. (Skip) Rutherford, member of the board of trustees, Clinton Presidential Library; former Senators Dale Bumpers and David Pryor; former Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts; former Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich; former Arkansas State Representative David Matthews; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. The President also referred to DLC, the Democratic Leadership Council. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Memorandum on Japanese Research Whaling September 13, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Interior, the Secretary of Commerce, the United States Trade Representative

Subject: Japanese Research Whaling

On September 13, 2000, I received Secretary Mineta's certification of Japan under the Pelly Amendment, 22 U.S.C. 1978, for having authorized its nationals to engage in whaling operations that diminish the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission. The Secretary has also certified Japan under the Packwood-Magnuson Amendment, 16 U.S.C. 1821(e)(2).

I direct the Secretary of State to inform Japan that the United States will not, under present circumstances, negotiate a new Governing International Fisheries Agreement (GIFA) with Japan, which has been certified under the Packwood-Magnuson Amendment. A GIFA is a prerequisite to foreign fishing inside the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) (16 U.S.C. 1821(c)). Without a GIFA, Japan will not be eligible for the allocation of any amounts of Atlantic herring, Atlantic mackerel, or any other species that may become available for harvest by foreign vessels in the U.S. EEZ, during the period in which the certification is in effect.

I also direct the Secretaries of State, the Treasury, Commerce, and the Interior, and the

United States Trade Representative, (1) to identify options for ensuring that existing prohibitions against the importation of whale products under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, 16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*, and the Endangered Species Act, 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*, are fully enforced; (2) to investigate the disposition of products from the Japanese research program, to ensure that no whale derivatives enter into international commerce in contravention on obligations under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; (3) to summarize the size and nature of economic activity in Japan related to whaling; and, (4) to continue to consider additional options, including trade measures, as warranted by developments in Japan.

I further direct the Secretary of Commerce, in coordination with all relevant agencies, to keep me apprised of developments as needed, and to report back to me on these issues prior to the end of the 60-day period triggered by his certification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 14.

Remarks at a Breakfast With Religious Leaders September 14, 2000

Good morning, everyone. I'm delighted to welcome you to the White House. This is the eighth, and final—[laughter]—for me, White House prayer breakfast that we have at this time every year.

I want to thank Secretary Glickman for joining us. He's sort of a symbol of our broad-based and ecumenical approach in this administration. He's the first Jewish Secretary of Agriculture. [Laughter] And he's helping people to understand that "Jewish farmer" is not an oxymoron. So that's good. [Laughter]

I want to say I bring you greetings on behalf of Hillary, who called me early this morning to ask what I was going to say—[laughter]—and the Vice President and Mrs. Gore. As you know, the three of them are otherwise occupied, but they need your prayers, maybe even more than I do. [Laughter]

I want to thank you, particularly those of you who have been here in past years. Each one of these breakfasts has been quite meaningful to me, often for different reasons. We've talked about personal journeys and the journey of our

Nation and often talked about particular challenges within our borders, very often due to problems of the spirit in our efforts to create one America. We've talked about that a lot.

Today, because of the enormous good fortune that we as Americans have enjoyed, I would like to talk just for a few moments about what our responsibilities are to the rest of the world. There is a huge debate going on today all over the world about whether the two central revolutions of our time, the globalization of human societies and the explosion of information technology, which are quite related—whether these things are, on balance, positive or, on balance, negative.

When we had the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle, the streets were full of thousands of people who were saying in a very loud voice, this whole deal is, on balance, negative. Interestingly enough, they were marching in solidarity, although often they had positions that directly contradicted one another. There were those who said this is, on balance, negative because it will make the rich countries richer and the poor countries poorer. And then there were those who said that this is, on balance, negative because it will weaken the middle class in the developed countries, because we don't require poor countries to lift their labor and environmental standards. And there were other various conflicts among them.

But the point is, there's a lot of ferment here and a lot of people who are, at the very least, highly ambivalent about whether the coming together of the world in the new century is going to be a good or a bad thing.

Then there's the whole question of how the coming together of the world and the way we make a living and, particularly, the way we produce energy to make a living, is contributing to changing the climate, which it is. There's more and more evidence that the world is warming at an unsustainable rate, and the polar ice cap—if you've seen the latest stories there about how much it's melting, it's incontestable that sometime in the next 50 years, we're going to begin to sustain severe, adverse common consequences to the warming of the climate if we don't do something to turn that around.

And some people believe that there's no way to fix this, if we keep trying to get richer and more global with our economy. I don't happen to agree with that, and I'm not going to talk about it today. But there's a big issue. And

very few people are in denial on climate change any more. Virtually all the major oil companies now concede, for example, that it is a serious problem and that they have a responsibility to deal with it, and if they don't, it could shape the way we are all—or our grandchildren are living, in ways that are quite different and, on balance, negative.

Then there is the whole question of whether technology will offer more benefits to the organized forces of destruction than it does to the forces of good over the next 30 years.

I just came back from a remarkable trip to Colombia. I went to Cartagena with the Speaker of the House. We only get publicity around here for the partisan fights we have, but in an astonishing display of bipartisanship, we passed something called Plan Colombia, which is designed to help primarily the Colombians but also all the nations on the borders reduce drug—narcotics production, coca production primarily, steer farmers into alternative ways of making a living, and develop an increase in the capacity of the Colombian Government to fight the narcotraffickers, and to keep drugs from coming into this country, which are directly responsible for the deaths of about 14,000 kids a year in America. And it was this really beautiful effort.

And then we got criticized, the Republicans and Democrats together, those of us that supported this, because people said, "Oh, Clinton is going down there to make another Vietnam," or we're trying to interfere in Colombia's politics or be an imperialist country. And I told everybody there that I didn't want anything out of Colombia except a decent life for the people there, with a way to make a living on honorable circumstances that didn't put drugs into the bodies of American children and children in Europe and Asia and throughout the world.

But the point I want to make is, there are a lot of people who believe that with more open borders, greater access, smaller and smaller technology—you know, you now get a little hand-held computer with a keyboard that's plastic, that fits inside of your hand, that has a screen that hooks you up to the Internet—and we know that, for example, terrorist networks in the world very often have some of the most sophisticated uses of the Internet. We know that as we get more and more open, we may become more vulnerable to people who develop small-

scale means of delivering chemical and biological weapons. And all these scenarios are real, by the way. We've spent a lot of money in the Defense Department trying to prepare for the adverse consequences of terrorism, using chemical and biological weapons.

So you've got that on one side. You've got the people that say that globalization of the economy is going to lead to increasing inequality and oppression, and whatever happens is going to destroy the environment. And if it doesn't, the organized forces of destruction will cross national borders and wreck everything, anyway. That's sort of what you might call the modest dark side.

And then you've got people like me that don't buy it, that basically—I think if you look at over the last 50 years, that over a 50-year period the countries that were poor, that organized themselves properly and rewarded work and had lawful systems and related well to the rest of the world and traded more, grew much more rapidly.

If you just look at the last 10 years, with the explosion of the Internet, countries that are highly wired, even though they're poor, had growth rates that were 6, 7 percent a year higher than they otherwise would have been. And so finally, there is no alternative. It's not like we're all going to go back to huts and quit talking to each other.

So if we believe that every person is a child of God, that everyone counts, that everyone should have a certain level of decency in their lives and a certain fair chance to make something, what are our obligations? And I just want to mention three things that are before us today that I think are quite important. And a lot of you in this room have been involved in one or all three.

The most important thing I'd like to talk about is debt relief. There are many countries that, either because of internal problems or abject misgovernment, piled up a lot of debt that can't be repaid. And now every year they have to spend huge amounts of their national treasure just making interest payments on the debt, money they can't spend on the education of their children, on the development of public health systems—which, by the way, are under huge stress around the world—and on other things that will give them a chance to take advantage of the new global economy in society.

Now, there are people who don't favor this sweeping debt relief. They say that it rewards misconduct, that it creates what is known, not in your business but in the economics business, as a moral hazard. *[Laughter]* In economic terms, moral hazard is created—the idea is, if you don't hold people liable for every penny of the mistakes they made or their predecessors made, then somehow you've created a mess in which everybody will go around until the end of time borrowing money they have no intention of paying back.

And there's something to that, by the way. It's not a trivial concern to be dismissed. The problem you have is that a lot of these countries were grievously misgoverned, often by people who looted the national treasury. And when they get a good government, a new government, a clean government, when they agree to new rules, when they hook themselves into the International Monetary Fund, to the World Bank on the condition that they'll change everything they've done, they still can never get out of debt and can never educate their kids and make their people healthy and create a country that is attractive to investors to give people opportunity, which is why the Pope and so many other people urge that we use the year 2000 as Jubilee Year to have a sweeping debt relief initiative. And there's a whole thing in the Judeo-Christian religion about how the Jubilee is supposed to be used every 50 years to forgive debts, to aid the poor, to proclaim liberty to all; and there are trends—there are similar traditions in other faiths of the world, represented in this room.

So for those of you who have been working on this, I want to thank you. What I would like to tell you is, I think that it is very much in the interest of America to have big, large-scale debt relief if the countries that get the relief are committed to and held accountable to good governance and using the money not to build up military power but to invest in the human needs of their people.

We worked very hard to develop a plan. And a lot of you are involved in other—in developing countries throughout the world. There are a lot of people here, I know, that are involved in Africa, for example, where many of the countries most in need are, but you also see this in Asia and Latin America, which is a very important thing.

We developed a plan with other creditor nations to triple the debt relief available to the world's poorest nations, provided they agreed to take the savings from the debt payments and put it into health and education. The United States—I announced last year that we would completely write off the bilateral debt owed to us by countries that qualify for this plan. That is, they've got to be too poor to pay the money back and well enough governed to be able to assure that they'll take the savings and put it into health and education. That's as many as 33 nations right now.

I'll just tell you, in the last year, Bolivia—an amazing story, by the way—the poorest country in the Andes, has done the most to get rid of drug production. The poorest country has done the most to get rid of drug production. Astonishing story. That ought to be worth it to us to give them debt relief, complete debt relief. But they saved \$77 million that they spent entirely on health, education, and other social needs. Uganda, one of the two countries in Africa that has dramatically reduced the AIDS rate, has used its savings to double primary school enrollment. Honduras has qualified but not received their money yet. They intend to offer every one of the children in the country 9 years of education instead of 6. Mozambique, a country which last year, until the floods, had the first or second highest growth rate in the world, after having been devastated by internal conflict just a few years ago, because of the flood is going to use a lot of their money to buy medicine for government clinics, because they've got a lot of serious health problems that are attendant on the fact that the country was practically washed away.

Ten nations so far have qualified for the debt relief. Ten more, I think, will do so by the end of this year. We've got to make sure the money is there for them. Last year I got—the Congress was supported on a bipartisan basis the money for America to forgive our bilateral debt relief. And we have to come up with money that—for example, if somebody owes a billion dollars, even though we know they won't pay, because they can't, it gets budgeted at some figure. And we actually have to put that money in the budget before we can forgive it.

But the Congress did not appropriate the funds for the highly indebted poor countries initiative to forgive their multilateral debt relief. Most countries owe more money to the Inter-

national Monetary Fund than they do to America or France or Germany or Britain or Japan or anybody else.

So if we want this to work, we have got to pass legislation this year to pay our fair share of this international debt relief initiative. Now, we have members of both parties from dramatically different backgrounds supporting this. It's really quite moving to see, because a lot of times this is the only thing these people have ever agreed on. It's really touching.

You know, we have a lot of Democrats who represent inner-city districts with people who have roots in these countries, allied for the first time in their entire career with conservative Republican evangelical Christians who believe they have a moral responsibility to do this, because it's ordained, and then all kinds of other people in the Congress. But it's given us a coalition that I would give anything to see formed around other issues and issues here at home—anything. And it could really—if we can actually pull it off, it can change the nature of the whole political debate in America because of something they did together that they all believe so deeply in.

What's the problem? The problem is, there is competition for this money, and some people would rather spend it on something else where there are more immediate political benefits. None of these people have any votes, we're helping. And some people do buy the moral hazard argument.

But I'm just telling you, I've been in these countries, and I know what many of their governments were like 5 years ago, 10 years ago, and I just don't think it washes. If you want people to organize themselves well, run themselves well, and build a future, we've got to do this. And I think it is a moral issue.

How can we sit here on the biggest mountain of wealth we have ever accumulated, that any nation in all of human history has ever accumulated—and we're not just throwing money away. We're only giving this money to people who not only promise to, but prove they are able to take all the savings and invest it in the human needs of their people.

So I would just say, anything that any of you can do—Bolivia is waiting for more money that they haven't gotten. Honduras is waiting for money that they haven't gotten. They're going to spend this money to send kids to school for

9 years instead of 6. This is not a complicated thing.

And I would just implore you, anything you can do to urge members of both parties to make this a high priority. Let me remind you, we've got a budget worth nearly \$2 trillion, and this money is for 2 years. So we're talking about \$210 million in one year and \$225 million in the second year to lift the burden off poor people around the world only if they earn it, in effect. So I just ask you all, please help us with that.

And let me just mention two other things very briefly. The public health crisis in a lot of these countries is threatening to take out all the gains of good government and even debt relief. There are African countries with AIDS infection rates in the military of 30 percent or more. A quarter of all the world's people every year who die, die from AIDS, malaria, and TB, those three things. A phenomenal number of people die from malaria, in part, because there are no public health infrastructures in a lot of these places.

So the second thing I want to ask for your help on is, we want to double or increase by \$100 million—it's about a 50 percent increase—our efforts to help countries fight AIDS. We want to increase, dramatically, our contributions to the global alliance for vaccines that helps countries who are poor afford the medicine that is there.

I just got back from Nigeria, and the President of Nigeria, who was a military leader in prison because he stood up for democracy and against a corrupt government that was there before, dealt with all these taboos that have gripped Africa and kept Africa from dealing with AIDS in an astonishing way. We went into an auditorium, and he and I stood on a stage with a 16-year-old girl who was an AIDS peer educator and a young man in his mid-twenties—this is an amazing story—or maybe he's in his early thirties now. He and his wife are both HIV-positive. He fell in love with a young woman who is HIV-positive. Her parents didn't want them to get married; his parents didn't want them to get married. They were devout Christians. Their minister didn't want them to get married. And he finally convinced the pastor that he would never love anyone else, and the pastor gave his assent to their getting married. Within 4 months of their getting married, he was HIV-positive. She got pregnant. He had to

quit his job to go around and scrounge up, because his job didn't give him enough money to buy the drugs that would free their child of being HIV-positive. So he finally was let go of his job, excuse me, because he was HIV-positive, and they were still afraid and prejudiced. So with no money he found a way to get the drugs to his wife, and they had a child who was born free of the virus.

So we were sitting there with hundreds of people in Nigeria, and the President is talking about this. So this guy comes up, and he tells this story and about what a blessing God has been in his life and how much he appreciates his pastor for marrying them and how much he appreciates their families for sticking with them. And then the President of the country called his wife up out of the stands, and he embraced her in front of hundreds of people. Now, this is a big deal on a continent where most people have acted like, you know, you might as well have smallpox, and you were giving it out by talking to people. This is a huge deal. And the President got up and said, "We have to fight the disease, not the people who have it. Our enemy are not the people with it. We have to fight the disease." It was an amazing thing.

Now, I think these people ought to be helped, so we—but it's \$100 million I want to come up with for that, and I forget how much we're giving to the Vaccine Alliance. And in addition to that, I have asked the Congress, after meeting with a lot of our big drug research companies, not just the big pharmaceutical companies but a lot of them that do biomedical research, to give us a billion dollar tax credit to encourage companies to develop vaccines for AIDS, malaria, and TB, because we have to do that, because they don't see any front-end benefit in it. And they have to—they can't justify the massive amounts of money that are needed to develop these vaccines, because they know that most of the people that need them can't afford to buy them.

So if they develop them, we'll figure out how to get the money to get them out there. But first we've got to have them developed. So I've proposed a tax credit, more money to help buy the medicines that are out there now, and a hundred million more dollars directly to help these countries fight AIDS. I want to ask you to help me get that money. It ought to be

an American obligation. This is a serious global problem.

The last thing I want to say is that there was a remarkable meeting in Senegal not very long ago, where essentially an alliance of the world's developing and developed countries made a commitment to try to make basic education available to every child in the world within 15 years. And one of the reasons that kids don't go is, they're not sure it makes sense, or their parents—there are even countries—in the poorest countries where the parents, no matter how poor they are, have to pay some money for their kids to go to school—lots of problems.

So Senator George McGovern, who is our Ambassador to the World Food Organization in Rome, and Senator Bob Dole came to me with Congressman Jim McGovern—no relation—from Massachusetts. And these three people from different worlds asked me to support an initiative to try to get to the point where the wealthier countries in the world could offer every poor child in the world a nutritious meal in school if they'd show up to school.

And they reasoned that—even though there are lots of other issues; and by the way, I won't go into all that; we've got to do a lot more to help these schools in these developing countries—but they reasoned that if we could do that, there would be a dramatic enrollment, especially among young girls, who are often kept at home because their parents see no economic benefit, and in fact a burden, to having their daughters go to school. But there are a lot of young boys that aren't in school in countries, too.

So we, thanks to Dan Glickman, got \$300 million up, and we are doing a test run. And we're going around to countries that want to do this. And with \$300 million—listen to this—we can feed 9 million schoolchildren for a year in school. But you don't get fed unless you come to school.

Now, for somewhere between \$3 billion and \$4 billion, we could give a—if we can get the rest of the world to help us do this, we could give a nutritious meal, either breakfast or lunch, to every school-aged child in every really poor country in the entire world for a year.

Now, you don't have to do anything about that now. I just want you to know about it, because we have to go figure out how to do this. And let me tell you why. Dan has got to figure out, how is this stuff going to be deliv-

ered to remote areas, or is it going to be in dried packages then hydrated and heated? How are we going to do this without messing up the local farm economies? The last thing we want to do is destabilize already fragile farmers. There are practical things. But we have many countries that are interested in this.

When I was in Colombia on the drug thing, the President's wife asked me about this program. She said, "Can we be part of that, or are we too well off?" You know, she said, "We're not really all that rich, with all these narcotraffickers taking the money." We were talking about it.

But the point I want to say is, we have reaped great benefits from the information revolution and the globalization of the economy. We, therefore, have great responsibilities. We have responsibilities to put a human face on the global economy. That's why I think we're right to advocate higher environmental and labor standards, try to make sure everybody benefits.

We have a responsibility to lead the way on climate change, not be stuck in denial, because we're still the number one producer of greenhouse gases. Although shortly, unless we help them find a different way to get rich, China and India will be, just because they've got more folks.

And in the short run, we have a very heavy responsibility, I believe, to broaden and simplify this debt relief initiative; to lead the assault on the global diseases of AIDS, TB, and malaria that take out a quarter of the people who die, most of them very prematurely before their time every year; and to do more to universalize education so that everybody, everywhere, will be able to take advantage of what we're coming to take for granted.

Now, we've had a lot of wonderful talks over the last 8 years, but I think that I do not believe that a nation, any more than a church, a synagogue, a mosque, a particular religious faith, can confine its compassion and concern and commitment only within its borders, especially if you happen to be in the most fortunate country in the world. And I can't figure out for you what you think about whether these sweeping historical trends are, on balance, good or bad. But it seems to me if you believe that people are, on balance, good or bad or capable of good, we can make these trends work for good.

And I'll just close with this. There is a fascinating book out that I just read by a man named Robert Wright, called "Non Zero." He wrote an earlier book called "The Moral Animal," which some of you may have read. This whole book is about, is all this stuff that is happening in science and technology, on balance, good or bad, and are the dark scenarios going to prevail, or is there some other way?

The argument of the book, from which it gets its title, is basically an attempt to historically validate something Martin Luther King once said, "The arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice." It's pretty hard to make that case, arguably, when you look at what happened with World War I, with Nazi Germany and World War II, with the highly sophisticated oppressive systems of communism. But that's the argument of this book, that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice.

The argument is that the more complex societies grow and the more interconnected we all get, the more interdependent we become, the more we have to look for non-zero sum solutions. That is, solutions in which we all win, instead of solutions in which I win at your expense.

It's not a naive book. He says, "Hey look, there's still going to be an election for President.

One person wins; one person loses. There's still going to be choices for who runs the company or who gets the pulpit." [Laughter] There will be choices. It's not a naive book. But he says that, on balance, great organizations and great societies will have to increasingly look for ways for everyone to win, in an atmosphere of principled compromise, based on shared values, maximizing the tools at hand. Otherwise, you can't continue—societies cannot continue to grow both more complex and more interdependent.

So I leave you with that thought and whatever it might mean for you in trying to reconcile your faith with the realities of modern life. And again I say, as Americans, we have, I think, a truly unique opportunity and a very profound responsibility to do something now on debt relief, disease, and education beyond our borders.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:57 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria; Pope John Paul II; former Senator Bob Dole; and Nohra Pastrana, wife of President Andres Pastrana of Colombia.

Remarks on the Patients' Bill of Rights and an Exchange With Reporters *September 14, 2000*

The President. Thank you so much. I want to begin, obviously, by thanking Dr. Anderson, the AMA, and the physicians who are here behind me from various medical organizations. I want to thank Ron Pollack, the director of Families USA, who has been such a long and tireless champion of health care.

As is often the case when I get up to speak, everything that needs to be said has pretty well been said, but I hope to bring it into some sharper focus in terms of what will have to happen now in the next few weeks if we're going to actually get a real and meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights.

Time is running out in Congress, and there is no more important piece of unfinished business. You see these numbers up here—18 mil-

lion a year. We're trying to pass a minimum wage law. It will affect 10 million people a year. We're very proud here that we reached across party lines to pass the family and medical leave law. It has affected about 25 million people in the first 5 years for which we have statistics.

I have already provided the protections of the Patients' Bill of Rights to 85 million Americans who are covered anyway by Federal health plans. And yet, you see that the remaining Americans, nearly 200 million of them, have the experience that leads 18 million of our fellow citizens to suffer delay or denial of care over a year.

Now, what are the rights in the Patients' Bill of Rights. Let me just state them one more time. We should never forget: The right to the

nearest emergency room care; the right to see a specialist when recommended by your physician; the right to know you can't be forced to switch doctors in the middle of a treatment such as chemotherapy or a period of pregnancy; the right to hold your health care plan accountable if it causes you or a loved one great harm.

Now, as I said, these are protections we have provided to 85 million Americans who get their health care through Federal plans. Fact: What did it cost to provide these protections? Less than a dollar a month. That's a fact. Even the Republican majority's Congressional Budget Office concedes that the costs to cover all Americans would be less than \$2 a month. And only congressional legislation can provide all Americans and all plans the patient protections they deserve.

Last fall, thanks to the leadership of Congressman Norwood, a physician and a Republican, and Congressman Dingell, a Democrat from Michigan, the House of Representatives passed such a bill with a majority of 275 Members, including 68 Republicans. Nearly a year later, I am confident we now have the votes to pass the very same bill with the same protections in the Senate if—big if—we can get it up to a vote.

The bill's vital signs, in other words, are growing stronger, but it's still a near-run thing. If it were a tie, I know someone who would like to break it. And as Al Gore always says, whenever he votes, the people win.

But this is not about politics. I was glad that Dr. Anderson said what he did. If you took a survey in any community in America except Washington, DC, there would be almost no difference in the opinion on this legislation between Republicans, Democrats, and independents.

Now, let me remind you what the daily toll is. Ron's got the running total up there, but nearly 50,000 Americans every day face a delay or denial of care—nearly 50,000. Every hour, more than 2,000 people fail to get the treatment they need. We can't turn back the counter, but we sure don't have to run it up.

And this is not about statistics. This is about real people with real problems who deserve real care so they can get on with real life instead of the politics of Washington, DC. That's what this Families USA tour is all about. It's about—let me just mention two—people like Joan Bleakley, who lost her sight in her left eye,

in part because her HMO forced her to wait 3 weeks before seeing a neurologist; people like Doug Bolden—you will remember him if you went with me to Missouri to the Patients' Bill of Rights event down there—a big, burly emergency room nurse, whose patient was forced by his HMO to leave one hospital and travel more than 50 miles to another, suffered a heart attack and died along the way because he wasn't entitled to health care at the nearest emergency center.

And believe me, these are not isolated examples. I've heard many, many more, and you've got the numbers here to back it up. So again, what this is about is whether the Senate leadership will let the votes be counted and allow a free and fair vote on Norwood-Dingell. The American people need to be reminded. The rules of the Senate, which were set up to avoid measures being dealt with too rapidly, give everything but our annual budget the option of being subject to a filibuster, which takes 60 votes, not 51, not a majority—60—to pass.

Now, there is no question that this has been debated forever. We do not need any more time for a debate. And the people who aren't for this bill ought to just stand up and tell the American people why they're not for it and why they think the doctors, the nurses, and 300 other health care provider and consumer organizations are wrong, and the HMO's and the insurance companies are right. And then, they ought to let everybody vote.

But it is an abuse of the filibuster to deny the majority of the United States Senate, representing an even bigger majority of the American people, a chance to have their way on an issue this fundamental to democracy.

We don't need any more time to debate this. They don't need to put on the brakes to look at it again. This thing has been hanging around for 2 years now, and it's been debated in and out. It's time to listen to the doctors, the nurses, the patients, the other consumer and provider experts, to listen to a majority of Members of Congress, including the Republican Speaker of the House of Representatives, who would vote for this bill today. The bill should not be held up or watered down.

Again, I am willing to reach agreement. We reached an honorable compromise on one major provision with opponents of the legislation in the Senate, which everyone could live with. But we cannot abandon our commitment to a bill

that covers all Americans—all Americans—with the right to the specialists they need, the nearest emergency room care, the right to keep a physician during a course of treatment, the right to hold health care plans accountable, the right, in short, that allows doctors, not people who have no training in medicine and are concerned only with the bottom line to make these decisions; and also, a system that provides access to important clinical trials. In other words, a strong, comprehensive, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights.

We can do this. If we just let the Senate vote, we can put progress over partisanship, health care over special interests, and restore trust and accountability to our health care system. We should do it now. But every single American should know what's going on.

In order to prevail on legislation that has the support of more than three-quarters of the American people, including 70 percent or more of every political group in America, we have to do one of two things: We've got to persuade the leadership of the Senate to let a majority vote on this, and if a majority's for it, to pass it; or we have to find 9 or 10 more votes between now and the time they go home to break a filibuster that is, in my judgment, an abuse of the filibuster system. There is no debating this. Everybody knows what the deal is. Everybody knows what the differences are.

Meanwhile, I will keep negotiating. I will keep trying, but I will not abandon the people who are part of these numbers up here, because I've heard too many of their stories.

Again, I thank the doctors; I thank the nurses; I thank Families USA; and I thank all the American people. We can do this, and we can do it in a nonpartisan way, if we can just get the roadblocks out of the way.

Thank you very much.

Wen Ho Lee

Q. Mr. President, could you take a question? I was wondering, Mr. President, if you share the embarrassment that was expressed yesterday by the Federal judge in New Mexico about the treatment of Wen Ho Lee during his year of confinement under Federal authorities?

The President. Well, I always had reservations about the claims that were being made denying him bail. And let me say—I think I speak for everyone in the White House—we took those claims on good faith by the people in the Gov-

ernment that were making them, and a couple days after they made the claim that this man could not possibly be let out of jail on bail because he would be such a danger of flight or such a danger to America's security, all of a sudden they reach a plea agreement which will, if anything, make his alleged offense look modest compared to the claims that were made against him.

So the whole thing was quite troubling to me, and I think it's very difficult to reconcile the two positions, that one day he's a terrible risk to the national security and the next day they're making a plea agreement for an offense far more modest than what had been alleged.

Now, I do hope that, as part of that plea agreement, he will help them to reconstitute the missing files, because that's what really important to our national security, and we will find out eventually what, if any, use was made of them by him or anybody else who got a hold of them.

But I think what should be disturbing to the American people—we ought not to keep people in jail without bail, unless there's some real profound reason. And to keep someone in jail without bail, argue right up to the 11th hour that they're a terrible risk, and then turn around and make that sort of plea agreement—it may be that the plea agreement is the right and just thing, and I have absolutely no doubt that the people who were investigating and pursuing this case believe they were doing the right thing for the Nation's security—but I don't think that you can justify, in retrospect, keeping a person in jail without bail when you're prepared to make that kind of agreement. It just can't be justified, and I don't believe it can be, and so I, too, am quite troubled by it.

Q. Mr. President, can you explain to me, are you thinking in terms of clemency for him, for Wen Ho Lee?

The President. I'd have to look at that. It depends on, if he's in fact—he has said he's going to plead guilty to an offense which is not insubstantial, but it's certainly aailable offense, and it means he spent a lot of time in prison that any ordinary American wouldn't have, and that bothers me.

Visit of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India

Q. Mr. President, tomorrow morning, right here on this lawn, you are going to welcome

the Prime Minister of India who spoke today on Capitol Hill, and he's calling for stronger U.S.-India security relations and also fighting against terrorism around the world, especially across the border from Indian border—across-border terrorism. So what do you think, sir, coming out from this historical visit and, also, following your visit in March that you've been in India?

The President. Well, first, I am delighted that the Prime Minister of India is coming here after my trip there, and I was honored to be the first President in over 20 years to go. They're the world's largest democracy. We need to have a better and closer and more constructive relationship with them, and I hope that this will be the next step in that, and I think we'll make some specific agreements.

The United States is strongly opposed to terrorism in any form, and I still hope that, if not while I'm here, then in the future, because of the groundwork we've laid, the United States can play a positive role to a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, which has been at the core of the difficulties between India and Pakistan for more than half a century now.

If you look at how well—I will say this again—if you look at how well the Indians, the Pakistanis, and the Bangladeshis who have come to America have done, the extraordinary per-

centage of them that are involved in the hi-tech economy, the professions, building our country across a broad range of areas, it is tragic to think of what this conflict has done to hold back the people who live on the Indian subcontinent, who are still all of them living on around \$500 or less a day, on average, and who have proven by their stunning success in this country, that they have the ability to be at the cutting edge of the 21st century.

So I hope they can lay this burden down, and I hope we can help them, and in the meanwhile, of course, we'll have to oppose terrorism in all its manifestations.

Thank you very much.

President's Upcoming Visit to Vietnam

Q. Mr. President, could you explain to the American people about Vietnam? Why you've decided to go?

The President. [*Inaudible*]*—another press conference with the Prime Minister tomorrow, and I will answer some more questions then. But I've got to leave.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:07 p.m. in the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Edgar Ratcliffe (Andy) Anderson, executive vice president, American Medical Association.

Remarks at a National Campaign Against Youth Violence Luncheon September 14, 2000

Thank you. Let me, first of all, say I'm glad you're here, and I'm glad that all of you who have made contributions to this endeavor to make sure it succeeds. I came by, overwhelmingly, just to say thanks, and a special word of thanks to you, Jeff, for taking this on when it would have been easy to take a pass, and to you, Steve, for taking this on when it would have been easy to take some more established way of being philanthropic and civic, with a more guaranteed but a much more limited return. I guess AOL didn't get where it is by looking for guaranteed but limited returns. [*Laughter*] So I thank you very much. [*Laughter*]

I'm almost done being President, and so I'm thinking a little bit not so much about the past but about why I and my administration did certain things when we did them and why I thought this was worth trying to do.

And one thing is, I really believe that ideas and dreams have consequences. If you have a bad one and you implement it in the most aggressive way, it still won't have a good outcome. And if you have a good one but you don't implement it very well, you won't have a very good outcome. But if you have a good one and you do it, you do everything you can to realize it in a smart way, it has results.

And I think that one of the things Presidents are supposed to do is to imagine things that

everybody wants but is afraid to say out loud they might do. I always thought we could balance the budget. And then once we did, I realized we ought to say we could make America debt-free. If I had said any of that in 1992, people would have said, "You know, he seems like a very nice person, but we really should"—[laughter]—"have somebody who's a little more well-grounded."

And that brings me to this issue. This is a good news/bad news story. The good news is, crime is down 7 years in a row, violent crime at a 27-year low; juvenile crime has been dropping after going up, and juvenile violence has been dropping, after going up for many years. The bad news is, we still have the highest rate of violence committed by and committed against young people of any industrialized nation.

So anybody who's satisfied with the trend, I think, is wrong. But we should be encouraged and empowered by the trends, because it shows we can do better. But just like we had to start out when we had a deficit of \$290 billion a year and we'd quadrupled the debt in 12 years, we had to first of all say, "Well, we're going to cut it in half in a certain number of years, and then we'll get rid of it." And then we realized we could get rid of it, so we said, "Well, why don't we go after the debt, too, and keep interest rates down and keep the economy going?"

Well, now, it's not like we don't know what to do here. And it's not like we don't know what works. And we've got all this evidence. So I think our goal should be to make America the safest big country in the world and the safest big place in the world for a child to grow up and live. That should be our goal.

Now, if that's our goal, the first thing we've got to do is, do what Steve says, and get everybody involved from all sectors of society. And the second thing we have to do is, do what Jeff said; we have to have a strategy. And the strategy he outlined, you know, to educate, replicate—or whatever word he used—and generate leadership—[laughter]—that's about as good as it gets. [Laughter] How did I do? Did I do pretty good?

So what I'd like to do, just briefly review what's been done that I have some notes on to say thanks and then talk about where we go from here. Because I want you to know, I wouldn't have asked you to do this if I didn't think you could make a big difference.

We had a meeting like this a few years ago on teen pregnancy and got a lot of people together, and the committee just took off with it. And teen pregnancy's dropped dramatically. Now, did that committee do it all? No. Were there economic and other factors that helped? Of course. Did they make a big difference? You bet.

We started a few years ago with five people in a room to have a Welfare to Work Partnership to try to prove that the welfare reform bill could work. And now, we've got 12,000 companies in that partnership, and they've hired hundreds of thousands of people off the welfare rolls. They have very good retention rates. They're making wages way above the minimum wage. They're doing very well. The welfare rolls are half of what they were when I took office. Did those 12,000 companies do that by themselves? No. Did the welfare reform law alone do it? No. The economy had a lot to do with it. Every one of you, if you never hired anybody off welfare, if you increased your own employment, made a contribution to creating an economy which reduced the welfare rolls. But did those 12,000 companies make a difference? You bet they did. And that enabled us to have the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years.

So that's how you need to look at this. If the economy went into a basket, would it be harder for you to succeed at this? Of course. And if Government had stupid policies, would it be harder for you to see? Yes. And if we pass our after-school initiative and more than double the number of kids that can be in after-school programs, will it be easier for you to see? You bet. But can you make a decisive difference in making America the safest big country in the world? Absolutely, because this is the only group that's focusing on everything in trying to come up with a strategy specifically directed at this issue. And that's the way I think you need to look at this.

But you ought to always have in your mind that you are laboring to make your country the safest big country in the world and the safest, big, complicated society in the world for a little child to grow up in. Nothing else is worth dreaming of. And when you think about that, it helps to organize everything that you do. And when you don't impose on yourself the burden of being fully responsible for the success or failure of the endeavor but asking yourself where you can add at the margins to make it a real

success to reach the ultimate goal, and how in a big society like ours, nothing ever gets done as well as it can be done unless there is a group of people like this that represent everybody in a society, doing this in partnership, then it ought to be highly energizing for you, and I hope you will continue to do it.

First, I want to thank you for the public service announcements. I want to thank ABC, NBC, AOL, Univision, LearningGate, the NFL, anybody else that would care to do it. Anybody who tells you they don't work is crazy. Why do you think politicians are spending all this much money advertising in an election year? [Laughter] If you don't think they work, why doesn't everybody just abolish their advertising budget?

It does work. It makes a huge difference. Ask Barry McCaffrey the role it has played in our efforts to reduce drug abuse among young people. So it does.

I want to say a special word of thanks to Bob Silberman for his leadership in this concert that's being introduced this fall. Those guys have produced one or two concerts, and I think it ought to be pretty great, and I hope I can see it unfold.

I want to thank Ronnie Coleman, the U.S. attorney from Memphis, and Ira Lipman from Guardsmark for their leadership and the remarkable things that have occurred in Memphis in such a few short months in implementing their city-by-city initiative.

I want to thank Francine Katz and Anheuser-Busch for helping to make similar things happen in St. Louis. Those are two cities that I know quite well from long before I ever thought I'd be sitting here doing this—standing here doing this.

I want to thank AOL for the work that it's doing in our schools. And I want to thank Tommy Hilfiger, Teen People, and Time-Warner for helping with all the things that are going to be done to connect young people to one another, the parades, the concerts, the assemblies, the television summits.

And finally, I would like to thank the Director of my White House Council on Youth Violence, Sonia Chessen, for leading our Federal efforts, and Assistant Surgeon General Susan Blumenthal over here for her dedication. We're doing everything that we can.

And I want to say one thing about what Steve said about the entertainment industry. There are

two realities here, and both of them ought to get out there. First of all, the entertainment industry, in the last 8 years—I went to Hollywood the first time and asked them to help us deal with violence and inappropriate exposure to material to young children in December of 1993 in a big deal that we had at CAA. We had hundreds of people there. I said, "Look, you've got to help us on this. This is a problem. Don't be an ostrich. Don't deny this. Let's just figure out how to do this."

And I would just like to say since then, we have seen remarkable efforts at content rating systems for television, for video games, Internet parental controls. This year all new televisions will be sold with a V-chip.

Now, as Hillary reminds me all the time, that since we have separate rating systems, it's hard to make sense of them all, and it would be nice if we had some way of kind of integrating them all. But it's not like nothing's happened here. Some good things have happened, and some real efforts have been made.

Now, what's the problem? As I said the other day, this FTC study is very disturbing, because it says some of the people who are making movies and other material rate them and say kids shouldn't look at them and then market it to the very people they say shouldn't be looking at it.

And the movie business is something I understand the economics of a little bit more, and one real problem of the movie business is, less than 10 percent of the movies make money in the theaters when they're first shown. So you wind up with a situation where people are making these movies imagining, "How am I going to package them when they're in the video stores? How can I sell it to one of these cable networks that will show it at 3 o'clock in the morning, three weekends in a row? Will there be a foreign market for this sort of thing?"

How does all this affect what they do? It doesn't justify it. I'm not saying that. I'm just trying to explain the fact that what I think we have to do is to take Steve up on his offer and implore—I can understand why the media executives didn't want to go to that congressional hearing yesterday and just get beat up on. But on the other hand, I don't think anybody should run away from this. I think they ought to say, "Look, here's where we were 8 or 10 years ago. Here's where we are now. Here's the progress we've made. Okay, so, this

is being done, and it's wrong, and we're going to stop it, and here's how we're going to deal with our situation."

But I think what we need to see is the positive and the negative, but it is unrealistic to expect that we can get where we need to go if the major entertainment media are not involved. They have to be involved. They have to buy onto this. And they have to understand that in the end, the most successful companies have a big interest in living in a safe society and a good society.

And that's the last thing that I want to say. I think we need a curious blend of commitment to a unifying and integrating vision and one that is individually empowering. The great thing I like about the whole business about the Internet and all these new companies springing out of the minds of these young people who think about things I can't even imagine, is that, in the most immediate sense, it's both individually empowering, and it's bringing us closer together.

The best book I read in the last few months is a book called "Non Zero," by Robert Wright. He wrote another book a few years ago called "The Moral Animal" that was a bestseller. I will oversimplify, at the risk of being criticized by the author, the argument of the book.

He basically offers an historical and semi-scientific analysis to support one of the most eloquent assertions of Martin Luther King, which is that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice. And his argument is that, notwithstanding the fact that we had modern society horribly disfigured by the Nazis, that we had modern organizational techniques and military power horribly abused by communist and other totalitarian regimes, that on the whole, if you study human history, as societies grow more complex in their interrelation, and more interdependent both within and beyond their borders, people in positions of authority and citizens at the grassroots level are forced to look constantly for more non-zero sum solutions, hence the title of the book—solutions in which everybody wins. Now, this is—the guy—it's a very interesting book and not naive. I mean, he know—he acknowledges, even in the most sort of cooperative societies, you've got an election. One person wins the Presidency; the other one doesn't. One person gets to be head of AOL; somebody doesn't. Choices get made all the time.

But the argument of the book is far more sophisticated. It is that to succeed, even in positions of leadership, where there is a competition for the position, the measure of success is not so much whether you got you want at somebody else's expense, but whether you got what you wanted because you enabled other people to achieve their dreams and to do what they want.

And I guess one of the things that bothers me about so much of the rhetoric I hear about young people today, especially when they do things they shouldn't do, and they grow up in disconnected ways—and you don't have to be poor to grow up in an isolated, disconnected way, as we've seen in Columbine and other places—is that it is—yes, it's important to tell these kids what they shouldn't do, but it's also much more important, on a consistent, loving, disciplined way over a long period of time, to give them lots of things to say yes to.

And I think the idea that we are moving toward a world where more and more, we will find our own victories in other people's victories, because our interdependence forces us to seek non-zero sum solutions, is a very helpful way to think about dealing with most social problems and, frankly, some economic challenges, like global debt relief and things like that.

So I just ask you to think about that. This is a big deal. And I know you can get frustrated in the beginning, because it's amorphous—everything big in the beginning, it makes a difference at the margins, where it makes all the difference is amorphous. But I urge you to stay with this. And if you want me to help after I'm out of office, I'll do that, because I believe in this.

But when you get discouraged, remember: When this Welfare to Work Project started, if anybody had told me that within 4 years, they would have 12,000 companies and hundreds of thousands of people hired, it would have been a hooter. Nobody would have believed it. No one seriously believes when that Teen Pregnancy Partnership met, a lot of them didn't believe in their heart of hearts that if they did this for 4 or 5 years, they could play the role that they've played in the dropping rates that we've seen.

And I can tell you, nobody in Congress who voted in 1993 to cut the deficit in half really thought that it would spark the avalanche of changed budgetary conditions. I cannot guarantee your success, but I can guarantee you'll

be rewarded if you try. And if we think about it in this way, that we're trying to find ways for all of us to live our dreams by empowering more people to live theirs, then I think that the chances of your prevailing are quite high, indeed.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the Concorde Room at the Hay Adams Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Jeff Bleich, executive di-

rector, National Campaign Against Youth Violence; Veronica Coleman, U.S. attorney, Memphis, TN; Ira Lipman, founder and president, Guardsmark; Francine Katz, vice president, consumer education, Anheuser-Busch, Inc.; Robert Silberman, chief executive officer, SFX Entertainment; and fashion designer Tommy Hilfiger. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Steven Case, chairman and chief executive officer, America On-Line.

Remarks at an IMPAC 2000 Reception September 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Well first of all, I want to thank all of you for supporting this endeavor, and I want to thank, as David did—Ken, thank you. I have—you have come a long way since we had that dinner. I think it was what we ate that night that did it. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Martin for all the work that he's done, and as your predecessor and also as Patrick Kennedy's predecessor. He was 7 feet tall when he started this job. And thank you, Vic Fazio, my longtime friend. I want to say a special word of appreciation to David Bonior. I did not know him very well when I got elected President, and one of the things that I will always treasure about these last 8 years is the relationship that he and I developed. I like him, and I admire his wife so much, and I feel about him a little bit the way I do about Nancy Pelosi. I love them when they are with me, and I love them when they are not—*[laughter]*—because, you know, both of them are so convicted, and they believe things, and they care about things, and they stick their necks out. And it's especially hard for him because he's in a district where he has to pay a price for every vote of conscience he casts, and he does it anyway. I want to thank you.

Probably more than anyone in America, I know how important this endeavor is. That's why I showed up tonight, besides the fact that I told Ken I would. *[Laughter]* When we had a majority in the Congress, we passed the economic plan that started this whole roll we've been on: the crime bill that played a major role in getting us the lowest violent crime rate

in 27 years; the Brady bill, which has kept guns out of the hands of half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers; the AmeriCorps bill, which has now given way over 150,000 young people a chance to serve in their community and earn money to go to college; the family medical leave act, which has helped about 25 million Americans to take some time off when a newborn baby was in the family or a parent was sick, without losing their job; and the beginning of one of the lesser known achievements that we've made together, which is a systematic attempt to reform Federal education policy, to concentrate on standards and results and effective investment in reform.

And I know what a difference it makes. This is an unusual and, in effect, a really kind of a wonderful time in my life. Earlier this year, I got to cast what well may be my last vote as a citizen of my native State for Al Gore for President, in the Democratic primary, and Tuesday I got to vote for my wife for the first time, which was an immense thrill.

And last night, when I watched the debate, I realize now what she went through all those years watching me. Is he going to fall over? Is he going to smile? Should he slug back? Should he just keep smiling? *[Laughter]* It's amazing, it's really been—so, now my family has a new candidate, my party has a new leader, and I have become the Cheerleader in Chief, and I like it.

But I just want to say, all of you know how important this is, or you wouldn't be here. But what Ken said is really worth remembering. I

think we're going to do well in these elections if we can continue to clarify the choices, because the American people want this prosperity to continue, but they don't want us to be in idle. They want us to take on the big challenges out there.

I think we have an excellent chance, and I've worked as hard as I could for the Senate candidates, for the House candidates, for the two committees, as well as to help our party and our nominees. But what I can tell you is that in spite of all the good things that have happened, the challenges that are out there are really big, and they cannot—and no American should expect President Gore, Vice President Lieberman, and a Democratic House and Senate to deal with them all in a year.

You know, when all the baby boomers retire, which will start in about 8 years, for the ones that take early Social Security, and go on for 18 to 20 more years, there will only be two people working for every one person on Social Security, although the Congress, thank you very much, took the earnings limit off Social Security. And now more people will be able to work in their later years, and that's good.

We have to—and with all these advances in health care, we're going to have huge challenges to figure out. How do we redefine aging in America? Yes, how do we save Social Security? How do we save Medicare? How do we add a prescription drug benefit? It's unconscionable that it doesn't exist already; we would have it now, if we had a Democratic Congress.

But how are we going to deal with a country, that is, in terms of age distribution, radically different from anything we've ever known and will be for 20 years, maybe 30 years, and then it will all start to get back to a normal distribution? We've got the most diverse student population we've ever had. It's a wonder, and we have actually learned how to turn around failing schools.

We know how to do it now, and it took probably 15 years of serious effort. But I was in a school in New York the other day, a grade school where, 2 years ago—listen to this—2 years ago 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level in Harlem. Two years later 76 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in just 2 years.

We know how to do this. But America has never succeeded, ever, in guaranteeing quality

education for all of our kids, and now we've got the most diverse group of kids we've ever had. Just across the river in Alexandria, there are children from 180 different national and ethnic groups, whose parents speak over 100 different languages as their first language. This is great for us in this global economy, if, but only if, we can figure out how to give all these kids a world class education.

We've had more millionaires and more billionaires in the last 8 years than in any time in history, and I like that, and I hope the next administration can keep it going. Maybe I can become one of them. But we still have too many people working hard for too little and having a really hard time making ends meet.

What kind of tax policy should we have for them? What kind of laws should we have to make sure that as more and more parents are working, they can work and still have time for their kids and save enough to make sure their kids can go to college? These are big questions, and this just scratches the iceberg. I didn't get into all the global questions.

The point I'm trying to make is, it would be tragic if we have a very good election this time, and just because of the distribution of the Governorships, which we can't get a majority of back until 2002, just because there aren't many up this year, and because we didn't do a good job in the legislative races, and because we weren't legally prepared, we lost what we won, notwithstanding the fact that a plain majority of the American people agree with the direction in which we want to take the country.

Now, if they disagree with us and they want to vote us out, that's their perfect right, but we shouldn't lose the Congress if a majority of the people are still with us. That's the important thing. We Democrats would never say we should stay in office whether they're for us or not, because we want to jiggle the lines around, but we should have an honest, open, legal, constitutional redistricting process so that if we can win this time and if we can maintain the confidence of the country, we can stay in the saddle because that's what the people want.

So this is profoundly important, and I spend a lot of time—I try to spend a significant amount of time every single week I was President, thinking about what America would be like, not just a month or a year from now but 5 and 10 and 20 years from now. And that's very, very important.

So I just want you to know, these Members here, I believe in them. Nothing good I achieved, including when they were in the minority, would have been possible if it hadn't been for them. In spite of all the good things that have happened in this country, I really believe that the next 8 years can be even more exciting, even more interesting, even more productive if we just stick with the philosophy that says we want to make sure everybody has a chance, that everybody matters, and we all do better when we work together. That's basically what we Democrats believe.

And you've made it possible, if the American people stick with us, to make sure that they can continue to do their job. That is very, very important.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. in the Lafayette Room at the Hay Adams Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Ken Bentsen, chair, IMPAC 2000 National Democratic Redistricting Project; former Representative Vic Fazio; and Representative Martin Fost, chair, Democratic caucus.

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton September 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Vernon has got this microphone here. It's not on. It's feeding to the press. And if I know Vernon, he's already fed the press, which may mean that I will get a little bit of slack from them if I say anything I shouldn't.

Let me begin by saying this is my second home. Usually, when I'm a surrogate for Hillary—and I try to do this as much as I can, because that way she can be out getting votes. I'm glad to do it, but tonight I really got the better end of the deal. Vernon and Ann have been so wonderful to us, and we have had these seven—soon to be eight Christmas Eves together, with Dwight and Toni and the rest of their family.

And he's always letting me bring all my family here. And sometimes, that's a pretty large and rowdy bunch. I have two young, impish nephews who, from time to time—[inaudible]—grandchildren. And I'm very grateful for their friendship, and I want to thank Dwight and Toni and Ann and Vernon one more time for being there for our family tonight.

We've had an interesting talk around the table tonight about everything in the wide world. But I'd just like to say a couple of things. This is a rather interesting time in my life. I'm not running for anything for the first time in 26 years. [Laughter] My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. I cast what may well be the last vote of a long and rich

life in my native State of Arkansas for Al Gore for President.

And Tuesday I got to vote for my wife for the first time, in a little school in Chappaqua, New York. And it was the most extraordinary experience. You know, I was happy as a kid on Christmas morning. It was amazing. We got to go in and shake hands with all the election officials. And I go into this little voting booth, and I realized what I was doing, and it was just an unbelievable feeling. So for me, personally, this is a source of great pride.

And I was very proud of her last night, because I thought she gave a good account of herself in a difficult and challenging format. It should have been difficult and challenging. These jobs are not being given away. Candidates ought to be tested. But I was very, very proud of her. And apparently, the people who saw the debate liked her pretty well, too. And I always believe you can trust the people. People almost always get it right if they have enough information and enough time to digest it. So I felt good about that.

But what I would like to say to all of you relates more to you than to her and to this campaign. I appreciate what Vernon said. I thought when I ran for President in 1991 and 1992, we needed to change not only the content of our policy but the way we did our politics and the way we related to each other as citizens. We needed to adopt a more unifying language and rhetoric and attitude toward one another,

because we're growing more diverse in a world that's growing more complicated and more interconnected. And we can't get much done if all we want to do is to figure out how to segment the election in every political season in a way that divides the American people against one another so that, hopefully, we have at least one more vote than the other side.

That's not the way the world works its best. It's not the way the best companies are run, not the way the best nonprofits are run. It's not the way people want to run their families or their communities. It's not to say that we shouldn't have vigorous debates, but I thought that the country had been disadvantaged by a harsh and exceedingly personal political style that, I thought, needed to go away for good.

So we set about trying to turn the country around and change the policy and change the politics. And the result proves that a lot of sunshine and a lot of storms have been pretty good for the American people. We'll leave it to the historians to judge how good and what role we had in it, but I feel very grateful. I have a heart full of gratitude.

But the point I want to make tonight—and we discussed this at our table—is that I think this is an election that's at least as important as the election of 1992, and in some ways it presents as big, if not a bigger challenge to people, because what you do when times are good is sometimes harder to judge than what you do when times are tough.

The people took a chance on me in 1992. And we were laughing outside, and I have no idea how many people were in that polling place. "Can I really vote for this guy? He's only 46 years old, a little State. I've never been there. I'm not quite sure, you know? They say all these bad things about him. Aw, heck, times are tough. I'm going to give him a chance." People felt, "Well, it's not that big a risk. I mean, after all, we're in tough shape here."

Now, the country's in good shape. People have a sense of well-being that they have earned. Current trends are going in the right direction. The important thing in this election, I think, is for people to be quite clear about what they want out of this and what they want for their country.

I've always believed that if we could, all of us who feel as I do, if we could just bring clarity to this election, to get the American people to sit down and take a little time to think,

"What would I like my country to look like in 10 years? What is it that I should do with this truly magic moment? What are the big challenges; what are the big problems; what are the big obstacles? What are the big changes, and who can manage them best?" I've always thought that we could all come out okay in this election, because very often, the person for whom you decide to vote depends in large measure on what you think the election is about in the first place.

So, I think the Vice President and Senator Lieberman are doing very well. I think Hillary's doing very well, but I don't think any of these elections are over yet, because I think the debate is still stewing out there. People are trying to come to grips with what it all means. I'd just like to say a couple of things, first about Hillary. One of the things that—not much gets me mad anymore, I'm feeling pretty mellow—but one of the things that still kind of steams me is when I hear somebody say, "Well, why is she doing this?" She wouldn't be doing this if she weren't his wife and the First Lady."

You can ask Vernon. The truth is, if she hadn't decided to spend the last 30 years helping me, helping other people, being a public servant as well as a private lawyer, she could have been doing this 25 years ago. She chose to be a citizen rather than a candidate. She chose to do things like be on the board of the Children's Defense Fund and found the Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families and start our neonatal nursery down there and be the chairman of the board of a legal services corporation before she was 30 and did other things where she could serve and not ask for anything.

This is the first time in 30 years she's ever asked anybody to do anything for her. So when people say to me—well they don't say it to me, to my face, but I hear it all the time. It's sort of—that's just not true. I've never known anybody that I thought was more qualified to serve as a Senator who wasn't one already than her, because she knows how to organize things. She knows how to get things done. She knows how to work with people who disagree with her.

She's worked for 30 years on issues that are central to this country's future, not just children and families and health care and education but also some of the big issues in New York: How

do you bring economic opportunity to economically distressed places? We had to make a living doing that in Arkansas for a dozen years.

So, I think she's superbly well qualified. She's been to all 62 counties in the State. She's the only person running, I think, for the Senate in New York this year that's done that. If you saw the debate last night, you know she's thought a lot about these issues.

But the second thing I want to say, in a larger sense, is that there are big things we know that we're all going to have to deal with as people, that our elected officials will be at the center of. We know right now we've got to deal with the aging of America, all us baby boomers retire, two people working and one person retired.

We know right now that in the world economy we live in, education is more important than ever, and we have the most diverse and largest student body we've ever had, a little picture of the changes in America. I'll just give you just a sample.

There's a new movie out starring Denzel Washington. I don't even know if its premiered yet, and it's about the integration of T.C. Williams High School and the football, over the river there in Alexandria. T.C. Williams High School today, just three or four decades later, is a magnificent school, still. It has one of the best antiviolenence programs in America, by the way, but it is part of the most diverse school district in America, where there are people from 180 different racial and ethnic groups, whose families speak over 100 different native languages, in one school district.

It's a whole different world out there. How are we going to give all these kids a world-class education? The truth is, we know how to turn around failing schools, so we're going to do it. I was at a school in Harlem, in New York, a couple weeks ago, that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading and doing math below grade level. Two years later, it has 76 percent of the kids doing reading and math at or above grade level.

This can be done everywhere in America. The question is whether we're going to do it. How are we going to do that? What should the Federal Government's role be? What should we focus on? So there are things we know. Then there are all these things that are imponderable. When will global warming change our lives? See the polar ice caps are melting? What does that

have to do with you? If you're from Illinois, what's it going to do to agriculture? Why? Will it bury the sugarcane fields in Louisiana? Now that we've saved the Florida Everglades, will they be overrun with water? How could we deal with that in ways that grow the economy and create jobs for working people, instead of take jobs away?

Don't you want somebody in the Senate and somebody in the White House that's curious and thinks about that kind of stuff? The world is growing closer together. What are our responsibilities to deal with the AIDS epidemic in Africa, growing even more rapidly in India now, and soon to have the most rapid growth of all in the states of the former Soviet Union?

What are our responsibilities for that? When you all—when new mothers can bring home their babies with a little gene card that tells them what their genetic makeup is likely to be, what their life expectancy is likely to be, and what the probability of a girl getting breast cancer in her thirties is, a little baby girl coming home from the hospital, or a man having a debilitating stroke in his forties because he's got a little genetic crook—what are our responsibilities there? How are we going to protect the privacy of that information and still get them the kind of—on the kind of regime that will be drastically minimize the chances that those bad things will happen and increase their life expectancy?

How are we going to bridge the digital divide that exists in the world so that poor kids, not just in America but all around the world, get the same chance that others do? What are you going to do if somebody decides—figures out how to get a terrorist group a biological weapon that can be carried in a plastic case that can be not—that won't be detected in airports.

Something like this could all happen. This is just some of the questions. If we had all night, I could give you a thousand questions. I think about this all the time. So, quite apart from the fact that I think we're right and they're wrong on how big the tax cut should be, whether we should pay down the debt, what's our obligation to the poor areas in America, whether we should raise the minimum wage, whether we should have the Patients' Bill of Rights, whether we should have a Medicare drug benefit, we need to elect people this year who are curious and think about the future and who have the capacity to deal with these big things

and imagine how it's going to effect our little children and grandchildren, because I'm convinced that for all the good things that have happened in the last 8 years, all the best stuff's still out there.

But I'm also convinced that the future is not about to stand still, and therefore it will be more important than ever to have people who not only have very clear and unambiguous political values and common commitments that are clear to all of us at elections but people who are really curious in the best sense and learning and flexible and care about this.

I have never known anybody that I thought had a better combination of mind and heart and of constancy and ability to work with other people than Hillary—ever—not anybody. I've never known anybody that I thought has thought about the future with a greater capacity to predict than Al Gore—not anybody.

These are not the things that you necessarily think about in political campaigns. You know, they may not—it's hard to make a 30-second ad on those two things. But I'm telling you, that's the kind of stuff we need to be thinking about, because all the best stuff's still out there, but there are a lot of profound challenges out there.

I went down to Colombia last week, and we're trying to help Colombia, and also Bolivia and Ecuador and the countries around there, you know, root out the scourge of cocaine, get the farmers to do something else for a living. Fourteen thousand kids die in America every year directly from drug overdoses, as a consequence of their drug habits.

They can lose their democracy down there. Nobody really knows exactly how to save it all, but I can tell you one thing. We won't get it done by just shouting at each other. We're going to have to work with people and think about it.

Just the last thought I'll leave you with: The most important thing about the whole human genome project to me is that the people who did it figured out, with the most sophisticated computer technology available, that we're genetically 99.9 percent the same. And that the genetic differences within different racial and ethnic groups, within the group, among individuals, are greater than the genetic differences between any two racial groups, as a profile.

There is a book that's out that I've been kind of touting lately, that I'm very interested in.

It's called "Non Zero," written by a man named Robert Wright. I don't know if any of you have seen it, but he wrote a book a few years ago called "The Moral Animal," which got a lot of interest.

Essentially, the argument of "Non Zero" is this: The world is—it is a scientific and historical argument. When Martin Luther King propositioned that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice, and essentially what the argument is that we have to become more just as a society, if we want to survive, as we grow more complex and more interdependent.

He's not naive. I mean, he understands that science was abused by Nazi Germany, modern organizational techniques, and military capacity was abused by communists, totalitarians, dictatorships. But he basically argues that if you look at it over the whole sweep of history, it is a good thing that we are growing, A, more complex, and B, more interdependent, because it forces us to try to find solutions in which we all win, instead of solutions in which some of us win at everybody else's expense.

As I said, he's not naive. If you have a race for President, one of these guys is going to lose, and one of them's going to win. You know, somebody's going to win, somebody's going to lose the race for Senate. But he argues that the leadership style that is required for this time is that we work together to try to find principled compromises but not say you'll split the difference. Things that are always on the edge of change, so that we can all win.

And what I've tried to do is to modernize the Democratic Party but rooted on very simple ideas: Everybody counts; everybody deserves a chance; people that need help ought to get it, to be empowered to make the most of their lives; and we all do better when we work together—very simple ideas. But you have to have people who can take those simple principles in a very complicated world and make it work for ordinary people.

I don't know anybody I think can do that better than Hillary, and I know I'm biased, because I know we spent 30 years together. I'm just telling you I've seen hundreds and hundreds of people in public life, in both parties, and most of them were better than most folks thought they were. Most people in public life I've known have been honest, hard-working, and

did what they actually thought was right 95 percent of the time. But I've never known anybody I thought could do it that well.

So I think that she would do a great job for New York, and I think she will win, only if she can continue to bring clarity to the message, and your presence here tonight and your support for her guarantees that she'll be able to be heard in her own voice, rather than somebody's clever transfiguration of it. And you should be very proud of that. I hope you'll always be proud you came to this dinner tonight.

But the stakes are far bigger than another Senate race, even far bigger than another President's race, and they are just as important, if not more important, than what we did in '92, because we now have the future to run ourselves, and we've got to do a good job of it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Vernon and Ann Jordan; and Dwight Bush, chief financial officer, Sato Travel, and his wife, Toni.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Joint Convention on Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Management Safety

September 13, 2000

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for Senate advice and consent to ratification, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, done at Vienna on September 5, 1997. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention was adopted by a Diplomatic Conference convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in September 1997 and was opened for signature in Vienna on September 5, 1997, during the IAEA General Conference, on which date Secretary of Energy Federico Peña signed the Convention for the United States.

The Convention is an important part of the effort to raise the level of nuclear safety around the world. It is companion to and structured similarly to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), to which the Senate gave its advice and consent on March 25, 1999, and which entered into force for the United States on July 10, 1999. The Convention establishes a series of broad commitments with respect to the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. The Convention does not delineate detailed mandatory standards the Parties must meet, but instead Parties are to take appropriate steps to bring their activities into compliance with the general obligations of the Convention.

The Convention includes safety requirements for spent fuel management when the spent fuel results from the operation of civilian nuclear reactors and radioactive waste management for wastes resulting from civilian applications.

The Convention does not apply to a Party's military radioactive waste or spent nuclear fuel unless the Party declares it as spent nuclear fuel or radioactive waste for the purposes of the Convention, or if and when such waste material is permanently transferred to and managed within exclusively civilian programs. The Convention contains provisions to ensure that national security is not compromised and that Parties have absolute discretion as to what information is reported on material from military sources.

The United States has initiated many steps to improve nuclear safety worldwide in accordance with its long-standing policy to make safety an absolute priority in the use of nuclear energy, and has supported the effort to develop both the CNS and this Convention. The Convention should encourage countries to improve the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste domestically and thus result in an increase in nuclear safety worldwide.

Consultations were held with representatives from States and the nuclear industry. There are

no significant new burdens or unfunded mandates for the States or industry that should result from the Convention. Costs for implementation of the proposed Convention will be absorbed within the existing budgets of affected agencies.

I urge the Senate to act expeditiously in giving its advice and consent to ratification.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 13, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 15.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee *September 14, 2000*

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 108(b) of Public Law 98-373 (15 U.S.C. 4107(b)), I transmit herewith the Eighth Biennial Report of the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (February 1, 1998, to January 31, 2000).

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,

September 14, 2000.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 15.

Remarks Welcoming Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India *September 15, 2000*

It is a special honor to welcome to the White House the Prime Minister of the world's largest democracy.

Prime Minister Vajpayee, America always has had a great fascination with India, for its rich history, culture, great religions. And increasingly, we are fascinated by India when we think in terms of the future.

We see in India today a rising economic leader, making breathtaking strides in information technology; an emerging environmental leader, promoting ambitious goals for energy efficiency; a pioneering health leader, recently immunizing 140 million children against polio; a leader in our community of democracies, reminding the world that freedom is not a western value but a universal longing.

Mr. Prime Minister, it is not only India's democracy but India's manner of achieving democracy that will forever inspire America.

On my recent trip to India, I was profoundly moved by the visit that my daughter and our

party and I had to the Gandhi Memorial. Tomorrow I will be proud to join you as you dedicate another Gandhi Memorial right here in Washington, DC. It is altogether fitting that both our nations honor him.

Martin Luther King used Gandhi's teachings to show America that, while we held principles of equality we knew to be right, we permitted practices of inequality we knew to be wrong, and we have been changing for the better ever since.

Mr. Prime Minister, from very different histories, India and the United States have forged a common bond, arising from our common commitment to freedom and democracy. Our challenge is to turn our common bond into common achievements. Today we will continue our work in areas where the world needs both America and India to lead if we are to defeat AIDS, reduce poverty, protect the global environment, and open the global economy.

We will discuss our common desire to seek peace through dialog in South Asia. We will talk about our common interests in slowing the spread of nuclear weapons and the broader consequences of proliferation in South Asia. At the same time, we welcome India's commitment to forgo nuclear testing until the treaty banning all nuclear testing comes into force.

No matter our differences—and two such large and diverse countries will always have some differences—as long as we are thinking, if we speak with care and listen with respect, we will find common ground and achieve common aims.

Prime Minister Vajpayee, in your speeches you talk of India's ability to cherish its own marvelous diversity. In your poetry, you write of the importance of unity, saying that people of many faiths can have one dream in every eye.

In America, we too have a dream of unity amidst our diversity. If people as diverse as we

can affirm our common humanity and share common dreams, surely we should and can embrace common endeavors. Mr. Prime Minister, I thank you again for the wonderful welcome you and your people accorded to me, the members of my family, and my delegation on our unforgettable trip to India.

I hope this, too, will be a great trip for you and that you will feel the warmth of America's welcome in return. But more than anything else, I hope this is the beginning of a long line of common endeavors.

Thank you for coming here, sir, and welcome to America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:54 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, where Prime Minister Vajpayee was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the Prime Minister.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India and an Exchange With Reporters

September 15, 2000

The President. Let me just briefly say, again, how very pleased I am to have the Prime Minister and his party here in the United States. He went to the United Nations. He was up on the Hill yesterday, talking with the leaders of the Senate and the House. It's great to have him here in the White House.

I think we have worked hard together to move our relationship from one of too little contact and too much suspicion to one of genuine efforts to build a long-term partnership that is in the interests of the people of India and the people of the United States. And I'm encouraged, and I'm very appreciative of Prime Minister Vajpayee's efforts to lead this transformation.

So I want to welcome you again, and thank you for that, sir.

Prime Minister Vajpayee. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I am grateful to you for your kind words and warm hospitality. The parade was really very impressive. But now we have some work to perform. With your visit

to India, a beginning has already been made. We have to pursue that path. Administrations have been working on different issues, and I understand that some agreements have already been arrived at.

As we discuss this, I'm sure differences will be reduced, and a common ground will emerge. The Millennium Summit was a wonderful idea. But the only regret is that the speakers had only 5 minutes. *[Laughter]*

The President. Although, if they had longer, we would still be up there. We wouldn't be down here talking. *[Laughter]*

Prime Minister Vajpayee. *[Inaudible]*—only of summit of religious and spiritual leaders were also good idea. Have them come together and discuss things and find out that there are more things in common than the rituals.

India-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, can you say that you have written a new chapter in the U.S.-India relations

to—in this Oval Office during this visit of the Prime Minister of India?

The President. You could say that. I'm not supposed to say such things. [Laughter]

Let me say, what I hope we have done is moved our relationship in a new direction. It began, I think, with the great opportunity that the Prime Minister gave me to come to India, to speak in the Indian Parliament Building, which is one of my most memorable experiences as President, and obviously, to see your country and its people. I thank you.

But I think that we should look at this as a long-term effort that—I can speak for myself—I hope very much goes well beyond my Presidency and our service together. I don't think it should be another 20 years before an American President goes to India. I think we should have a regular, sustained partnership. We should identify our common interests. We should be forthright about the places where we still have differences, and we should set about trying to resolve them in a very matter of fact, open and honest way.

But if you look at the way the world is going, it's inconceivable to me that we can build the kind of world we want over the next 10 to 20 years unless there is a very strong partnership between the United States and India.

Q. When the next President is in the Oval Office in November, there's a great deal of concern that the kind of milestones that you have achieved, Mr. President, with India—what about the continuity, either if Mr. Gore comes in or if Mr. Bush comes in, in terms of Indo-U.S. relations?

The President. Well, you know, the way our system works, the election is held in November, and then about 9½ weeks later there is a formal transfer. And there is a period of transition there where we have a chance to talk to the new administration. It certainly will be a priority of mine to make the argument that this should be continued.

Now, since the Vice President has been a part of this administration and an intimate part of all of our foreign policy decisions, I know how he feels about it, and I know he will support it. But I would hope this would become an American commitment that would go beyond political parties, and I believe it will.

Oil Prices

Q. Mr. President, you said last week in New York that oil prices were too high, and you raised the prospect that they could trigger a recession somewhere in the world. There have been protests across Europe about these high prices. And here at home, Americans are facing fuel bills 30 percent higher than last year.

What's the economic risk to the United States, and should Americans be worried about a recession here?

The President. Well, I think in the short to medium term, the answer to your second question is no. We have worked very hard over the last 25 years to be a more diverse economy and a less energy-intensive economy in a lot of our production. So we have withstood this oil price fight very much better than we did when it happened before. That's in the short term.

Now, what we need to do is watch the situation closely. The market is still sorting out what to do with the recent OPEC announcement. And I think there will be an evaluation of what the production schedules are, who does what in the various countries, how quickly. And that will have an impact on what happens to the price and whether we can get it down.

Meanwhile, I'm spending a great deal of time on this, keeping all my options open, looking at the specific problems of various regions of the country and the general problem of the oil prices. I hope that before they go home, the Congress will reauthorize the strategic petroleum reserve. I think that's quite important.

And I will say again that I've had blocked in Congress for a few years now my proposals for tax incentives for businesses and individuals to buy energy conservation or alternative energy products, which I believe would dramatically accelerate our energy independence. So I hope that that will pass, as well.

But we just have to watch this. The OPEC announcement and the actions that have been taken since then are not enough, I think, for the market to fully sort out what it's going to do. But I assure you, I'm spending a lot of time on it, and I will do everything I can to minimize the impact of any adverse impact on the American people.

Wen Ho Lee

Q. Mr. President, if you always had doubts about whether Wen Ho Lee should be in jail, why didn't you share those with us until yesterday? And what do you say to Asian-Americans who are concerned that his ethnicity may have played some role in the fact he was detained for so long?

The President. First of all, I don't believe that. I don't think there's any evidence of that. Let's look at the facts here.

He has admitted to a very serious national security violation. And the most important thing now is that he keep his commitment to the Government to work hard to figure out what happened to those tapes, what was on the tapes, to reconstitute all the information. That's very important.

In America, we have a pretty high standard, and we should, under our Constitution, against pre-trial detention. You have to meet a pretty high bar. I had no reason to believe that that bar had not been met. I think the fact that in such a short timeframe there was an argument that he needed to stay in jail without bail, and then all of a sudden there was a plea agreement which was inconsistent with the claims being made, I thought—that raises a question, not just for Chinese-Americans but for all Americans, about whether we have been as careful as we ought to be about pre-trial detention.

And that's something that—you know, in a Government like ours, that was basically forged out of the concern for abusive executive authority, we sometimes make mistakes, but we normally make mistakes the other way, where we're bending over backwards. So that was my narrow question. Our staff has talked to the Justice Department about it. I'm sure I'll have a chance to talk to the Attorney General. It would have been completely inappropriate for me to inter-

vene. And I don't believe she intervened. This was handled in the appropriate, normal way.

But I want you to understand, there was a serious violation here. He has acknowledged that. We have to get to the bottom of what was on all the tapes. But the narrow thing that I want to illustrate here is that when the United States, whenever we hold anybody in prison who can't get bail or who is interned for a long period of time before being charged and convicted and sentenced, we need to hit a very high threshold. That is the specific thing I wanted to focus on. And I think that there ought to be an analysis of whether or not that threshold was crossed, in light of the plea bargain.

But the American people shouldn't be confused here. That was a very serious offense, and we've got to try to reconstitute what was on the tapes. That's the number one thing we have to do for the national security now.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, on the Middle East, is there any reason for hope now?

The President. I think my answer to—specific answer to your question is you should wait; we should all wait and see. Everybody is working hard, no big breakthroughs, no reason for hope, no reason for despair. They're after it. They know they're on a short timeframe, and they're working it. But I have nothing to report, and I'm staying up with it. But we're working on it.

But you should be encouraged only by the fact that they are working. But there are no breakthroughs, no reason for hope, no reason for despair.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:42 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

India-United States Joint Statement September 15, 2000

Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Clinton today reaffirmed the vision they outlined in March in New Delhi of a closer and qualitatively new relationship between India and the

United States in the 21st century. They reiterated their conviction that closer cooperation and stronger partnership between the two countries will be a vital factor for shaping a future of

peace, prosperity, democracy, pluralism and freedom for this world. They acknowledged that this vision draws strength from broad political support in both countries.

The two leaders agreed that the wide-ranging architecture of institutional dialogue between the two countries provides a broad-based framework to pursue the vision of a new relationship. They expressed satisfaction at the pace and purposefulness with which the two countries have initiated the consultations envisaged in the dialogue architecture.

In particular, the two leaders are gratified by their recent exchange of visits, and by the regular foreign policy consultations at the ministerial and senior policy levels:

- They expressed satisfaction at the role that the two countries played in the launch of the Community of Democracies.
- In the economic arena, they reaffirmed their confidence that the three ministerial-level economic dialogues and the High-Level Coordinating Group will improve the bilateral trade environment, facilitate greater commercial cooperation, promote investment, and contribute to strengthening the global financial and trading systems.
- They welcomed the progress of the Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, and agreed that it would also examine linkages between terrorism and narcotics trafficking and other related issues. They noted the opening of a Legal Attaché office in New Delhi designed to facilitate cooperation in counter-terrorism and law enforcement.
- The two leaders expressed satisfaction that the joint consultative group on clean energy and environment met in July and agreed to revitalize and expand energy cooperation, while discussing the full range of issues relating to environment and climate change.
- They welcomed the establishment of the Science and Technology forum in July and agreed that the forum should reinvigorate the traditionally strong scientific cooperation between the two countries. In that connection, they noted the contribution of the two science and technology related roundtable meetings held in March and September.
- They also welcomed the recent initiatives in the health sector, including the joint

statements of June 2000, as examples of deepening collaboration in improving health care and combating AIDS and other major diseases of our time.

The two leaders agreed that India and the United States must build upon this new momentum in their relationship to further enhance mutual understanding and deepen cooperation across the full spectrum of political, economic, commercial, scientific, technological, social, and international issues.

During this visit, the two leaders had productive discussions across a wide range of bilateral, regional, and international developments. In the economic arena, they agree that India's continuing economic reforms, as well as the two countries' complementary strengths and resources, provide strong bases for expansion of economic ties between the two countries. The two leaders recognized the need to deepen cooperation on high-tech trade issues. They noted that the present regime on e-commerce would be rolled over until the next ministerial meeting of the WTO, and that the two countries would cooperate in building a wider international consensus on information technology. The two leaders pledged their joint commitment to bridge the digital divide, both within and between countries, so that the benefits of information technology may advance the economic and social development of all citizens, rich and poor.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction with their agreement on textiles. They also affirmed the need for expansion of bilateral civil aviation ties and agreed to work toward this goal. They recognized the contribution that biotechnology can make to a safe and nutritious food supply, in offering new options to farmers to address problems of pests and diseases, while contributing to environmental protection and enhancing global food security. The governments of the United States and India will explore ways of enhancing cooperation and information exchange, joint collaborative projects and training of scientists in agriculture biotechnology research. The ongoing vaccine research would be further strengthened also, making use of genomics and bioinformatics. The governments of both the United States and India support science-based regulatory activities.

They also noted significant progress on other important economic issues including mutual taxation and investment in the power and other sectors. In regard to double taxation issues, the

competent authorities of both sides intend to soon negotiate an arrangement under which collection or recovery of tax will generally be suspended on a reciprocal basis, during pendency of a mutual agreement proceeding. To ensure sustainable economic growth that will lift the lives of rich and poor alike, the two leaders committed support for efforts that will make capital markets more efficient, transparent, and accountable to attract the billions in private investment that is needed.

They recognize the need for appropriate technology for power generation, and the importance of greater South Asian regional cooperation and trade in energy, as well as the development and application of clean technologies that address our respective problems of urban and water pollution. The leaders noted with satisfaction the signings of several major commercial agreements, under which U.S. firms will contribute to the development of the power industry in India.

The United States and India intend to harness their cooperation in emerging scientific and economic sectors into a partnership for defining new ways of fighting hunger, disease, pollution, and other global challenges of our time. The two leaders pledged their strong commitment to address the global challenge of the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through the close involvement and cooperation between the governments and civil society in the two countries. They expressed support for the collaborative program for research in various areas, including HIV/AIDS vaccine development, through the Joint Working Groups of scientists envisaged by the Joint Statement of June 2000. They agreed to encourage the formation of a business council to combat HIV/AIDS with the active involvement and participation of business and industry to raise awareness in the industrial workplace.

The two leaders discussed international security. They recalled the long history of Indo-U.S. cooperation in UN peacekeeping operations, most recently in Sierra Leone. The two leaders agreed to broaden their cooperation in peacekeeping and other areas of UN activity, including in shaping the future international security system. The two leaders also discussed the evolving security environment in Asia, recalling their common desire to work for stability in Asia and beyond. They agreed that the Asian Security Dialogue that the two countries have initiated will strengthen mutual understanding.

The two countries reaffirmed their belief that tensions in South Asia can only be resolved by the nations of South Asia, and by peaceful means. India reiterated its commitment to enhancing cooperation, peace, and stability in the region. Both sides stressed the unacceptability of continued violence and bloodshed as a basis for solution of the problems of the region.

The United States and India seek to advance their dialogue on security and nonproliferation issues, building upon the joint statement signed during President Clinton's visit to India in March. They reiterated their respective commitments to forgo nuclear explosive tests. India reaffirmed that, subject to its supreme national interests, it will continue its voluntary moratorium until the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) comes into effect. The United States reaffirmed its intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at the earliest possible date. The Indian government will continue efforts to develop a broad political consensus on the issue of the Treaty, with the purpose of bringing these discussions to a successful conclusion. India also reconfirmed its commitment not to block entry into force of the Treaty. India expects that all other countries, as included in Article XIV of CTBT, will adhere to this Treaty without reservations. The United States and India reiterated their support for a global treaty to halt the production of fissile material for weapons purposes, and for the earliest possible start of Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty negotiations in Geneva. The United States noted its moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes and supports a multilateral moratorium on such production pending conclusion of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty. The United States and India commended the progress made so far on export controls, and pledged to continue to strengthen them. Both countries agreed to continue their dialogue on security and nonproliferation, including on defense posture, which is designed to further narrow differences on these important issues.

In combating international terrorism, the two leaders called on the international community to intensify its efforts, including at the current session of the United Nations. Noting that both India and the United States are targets of continuing terrorism, they expressed their determination to further reinforce bilateral cooperation in this area. They have agreed to hold another round of counter-terrorism consultations

in New Delhi later this month, and to pursue work on a Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty.

Finally, the two leaders also paid tribute to the contributions of the Indian-American community in providing a bridge of understanding between the two societies and in strengthening the ties of commerce and culture between the two countries. In this connection, they commended the progress of the initiative to set up

a collaborative Global Institute for Science and Technology in India. The two leaders agreed to encourage people-to-people connections between the two nations, and to enlist the cooperation of all sections of their talented and diverse societies in support of that goal.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton *September 15, 2000*

Thank you very much. First, let me thank Weldon and Connie for getting us all together, and thank all of you for coming and for contributing to Hillary's campaign. I want to thank the large number of members of the Congressional Black Caucus who were here earlier, who came by to express their support. I'm looking forward to being with them and, I suppose, a lot of you tomorrow night at the dinner.

I won't keep you long, but I want to make two or three points. First of all, you ought to know how you came to be here tonight. Weldon came up to me one day, and he said, "So Hillary is really going to run." I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, you know, I'm from New York," and I said, "Have I got a deal for you"—[*laughter*]"—and here it is." [*Laughter*]

Anyway, I am very grateful to him and to Connie and to all of you for helping Hillary, and I'll be quite brief in bringing her on. I'm very grateful that I had the chance to serve, and I'm very grateful that the country is in better shape. And I'm glad that we were able to do some things that people hadn't done before, to reach out to people within our country, and also beyond our borders, that had too long been overlooked.

She had a lot to do with that. She went to Africa before I did. She went to India and Pakistan and Bangladesh before I did. She has been to more countries, trying to help empower poor people and support democracy and support women's rights and support getting girls in schools where they don't go to school, than any First Lady in the history of this country by a long, long way.

She helped to establish this Vital Voices network of women around the world that have worked for peace in Northern Ireland. I just got a—I was just in Nigeria, and when I mentioned it, all the members stood up and started applauding in this audience. The guys in the audience didn't know what I was talking about, but the girls in the audience knew about Hillary and their deal. It was great.

So I'm grateful for what she did there. What I want to say is that I think in a lot of ways this election is as important, in some ways maybe more important, than the election of 1992, which brought Al Gore and me to the White House, Tipper and Hillary and our crowd. Because then the country was in bad shape, and the people took a chance on me. But I don't know that it was much of a chance, since the country was in bad shape. [*Laughter*] Everybody knew that we had to do something different.

Now, we're laughing, but you know I'm telling the truth, right? How many people do you think went in that room and said in that voting booth, "I don't know about this guy. He's a Governor of this little State. I'm not sure where it is. I mean, you know, they say all these bad things about him, but oh, what the heck?"

Now, the country is in good shape. And I think sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than it is in bad times, because you have to actually decide. What do you want? Where do you want your country to go? What do you want it to be? And the reason I feel so strongly about this election, it's the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. [*Laughter*]

My party has got a new leader. My family has got a new candidate. *[Laughter]* My official title is Cheerleader in Chief. *[Laughter]* But the reason I feel strongly about it is, we worked so hard to turn this country around, get it going in the right direction, and now there's a real hard decision, or set of decisions, to be made. And I can tell you, after 8 years here, obviously it matters who the President and Vice President are. It matters hugely—every single Senate seat, every single House seat.

I wanted to say, in the presence of the Black Caucus members that were here, even when we went into the minority, nothing I achieved here, of any real substance, could have been possible if they hadn't stuck with me every step of the way. It matters, and it really matters who's in the Senate.

And we need to keep changing as a country, but we need to build on what we've done. And when I think of all the great questions facing America, how are we going to provide education for the largest and most diverse group of kids in our history, and I think how long Hillary's been working on that, and the results we got because of her efforts when we were at home in Arkansas; when I think about how are we going to balance the demands of work and rearing children, which is a challenge not just for poor working people but for middle-class working people and for a lot of people that are upper middle class, and I think that, you know, she spent a lifetime working on that. Everybody talks about it now. One of the most popular pieces of legislation we ever passed, and she helped pass it, was the family and medical leave law. Over 20 million people took some time off when a baby was born or a parent was sick without losing their jobs. Twenty-two years ago—22 years ago—she founded a state-wide advocacy group for families and children at home, long before it was fashionable to think about.

When I think about how are we going to spread this prosperity to people and places that

have been left behind, that's what she spent 8 years doing as First Lady, going to places to promote microcredit and economic empowerment, all around the world. Same issues apply in upstate New York and the inner-city areas that have been left behind. And I could go on and on and on.

We need somebody who's spent a lifetime working on the things that we need to decide to do now, because most people don't have to do it now. And we need somebody who thinks about the future all the time. And so even if I didn't know her better than anybody in this room, I'd be for her because of what she's done and what she's achieved and what she wants to do.

You know, most of the time we've been hit so many times, between the two of us, we're kind of thick-skinned. But one thing sometimes people say that really steams me is—I heard somebody the other day say, "Well, she wouldn't even be running if she weren't First Lady."

Let me tell you something. If you look at her record as a lawyer, as a public servant, she spent 30 years helping everybody else. She never asked anybody to do anything for her. But if she hadn't married me so long ago and chosen to live a life of volunteer public service, she could have been doing this 20, 25 years ago.

So you get somebody now who has spent a lifetime in public service, always giving to other candidates, other causes, always leading by the power of her example, who actually has spent a lifetime doing what America needs to focus on most, today, when we think about the future.

This is a big decision, and you've helped to make sure it will be the right one, and I am very grateful to you. But you will be very proud of what she does for New York and America.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Weldon and Connie Latham.

The President's Radio Address *September 16, 2000*

Good morning. I'm joining you today from the Washington Home, a nursing home in our Nation's Capital that has been delivering quality care to older Americans for more than 100 years now. The seniors here with me receive top-quality assistance from a dedicated and attentive staff.

Every one of the 1.6 million Americans living in nursing homes all across our Nation deserve the same quality care. And as the baby boomers retire, the demand for quality care will continue to rise even higher. By the year 2030, the number of Americans over the age of 85 will double, making compassionate, quality nursing home care even more important.

But while the majority of nursing homes today provide excellent care, too many of our seniors and Americans with disabilities in homes, in too many of those homes, are not getting the proper attention they deserve. According to current research, the number one culprit is chronic understaffing. When there are too few caregivers for the number of patients, the quality of care goes down.

A recent study from the Department of Health and Human Services reports that more than half of America's nursing homes don't have the minimum staffing levels necessary to guarantee quality care. And too often the staff that is there isn't properly trained. Patients in these homes are more likely to lose too much weight, develop bed sores, fall into depression. More than 30 percent are dehydrated, malnourished, at much higher risk for illness and infection.

Older Americans who have worked hard all their lives deserve respect, not neglect, and for more than 7 years now, Vice President Gore and I have acted to improve the quality of care in our Nation's nursing homes. In 1995 we put in place new regulations to crack down on abuse and neglect, stepping up on-site inspections of nursing homes.

That same year, when Congress tried to eliminate Federal assurances of nursing home quality, I said no. Then in 1998 I issued an Executive order, requiring all States to increase investigations of nursing homes and fine those that failed to provide the residents with adequate care.

Today I'm taking four new steps to improve nursing home conditions across America. First, working with Senator Grassley, a Republican from Iowa, and Senator Breaux, a Democrat from Louisiana, along with Representatives Waxman, Stark, and Gephardt, I'm sending legislation to Congress next week that I believe can be enacted this year. It will create \$1 billion in new grants to boost staffing levels in nursing homes that need it most, to improve recruitment and retention, and to give more training to caregivers, rewarding the best performing nursing homes.

While working to improve nursing home care, we have to act swiftly to keep nursing homes safe. This legislation will impose immediate financial penalties on nursing homes that are endangering the safety of their residents, and then those funds will be used to improve patient care.

Second, I'm directing the Health Care Financing Administration to establish, within 2 years, minimum staffing requirements for all nursing homes participating in the Federal Medicare and Medicaid programs. The agency will also develop recommendations to ensure that nursing homes receive the necessary payments for high-quality care.

Third, we are taking new measures to educate caregivers at nursing homes. Just this week we launched a new campaign in America's 17,000 nursing homes to identify residents who are at risk and prevent them becoming dehydrated or malnourished.

And finally, to help families select the right nursing home, we'll require all facilities to post the number of health care personnel serving their patients.

Of all the obligations we owe to one another, our most sacred duty is to our parents. They kept us safe from harm when we were children, and we must do the same for them as they grow older. They shouldn't go another day without the care they deserve wherever they live, in whatever nursing home facility.

President Kennedy once said, "It is not enough for a great nation merely to have added new years to life. Our objective must be also to add new life to those years."

The steps we're taking today will help to bring new life to our Nation's seniors by bringing a new level of quality to America's nursing homes. Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Washington Home.

Exchange With Reporters at the Dedication of the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial

September 16, 2000

India-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, how would you describe the visit, overall, of the Indian Prime Minister? What has this visit meant to Indo-U.S. relations?

The President. Well, I think it's been a great success. It sort of rounds out our efforts to take a different turn in our relationships, to deepen and broaden them. As I have said many times, I am profoundly grateful for the reception that I received from the Prime Minister, the Government, and the people of India when I came with my daughter and my mother-in-law a few months ago.

I hope that this change in partnership goes beyond my service, into a whole new era of partnership between India and the United States.

You know, one thing I didn't mention a moment ago is that, in addition to the Government of India, Americans who are of Indian heritage also contributed to this magnificent memorial. There is probably no country outside India that has been more enriched by Indians than the United States. So that's another reason, and I think it's important we continue to go forward together.

Mahatma Gandhi

Q. Mr. President, has Mahatma Gandhi made an influence on your life, sir, in any way?

The President. Well, when I was a boy, actually, I was a profound admirer of Martin Luther King, and I began to read all his writings. And when I read that he was so influenced by Gandhi, then I began to read about Gandhi. I was, I don't know, 17, 18, or something like that.

H-1B Visas

Q. Mr. President, since you talked about the Indian contribution—about immigration, H-1B

visas, does your administration want to do something?

The President. Let me say this, the number of H-1B visas will be increased in this Congress, I believe. I'll be quite surprised if it isn't. The issue is, how much will it be increased by, and can we use the occasion of increasing the quotas to get some more funds from the companies that are hiring people for the training of our own people, who could also do these jobs—the people who are already here—if they had training? So there's no question that we're going to increase the visas.

India-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, the fact is, you said you're very excited; it was a very positive visit. In concrete terms, where do you see the alliance going now? Where in concrete terms do you see India and the United States as natural allies going ahead?

The President. Well, I hope in the years ahead we'll be better economic partners, better political partners. I hope we'll work together through the United Nations and other international forums. I hope we'll both be able to help to turn back what could otherwise be a dangerous tide of proliferation of dangerous weapons, not just nuclear warheads on missiles, either, chemical weapons, biological weapons. I hope we'll be able to turn that back.

And I hope some day that there will be some constructive role we could play as a partner in working with India and others to bring peace on the subcontinent.

Q. Will you be a strategic ally? Will we be a strategic ally?

The President. We've done enough talking today. [Laughter] If you want to ask the Prime Minister a question—[laughter]—

Travel to India

Q. Mr. President, do you see yourself going back to India after post-Presidency?

The President. Absolutely. Absolutely. I hope I'll be able to go back to India for the rest of my life. I don't mean permanently, but I mean to keep going back, always.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:04 a.m. in a park at Massachusetts Ave. and 21st St. NW., near the Indian Embassy. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India; and the President's mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham.

Statement on the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption
September 16, 2000

Yesterday I joined the leaders of 19 nations in the Western Hemisphere in ratifying the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption.

The Convention establishes a treaty-based regime among members of the Organization of American States (OAS) to combat official corruption. OAS members who have ratified the Convention will have to criminalize acts of corruption if they have not already done so. Most important, they will have to criminalize the bribery of foreign government officials, a practice that punishes honest businesses, undermines economic development, and destroys confidence in law. The United States pressed for this provision, and it is a breakthrough in our effort to

persuade other countries to adopt legislation similar to our Foreign Corrupt Practices Act.

The Convention will strengthen America's ability to cooperate with and receive assistance from countries in the hemisphere in efforts to prevent, investigate, and prosecute corruption through extradition, mutual legal assistance, and other measures. It will also enhance law enforcement capabilities in other areas, given the links between corruption and organized criminal activity.

This Convention was the first multilateral agreement against bribery to be adopted anywhere in the world. It is a victory for good government, fair competition, and open trade through our hemisphere.

Remarks at a Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Dinner
September 16, 2000

Thank you very much, Chairman Clyburn; dinner chair Eddie Bernice Johnson, my friend of 28 years—and didn't she give a great introduction to the Vice President? You better go on the road, girl. *[Laughter]* Our foundation chair, Eva Clayton, and all the members and former members of the CBC, especially to my friend Bill Clay. We wish you well and Godspeed on your retirement, and I thank you for 8 years of our good partnership.

To Mrs. Coretta Scott King and all the distinguished citizens in the audience, but especially to the two whom I had the great honor to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Marian Wright Edelman and Reverend Jesse Jackson, thank you for being here with us tonight.

I thank Lou Stokes and Phylicia Rashad and want to join in congratulating the award winners, my friend Arthur Eve, whose son did such a good job working for the Clinton/Gore administration; Kenneth Hill; Rodney Carroll, who has been great on our Welfare to Work program; Tom Joyner, who lets me jaw on his radio program from time to time. Even I never got an eight-page spread in *Ebony*; I don't know about that. *[Laughter]*

To Tavis Smiley and to the family of our friend LeBaron Taylor; Bill Kennard, and Ambassador Sisulu, thank you for what you said about our friend Nelson Mandela. I thank General Reno and Secretary Slater and Secretary Herman and Deputy Attorney General Holder

and our SBA Director, Aida Alvarez, and all the people from our White House team who are here, and from the entire administration.

I thought the Vice President gave a great speech, and I'm looking forward to getting rid of that trouble adjective at the beginning of his title in just a couple of months now.

Now, there was nothing subliminal about that. We Democrats don't have subliminal advertising. [Laughter] I also want to thank Senator Lieberman, who has been a friend since Hillary and I met him 30 years ago when he was running for the State Senate in New Haven. And I can tell you that if he is the Vice President of this country, you will be very, very proud of him. He has done a great job, and he has been a great friend of mine.

I want to bring you a warm welcome from Hillary. She wishes she could be here tonight, but she's otherwise occupied. They sent the one in our family who is not running for office this year to speak to you tonight.

I've been honored to be at every one of these dinners since I became President. Tonight I came mostly to listen and to clap and to say thanks. Thank you for your friendship, your leadership, and your support. Thank you for giving me the chance, John Lewis, to walk with you in Selma this year. Thank you, for those of you who went back to Africa with me when we went to Nigeria and Tanzania. Thank you for working with me to reach out to the people of Africa and the Caribbean to try to build their countries through trade.

Thank you, for those of you who helped me to relieve the debt of the poor countries and to increase our fight against AIDS and TB and malaria around the world.

The Vice President said that there are so many people who could say that the CBC covered their back. Covered their back? [Laughter] When they took a torch to me and lit the fire, you brought the buckets and poured the water on it. And I thank you. Thank you.

But mostly, I want to thank you for taking our Nation to higher ground, for standing with Al Gore and me in our simple but profound mission to make sure that everyone counts and everyone has a chance, to make sure that we act as if we all do better when we help each other.

I can't thank you enough for your role in all the good things that have happened in the last 8 years. It's all been recited. I guess what

I would like for you to know is that there are a lot of days when I just felt like the troubadour, but other people had to play in the orchestra and even write the songs. And nothing—nothing good that I have achieved would have been possible without the Congressional Black Caucus, our other friends in Congress, and especially Vice President Al Gore. And I thank you all for that.

I just want to say two serious things about the future tonight. The first is that when Al Gore says you ain't seen nothin' yet, I agree with him. We've spent a lot of time in the last 8 years just trying to turn this country around and get it together and get it moving in the right direction. And now, for the first time in our lifetime, we have both prosperity and the absence of serious internal crisis and external threat.

We actually can build the future of our dreams for our kids. We could get rid of child poverty. We could give every child in America the chance at a world-class education for the first time. We could open the doors of college to all. We could take Social Security and Medicare out there beyond the life of the baby boomers and add that prescription drug benefit.

We could do a lot of things with these unbelievable discoveries in science and technology. But we have to make a decision. And so the second point I want to make is, sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than bad times. I know the people took a chance on me in 1992, but give me a break. The country was in a ditch; it wasn't that much of a chance. [Laughter]

I mean, you know, they—I don't know how many voters went into the polling place and thought, "You know, I don't know if I want to vote for that guy. He's a Governor. President Bush said he was the Governor of a small southern State, and I don't even know where that place is on the map, and he looks too young, and everybody says he's terrible." But we had to change.

Now things are going well, and people are comfortable and confident, and we have options. So it's up to you to make sure that people ask the right question and answer it in this election season, that we say we cannot afford to pass up the chance of a lifetime, maybe the chance of a half a century, to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And there is a lot at stake. You've heard it all tonight, just about, how we're fighting for strong schools and modern classrooms and a higher minimum wage and all the other things. I would like to mention one other thing that hasn't been talked about. We ought to be fighting for an end to delay and discrimination against highly qualified minority candidates for the Federal courts.

This administration has named 62 African-American judges, 3 times the number of the previous two administrations combined, with the highest ratings from the ABA in 40 years. Yet, we know, in spite of that, that women and minority candidates are still much more likely to be delayed or denied.

So even though this is a nonprofit organization, I can ask you to remember Judge Ronnie White, the first African-American on the Missouri Supreme Court, denied on the party-line vote. The fourth circuit, with the largest African-American population in the country, never had an African-American judge. Last year I told you I nominated James Wynn, a distinguished judge from North Carolina. After 400 days, with his senior Senator still standing in the courthouse door, the Senate hasn't found one day to give Judge Wynn even a hearing.

This year I nominated Roger Gregory of Virginia, the first man in his family to finish high school, a teacher at Virginia State University, where his mother once worked as a maid, a highly respected litigator with the support of his Republican and his Democratic Senator from Virginia. But so far, we're still waiting for him to get a hearing. And then there's Kathleen McCree Lewis in Michigan and others all across this country.

So once again, I ask the Senate to do the right thing and quit closing the door on people who are qualified to serve.

Now, they say I can't ask you to vote for anybody, but I will say this. If you want no more delay and denial of justice, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Senators like the First Lady.

If you want a Tax Code that helps working families with child care, long-term care, and access to college education, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Charlie Rangel as the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

If you want strong civil rights and equal rights laws and you want them enforced, it would real-

ly help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and you made John Conyers the chairman of the Judiciary Committee.

If you want the intelligence policy of this country to reflect genuine intelligence—[laughter]—it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Julian Dixon as the chairman of the Intelligence Committee.

But I will say again, sometimes it is harder to make good decisions in good times than bad times. Sometimes it's easier to think of some little thing you've got to quibble about. Remember the African proverb: "Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors." My friends, we've got to be skillful sailors.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart. Toni Morrison once said I was the first black President this country ever had. [Laughter] And I would rather have that than a Nobel Prize, and I'll tell you why. Because somewhere, in the deep and lost threads of my own memory, are the roots of understanding of what you have known. Somewhere, there was a deep longing to share the fate of the people who had been left out and left behind, sometimes brutalized, and too often ignored or forgotten.

I don't exactly know who all I have to thank for that. But I'm quite sure I don't deserve any credit for it, because whatever I did, I really felt I had no other choice.

I want you to remember that I had a partner that felt the same way, that I believe he will be one of the great Presidents this country ever had, and that for the rest of my days, no matter what—no matter what—I will always be there for you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:33 p.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Representative James E. Clyburn, chair, Congressional Black Caucus; former Representative Louis Stokes and actress Phylicia Rashad, dinner masters of ceremony; Representatives Eva M. Clayton, chair, and William (Bill) Clay and Julian C. Dixon, board members, Congressional Black Caucus Foundation; Coretta Scott King, widow of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; New York State Deputy Assembly Speaker Arthur O. Eve and his son, former Special Assistant to the President for Political Affairs Eric V. Eve; Kenneth Hill, executive director, Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program, Inc.; Rodney Carroll, chief operating officer, Welfare to Work

Partnership; morning radio show host Tom Joyner; talk show host Tavis Smiley; Ambassador Sheila Sisulu and former President Nelson

Mandela of South Africa; and author Toni Morrison.

Remarks at a Brunch for Hillary Clinton in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania September 17, 2000

Thank you very much. I was telling Ed that I left the Black Caucus dinner last night about 12:15—the Congressional Black Caucus—I was hoping that I would be *compos mentis* by the time I was introduced to speak, and you gave me such a warm welcome, I'm about to wake up. [Laughter]

Let me say, first of all, how grateful I am to all of you for being here, and so many of you have already helped Hillary. I appreciate you being here, and I'll explain in a minute why we're doing this.

I want to thank Congressmen Borski and Congressman Brady for being not only friends of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania but true friends of mine in the Congress. I'm very proud of what we've done together.

I can't say enough about Ed. It's been wonderful for me to close out my Presidency with a chairman of the Democratic Party who has as much energy as I do—[laughter]—because we knew we would have to work, and work we did. That first 7 months of this year, I don't think either one of us slept very much, but we worked very hard. And everybody was saying, "Oh, the Democrats didn't have a chance. We were all going to get wiped out. We couldn't hold the White House."

And people thought Rendell and I needed a dose of reality serum because we'd go around and say, "What do you mean? We're going to win this thing. It's"—[laughter]—didn't we? And we would go around, and these people in far-flung places, a long way from Philadelphia and Washington, would look at us like, "What have these guys been drinking tonight?" [Laughter]

You know, now all those people who were doubters think we're geniuses. And we just need about 50 more days of effort so that they'll be right. But I'm very grateful to you, Mr. Mayor, because after you did such a good job here, you could have taken a well-deserved rest,

and instead, you went on the road, and we've had a good run. I'm very grateful.

Let me say to—I don't even have the words to express the gratitude I feel to the people of Pennsylvania and especially the people of Philadelphia in this area who have given me and Al Gore such an overwhelming endorsement in 1992, and in 1996, the margin was truly breathtaking. I will never forget it. It does an amazing thing for a Democratic campaign for President not to have to worry about whether you're going to win in Pennsylvania.

What happens—I can just tell you, after the conventions are over, the candidates and their folks, they sit down and look at a map. And they look at where they're going to get to 270 electoral votes, what they have to carry that's up in the air, what they have to go take away, what they have to defend. And after the convention, there are only a relatively small number of days left. And the candidates accept their public funding, so they have a limited amount of resources to travel, to organize, to advertise.

And so it's like this elaborate chess game, quite apart from what we all see when we pick up the papers every day and they're talking about issues, debating issues—and, this year, debating the debates, of all things—and what's in the debates. Underneath it all there is the sure knowledge that we still have—since we're dedicating the Constitution Center today, we still have the same system we started with. We elect Presidents by States and by the electoral votes of States, which is all the House Members plus two Senators. That's how many electoral votes every State has. And even after reinforcement, when they get shifted around, it all still adds up to 538, and you have to have 270 to win.

And Pennsylvania has 23 votes. And it's also in the heartland of America, with Ohio and Michigan and Illinois and Wisconsin and Minnesota, and you go over to New Jersey and up to New York. If you have Pennsylvania, it

drastically increases your chances of carrying New Jersey and of carrying Ohio. No Republican has been elected since the Civil War without carrying Ohio. And it is very hard for a Democrat to be elected without carrying Pennsylvania.

So I am profoundly grateful, because for two Presidential elections we got to go play on their field. If you're playing on the other team's end of the field, you have a chance to score. And the people of Pennsylvania trusted me and Al Gore to deliver for America, and I hope you're not disappointed. It's been an honor. *[Applause]* Thank you.

There's something else I would like to say, and I won't give my standard speech because it's Sunday and a lot of you want to go do something else, and because you've heard it before, but I will say this. I promised myself between the first of the year and election day I would never, ever give a public speech without reminding people that it is sometimes more difficult to make the right decision when times are good than when times are bad. And I know the American people took a chance on me in '92, but maybe it wasn't such a big chance because the country was in trouble, right?

But now things are going well, and there must be clarity. People have got to stop and think about what is it they want for their future. Because I can tell you, in my lifetime, we've never had such a good chance to build the future of our dreams for the children that are in this room today and all the other kids in this country. We could actually do things that were unthinkable when I ran for President. We could actually get the country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President. We now know, without any question, what it takes to turn around a failing public school, and we could put in place a system if we had the will and were willing to commit the resources to do it, that would guarantee a world-class education to all the kids in this country.

We know how to do it now. When I started on this back in 1983, we had some ideas, but we didn't know. We now have mountains of evidence. I was in a school in Harlem the other day, a grade school. Two years ago 86 percent of the kids—80 percent of the kids, excuse me—were reading below grade level, doing math below grade level—2 years ago. This year 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years. We know

how to do this. Then the question is, are we going to do it for all these kids? We've got more kids in schools than ever before; it's the most diverse student body. We could do this.

We could actually get rid of child poverty. We could provide health insurance to all the working families in the country, something we've never done. We could turn around the environmental problems of the country, in the world, including global warming, in a way that would generate hundreds of thousands—maybe even over a million—jobs for the American economy alone.

And all the best stuff is still out there. The human genome project, I believe, will have young mothers bringing babies home from the hospital within 10 years, with a life expectancy of 90 years. So all the best stuff is still out there. We've got to make the right decisions. And we need people who understand the future and understand the bedrock values and institutions that build the future of America and who are curious and thinking about what all these dizzying changes mean.

I know you can never make an ad out of it, but I really think one of the best reasons to vote for Al Gore is his relentless curiosity and passion about the future and the issues that are central to the future. And one of the best reasons to vote for Hillary is that she has always understood the importance of taking everybody along into the future.

So that's really important. But let me tell you why we're here. She has been very blessed. I thought she did great in that debate the other night, even though it was two on one half the time. *[Applause]* Thank you. I was really, really proud of her. I thought she did best when they got meanest, and that's good. It's a contact sport. *[Laughter]* But it also matters whether you're big or little, and she's nothing if not big, and I'm proud of her.

She's doing well in the campaign. She's been very successful with fundraising, both in New York, where an astonishing number of people who have never been really involved before have helped her, and around the country. But in order to maximize her impact between now and the election day, she has to raise more money for her campaign—in \$1,000 and \$2,000 contributions; if nobody has given to her at all before, they can give \$2,000—and for the Democratic Committee, more money in so-called hard money.

I think all of you know that there's a limit under our Federal laws how much soft money can be spent, unless there's a matching amount of hard money. And we need a lot of contributions at a more modest but generous level. So I told Ed I was coming here today, and he said that he would try to get us some more help in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia is one of the States, outside New York, that can be most beneficially impacted by having a good Senator from New York, because you can't be a responsible New York Senator unless you have a great urban policy. You can't serve there. But it's like Pennsylvania. You also can't be good unless you know something about agriculture. Most people don't know that both New York and Pennsylvania are huge agricultural States.

But it's very, very important, as we get down here in the stretch when—I think she said on her debate the other night there are 32—32—third party committees who can spend 100 percent soft money. If you set up one of these sort of front committees to attack someone—unless it's the Republican Party—if it's some other committee with some funny name that's misleading, 100 percent of their money can be soft money. They just throw the stuff on the air and lob those bombshells at you. And believe me, the better she does, the more they want to beat her. I know something about that.

So it's very important that she be able to make the most use of the resources that have already been committed to her and have enough to stand up to whatever comes in the next, how many, 50-odd days between now and the election.

But I think she's going to win if she has the horses to stay in the race until the end. And that's what this is about. And I think when she does, a huge number of people who don't even vote for her the first time will wonder what they were thinking about on election day. And people will see what I have known for 30 years. I have never seen anybody with the same combination of mind and passion and heart and, actually, ability to get her ideas transformed into reality that she does.

I get tickled. They attack her on health care. You might be interested to know that even though our health care plan didn't pass in '94, it got further than Richard Nixon's health care plan, further than Lyndon Johnson's health care plan—I mean, Jimmy Carter's health care

plan—and further than Harry Truman's health care plan. And the same people that attacked Harry Truman attacked Hillary and me, with the same results in the next congressional election.

But after a while, people decided he was right, and they'll decide we're right, too. It would be a better country if every working family could afford health insurance. And we've made a lot of progress. We're insuring over 2 million kids now. We have a law on the books that will allow 5 to get health insurance.

One of the things that went in her health care plan was a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. One of the reasons the health insurance companies campaigned against it was because there was a strong Patients' Bill of Rights in it. And now, 70-something percent of the American people want a strong Patients' Bill of Rights because they've been, or they know someone who's been, on the receiving end of a medical decision being made by somebody other than a medical professional.

So these are big, big issues here. The country is in great shape. We're doing right. If everybody is serious about what the choice is, I feel wonderful about what's going to happen in the Presidential race, the Senate races, the House races.

I want to say one other thing, since I'm in Pennsylvania. We're trying to win—if we just win six or seven House seats, the Democrats will win back the House. And we probably will, and then a few. But what you should know is, today, if Mr. Corzine wins in New Jersey—and I believe he will—and Hillary wins—and we will have two Senate seats that are in some question, one in Nevada, where we're still behind, but we have a chance; one in Virginia, where Chuck Robb is running against the former Governor, and I believe with all my heart Senator Robb is going to win because he's one of the bravest people I've ever known in public life. He's got more courage than is good for him sometimes, given his State. But those are the only two seats we have in play. We are 11 points ahead in Florida for a Republican seat; almost 10 points ahead in Delaware for a Republican seat. We are 25 points ahead in Georgia for a seat previously held by a Republican. We are ahead today, only 5 days after the Minnesota primary, for a seat held by a Republican. One of the two candidates for the Democratic nomination in Florida—I mean, in

Washington State, is already ahead of the incumbent Republican Senator, and the other one is nearly ahead. We are even, to a little ahead, in Missouri. We are within five points in Michigan, where our candidate is fabulous but has been badly outspent, and if she can get back up and go all the way, she'll be fine. And I believe we can do right well here if our candidate had enough money.

So it's something I want you to think about because the future of the Supreme Court is at stake; the future of all these policies is at stake. And I can tell you, every single Senate seat really does matter. As President, I know. I mean every single one of them has an enormous impact on the way Americans live and the framework within which we build our future.

So that's it. If you can help Hillary with some more of these contributions, if you know anybody that hasn't made one, may be willing to make a modest contribution to her campaign, it could make a big difference to her. Because

remember, in New York, it's the Democratic Party against the Republican Party, Hillary against her Republican opponent, and then they have 32 other committees, bringing pleasant messages—[*laughter*—of every conceivable stripe.

She'll do just fine with it. She showed last week she could take a punch, and she can take a lot of them. But she needs to have something to respond, and if you can help, I'll be profoundly grateful.

Thanks again for everything you've done for Hillary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. at the City Tavern. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Jon S. Corzine, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey; and former Gov. George Allen, Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in Virginia.

Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia

September 17, 2000

Thank you very much. The final sentence of the preamble: "We do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States." Today we come to ordain and establish this Constitution Center, so I begin by thanking Senator Specter, Senator Santorum; Representatives Brady, Borski, and Hoeffel, who are here; Mayor Street and Mayor Rendell; Chairman Bogle; President Torsella; Judge Giles, Judge Becker; Park Service Director Marie Rust and all of your employees; President Rodin; and Lee Annenberg, we thank you and Walter so much for your continuing generosity and vision. And most of all, I'd like to thank the people of Philadelphia, who have contributed so much to make this center a reality.

This is an appropriate thing to do, I think, in the millennial year and in the political season. I thank Senator Specter for the plug for First Lady, and I hope he will not be too severely rebuked at the Republican caucus in a few days. [*Laughter*]

But if it is the season of political olympics in America, we shouldn't forget that we have over 600 of our athletes halfway across the world in Australia. And I think we ought to give a big hand to the female 400-meter free style relay team, who set a world record in winning a gold medal yesterday. [*Applause*] I might say, just as an aside, I saw a television special which said that this is the oldest women's swimming team we have ever fielded, and the first time the women's team has ever been older than the men. But I don't think they meant that in the same way I do. I think their average is about 21 years and 6 months. [*Laughter*]

I bring you greetings, also, from the First Lady, who wanted to be here today, because of her efforts to save the charters of our freedom.

As you may have read, and I hope you have, this weekend at the National Archives in Washington, scientists and engineers unveiled new, state-of-the-art technology to display and better preserve the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and

Declaration of Independence. We have been struggling now for many, many years to show it to the largest possible number of visitors without having the precious old paper erode and the ink bleed away into the mists of memory.

This effort to preserve the documents is part of America's Millennium Project to save our treasures, from Thomas Edison's invention factory to Harriet Tubman's home, from the Old Glory that inspired Francis Scott Key to write the "Star-Spangled Banner" to Abraham Lincoln's summer residence at the Old Soldiers Home in Washington.

It is the largest historic preservation effort in our history. It has garnered already over \$100 million in public and private funds, and I'm very proud of the First Lady for thinking of it and executing it. It will complement this Constitution Center for you to know that the Constitution is alive and well and preserved for all time, along with the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence.

Two hundred and thirteen years ago today, a few hundred feet from where we stand, 39 men signed a document that would change the world. Some of them—Washington, Franklin, Madison—are remembered today as our greatest citizens. In light of the naturalization ceremony just held, I think it's worth noting that 8 of those 39 signers were immigrants, including Alexander Hamilton, born in the West Indies, and James Wilson of Pennsylvania, who spoke with a heavy Scottish brogue.

Those who put their names in the Constitution understood the enormity of what they were attempting to do, to create a representative democracy with a central government strong enough to unify a vast, diverse, then and now politically fractious nation, but a government limited enough to allow individual liberty and enterprise to flourish.

Well, 213 years later, we can say with thanks, they succeeded not only in keeping liberty alive but in providing a strong yet flexible framework within which America could keep moving forward, generation after generation, toward making real the pure ideals embodied in their words.

How have we moved forward? Well, today, our liberties extend not just to white males with property but to all Americans, including those who were just signed in. Our concept of freedom no longer includes the so-called freedom to keep slaves and buy and sell them or to

extract profit from the labor of children. And now our Constitution is the inspiration behind scores of other democratic governments all over the world, from Japan to Poland, from Guatemala to South Africa.

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "The Constitution is an experiment, as all life is an experiment." The new center we begin today will tell the story of that experiment, showing how each generation of Americans has been called on not only to preserve liberty but to enhance it, not only to protect the institutions that secure liberty but to renew and modify them to the demands of the present with an eye to the future.

Our generation has also begun to meet that sacred duty, for at the dawn of a new century we are clearly a nation in renewal. Like generations before us, we are renewing the promise of America by meeting the challenges of our time with new ideas rooted in old values: faith and freedom, opportunity and responsibility, family and community.

This new center is a symbol of that broader renewal. It will use the latest technologies to bring alive to visitors the meaning of our founding documents. Perhaps the greatest testament to our national renewal is, we are becoming as a people simultaneously more diverse, as you can see from those who just became American citizens, and more tolerant.

The degree of diversity in America today would probably astound the Founders. But if they thought about it just for a moment, they would recognize it as the inevitable product of their own handiwork. James Madison, himself, predicted America would be made stable by a strong Constitution that would draw from other countries "men who love liberty and wish to partake of its blessings." Even in the beginning we were a diverse country, compared to most.

A few years ago, I went to Germany on a state visit. And I presented to the Chancellor of Germany a copy of the Declaration of Independence, printed in Philadelphia on July 5, 1776, in German, for the German speakers who were already here.

A newspaper way back then wrote, "If the new Federal Government be adopted, thousands would embark immediately to America. Germany and Ireland would send colonies of cultivators of the Earth, while England and Scotland would fill our towns and cities with industrious mechanics and manufacturers."

Well, today, we benefit from the skills and drive of a new wave of immigrants from Nigeria and India, Poland and China, Mexico and Russia, and as you heard, scores of other countries. No country in the world has been able so to absorb large numbers of immigrants and profit by them, yet still somehow find a way to remain one nation.

I believe the reason is that we base national identity in America not on common blood or common history or loyalty to a particular ruler but on a shared belief and a set of political ideas and arrangements. We revere the Constitution because it is at the core of who we are. And I would submit for all the troubling responses in the polls that were cited, one of the reasons that we need this Constitution Center is so people will come here and learn the answers to those questions so they will know why they already feel the way they do, because even people who don't know the answers to the questions at bottom are Americans in the sense that I just mentioned, thanks to 213 years of this Constitution.

Since 1993, 5 million immigrants have chosen to become Americans, more than the total of the previous three decades. This week, 25,000 more are being sworn in in ceremonies across our country, celebrating Constitution Week and Citizenship Day. They gain new rights and freely accept new obligations to play their part in the ongoing experiment in self-government that is our Nation.

I say it again, the final clause of the Constitution's preamble reads, "We do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States." The Founders ordained it when they signed it. The American people have renewed it again and again: in 1789, when we added the Bill of Rights; in the 1860's, when hundreds of thousands gave their lives to ensure that a Union founded in liberty on the proposition that all are created equal would not perish from the Earth in slavery; we renewed it at the coming of the industrial age, recognizing new measures were required to protect and advance equal opportunity and freedom; we renewed it in 1920, when we ratified the 19th amendment, granting women the right to vote; we renewed it during the great worldwide Depression of the 1930's, when we saved a free economy for free people by building a social safety net and appropriate regulatory protections; we renewed it in the Constitution's finest sense during World War II

and the cold war, when we stood up to tyrannies that did not believe people could be trusted with freedom; we renewed in 1963, hearing and heeding Dr. King's dream that one day the sons of former slaves and former slaveowners would sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

Today, we enter a new era in human affairs, dominated by globalization—which is a fancy way of saying the world is getting smaller and more interconnected—and an explosion in science and information technology, which will change the way we live and work and relate to each other in ways we can only dimly imagine, at a pace that is truly breathtaking.

We, therefore, must renew our commitment to the charters of freedom and apply their values to the challenges of this new era. Our Constitution protects individual integrity and privacy. What does it mean when all of our genetic information is on a little card and in someone's computer? How can we take this magnificent prosperity that the global economy is producing and spread it to everybody? What are our responsibilities to deal with our brothers and sisters half a world away who are still struggling in poverty and under the grip of AIDS, TB, and malaria, which together kill one in every four people who die every year? What is our responsibility to share our learning in outer space and the deepest oceans with all Americans and with those beyond our borders? How can we be a great nation of free people unless every single child can get a world-class education?

These are only some of the questions the next generation of American leaders will have to contemplate and answer at more and more rapid speeds. But the great thing is, we now have over two centuries of experience to know that we always will need new ideas; we'll always need strong leadership; we'll always need to be open for change. But the Constitution, the Declaration, and the Bill of Rights will always be home base and a good place to return to know what should be the anchor of the changes and the challenges of any new era. That is what this center will give to all Americans.

Finally, let me say, if you read the Declaration of Independence and its commitment to build a more perfect Union, it is easier to understand why the Constitution was constructed as it was. For the Founders, though in many ways ordinary people, were inordinately wise in the ways of social change and the frailties of human nature. And they knew that the Union

would never be perfect but could always be made more perfect.

They knew that we would never fully realize the ideals of the Constitution and the Declaration or the Bill of Rights but that we could always deepen the meaning of freedom, widen the circle of opportunity, and strengthen the bonds of our community. That is what these young immigrants represent today, our future and our steadfast belief that we grow stronger with our diversity in a global world, as long as we reaffirm our common humanity and our common fidelity to the freedom and values of the Constitution.

Now, my fellow Americans, about 4 months from now I will change jobs, and I will be restored to a title that Harry Truman once said was the most important title any American could have, that of citizen. No American citizen in this Republic's history has been more fortunate or more blessed. I hope for the rest of my life I can do a good job with that title. I hope all these young, new citizens behind me will realize that President Truman was right. As important as our Presidents are, as important as our Congresses are, as important as our judges are and our Governors and our mayors, our philanthropists, our artists, our athletes, this country is great because there are good people who get up every day and do their very best to live their dreams and make the most of their own lives and because this country has a system

enshrined in the Constitution that gives them the maximum opportunity to do just that.

You should be very proud of what you are doing here today to make sure everyone knows why America is a special place and being an American is a great gift. I thank you for that. [Applause]

Now, we're just about done, but I'm going to ask one of our citizens, Susan Yuh, who was born in South Korea, to join me in signing, as everyone else has already done, this steel beam to my right, that will be the founding pillar of a building devoted to our Constitution. I think it's quite fitting that the beam should have the signature of a President, and even more fitting that it should have the signature of a new citizen on her first day as an American.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:17 p.m. on Independence Mall. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor John F. Street and former Mayor Edward G. Rendell of Philadelphia; John C. Bogle, chairman, and Joseph M. Torsella, president and chief executive officer, National Constitution Center; James T. Giles, Chief Judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; Edward R. Becker III, Chief Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit; Marie Rust, Regional Director, Northeast Region, National Park Service; Judith Rodin, president, University of Pennsylvania; and Walter H. Annenberg and his wife, Lee, founders, Annenberg Foundation.

Remarks at a State Dinner for Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India

September 17, 2000

And Mr. Prime Minister, on behalf of the American people, let me welcome you again to the White House, along with all your party from India.

I hope that in your time with us, we have at least come close to repaying the warm hospitality with which you and the Indian people greeted me, my family, and our fellow Americans on my visit in March.

One of the most remarkable things to me about our relationship is its scope and its increasing interdependence. There are hundreds of American businesses, foundations, and univer-

sities with long commitments to India. When Americans call Microsoft for customer support today, they're as likely to be talking to someone in Bangalore or Hyderabad as to someone in Seattle.

There are more than one million Indians here in America now, and I think more than half of them are here tonight. [Laughter] And I might say, Prime Minister, the other half are disappointed that they're not here. [Laughter]

Indian-Americans now run more than 750 companies in Silicon Valley alone. In India, the best information available on maternal health

and agriculture can now be downloaded by a growing number of villages with Internet hook-ups. And Indian-Americans can now get on-line with people across the world who speak Telugu or Gujarati or Bengali.

Americans have fallen in love with Indian novels. I'm told that Prime Minister Vajpayee, when he's not writing Hindi poetry, actually likes to read John Grisham. [Laughter] You might be interested to note, Prime Minister, that he's a distant relative of mine. All the Grishams with money are distant relatives of mine. [Laughter]

And don't forget, whether we're in California or Calcutta, we all want to be a *crorepati*. Now, for the culturally challenged Americans among us, that's from India's version of "Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?" [Laughter]

Of course, our interdependence is about more than commerce and culture. We are also vulnerable to one another's problems, to the shock of economic turmoil, to the plague of infectious diseases, to the spread of deadly military technology, and as we have all too painfully seen, to the terrorists, drug traffickers, and criminals who take advantage of the openness of societies and borders.

The simple lesson of all this to me, Mr. Prime Minister, is that if we're already all in the same boat together, we had better find a way to steer together. We must overcome the fear some people in both our countries sometimes have, for

different historical reasons, that if we meet our friends halfway, somehow it will threaten our own independence or uniqueness.

That is why I am so gratified that, with your leadership and the efforts of so many people in this room, we have together built the strongest, most mature partnership India and America have ever known.

We have so very much more to learn from each other. In both our societies, you can find virtually every challenge humanity knows. And in both our societies, you can find virtually every solution to those challenges: confidence in democracy, tolerance for diversity, a willingness to embrace economic and social change.

So it is more than a slogan for Americans to say that India's success will be our success and that together India and America can change the world.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you now to join me in a toast to Prime Minister Vajpayee, to the Government and people of India, and the enduring partnership between our two great democracies.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:03 p.m. in a pavilion at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee.

Statement on an Initiative for the Reintegration into Society of Ex-Offenders

September 18, 2000

Working together, we have made great strides in reducing crime across the country. The overall crime rate is at its lowest point in 25 years, and America is the safest it has been in a generation. But I believe we can make America even safer for our families. We must continue to confront emerging public safety challenges if we want to keep reducing crime in the 21st century.

One of the key challenges we must address is ex-offenders returning to their families and communities after their release from prison. While the Nation's prison population growth rate has slowed to its lowest level in two dec-

ades, more than 1.9 million individuals were incarcerated in State and Federal prisons and local jails in 1999. As a result, an unprecedented number of individuals will be released from prison in the coming years—nearly 600,000 in the next year alone. Moreover, this population poses a serious public safety risk. Studies show that nearly two-thirds of all released offenders will be arrested again within 3 years.

That is why I have proposed a new public safety initiative aimed at providing greater supervision for offenders reentering the community. My fiscal year 2001 budget includes a total

of \$145 million for innovative “reentry” programs to promote responsibility and help keep ex-offenders on track and crime- and drug-free. Through this reentry initiative, the Departments of Justice, Labor, and Health and Human Services will target resources in high-impact communities for increased law enforcement, drug testing, and treatment, and critical employment, training, and other services to help young ex-offenders work and meet their family responsibilities, including child support. The initiative would fund reentry partnerships between police, correctional agencies, local service providers, and key community organizations like faith-based fatherhood, and victims’ groups. Additionally, the initiative would fund reentry courts, based on the drug court model, to provide critical supervision and services for offenders.

Today the administration is taking some important steps to move us forward in this area. The Justice Department is announcing over \$57

million in Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) grants to all 50 States to provide substance abuse treatment to offenders in State and local correctional facilities. The Department of Health and Human Services is also releasing child support demonstration grants, including a model approach to improve child support and promote responsible fatherhood among incarcerated fathers in Massachusetts. In addition, the Attorney General and other members of my administration are hosting a roundtable discussion with State and local leaders to spotlight an innovative reentry partnership already underway in the Druid Heights neighborhood in Baltimore, Maryland. Congress could significantly expand and help launch similar efforts across the country by fully funding our reentry initiative. I urge them to do this without delay. If we all do our part, we can build on our progress and strengthen America’s communities and families.

Remarks on Signing Legislation on Long-Term-Care Insurance for Federal Employees and Retirees and Members of the Armed Forces

September 19, 2000

I should say Joan is, first of all, an amazing person. And her husband and her three children are here. Their son and daughter thanked me for getting them out of school today. *[Laughter]* I just want the Members of Congress to know there are extended social benefits to these sort of—*[laughter]*.

I want to thank Senators Cleland, Mikulski, and Sarbanes for being here, and Representatives Scarborough, Allen, Davis, Morella, Holmes Norton, Cardin, Moran, and Cummings for coming. All of these Representatives in Congress—I think that’s 11—and many more are truly responsible for this happy day, and they worked in a genuine bipartisan spirit to produce this legislation.

I want to thank Janice Lachance and the others at the Office of Personnel Management who worked so hard on it, and the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, the Retired Officers Association, the Treasury employees union, and others.

I’m very honored to be signing this legislation today, so near the end of my service, because

the first bill I signed as President was the family and medical leave law. And since then, some—more than 25 million of our fellow citizens have taken time off from work to care for a child or an ill loved one without losing their job. It’s made a difference in America. Everywhere I go, somebody comes up and mentions it to me even today.

We come in the same spirit to sign the Long-Term Care Security Act, and over time, this legislation will help more and more families to meet the challenge of caring for our parents and grandparents and others in our families that need long-term care.

Part of the long-term-care problem is what I affectionately call a high-class problem. We’re living longer. In 1900 the average American couldn’t expect to live beyond 50. Today, the average American’s life expectancy is 77. Americans who live to be 65 have the highest life expectancy in the world. They can expect to live to be almost 83. Amazing as it sounds, there are currently more than 65,000 living Americans who are at least 100 years old. That’s enough

to fill the Houston Astrodome and put two teams on the field. *[Laughter]* And if we do it right, before you know it, some of those 100-year-olds will be fit enough to play. *[Laughter]*

Now, these numbers are only going to keep rising as the baby boomers age. By 2030, one out of every five Americans will be 65 or older, and there will be 9 million people over 85. I hope to be one of them. *[Laughter]*

We all know there are many joys to aging, but unfortunately there are also the challenges to our good health, our independence, and sometimes a lifetime of savings. The cost of nursing home care now tops \$50,000 a year, an extraordinary sum few families can afford. Even home care is expensive, as you have just heard, in terms of direct costs, low income, and enormous challenges to family time and parent time.

The legislation I'm about to sign, the Long-Term Care Security Act, will help families plan ahead. It will enable current and former Federal employees, military personnel, and all their families to choose from a menu of quality, long-term-care insurance options and purchase their choice at reduced group rates. That means as many as 13 million people will now be able to plan for the future without fear of financial ruin should such care become necessary.

The legislation also will spur more American companies to offer employees the option of affordable high-quality long-term-care insurance. I believe that. I believe this will lead into the creation of a market that will benefit people far beyond the reach of the employees and former employees that are covered.

The insurance industry has called this legislation a model for private sector employers, and we thank them for their support, as well. We are also pleased that this groundbreaking legislation has, as it must have had to pass, enjoyed strong bipartisan backing; further proof that not only do Democrats and Republicans both get old, but when we put progress before partisanship, we can tackle our toughest challenges.

Today's signing represents an important step toward meeting the phenomenal demographic changes that we're facing in a humane and decent and, I believe, highly intelligent way. It helps to make sure that the aging of America will be, on balance, a great blessing and not an overwhelming burden to our children and our grandchildren.

Now, as I said, the Long-Term Care Security Act helps many families plan for the future, enabling them to buy good insurance. We believe it will help a lot of families beyond the reach of the law by creating markets which private sector employers will also be able to take advantage of for their employees. But we know there are millions of people already chronically ill, who can't buy insurance at any price and who do need help right now. That's why I'm so glad that Joan and her family joined us here today.

In homes all across America, 7 million of our fellow citizens are like the Madaras. Seven million are caring for loved ones, primarily elderly loved ones, sometimes children or other close family members who have disabilities. For some, it is a joy, a chance to share memories over a cup of coffee, a chance to share the rhythm and cycles of life. But for others it also includes constant labor or watching the shroud of Alzheimer's transform a soul mate into a stranger, as happened to an uncle and an aunt of mine. These are burdens that people shoulder every day and, as you heard, unapologetically, proudly, loyal to their families, understanding that loving someone for a lifetime means taking the bad along with the good.

But the rest of us ought to lighten their load. And we ought to recognize that these simple, extraordinary sacrifices, rooted in love and loyalty, are also an exceptional boon to society. For whatever their cost to these families, the cost to society is far less than it would be if they had to give up and put their loved ones in institutionalized care.

So if we were to pass our \$3,000 tax credit to provide chronically ill Americans and their families with desperately needed financial relief, it would be, over the long run, less expensive than paying the full cost of institutional care for those who have to give up because the burden becomes too heavy. This \$27 billion initiative eventually could cover up to 60 percent of the cost the families provide—incur—in providing long-term care. But as I said, it's only a small percentage of the cost that would be involved if the families had to give up providing that care.

It's the kind of tax cut our families most need. It will improve the lives of those who need it the most. It will make us a better country because we will fully live up to our professed faith and support for families.

After 5 years of waiting, I hope we can also finally reauthorize the Older Americans Act. It has helped, for more than 35 years, millions of seniors to lead more independent lives by funding vital, everyday basics like transportation and Meals on Wheels. And I hope we will reauthorize it and strengthen it by funding our caregivers initiative, as well, to provide families with the information, counseling, and support services they need to sustain their selfless missions.

Finally, I hope that we will succeed in passing a voluntary affordable Medicare drug benefit this fall, which also will be a great help to families. Many of the people providing long-term care are doing it for people with extraordinary medicine requirements. Studies show that seniors who lack this kind of coverage are twice as likely to be admitted to nursing homes as those who have it. So again, this is not only the humane and decent thing to do, it's also common sense. It's good for family ties and good for economics.

We have a golden opportunity, as so many of our fellow citizens move into their golden years, to meet the challenges of the aging of America. We have never had a better oppor-

tunity to do it, because of our prosperity and our surplus. So I hope that we will continue to build on the spirit embodied in this bill today.

The Long-Term Care Security Act is worth celebrating. It is worth celebrating for what it does, for the indirect benefits it will have for people who are not covered by it but whose employers will be able to get this kind of group insurance, and for what it says about our values and what we can do in the future. I hope that we'll take every opportunity to build on it.

And now I'd like to ask all the folks on the stage with me to gather round, and I'll sign the bill.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Joan Madarases, mother of three and caregiver for disabled family members, who introduced the President. H.R. 4040, approved September 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106-265. The Long-Term Care Security Act is Title I of Public Law No. 106-265.

Statement on Signing Legislation on Long-Term-Care Insurance for Federal Employees and Retirees and Members of the Armed Forces *September 19, 2000*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4040, the "Long-Term Care Security Act." It includes two titles—the "Long-Term Care Security Act" and the "Federal Erroneous Retirement Coverage Corrections Act." This bill authorizes the creation of a new program of group long-term care insurance for Federal employees and annuitants, active and retired members of the uniformed services, employees and annuitants of the U.S. Postal Service and the Tennessee Valley Authority, and relatives of these individuals. It also provides for a more equitable way to correct certain retirement coverage errors affecting thousands of Federal employees and their families.

Addressing the needs of an aging society has been one of my highest priorities. The retirement of the baby boom generation will have profound effects not only on Medicare and So-

cial Security but on long-term care. Millions more seniors will need care from home and community-based providers, nursing homes, and families. Yet, today's system is a patchwork that often does not serve the needs of people with chronic illnesses. To address this, I announced a multi-pronged long-term care initiative in early 1999. It tackles the complex problem of long-term care through: (1) creating a \$3,000 tax credit to help people with long-term care needs or the families who care for them; (2) providing funding for services that support family caregivers of older persons; (3) improving equity in Medicaid eligibility for people in home- and community-based settings; (4) encouraging partnerships between low-income housing for the elderly and Medicaid; and (5) encouraging the purchase of quality private long-term care insurance by Federal employees. H.R. 4040, which

is bipartisan, consensus legislation, implements the portion of the initiative concerning long-term care insurance for Federal employees.

It will improve the availability and quality of private long-term care insurance by allowing, for the first time, families of Federal employees to access a high-quality, affordable long-term care insurance option through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The OPM will contract for benefits with one or more private contractors, enabling the agency to obtain the best value for the entire Federal family. The OPM will ensure that policies have important consumer protections that are generally not available in individual insurance policies, such as full portability, and that enrollees will have the option to purchase policies that include inflation and non-forfeiture protections. By using the size of the Federal workforce family—about 13 million people—as leverage, the Federal Government will be able to provide long-term care insurance at group rates expected to be 15 to 20 percent lower than individual rates. Coverage will be provided for a range of services, including personal care, home health care, adult day care, and nursing home care.

Our hope is that, by making high-quality private long-term care coverage available to the Federal family at negotiated group rates, we will continue to serve as a model to other employers across the Nation. This policy is also the most responsible next step in promoting private long-term care insurance. Building on the financial incentives I signed into law in 1996, this policy will increase both the number of people with long-term care coverage and the quality of such coverage—increasing confidence in this growing market as people start planning for their own future long-term care needs.

The bill also provides a comprehensive solution to the problems faced by many Federal employees and their families who, through no fault of their own, are affected by retirement coverage errors. Unlike current law, which directs how coverage errors will be corrected, it permits those placed in the wrong retirement coverage to choose the coverage that best serves

their needs and preferences. This new authority to correct erroneous retirement enrollments and the new long-term care insurance program will greatly enhance the quality of life for Federal employees and members of the Armed Forces. I applaud the bipartisan congressional coalition and OPM Director Lachance for their yeoman efforts in developing and passing this important bill.

In approving H.R. 4040, I note that section 1002 of the bill (new section 9003(d)(3) of title 5, U.S. Code) provides that “the President (or his designee) shall submit to [specified congressional committees] a written recommendation as to whether the program . . . should be continued without modification, terminated, or restructured.” The Recommendations Clause of the Constitution provides that the President “shall from time to time . . . recommend to [Congress] . . . such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.” That Clause protects the President’s authority to formulate and present his own recommendations, which includes the power to decline to offer any recommendation. Accordingly, to avoid any infringement on the President’s constitutionally protected policy-making prerogatives, I shall construe this provision not to extend to the submission of recommendations that the President finds it unnecessary or inexpedient to present.

It gives me great pleasure to sign H.R. 4040 into law. I welcome the opportunity to offer Federal employees, members of the Armed Forces, and their families, this additional option to care for their aging parents, and let their children care for them with dignity and financial security. I look forward to working with the Congress to pass the other critical elements of my plan to improve long-term care for all Americans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 19, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4040, approved September 19, was assigned Public Law No. 106–265.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Gubernatorial Candidate Heidi Heitkamp September 19, 2000

Thank you. You know, I have a lot of interest in this race. Heidi was attorney general; I was attorney general. And I was Governor for a dozen years. It's a wonderful job. It really matters whether we have a few more Democratic Governors. This year more than ever, I think women should be elected to public office. [Laughter] But the main thing I want to say is, you've got Dorgan, Conrad, and Pomeroy. And you all know how strong I've been for diversity. I just want anyone who doesn't look like a spy during the cold war—[laughter]—representing North Dakota. [Laughter]

I'm convinced that sometime years ago when the Republicans were winning all the races, these brilliant guys made a pact and said, "Listen, guys, if we all have short hair, if we're thin, if we wear glasses, we ain't going to scare nobody, and we can do whatever we want to do." [Laughter] And look, what can I say? It worked. I never carried North Dakota. [Laughter] It was great, but I think they're really stepping out here. [Laughter] I mean, they're really stepping out.

Now, I'll be brief and serious. The two things should always go together. One of the greatest things about this country is its genuine diversity, going beyond even race and religion and all the other things we talk about in Washington, to the way people make a living off the land, the way they organize themselves in their communities, the difference in what it's like to live in a place like North Dakota where Heidi can invite you all to come and mean it, and it's so big we could all be missed if we showed up, and a place where nobody's got any elbow room.

And the genius of our system is that if we all do our part, the country works better. Central to that is what happens in all these States. And North Dakota, too, is growing more diverse and more faced with the challenges of the 21st century. And I can just tell you I have an enormous amount of respect for Heidi Heitkamp, and I know how important it is that we have good Governors.

I'll give you just one example. I could give you 20, but after she scared me by saying I talked an hour and a half in North Dakota,

I'm not going to do that. [Laughter] I started to bring a cup of coffee up here, too, and I couldn't. [Laughter] But anyway, I'll give you one example. We passed in the balanced budget bill in 1997, with a bipartisan vote in both Houses, big majorities, the largest expansion in federally funded health care for children since Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program. And we knew that the number and circumstances of the children were different from State to State. So we reached a bipartisan agreement that instead of just expanding Medicaid, we would allow the States to build and design these programs and enroll the children.

Now, there's enough money in that program to enroll 5 million kids. And if the program really identified all the people who were eligible, it would also pick up another 2 million or 3 million kids who could be served by Medicaid. There is a drastic difference in how well the different States have done in identifying and enrolling their children. It matters who the Governor is in a State.

I'll give you another example. Under the leadership of Secretary Riley over the last 7 years, we have cut Federal regulations on States and local school districts by two-thirds, but we have increased the focus of Federal spending on certain standards, so that for example, all the schools—all the States that get Federal funds have to have some standards, have to identify failing schools, and have to have strategies to try to turn them around. As some of you know, I've tried to get Federal funding tied a little tighter, to say you've got to turn them around, shut them down, or give the kids some other alternative. But already, we have required them to identify failing schools.

Now, some States have said, "So what?" Some school districts have said, "So what?" But I was in an elementary school in western Kentucky the other day that was one of their failing schools 3 years ago that's now one of the 20 best schools in the State. Lots of poor kids, lots of problems—it worked.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day, to take a totally different culture, that 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading and doing math below grade level, elementary

school. Today, 76 percent are reading and doing math at or above grade level—in 2 years.

Now, if you do it on a—one of the biggest problems with education reform is that no one has ever done it systematically. Every problem in American education has been solved by somebody somewhere. Places like North Dakota have generally done very well because they have time and space enough to give everybody the personal attention they needed. But they will have a lot of these challenges, too. And I'm telling you, it really matters who is Governor. No one has ever succeeded in systematically doing what teachers and principals do every day in the most difficult circumstances, creating miracles all over this country. It's never been done in any State in a systematic way, but some have done much better than others. It matters who the Governor is.

And those are only two examples. It matters economically. It matters in terms of the social services. It matters in terms of how the elderly are treated, and especially those that get nursing home care. And what about the people who are going to be living in boarding homes, and

what about the people that are going to be—you're going to see the most unbelievable explosion of living options for elderly and disabled people, as we are able to keep more disabled people alive and functioning and doing well, and more elderly people live longer, that you can imagine.

And a lot of it—I don't care what we do at the national level and who's the President and what the Congress does; it will matter who the Governor is. I just—the first time I ever met her, I thought she was great. I wanted to take her home to meet Hillary and keep her there for a couple weeks. And she had other obligations. [Laughter] She is an extraordinary woman. You did a good thing coming here and giving her money today. And if we all keep doing it, I think she'll win in November.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. in the Crystal Ballroom at the St. Regis Hotel. State Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp was a candidate for Governor of North Dakota.

Remarks on Senate Action on Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China and an Exchange With Reporters

September 19, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. Today the Senate voted to pave the way for permanent normal trade relations between the United States and China. This landmark agreement will extend economic prosperity at home and promote economic freedom in China, increasing the prospects for openness in China and a more peaceful future for all of us.

When we open markets abroad to U.S. goods, we open opportunities at home. This vote will do that. In return for normal trade relations—the same terms of trade we offer now to more than 130 other countries—China will open its markets to American products from wheat to cars to consulting services. And we will be far more able to sell goods in China without moving our factories there.

But there is much more at stake here than our economic self-interests. It's about building a world in which more human beings have more

freedom, more control over their lives, more contact with others than ever before, a world in which countries are tied more closely together, and the prospects for peace are strengthened.

Trade alone won't create this kind of world, but bringing China under global rules of trade is a step in the right direction. The more China opens its markets to our products, the wider it opens its doors to economic freedom and the more fully it will liberate the potential of its people.

When China finishes its negotiations and joins the WTO, our high-tech companies will help to speed the information revolution there. Outside competition will speed the demise of China's huge state industries and spur the enterprise of private sector involvement.

They will diminish the role of government in people's daily lives. It will strengthen those

within China who fight for higher labor standards, a cleaner environment, for human rights, and the rule of law.

And we will find, I believe, that America has more influence in China with an outstretched hand than with a clenched fist. Of course, none of us should think for a moment that any of these outcomes are guaranteed. The advance of freedom ultimately will depend upon what people in China are willing to do to continue standing up for change. We will continue to help support them.

Peace and security in Asia will depend upon our military presence, our alliances, on stopping the spread of deadly weapons. So we will continue to be a force for peace, and we will not rest in our efforts to make sure that freer trade also is fairer trade.

These are some of the most important issues that our Nation faces. That's why this vote was so important and, for many, so difficult. I want to thank Senator Lott and Senator Daschle, Senator Roth, Senator Moynihan, and Senator Baucus, as well as those who led our effort in the House, and everyone within this administration who worked so hard to achieve this important milestone.

But I also want to acknowledge those who raised important questions about this policy and say to you, this is not the end of the story; it is the beginning. We have a chance, not a certainty but a chance, to strengthen our prosperity and our security and to see China become a more open society. Now our test as a nation is whether we can achieve that. I hope, and I strongly believe, that we will.

Thank you very much.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, what's your understanding of what's going on in the Middle East? Prime Minister Barak announced a suspension of talks. Now, he says he'll resume tomorrow. What's going on there, sir?

The President. They're down to the difficult issues, and they're both feeling the pressure of these hard issues and the press of time. I don't think it's more complicated than that, and I think you should expect, from time to time, both sides to express some exasperation. And as long as they get back to the work, you should feel positive about it.

Q. Are you, sir, exasperated by the process itself?

The President. No. I always thought it was going to be hard. And they're down to the difficult—there are no easy decisions now, so we've just got to keep working at it and try to finish.

Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China

Q. Now that they have the trade bill, sir, what incentive will China have to listen to our concerns about human rights and weapons proliferation?

The President. Well, first of all, on the proliferation front, let me point out that we've made a lot of progress. China signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. And they work with us to stop transfers that we thought were destructive on more than one occasion.

Are there still problems? Yes, there are. I think that the incentive they will have is that more and more countries will want to become more and more involved with them as long as they feel that they're becoming more responsible members of the international community. And also, they'll have other ways to earn money over the long run that are responsible, legal, and actually socially beneficial. And I also believe that they have shown in other ways that they would like to be partners in the international system and assume a leadership role that is constructive. All of this will be possible if there is a common course on nonproliferation. Furthermore, I think that all big countries will come to see that their own personal interests are more advanced by nonproliferation than by having various entities within the country make a quick buck through proliferation. It's not good politics, and it's certainly not good for national security.

Downed Cuban Aircraft

Q. Mr. President, have you followed the situation of this downed aircraft just off of Cuba, and what can you tell us about that situation, sir?

The President. I don't know that I can say any more than I have seen on the breaking news. I have clearly—I've been briefed, and we know about what's been on the news reports. Let me say this. I can imagine that there will be a lot of questions about what should be done about the people that are found alive. I think the most important thing now is just to worry about their care: How badly are they hurt; what

kind of medical care do they need; how quickly can we get it to them? To me, that's the overwhelming question, and I think other facts will emerge as the day goes on, and we'll probably know a lot more about it tomorrow.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Q. How close are you, sir, to making a decision on tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and what sort of time constraints do you have to work with, given the fact that winter's coming?

The President. Well, first I want to—I really do want to see what is the considered market judgment about the recent OPEC move, and I don't think we've seen it yet. It's been sort of complicated by speculations about Iraq, about speculations about what the refinery capacity is, and some uncertainty, still, about how much oil is on the seas now based on production.

So I'm studying this very closely. I've talked to a lot of people about it; I will continue to do that. But we have some time before it will be too late to affect the supplies and availability of all the products we'll need as the cold weather sets in. I just think we need a few more days to see what the real market impact of the OPEC decision is. And as all of you know—you've read all the stories and analyses about what the decision might or might not mean, and I just want to see what the lay of the land is, and then I'll make the best judgment I can.

Q. Would mid-October be too late?

Independent Counsel's Report

Q. Mr. President, there's word that Independent Counsel Ray will release a statement tomorrow about his findings on Whitewater, including the role of your wife. Six weeks away from the election, do you question the timing?

The President. Well, you know, even Mr. Starr said almost 2 years ago that there was nothing to any of that stuff that's just been coming out now, a year and a half later. So I think people are capable of drawing their own conclusions about that. I don't think I can serve much of the public interest by commenting on it. I think it's pretty obvious.

We had a report from a truly independent source in 1996, saying that nothing wrong was done and that Hillary's billing records fully supported her account—1996. So nothing has changed in this thing in the last few years, and I think people will just be able to draw their own conclusions.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and former Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. A reporter referred to Independent Counsel Robert W. Ray.

Statement on Legislation To Establish a National Drunk Driving Standard September 19, 2000

A new study released today by Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater underscores the need for Congress to act swiftly to strengthen protections against drunk driving.

The study by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Transportation Safety Administration makes clear that crucial driving skills are seriously impaired when an individual's blood alcohol content (BAC) reaches .08. Simply put, this study lends further proof that at .08, a person is too impaired to safely get behind the wheel. To help stem drunk driving and other safety hazards, the Department is releasing nearly \$44 million in highway safety

grants to 38 States and the District of Columbia. These grants will provide important incentives for States to save lives through tough programs and penalties to reduce drunk driving and increase seat belt use.

But we must do more to make our streets and highways safer. In the Transportation Appropriations conference report, Congress has the opportunity right now to save an estimated 500 lives a year by setting a nationwide standard of .08 BAC. The Senate courageously passed this lifesaving measure in June, thanks to the leadership of Senators Lautenberg and Shelby. I urge the Congress to send me a final bill

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that helps make .08 BAC the law of the land without further delay.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Telecommunications Payments to Cuba *September 19, 2000*

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104–114, 110 Stat. 785, I transmit herewith a semi-annual report detailing payments made to Cuba

as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 19, 2000.

Remarks at the Debut of “Speak Truth to Power: Voices From Beyond the Darkness” *September 19, 2000*

Thank you very much. President Arias, first let me thank you for your presence here tonight and your remarkable leadership.

And Kerry, I want to join this great throng in telling you how grateful we are that you have undertaken this project with such passion and commitment. I know that in spite of the fact that half the seats tonight are filled by your family—[laughter]—there are a lot of people here who feel just as strongly about you as Andrew and Ethel and your mother-in-law, Matilda, and Senator Kennedy and the others who are here. You are an astonishing person, and we thank you for amplifying the voices of the human rights defenders who have honored us by their presence here tonight.

These men and women have carried on against unimaginable obstacles, knowing the truth once spoken can never be completely erased, that hope, once sparked, can never be fully extinguished. They have seen injustice aided by apathy. In spite of all the nice things you said about me tonight, a full half dozen of them were prodding me along tonight before I came out here to do even better, and I like that a lot. They have carried on knowing that even a single act of courage can be contagious,

and their courage and that of so many others around the world, has indeed proved contagious.

More people live in freedom today than at any time in human history, and in 1999 more people around the world won the right to vote and choose their leaders than was in even the case in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell. From Bosnia to Croatia to Kosovo, we are no longer struggling to stop crimes against humanity but, instead, working steadily to bring perpetrators to justice and to create the conditions of humane living. From South Africa to Chile, people are confronting the injustices of the past so that their children will not have to relive them. And all over the world, people finally are recognizing, as Hillary said in Beijing, that women’s rights are human rights.

Yet for all the brave work that is captured in this magnificent book and that will be honored tonight, freedom’s struggle is far from over. And I think it is appropriate tonight that we all ask ourselves at this magic moment of prosperity and peace for our country, what are our responsibilities to advance the struggle? How can we use this global age to serve human rights, not to undermine them?

Globalization is not just about economics. It has given us a global human rights movement, as well. Whether activists are fighting for press freedom in Ivory Coast or the rights of children in America, they can talk to each other, learn from each other, and know they are not alone. Indeed, maybe the most important lesson of this evening is to say to all of them, whom we honor, you are not alone.

Global economic integration can, if done right, make it harder for governments to control people's lives in the wrong way. Information technology can be one of the most liberating forces humanity has ever known.

Twenty years ago it was a great victory if we could smuggle a handful of mimeograph machines to dissidents in Poland or Russia. When I went to the Soviet Union 30 years ago, young people would come up to me on the street and try to figure out if there was some way I could smuggle a book back in to them. Now, hardly a government on Earth, in spite of all their best efforts, can stop their much more technologically wise young people from using the Internet to get knowledge from halfway around the world.

But for freedom to prevail, we need to do more than open markets, hook up the world to CNN, and hope dictators are driven out by dot-coms. Real change still depends upon real people, on brave men and women willing to fight for good causes when the chance of success is low and the danger of persecution is great—men and women like those we honor tonight. Globalization on the whole, I think, will prove to be a very good thing, but it is not a human rights policy. To advance freedom and justice, we have to support and defend their champions.

Today, the defenders of human rights need our support in Serbia, where the democratic opposition is stronger than ever, heading into critical elections this weekend. Mr. Milosevic has stepped up his repression. Surely, he is capable of stealing the election. But if he does, we must make sure, all of us, not just the Americans and certainly not just the American Government, that he loses what legitimacy he has left in the world, and the forces of change will grow even stronger. We must keep going until the people of Serbia can live normal lives and their country can come back home to Europe.

The defenders of human rights need our support in Burma, as well. Their only weapons are

words, reason, and the brave example of Aung San Suu Kyi. But these are fearful weapons to the ruling regime. So last week they confined her again, hoping the world would not hear or speak out. But voices were raised, and her struggle continues.

Those who rule Burma should know, from this place tonight, with all these people we honor, all of us will watch carefully what happens, and you can only regain your place in the world when you regain the trust of your people and respect their chosen leaders.

In these and so many other places, those who fight for human rights deserve our support and our absolute conviction that their efforts will not be in vain. All human rights defenders are told in the beginning they are naive; they are not making a difference; they are wasting their time. Some have even been cruelly told they are advancing some sort of Western cultural notions of freedom that have no place in their country. They are all laughed at, until one day their causes triumph and everyone calls them heroes.

The same has been said of almost every human rights policy our Nation has pursued in the past. Kerry talked about East Timor. A few years ago, how many people would have predicted it could become independent? A dozen years ago, how many people believed the Baltic States would be free? But all those people who came out for Captive Nations Week, year-in and year-out, and were literally ridiculed in the sixties and seventies, would be right, and all the hard-headed realists would be wrong.

The men and women we honor never gave in to repression, fatigue, to cynicism, or to realism which justifies the unacceptable. And neither should America.

Hina Jilani, who has worked for women and human rights in Pakistan and is with us tonight, said, "I never have a sense of futility because what we do is worth doing." If you believe that every person matters, that every person has a story and a voice that deserves to be heard, then you must believe that what all human rights defenders do everywhere is worth doing.

Let us never develop a sense of futility, for the people we honor tonight have proved the wisdom of Martin Luther King's timeless adage, that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:28 p.m. in the Eisenhower Theater at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts. In his remarks, he referred to former President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica, founder, Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress; Kerry Kennedy Cuomo, author on whose work the play was based, her mother-

in-law, Matilda Cuomo, husband, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew M. Cuomo, and mother, Ethel Kennedy; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Aung San Suu Kyi, 1999 Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

Remarks to the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts *September 19, 2000*

Well, first of all, let me say thank you for the welcome. I thank the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus who are here and other Members of Congress and the people from our administration who are here. I want to thank Jimmy Smits and Felix Sanchez. And I want to congratulate your honorees, Sara Martinez Tucker and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, for 25 years of service. I want to say a special word of appreciation to all the Latinos who have been part of our administration, including Maria Echaveste, Mickey Ibarra, Brian Barretto, Aida Alvarez, Bill Richardson, and all the others.

Let me say, I'm sorry I'm not in proper attire tonight. *[Laughter]* But Jimmy Smits called me this afternoon, and I only had two other things I was supposed to do, and so he said I had to show. *[Laughter]* And I want you to know I am here in spite of the fact that Jimmy Smits called me. *[Laughter]* And I'll tell you why. If I have to hear Hillary say one more time, "That is the best looking man I have ever seen," I think I will die.

So, right before I was here, I went over to the Kennedy Center. And there's a magnificent event at the Kennedy Center that Kerry Kennedy Cuomo is having about her book on human rights activists, and artists from all over our country and human rights heroes from all over the world are over there tonight. And so, I went from there to a book party for my friend Paul Begala. And I'm on my way over here, and everybody wanted to know where I was going. And this NBC television reporter said, "Jimmy Smits, that's the best looking man I ever saw in my life." *[Laughter]*

So, I said, "Well, what can I tell you? I've been to war for 8 years now, and I don't look

very good anymore." *[Laughter]* He will never forgive me for embarrassing him like that. *[Laughter]*

I want to say something seriously. Felix, I appreciate what you have done so much with this foundation. And I want to say, I made fun of Jimmy Smits tonight, but I want you to know that becoming a friend of his has been one of the real joys of being President. He has been so kind to my wife and to me, to our family. He's been to the White House many times, and he's always been there for a good cause. And I hope you'll forgive me for pulling your leg tonight, Jimmy, but I'll never forget you for being our friend. Thank you very much.

I want to thank the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts for giving young people a chance. From the silver screen to the Broadway stage, kids with talent and dreams need a chance. That's what we've tried to do for 8 years now for all America's children. And the Vice President and I owe those of you who have done so much to help us do that a profound debt of gratitude, and I thank you.

Tonight I came mostly just to do that, just to say thank you, for all you do for the arts, for all you do for the Hispanic community, and for all you've done to help America move forward in the last 8 years. We now have the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate we've ever recorded, the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in a generation, a million new homeowners in the last 6 years. The earned-income tax credit has been doubled, and it's lifted over a million Hispanics out of poverty. The minimum wage helped 1.6 million Hispanic workers, and it's time to raise it again and help more.

The Hispanic Education Action Plan to encourage Hispanic youth to stay in school and

go to college, along with our scholarship initiatives and other things, have contributed to the fact that the college-going rate among Hispanic young people is up over 50 percent in the last 7 years. And—listen to this—a report which was issued last week said there has been a 500 percent increase in the number of Hispanic students taking advanced placement courses in high school to prepare for college.

Under the Vice President's leadership, we've reduced the naturalization backlog at INS. And under Aida Alvarez's leadership, loans to Hispanic entrepreneurs by the SBA have increased by 250 percent.

We have all been enriched by your work. And I know that because of your work, we'll have more great singers, more great writers, more great actors and actresses. I know we've got a long way to go, too, because still Latino characters are only about 3 percent of those that appear on prime-time television. I just left Rita Moreno, and I told her that I enjoyed watching her as a nun on her television series. [Laughter] And we were laughing about it. And I think that you will see, if you keep working, though, more and more of our movies and our television shows and our Broadway shows reflecting the rich diversity of America.

And that's the last point I want to make. I have said on many occasions, and I'll just say one more time tonight, that if I could have only one wish for America, believe it or not, it would not be for a continued unbroken economic prosperity. It would be that somehow we would find the wisdom to live together as brothers and sisters, to truly be one America across all the lines that divide us.

And to—just sort of a little picture of how fast America has changed; you may see the advertisements today for—they're on television now—for Denzel Washington's new movie about the integration of T.C. Williams High School over in Alexandria, Virginia, and its football team, which occurred—what—almost 40 years ago, not such a long time ago once you've reached my age, anyway. [Laughter] Now, a little over three decades later, that high school is in a school district which has students from over 180 different racial and ethnic groups, parents speaking over 100 different native languages. It's the most diverse school district in America.

And I think it's sort of fitting that this movie, coming out in the new millennium, talks about

something that to most of these kids is ancient history, that we hope they'll never forget. But it's sobering to look at the profile of them and realize that they are both the great opportunity and the great challenge of the future: Can we figure out a way to give them all a world-class education, with all their diversity? Can we figure out a way to make sure that every single child, every family, every faith in America is profoundly proud of its roots, understands them, and yet believes deep in the core of being that our common humanity is even more important than our unique characteristics? These are very big questions.

Not so long ago, a number of you in this room came to the White House for a showing of "*Mi Familia*," the movie. Remember, you saw it; you were there. And so I was thinking about that tonight and feeling sort of nostalgic. And I think the central question that all of us have to ask ourselves, both within and beyond our borders now, is who is in our family anyway?

There is an astonishing new book out, been out a few months, by a man named Robert Wright, called "*Non Zero*," kind of a weird title unless you're familiar with game theory. But in game theory, a zero-sum game is one where, in order for one person to win, somebody has to lose. A non-zero-sum game is a game in which you can win, and the person you're playing with can win, as well. And the argument of the book is that, notwithstanding all the terrible things that happened in the 20th century—the abuses of science by the Nazis, the abuses of organization by the Communists, all the things that continue to be done in the name of religious or political purity—essentially, as societies grow more and more connected, and we become more interdependent, one with the other, we are forced to find more and more non-zero-sum solutions. That is, ways in which we can all win.

And that's basically the message I've been trying to preach for 8 years here, that everybody counts; everybody deserves a chance; we all do better when we help each other. We have to have an expanding idea of who is in our family. And we in the United States, because we're so blessed, have particular responsibilities to people not only within our borders who have been left behind but beyond our borders who otherwise will never catch up if we don't do our part, because we are all part of the same human family and because, actually, life is more

and more a non-zero-sum game, so that the better they do, the better we'll do.

Now, I believe, because of the history and culture, because of the pain and the promise of the Hispanic community in the United States, you are uniquely qualified to make sure America learns this lesson now.

And so that's the last thing I'd like to say from the heart. You have made being President this last 8 years a joy. It has been an honor for me to work with so many of you. If our country is better off because of anything I did, I am grateful. But all the best stuff is still out there if we can learn to preserve what is special about us and our clan, our tribe, and our faith,

and do it while affirming our common humanity. Do that for America, and the best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 p.m. at the Renaissance Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to actor Jimmy Smits; Felix Sanchez, president and founder, National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts; Sara Martinez Tucker, president and chief executive officer, National Hispanic Scholarship Fund; and actress Rita Moreno. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Church of God in Christ Bishops Convention

September 20, 2000

The President. Thank you. Well, if I had any sense at all, I would quit while I'm ahead. [Laughter] I know I'm not running for anything this year; otherwise, I would never agree to speak behind all those folks. [Laughter]. Bishop Owens and Bishop Smith and Bishop Brooks, Bishop Haynes. Let me say hello to Bishop Clark, the General Board of Bishops. I thank the choir. I was pretty transported during all that, weren't you?

Audience members. Yes, sir.

The President. If I could sing like that lady, I'd have been in a different line of work. [Laughter]

I want to say a special word of thanks to Bishop Walker, who has been my friend for so many years, and his colleague in Arkansas, Bishop Lindsey. I hope the Lord won't think it's sacrilegious, but in a figurative way, they helped raise me from the political dead 18 years ago. Otherwise, I wouldn't be here today. And I thank them for that.

I also want to say how grateful I am to those in our administration who have helped me to work with you—Ben Johnson, who is here. You mentioned Alvin Brown, representing the Vice President. He also represented all those empowerment zones, where we've created jobs for people who have been left out and left behind. The Vice President and I thank him for that.

And I, too, want to pay special privilege to the man, Bishop Owens, who was where you

are now when I started. Bishop Ford—I loved him. He was my friend, and I'm honored to see you, sir.

In Timothy, it is written that "if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Now, I thought I would come here and talk about that, because unlike me, you aren't term-limited—[laughter]—except, of course, in the sense that we are all term-limited.

And so as we pass through this fleeting life, I wanted most of all to thank you for your good work. I want to thank you for your friendship to me and to Hillary and to Chelsea, for sticking with our family through thick and thin, and for being a part of America's family as we have moved forward.

It seems hard to believe it's been almost 10 years since I spoke to about 20,000 members of the Church of God in Christ in Memphis at the convention. Then, Bishop Owens and I were reminiscing. I went back to Memphis, to the Mason Temple, in 1993, to speak where Dr. King delivered his last sermon. And as he pointed out, some people thought it was my best sermon as President. [Laughter] In 1996 I addressed the Women's Convention in New Orleans.

We've had a wonderful relationship, a friendship, a partnership. And much of what has been said today has been deeply personal, and for that I am grateful. But I think it's worth remembering that you do your jobs, and I have done

mine, not primarily for the personal but for the others, that we are supposed to be serving. And if we take a hit now and again along the way, that's just part of the cost of service.

And the Scripture says we should simply not grow weary; that in due season, we shall reap. I have to admit, there were times when I thought the winters were too long, and I thought we'd never get to the reaping part. [Laughter]

But we have. We have the longest economic expansion in our history, and we've all been a part of it. We have the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest violent crime in 27 years, the lowest African-American unemployment ever recorded, the lowest poverty rate among African-Americans ever recorded, the highest homeownership and business ownership among minorities in America ever recorded.

The teen birth rate is at the lowest level ever recorded. For the first time in history, African-American children graduate from high school at the same rate as the white majority. We saw a report just a few days ago saying that the last couple of years the percentage of African-American children taking advanced placement courses in high school—which means they're going to college; otherwise, there's no point in going through all that grief—has increased by 300 percent in just the last 3 years.

And I do think a little of the venom is draining out of our national life. You know, there are people that try to start up and get everybody mad, but it's not getting a lot of traction this year. I saw, just the other day, the Church Arson Task Force said that church arsons today were less than half what they were 4 years ago. Maybe the American people are coming home to their better natures. I think they are. I hope they are.

And I guess that's the most important thing I want to say. I'm grateful that we've been able to make this progress, and I'm grateful that you believe I kept my commitments to you. I certainly tried to. But after all, we are all just passing through. If you serve 4 years or 8 years as President, or 4 years or 40 years as Bishop, we're all just passing through. And we add our little bit to humanity's work, and then we go on.

Now, what I want you to think about now is, what have we done all this work together for in the last 8 years? What have we fought all these fights for in the last 8 years? What

do we intend to do with this great unusual moment of peace and prosperity?

When I came to you 10 years ago—I said this at the Congressional Black Caucus the other night, and I got a laugh, and I think some people thought I was being a bit irreverent, but I wasn't—I said, "You know, people took a chance on me in 1992. I can just imagine all those people going in the polling place and saying, 'Do I want to vote for this kid? He looks so young.' " I didn't have any gray hair then. [Laughter] " 'And his opponent refers to him as the Governor of a small southern State. I can't even find that place on the map. Should I do this?' " I just hear all those conversations. And I said, "Look, give me a break. It wasn't that big a chance because the country was in the ditch, and we needed a change, right?" We needed a change. [Laughter]

But now we're doing well, and we have a lot of self-confidence, and there are a few little storm clouds on the horizon at home and abroad. But people basically know that we're moving in the right direction, and we're doing it together. So now we have a decision to make in the absence of that kind of pressure we felt in '92.

Audience member. Al Gore.

The President. Yes, I'm getting to that. [Laughter]

But it's not that easy. Why? There's an African proverb which says, "Smooth seas do not make skillful sailors." Sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than bad times. Everybody in this room who's over 30 years old has made at least one big mistake in your life, not because times were so tough at the moment but because they were so good, you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Is that right? Isn't that right?

Audience member. You're right. You're right.

The President. If you live long enough, you'll make a mistake like that. Is that right?

Audience member. Preach, Mr. President!

The President. Okay, that's where we are now. That's where we are.

Now, here's what we could do with this good fortune. If we wanted to, over the next 10 years, we could get rid of child poverty—if we wanted to. We could give all our kids a world-class education. How do I know that? Well, I just told you some of the statistics.

The reason is, we now figured out what works: small classes, well-trained teachers, pre-school, after-school programs, high standards; you turn around failing schools or put them under new management. Let me just give—I was in Harlem the other day in a school, elementary school. Two years ago—2 years ago—80 percent of the children were doing reading and math below grade level. Two years later, today, 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math above grade level—at above grade level.

So we can do that. But it won't just happen because we have smooth seas. We'll have to decide. We could bring economic opportunity to the neighborhoods in the cities, the small rural towns, the Indian reservations, places that have been left behind.

We can take Medicare and Social Security out beyond the life of the baby boom generation so we don't bankrupt our kids and grandkids when we retire. We can give the seniors on Medicare a prescription drug benefit. We could have a tax cut that would continue to open the doors of college, that would help you pay if you're caring for an elderly or disabled loved one, long-term care, help you with child care.

We could have the right kind of tax cuts. We can do all that and still get this country out of debt over the next 10, 11 years, for the first time since 1835. We could do those things.

We can continue the initiatives—I hope we will—that our country has made reaching out to the world, to fight AIDS and TB and malaria. Those three things kill one in every four people who die every year in the world. We can continue to work to lift the burden of debt off the poorest countries in the world—in Africa and Latin America and in Asia—so we can have genuine partnerships with free people and help the rest of the world lift up.

You know, we're only 4 percent of the world's people, and we've got 21 percent of the world's wealth. So if we want to keep doing well, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out we've got to sell something to the other 96 percent, and therefore it's good for us if they do better. It is not only the morally right thing to do to lift up people who are trying to help themselves in Africa and Latin America and Asia, throughout the world, it also turns out to be good for us. So we can do these things, but we will have to decide.

Now, that's what the race for President is all about. That's what the race for all these Senate seats are all about. Of course, I have a particular interest in one of them. [Laughter] I told a group the other day, I said, "This is an interesting time for me. This is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. I've got 120 days, more or less, to be President. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. My title now should be the Cheerleader in Chief of America." [Laughter]

But I'm glad to do it. We're all term-limited, but we've got to keep working. Right? So I ask you to think about that. Think about how thrilling it was when we started this in '91, '92, how concerned we were about all the problems of the country. Think about how troubled we were in 1993 in Memphis, talking about all these kids shooting other kids. That's what I said—Martin Luther King didn't live and die for the right of some African-American children to shoot others on the street and kill them, put drugs in their veins. That's not what it was about.

And what a long way we have come. But what I want to say to you is, for our country and our world, all the best things are still out there. We had to work so hard just to turn the old ship of state around. It was just like the country is like a big old ocean liner, and when you get going in one direction, it takes it a little while to turn that sucker around. [Laughter] That's why they hit—that's what the *Titanic* was all about. Sometimes you can't turn it quick enough; you hit an iceberg, right? [Laughter] So, thank God we got her turned around, and now it's going in the right direction. But if we keep going, all the best things are still out there.

This election is not about whether America will change. Of course, America will change. The world is changing every day. The little girls in your congregation will soon become young women, and they'll get married, and they'll have babies of their own. And before you know it, when they come home from the hospital with their babies, they'll have a little gene card, coming out of the human genome project, that will tell them basically what their little babies' whole life history is likely to be like.

And they'll have some scary things on there. It'll say, "Well, your daughter has this little gene problem and, therefore, she's at greater risk of getting breast cancer in her thirties. That's the

bad news. But the good news is, if you do these five things, you can cut the risk by two-thirds." That kind of stuff is going to happen. We're going to change.

And then our life expectancy, I think, in the next 20 years will go from 77 years to over 90. And it'll change. So, what are all these old folks going to do? I hope to be one of them. [Laughter] What are we going to do?

We've got to show up for some kind of work every day. How are we going to be useful? How are we going to avoid being—how will this change your life and the way churches work and communities work? Yes, of course, it's going to change. And there will be more different kinds of people elected. You see, California, our most populous State, no longer has a majority of people of European ancestry. It's a polyglot State, and America soon will be.

It will change in other ways. I say this along toward the end of my talk, but one of the two people who really started me—introduced me to the African-American churches in general and to your church in particular, is Secretary Slater, our Secretary of Transportation, who has been with me for 18 years, and I want to introduce him.

Won't be long until Rodney and people like him will be getting elected, and they'll be calling people like me to serve in their Cabinet. And that will be good, too. [Laughter] That will be good, too. Things will change. Things are going to change.

So the issue is not whether we're going to change; it is how we're going to change. And so if you feel all those things that I feel coming from you, all the wonderful things the Bishops said, if you think I was your faithful servant, then you hear me now: The best is still out there, and all we have done is basically set the table for America's feast.

But you've got to serve it up. You can't leave the food in the refrigerator and the stove and expect the banquet to be enjoyed. But the best is still out there. This is a good country. We're learning to live with each other a little better. And it's changing so fast.

I'll just tell you one little story. I got a call a couple days ago from Denzel Washington, a great actor. He's in a new movie. I don't know if you've seen it advertised, about football, about high school football and the integration of T.C. Williams High School, and having a black football coach, in the sixties—

Audience member. A Church of God in Christ brother.

The President. Yes, a Church of God in Christ brother—right across the river here, in Alexandria, Virginia.

So here, just in a generation, how far we have come. There is this wonderful, beautiful story—I hope it will be a smash movie—about how all these white southerners found football heaven with a black coach and black players, right? [Laughter] It's a story that has played itself out pretty well now. It's going to be a great movie.

But to give you an idea of how you can't stop change, I've been to T.C. Williams High School, more than once, as President. It probably has the best violence prevention program than any big high school I've ever seen. But it's not a black-white high school anymore. Ain't no telling how many people are there from how many countries. And that school district now has students—the high school is the anchor of a school district that has students of 180 different ethnic and racial groups whose families speak over 100 different native languages.

So this is not just about you and me anymore, is it? America is about a whole lot of other people, too. And our future is about a whole lot of other people.

So that's the last point I want to leave you with. The Vice President and Senator Lieberman are good people, and they're good servants. And my wife has the best combination of mind and heart and knowledge and ability to get things done in the context of a forum like the Senate of anybody I've ever known. They're both better than me at some of the things that are important for people in public life to do. So nobody's got all the skills, and everybody needs to be lifted up, first by the Lord and second by the people.

But you just remember what I told you. All we've done in the last 8 years is set the table. And the feast is still out there. And you've got all these little kids growing up into a world that would have been unimaginable 10 or 15 years ago. They're going to be on their little computers, talking to kids in Africa and Japan and Ecuador, first one place and another. It's going to be a different world.

And this is the last point I want to make. The most important thing of all is still the struggle to get people to be proud of their own racial and ethnic heritage, proud of their own

religious heritage, but absolutely convinced that our common humanity is the most important thing of all.

If I could have one wish at the close of my service, it would not be for your continued prosperity—if I only had one—although I dearly hope you'll have it. It would not be even for every one of your children to get a college degree, although I deeply hope they will. If I could only have one wish, it would be that somehow, we could lay down enough of our demons to be one America and live together as brothers and sisters.

So you have been good to me. I love you. I'll never forget you. When I'm not President anymore, I'm still going to try to be a good citizen. I'm going to try to use all the things I've learned and all the things I've done to be of some use in the world. And if I can be of some use to you, all you've got to do is call.

But you remember, meanwhile, I'm going to give you 120 hard days. I'm going to try to finish the peace process in the Middle East. I'm going to try to get as much done in education and other things as I can with this Congress, and I'm going to do what I can to take my case on America's future to people who wish to listen to it.

But the most important thing is to realize we are all term-limited. It's what we do, not who we are as individuals, that matters. Now, if you can help the agents of positive change, we'll build one America. And you recognize that the table is set, but the feast has to be put out there, and it's still out there. That would be good for you, good for your children, good for our country, and good for the world. Meanwhile, if you ever need me, just call.

I love you. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Renaissance Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Bishop Chandler D. Owens, presiding bishop, Bishop J. Neul Haynes, first assistant, Bishop P.A. Brooks, secretary of the general board, Bishop Melvin E. Clark, director, Second Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of Pennsylvania, and Bishop Donnie Lindsey, former director of the Arkansas jurisdiction, Church of God in Christ; Bishop Felton M. Smith, Jr., pastor, Temple of Faith Deliverance Church of God in Christ, Chattanooga, TN; Bishop L.T. Walker, pastor, Holy Temple Cathedral Church of God in Christ, Little Rock, AR; and Alvin Brown, Senior Adviser to the Vice President for Urban Affairs.

Statement on Awarding Adoption Bonuses to States

September 20, 2000

Today's award of nearly \$20 million in adoption bonuses to States demonstrates the dramatic success of our efforts to move more children from the foster care system to loving homes they can call their own. With this second round of awards by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, all 50 States, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have now earned bonuses for increasing the number of children adopted from public foster care. Last year alone, 46,000 foster care children were adopted, an increase of nearly 65 percent since 1996. This puts us well on the way to meeting my goal of doubling the number of adoptions from 28,000 in 1996 to 56,000 by 2002. I commend the States for accepting the challenge to more rapidly move chil-

dren from foster care into permanent homes and the many loving families who have opened their hearts and their homes to adopt children from the foster care rolls.

I also want to thank the First Lady for her commitment and leadership on this issue. Hillary spearheaded my administration's effort to transform our child welfare system and promote adoption by leading the administration's Adoption 2002 initiative, which served as the blueprint for the Adoption and Safe Families Act that I signed into law in 1997. The adoption bonus awards were included as part of my our Adoption 2002 initiative and were enacted as part of the Adoption and Safe Families Act, establishing the first-ever financial incentives to

States to increase adoptions of children waiting in the foster care system.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report of the Trade and Development Agency

September 20, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As required by section 201(d) of the Jobs Through Exports Act of 1992 (Public Law 102–549; 22 U.S.C. 2421(d)), I transmit herewith the annual report of the Trade and Development Agency for fiscal year 1999.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations.

Remarks at the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Dinner

September 20, 2000

Thank you. Please be seated. Well, in case you haven't figured it out, I'm the warmup act for Los Lobos—[laughter]—and Nydia Rojas and Elvis Crespo and Tito Puente, Jr.

Let me thank you, Lucille, and all the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus for all you have done with me and for me these last 8 years. I thank the Institute board members for supporting these fine public servants. I thank the members of my administration who have done so much to make sure your concerns were heard, including Maria Echaveste, Mickey Ibarra, Aida Alvarez, Bill Richardson, Louis Caldera. And I understand we have the honorary Hispanic caucus in the Cabinet here tonight, Secretary Herman, Secretary Slater, and Secretary Mineta. I thank them for coming as well.

Because our administration has looked like America, we've been able to—I hope—serve America better. For example, under Secretary Caldera, the Army is cosponsoring a series of public service announcements targeted at young people between the ages of 12 and 14, many of them Hispanic, focusing on the benefits of staying in high school and getting a diploma. I thank him for that, and I thank you for that.

Last week in Philadelphia, I had an incredible experience—really Sunday, the first day of this week. I went there to dedicate and lay the first

construction beam on what will be America's Constitution Center, where people will be able to go to Philadelphia, learn about how we got started as a nation, learn about how the Constitution was put together and what is in it and how it applies through countless decisions of the United States Supreme Court to all Americans down to the present day. I also had the opportunity to help to swear in as new citizens 73 immigrants from 23 different nations.

And I told them something that the American people and the Members of Congress should never forget: 8 of the 39 men who signed the Constitution were immigrants, including Alexander Hamilton, the first Secretary of the Treasury, born in the West Indies, and James Wilson of Pennsylvania, who spoke with a heavy Scottish brogue.

From the very beginning, our country has benefited from immigrants. When I went to Germany 4 or 5 years ago, I presented to the German Chancellor a copy of the Declaration of Independence which was printed the day after it was signed, July 5, 1776, in Pennsylvania, in German, because so many of the people who lived in Pennsylvania at that time had German as their first language and spoke limited, if any, English.

It is very important that we not forget that we have always been, we always will be, and God willing, we will always be strengthened by the fact that we are a nation of immigrants.

This has been a great week for me and the Latino community. Yesterday Lucille and the whole Congressional Hispanic Caucus came to see me, and we went over the remaining issues of this year. They, once again, gave me my marching orders. [Laughter] And last night Jimmy Smits had me to the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts, and some of you perhaps were there. I had a wonderful time. And tonight I am with you, in all probability, and hopefully, the last American President who does not speak Spanish.

And I say that because I am very proud to have been President of the United States during the time when the Latino community of America truly came of age as a political, a cultural, and an economic force. I thank you for that.

The main thing I came here to do tonight is to say that, a simple thank you. I thank the members of the Caucus for working with Al Gore and me for these last 7½ years. Think of what we have done together that would not have been possible without you, and without all the people throughout America who support you.

Together we passed a new economic plan in 1993, which got rid of the worst deficits in our history, is paying down the debt, and has given us the longest economic expansion in history. It has also given us the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded, the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in a generation, a median income for Hispanics rising even faster than for the population as a whole, a million new Hispanic homeowners in the last 5 years.

Together we passed the family and medical leave law, which has given 25 million of our fellow citizens a chance to take some time off from work when there's a newborn baby or a sick family member, without losing their job. Together we passed an historic crime bill that put more police on our streets, take more guns off our streets, give kids more things to do to stay out of trouble and get involved in positive conduct. It was opposed by most of the members of the other party, but today, after 7 years of straight decline, crime is at a 27-year low.

Together we doubled the earned-income tax credit, which cut taxes for 15 million of our hardest working families, including more than

a million Hispanic families. Together we raised the minimum wage, which benefited nearly 2 million Hispanics. And it's high time we raised it again, and I hope you will support that.

Together we doubled funding for education and training and put in place the Hispanic Education Action Plan for programs to improve Latino student outcome. And though there are still troubling gaps, Hispanic students now are scoring higher on math tests, greater percentages are completing high school, graduating from college, and getting advanced degrees. In fact, the college-going rate among Hispanic-Americans has increased by 50 percent over the last 6 years, and the number of children—the number of Latino children in our high schools taking advanced placement tests—which means they mean to go to college; otherwise, why go through all that hassle? [Laughter]. Listen to this—the number of Hispanic children taking advanced placement courses has increased by 500 percent in the last 5 years.

Together we created 100 empowerment zones and enterprise communities, community development banks, doubled small business loans to minorities, tripled them to women. And under the leadership of the Vice President, these empowerment zones have helped to bring thousands of jobs to people in places who have been left behind for too long.

We provided health insurance coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program to 2 million children, and we're determined to add 3 million more. We revolutionized welfare; the welfare rolls have been cut in half. We fought steadily to restore the benefits that were wrongfully cut from legal immigrants, and we're going to keep fighting to restore the Medicaid and CHIP coverage for children and pregnant women who are legally in the United States.

And with the strong leadership of the Hispanic Caucus, we will continue to push the majority in Congress for a vote on the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act."

Now, none of this would have happened without you. And I want you to know that all I feel is immense gratitude that the people of my country gave me a chance to serve, to implement the ideas that I brought to the American people in 1992 and 1996, to build a bridge to the new century and the new millennium that we could go across together. But when the Vice President tells you, "You ain't seen nothing yet," I want you to know I believe he is right.

Why? Because we have spent so much time in the last 7½ years trying to turn the ship of state around, and it takes a while to do that. It's like having an ocean liner in the middle of the ocean, and you're trying to avoid an iceberg. Will it be "Titanic" or a happy story? You know you can't do it like this. It takes time. Now we have turned around. We're going in the right direction. We're moving forward together.

And what I want to ask you to do is to think about, what now? You know, we could actually end poverty for all the children of America. We could actually bring economic opportunity, real jobs, to all the communities that have been left behind, from the Native American reservations to the rural communities of the Delta and the Appalachia to the inner cities that still aren't prospering. We could get this country out of debt over the next 12 years, for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835. And I might add, if we did that, instead of squandering the surplus on a tax cut that's too big, it would keep interest rates a point lower for a decade, which would save people like many of you in this audience and the people who you represent, in 10 years, \$390 billion in home mortgage costs alone.

Now, so I know this is not a political evening. [Laughter] But it should be an evening for citizenship. So if you want to fulfill these dreams, if you want to meet the challenge of the aging of America when we baby boomers retire and there will only be two people working for every one person on Social Security, if you want Medicare and Social Security not to go broke and you think our seniors deserve prescription drugs, the election matters.

If you want a Patients' Bill of Rights, the election matters. If you want to stick with a strategy to lower crime that lifts children up and keeps guns out of the hands of criminals and kids, the election matters.

I'll tell you something else. If you want to put an end to delay and discrimination against highly qualified minority candidates for the Federal courts, the election matters.

Now, I am proud, as Lucille said, that our administration has appointed more Hispanics to the Federal bench than any in history. But it has been an unbelievable fight. It took 4 years just to get a vote that put the very able judge Richard Paez on the ninth circuit—4 years. Now

we're fighting for another great candidate, El Paso lawyer Enrique Moreno.

Now, listen to this. You would think that the Texas Republicans would be delighted to support someone like Enrique Moreno. He graduated summa cum laude from his university, near the top of his class in law school. A panel of State judges in Texas said he was one of the three best lawyers in west Texas. He got the highest rating from the American Bar Association. So what did the two Senators from Texas say? "He wasn't qualified to be on the Court of Appeals." And I might add, for reasons that escape me, none of the other elected Republicans in Texas have said a word about it.

Now, I can't ask you to vote for anybody tonight. I don't want to endanger your tax exempt status. [Laughter] But if you want an end to this kind of delay and denial, it would really help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Senators like Hillary in the United States Senate. If you want to see investments made in the enforcement of our gun laws, our civil rights laws, and holding tobacco companies accountable and shrinking the citizenship backlog at INS, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and José Serrano as chairman of the House Committee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations.

If you believe that there should be new market investment incentives to spread prosperity to people in places that have been left behind, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and Nydia Velázquez as chairman of the House Small Business Committee. If you want the interest of the American people to be the agenda of America's Government, it would help if you had Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and if you had in a leadership position Bob Menendez, the vice chair of the House Democratic caucus.

There's an old Mexican proverb that says, *El que no siembra, no levanta*; he who does not sow does not harvest. In my lifetime, which, unfortunately, is longer than most of yours in this audience—and most days I'm all right about it—our country has never had a chance like this. When I became President on January 20, 1993, I dreamed that I could leave office with my country in the position to make the most of this magnificent new millennium; to stay on the far frontiers of science and technology and do it in a way that helps all people, not just a few; to lift us all together; to build a future

of our dreams for our children; to go forward as one America. But anybody in this audience who is over 30 knows that sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're tough. [Laughter]

I laugh, you know—the American people took a big chance on me in 1992. I can only imagine how many people walked into the polling place on election day in 1992 and said, “I wonder if I should really vote for that guy. I mean, President Bush says he's just a Governor from a small southern State. I don't even know where it is.” [Laughter] “He's probably too young for the job. Oh, what the heck, it's not much of a chance. The country is in the ditch.” [Laughter] I mean, that's basically what happened. It wasn't that big a chance. [Laughter]

Now, that's not true anymore. It's not true anymore. And we all have a responsibility to our fellow Americans to think deeply about this election, to dream of what we want America to look like in 10 years or 20 years, and then to go out and choose the course that will take us there. That is what we have to do.

And this is the last thing I want to tell you. I'm very proud of all these economic advances. I'm glad of the contributions we made to a strong economy that enabled more of you than ever before to afford a ticket to come here tonight. I'm glad about that. But if I could only have one wish as President for you as I leave, even more than continued prosperity, I would wish for us to have the wisdom and the tenderness to go forward as one America, across all the lines that divide us.

We are a good people. We are a smart people. We'll do fine in the face of all adversity. But we still have a lot to let go of. We've got to learn to trust each other, even if we come

from different cultures and different backgrounds. We've got to learn to feel deep, abiding, bursting pride at our roots and our faith and still respect those who are different and understand that our common humanity is the most important fact of life there is.

If we do that, if we do that, believe me, you ain't seen nothing yet. And so I say, I had a wonderful time. Even the bad days were good, thanks in no small measure to many of you who always were the wind at my back. But believe me, it's there for you now. And when you hear all this fabulous music tonight, and the Vice President comes out here and says in his emotional and heartfelt Spanish what he's got to say—[laughter]—you just keep thinking one thing. I don't want you to forget, in a quiet place, this country operates not just by the leaders but, more important, by the people.

Harry Truman said when he left the White House he would resume the most important title any American could have, that of citizen. And you are what makes this country great. You are what makes this country go. If you liked the last 8 years, if you believe you ain't seen nothing yet, you must ask yourselves, what do I have to do to make sure the right choice is made, and what do I have to do to build one America? If we all do that, the best is yet to be.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:23 p.m. at the MCI Center. In his remarks, he referred to singers Nydia Rojas and Elvis Crespo; musician Tito Puente, Jr.; Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard, chairwoman, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute; and actor Jimmy Smits.

Remarks at a Reception for Governor Jeanne Shaheen September 20, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. First thing I would like to say is that back when we were taking pictures, a number of you commented on my dress. I'm here to take your drink order before the movie begins. [Laughter]

Actually, this is a terrific theater, and I would like to thank the owners who are here. Our

hosts are here tonight, and I think we should give them a big hand. [Applause] This is a beautiful place, a project, I might add, financed by the Small Business Administration loan.

I want to thank my friend Parris Glendening for being here. We've had a wonderful partnership with Maryland. You know, they're kind of

right next door to DC here. We do a lot of things with Governor Glendening. He's done a fabulous job. He's a very generous person. He's spent a lot of his time this year trying to raise money to create other Democratic governorships and help the ones that we have get reelected, and I'm grateful.

I really wanted to come here tonight. First, I have known Jeanne Shaheen a long time, a long time before I was President, a long time before she was Governor. I went to New Hampshire the first time when Hugh Gallen was Governor. That was when I didn't have any gray hair. *[Laughter]*

And I went once to campaign for a man named Paul McEachern who is a very good man who didn't win. But I was glad to be there. Jeanne and I had a long talk then. I used to read about her all the time in the articles about what an important political operative she was, and if you wanted to run for President and you went to New Hampshire, you had to have her for you. And it's not easy—I can say this; I worked in politics from the time I was a teenager—it's not easy to make the transition from being somebody that helps someone else, to being a candidate in your own right, particularly in a very difficult environment.

So, I'm here because I really believe that I know her much better than most Presidents know most Governors. And everything she said about her record, everything she said about the difference between herself and her opponent, that's all true.

It's also true that she's had a lot of difficult challenges, one of which I'll say more about in a moment, that I think she's tried to meet in a forthright way, keeping her commitments to the voters, trying to do what's best for the people of New Hampshire, and not running away from decisions that are bound to make everybody a little bit unhappy just because they break so many eggs. And I admire her.

And I think that people who are strong leaders who do what needs to be done should be rewarded at election time and kept in office. So that's one reason I'm here. The second reason I'm here is, there is nobody in America, no living public figure, who owes more to the State of New Hampshire or loves it more than I do.

Hillary and I were laughing the other night about how quickly these 8 years have gone by, how busy they were, how jam-packed they were,

how full of pressure they were, how embarrassing it is that I can't remember some things that I'm supposed to be able to remember, or I remember some things we did, and I can't remember the year in which we did it. I used to pride myself on having a flawless memory. But I remember everything about New Hampshire in 1992. *[Laughter]*

And a lot of you here helped me. And the people of New Hampshire, even the ones that didn't vote for me—even the Republicans helped me—because I spent a lot of time just going around talking to people and listening to them and hearing the rhythm of their dreams and hopes and frustrations and seeing the personal manifestation of the difficulties our countries faced back then.

And I think it would be good for them if Governor Shaheen was reelected. And I'm doing what I think is right by people who have done right by me, twice. I never thought a Democrat could win New Hampshire once, much less twice, for President. *[Laughter]* And I hope we'll make it three in a row this time.

But here is the third thing I would like to say, and I hope it causes no difficulty for the Governor. I don't think it will. But the most difficult problem she's had to face that can't make anybody happy is how to finance the schools. But what I would like the people of New Hampshire to know is that today, there are 36 States, 36 of our 50 States are in court today, not just one or two or three, 36, trying to work out the agonizing conflicts between everyone's desire to have taxes as low as possible, everybody else's desire to maintain maximum local control, and figuring out how to equalize school funding so that all kids have a chance to get a good education at an adequate level of funding.

And what I would like you to know is, there are no perfect answers. There is no perfect answer. But I have fought—one of the big reasons I have fought so hard—and we nearly doubled Federal funding for education and training while we were getting rid of the deficit and going from a \$290 billion deficit to a \$211 billion surplus—we have nearly doubled funding for education and training since I've been here.

And I know that some people in New Hampshire, because they believe in local control and want it all local taxes, even in those State taxes, they turned down the Goals 2000 money. Do you know what Goals 2000 required States to

do? Here is the strings we attached. We said, "If you take this money, you have to set standards to reach the national education goals and figure out how you're going to reach them." That's it.

The truth is that under Secretary Riley, himself a former Governor, we have actually cut the rules and regulations imposed on local school districts in States for the Department of Education by two-thirds over what they were in the previous Republican administration, a little-known fact. I would appreciate it if my friends from New Hampshire would not keep that a secret in the coming election.

But what we did do is say, "Hey, we want to give you more money, and we want you to figure out how to spend it, but you have to spend it in a way that is designed to get results." Now, that's the only string we imposed, which is why the Governor was right and her adversary was wrong on whether they should take Goals 2000 money.

New Hampshire needs all the Federal money we can get to New Hampshire, because there are a lot of people in New Hampshire that don't have a lot of money. There are a lot of school districts in New Hampshire that don't have a lot of property wealth. And whatever the right decision is for New Hampshire and how to resolve all these difficult questions, the National Government should make education a national priority, should recognize that even though we have more schoolchildren in school than ever before, in most States, a smaller percentage of the property owners have kids in the schools.

So you have these blinding crosscurrents of politics. And in New Hampshire, anything that has the word "tax" in it is more explosive than in most places, as all of you know. But what you need to understand is that she needs our support, because she's supported improvements in education, and because there is no perfect answer to how the schools can fairly and adequately be financed.

And one of the things that we ought to do, and one of the reasons Al Gore ought to be elected President, one of the reasons the people of New Hampshire ought to vote for him and Joe Lieberman and make it three in a row for our side—maybe has never happened—is that we are committed to doing this.

You know, the 100,000 teacher program allows States that are growing rapidly and don't

have a lot of money to have smaller classes in the early grades. We know it gets results. The school financing program allows States who have to do new building or major repairs to do it and keep their property taxes lower than they otherwise would be.

So it is true that under our administration, we have set more rigorous standards, and we've been more results-oriented for spending Federal money. That's true. I plead guilty. But it's also true that we've tried to say less to the States about how they had to do it.

We have cleared out a lot of the underbrush of micromanagement that was there before we showed up. And by doubling the amount of education and training funds, we have tried to at least make the solutions that have to be found by the Governor and the New Hampshire Legislature and the people of New Hampshire and people like that all over the country.

There are 36 States in court, but over 40 could be easily. So I would hope that our friends from New Hampshire would go back and tell the voters that—that we're out here trying to help you. Whatever solution you resolve, the burden on the people of New Hampshire will be lower if our policies prevail. And on every single decision that she mentioned, she was on the right side, from the Martin Luther King holiday to participating in Goals 2000 to taking our school-to-work funds and all these other education initiatives.

There isn't anything more important than figuring out how to do this, because if you look at the growth of the New Hampshire economy, they've almost got negative unemployment up there now. But what that means is that the education premium is even bigger than it was before.

I'm here because I admire her, because I support her, because I love New Hampshire. And I'll never repay my debt to the people there—and because I understand them, even when they're being ornery. [Laughter] And I know that they're stern taskmasters at election time, but she has worked hard. She's worked effectively with us, and if for no other reason than New Hampshire ranks first in the participation of children in the Child Health Insurance Program, she's earned reelection.

That's the last thing I want to tell you. We appropriated funds at the Balanced Budget Act in 1997, the biggest expansion of child health care since Medicaid was passed in 1965. We

appropriated funds for 5 million children from low-income working families to get health insurance, children that desperately needed it, but their parents earned just a little too much money to get them into the Medicaid program—5 million.

Today, 3 years later, we have only enrolled a little over 2 million. Why? And Parris has done well, too. But the reason is that not every State has done that well. So there are children all over America tonight who are sick, who need to see doctors, who need to have checkups, who need to have everything that's covered in these programs who don't get it. But they get it in New Hampshire because she's been a good Governor.

So I want you to go home, those of you from New Hampshire, and redouble your effort. I did say to Jeanne, for those of you who gave money tonight, in New Hampshire, \$75,000 is still real money. That's a lot of television ads

on the Manchester TV station. And if you can do anything to help her, I hope you will.

I think that this election, because of what she represents and because of her opponent and the clear ideological divide, represents one of the seminal contests in our country this year. But the most important thing is that the people that live in New Hampshire need, deserve, and ought to have her leadership for another term.

I'm glad we're here tonight. And if you can do anything between now and November to help her, I hope you will do that, too. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. in Theater One at the Visions Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland and Gordon Humphrey, Republican gubernatorial candidate in New Hampshire. Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire was a candidate for reelection.

Remarks on Proposed Conservation Legislation *September 21, 2000*

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to begin by thanking this distinguished group of Americans who have joined me, and I want to introduce them all. To my immediate left, looking over my shoulder here is Mayor Brent Coles of Boise, Idaho; Senator Gaylord Nelson, the founder of Earth Day; and next to him, his small namesake, Major League Baseball legend Gaylord Perry. Henry Diamond is here, who is a partner in the law firm of Beveridge and Diamond, and a distinguished environmentalist, heading the largest environmental law firm in the Nation; Roger Schlickeisen, the president of Defenders of Wildlife, over my right shoulder here. Jack Hanna is here, the director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo; Frank Beamer, the head coach of the Virginia Tech football team—as he said, “Last year number two; and rising this year”—[laughter]—Jimmie Lee Solomon, the senior vice president of baseball operations for Major League Baseball; Dr. Michael Hirshfield, the vice president at the research protection programs of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation; David Waller, the director of wildlife resources

division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, who told me to say something good about wildlife today. I often feel that we're in the presence of it here in Washington. [Laughter] And I appreciate his efforts to preserve it. And the lady to my left is Sue Maturkanich, who is a teacher from Grand Rapids, Michigan. I wanted to thank her for being here and for her interest in the intersection of education and the environment for our children.

These conservation and community leaders have come here from all over America to work for the protection of our open spaces and our most precious lands, to ask Congress to provide permanent funding for them with Federal funds dedicated to supporting State and local communities.

Under the leadership of Chairman Don Young and Congressman George Miller, the House recently cast an overwhelming bipartisan vote to provide permanent funding for America's open spaces from the resources the Federal Government gets from Federal offshore oil leases. There is significant support in the Senate for this legislation. And we are here today to ask

the Senate leadership to work with Senators Frank Murkowski and Jeff Bingaman, again on a bipartisan basis, to pass the "Conservation and Reinvestment Act" known as CARA.

When I was growing up in Arkansas, I had such easy access to parks and woods and mountains and rivers and lakes that I suppose I took them for granted a little bit. But we know that we can no longer take our access to our natural resources and our wildlife for granted. In too many communities, our green spaces and our open spaces continue to disappear.

For too many of our young people and their families, it's becoming harder and harder to protect what we have left, the meadows and seashores, the lands farmers harvest, the streams where families fish. With more and more people visiting our national parks and forests, we also have to do more to protect and preserve these treasures. That's why Gaylord Perry is here today. He believes that all our children should have a place to play Little League ball. That's why Sue Maturkanich is here today, all the way from Michigan, to remind the Congress how essential it is for children to have a good place to play.

For 7½ years now, Vice President Gore and I have fought for these causes, to protect our natural resources, to provide communities with resources they need to preserve green and open spaces. Working with Congress, again on a bipartisan basis, we protected Yellowstone from the threat of mining, preserved the Baca Ranch in New Mexico, saved age-old California redwoods, set aside huge stretches of the Mojave Desert for the national park system, and launched the most ambitious environmental restoration effort ever in the magnificent Florida Everglades. But we also provided significant new resources to help States and communities preserve farms, urban parks, and other precious open spaces.

The mayor of Boise is here, as I said earlier. We worked with him to give him the funds to develop a 55-acre recreation complex so that children and parents have a place to enjoy the wonders of nature close to home.

Here in Washington, DC, we helped the city rebuild Girard Street Park, the only open space in an entire urban neighborhood, a park that will give children a place to play in safety and the community a place to call their own.

We believe every community should have such places so that neighborhood parks and

baseball fields are as common as cell phones and video games. That's why CARA is so important and why Congress must pass it now before it adjourns.

I want to make it clear: The virtue of CARA is one of the things which makes it controversial in the ordinary course of congressional operations. It would set aside money that we have coming in every year, automatically, for these communities for these purposes, so that they would always know that there was a stream of money there to protect the future for our children.

I also hope Congress, before it leaves, will provide adequate resources for us to continue to protect our air and water and ensure permanent funding for land conservation. And I hope they will send me budget bills free of anti-environmental riders. Once again, too many of these bills are being watered down and polluted with riders aimed at weakening public health protections, blocking commonsense efforts to combat climate change, and surrendering public lands to private interests.

In the last 24 hours, Congress has added some more of these riders. I vetoed bills before because they contained them, and if I have to, I'll do it again. But I ask Congress to drop them so we can get on with the people's business, and they can go back home and talk to the voters.

A century ago President Theodore Roosevelt set our Nation on the path of conservation. He reminded us, and I quote, "Our responsibilities to the coming millions is like that of parents to children. In wasting our resources, we are wronging our descendants."

Since then, we've answered President Roosevelt's call to conservation. And time after time, over the entire length of the 20th century, we put the restoration and protection of the environment ahead of partisan conflict.

In the weeks ahead, we should continue to do this. We have a unique and profoundly important effort to give people at the grassroots level in America a permanent source of funding to protect our natural resources.

A chance like this comes along once in a great while. That's why there were over 300 votes for this bill in the House. And there ought to be 100 votes for it in the Senate, and I hope we can get it done, and these folks, by coming here today, have made it more likely.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Remarks at Mott Community College in Flint, Michigan *September 21, 2000*

Give her another hand. *[Applause]* Wasn't she great? Thank you, Karla.

Well, good afternoon, everyone. I am delighted to be here at Mott Community College. And I want to begin by thanking Karla Hudson again for her sterling example, but even more for her commitment to helping other people build a better future for themselves.

I also want to thank my longtime friend and now Cabinet member, Secretary Mineta, for his years and years of commitment to empowering people with disabilities. I thank my National Economic Adviser, Gene Sperling, who is a native of Michigan, for the work he did on the announcements I will make today. And Mayor Stanley, thank you, as always. Judy Brewer, thank you for your work.

I also want to acknowledge Pamela Loving from the Career Alliance and Michael Zellej from the Disability Network for what they're doing. I'd like to thank Dr. Shaink, the board, and the faculty members and the students of Mott Community College for making us welcome here today.

And I'd like to acknowledge a couple of other people who came with me today to be here—first, the remarkable president of Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, Dr. I. King Jordan, and a marathon runner—congratulations for being here—James Clark, vice president at NCR; Carl Augusto, the president of the American Foundation for the Blind; and from the administration, Judy Heumann, the Assistant Secretary for Special Education Rehab Services, and Jonathan Young from the White House. They're all around there. Thank you all very much for being here.

I would also like to thank the Vice President in his absence for the work that he has done with me for 8 years to empower all Americans.

Looking back, I think this is my fourth trip, Mayor, to Flint. I'm beginning to feel at home. I'm afraid if I come back, I'll get a tax bill, I've been here so often. *[Laughter]* When I first came here in 1992, Mayor Stanley wel-

comed me. Now I'm about to leave the Presidency, and when I'm gone, he'll still be mayor. *[Laughter]* I want to know what the secret is. *[Laughter]*

Let me say, as Secretary Mineta said, this is a very fortunate time for our country, and it happened because of a lot of people across America working together. Flint has worked hard, against tough odds, to bring this city back, to prepare for a new century. And you have made a great deal of progress. I am quite sure that the people whom I visited today who are involved with the Disability Network and the Career Alliance and the people at this community college have played a major role in the resurgence of this fine community.

But we all know that not everyone has shared in the American economic renaissance. We all know there are people and places who have been left behind, including millions of Americans with significant disabilities who want to go to work but whose path is blocked and who could work and could contribute, not only to their own lives but to the rest of us, as well.

The great labor priest George Higgins articulated a fundamental truth when he said, "Work is an important way in which we exercise our humanity. In return, society offers us not only our daily bread but a sense that we, ourselves, are honored for the contributions we make."

When I sought the Presidency in 1991 and 1992, my first objective was to give work back to the American people. One of the strongest supporters I had was your former Governor, who is here with me today, and my friend of many years, Jim Blanchard, and I thank him for coming. Not only here in communities in Michigan but in far away New Hampshire, Jim went with me in the snows to listen to people who had lost their livelihoods, who broke down over dinner, crying because they were afraid they'd never be able to send their kids to school.

And we have, in large measure, succeeded. But we have not given every American the

chance, first, to get an education, and second, to use their education to work and achieve the American dream. We have an obligation to do it, an obligation that requires us to keep expanding the circle of opportunity. And in this information age, when the pace of change increasingly accelerates at a breathtaking rate, we cannot achieve that goal if we leave any Americans stranded on the other side of the now famous digital divide.

Now, for nearly 8 years now, the Vice President and I have worked to break down barriers that hold people back. One of the most important things we did was to fight hard in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to insist that people with disabilities have full access to telephone equipment and service that most people take for granted. And one of our Federal Communications Commissioners, Susan Ness, is here with me today. I thank her, and I thank all of those who helped us to fight for the rights of disabled Americans in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

In 1998 we pushed through the Work Force Investment Act, requiring that any information technology the Federal Government buys be accessible to people with disabilities. And in 1999 I was very proud to sign the Work Incentives Improvement Act, which will enable Americans with disabilities to retain their Medicare or Medicaid coverage when they go to work and provide more choices for job training. This will give tens of thousands of Americans the opportunity to be in the work force.

But breaking down barriers is not enough. People actually have to have the tools they need to take advantage of this remarkable moment of opportunity—especially the tools they need in cyberspace. There are truly amazing new possibilities, as I saw today on my tour.

Through information technologies, a person with a disability, such as the great physicist Stephen Hawking, can continue to be one of the world's top astrophysicist and—and this is a big “and,” because he suffers from Lou Gehrig's disease and is the longest living person, as far as we know, in history with that disease—and I'm convinced that one of the reasons he is alive today, with the fire in his eyes and the passion burning in his heart, is that he can not only continue to learn; he can continue to communicate what he knows and what he thinks to the rest of the world, thanks to technology.

Millions of other people with disabilities can also access and use the information super-highway if we build the necessary on ramps. For example, we're creating a national network of community technology centers so that all Americans, no matter where they live or what their incomes, have easy and affordable access to the Internet.

I visited America's newest community technology center this afternoon, right here in Flint, a partnership between the Department of Education, Mott Community College, and the non-profit Disability Network, focusing on empowering people with disabilities to access the Internet and learn computer skills. I was amazed by a lot of what I saw: technology that translates web pages aloud for people who are blind or visually impaired; provides captioning for deaf and hard-of-hearing people; enables people with significant physical disabilities to control a computer through eye movement and brain waves. This technology has unbelievable potential.

I have a friend in North Carolina, named Joe Martin, with Lou Gehrig's disease. Years ago, we worked together on education and the economy in the South. Joe Martin then was in great health. He was vigorous, energetic, charismatic, compelling, and effective. He's had Lou Gehrig's disease for some time now, and in spite of how great he was then, he is greater today in every way. Although he can't walk or talk or use his hands, his eyes provide a window on the world. With EyeGaze technology, he can look at a computer screen and type away just using his eyes. He E-mails people here in Flint. With another glance he can activate an electronic voice that reads his words aloud. This astounding technology has enabled him to keep his job as a banker, to talk with his wife and friends and, now, write an about-to-be-published compelling book about his life.

Some of you may have heard of a young swimmer from South Africa named Terence Parkin. Yesterday he won the silver medal in the mens' 200-meter breast stroke, one of the best athletes in the world. He also happens to be deaf, and he can't hear the starting buzzer that used to begin all swimming races. Instead, he can now watch for a personal, yellow starting light, which flashes at his starting block at the same time the buzzer goes off. By installing the simplest of technology, a little light bulb, officials gave this determined and gifted athlete

his shot at glory. He took it. Now he can celebrate the flash of sunlight off his silver medal, and aren't you glad he got the chance to race?

These kinds of innovations are going to make a tremendous difference in people's lives, especially as we incorporate them into mainstream technology, something Judy emphasized. Here in Genesee County, employers can't find enough people to fill all the technical jobs. Many pay \$20 an hour.

Now, if we want to keep the rest of the economy growing, we have to make information technology more accessible. It's responsible for about 30 percent of the economic growth we've enjoyed over the last 8 years. And we have to bring more people into the circle of opportunity to work in information fields. That means people with disabilities have to be able to enter the 21st century work force, not only for your own benefit but for the rest of America as well.

Today I am honored to announce several major public and private commitments that will move us in the right direction. First, 45 chief executive officers of American high-tech companies have pledged to make their products more accessible to people with disabilities, training their employers to develop new accessible software, hardware, and services.

Second, 25 of our Nation's leading research universities have committed to helping us provide equal access to information, including new course work for engineering majors and new tenure-track faculty positions to address these challenges. That's a big deal. Think about it. Major universities giving people tenure to teach how to provide equal access to all Americans without regard to disabilities, to have information-age technology—that's wonderful.

Third—I'm trying to keep up with all of this. Third, I am pleased to announce that Flint's very own CS Mott Foundation—and I believe the president of the foundation, Bill White, is here—will support these goals by funding a blue-ribbon task force, headed by the Disability Network, to figure out how to make this new technology more affordable. It's not enough to develop it if people can't afford it.

Fourth, I'm directing my Cabinet to explore ways of enhancing Medicare and Medicaid to help people with disabilities pay for technologies to enable them to live and work independently in their communities. The Department of Education will provide grants totaling \$4 million to the Web Accessibility Initiative and the National

Center for Accessible Media to help to ensure that people with disabilities can tap into the World Wide Web and make the most of on-line learning.

And finally, I am particularly proud to announce that AmeriCorps is awarding \$9 million in grants to put 1,200 volunteers into schools and communities to teach students with disabilities and children from difficult backgrounds the skills they need to take advantage of the Internet.

One project in North Carolina will provide computer training to 300 students who are blind or visually impaired, showing them a whole horizon of possibilities. And I know, of course, that AmeriCorps volunteers have been active in the disability community here in Flint, and I thank them for their work. And thanks for wearing your T-shirt today. You look good. Thank you.

I've got to get in a little plug for AmeriCorps now. Our legislation reauthorizing AmeriCorps is now pending in the Congress. I have now received a letter signed by 49 of the Nation's 50 Governors asking Congress to reauthorize AmeriCorps and other community programs administered by the Corporation for National Service, including the new E-Corps program to bridge the digital divide. I hope Congress will take a look at what you've done here and reauthorize AmeriCorps.

Let me just make two points in closing. Once more, bridging the digital divide is not just the morally right thing to do; it is the smart thing to do. I remember a decade ago when people were debating the Americans with Disabilities Act, critics said it would be too expensive to make public facilities available to put in curb cuts, handrails, to put those signs in braille up. They were wrong. Since we've torn down those barriers, more than a million Americans with disabilities have entered the work force, and we have had the strongest economy America has ever known. It is good to help people live their dreams.

And if we build new onramps to the information superhighway, people with disabilities will help us build an even stronger America and, I might add, share in the promise of the declaration of true independence.

The second thing I'd like to say is, this is about way more than economics. It's important to be able to earn a living, and I want all of

you to contribute to America's economic welfare. But it's about more than economics. A century ago, visionaries here in Flint harnessed the potential of new technology to build the world's largest auto company. Their success gave Americans a mobility and freedom that reshaped the entire economic and physical landscape of our Nation.

Today, at the dawn of the information age, we have the potential to give millions of Americans even greater freedom in cyberspace. As I said, it's about more than economics. You know, when I was driving from my last stop here, there were police along the way at intersections, making sure that no children got in the way of the motorcade or no cars went through the stop sign. One of those police officers was in a wheelchair.

One of my speechwriters has one disabled arm and one prostheses. He writes a heck of a speech. It's nice that he's got a job, but it's more important that the feelings of his heart can be expressed. One of the things I've learned in nearly 30 years in public life and a few years before that, just sort of ambling around the world, is that everybody's got a story; everybody's got dreams; everybody's afraid sometimes and brave sometimes. And in the end, when you strip it all away, there's not a great deal of difference in the relative significance of our stories. If you put all the people in the world end to end, with the person with

the lowest IQ on one end and the highest IQ on the other, you couldn't stick a straw between any two people.

The whole premise of America is that we are inherently, in a fundamental way, equal, though unique. People carry different burdens in life, and everybody, even the most blessed, carry a few. God puts bigger burdens on some than others, but everybody should have the chance to have their story. In the end, in the not completely knowable terrain of the human heart is the real argument for all these efforts.

So I ask you, I'll do everything I can in the time remaining. For the rest of my life I'll be grateful that I happened to be President at this moment of true revolution in human ability. But we have to keep working and never forget the economics is important, but the dreams matter more.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. in the Ballinger Field House. In his remarks, he referred to Karla Hudson, rehabilitation counselor, Michigan Commission for the Blind, who introduced the President; Mayor Woodrow Stanley of Flint; Judy Brewer, director, Web Accessibility Initiative; Pamela Loving, president and chief executive officer, Career Alliance; Michael Zelley, executive director, Disability Network; and Richard Shaink, president, Mott Community College.

Statement on the Federal Budget Surplus

September 21, 2000

Today the Department of the Treasury is announcing that for the first 11 months of this year the surplus stands at a record \$171 billion, more than twice the surplus at this time last year. In total, we are on track to pay off a record \$360 billion of publicly held debt over the last 3 years, including over \$220 billion in this year alone.

This dramatic fiscal progress did not happen by accident. A long-term commitment to tough choices and fiscal discipline, not to short-term political gestures, has helped put America on track to pay down the debt by 2012. The majority in Congress should not jeopardize the longest

economic expansion in history by failing to adopt our long-term strategy to make America debt-free for the first time since 1835.

Let's work together to invest in our future by strengthening Social Security and Medicare, including a voluntary, affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit, making investments in key priorities like education, and putting America on course to be debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Memorandum on the Interagency Task Force To Examine the Role of Medicare and Medicaid Coverage of Assistive Technologies in Encouraging the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

September 21, 2000

Memorandum for the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Subject: Interagency Task Force to Examine the Role of Medicare and Medicaid Coverage of Assistive Technologies in Encouraging the Employment of Persons with Disabilities

The Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999, the last legislation that I signed during the 20th Century, was a breakthrough in helping persons with disabilities enter the workforce. Persons with disabilities can now return to work and retain their Medicare and Medicaid coverage. No longer will they be forced to make an unfair choice between work and essential health care coverage. The Work Incentives law affirms that persons with disabilities can and do make valuable contributions to society through participation in the American workforce.

In ensuring that persons with disabilities have the same opportunities to work as all Americans, our next step is to take advantage of the remarkable advances in “assistive technologies”—the innovative devices that facilitate independent living and meaningful employment for persons with disabilities. This year I have included \$100 million in my budget, an increase of \$14 million over FY 2000, for disability and technology research, including assistive technology research, at the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research. I have also included in my budget this year \$41 million for State-based assistive technology programs through the Department of Education. The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research, which is overseen by the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, each provide \$30 million in grants for assistive technology research. Together, these funds will support comprehensive research and education on the use of assistive technologies to further integrate persons with disabilities into their community and the workforce.

While the Work Incentives law extended Medicare and Medicaid to workers with disabilities, the Federal Government must make a comprehensive effort to determine how best to make these programs more effective for persons with disabilities, including improved coverage of assistive technologies. It is especially important to examine how medically necessary assistive technologies may facilitate independent living and also support employment for persons with disabilities.

I hereby direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to convene an interagency Task Force on Health Care Coverage of Assistive Technologies that includes the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Education, Labor, Veterans Affairs, and other agencies, as appropriate. The Task Force shall study the role that Medicare and Medicaid does and should play in the coverage of assistive technology devices. The work of the Task Force is intended to provide a framework for future Medicare and Medicaid coverage decisions that complements my Administration’s overall efforts to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

I direct the Task Force to conduct a study on the role of Medicare and Medicaid in covering assistive technologies that encourage employment of individuals with disabilities. The study should:

- (a) examine current Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technology devices and the cost of providing such coverage. Assess the current coverage criteria under Medicare and Medicaid with comparisons to the private insurance market. Review and evaluate other past and on-going research on Medicare and Medicaid coverage of assistive technologies;
- (b) seek input from the disability community to identify the types of medically necessary assistive technologies that facilitate independent living and employment. Develop criteria for identifying such devices;
- (c) determine whether provision of assistive technologies may substitute for other

Medicare and Medicaid health care services such as personal care services and, if so, provide an estimate of the potential savings;

- (d) analyze Medicare and Medicaid medical necessity guidelines to determine whether they can support employment while continuing to meet the health care focus of the Medicare and Medicaid programs. As we move toward an increased employment of persons with disabilities, there is a need to study the intersection of the concepts of disability, medical necessity, and employment;
- (e) determine an appropriate delineation of responsibility for coverage of assistive technologies between publicly financed health

care and employers by evaluating employers' responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Assistive Technology Act; and

- (f) make recommendations for administrative and legislative changes to the Medicare and Medicaid programs, including an estimate of costs, to encourage coverage of medically necessary assistive technologies that also support employment of persons with disabilities.

This memorandum does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by a party at law against the United States, its officers or employees, or any other persons.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks to the Michigan State Bar Association in Detroit, Michigan September 21, 2000

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for that warm welcome. Thank you, President Butzbaugh, for that introduction, even though you almost took my speech off with you. [*Laughter*]

And I also want to thank your incoming bar vice president, Reginald Turner, because he was a White House fellow, and I know he's chairing your Access to Justice Task Force now. And I was glad he was out there. Thank you. And I want to acknowledge the presence here of your attorney general, Jennifer Granholm, and the president of the Legal Services Corporation, John McKay, and Judge Harold Hood, the first State bar commission chair on gender, race, and ethnic bias issues. That's very important. I thank you.

I'd also like to say that my longtime friend Mayor Archer was here and had to leave, but his wife, Trudy Archer, is here. And I thank you, Trudy, for staying around. You've heard me speak a lot before, and you didn't have to do that. I thank you.

When the mayor heard I was going to be in Michigan today, he told me you were here, and you were interested in these access-to-justice issues. And he told me that I was coming to the bar association. [*Laughter*] We've been friends, as I said, a very, very long time. He

and Hillary used to work together in the ABA, back when he was a judge and before I was President, on the participation of women and minorities in the bar. So I've known Dennis for many years, and we share a common interest in a lot of the things that you're concerned about now.

I would like to begin by congratulating those who were honored for 50 years of service in the legal profession. A tremendous amount has been done in the last half century to increase access to justice, from the establishment of our modern civil rights laws to the creation of Legal Services Corporation, to the acceptance of public interest practice, to the growing numbers of women and minorities in the profession. And Michigan lawyers clearly have been on the forefront of those efforts. I already mentioned the role Mayor Archer played in the ABA when he was on the supreme court.

I'd like to mention two of those honored tonight: Leonard Grossman has given a lifetime service for civil liberties, and Judge Damon Keith, who I had the honor to know before I was President, for his life of service in civil rights.

Tonight I would like to talk about a couple of issues that I think are profoundly important

to the question of access to justice and the future of one of its cornerstones, the Legal Services Corporation.

We're all here because we believe equal justice is the birthright of every American, but there remains a crying need for the work of the Legal Services Corporation to make that principle a reality for all citizens, including that little baby. I don't mind having babies cry in my speech. [Laughter] The only thing I hate about babies crying is, it reminds me how old I am. [Laughter]

The Legal Services Corporation has been important to my family for a long time. In the 1970's, when President Carter was in office, he appointed Hillary to the Legal Services Corporation Board, and she served as its youngest chair. And in all these years, we have cared a great deal about it. Every budget I have submitted as President has requested more funding for legal services, but every budget passed by Congress—that's the good news, but every budget I have passed by Congress has drastically slashed my request, and funding has declined by 25 percent since 1996, when plainly, the number of people in our country who need access to legal services and who can't afford them has substantially increased.

Again this year the Congress is proposing to flatline or cut the budget that I have asked to be increased by \$36 million. So if any of you know anybody in Congress and you can get me another vote or two, I'd appreciate it.

Now seriously, this is not some sort of abstract concept or, as some Members of Congress, I think, honestly believe, just sort of a luxury our democracy can do without. It is tens of thousands of Americans who seek a lawyer and can't consult with one because they don't have the money for it, hardworking people in rural communities or inner cities, many of whom have never even seen a lawyer. It is a profound failing in our system of justice when we don't provide legal services but we continue to maintain we are all equal before the law.

Obviously, you think lawyers make a difference, or you wouldn't be one. And I ask you again, this—for most of our history, since legal services came into being, this has not been a partisan issue. And I would hope it would not be again. Our country will have a \$211 billion surplus this year. We can afford \$36 million more for legal services.

But I'd also like to talk about the responsibilities of the profession, because the Government can't do all of this alone. Since antiquity, lawyers have been expected to give of their time and talent pro bono. It is essential for our democracy and the future of this profession that everyone who needs a lawyer can get one and that everyone who might one day need a lawyer trusts the system will work in that event for him or her.

Over the last decade, our strong economy has actually increased pressure, as you know, to bill more hours and cut back on pro bono work. Surveys tell us that lawyers at the Nation's highest grossing firms are now averaging just 36 hours a year in pro bono work. That is down dramatically from the 56 hours averaged in 1992 and well below the 50 hours recommended by the ABA.

I know this bar association has been a leader in responding to these pressures and meeting the desperate needs for counsel. You created one of the largest and best State bar access programs in the entire Nation, and I thank you for that. I hope you will continue to advocate this position with others in other States who run law firms or work with young lawyers. Pro bono work is good experience and good for the standing of the profession in the community. It is also vital for our democracy.

I can't help saying, in light of all the publicity that the death penalty cases have received lately, this issue is more important than ever. The Governor of Illinois declared a moratorium on executions in Illinois because there were so many questions about whether innocent people had been convicted.

Many States have failed to adequately fund their public defender systems; others have failed to fund them at all. In one of our largest States, two attempts to pass public defender systems were actually vetoed. And we have to do more. There is a very important piece of legislation in the United States Senate today sponsored by the Republican and Democratic Senators from Vermont, Senators Leahy and Jeffords, and others, which would provide funding for DNA testing and for adequate assistance of counsel in all capital cases. And I hope that the bar will support that objective.

Now, let me just say, I couldn't speak before a group of lawyers, especially in Michigan, without mentioning what I think is another threat to equal justice under the law and to access

to justice, and that is the Senate slowdown in the consideration and confirmation of my nominees to our courts.

Let me say, I know this is a controversy which has been building for some years, which to some extent predated my service as President. This was a very important issue to me not only because I've been a lawyer and the attorney general of my State, but because I used to teach law, criminal law, criminal procedure, admiralty and antitrust, and most importantly, constitutional law. And when I became President, I made a commitment to myself that I would appoint members to the Federal judiciary that were broadly reflective of our country in terms of gender and race and other different background experiences, that would meet the highest standards of the American Bar Association, and that would be essentially nonpolitical, that would be fair and not overly result-oriented in dealing with cases.

The judges that I have appointed have gotten more top ABA ratings than those of any President in 40 years. And independent analyses have demonstrated that they have not been in their decisionmaking particularly ideologically driven, unlike the judges that previous Presidents have appointed.

Now, nevertheless, even making allowances for the fact that in election years there's normally a slowdown if the President is of one party and the Senate is of another, if you look at the whole record, the Senate majority has been far less forthcoming with me than Democratic Senates were with Presidents Reagan and Bush, even though their nominees were, on average, not as highly rated by the ABA as my nominees.

A blue ribbon panel, moreover, recently found that during the 105th Congress, nominations of women and minorities tended to take 2 months longer to be considered than those of white males, and minorities were rejected twice as often, having nothing to do with their ABA ratings, I might add.

The Senate has 42 nominations before it right now; 34 of those people have never even had a hearing; 20 of them have been nominated to fill empty seats that have been declared judicial emergencies, places where our legal business is not getting done and, therefore, access to justice is not fully guaranteed. Two of those judicial emergencies are on the sixth circuit,

here in Michigan, where one-fourth of the seats are vacant.

But you'd never know it from how the Senate has acted, or refused to act. Judge Helene White, who ought to be Judge Keith's successor, has waited for a hearing for 3½ years, longer than any nominee in history. She is here tonight, I think, and I want to thank her for hanging in there, through an ordeal that no one should have to endure. Stand up. [Applause] Thank you.

Kathleen McCree Lewis has been waiting a year for her hearing. She would be the first African-American woman on the sixth circuit. The ABA unanimously gave her its highest rating. Now, if both the Senators from this State would push for a hearing, we might still get both of them confirmed, and we could certainly get one of them confirmed.

This is wrong, and what you need to know is that the sixth circuit is not alone. Look at the fourth circuit, in the southeastern part of our country. It has the highest percentage of African-Americans of any Federal circuit in the country. One-third of its judgeships are vacant, and although it has the largest percentage of African-Americans of any circuit, it has never had a single African-American or, indeed, any person of color as a judge.

For years—I mean, for years and years—I have sent up one qualified nominee after another. There are now, still, two well-respected African-Americans whose nominations are pending from that circuit, Judge James Wynn from North Carolina and Roger Gregory of Virginia. Those seats are also judicial emergencies, but neither nominee has even gotten a hearing.

Now as I said, in election year, there's always been some slowdown, but if you look at the statistics here over the last 5 years, this Senate has been far less forthcoming on these nominees than the Democratic Senates were with Republican Presidents who were my predecessors. And these people are very highly qualified, which leads to only one conclusion, that the appointments process has been politicized in the hope of getting appointees ultimately to the bench who will be more political. This is wrong. It is a denial of justice, and I hope the bar will speak out against it strongly.

Otherwise, I don't have strong feelings about it. [Laughter] Thomas Jefferson once said that, "Equal justice is a vital part of the bright constellation that guides our political fates and our

national life.” I want to thank you, all of you, for your devotion to that goal, for making the law an honorable profession, and for believing in equal access.

I want to especially thank those who have given a lifetime and more, in 50 years of service, to the law of the land. I hope that with all the prosperity and progress our country enjoys, with all of the social indicators moving in the right direction, we will not let the indicator of justice move in the wrong direction. I hope that you will continue to stand for equal access, work for it, and urge others to follow your example.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:05 p.m. in the Willow Room at the Atheneum Suites Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Alfred M. Butzbaugh, president, Michigan State Bar Association; Judge Harold Hood, chair, Michigan Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/Ethnic Issues in the Courts; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit; Leonard Grossman, board member, Guild Law Center for Economic and Social Justice; Judge Damon J. Keith, former Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit; and Gov. George H. Ryan of Illinois.

Remarks at a Michigan Victory 2000 Reception in Livonia, Michigan September 21, 2000

The President. Thank you. If Jennifer had just given me credit for the Sun coming up in the morning, I would have been sure I was at a Republican rally. [Laughter] I mean, look up here. I’m basically here as an affirmative action prop so the men wouldn’t be too outnumbered.

I want to thank Jennifer Granholm for her introduction, for her service, for holding the flag of the Democratic Party high in Michigan. And for her, there will be life after the attorney general’s office. I’ll guarantee you that.

I want to thank Dianne Byrum for running for Congress. You get a two-fer if she’s elected. You’ll have a great Member of Congress, a great successor to Debbie Stabenow, and you’ll help make John Conyers chairman of the Judiciary Committee. I want to thank Matt Frumin for running for Congress and for proving that Democrats can tie and wear bow ties. [Laughter] I’ve never been able to do that. See, look at Orson Porter down there laughing. He wears a bow tie every day, and I still can’t do it, and I’m 54. [Laughter]

I want to thank Marty Robinson for running for the supreme court. She’s out here somewhere. We thank her. I want to thank Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick for being a great Representative and a great personal friend to me in these years that she has served.

And I don’t know what to say about John Dingell. But when I was at the Congressional Black Caucus dinner the other night—I mean about John Conyers—I want to say something

about John Dingell, but I’m going to save that. I want to tell you something about John Conyers. I was at the Congressional Black Caucus dinner the other night. And all these people got up and talked about how the caucus always had their back, how good they were—always. Even the Ambassador from South Africa talked about—when they gave an award to Nelson Mandela—and she was passionate about how the Black Caucus was always there, always had their back. The Vice President got up and said the caucus always had his back. I got up and said, “Covered my back? When they came after me with a torch and lit the fire, John and the Black Caucus brought the buckets and poured water on it, and I appreciate it.” [Laughter]

I want to say something very serious about Debbie Stabenow. I was here at an event for her not so long ago—or two events. It is, next to a certain race in New York, the Senate seat that I may feel the strongest about. [Laughter] Nobody in America now appreciates the importance of every single Senate seat as much as I do. They confirm judges. They can hold up bills. They can hold up judges, including two from Michigan that should have been confirmed a long time ago. In the Senate, except for the budget, 41 Senators, not a majority—41—can stop anything from happening. And I can’t imagine a clearer choice, whether it’s on a real Patients’ Bill of Rights or a real drug benefit for seniors through Medicare or a real commitment

to human rights and building one America or a real commitment to an economic policy that continues to benefit average people.

What she said is true. They've got more dollars. They should have. They earned them. [Laughter] They earned them. You want to see them vote, follow the money. And there's nothing wrong with that. I believe in raising money. I think people ought to contribute. But forces that block positive change have to be opposed or they will prevail. And very rarely nowadays—it's hard to find somebody to take on an incumbent Republican Senator.

Now we have a man who was brave enough to do it in Minnesota, but he's independently wealthy. We have a wonderful woman who voted for my economic plan in 1993, lost her seat in the House, and is now ahead in running against the incumbent Senator from Washington State. But she's independently wealthy. Debbie Stabenow is just independent. [Laughter]

But it's really true—even if they do have more dollars, I can tell you for sure, I know her well, she does have more sense. [Laughter] I've watched this thing very closely. I know if one person goes off the air and the other dumps several million on the air, you can move the numbers, but they're not getting above 50 percent. She can win, and she will win if you will fight for her. And do not be discouraged. Do not give up. Fight. This is worth fighting for. It's worth fighting for.

Now, I've got a little something substantive I want to say, but first I've got to say something about my young friend, Mr. McNamara. All the talk about Ireland and the trains and all that, this guy was there for me when only my mama thought I could be elected President. [Laughter] And this is his 74th birthday. So we're going to sing "Happy Birthday." Ready? One, two, three.

[At this point, the audience sang "Happy Birthday" to Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara]

Mr. McNamara. He is a much better President than he is a singer. [Laughter]

The President. You may be the only 74-year-old man in America with more than enough hot air to blow out those candles. [Laughter] Go blow those candles out. And make a wish.

Now, I just want to say a couple of other things. First, on behalf of Al Gore and Tipper and Hillary and me, I want to thank the people

of Michigan and the Democrats of Michigan. You heard in the introduction that no Democrat had carried this State since 1968. Michigan gave me a margin of 8 points in 1992, and 13 points in 1996. And even before, on Saint Patrick's Day in 1992, the voters in the Democratic primary in Michigan and Illinois ensured that I would be the nominee of my party. I will never forget that, ever, as long as I live.

Michigan is a special place with special leaders. One of them who's not here tonight is John Dingell. I wanted to say that. I thank Debbie for being here, for carrying all of our water all these years and doing all this work. And I'm deeply indebted to a lot of people from Michigan. Senator Riegle is here. And we worked 2 years together, and he was terrific. Jim Blanchard was great to me. All of them—I appreciate that. But John Dingell is sort of a vanishing breed. He's just an old-style person who believes politics is an honorable profession and who believes that there's no point in being in office unless you're going to get something done or stand against something you don't believe in.

And so what I want to say to you is, you need to treat this election like you're going to get something done. And Michigan is really America. Yes, it's different than America; people make more cars here than anywhere else. But it's also an agricultural State; it's a small-business State; it's a high-tech State. It's a place with worlds of—very remote rural communities and big thriving cities. It is America.

And what I want to say to you is, for 47 days it will be the center of the conflict between the Democrats and the Republicans for the Senate and the House and between Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Governor Bush and Secretary Cheney. And I was told on the way up here that the Republican nominee is coming here in a day or two and is going to stand in an automobile factory and blast Al Gore over the internal combustion engine. The only thing I want you to remember is, when you voted for me, when they had the White House the last time, not very many people could afford to buy an internal combustion engine or fill it up.

We've had a real partnership with the people of Michigan, and I've worked, when I could, on a bipartisan basis. We've had a partnership that's helped to lower the welfare rolls, to lower the unemployment rates, lift the State up. We've

also had a very important partnership with the UAW and the automobile industry to build the next-generation vehicles.

Now, you all are following what's going on with the oil prices—and I don't want to say much tonight, otherwise it will be a big story tomorrow, and I'm going to have more to say about it later. But the point I want to make is, one of the reasons we're doing better than we were the last time this happened is that the American people have become much more energy-efficient; our cars get better mileage; our homes are more energy-efficient; our factories are more energy-efficient.

And we know—we know that the work being done now with high-tech companies, with the major auto companies and the UAW—work that our administration has supported financially and otherwise to build next-generation vehicles that can get 70 or 80 miles a gallon or use fuel cells or use electricity and gasoline or use alternative fuels that don't pollute the atmosphere, that we can make here from an unlimited supply of other things.

Let me just say, you know this whole business about ethanol and farm-based fuel products, right now the reason we don't have more of it is, it takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to produce about 8 gallons of ethanol. But we are funding research, which is very close to making a breakthrough that is the equivalent of what happened when crude oil was broken down so that it could be refined into gasoline. And when that happens—when that happens, you'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol for about one gallon of gasoline, and the whole world will change. That is what Al Gore has been doing the last 8 years.

And whatever they tell you in the next 47 days—I'm not running for anything, but I've got a record in Michigan—if I were trying to cost you jobs, I've done a poor job of it. Now, if we develop new engines, new fuel cells, and new fuels, it will save the automobile industry in Michigan, not destroy it. It will be more prosperous than ever before.

And every single year I have had to fight the other party in Congress for funds for the Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicle, for funds to promote energy conservation, for funds to develop alternative sources of fuel to keep our automobile industry strong and our people able to afford to drive and our country more secure—every single year.

So what we need is not to stick our heads in the ground and deny that there's a challenge; what we need is what we've had, a genuine partnership that will save America's auto industry, create more jobs, and lower our reliance on expensive and unreliable fuel. We can do that together if we do it.

Now, let me just say something else. In the last few weeks, since the convention, where I thought the Vice President and Senator Lieberman made great speeches and laid our program out for the American people, our side has been doing pretty well. And their side has had a few problems. *[Laughter]* But one of the things I've learned in life is that all those martial arts people—you ever watch those martial arts, the judo and karate contests or the tae kwon do contests? You know what they do before every match? They bow to their opponents. Why do they do that? Because they know that the surest sign of defeat is to disrespect your opponent, to underestimate your opponent, to have contempt for your opponent.

So I have said all along, why don't we just call a moratorium on personal abuse and attacks? Why don't we posit the fact that our adversaries are patriots and good people; they love their families. And why don't we thank them for abandoning, or at least appearing to abandon, the 20 years of negative politics that they have brought to this country's political life and talk in a more inclusive way and thank them for that and say, "Okay, let's have an election on the differences."

And I can just tell you, I have worked hard to turn this economy around, but the best is out there. Believe me. As good as everything is, the best stuff is still out there. If you make the right decisions, we could bring jobs and economic opportunity to people and places that haven't felt it yet.

I was in Flint today to highlight the possibilities of the Internet to educate, empower, and employ people from Michigan with disabilities. And it's stunning. I was able to talk in Flint—because we had one of the machines there, this new laser technology that operates with the eyes—about a friend of mine from North Carolina who has Lou Gehrig's disease, who can no longer move any part of his body. He can't speak, and he can't move. And when we were friends and working together in the eighties, he was a strapping, healthy, charismatic, handsome, active, vital guy. But he's an even greater

person now because of the courage with which he's proceeded. But because of new technology, he is about to publish a book he wrote on the computer with his eyes. Now, because of new technology, he still can work at home and earn a living doing business at the bank he used to run—unbelievable.

So I'm telling you, the best of it is still out there. If you make the right decisions, in the next decade you can get rid of child poverty; you can give all working families access to affordable health insurance; we can take Social Security and Medicare out beyond the life of the baby boomers. We can get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835. We can generate more jobs in transportation, including automobiles, by developing cars that get 80 or 90 or more miles to the gallon. And we can clean up the environment and generate hundreds of thousands, maybe even millions more jobs. We can do all this stuff if you make the right decisions. We've opened the doors of 2 years of college to all Americans. We can open the doors of 4 years of college to all Americans, if you make the right decisions.

Every time I see Debbie out here making this campaign, and I realize she could have just stayed in Congress and enjoyed her seat, rolled along, she knew what she was up against—what I see are all the little children that will grow up with a better education, have access to college, all the older people that will have real medicine when they need it, a genuine Patients' Bill of Rights so that the doctors, not the HMO's, will be making your health care decisions, and an America with a stronger economy.

And when I see Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, I am telling you, they have a different economic policy. You cannot—you cannot—I don't care what they tell you these projected surpluses are. Believe me, they're just projected. And because I was conservative with your money every year—every year—first the deficits were less than they were supposed to be, and then the surpluses were bigger. But, why? Because I didn't play like it was, and I didn't play games with your money.

Now, they say we've got a \$1.8 trillion, or \$2.2 trillion, projected surplus. That sounds like a lot of money. What they don't tell you is, that doesn't assume that Government spending will grow with inflation and population, which it's done for 50 years—whack \$300 billion off. What they don't tell you is that those of you

who are upper middle class people, if we don't continue to raise the earnings limit on the alternative minimum tax, you'll start paying taxes you've got no business paying just because you get a pay raise. So we fix that—whack another \$150 billion off. What they don't tell you is that we don't have in there continuing the research and development tax credit, which we've got to do if you want to develop these new cars that get high mileage—whack another \$40 billion off. You get the idea. And then the money may not come in. And what about the emergencies that could come up along the way? We've had to give the farmers \$6 billion, \$8 billion, \$10 billion every year for the last 3 years because farm prices have been so bad.

Now, so when they tell you, "Hey, what do we care? Our tax cut is a trillion and a half dollars, and we'll privatize Social Security for young people and guarantee everybody over 55 that they'll get their benefits," and when you transfer that, it costs a trillion dollars more, because if you take money out of Social Security, but you leave everybody drawing out the same money, somebody has got to replace it, right? They don't ever talk about that. That's another trillion—whack \$2.3 trillion, \$2.5 trillion, \$2.8 trillion. You're already back in deficits.

They don't ever say that. I'm telling you, that means higher interest rates. That means higher interest rates. Do you know what—I got a study last week that said the difference in our candidate's economic plan and theirs, going back into deficit, into the Social Security Trust Fund, is one percent a year on interest rates. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this: \$390 billion in home mortgages, \$30 billion in car payments, and \$15 billion in college loan payments over a decade.

In other words, if you do what Vice President Gore wants to do, in interest savings alone, you'll get the equivalent of a \$425 billion tax cut that will go straight to the working families of the United States of America.

So we've got a different—we have a different economic policy, a different energy policy, a different education policy. We want high standards, smaller classes, modern schools. We want schools to get more aid, but we want to turn around these schools or put them under new management, because we know we can turn schools around.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day, in New York. Two years ago 80 percent of the

kids—80 percent—doing reading and math below grade level; 2 years later 74 percent doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years. We can turn these things around. And they didn't do it by taking limited public funds with the largest number of schoolchildren in history and siphoning it off into a voucher program. They did it with high standards and accountability.

If you want more choice for parents, pass a statewide school choice plan, have more public charter schools. But we don't have enough money in education now. We've got more kids than ever before. We've got all these facilities that are inadequate. We've got all these schools we still have to hook up to the Internet. We need more preschool and after-school programs. And I'm telling you, the Gore plan is what we've been trying to build on. Just make the money accountable. Say, "Okay, we'll give you the money, but you've got to identify the failing schools and turn them around or put them under new management. You don't have to put up with schools that don't work." That's what the teachers want. That's what the good principals want. And that's the right thing to do.

We have a different human rights policy. We're for employment nondiscrimination. We're for a hate crimes bill. We're for one America. We have a different health care policy. We're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights and a real Medicare drug program.

Now, if you want these things, and you want to achieve these big goals, you've got to make the right decision. What Debbie told you was right. Look, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot, and most days I'm okay about it. *[Laughter]* I tell everybody; my party has a new leader; my family has a new candidate; my new official title is Cheerleader in Chief.

But I have loved this job, and I have been honored to serve. But you have got to know something; you've got to believe me on this. We spent a lot of time, John and Carolyn and Debbie and Don Riegle and everybody else that served with me in the Congress—we spent a lot of time just trying to turn the ship of state around and get it going back in the right direction and get America coming together instead of being driven apart. And in my lifetime, there's never been this much prosperity and promise and progress.

But anybody that's lived to be 30 years of age or more will tell you, there's been at least one time in your life when you've made a mistake, not because times were tough but because they were so good you quit concentrating. *[Laughter]* Sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're bad. You get lulled along. You think there's no real consequence. You just sort of feel one day—one way one day and one way another day.

And you believe stuff like this tax stuff they're saying, based on the projected surplus. I told somebody the other day, this projected surplus tickles me. This is like those letters you get in the mail from Publishers Clearing House. Did you ever get one? Ed McMahon wrote you a personal letter and told you, "You may have won \$10 million." You may have. Did you go spend the money the next day? If you did, you should seriously consider voting for the Republicans. But if you didn't—if you didn't, you'd better stick with us. I'm dead serious. The best stuff is still out there. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that's not just a campaign statement. That's just not something that sounds good. That is the truth, but we have to make the right decision. You need this crowd behind you. You need them, all of them.

Now, if you take this Senate race—down deep inside, people in Michigan know that. Otherwise, with all this money that has been spent against Debbie, the other fellow would be above 50 percent, and he's not there yet, not by a good stretch.

So I'm telling you, she can win, and she has to win. Al Gore and Joe Lieberman have to win. But there are 47 days, and there will be a lot of twists and turns in this race before it's over. Respect our opponents. Say they're good people. Say we have honest differences. Tell people, even though times are good, the best is still out there. Clarify the differences. Get people to focus. Don't get tired. We'll have a great victory in November.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Laurel Manor. In his remarks, he referred to Jennifer M. Granholm, Michigan state attorney general; Dianne Byrum, candidate for Michigan's Eighth Congressional District; Representative Debbie Stabenow, candidate for U.S. Senate in Michigan; Matt Frumin, candidate for Michigan's

11th Congressional District; Marietta Robinson, candidate for Michigan State Supreme Court; former Gov. James J. Blanchard of Michigan; former Senator Donald W. Riegle, Jr.; South African Ambassador to the U.S. Sheila Sisulu; former

President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and Republican Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Dick Cheney.

Remarks at the Dedication of the Harry S. Truman Building September 22, 2000

Thank you very much, and good afternoon. Secretary Albright, thank you for your remarks and your leadership. My longtime friend Ike Skelton and the other members of the Missouri congressional delegation, thank you for this great gift to America and to our children.

John Truman and the members of the Truman family, we welcome you here. We are honored by your presence. And I'd like to say a special word of personal thanks on behalf of Hillary and myself to Margaret Truman Daniel for her uncommon kindness and concern for the First Lady and our daughter, for nearly 9 years now. We are thinking about her in what has been a hard year.

I was telling John Truman when we came out here that Margaret came to dinner with her late husband several years ago at the White House, and I rather cavalierly, along with Hillary, had her to dinner in the private dining room on the second floor. And I did a little research right before she came and discovered that that had been her music room when she was a young lady living in the White House with another First Family that had only one child, a daughter.

And so I asked her, I said, "Margaret, how do you like this dining room?" And she said, "Well, Mr. President, I like you, but I really don't think people should eat on the same floor they sleep." [Laughter] And I felt as if I were in the presence of Harry Truman all over again. [Laughter] So I dutifully got down my well-worn copy of David McCullough's great biography, and I looked at the houses of Harry and Bess Truman in Independence, and sure enough, they were two-story houses, where the bedrooms were on the top floor and the dining room was on the ground floor.

I want to say to you, Mr. Elsey, I wish you had just taken the whole program. [Laughter]

I could have listened to you for another hour and a half. And I think I speak for all the people in this audience in saying that we are grateful you are here to provide us a living account of a remarkable time and a great President. And we are grateful for your service to America, as well, and we thank you, sir.

And I want to thank James Earl Jones for being here, and also for his friendship to me over these years. I was so hoping, before I knew he would come, that there would be an African-American in this place at this time who could be the living embodiment of the remarkable steps Harry Truman took that put us on the road we still travel today.

You have made quite a showing in your life, Mr. Jones. But I can't help thinking that in more modest and less famous ways, there are hundreds of thousands of others whose lives were also encouraged and advanced by Harry Truman's courage. And we thank you for being here today to embody that.

Most of all, I would like to thank our Foreign Service and civil service employees who are here, who work every day to advance our interests and values around the world and to make us more free and more secure.

This is a very good thing we're doing today. Listen to this: In 1956, at the close of his visit to Great Britain, the London Daily Telegraph called Harry Truman "the living and kicking symbol of everything everyone likes best about America." That's a pretty good reason for putting his name on the State Department. But it really doesn't even get into the top 10, for history will credit Harry Truman for creating the architecture of postwar internationalism in politics and economics; for drawing the line against communism and for democracy, setting us squarely on the trail of freedom we continue

to blaze today; for leading America toward increasing prosperity and racial equality here at home; and for laying the groundwork for pioneering achievements in meeting America's health care needs, even though he paid a dear price for it.

We are still blessed because President Truman understood the importance not just of winning the war but of building the institutions and alliances that could maintain the peace. What a job he did: the United Nations; NATO; the Truman Doctrine; the Berlin Airlift; Korea; and the Marshall plan. Oh, yes, he was committed to military strength. But from the very beginning, he knew that peace could not be maintained and the cold war could not be won by military power alone. He told the National War College, behind the shield of military strength, "We must help people improve the conditions of life, to create a world in which democracy and freedom can flourish." That's an argument he had to make over and over and over again. I can identify with that.

In early 1947, the House cut in half President Truman's request for funds to prevent starvation and disease in occupied Germany and Japan. He knew he had to turn that mentality around, but he believed he could. He would often say, "I trust the people, because when they know the facts, they do the right thing."

So when he went before a joint session of Congress to call for emergency aid to keep Greece and Turkey from falling into the Communist orbit, he put it this way: "The United States contributed \$341 billion toward winning World War II. The assistance I recommend amounts to little more than one-tenth of one percent of that investment. It is only common sense that we should safeguard this investment and make sure it was not in vain." With the leadership and support of like-minded Members of Congress, the bill was on his desk in 2 months, passed by overwhelming majorities in both Houses. And he fought the same way to win America over to the Marshall plan.

Harry Truman's unmatched insight allowed him to see emerging patterns in history, to identify new challenges over the horizon, and to build the institutions and approaches to meet them. Thanks, in no small measure, to President Truman, we have won the cold war and now must shoulder a like responsibility for meeting the challenges of a new century and a new era in human affairs.

With global interdependence growing daily, creating ever-new opportunities and new and different vulnerabilities, the need for U.S. leadership in the world has never been greater. The need for building on Harry Truman's legacy has never been greater.

But the old American pull of isolationism—or at least, in this age, cut-way-back-ism—is still there. We should remember what he said: "Lasting peace," President Truman reminded us, "means bread and justice and opportunity and freedom for all the people of the world." My fellow Americans, this is a great day, and this is a good thing. But we should do more than dedicate this building to Harry Truman. We should rededicate ourselves today to fulfilling his vision in the new century.

To paraphrase what he said so long ago, it means we have to put a small percentage of the resources we put into winning the cold war to work in the world in keeping the peace, advancing global prosperity, reducing poverty, fighting AIDS, battling terrorism, defending human rights, supporting free press and democracy around the world.

We need to move forward with debt relief for the world's poorest nations, to give them the lifeline they need to fight AIDS and educate their children and become better partners for us in the world. These are the kinds of investments Harry Truman proved decades ago could keep our soldiers out of war. If we do not want to overuse our military, we must not underfund our diplomacy.

I believe if President Truman were here today, he would tell us that if we truly want to honor him, we should prepare for the future in our time, as he prepared for our future in his. Those of us here today know that that means not only investing in foreign affairs; it also means investing in the capacity of our own people at home.

Truman once said, "The success of our foreign policy depends upon the strength of our domestic policy." Well, he tried it, and it worked. By the close of his administration, he had helped to create 11 million new jobs; unemployment was at a record low; farm and business incomes at all-time highs; the minimum wage had increased; Social Security benefits had doubled; 8 million veterans had been to college on the GI bill; and our country had moved closer to one America, across the lines of race that divided us.

In 1947 President Truman was the first President ever to address the NAACP. His biographer, David McCullough, called it the strongest statement on civil rights heard in Washington since the time of Lincoln. President Truman said, "I meant every word, and I'm going to prove it." And so he did, desegregating the Armed Forces and the Federal civil service and continuing to fight for civil rights gains.

He also envisioned a new system of health care for the elderly and affordable health insurance for all Americans. He led America on the first leg of a long march that would end in 1965, with the creation of Medicare. He endured vicious attacks, and his party lost the Congress in a record way, in no small measure because he simply thought that people, when they needed a doctor, ought to be able to get one.

But at the signing ceremony for Medicare several years later, the guest of honor was Harry Truman. President Johnson gave him the very first Medicare card and said, "It was really Harry Truman who planted the seeds of compassion and duty which have today flowered into care for the sick and serenity for the fearful."

So at home and around the world, if we truly wish to honor President Truman, we will do in our day what he did so brilliantly in his: see clearly the long-term path we must follow, take the first steps without hesitation.

This is a kind of time Harry Truman must have dreamed of at the end of World War II, at the dawn of the cold war, in the bitterest, bleakest days of the conflict in Korea: an America at peace, with prosperity, social progress, no crippling internal crisis or external threat.

Like our victory in World War II, this opens a whole new era for us. It gives us great opportunities, enormous challenges, profound responsibilities. At home, we have the chance and the

duty to meet the challenge of the aging of America; of the largest and most diverse group of schoolchildren in our Nation's history; of families struggling to balance the obligation to work with the more important obligation to raise their children well; to explore the far frontiers of science and technology in a way that benefits ordinary Americans and protects our most cherished values; to get this country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Around the world, we have to face the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, narcotrafficking, the persistent, enduring ethnic, religious, tribal, and racial conflicts that grip so many places in the world, and new and different threats that could profoundly affect us all, including global warming and the rise of AIDS and other infectious diseases, along with the breakdown of public health systems around the world.

But we're well-positioned to deal with this, thanks in no small measure to what Harry Truman and his generation did so long ago. He gave us the opportunities we have today. It's a good thing that we say, thanks, Mr. President, by naming this building for him. It would be a far, far better thing if we would follow his lead and give the same set of opportunities to our grandchildren. I pray God that we will.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:33 p.m. outside the Harry S. Truman Building. In his remarks, he referred to President Truman's grandnephew, John Ross Truman, and daughter, Margaret Truman Daniel; George M. Elsey, former administrative assistant to President Truman; and actor James Earl Jones, master of ceremonies.

The President's Internet Address

September 22, 2000

Good afternoon. We Americans are truly fortunate to be living at such an exciting time. Computers and the Internet are revolutionizing the way we work, live, relate to each other and the rest of the world. They also have the potential to fundamentally transform and improve the

way Government serves the American people. Today I want to talk about a major step we're taking toward that goal.

When I became President, there were only 50 websites on the entire World Wide Web. Today, there are almost 20 million. Under the

leadership of Vice President Gore, we've made great progress bringing Government into the digital age. Instead of waiting in line, citizens can go on-line to file their taxes, compare their Medicare options, and find good jobs. They can tap into the latest health research, change their address at the post office, and follow along with NASA's missions in outer space. And they can do it 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

But with 27 million web pages of Government information now on-line and more added every day, finding the information or service you need can be frustrating. That's why I'm pleased to announce that today we're launching a new, one-stop website for Federal on-line information: firstgov.gov. It allows you, for the first time, to link to the Federal Information Service, or service you are looking for, without having to know the name of the agency or the program that offers it.

So, go to www.firstgov.gov, and you're just a few mouse clicks away from websites where you can apply for student loans or reserve a campground in a national park.

Now, when I first announced in June we would be creating firstgov.gov, I promised we would do so in 90 days. That was exactly 90 days ago. I am very proud of the Federal em-

ployees who made this happen in Internet time. And I'm thankful to Dr. Eric Brewer of Inktomi. He's the entrepreneur who, with the help of Federal grants, created one of the private sector's most successful search engine technologies. Out of gratitude and patriotism, he developed and donated the search engine for firstgov.gov.

Now this website belongs to the American people. We've included a place for you to suggest improvements, and we're going to keep working on this site and on all of our Government websites. Firstgov symbolizes, I think, the kind of Government we need in the 21st century, one that empowers citizens to make the most of their own lives.

At the dawn of our Republic, Thomas Jefferson said, "America's institutions must move forward hand in hand with the progress of the human mind." Well, today, as the progress of the human mind races ahead, it's vital that we make sure our democratic institutions keep pace. And if we do, we can create a more perfect, more responsive democracy for the information age.

Thanks for logging on.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. from the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Statement on Signing the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000

September 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2869, the "Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000," which will provide important protections for religious exercise in America. This Act will, in certain cases, forbid State and local governments from imposing a substantial burden on the exercise of religion unless they could demonstrate that imposition of such a burden is the least restrictive means of furthering a compelling governmental interest. The Act would protect the exercise of religion in two situations: (1) where State and local governments seek to impose or implement a zoning or landmark law in a manner that imposes a substantial burden on religious exercise and (2) where State and local governments seek to impose a substantial burden on the religious exer-

cise of persons residing or confined to certain institutions.

I applaud the Congress, particularly Senators Kennedy, Hatch, Reid, and Schumer, and Representatives Canady and Nadler for their hard work in passing this legislation. The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act will provide protection for one of our country's greatest liberties—the exercise of religion—while carefully preserving the civil rights of all Americans. Just as I fully supported the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in 1993, I support Senator Kennedy's and Hatch's bill. Religious liberty is a constitutional value of the highest order, and the Framers of the Constitution

included protection for the free exercise of religion in the very first Amendment. This Act recognizes the importance the free exercise of religion plays in our democratic society.

I also want to thank the Coalition for the Free Exercise of Religion and the civil rights community for the central role they played in crafting this legislation. Their work in passing this legislation once again demonstrates that

people of all political beliefs and faiths can work together for a common purpose that benefits all Americans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 22, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2869, approved September 22, was assigned Public Law No. 106-274.

Statement on the President's Commission on Improving Economic Opportunity in Communities Dependent on Tobacco Production While Protecting Public Health

September 22, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign an Executive order establishing a new Commission to improve opportunities for tobacco farmers and their communities while continuing to protect public health. This action builds on the longstanding commitment Vice President Gore and I share to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco use and protect individual tobacco farmers. Tobacco growers, like many other farmers, have confronted difficult economic circumstances these last few years as tobacco companies increasingly turn to foreign tobacco. We have supported several efforts over the years to protect tobacco farmers and to develop new opportunities for these growers and their communities. The Commission, which will make recommendations on ways to continue this work while protecting public health, is an important next step.

This new panel, the President's Commission on Improving Economic Opportunity in Communities Dependent on Tobacco Production

While Protecting Public Health, will be co-chaired by William Martin "Rod" Kuegel, Jr., the president of the Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association, and Matthew Myers, the president of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Both are leaders in their communities with proven records on bringing grower and health groups together on issues important to both. In 1998 they worked with a coalition of grower, public health, and religious groups to issue a statement of principles outlining their shared commitment to reducing disease caused by tobacco products and ensuring the future prosperity and stability of American tobacco farmers and farming communities. The work of this important new Commission will serve to further demonstrate that the goals of reducing youth smoking and protecting American farmers can be pursued together.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to UNITA

September 22, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1622(d) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) is to continue in effect beyond September 26, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The circumstances that led to the declaration on September 26, 1993, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions and policies of UNITA pose a continuing unusual and ex-

traordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. United Nations Security Council Resolutions 864 (1993), 1127 (1997), 1173 (1998), and 1176 (1998) continue to oblige all member states to maintain sanctions. Discontinuation of the sanctions would have a prejudicial effect on the prospects for peace in Angola. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure on UNITA to reduce its ability to pursue its military operations.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 22, 2000.

NOTE: The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the Strategic Petroleum Reserve and an Exchange With Reporters

September 23, 2000

The President. Good morning. Yesterday I directed the Secretary of Energy to exchange 30 million barrels of crude oil from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve over the next 30 days.

As it stands, overall heating oil inventories are more than 20 percent lower than they were last year, 50 percent lower on the East Coast, more than 60 percent lower in New England. The underlying cause of low inventories is the high price of crude oil.

The overriding purpose for our action is to increase supply and help consumers make it through the cold winter. Families shouldn't have to drain their wallets to drive their cars or heat their homes.

I'd also note that this action will result in more oil in the reserve. This is a swap. And the reserve will be replenished along with a premium, further increasing our long-term protection against energy supply disruptions. This is the right thing to do. It's good energy policy,

good national security policy, and good family policy.

Today I'm announcing new actions to help make sure that heating oil is available and affordable for our families. First, I'm directing the Department of Health and Human Services to release \$400 million in Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds, the largest ever emergency funding release of its kind to help families who can least bear the burden of high energy prices this winter.

Second, I'm asking the EPA to help States identify ways to use more and different kinds of home heating oil while minimizing environmental consequences. This could help to further build home heating oil inventories.

Third, I am directing Federal agencies to make early contractual commitments to purchase heating oil throughout the winter so the wholesalers will have the confidence to build inventories in advance.

Fourth, I'm asking State public utility commissions to ensure that factories and businesses that use heating oil as a backup fuel keep adequate reserves.

And finally, Secretary Richardson will meet with the National Petroleum Council, an energy policy advisory committee, to discuss heating oil production this fall and winter. Taken together, these steps will enhance our Nation's energy security and help to cushion working families from high heating bills. It builds on our decision in July to establish a home heating oil reserve in the Northeast.

Now, we've also taken some important steps to strengthen our long-term energy policy. To ease reliance on imported oil, we've invested in new technologies to enhance recovery of domestic oil reserves, and they are quite promising. To promote clean energy alternatives, we've expanded research and development of solar, wind, biofuels, and other renewable resources.

We have also expanded research in the development of alternative forms of engines, including fuel-cell engines and engines that run on both electricity and gasoline, or electricity and other fuels. To save energy and tax dollars, we have taken dramatic steps to reduce energy use in the Federal Government, America's largest consumer. By making our Federal buildings more energy efficient, we will reduce electricity consumption by 30 percent, saving taxpayers \$800 million a year.

We've adopted energy efficient standards for appliances and forged new alliances with industry, including the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles and the 21st Century Truck Initiative. We're on track to tripling the mileage of passenger vehicles and more than doubling the mileage of medium- and heavy-duty trucks. We have made headway. But too many critical elements of our energy strategy have been chopped, blocked, or ignored by the Republican majority in Congress.

I proposed electricity restructuring legislation. They abandoned it. And for every new dollar we have sought to invest in clean, efficient sources of energy, they have provided the dime.

Today I urge Congress to get off that dime and take action: Take up my energy budget initiatives and tax incentives to help families and businesses buy fuel-saving vehicles and energy-efficient office buildings and homes and appliances; fully fund development and research into

clean energy technology; provide clear guidelines for using home heating oil reserves when we need to; reauthorize the strategic petroleum reserve; and stop trying to make this about drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

We cannot achieve energy security by endangering the environment, denying critical funding, or delaying vital action. We ought to do something more than offer cold comfort to people who simply want a warm home.

Once again, I ask Congress for its support. We can work together. There are many things that we can do. If you look—let me just emphasize this, because it always gets overlooked every time an energy issue comes up—just look at what we have done with immediately available technologies to reduce energy consumption in the Federal Government. If we did the same thing throughout the domestic and the business sectors of the American economy, using off-the-shelf technology with a 2 year or less payoff—if we did it throughout the economy, you would see reduced reliance on foreign oil, lower fuel bills, higher productivity, and more jobs in the American economy.

But we need help from Congress to give people the incentives to do the kinds of things that we're already doing throughout the Federal Government and that many, but nowhere near enough, businesses and consumers are doing.

So I hope we can get some action on the long-term issues as well. But I believe we have done the right thing with the petroleum reserve.

Thank you.

2000 Election and Energy Policy

Q. Mr. President, I was wondering how you would respond to critics, like to Speaker Hastert, Governor Bush, who say this is really politics; this is more about the ballot box than it is the gasoline prices?

The President. Well, first I would say I doubt if they are relying on home heating oil this winter. If you look at it, the reason that the prices got so high is that the supplies got so low. And what we're trying to do here is to even out supply and price. We're in an unusual situation, I might add, where if you look at the projected price of oil for next spring, it's actually lower than it is now.

Now, what does that indicate? If people believe that the price of oil is going to go down in several months, why is it so much higher

now? It must be because there is a supply shortage in the stocks and reserves. So what we decided to do, after debating this for weeks and looking at all of our options, was to have a release from the petroleum reserve, and to do it in the form of a swap. So we release the oil now, and then those who get it will replace it next spring when the oil is projected to be more plentiful and, therefore, much cheaper.

So what we're trying to do is to compensate for the fact that the stocks are too low and the price is too high now and to get the oil back into the reserve in the springtime, when the stocks are supposed to be higher and the price is supposed to be lower. I think it's plainly a prudent thing to do.

Who else had a question?

Oil Prices

Q. When do you think prices are going to come down?

The President. Well, I think—haven't they dropped almost \$3 a barrel in the last 2 days? I think they've dropped quite a bit just in the last couple of days, and former Secretary Rubin used to say, markets go up, and markets go down; it's hard for me to know. All I can tell you is, I think this is a prudent thing to do to increase stocks for the winter and to try to make sure it has a moderating effect on prices, but basically, to deal with the supply issue. And normally, in a market situation, the price will follow. That's what I hope will happen here.

But I will say again, I think it is important that we accelerate the long-term issues. But if you look at the things that are out there now that are available for us, if you look at how close we are to breaking the chemical barriers, to the efficient production of bio-fuels, and all these other things that we're working on—if you look at how close we are to having a truly affordable, efficient fuel-cell vehicle, all these things are out there. We should be accelerating efforts into where we know the future is. And if we do that, we will reduce the number of these instances that the United States and the world will face in the future.

Thank you very much.

Martin Indyk

Q. Can you say anything about Martin Indyk, sir?

The President. No, I have nothing else to say, except I've got to go to California. If you want to come, you're welcome to do it. I think some of you are coming with me.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House prior to departure for Palo Alto, CA. In the exchange, reporters referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin; and U.S. Ambassador to Israel Martin S. Indyk, whose security clearance was suspended on September 22 for improper handling of classified information.

The President's Radio Address *September 23, 2000*

Good morning. In these first fall days of the new millennium, America is basking in the glow of unprecedented prosperity, with the longest economic expansion in history. But we're not just better off; we're more hopeful, more united, and more secure.

Last year the overall crime rate fell for the eighth consecutive year, the longest continuous drop in crime on record, giving us the lowest crime rate in 27 years. Since 1993, gun violence alone has declined by more than 35 percent. But none of us believes America is as safe as it should be, and none of us should be satisfied

until America is the safest big Nation in the world.

This morning I want to talk about new ways we're harnessing the power of technology to catch more gun criminals and keep guns out of the wrong hands. Recently, we saw stark evidence that the Internet is fast becoming a new outlet for illegal gun sales. This past May, two teenagers, using a forged Federal firearms license, were able to order guns over the Internet for delivery to their home in Montclair, New Jersey. Because they used a forged license, there

was no scrutiny, no background check, no questions asked. It was only because of the actions of a suspicious UPS delivery man that this scheme was thwarted.

Unfortunately, the Internet, despite all its benefits, is making it easier for guns to fall into the wrong hands. There are now 4,000 firearm sales-related sites on the Internet, and there are 80 sites where you can actually buy a gun at auction. Clearly, we must do more to ensure that every sale over the Internet is legal and that no one uses the anonymity of cyberspace to evade our Nation's gun laws.

That's why today I'm announcing that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms is launching a new website, called EZ CHECK, to prevent criminals and juveniles from using fraudulent licenses to buy firearms. The system, linked to the ATF website, allows licensed gun dealers to quickly verify that licenses presented to them for purchase or shipment of guns are valid. In addition, the ATF is proposing new measures to require gun sellers to verify licenses and report individuals who use invalid ones.

By making it easier to check the validity of gun licenses, we'll make it harder for guns to fall into the wrong hands and give law enforcement and the gun industry a new tool to put a stop to illegal sales.

EZ CHECK is a part of our comprehensive strategy to strengthen gun laws and better enforce those already on the books. In 1993 we passed the Brady law, which has kept more than half a million felons, fugitives, and domestic abusers from buying firearms. In 1994 we passed an historic crime bill, which has funded more than 100,000 additional community police officers around the Nation. The bill also toughened penalties and banned assault weapons.

Meanwhile, gun prosecutions have been rising. Federal firearms prosecutions have in-

creased 16 percent since 1992, and the average sentence has gone up by 2 years. Since this strategy is working, it's quite curious to me that those who argue for more enforcement over new gun safety legislation are, nevertheless, refusing to fund key elements of our \$280 million gun enforcement initiative, including funds for an additional 1,000 gun prosecutors. So I ask this Congress, don't just talk about strong enforcement; give us the tools to do the job.

I'm also calling on Congress to help prevent gun crimes from happening in the first place by passing our long-overdue commonsense gun safety measures, requiring background checks at gun shows, mandating child safety locks for handguns, and banning the importation of large capacity ammunition clips.

We must begin this new century by abandoning the stale debate from the last one about whether it's better to strengthen gun laws or enforce existing ones. The ATF's new EZ CHECK system, combined with our unprecedented enforcement budget and our strong commonsense gun safety proposals, will do both. They'll be a major step forward in our efforts to crack down on gun criminals and save lives.

Our current prosperity gives us the chance to focus on the big challenges of the new century. Making America the safest big country in the world is a challenge big enough to be worthy of our attention and one we must meet for the sake of our future and our children.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:34 p.m. on September 22 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 23. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 22 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in Palo Alto September 23, 2000

First of all, thank you for talking a few seconds longer so I could—[laughter]—could almost finish my Indian meal. I want to thank the Doctors Mahal and their children for open-

ing their home. Thank you, Vish. Thank you, Dinesh. Thank you, Joel Hyatt.

You know, for a long time, Joel Hyatt was the first legal entrepreneur in America. He had this sort of legal services for the masses. He

was advertising before it was fashionable. Hillary and I used to look at Joel's ad on television. She said, "You know, he was behind us at Yale Law School, but he's way ahead of us in income." [Laughter] So I'm very proud of him and grateful for his service to the party.

I would also like to thank all of those who provided this wonderful meal and the people who served it today. It's really quite a wonderful occasion for me. Back when I was a civilian and had a private life, I used to spend a lot of time in Indian restaurants, starting from—I fell in love with them when I was in England living for 2 years, where most of the impoverished college students like me ate Indian food at least four times a week. [Laughter] We figured if we couldn't be full, at least we would be warm, and we loved it. [Laughter]

I want to thank you for supporting our party, and I want to make just a few brief observations, if I might. First of all, the primary thing I have tried to do as President is to turn the country around and make the systems of our country work so that Americans have the tools and the conditions to make the most of their own lives.

If you look at the Indian-American community in this country, if you look at the phenomenal success just here in Northern California, the industry and enterprise and imagination of people will carry communities and countries a long way if governments aren't getting in the way but instead are offering a hand up. And that's basically what we've tried to do.

I'm very grateful for the partnership that I formed way back in late 1991 with a number of people in Silicon Valley who helped me to adopt good—both macroeconomic policies and to do better by the high-tech community and the information technology revolution in general. And I am very grateful for that.

I also appreciate the kind words many of you said about the opening that my administration and I have made to India and the restoration of harmonious and good relationships which were, as I said at our table, understandably a little out of kilter during the cold war when India had to relate to the Soviet Union because of the tensions between India and China, but for more than a decade now have made absolutely no sense at all. So we are working hard on a partnership that I believe will be one of the most important relationships that the United States has for many, many decades to come.

In a larger sense, your presence here—I met one person who came through the line and said, "I can't believe it. I've been here one month, and I'm meeting the President." [Laughter] And I think that is adequate testimony to the increasing importance of mobility and openness in our global society, increasing interconnectedness, and therefore, increasing the importance of networks. Now, some people believe that networks will replace nation-states. I don't believe that, because there will still be plenty of work to be done by both. But I do believe that global networks will become more and more important.

There is a book I've been talking quite a bit about lately that—the author actually wrote me a letter last week and thanked me. But I haven't asked for any royalties or anything. [Laughter] The title of the book is "Non Zero," written by a man named Robert Wright, who wrote a fine earlier book called, "The Moral Animal."

But the argument of "Non Zero" is that even when human history seems to be regressing, in the Dark Ages, for example, in the early part of the last millennium, basically, there is a long process of increasing interdependence which has reached its apotheosis in our time; and that the more interdependent people become, the more they are compelled to treat each other in better and better ways, because the more you are interdependent with others, the more your victories require other people to have victories, as well.

So the title is a reference to game theory, but that—in a zero-sum game, in order for one person to win, someone else has to lose. In a non-zero-sum game, in order for one person to win, you have to find a way for others to win as well. And he basically argues that the present stage of economic, political, and social development is the latest and by far the most advanced example of the growth of interdependence.

And that's also, by the way, been at the heart of a lot of what I've tried to do in racial, religious, and ethnic reconciliation. I think the trick is not to get people to give up their identities but to take great pride in their identities, their ethnic and their religious convictions, but to recognize, at least in this lifetime, the ultimate primacy of our common humanity and a way of reaching across divides so—not so that we can

give up our differences but so that we can celebrate them and still find a way to work together and move forward.

That's another reason I think that it's very important that you be involved in the political life of your Nation. When Secretary and Mrs. Mineta and I were riding over here, I told him that I believed that it was imperative for the next administration to do more to get Indian-Americans and others who come here from other countries involved not just in the political process but in the governmental process in appointed positions at high levels, in more boards and commissions and more advisory committees, working on more projects, because you really are making the world of the new millennium.

One of the things that I used to say earlier in the year, when our electoral prospects didn't look as good as they do now, when I would assure people that I thought that the Vice President would prevail, is that the question is not whether we're going to change. Anybody in a governmental position who advanced the proposition that things are going so well we shouldn't change, I wouldn't vote for that person.

If there had been a candidate this year running, saying, "Vote for me. Bill Clinton's a great President, and we don't need to change anything," I would vote against that person, because the underlying circumstances of life are changing so much that's not an option.

The real issue is not whether but how. Are we going to change in a way that enables us to take advantage of a unique moment in human history? Are we going to meet the big challenges this country faces? Are we going to continue to successfully integrate all the different groups of immigrants that are coming into our country? Are we going to have a policy with regard to other nations that recognizes that their challenges are our challenges?

We actually had—Vice President Gore and I had some people in the other party making fun of us not very long ago when we said that AIDS was a security challenge. But it is. When you look at democratic African countries with infection rates hovering around 40 percent in their military, when you look at countries we've worked hard to stabilize as free societies that within just a few years will have more people in their sixties than in their thirties, when you look at wars that have been propagated and the children that have been turned into soldiers

and what that's doing to the fabric of society and how the epidemic feeds that, we have to have a broader notion of what is in our security interests.

First, it's about more than military; it's about nonmilitary causes, as well. And secondly, it's about a lot of things that have to do with health and education and well-being.

Climate change, if we don't do something about it, will become a national security concern because more and more land will become unarable, and people will fight more and more over that which is. More and more countries will have water supply problems.

We're working very hard to finish up the peace agreement in the Middle East, and one of the things you never hear anybody talk about is the importance of these nations reconciling so that we can meet the coming water challenge in what is perhaps the second most arid part of the world.

So I wanted to be here not only to thank you for what you have done and thank you for what you are doing but to tell you that to me, your support for our administration and for what we're doing in this election season is a stellar example of what I think America needs to be doing more of.

When I ran for President in 1992, I had a more systematic outreach to all sorts of immigrant groups than anyone ever had. And I did it because I believed that you were important to America's place in the world as well as to America's economic growth and social health. I still believe that more strongly.

So I would just like to leave you with this. There are huge differences between the two parties in America. There are some similarities, and that's good. We've stabilized our country over many years because we've managed to have two parties that could be broadly representative. But in the last decade, as you know, we had a much more stark ideological difference and a challenge that had to be met.

And essentially, our party now is a modern political party with a modern economic philosophy that is pro-growth, pro-high tech, pro-immigration, pro-education, but believes that the most important solutions are community-oriented solutions, the ones where everybody wins.

We believe that everyone deserves a chance, that everyone counts, and that we all do better when we help each other. And when you strip

it all away, that really is the fundamental difference here. That explains the difference in our position on a Patients' Bill of Rights and theirs; our position on a drug benefit for seniors who don't have it now and theirs; our position on raising the minimum wage and theirs; our position on tax cuts so that everybody can afford 4 years of college for their children and theirs; a whole range of issues. And thank goodness, the last 8 years have given us some evidence that if you do all this within the framework of fiscal prudence and a sensitivity to the economic opportunity areas of American society, it turns out that good social policy is good economic policy as well.

So I came here, I guess, finally more than anything else, just to say thank you. This is an interesting election for me. It's the first time in 26 years I haven't been a candidate. *[Laughter]* My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. *[Laughter]* And I tell everyone who will listen, my new official title is not Commander in Chief but Cheerleader in Chief. *[Laughter]* And I'm enjoying it immensely.

I think that Hillary will be elected in New York if we can keep getting—building her support, and I think that we're going to do very well in these Senate races. I think we'll do very well in the House races. But we have to win the White House because of the stark differences on economics, the environment, crime, education, health care. On all these issues, there are real differences.

And I hope that if we do win, and I believe we will, that you will intensify your involvement. I hope you'll continue to support the fundraisers, but I want to see more Indian-Americans in the Government, on the boards, on the commissions, coming to us with specific ideas that ought to be broadly spread, because we have only scratched the surface of the public benefits of the information revolution.

And I'll just close with this. I went to Flint, Michigan, a couple of days ago, which was the home of a lot of the early automobile factories. They still have 7, but they only have 35,000 people working in the car plants there as opposed to 90,000 people at their height.

After the Second World War, an enormous number of people, both African-Americans and European-Americans from my home State, couldn't make a living on the farm anymore, and they moved to Flint or to Detroit or to other towns in Michigan where they got jobs

in the auto industry, and they became good, middle class citizens.

So when I ran for President, everybody from my home State, it seemed like, moved to Chicago or Michigan. I won big victories in Illinois and Michigan, and the gentlemen who were running against me never did figure out why. It's because half the people who live there were born in Arkansas—*[laughter]*—because they literally couldn't make a living, so they went up there.

Now, Flint's gone through this enormous economic restructuring, but I went there because they have one of these community computer centers we're setting up, like the ones I saw in the little village of Nayla, for example, in Rajasthan when I was in India. But they have—in Flint—I went there for a specific reason. They had a particular emphasis on the power of the Internet and new software technology to empower the disabled, and we had this great disability rally.

But before, I went through—and I looked at the technology there and saw how people who were deaf could use it, people who were blind could use it, and I also used this laser technology that is fully activated and operated by one's eyes. And it's very important for people who are completely paralyzed or for people who are suffering from Lou Gehrig's disease, where eventually, you lose all momentum, movement in your body except for your eyes.

The people there in Flint, Michigan, every week get an E-mail from a guy with Lou Gehrig's disease in North Carolina who is a friend of mine. And we were friends in the 1980's, and he was a young, handsome, vigorous man. And we worked on education and economic development in the South, and he was tragically stricken with Lou Gehrig's disease. He's had no movement for some time now.

In the next month or two, he will publish a book that he wrote with his eyes, thanks to the Internet. Maybe even more important, he can talk with his wife and children. And I've mastered the technology enough so that I've turned on lights and turned them off, I turned on the tape deck to listen to music and turn it off. And I finally got "good morning" down—*[laughter]*—but I could see how, with a couple of days' effort, particularly if you couldn't move your head, which is the primary thing that throws it out of whack—it was an amazing thing.

Stephen Hawking, the famous British physicist—and a lot of you may have read his books—is a friend of mine. And he has lived longer with Lou Gehrig's disease than any person ever recorded, as far as we know, any person in history. And he has lived longer because he has just this movement in two fingers. But he can operate a machine that has thousands and thousands of words in it, and he's memorized the order of all of them. And he came to the White House and delivered a speech on the future of time and space for Hillary in one of our Millennial Evenings that he wrote himself, put into his machine, and then pulled out with a voice box. And he is alive today because he can share what he can think and feel and know with other people.

So that is the other thing I would like to say about this. I'm glad all this money has been made here. I'm glad that our country has added all this wealth. I hope we can do a better job by bringing these kinds of opportunities to poor areas and poor people who have been left behind in our country and in other countries.

But fundamentally, the wealth itself is not an end. It's a means to an end. And what really matters to people is their life story. Norm and Danny and I were talking about that on the way in. That's one thing I learned as a young boy from my relatives who had no money but were very wise. They said, "Just remember, there is not much difference separating the very successful from people that have had a lot of bad breaks in life. And everybody's got a story. And people should be able to live their story. They should be able to dream and live their story."

And one of the things that I am thrilled about is that this information revolution and what's

happening with the Internet has the potential to lift more people more quickly out of poverty, adversity, and disability than any development in all of human history by a good long stretch.

But it will be very important for the United States to lead the way and very important—this is another big difference between the two parties. One of my greatest regrets is that the United States is—we have never succeeded in winning a big debate about what our responsibilities are in the rest of the world and how fulfilling them helps us. If we help a poor country become a middle class country and a trading partner, it helps us. It's also the morally right thing to do.

So that is another argument, I would hope, for all of you staying very actively involved. We need to imagine what all these technologies can do and all of these new ideas that you're coming up with and all of these new companies you start, what it can do, not simply to pile wealth upon wealth but to do it by continuing to advance society, by continuing to find those non-zero-sum solutions so that we all win.

If we become what we ought to become, if we make the most of this truly magic moment, I'm convinced that it will be in no small measure because people like you played a full part in it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:36 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Anomol and Surjit Mahal; Vish Akella, event chair, who introduced the President; Dinesh Sastry, board member, Democratic Leadership 2000; Joel Hyatt, finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and Secretary Mineta's wife, Danaelia.

Remarks at a Barbecue for Congressional Candidate Mike Honda in San Jose, California

September 23, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, I never, in my wildest dreams, thought I would be introduced by a Japanese-American wearing cowboy boots. [*Laughter*] I mean, you're the walking embodiment of one America right there. [*Laughter*] I love it. Good for you. Look, we've got to

have a little fun. It's too nice. You know, we're all having a good time.

I want to thank Jessie and Surinder and the Singh family for welcoming us to their beautiful home, and for so conveniently having such a nice deck so we can all gather. Let's give them

all a hand. *[Applause]* That's really great that they had us. Thank you.

I want to thank Secretary Mineta and his wonderful wife for flying out here with me today so he could be here with Mike. You should be very proud of Norm Mineta. He's doing a good job at the Commerce Department; he did a great job for you.

And I want to thank your Representatives who are here. They are some of the best in the Congress, some of the best I've ever seen, and you're very fortunate. I want to thank Anna Eshoo and Zoe Lofgren and Sam Farr. And Paul Pelosi, thank you for coming today. And we look forward to Nancy's continued progress. And I thank Senator Liz Figueroa for coming here. Thank you very much.

I want to thank all of you for coming, and I'd like to say, before I get into any substantive remarks, how profoundly grateful I am to the people of this State, and particularly the people of this community for over 8 years now—partnership and friendship and support for me and the Vice President and our administration. Some of you in this audience were here the very first time I came to Silicon Valley a long time ago, and I am very grateful to you.

I am also grateful because this has been my daughter's home for 3 years now. And I wonder if we'll ever get her back from here. *[Laughter]*

I wanted to be here today because I like Mike Honda, and I admire him, and I strongly support him, and because the stakes in this particular race are quite high.

I've done everything I could do in the last 8 years to show that a Democrat could be pro-business and pro-labor, pro-growth and pro-environmental protection, for a high-tech future and the preservation of traditional American values. And that's what I think he represents. And I can't tell you how important I think it is for Mike and so many of our other good candidates here—I'm going to southern California to help some more of them tonight—to win these House races.

I think it's very important that the American people decide what they think this election's about. I've often found in politics that what people think the election's about determines for whom they vote and how it comes out. And if somebody were to say, "Vote for me because I think Bill Clinton's been a great President, and I won't change anything," I'd vote against that person, because the world is changing.

The question is not whether we're going to change, but how we're going to change and whether we're going to use this moment of incredible prosperity and social progress to meet big challenges and seize big opportunities or whether we're going to be sort of distracted and take some of the siren songs that are being sung in this election.

You know, anybody in this audience that's over 30 years old can remember at least once in your life when you made a mistake, not because things were going so poorly but because things were going so well you thought you no longer had to concentrate. If you live long enough, you'll make one of those mistakes. I see a lot of people nodding their heads. *[Laughter]*.

It is sometimes more difficult to make a good decision in good times than it is in tough times. I mean, I know the people took a big chance on me in California in 1992. I can only imagine how many people on election day in 1992 walked into the ballot box and said, "Should I really vote for this guy? He's only 46. His opponent says he's only the Governor of a small southern State." I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment, and I still do. *[Laughter]* So people think, "You know, this is a big chance." But now, give me a break. Look at what California was going through in '92. It wasn't that big a chance. We had to do something different.

Now there is a sense of well-being, a sense of progress, a sense of possibility, a sense of confidence. But it's easy for people to lose their concentration. And I'm telling you, in my lifetime, our Nation has never had both the opportunity and the obligation to build the future of our dreams for our children and to fulfill our responsibilities around the world that we have today.

And I have so much greater appreciation than I ever did before I became President of the importance of every single seat in the House, every single seat in the Senate. Our economic plan in 1993 passed by a single vote. Everybody in the other party said it would bring on another recession, lead to a big increase in unemployment. As I said in Los Angeles a couple of weeks ago, time has not been very kind to their prediction.

But we turned the country around, and Al Gore now says the best is still out there. Now,

a lot of people just think that's campaign rhetoric. I believe that. I really believe the best is still out there. But we have to decide. We have to decide that we'll meet the challenge of the aging of America so that when all of us baby boomers retire and there's only two people working for every one person on Social Security and Medicare, we won't bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren.

We have to decide to talk about what Mike did, that we are going to give a world class education to the largest and most racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse group of schoolchildren in the history of the United States. But it's not like we don't know how to do it.

There are schools all over this State succeeding against all the odds. When I started working on school reform 20 years ago and Hillary and I started trying to rewrite the standards when I was Governor 17 years ago, people sort of had a hunch about what would work. We know now.

And you can see it in a lot of your most successful charter schools in California. You can see it in a lot of the other public schools. I was in a school in Harlem the other day where, 2 years ago, 80 percent of the children were doing math and science and reading in an elementary school below grade level—80 percent—by any measure, a failing school. Two years later 74 percent of the kids are doing math and reading at or above grade level—in only 2 years.

Look, we can make public schools work, but we need smaller classes, modern facilities, Internet connections, well-trained teachers, high standards, and if the schools that are failing don't turn around, they have to be put under new management and change.

This is not rocket science. We now know how to do this. But we have to decide to do it. We have to make a decision. We have to make a decision. We like running a surplus instead of a deficit and having low interest rates—big decision in this election.

We could get this country out of debt in 12 years for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President. Now, what difference does it make here? This area got about 30 percent of all the venture capital invested last year in the United States.

I received a study from my economic advisers a month ago that said if the Vice President was elected and had the support of Congress

to stay on the path of paying down the debt as opposed to adopting the tax cut proposals of his opponent, plus privatization of Social Security, which costs another \$1 trillion over the next 10 years, and will take us back to deficits, it will keep interest rates a percent lower.

One percent lower interest rates means \$390 billion in lower home mortgage payments—\$390 billion—\$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments, or a \$435-billion and—what does that mean—\$435 billion tax cut, keeping interest rates lower. We have to decide. Are we going to do that, or are we going to go back to the way we used to run our budget?

We have to decide whether we believe we can grow the economy and improve the environment or whether it's too much trouble, we don't want to take the chance, and so we're going to relax all these environmental regulations, repeal my order setting aside \$43 million roadless acres in the national forests, undo some of the national monuments I've set aside.

These are specific, clear choices. We have to decide whether we believe that we can have a health care system we can afford where medical professionals still called the shots instead of allowing people who don't have medical training to make these decisions. That's what the fight over the Patients' Bill of Rights is all about. It's a decision we have to make.

Now, and I can tell you I used to believe, even after I got into politics that, you know, these races for Congress and Senate sometimes could be just decided on local issues and personal feelings without regard to that. Look, I like Mike Honda. If I lived out here, I'd be for him just because I like him and because he's a Democrat. But I'm telling you, there are far bigger stakes here.

Don't take my word. Ask Anna. Ask Zoe. Ask Sam. They've been living with this. We have lived with this for 6 years. And we may never have another time in our lifetime to do this. We also, I might add, have very different views about immigration by and large.

We want to raise the H-1B visa ceiling—all of us do—a lot. But we'd like the permits to cost a little more so we could put the money into training Americans who are still here, who have insufficient skills, who also need to be part of the high-tech economy. We think that's important.

I could give you lots of other examples, but I hope that I'm making the point. Number one, you've got to go out here and convince people that didn't come today that this is a big election and no choice can be taken lightly, and that the decision you make for President and Vice President, for the Congress seats, it has to be rooted in what you want for your country and your State and your family. And I'm telling you, we may never have a chance like this again.

And the last thing I would like to say is, to echo something that's been said earlier, I think the most important difference today, based on 8 years of working at it pretty steadily now, is that our party really does believe that everyone counts, that everyone deserves a chance, and that we all do better when we work together. We believe that we live in a country that is stronger if it's a community, and we believe in a world that is becoming increasingly not only connected through the net but interconnected through a web of mutual interdependence, and we think it's a good thing, not a bad thing.

We don't like the politics of division. We like the politics of unity. We want to try to find a way for us all to go forward together. And if you just look around the world at all the troubles that I've tried to deal with in the last 8 years that were rooted in people's inability to treat those of different races or ethnic groups or religions as equal in terms of their common humanity and if you look at all the troubles we've had in America that we need not have had, if we hadn't had such bitter partisanship in Washington, there's a pretty good argument for sticking behind our side and trying to build a stronger, more interdependent American community.

I am glad that we have people here—I'm glad we've got people here from all over the world. And if we can get along together within our borders, we can have a much more profound impact on helping people to get along better beyond our borders. If we can be good at home, we can do good around the world.

But there really is an important issue at stake here. I see it all the time, when I make the arguments for expanding trade in the global economy but doing so in a way that lifts people up and improves the environment, improves labor standards, and fights against child labor and other abusive labor conditions.

I see it when I argue that we ought to be out there aggressively reducing the debt of the poorest nations in the world, if they'll have honest governments and be good trading partners with us. I see the same thing here at home, when I argue that we ought to—we should have passed the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban like we did. We ought to close the gun show loophole and ban child trigger locks. And we ought to, not because I'm against people hunting or going and doing their sport shooting but because we have mutual responsibilities to one other, and one of those is that, together we ought to take some special effort to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. That's our common responsibility.

So, that's what the Democrats amount to. We want to go into the future together. And I just—let me just close with this story. I had an amazing day a couple days ago in Flint, Michigan. I went to one of the community computer centers that we set up. And this one—we're trying to set up a thousand around America so that people who aren't connected in their own homes or in their own businesses can come in, get training, and turn their lives around.

The one in Flint is especially focused on the needs of disabled Americans, and oh, it was quite a kick. I got to see people who were blind work in braille and then put it into the computer and have the computer speak back to them. I got to see people who were deaf work with a computer, and it spoke to those who could hear and wrote to those who couldn't. And I got to see an amazing laser technology where people who had no movement in their bodies and could only use their eyes, could use their eyes on a computer screen to turn the lights on and off in their house, to turn the music on and off on their tape deck, to write messages to their relatives.

And I actually got to use this, and I realize this is about way more than money. I've got a friend with Lou Gehrig's disease, with whom I used to work 20 years ago. He lives in North Carolina. We used to work on economic development in the South. He has no movement anywhere, except in his eyes. And in the next month or two, his latest book will be published, that he wrote with his eyes.

Now, he counts, too. He deserves a chance. We're a better country because he can live and communicate and because he has been empowered. That's what we stand for. So I want you

to help Mike, because most of you know him, like him, trust him; he's your friend. But you have to understand, most people who vote on election day never come to one of these events. Most people who vote on election day, no matter how many hands he shakes, have not met the candidate.

And you, every one of you, will see a lot of people between now and the election, and you have got to talk to them and tell them this is the chance of a lifetime for America. And we can meet these really big challenges, and they ought to be for Mike Honda, and they ought to be for Al Gore and Joe

Lieberman, because we believe that we all do better when we help each other.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:11 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to barbecue hosts Jessie and Surinder Singh; Danaelia Mineta, wife of Secretary Norman Mineta; Paul Pelosi, husband of Representative Nancy Pelosi; Secretary Mineta's wife, Danaelia; and State Senator Liz Figueroa. State Assemblymember Mike Honda was a candidate for California's 15th Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Carl Rowan September 23, 2000

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Carl Rowan, one of America's most prolific columnists and social commentators.

Carl Rowan called his autobiography "Breaking Barriers," and that was exactly what he did. He was, without a doubt, one of our Nation's most eloquent voices for human rights and racial justice. Carl's passion for progress led him from a struggling coal mining town to the U.S. Navy, where he served as one of its first African-American commissioned officers. It led him from the newsroom to the corridors of power and back again, to the pages of our Nation's newspapers.

Carl Rowan served two Presidents and represented the United States abroad. But he saw himself first and foremost as a journalist. His gentle, civil tone only heightened the power of his commentary, and he felt a special obligation not only to inform his readers but to enrich them with new ways of thinking.

Hillary and I will miss Carl Rowan and the special perspective that he shared with his Nation. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Vivien, and their three children.

Remarks at a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in Brentwood, California September 23, 2000

The President. Thank you.

Audience member. Four more years! [*Laughter*]

The President. That's one song we won't sing tonight. [*Laughter*] Wow. Well, first, let me thank Michael and Jena and everyone who brought us all together for a perfectly wonderful evening. I think you've actually had a good time. I hope you have. I have.

And my friend David Foster, thank you for putting together that show. It was wonderful.

I love Richard Marx's songs. I'm glad I got to hear Kayla. Nita was stunning. Jessica took my breath away. Those of you who love opera know there's no 19-year-old in the world who has an opera voice like that, anywhere. She's amazing.

I love the band. I like the sax player over here. [*Laughter*] I don't know that I like that Christian Slater can also sing and that Rob Lowe plays saxophone better than me. I don't think I like that. [*Laughter*] But we all had a lot

of laughs tonight. And I'm grateful for what has been said and for the songs that have been sung.

But I'm especially—I'm just grateful to be here on behalf of my friend Dick Gephardt. He and Jane have been friends of Hillary's and mine a long time—and Charlie Rangel, Bob Matsui, Henry Waxman. Brad Sherman is here. I think Xavier Becerra is here. Patrick Kennedy, thank you for doing such a good job. I know we've got Jane Harman, Mike Honda, Adam Schiff, Janice Nelson, and Gerrie Schipske here, at least those candidates, maybe some more.

I want to just talk to you; I won't take long tonight. But I want to ask you to do something besides give your money. So you have to listen a little bit.

You might ask yourself why, in the last year of my Presidency, when things are going so well, I would do what is now 138 events. And you might say, "Well, maybe he did a few for Hillary. He had to do that, but why did he do the others?" *[Laughter]*

And I told somebody the other day, this is a strange time in my life. It's the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. I'm kind of trading in the title of Commander in Chief for Cheerleader in Chief. *[Laughter]* But I like it. I like it because the whole essence of freedom and democracy is that nobody is indispensable, but the principles and the ideals and the energy and the vision of the vast masses of people, that is indispensable.

I'm doing this partly because we lost the majority because of what the Democrats were willing to do for you in '93 and '94, and the members of the other party wouldn't help them. When we adopted the economic plan and not a one of them would vote for it, they said we were raising taxes on people we weren't raising taxes on. They said we were going to break the economy and drive up unemployment and explode the deficit. And we did it in late '93. And in '94, when the voters were voting, they didn't yet know whether it would work or not.

We adopted a crime bill in '94, after we passed the Brady bill in '93 requiring handgun owners to do background checks. Then we adopted a crime bill to put 100,000 police on the street and banned assault weapons. And the NRA said we were going to interfere with the hunters. And we didn't adopt the crime bill until '94, and so when the people voted, it was—

they didn't know whether they were telling the truth or not.

We tried to provide health care to all Americans. And like Harry Truman and Jimmy Carter and Richard Nixon before us, everybody who ever tried it, we got beat. We got further, actually, even than Harry Truman did, and we didn't lose quite as many seats as he did for exactly the same reason.

And I've had to listen to 8 years of misrepresentation now about what we proposed. But the people that wanted it were disappointed they didn't get it. And the people that thought it was a bad deal were inflamed. And all those things happened, and we lost the majority in the House of Representatives and the Senate in '94—because they did what was right for America.

And we've gone from a \$290 billion deficit to a \$250 billion surplus because they were willing to lay down their majority. And there were good people who gave up their careers in Congress to turn this country around. There were good people—at least a dozen of them who lost their seats because they came from rural districts, where a lot of people had hunting licenses, and the hunters were told that their Congressman had voted to interfere with their right to go into the woods and hunt. There was nothing true about it. But the voters didn't know, and they were in a bad frame of mind. Turnout was low, and we lost a dozen Members because the NRA told the people—falsely—that the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban were somehow designed to interfere with them.

Well, it's different now. They know that the economic plan works. We've kept interest rates down and gave the country a different future. The crime rate has dropped for 8 years in a row, a 27-year low, a 35 percent drop in gun crime, and nobody has missed a day in the deer woods. *[Laughter]* It's different now.

And so part of me wants to do this because they took the bullets for what I asked them to do to make America a better place. And they had to run in 1994, and I didn't. I had until 1996. By '96, everybody said, "You know, this thing is rocking along pretty good here. We might not want to mess it up." But they paid.

Even more important, they ought to be in the majority because of the future. And that's the last thing I want to say. In 1996 we didn't

win a couple of seats because people from California didn't vote when the people on the East Coast called the election for me. So a lot of people said, "Well, that's over; I won't go vote."

What I want to say to you tonight is that—I just want to echo what Dick said. In my lifetime, which, unfortunately, is now more than a half century, and most days I'm okay about that, too—[laughter]—but in my lifetime we have never had, at once, this economic prosperity, social progress, and the absence of domestic crisis or external threat.

Therefore, we have never had as much of an opportunity to build the future of our dreams for our children. And the real reason they ought to be in the majority is not that they were wrongly kicked out in '94, under the most adverse possible circumstances, are not so you can make it possible for me to sleep easier at night when I leave the White House, knowing that we helped to bring them back. It's because it's the right thing for America's future.

Let me tell you what—we could actually in the next few years end child poverty in America. We could actually provide a world-class education to all the kids that live in this country. We actually know how to do it now. I've been working at this for 22 years, and when Hillary and I started out doing all of this school reform, we thought we knew what to do, but nobody really knew. Now we know.

I was at a school in Harlem the other day, a grade school, where 2 years ago 80 percent of the children were reading and doing math below grade level, and 2 years later, 74 percent of the children are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years. This can be done everywhere. This is not rocket science. We know how to do it now. Our plan will do it.

But they need small classes and modern schools and trained teachers and the Internet hookups, and they need high standards. And then the schools that aren't cutting it need to be identified and turned around or put under different management. It's not rocket science. We know how to do this now, but we have to decide whether we're going to do it.

We can make America the safest big country in the world, but we have to decide to do it. We can reverse this global warming—if you've got little kids, you better care a lot about this—and continue to grow the economy. But we have to decide to do it.

And my only worry here is that things are going so well, people may just sort of sidle through the election, thinking there are no real consequences, not understanding the choices on health care and education and the economy and the way we relate to the rest of the world—on arms control, for example, huge differences between the two parties.

So here's what I want to ask you to do. I thank you for your money. I thank you for the money you've given to Al and Joe and the Democratic Party. I thank you for the money you've given to the House. Many of you have given to the Senate candidates. A lot of you have given to Hillary. If you haven't, I hope you will. [Laughter] I thank you for all that.

But remember, every one of you, every day, comes in contact with tons of people who have never been to one of these events, who never will go, don't know anybody in public life, but on election day they will go vote. And I would like to ask you to do something you probably have never thought of doing, which is to take some time every day between now and the election to bring this election up to somebody you know or you come in contact with and tell them why you came here tonight, why you forked over the money, why you know Dick Gephardt ought to be Speaker, why you're trying to help us win the Senate, why Al Gore and Joe Lieberman should be elected. This is very important.

America is going to change a lot in the next 8 years. When Al Gore says the best is—you ain't seen nothing yet, you may think that's just a campaign slogan. It might interest you to know that I actually believe that. We've spent a lot of time these last 8 years just trying to turn this country around. And it's like—it's why the *Titanic* hit the iceberg; you can't turn a big ocean liner around in a split second. And that's what a nation is like.

And now we've got it turned around. It's going in the right direction. And we, literally, are free to think about big things. We could get the country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President. I mean, that's amazing, you know. Isn't it?

Now, it would require you to take a smaller tax cut, but it'll keep interest rates lower—one percent lower at least for a decade—the difference in the Republican and Democratic

plans. You know what that's worth? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in home mortgage reductions, alone—just in home mortgages, never mind the business loan, what it will do to the markets and all that.

So you need to do this, not for me, for you, for your kids, and your grandkids. Because anybody in this room tonight over 30 can remember at least one time in your life when you made a serious mistake, not because your life was going so badly but because things were going so well, you thought you didn't have to concentrate any more.

Now, anybody who's over 30 has made one of those mistakes. I mean a big one. [*Laughter*] Unless you've just been comatose, you've made a mistake like that. Now that's where we are. That's where the country is today. Are we going to grab a hold of this? Now, a lot of you said some very nice things, and Kenny Edmonds and his wife, Tracy, they've been real friends to me, and I appreciated him saying that I was for real. Whatever that means, that's what I've tried to be all right—for good or real.

I want to tell you something. I want to tell you what this means to me. You know, if Dick Gephardt were in the majority, we would have raised the minimum wage this year. You know what that would have meant? Ten million more people—10 million more people would be out there working and having greater dignity in their work and being rewarded for it. The richest time in the world, this Congress has not restored the minimum wage in real dollar terms to where it was 15, 16 years ago.

And if he had been the Speaker and we'd been the majority in the Senate, we'd have a Patients' Bill of Rights. You know, that sounds like a good thing, but 18 million people a year have their medical care either denied or delayed, even though the doctors want to give it to the patients because the insurance industry and the HMO's don't want to do it—18 million people. We're talking about real people here, 22 million people who have jobs because of the things we've done together, new jobs.

So you're talking about—when you hear people talking about this, there are millions of older people who need to be able to buy medicine. You know, if you live to be 65 in America, your life expectancy is 82. And the young women in this audience, because of the human genome discoveries—those of you who will have babies over the next 10 years, at least by the

end of that cycle, your babies will be born with a life expectancy of about 90 years.

Now, that's the good news. But what are we going to do to make those years meaningful? How are we going to keep people healthy in those years? How are we going to make those years not only living years but life-full years? And don't you think that somebody ought to be able to have good years, even if they're not rich when they turn 65? That's what this Medicare drug thing is all about.

You've got people out there, literally can't take medicine that has been prescribed for them without giving up what they had to spend on food today. So what I want you to understand is, these are big issues. One of the reasons that I want Al Gore to be elected is, in spite of all the people making fun of him and misrepresenting what he said about his role in the Internet, he understands the future, and he thinks about it.

All your medical records and your financial records are going to be on somebody's computer. Don't you think you ought to be able to say yes before somebody gets them? And if you get to say yes, how are we going to allow the Internet economy to continue to grow? Wouldn't you like somebody in the White House who understood that and thought about it all the time?

This is a magic moment. Believe me, the best stuff is still out there. And this is the last point I want to make. It's late, and I'm tired, and I'm jet-lagged. But I wanted to go back to what Kenny said, because Norm Mineta was riding with me up in northern California today, and he asked me why I did my politics the way I do, or how I came to be the way I am in public life.

And I said, "Well, when I was a little boy, I used to get on a bus two or three times a month and go about 80 miles down the road to my great uncle's house and sit out on the porch and listen to him talk. He had about a sixth grade education and about 180 IQ. And when I was a little boy, he used to say, 'Now, Bill, you just sit here, and when these people come up here, you listen to their stories, and you just remember everybody's got a story. And the poor man's story is about as good as a rich man's story and is not but a turn or two in life that makes a difference between one and the other.' And so I would sit there, year-in and year-out, and listen to that."

And then when I became old enough to run for public office, even when I started working in campaigns, I noticed that every election, the people told their stories in slightly different ways, almost like there was a different song every 2 years or 4 years, always with the same theme, always using the same words, but the stories were always different.

All of you are in a unique position to make sure that this is an election devoted to America's stories being heard. If you look at all the differences between our party and the other party on all the issues, it basically comes down to this: We think everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; we all do better when we help each other. That's what we believe.

We believe that our independence as people depends upon recognizing our interdependence as people, that we are growing closer and closer together, that we have to reach across all the lines that divide us, that hate crimes are nutty hangovers from an earlier period where people were scared of those who were different from them or taught that they were somehow morally inferior, and that the truth is, America is the greatest place in the world today because it's the most diverse place in the world. That's what we believe.

We believe the role of Government is to give people a hand up who need it, to create the conditions and give people the tools to live their dreams. But mostly we believe we're so interdependent we need each other. And all I know is, those ideas, in practice, worked pretty well the last 8 years. It turns out that what is the right thing to do is also good economics, good social policy, good crime policy, good environmental policy.

But when you go home tonight, if somebody asks you why you're a Democrat, tell them that everybody counts; everybody deserves a chance; we all do better when we help each other; and everybody has a story.

And I will close with this. Two days ago I went to Flint, Michigan, a town I spent a lot of time in that's been very good to me. And there is a bunch of people from Flint, from Arkansas because in the forties and fifties, after the war, a lot of people in the South couldn't make a living off the land. And blacks and whites alike exploded out of there. A bunch of people came to California from the South. A bunch of people even went back east to New York.

But in our part of the South, nearly everybody who left went to Illinois and Michigan. That's why I won those places in '92, when I ran for President. Those guys are still trying to figure out how I won those places. They don't understand. Every third voter was from Arkansas. It was easy. *[Laughter]*

So anyway, I go to Flint, which lost over half its auto employment. They went from 90,000 people working in the car plants to 35,000, and they've had to rebuild. So we put a community computer center in Flint, and Dick and I are trying to get the Congress now to approve funds to put a thousand of these across America, so that people even who don't have computers, whether they're children or older people—can at least come into these centers, at all hours of the day and night, and try to get hooked into the new world of the information economy.

The one in Flint is the best one in America that we know of for working with disabled Americans. And so I went to the center, and I saw the stuff. And then I spoke to this huge crowd of people with every conceivable disability and ability known to man. So I went in, and I saw this software program. And there was this blind woman feeding it into the computer in braille and pressing a button so it spoke back to her, and she knew that she had done the right thing. And there was a deaf person feeding it into the computer in braille, and then it wrote back to her, so she knew it was real.

And then they took me to this laser technology made for people who are totally paralyzed or have Lou Gehrig's disease or something else that keeps you from moving anything but your eyes. And I learned how to turn lights on and off in a house, start the tape deck and hear the music. I even wrote "good morning" to the people who were with me with my eyes.

And the person there said, "You know, we get E-mails every week from a guy in North Carolina named Joe Martin who's got Lou Gehrig's disease." I said, "Yes, I know him." And I'm just going to tell you this one story, because we invest a lot to help people with disabilities access this technology. And remember, I think if they can do it and they can live their stories, we're all better off. So here's Joe Martin's story.

When I met him 15 or 16 years ago, he was a very handsome man with a beautiful wife, who was North Carolina's representative on

something called the Southern Growth Policies Board. And because I was the Governor of a southern State, we would meet and work together on how to develop jobs and education in the South. And of all the people I fool with from all the States that I worked with, I think I liked Joe Martin the best, which is sort of strange.

His brother was a chemistry professor who became the Republican Governor of North Carolina. I liked his brother, too. But you wouldn't expect that guy to be my favorite guy, but I liked him, because he was serious and he was full of energy. He was vital. He was charismatic. He was dynamic. He was constant motion. Fast forward 15 years, and he's got Lou Gehrig's disease, and he continues to go down, and he can't move.

So Joe Martin has lost all the things that I found most attractive, except the inner qualities, which have deepened. And he is a far more impressive man today than he was before.

And in about 2 months, Joe Martin will publish a book he wrote with his eyes. Every day he talks to his wife and children on that computer with his eyes. And he's still alive because he can say what he knows and what he feels to other people.

Now, I think it's a good thing that some of your tax money finances research into technologies like that and tries to spread it to other people and provides a center like that in Flint, where people can come who are disabled and get E-mails from—and he writes up there once a week. He E-mails them with his eyes. And when they know about Joe Martin, all those other people don't feel sorry for themselves anymore. I think that is a good thing.

So that's what I want to tell you. To me, this isn't very complicated. I believe that we are growing more and more and more interdependent. I believe in order to make the most of the modern world we live in and all these wonderful technologies, we have to understand that our enlightened self-interests requires us to try to make sure every man and woman and boy and girl get to live their story, even if they have to do it with just their eyes. And I believe that the best is still out there. I nearly know the best is still out there if we make the right decisions. So thank you for being so nice to me. Thank you for all the things you said. Thank you for raising the \$4 million-plus. But remember, if every day the people in this room took a little time to make sure that everyone you know understood what was at stake and why they ought to stick with us, we'd have the celebration we want on election night, and most important, you'd have the future that your children deserve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Michael and Jena King; music producer David Foster; musician Richard Marx; actors Christian Slater and Rob Lowe; Representative Patrick J. Kennedy, chairman, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; Mike Honda, Adam Schiff, Janice Nelson, Jane Harman, and Gerrie Schipske, candidates for California's 15th, 27th, 28th, 36th, and 38th Congressional Districts, respectively; and musician Kenneth Edmonds, popularly known as Babyface, and his wife, Tracy.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Lois Capps in Pacific Palisades, California

September 24, 2000

The President. Thank you.

Audience member. Four more years! Four more years!

The President. In your dreams. [Laughter] No way!

The amazing thing is that Susan and Ted should be surprised that I would want to come

to their backyard. I would be happy to come next Sunday, too. [Laughter] Is this a gorgeous place or what? I mean, amazing.

I want to thank you both for having us here and supporting one of the finest people I've ever known in public life. And I know when you have a family and your Sundays are

precious, and I thank you for giving us this time and making it possible for all of us to come.

I want to thank all of you for being here. I thank Representatives Becerra and Sherman for coming to support Lois, and I thank Senator O'Connell and Kathleen Connell for being here. And mostly I just want to thank all of you for being here.

I want to say just a few words about Representative Capps. I got a little choked up when she started talking about my relationship with her family. I loved her husband very much. He was a special man, and we had a great rally in '96 in Santa Barbara and there were 15,000 or 20,000 people there with the Sun out and the ocean glistening, you know. And I thought we all were just going to levitate off the side of the world. *[Laughter]* If I had done that, it would have been the subject of another investigation. *[Laughter]* "How did he do that? What was behind that? What mysterious foreign entity financed that levitation?" *[Laughter]*

And Laura, who is standing back there, did work in the White House for many years, and she worked right behind my office, so I saw her several times a day. And she was one of the true, good souls in the White House. She kept everybody in a good frame of mind, and you couldn't act small around her, not only because she's physically big, but because she's big inside, just like her mother.

So, I'm honored to be here. But I also want to emphasize what Lois said. Now, I have worked harder in this election, I think, than any other one I've ever been in, although it's the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. *[Laughter]* This is something like the 140th campaign event I've done this year. And I've done these things for individual House Members and Senators and for a Senate and House committee and for the National Democratic Committee, which basically benefits directly Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. And of course, I've made a little extra effort in New York—*[laughter]*—where I have more than a passing interest in the outcome of the race. *[Laughter]*

The new joke around the White House is that, now that my party has a new leader and my family has a new candidate, my title should be changed to Cheerleader in Chief, and I'm quite happy with that. But I want you to know, first of all, I hope you remember what Lois

said, and I hope you remember what Susan said about this election.

I worked as hard as I could, and Lord knows, the people of California have been good to me, from the June '92 primary to the general election in '92 to the overwhelming mandate I got here in '96. And we've worked very hard to turn this country around and to beat back the reaction to what we were trying to do that was manifest in the Gingrich revolution and the Republicans taking over the Congress and many of the extremist things that have been done over the last 5, 6 years.

And we've had a great deal of success in actually getting affirmative things done, because, as you're about to see, when the Congress gets ready to go home, if the Democrats stick with me even though we're in the minority, we get a lot of what we want. Otherwise, nobody gets to go home. *[Laughter]*

So we work all year long just to sort of keep our heads above water waiting for the last 3 weeks, and then we all sit there like calm Buddhas—*[laughter]*—waiting for the results to come in. So watch it, and see if we can pull it off one more time.

But now, the American people really do have to decide. I mean, they really have to decide whether you think they're right or we are. There will be an effort at bipartisan cooperation no matter what happens in this election, because if we win the majority, it won't be so big that we won't have to work with them. We might even win the Senate back; but if we do, it will just be by a seat or so.

I do believe that the Vice President and Joe Lieberman will be elected, and they should be, because they have a better plan and they've got a better record and they've got a better direction.

But you have to understand, I know better than anybody alive now the enormous consequences of every single seat in the House and every single seat in the Senate. And I cannot even begin to tell you, especially for the House, what a difference it makes to be in the majority. Because I can give you example after example, over the last 5 years, when we had enough Republican votes, voting with our side, to do things, and because of the way the rules work in the House of Representatives, we couldn't even get a vote on a measure, just because we weren't in the majority.

I could give you example after example where, because we weren't in the majority on these committees, amendments were put into bills weakening the environment or undermining the public health or the long-term public interests of America, where we couldn't get them out because, by the time they actually got to the floor, they were in some big defense bill or some big other bill that Lois and everybody else had to vote for because you can never explain to people at home why are you voting against education or against health care or against defense. And because we weren't in the majority on these committees, all that underbrush was in there.

And this is really important, and the American people now have to decide, because we actually have a chance, because of our economic prosperity and because crime is down, welfare is down, teen pregnancy is at a recorded low, every social indicator, virtually, is going in the right direction. We have a chance to build the future of our dreams for our kids. We can have a health care system that really serves everybody, in the ways that Lois said, with a Patients' Bill of Rights and the Medicare drug issue for the seniors. But also, we can do a lot more for people that don't have health insurance, to make it affordable for them to buy it. There are still over 40 million Americans that don't have it.

We can actually provide a world-class education for all of our kids. I've been working in education for all of our kids. It's not like—I've been working in education for 20 years, and a lot of the teachers here will tell you that there have been 20 years of hard work of trying to figure out how do you deal with a more and more diverse student body from more and more different and often very difficult home backgrounds and get a world-class education out there.

And we had a lot of ideas for a long time, but we now have lots of research that shows us how to do it. I was in a school in Harlem in New York City the other day that 2 years ago—listen to this—2 years ago 80 percent of the children in this school were doing reading and math below grade level. Two years ago—a failing school by any standard. Today, 2 years later, with a new principal, a school uniform policy, the smallest class size policy, a strong—you know, very high standards and accountability—2 years they went from an 80 percent

failure rate to 74 percent of the kids doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years.

Now, that can be done everywhere. But you've got school after school after school where the kids are piled up in housetrailers out behind the buildings. You've got school after school after school in our cities where the average school building in many of our cities is 65 years old—New York City is still heating schools with coal-fired furnaces from the late 19th century—where they can't hook the schools up—the classrooms up to the Internet because the buildings won't take the wiring.

So we can do this. But we have to make a decision that we're going to make education a priority. We have to make a decision that we're going to make our health care a priority.

We have clearly proved that you can grow the economy and improve the environment. And yet, there are explicit commitments in this campaign from the other side to roll back the environmental advances of our administration. They say we're hurting the economy, so they want to relax the air rules, relax the water rules, repeal my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forests, review all the national monuments I set aside. They probably oppose what I'm going to do to protect the lands of the Big Sur today when I leave here.

And you have to decide, because if we win 12 seats in the House of Representatives, they can't do it. Simple as that. There are vast consequences here—education, health care, the environment, crime policy. Crime's gone down 7 years in a row. It will be 8 years this year, longest drop we've ever had, lowest crime rate in 27 years, gun violence down 35 percent. Now, they have said that, notwithstanding the evidence, our approach is wrong. [Laughter] "Don't bother me with the facts. We don't like what you're doing."

So, you have to decide if you want more sensible things—to keep guns out of the hands of kids and criminals, and you want more community police on the street. Most people think this is just about the minor little combat I've had over the last several years with the NRA. That's not true. They've also promised to repeal our bill that first put 100,000 police on the street and have now put another 50,000 people. They say that's not the business of the Federal Government.

All I know is, these cities couldn't afford the cops, and since we put them on the street, they prevented crime from happening and kept more people out of trouble in the first place, and this is a safer country, and you have to be safe to be truly free. So there's a huge difference here. You have to decide.

We can get this country out of debt in 12 years, unless we give away too much in a tax cut and spend another trillion dollars to partially privatize Social Security. Don't forget that in this debate. Whatever the tax cut number is, when you hear them debate, whatever the Republicans say their tax number is, it's a little bigger than they say. But you have to add a trillion dollars on top of that. Why? Because if we partially privatize Social Security and half the young people in this audience, let's say, under 50—that's young to me—[laughter]—if you're really young, you will learn, the older you get, young is somebody who is a day younger than you are—[laughter]—and half the people take their 2 percent payroll and put it in some sort of mutual fund—most of you do better; not all of you would. And then someday, we'd have to come around and pick up the pieces of the people that didn't. But they promise to give everybody the benefits they've got already under the present system if you're 55 or over. So if you take a lot of money out of the system but you still have the same payment commitments—right—you've got to put the money right back in from somewhere else.

It's a trillion dollars over a decade, plus, their tax cut. If you do that, forget it. The country is not getting out of debt. Interest rates will be about a percent higher every year for a decade. Under the Democratic plan championed by Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, if you have interest rates one point lower over a decade, do you know what that's worth to you? Compare this to the tax cut promises they make. If you keep interest rates one point lower, \$390 billion in lower home mortgage payments; \$30 billion in lower car payments; \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. Or, if my math is right, that's about a \$435 billion tax cut in lower interest rates by continuing to pay down the national debt.

It's interesting. I never thought I'd live to see the day that the progressive party in our Nation's Capital was the more fiscally prudent one, because that's progressive politics: to give people—everybody benefits from lower interest

rates. And I haven't even said how much money you'd save in business loans and how much it would do for the markets and all of that. So you have to understand there are huge consequences.

I've done everything I could do to leave this country in good shape. But when Al Gore stands up and says, "You ain't seen nothin' yet," that is not just a campaign slogan. I'm not on the ballot, and I believe that. I believe that.

And look, why do I believe that? Because we've turned the thing around. It takes a long time to turn a country around. It's like a big ocean liner, and you have to work at it steadily all the time. Why did the *Titanic* hit the iceberg? Because they couldn't turn around in a split second. They did see it coming.

So we took our time. We got this thing turned around. It's going in the right direction. But all of the great stuff is still out there.

I was just playing with Lois' grandson. You know, there are young people in this audience who will have babies over the next decade that sometime in the next 10 years, they will come home with babies that will have a life expectancy of 90 years, because of the human genome project. We will be able to predict for infants with their gene maps whether they are likely to develop certain kinds of cancers or other kinds of maladies, and we will then shortly know what kinds of things can be done to minimize—you can't eliminate risk or make people live forever—we will be able to dramatically minimize the health hazards that are predictable in our genes from birth. And when that happens, it will have the biggest boost in life expectancy we've ever seen.

That's the good news. But what are the rest of you going to do with all of us old codgers running around here in 30 years? [Laughter] We're going to have to totally rethink what old age is. We're going to have to—you know, we made a big step on it this year when the Congress voted to repeal the earnings limit on Social Security. We have to rethink this.

And we're going to have to totally rethink the nature of our obligations to our children. And we're going to have to get all this information out there and take advantage of it and still protect your privacy rights, because I don't think anybody ought to get your health records if you don't say yes. I think that's important.

So I think it would be a good thing to have somebody who was a highly intelligent nurse,

who knows about education, who understands these issues in the Congress, quite apart from California and her particular district and everything else. And I think you have to really think about this. I mean, I know I'm preaching to the saved today. You wonder why am I going on, because you already are for her, right? [Laughter]

Here's why: Because this is a very tough, competitive district. We already went through one fight together in order to hold on to her seat. And most of the people who vote on election day have never been to one of these events. They've never given any money to a Republican. They've never given any money to a Democrat. They've never been to a campaign rally. Maybe they see a few TV ads. Nobody ever comes up to them personally and says, "You know, I know Lois Capps, and I'd like to ask you to vote for her, and here's why: one, two, three." Believe it or not, that does not happen to most people.

And so, I thank you for your money—[laughter]—but if you live in her district, I hope you'll take some time between now and the election to tell people this is a huge election. In some ways, this is a more important election than '92 was. It certainly is one that requires more thinking. In '92 California was in trouble; the country was in trouble. You took a chance on me, but as I was always say, hey, it wasn't that much of a chance, because we were in a ditch, right? We had to do something different. [Laughter]

Now, people have to actually make a decision. What are we going to do with all this good fortune? And are we going to be disciplined and thoughtful and think about how our children are going to be living 20 years from now and do these big good things, or are we just sort of—kind of wander through and pretend like it doesn't matter?

I'm telling you, I'm not running for anything. I will not be in office. All I want to do is

to give the best gift I can to my country. We cannot squander this. In my lifetime, we have never had a chance like this to build the future of our dreams for our children, and what you need is people who are voting on election day who understand that they have to go in there and that every vote counts.

If they call this Presidential election on the East Coast, an hour and a half before the California polls close, whether you talk to somebody to tell them it was important to go vote for Lois might turn the tide in these Congress races and whether people think it matters for them to go vote. So I just implore you, if you cared enough to come here and contribute today, care enough to take every opportunity you can between now and election day to tell people about her, about the issues between the two parties, about the Presidential race. Talk to people about it. Make them think it's important.

I think it's finally beginning to sink in on people that they've got some big decisions to make. I saw yesterday that more people have followed the Presidential election than the Olympics. That is good for the health of America, but you need to participate in that.

And I'm telling you, I've been in this business for a long time. I basically like most of the people I've known in public life, including most of the Republicans I've known—most of them I like better than they like me. [Laughter] But I've never known a better human being than this woman, ever. And I want you to help her.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:36 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Ted and Susan Harbert; State Senator Jack O'Connell; State Controller Kathleen Connell; and Representative Capps' daughter, Laura. Representative Capps was a candidate for reelection in California's 22d Congressional District.

Remarks to the California League of Conservation Voters in Bel Air,
California
September 24, 2000

Well, Ruth has given me a lot of gifts over the years, mostly tapes of great old rock-and-roll songs. [Laughter] But I'm very grateful for this.

And I want to thank you, Ruthie, and Fran Diamond and Wendy James. I thank Rampa Hormel and Hilda Solis for their leadership. I really want to thank Carole and Phil for letting us come to their home on this beautiful, beautiful day and share it.

I thank all the officials that are here, those who have been introduced. But I want to say again to all these congressional candidates—Michael Case, Susan Davis, Gerrie Schipske—of course, Hilda—and my long-time friend Jane Harman. Thank you for running for the Congress, to give it back to the American people and to give our natural heritage back to the future.

I want to thank you for this award but, more importantly, for your leadership on environmental and resource issues. I basically have always thought Presidents shouldn't get awards. I thought that the job was reward enough. But you know, as I get ready to move out—[laughter]—this will look really wonderful in my home. So I do thank you. [Laughter]

The work we have done on conservation is among the things I'm most proud of as President. Ninety-four years ago today—exactly today—Theodore Roosevelt designated America's very first national monument, Devil's Tower, in Wyoming. He set us on a path of conservation a century ago that we are working to make stronger.

For more than 7 years now, Al Gore and I have fought to do that, most of the time with a Congress that was very hostile to our environmental objectives. We believed always that we could grow the economy and improve the environment. And we believed, in a larger sense, that if we didn't deal with the big challenges of climate change and other pollutions, that economic growth would turn in on itself, sooner or later anyway.

So over the last 8 years, we've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps from neighborhoods as the two previous administrations did

in 12. We've taken the most dramatic steps to improve the quality of air in a generation. We've also improved the quality of our water and our drinking water with major new legislation. We made record investments in science and technology designed to reduce the threat of global warming.

You heard Ruth say some of the things we have done in California. We've had the national monuments designed to preserve the redwood forest, the coastal lands and waters. We had a big conference on preserving the oceans on the Monterey Peninsula a couple of years ago. We've begun to do some significant things to try to recover the quality of the oceans, particularly those that are near us.

There is a dead spot in the Gulf of Mexico the size of the State of New Jersey today because of pollution and runoff that will have significant adverse impacts on marine life over the long run if we don't do something to deal with it.

I was honored to create the national preserve in the Mojave Desert and to expand the Pinnacle Monuments, as Ruth said. We've done this from the Grand Canyon to Yellowstone to the Florida Everglades. And we have already set aside over 40 million roadless acres.

Today we took another big step by protecting almost 800 acres of the southern gateway to Big Sur. I'll never forget the first time I saw it 30 years ago. It's a coastline we value not just for its breathtaking views but as a home for endangered species like the steelhead trout and Smith's blue butterfly. And thanks to funds provided by the lands legacy initiative the Vice President and I have worked for, for the last several years, we are able to make this gift to the future.

I want the National Government and every community in our country to be able to have the resources to make gifts like this well into the future. That's why I have asked Congress to provide permanent funding for our open spaces and pass the "Conservation Reinvestment Act," CRA, that would significantly boost our lands legacy initiative.

The House passed it with over 300 votes, and now we are trying to get it through the Senate. If any of you can help us, I'd really appreciate it. *[Laughter]*

I want to mention just a couple of other things, too. First, one more time, even in the teeth of an election, even in the face of evidence that the overwhelming majority of the American people support a strong environmental policy, Congress is larding up these bills, these appropriation bills, with anti-environmental riders. And the theory is that if you can just put enough amendments on enough bills, that eventually all us Democrats will get veto fatigue, and it'll be 3 hours and 15 minutes before the polls open, and everybody will want to go home to vote, at least, if not to campaign, and so they'll be able to pass their anti-environmental agenda.

Now, I say that, first, to ask the Congress, if they want to go home and campaign, to take the anti-environmental riders off the bills, because I've got nowhere to go, and I'm not running for anything. *[Laughter]* And I'd be happy to stay there until election day.

But secondly, I want to emphasize how important these congressional races are, every House seat and every Senate seat—although, at least to me, some Senate seats are more important than others. *[Laughter]*

Let me just tell you what the lives of Members of Congress are like. Okay. It's late September. There's an election in early November. People want to go home. They want to be with their constituents. The party that's in the majority gets to decide what is voted on in the committees, gets to have the votes to add these anti-environmental riders, in this case. And they hope that at some point you just keep putting these bills out and there's a defense bill. Do you want to be against defense 2 weeks before the election? There is an education bill that might have anti-environmental riders—do you want to be anti-education?—and a health bill. There may even be a good bill for the EPA and a decent budget, but it's all larded up with this stuff. Do you want to be in the position of voting for this? Now, if we had about 12 more Members of Congress who were pro-environment and we could organize the committees, this would not happen. This is a big, big deal.

Let me just make two other points. You know, some people in the other party have continued to try to distort some of the things that the

Vice President said in his book, "Earth in the Balance." But even the oil companies now admit that all those years ago he was right and they were wrong about climate change.

The 1990's were the warmest decade in a thousand years, we now know. And we know that an extraordinary amount of the warming of the climate is due to human activity, and we know that, if we don't do something about it, sometime in the next three to five decades it will substantially change the pattern of life here in our own country. The sugarcane fields in Louisiana, the Everglades in Florida could flood; agricultural production could be forced upward in America; and whole massive stretches of farmlands could be dramatically less productive; and all of the other things that you know very well could happen.

I've already seen the change in the biodiversity on the Pacific Coast. When I was on the Monterey Peninsula, I saw some small, microscopic, almost, animal life in the bay, that just 40 years ago was 20 miles south at its northernmost point. So I'm seeing all this happen. And I just want to say that I'm working hard to deal with the present energy problem. But the real issue is, how are we going to grow the economy and save the environment over the long run?

Today, there are technologies available off the shelf that would dramatically boost productivity in America and increase output per energy input. If you don't believe me, go look at that low-income housing project out in the Inland Empire in San Bernadino, where they cut power use by more than 50 percent by simple, off-the-shelf technologies. I have been trying for 3 years to get Congress to give tax credits to accelerate research and development into conservation technologies and alternative fuels and to increase investment in that kind of research and development and to give tax credits to consumers and to businesses to buy conservation technologies and employ alternative fuels.

Now, that's another reason you need more people in the Congress, because the President, if his party sticks with him, even if they're in the minority, can stop bad things from happening. Although as I just explained, it gets tougher as you get closer to the election. But if you want good things to happen and you believe, as I do, that there's a world of environmentally responsible potential growth out there, by investing in and betting on the fact that

we can reverse the tide of climate change without all going back to the Stone Age to live, the way the other side talks—now, you’ve got a big choice here.

And every House seat and every Senate seat and this White House matters. Because, unlike some areas—I’ve got to give it to the other side, they’ve been quite forthright here, and I appreciate it. They’ve been very, very honest in saying, “I disagree with Bill Clinton. I disagree with Al Gore. Vote for us. We will repeal the 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. Vote for us. We will relax the air standards. They’re too hard, and they’re going to slow the economy down too much. Vote for us. We will reexamine all these national monuments.”

And I could give you lots of other examples. So it’s not like we don’t know what the deal is here. And that’s good, because that’s why you have elections, so people can make choices.

But I want to say to you, it’s been a great honor for me to work in the environmental area. I’m glad to know that we’ve had the strongest economy in history with cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, and more land set aside than anybody since the Roosevelts. I’m proud of that.

But the huge question out there, hanging out there, is whether or not we will create out of this information technology revolution a post-industrial form of energy use, even for manufacturing, if we will unlock the last chemical step keeping us from using biofuels in an efficient way.

The scientists that work for the Department of Agriculture say, you know, you can’t really take ethanol too seriously now because it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But they are a short step away from a chemical advance that would enable us to make 8 gallons of ethanol from one gallon of gasoline.

Think about it. That would be the equivalent of 500 gallons of gasoline—500 miles to the gallon in modern cars. We’re so close. And you have to decide.

We need people in the White House and in the Congress that understand the future and are committed to making sure that we get out of denial here, or as my daughter’s generation says, it’s not just a river in Egypt. *[Laughter]*

And this will not be a headline issue here. Most people say this election is about the Medicare drug issue or the Patients’ Bill of Rights or whether the Republican nominee’s tax cut plan is too big, especially when you compare it with privatizing Social Security. You add them up, and we’re back in deficits. All those things are real important.

But I’m telling you, 50 years from now, our generation will be judged on whether we met the challenge of climate change. And it is not necessary for us to go in a hut and quit making a living to do it. The technologies are there, are right on the verge of there. We can increase productivity. We can grow this economy, and we can do it. You’ve got to decide. Help them get elected, and help Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Ruth Hunter, president, California League of Conservation Voters; Fran Diamond, member, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board; Wendy James, president, Environmental Media Association; Rampa Hormel, honorary event chair; State Senator Hilda Solis; event hosts Carole King and Phil Alden Robinson; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Hidden Hills, California

September 24, 2000

Well, first of all, let me tell you what I’d like to do. I like small events like this, with fewer people. And what I’d like to do—most of what I have to say about the last 8 years I said at the convention in L.A., and maybe

you saw it, and if you did, there’s nothing else I can say.

I would like to just talk for a few minutes, not long, and then just take the microphone

away and have a conversation. If you've got anything you want to ask me or you have anything you want to say or if you'd like to give a speech, just feel free to do it. [Laughter]

I want to thank you, Mitch, for what you said. Thank you, Tracy, for being so good to me, and thank you especially for being so good to Hillary. It means more to me than I can say. I'm very grateful.

I want to thank Sim and Debbie, who have been great friends to me and my family. We met them through Senator Boxer, but I cannot—I don't even have the words to say how grateful I am to you for how good you've been to all the members of my family, my mother-in-law, my brother-in-law, my nephew. I feel like a bag lady around you. It's just unbelievable. [Laughter]

Here's what I'd like you to think about. If somebody asks you tomorrow, "Why did you come here and give this money," what would your answer be? Besides, you know, you wanted to get in here and look at this unbelievable house. [Laughter] If I'd found this house when I was 6 years old, I never would have gone out of it. [Laughter] It's unbelievable.

But anyway, this is what I would like to say. When I ran for President in 1992, only my mother thought I could win. And I did it. It was not easy for me. I was very happy being Governor of my State. My family was in good shape. I was having a great time with my friends. But I had some very definite ideas about how our country ought to work and how we should change direction. And I was afraid that the country was really in trouble.

And I thought, well, even if I don't win, maybe we can move the country off the dime. And the first time I realized I had a chance to win was when I was in the snows of New Hampshire in late 1991, and I was going to a little town called Keene, up in northern New Hampshire. It's one beautiful, beautiful town. There's a beautiful little college there.

So I was asking these young people who were helping me in New Hampshire, I said—they said, "We're going to go up here and have a town meeting, but you've got to understand there are six people running for the Democratic nomination. And President Bush is at 70 percent, but New Hampshire is a basket case, and people are hurting." And I said, "Look," I said, "get to the bottom line here. How many people do I have to have at this town meeting to avoid

being humiliated?" [Laughter] And they said 50. And I said, "Well, what if we get 100?" They said, "That's a pretty good crowd." I said, "What if we get 150?" They said, "It's great"—a little town. I was fifth in the polls in New Hampshire. I had nearly negative name recognition.

But I had put out this booklet telling people exactly what I would do if I got elected, not what I would try to do. So we showed up in Keene, and 400 people showed up, and the fire marshal shut it down. And keep in mind, they didn't—they weren't coming there because they were committed to me. These people didn't know who I was. They were coming there because they heard that somebody who was serious about the problems of America wanted to talk to them and listen to them and try to change the direction of the country. And I saw those 400 people—I got on the phone and called Hillary and said, "This thing may run a little further than we think here." [Laughter] And so the rest is history.

But I say that to make the first point, which is that to a degree that is often underestimated, the Nation's business is like other businesses. It really matters if you've got a clear analysis of where you are, a clear vision of where you want to go and if you lay out what you're going to do. And it's a lot easier to do the job if you get people around you who want to be on the team, and they work like crazy. It makes a difference.

The problems of the Nation yield to efforts in the same way the problems of any other enterprise does. And I think sometimes we forget that. We think that politics is somehow mysterious or its all words or whatever. It's just not true.

And I have been very blessed and have had a great Cabinet and a great staff and people who work like crazy and who had far less destructive ego problems and far fewer sharp elbows than the previous administration had suffered from. And I think it was partly because we actually knew why we wanted to be there. And as hard as it's going to be to leave in many ways, that's the way the system is supposed to work.

And so that brings me to the present moment. The only thing I ever worried about in this election was that the American people would somehow believe it wasn't important because

times were good, that somehow the consequences of their collective decisions on election day were somehow not profound.

It's very often easier to make a good decision when you're up against a wall than it is when times are good. Nobody over 30 years old can deny having made at least one colossal mistake in their life, not because times were so bad but because things seemed to go so well, you thought you didn't have to concentrate anymore—nobody. If you live long enough, you make those mistakes.

So the first thing I want to say is, I've spent a lot of time in my life studying the history of my country. I love it very much. If you come to my office in the White House, you'll see a lot of—you'll see an original edition of the only book Thomas Jefferson ever wrote and two original printings of George Washington's Farewell Address. I've studied this country closely.

I'm not sure we've ever had a time when we've had, at the same time, so much economic prosperity, so much social progress with the absence of gripping internal crisis or external threat. So the main issue here in this election season is, what do people believe this election is about anyway?

And I must say the preliminary indications are very, very good. Witness the different responses to Governor Bush's speech in Philadelphia and Vice President Gore's. Governor Bush gave a beautiful speech in Philadelphia. It was beautifully written. It was eloquent, and it studiously avoided being specific about what he would do if he were President.

Al Gore gave a very good speech in Los Angeles, which revealed who he was. But most important of all, he said—he gave a lot of respect to the American people. He said, "This is a job interview. And unlike other job interviews, you're running for President. You have to define the job. The people want you to say what you think the job is and then what you will do."

So he said, "If you hire me, this is what I'll do." And lo and behold, he got a bigger bump out of our convention than they got out of theirs, even among people, I suspect, who weren't sure they agreed with everything he said or maybe he couldn't remember more than two or three things. He said, "This is what it's about."

So the first thing I want to say to you is, based on 8 years of experience, is that anyone who wants to be President in a dynamic time

should be flexible enough to admit that he might have been wrong, flexible enough to change course, but it really matters whether you have thought through what you were going to do with this job when you get it.

It is a great comfort when the storms come and when you're in all kind of conflict and all this political stuff is happening in Washington the way it does, and people who are in the business or around it primarily for power are pulling back and forth—if you get up every day with a very clear idea of what you said you were going to do and what you believe the country needs, it is an unbelievable asset to America.

So one good reason to be for this guy is, he actually talks about what he would do if he were President in great detail, with the benefit of a unique amount of experience. Now, this may seem self-evident to you, but you go back and look at all the Presidential campaigns in the 20th century. In New Hampshire, I knew that America was moving to this because Senator Tsongas, who was from Massachusetts next door, who won the New Hampshire primary, and I got 60 percent of the vote between us in a six-way race, and we were the only two people that put out very detailed plans of what we would do.

The second thing I want to say is, what I think we should be thinking about is how we keep this thing going, first of all. What could go wrong with this economy? How do we keep it going? How do we head off the problems, maximize the opportunities? And then what are the really big challenges out there for America? Because when you have this luxury and this kind of circumstance, you ought to be going after the big challenge.

What are we going to do when all the baby boomers retire and there's two people working for every one person drawing Social Security? What are we going to do when all of America looks like California—there's no majority race—and we have the biggest bunch of school kids we've ever had from all these diverse racial, ethnic, religious backgrounds and with different first languages. The most diverse school district, interestingly enough, is not Los Angeles or New York or Chicago; it's Fairfax County, Virginia, just across the river from Washington, where there are children from 180 different racial and ethnic groups with over 100 different native languages. And I spent a lot of time there.

What I want to say—because California has done a lot of good work in education the last few years, and I'm honored to have the attorney general and the speaker here tonight. We know something we didn't know 20 years ago, when Hillary and I started working on public schools. We actually know how to turn failing schools around. We actually know what it means to say all children can learn. I was in a school in Harlem the other day where 2 years ago, 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level. Two years later—2 years later—in one of the poorest neighborhoods in New York City, 74 percent of the kids were doing reading and math at or above grade level—2 years.

But the one thing America has never done, ever—and there was no real penalty to it before, but there is now—we have never taken what works in some places and been able to make it work everywhere for our schools. How are we going to do that? Huge issue. There are lots of other issues. People used to make fun of Al Gore when he talked about global warming. Now all the oil companies admit it's real. We just got a study from one of the polar ice-caps that indicates the 1990's were the warmest decade in a thousand years. I think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands that.

So there are these big challenges. I personally think we ought to keep paying down the debt until we get out of debt for the first time since 1835, because that will keep interest rates lower, and our growth in this 8-year period has been more generated by private sector growth than any economic recovery in the 20th century.

There are big, big things we can do. So that's the second thing. You can make your own list. But you think about the big things. That's what America ought to be focused on.

The third thing I would like to say, and I think by far the most important, is that we need, as a nation, to have, in my judgment, a unifying, a synthesizing view of human society and human history. I've always tried to bring people together. I ran for President because I hated what I was hearing out of Washington every night. There was nobody in Congress to get on television and get their 15 seconds at night on the evening news unless they were somehow coming up with a wedge issue that divided us.

But if you think about the way you run your family or your business or any other enterprise,

if you spent most of your time on what divided you and none of your time trying to get together, the whole society would fall apart. And yet, national politics, because it's a long way from us and operates at a fairly high level of abstraction, at a time when people don't believe you can do anything right, there's no way to make any headway politically unless you have wedge issues.

And I think one of the signal achievements of this administration in rolling back the Gingrich revolution was to reject the politics of division in favor of the politics of unity. And you know, my political philosophy is very simple and borne of my life experience. I think everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; and we all do better when we help each other. That's what I believe. I actually believe that. I think it's not just good morals; I think it's good economics, good social policy.

And there's an interesting book out that I recommend, written by a man named Robert Wright, who previously wrote a book called "The Moral Animal." It was widely acclaimed. It's called "Non Zero," and it's a reference to game theory. You know, a zero-sum game is one where, in order for me to win, you've got to lose, or vice-versa, like a golf match. One person wins; one person loses. Or the President's race is a zero-sum game. One of them will win; one of them will lose.

And Wright is not naive. I mean, he understands that there will be competitions and contests. But the argument he makes in this book is that as societies grow more and more complex and we become more and more interdependent, both within and beyond national borders, we have a greater and greater stake in finding ways to win together. And that, basically, he makes an historical argument for Martin Luther King's wonderful famous saying that, "the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice."

That's the argument, and it's a very compelling argument. And I guess we all like books that agree with us. You know, we're all that way. [Laughter] But I have spent my whole life believing that we waste a lot of our lives by trying to lift ourselves up by putting other people down.

So if I could leave America with one wish, it would not be even for continued prosperity; it would be to find some way to get over all this stuff that we're hung up about, respect our differences, relish our differences, teach children

to be proud of their ethnic, their racial, their religious heritage; but somehow understand that, underneath it all, the most important thing of all is our common humanity.

And I think it is more important than ever before because of the scientific and technological advances we face. Because I'm just going to tell you, among the things you'll have to deal with in the next 20 years when I'm gone: Terrorists will be able to come across national borders with chemical and biological weapons in plastic cases that won't show up on airport metal detectors. The forces of division will be able to do things. If we don't do something about the AIDS epidemic in Africa and the growing rates in South Asia and the rapidly growing rates in the countries of the former Soviet Union, it will eventually come back around to this country where we're making real headway.

If we don't do something about the total breakdown of public health systems in poor countries around the world, all these places that we're looking for to buy our products, because we've got 4 percent of the world's people and 22 percent of the world's wealth, they're not going to have any money; they won't even have any people to buy our products. There are African countries that, within a decade, will have more people in them in their sixties than in their thirties.

So what I want to say is, look, I think the best time in human history is unfolding. I think the children in this room tonight will grow up, if we make good decisions, in the most exciting, peaceful, prosperous, interconnected time in all of human history. But nothing happens by accident. We have to decide.

Every House position matters. Every Senate seat matters, and it really matters how the White House comes out. So if somebody asked you tomorrow why you came, I hope you'll say, "Well, I think they've had a pretty good 8 years. The country is going in the right direction. I'd like to keep it going. Number two, they seem to have a pretty good idea of what they'll do if I give them the job. Number three, I want somebody that will take on big things. I don't want to blow this, certainly the chance of 50 years. And number four, I think we ought to go forward together." And that's basically the defining, enduring dream of the 20th century Democratic Party. And if I've contributed to it, I'm grateful.

But you know, this is an interesting position for me. I always tell everybody, for most of my life, I was the youngest person who was doing whatever it was I was doing. Now I go in a room, most people are younger than me. [Laughter] Now people look at me like I've got a leg in the grave. What's the next President—[laughter]. My party's got a new leader. My family's got a new candidate. I'm the Cheerleader in Chief of the country. What am I supposed to do?

I'll tell you, the thing that I really want out of all of this is just for you to make the most of it. And I'll just leave you with this one story.

I think that if I had any success, part of it was the way I was raised. I think most American people thought I was pulling—I think the people that served this dinner tonight ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college that you do. I believe that. I believe that disabled people ought to be able to access modern technology, because I don't think their bodies ought to keep them from living however much of their dreams that they can live.

I went to Flint, Michigan. I will close with this story, because this will make the point. I went to Flint, Michigan, this week to go to one of the community computer centers we're setting up around the country in low-income areas, to try to make sure that people can access the information resources for the Internet. And I got a bunch of stuff in the budget that would put a thousand of these up.

But the reason I went to Flint is that it used to be the automotive capital of Michigan, even more than Detroit. There were 90,000 automotive manufacturing jobs there. Now, there are only 35,000. They've had to rebuild their whole economy, but they have maybe the best outreach programs to the disability community in their city of anyplace in the country.

So I saw software where blind people were working on braille and putting it into the Internet, and then the computer would speak back to them, so they know that they got the E-mail right or the message right. And I saw the deaf people working on it, and the computer would write back to them so that they could see that they had gotten it right.

And this wonderful woman said to me, "You know, I get E-mails every week from a guy in North Carolina named Joe Martin, and I understand you know him." And I said, "Yes, I do know him." I'll tell you about Joe Martin,

because I think we ought to empower everybody to live like this.

In the 1980's, when I was a young Governor, I was active in something called the Southern Growth Policy Board. And it's a group of Governors and legislators and other folks, businesspeople and educators. And we worked on growing the southern economy and trying to catch it up to the rest of the country. And basically, we worked on jobs and schools; that's what we did.

One of the North Carolina delegates was this guy, Joe Martin, whose brother was the Republican Governor of North Carolina. He was a chemist, the Governor was—a chemistry professor. Joe Martin was a banker. He was young, handsome, vigorous, had a drop-dead gorgeous, wonderful wife, great family. I loved him. He was full of energy, and he was just one of the two or three best people that I ever met in this outfit. And I worked with him for a decade. And I loved being around him.

Joe Martin, while still a young man, got Lou Gehrig's disease. That's what Stephen Hawking, the famous British scientist, has. Eventually, you lose all your movement. Hawking still can move his fingers, and he uses his computer to speak.

Now, Joe Martin has no movement anywhere. Nothing moves but his eyes. I used this laser technology now that the Internet has. You sit in front of it; they focus a camera on you; it gets your eyes on the screen; then they put

the laser—it bounces off your eye. I turned lights on and off; I turned music on and off; I typed “good morning” to the people there and then pushed “speak” with my eyes and it said, “good morning.”

And sometime in the next couple of months, Joe Martin is going to publish a book he wrote with his eyes. Even more important, he can still talk to his wife and kids. And so he's still got a story. I'm a Democrat because I know everybody has got a story.

I was raised by an extended family of wonderful people. Most of them didn't have any education. Most of them didn't have any money, but they taught me that everybody had a story and should be treated with dignity, and we would all do better if we helped each other. I still believe that, and with 8 years of evidence, I think it's a pretty good argument for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary and the rest of our crowd.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:27 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Mitchell Stein and Tracy S. Hampton; Sim Farar, treasurer, PAC for a Change, and his wife, Debra; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; State Attorney General Bill Lockyer; and State Assembly Speaker Robert M. Hertzberg.

Remarks on the Need for Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act in Santa Fe, New Mexico

September 25, 2000

Thank you very much. Connie, you can drink my water anytime. [*Laughter*] Didn't she do a good job? [*Applause*] I was really proud of her. Thank you.

Thank you, Greg Neal, for welcoming us here in this beautiful, beautiful center. I'd like to thank your Congressman, Representative Tom Udall, for joining us today. Thank you, Tom, for being here. And Attorney General Patsy Madrid, thank you for being here. A little bird told me this was your birthday today, so thank you for spending your birthday with us, in a worthy cause. Santa Fe Mayor pro tem Carol

Robertson Lopez, thank you for being here. I thank the members of the city council and county commission and many others who have come here. Our former U.S. attorney, John Kelly, and my college classmate, thank you for being here. I've got a lot of other personal friends here, as well as those of you who are involved in these endeavors, and I thank you.

But most of all I want to express my appreciation to the brave women in this audience who have survived the horrors and fears of domestic violence for being with us today and for being in this very public setting. Connie, I thank you

for sharing your story with us and for somehow finding the strength to help other women deal with theirs.

We are here today to salute your efforts, to recognize that progress has been made, and to remind all Americans that the struggle with domestic violence is far from over. We're also here because, on Saturday night, on the very eve of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Violence Against Women Act will actually expire without congressional action.

We're here to say to Congress, we owe it to women like Connie Trujillo and millions of others and their children and families to reauthorize and to strengthen the Violence Against Women Act and to do it this week, now, before the clock runs out.

For too long, women like those who have been victimized in this room today fought a lonely battle. For too long, domestic violence was an issue kept behind closed doors, treated as a purely private family matter. Despite the fact that it usually does occur at home, despite the fact that victims are almost always women and children, domestic violence is not just a family problem that neighbors can ignore, not just a woman's problem men can turn away from. It is America's problem.

The statistics speak for themselves. Domestic violence is the number one health risk for women between the ages of 15 and 44 in our Nation. Close to a third of all the women murdered in America were killed by their husbands, former husbands, or boyfriends. Every 12 seconds another woman is beaten, amounting to nearly 900,000 victims every single year. And we know that in half the families where a spouse is beaten, the children are beaten, too.

Domestic violence is a crime that affects us all. It increases health costs, keeps people from showing up to work, prevents them from performing at their best, keeps children out of school, often prevents them from learning. It destroys families, relationships, and lives, and often prevents children from growing up to establish successful families of their own. It tears at the fabric of who we are as a people and what we want for our children's tomorrows.

For many years, when Hillary and I were living in Arkansas, we lived very close to the domestic violence shelter and center in our hometown. We spent lots of hours there, talking to the women and the children and listening to their stories. I'm very proud of the fact that

after we moved to Washington, Hillary traveled all around the world to highlight the fact that violence against women and children is not an American problem. It's a global problem, with different manifestations, and in many places violent practices masquerade as cultural traditions. That is wrong.

And I have to tell you that every time I come into a setting like this, I think about the encounters that—because of Hillary's efforts—I've had with village women in remote places in Africa and in Latin America. And it is truly chilling to think about all the different rationalizations people have cooked up all over the world to justify men beating up on women and twisting the lives of their children.

We have come a long way in the United States in recognizing that this is criminal conduct, that there may be deep-seated emotional reasons for it which treatment is a better answer for than incarceration in some cases. But it's a crime. And it's a crime against the people who suffer, against the children who are tormented by it, very often for the rest of their lives, and against the larger society that we are trying to build.

For 8 years now, the Vice President and I have tried to convey this simple message. Our message to the perpetrators is that you should be punished, and to the victims is, we want you to have safety and security. No American should live in fear, least of all in his or her own home.

The Violence Against Women Act was part of our landmark 1994 crime bill. It was the very first time in the history of America that the Nation's Government, in a comprehensive effort, joined those of you here and your counterparts all across America in standing up and making common cause on this issue.

The Violence Against Women Act imposes tough penalties for actions of violence against women. It also helps to train police and prosecutors and judges so they can better understand domestic violence, something which, believe it or not, is still a significant problem all across the United States.

It helps to train people to recognize the symptoms when they see it. It helps people, perhaps most important of all, to take appropriate, systematic steps to prevent it. The law gives grants to shelters who need more beds and better programs. It provides assistance to law enforcement,

the courts, and communities, to help them respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking when they occur. It established a 24-hour, 7-day, toll-free, national domestic violence hotline, to help women get emergency help and counseling, find a shelter, report abuse to authorities. Since 1996, this hotline has given more than 500,000 people a place to call to find help when they need it most.

The act has offered hope to countless numbers of women by letting them know they are not alone. Police officers who often shy away from so-called family squabbles should now get involved. Physical violence is unacceptable in our homes.

The law's impact is no clearer than here in Sante Fe, where the act and its much needed funding has helped make the city's streets, schools, and homes safer. With the act's help, Connie and her Esperanza Shelter for Battered Families provided counseling and shelter to nearly 2,000 families last year.

With the act's help, eight northern Indian pueblo councils here in Santa Fe now have the means to give legal advice and victims counseling to Native American women and proper training to tribal police departments, courts, and prosecutors. With the act's help, the Morning Star Program in Albuquerque provides safe houses and support groups for victims and their families. All told, the Violence Against Women Act has dedicated nearly—listen to this—\$1.7 billion since 1994 to programs combating domestic violence around our Nation, including more than \$173 million this year alone.

Today the Department of Justice will award nearly \$2 million in Violence Against Women Act funds to combat domestic violence here in New Mexico, to strengthen tribal law enforcement, address child abuse and domestic violence in rural areas, and improve civil legal assistance programs.

Now, has all this made a difference? Well, thanks to your work in programs like the ones here in Santa Fe, we know that the Violence Against Women Act is having a real impact on domestic abuse. According to a recent study from 1993 to 1998, violence against women by an intimate partner fell by 21 percent. In the years 1996, '97, and '98, intimate partners committed fewer murders than at any other time since 1976, when there were far fewer people in this country.

So while we have made strides in our war against domestic violence, you only have to look around to know we've still got miles to go. We cannot turn our backs on the millions of women and children trapped in the cycle of domestic violence. We can't allow them to face a nightmare alone.

Let me say to you, this really shouldn't be a partisan issue. When Congress first passed the Violence Against Women Act, we had strong support from Republicans, as well as Democrats. This summer, in a bipartisan effort, both the House and the Senate Judiciary Committees approved extending and reauthorizing and approving the Violence Against Women Act—both Republicans and Democrats.

Why is this not law now? The committees have approved it. We have more than enough votes in both Houses to pass it. Because this issue, for reasons I cannot understand, has been used as a political football in Washington. All the congressional leadership has to do is to put it up for a vote, and it will fly through. And so again I implore the leadership of Congress not to play games with the safety and future of women and children.

I ask all of you and those who will hear this message all across America tonight: Contact your Senators and your Representatives and tell them to ask the majority leadership in Congress simply to schedule this for a vote. This is not rocket science. There is no complication here. Everybody knows what this law is. Everybody knows what it will do. Everybody knows what it has done. Yes, we're close to an election, and yes, there are a lot of things that various people want to get done in Congress between now and the end of the session when they go home for the election. Nobody wants to get anything any more done than I do, but it is wrong to delay this one more hour. Schedule the bill for a vote.

I have spent a lot of time in the last 8 years trying to make peace around the world, trying to get people from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to the Balkans to the African tribal conflicts to lay down their ancient hatreds and stop dehumanizing people who are different from them. I spent a good deal of time trying to make peace within our borders, trying to get people to give up old hatreds of those who are different from them because they're of a different race or religion or because they're gay, to give up all that.

But it is very hard for us to make peace around the world, or even around the land, unless we are first committed to making peace within our homes. And I think we should stay at this until the day when we are truly shocked if we hear a little boy or a girl say something at school about witnessing a violent incident in their home, when it is so rare, people gasp in astonishment.

We're a long way from there. But we owe it to our kids and all the women and children

who have already been injured to keep at it until we reach that day.

Thank you very, very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:32 p.m. at the Genoveva Chavez Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Connie Trujillo, executive director, Esperanza Shelter for Battered Families; Greg Neal, director, Genoveva Chavez Community Center; and New Mexico State Attorney General Patsy A. Madrid.

Remarks at a New Mexico Coordinated Campaign Victory 2000 Reception in Santa Fe

September 25, 2000

Thank you very much. First, ladies and gentlemen, let me just thank you for coming here. I want to thank our hosts. And thank you, Diane, and thank you, Bill Sisneros, the Santa Fe Democratic chair.

I thank all the tribal leaders who are here. I thank your predecessor, Earl Potter, who is here tonight. Thank you very much. I'm glad to see you.

I want to thank Congressman Udall. He's done a great job. He's really fun to work with, and as you can see, he's sort of a high-energy person. *[Laughter]* And he has this idea which, there for a few years in Washington, I was afraid was getting altogether too rare. He actually thinks he's supposed to go back to Washington and get something done for you, instead of just—*[laughter]*—and he's really, really good, and you should be very proud of him. I like him very much.

I want to thank my friend of more than 30 years John Kelly for running for Congress and for his service as United attorney. And I urge you to do what you can to help him. We're just six seats short of being in the majority. And it makes a huge difference. I'll just give you an example.

Today, before I came here, I went over to a shelter for battered women and troubled children and families. And we're in this big struggle to get the Violence Against Women Act reauthorized, which ought to be an absolute

laydown. And we clearly have a bipartisan majority in both Houses for this legislation.

But the leadership, for reasons I don't quite understand, has not scheduled it for a vote, and it's supposed to run out Friday night. If we had six more seats, it would have been reauthorized months and months ago. So I say to you, it's a big issue for all the New Mexico-specific reasons and also because your Nation needs it, I think, very clearly.

I'd like to say more than anything else a word of thanks to a number of people. First, on behalf of Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore, I want to thank the people of New Mexico for sticking with us for two elections and giving us your electoral vote.

And I want to say even more, thank you for how much I've learned about America and specific parts of America, from the people of New Mexico; from our friends the Sikhs, many of who were at the Indian Prime Minister's dinner the other night; from most especially the tribal leaders and those whom they represent. I was at the, you know, on the Shiprock Reservation not very long ago. And I think I'm the only American President ever to go to two Native American reservations, and I know I am the first President since James Monroe in the 1820's to invite all of the tribal leaders back to Washington to meet with me.

And I've had liaison in the White House to the Native American community since the first day I became President. And I can't begin to

tell you what it's meant to me to try to work with you to meet the common challenges we face and try to help solve some longstanding problems and try to change the whole nature of the relationship between the United States and the Native American tribes.

I want to thank Tom Udall for what he said about me and my friends. You know, I have to say for my friends, I may be the only President in the entire history of the country who was literally elected because of my friends. [Laughter] I mean, I had the lowest net worth of any President since Harry Truman when I got elected. And as my predecessor never tired of telling the American people, I was just the Governor of a small southern State. [Laughter] And when I ran, I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] You know something? I still do.

And if Bruce and Alice and John Pound really thought I was going to be President in 1988, they were—that's 75 percent of the people in the country who felt that way, my mother being the other. [Laughter] But it's worked out pretty well for America.

And that's just the last thing I want to tell you. I hope you're proud of our party and proud of where we've come, compared to where we were, and proud of the fact that, if you listened to the debate, half the time they sound like us now. [Laughter] Or they kind of want to sound like us. Like they can't possibly admit that they're going to blow a hole in the deficit again, because being for a balanced budget and getting rid of this debt is now the thing to do. And I could go through a lot of other issues.

But what I'd like to remind you of is that ideas have consequences. I think sometimes we forget that in politics. We just kind of like the way it feels: Somebody looks good, sounds good, got a few good moves, gets through a press conference all right. Ideas have consequences, just like they do in every other aspect of your life.

We changed the economic policy, the crime policy, the welfare policy, the education policy, the health policy, the environmental policy, and the foreign policy of the United States. Did we make some mistakes along the way? Of course we did. Not everything turned out just the way we intended in every policy. But if you look back at every single one of those areas, we're stronger today and different than we were then.

So people need to understand that this is a very big election. I hope New Mexico will stick with Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. It's really, really important. We need you.

In the parlance of my culture, I realize I'm preaching to the saved here, so I won't belabor this. But I will tell you just, you know, what I feel, as someone who is not running for office for the first time since before some of you were born, in this room. [Laughter] Most days, I'm okay about it. [Laughter]

But, you know, we worked so hard to turn the country around and get it to this point. And this is really the first time in my lifetime we've been in a position to build the future of our dreams for our children, because our circumstances are good, because we have prosperity, social progress, the absence of pressing domestic crisis or external threat. We've got a lot of problems; that's part of being alive. We'll always have problems as long as we're alive. And we have some big, big long-term challenges.

When all us baby boomers retire, there will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare. We don't want to bankrupt our kids, their ability to raise our grandchildren.

We are the most racially, ethnically, and religiously diverse student population in our history and the biggest one by a good long ways, the first group of kids in the schools today, bigger than the baby boom generation, who need, even more than we did, a world-class education. We actually know now how to turn around failing schools. So the real issue is whether we intend to do it and what the National Government's role should be in that great crusade.

Tom mentioned something about environmental problems. No one denies anymore that climate change is real. We just had a fresh study last week from a huge polar icecap that demonstrated conclusively that the 1990's were the hottest decade in a thousand years. Now, this could have enormous consequences for every farmer in America. It could, if we don't reverse it. I worked so hard to save the Florida Everglades, and in 30 years, a bunch of it could be underwater. I mean, really underwater, not just sort of sliding along the top like today.

How are we going to grow the economy and actually reduce the environmental threats? The truth is that there is on-the-shelf technology

available today that would enable us to drastically reduce our emission of greenhouse gases without having any impact, except a positive one, on our economy, and would allow us to live in more harmony with our natural environment—today.

And we are very, very close, if we continue the research, to developing automobiles that get 80 miles to the gallon, that operate on fuel cells or dual-use electricity and fuel. We are quite close to a chemical breakthrough in biomass fuels that is the equivalent of when people figured out a hundred years ago how to take crude oil and crack the petroleum molecule and turn it into gasoline, which changed the whole future of the world.

Now, the problem with all biofuels today is, it takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But if we get over the last chemical problem, we'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol with one gallon of gasoline. And it won't just have to be corn. It can be rice hulls. It can be field grasses. It can be nearly anything. And when that happens, it will be the equivalent of 500-mile-a-gallon cars, and it will radically change the whole environmental future of America.

Are we going to pursue these things or continue in denial? Or, as my daughter's generation says, "Remember, Dad, it's not just a river in Egypt." [Laughter]

This is a big issue, a huge issue. And there are lots of others. Ideas have consequences. In this election for President, in the elections for Senate and the Congress, we have different economic policies. We're for a tax cut. We're for investments in education and health care, but we believe we have to keep paying down the debt to keep interest rates down and economic growth high, that we were profligate, inexcusably, in quadrupling the national debt in the 12 years before Al Gore and I came to Washington. It was wrong.

All the economic analysis I've seen indicates that the difference in the Republican and the Democratic economic proposal—they'll give you a bigger tax cut in the short run, especially if you're in an upper income group. And once they do that and partially privatize Social Security, the non-Social Security surplus is gone, long gone. We're into the Social Security spending again. Interest rates will be about a percent a year higher over 10 years. If somebody in New Mexico wants to talk to you about tax

cuts, tell them that if the Gore plan keeps interest rates a percent lower a year for 10 years, here's what it's worth to them in a tax cut: A percent lower interest rates gives you, over a decade, \$390 billion in lower home mortgage payments; \$30 billion in lower monthly car payments; \$15 billion in lower college loan payments.

Now, if my math is right, that's a \$435 billion tax cut that goes overwhelmingly to ordinary working folks and American families, kids trying to get an education, just by keeping interest rates down. There is a huge difference. It's hard to tell through the smoke and fire of the momentary campaign. This is one of the central decisions the American people have to make: Was I right or wrong to say, yes, we're going to increase our investment in education and health care and the environment, but we're going to keep driving this debt down and we get out of the deficit, then we're going to use the surplus to keep driving the debt down? Was I right or wrong? Is it the right or wrong course for America?

Someday we'll have another recession, and we may need a big tax cut. We'll have to run a deficit because in recession, unemployment goes up, which means not as many people are paying into the Government, and expenses go up, which means there is more money going out.

But when I became President, we didn't even have any tools left to fight recessions with tax cuts and deficit spending, because we were running a deficit every year of over \$200 billion. This is a huge decision.

Now, this State has got a lot of people, I think, who are moderate Republicans and independents who think of themselves as fiscal conservatives and may find it hard to register that even after 8 years, we are the party of fiscal responsibility. And it's the right thing to do, and it's a bigger tax cut, in lower interest rates.

We have differences in education policy. We think we ought to help these States that have growing student populations with smaller classes in the early grades, with building new schools and modernizing schools. They don't believe that's the Federal Government's business. I think it's America's business. I think every kid that needs to be in an after-school program or a preschool program ought to be in it. And we've got the money to do it, and we ought to do it.

We have huge differences in health care, right? Patients' Bill of Rights, exhibit A: We're for it; they're not, really. Now, as we get close to the election and the heat turns up, they may kind of come across the goal line here at the 11th hour, and I'm hoping. [Laughter] Medicare prescription drugs: They want kind of a Rube Goldberg setup where we give some money to the poorest Americans and tell the rest of them they can buy insurance. And God bless them; I've got to give it to them, even the insurance companies—we fought so much over the last 8 years, I take my hat off to them. They have been totally honest here. They have told the Republican Congress, "Look, you cannot have an affordable private insurance program for prescription drugs for elderly people. It won't work. We can't do that."

Nevada passed a law just like the Republicans are trying to shove through in Congress—the exact same law. You know how many insurance companies have offered people above 150 percent of the poverty line insurance for Medicare prescription—for drugs? Zero. I tell you, with all the fights I've had with the health insurance companies, I want to compliment them. They have been scrupulously honest here. They have told the truth. They have said, "There is no insurance market here. Why are you doing this? We don't want to look bad when we don't offer insurance or we've got to make the premium so high nobody can buy it."

But the pharmaceutical companies are against having Medicare offer a prescription drug benefit to all the seniors who need it. It doesn't make any sense, does it? They're afraid that they'll acquire such market power, they'll be able to get prices down to where they're almost as low as they are in every other country in the world. Now, this is a big deal. These are huge differences.

And there are massive environmental differences. They have made a commitment to repeal my order setting aside 43 million roadless acres in the national forests. The Audubon Society says it's the most important conservation move in 40 years. And they are committed to reversing it. They said they may take away some of the national monuments I've set up. They say that clean air standards are too tough. We've still got a lot of little kids getting asthma in this country because they can't breathe the air.

And goodness knows, if we haven't proved that you can clean the environment and grow

the economy, then somebody hasn't been paying attention. It's good for the economy to clean up the environment. Every single time for 30 years we've raised the environmental standards, the act of raising the standards and implementing them has created more jobs than it's cost—every single time for 30 years. But we're still debating it.

So you've got to go out across this State and say, "Look, there's a different economic policy, a different education policy, a different health care policy, a different environmental policy. There is a different crime policy." They're against my program to put 150,000 police on the street and have promised to get rid of it.

Now, this is the first time ever that crime has dropped for 7 years in a row. We're at a 27-year low. The country is safer than it's been in over a quarter century. One of the reasons is that we put all those police on the street. They were also wrong about the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. There hasn't been a single hunter in New Mexico miss a day of a season, not a day.

But even if you forget about that for a minute, they actually want to repeal the program that is putting 150,000 police on our streets, that's giving us a safer—why? They say it's not the Federal Government's business. All I know is, when people don't feel safe—that's that Violence Against Women Act we just did—if people don't feel safe, they don't have much emotional space to worry about what your economic policy is or your education policy or your environmental policy or anything else.

So I'm just asking you to go out across this State and talk to your friends around the country. Every one of you know and deal with people who never show up at events like this, have never been to a political event in their lives, but they'll all be there on election day, because they believe in America and they want to be good citizens.

And if people really understand the nature of the choice, we will win. We will win in New Mexico. We will win the Presidency and the Vice Presidency. John will win. We'll get the Congress back, and we'll keep going forward. And I just don't want to see us give up this.

I worry. You know, sometimes it's harder to make a decision, a good decision in good times than bad times. I know people took a chance on me in '92. I know they got tired of hearing that—you know, they got worried when they

heard, "He's a Governor of a small southern State, and where is it?" [Laughter] It was actually a bad strategy. I mean, think how many thousand people there are in New Mexico from Arkansas—half of Chicago, half of Detroit. It was a bad strategy. If you come from a poor southern State where people couldn't make a living after World War II, you've got kin folks in 20 States. I mean, you can't lose them. [Laughter] Anyway, I know they were worried about it. But come on, it wasn't that big a chance because the country was in terrible shape. We had to do something different.

Now people really do feel like they've got options. And there's not a person in this audience, at least who's 30 years of age or over, who cannot think of one time in your life when you made a big mistake, not because times were so tough but because times were so good, you thought you didn't have to concentrate. You can't live three decades or more without making that kind of mistake. That's what America has to avoid in this election. And you've got to go out and tell people what the differences are and what the nature of the choice is.

When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that's not just a political slogan. I believe that. I do. I believe that with all my heart. I believe the best stuff is still out there. I really do believe. You know, I think within 10 years, measured by today's terms, we'll be driving cars around that get 150 miles a gallon. I believe that mothers will come home with their babies, after they give birth, with little gene cards that will tell them how to plan their future, and the life expectancy of newborns will be 90 years of age.

That's what I believe. I think this stuff is going to happen. I think technology will lift the lives of the disabled people in this country to a level never before imagined. I think we'll totally re-imagine what it means to get older. I think we'll think of people 70 and 75 as sort of middle-aged people. They'll be out doing things, you know, running marathons and stuff. [Laughter] I think all this is going to happen. It's going to be a very interesting time, if we make the right decisions.

Will there be problems? Oh, yes, there will. You'll have to worry about chemical and biological warfare and terrorists putting them in plastic containers that don't go off in airport metal detectors. There will be all kinds of challenges out there. There will be problems until the end

of time. But we have a chance to make this the most peaceful, exciting, and harmonizing time in history.

And I'll just close with this. I think the most important thing about our party is that we are not interested in asserting our inherent superiority over anyone. We believe in one America. I mean really believe in it. We're glad to have people in our country who have different backgrounds, different heritages, different faiths. And we want everybody to be proud of themselves, their tribe, and their faith—everybody.

But we believe the only way we can really celebrate our diversity is if we accept the fact that our common humanity is the most important fact of life on this Earth. And so we really do believe that everybody counts; everybody should have a chance; we all do better when we help each other.

And I believe the central fact of our time is not the scientific or the information technology revolution. It is the growth of interdependence within countries and beyond national borders. We're getting more and more and more caught up in what Martin Luther King called the inescapable web of mutuality. And our party believes in it. That's what one America means.

And I honestly believe that if we just keep purging ourselves of our fears of people who are different from us, we keep looking for common ground, we keep reaffirming common values, that the best is out there. But you have to share this sort of stuff with people in this election. And you just cannot assume that because we're so much better off than we were 8 years ago and because the case is obvious to you, that everybody else will be there, because remember, the better things are, the easier it is to stop concentrating.

So you go out and take some time every day between now and the election and share this with our fellow citizens and bring us home a great victory.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. in the La Terazza Room at the La Fonda Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to hosts Brian and Rose Elgoff; Diane D. Denish, State chair, Bill Sisneros, Santa Fe County chair, and Earl Potter, former State chair, Democratic Party of New Mexico; John Kelly, candidate for New Mexico's

First Congressional District; and Prime Minister
Atal Behari Vajpayee of India.

Statement on the Deaths of United Nations Refugee Workers in Indonesia and in Guinea

September 25, 2000

I join all Americans in mourning the recent deaths of United Nations refugee workers in Indonesia and in Guinea.

On September 6 in West Timor, three staff members of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees were brutally murdered by a rampaging local militia. One of those killed was an American, Carlos Caceres-Collazo, who was still new to the cause of helping refugees and displaced persons, but already dedicated to it, even in conditions of great danger and hardship.

Two weeks later, in the West African country of Guinea, another UNHCR staff member was killed, and a colleague abducted, by an unidentified armed group. I extend my condolences to

their families and to UNHCR, which has been shocked by these tragedies. We hope that the abducted employee will be returned to safety.

These international civil servants were willing to take enormous risks and endure great hardship to protect and assist the most vulnerable refugees, displaced and war-affected people. Humanitarian workers operate on the principles of neutrality and impartiality, and it is tragic that they so frequently become the victims of willful violence themselves. We must work to end the culture of impunity that allows such violence to flourish and dedicate ourselves to strengthening the protection of those whose mission is to help their fellow human beings.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the “Medicine Equity and Drug Safety Act of 2000”

September 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

In your letter, you outlined a number of health care issues that you indicated could be resolved before Congress adjourns. I want to be equally clear about my priorities and hopes for progress this fall. As the days dwindle in this session of Congress, I am seriously concerned about the lack of movement on some of our most important issues. I am, however, encouraged to learn from your letter that the Republican leadership is now committed to providing Americans with access to prescription drugs available at lower cost from other countries.

As you know, our people are growing more and more concerned that the pharmaceutical industry often sells the same drugs for a much higher price in the United States than it does in other countries, even when those drugs are

manufactured here at home. This forces some of our most vulnerable citizens, including seniors and people with disabilities, to pay the highest prices for prescription drugs in the world. This is simply unacceptable.

That is why I support the “Medicine Equity and Drug Safety Act of 2000,” which the Senate passed by an overwhelming vote of 74 to 21. This important legislation would give Americans access to quality medications at the lower prices paid by citizens in other nations. The Senate bill, sponsored by Senators Jeffords, Wellstone, Dorgan and others, would allow wholesalers and pharmacists to import FDA-approved prescription drugs and would establish a new safety system intended to track these imports and test them for authenticity and degradation. Before this provision could take effect, the Secretary

of Health and Human Services would be required to certify that the regulations would, first, pose no risk to the public health; and, second, significantly decrease prices paid by consumers.

With these protections in place and the \$23 million necessary to implement them, this legislation would meet the test that we both believe is crucial—preserving the safety of America’s drug supply.

Although your letter implies support for legislation similar to the Senate-passed bill, I am concerned by its statement that seniors would “buy lower-priced drugs in countries like Canada” [*emphasis added*]. Of course, few seniors live near the Canadian or Mexican borders and even fewer can afford to cross the border in search of lower-price drugs. Moreover, policies like the House’s Coburn amendment would strip the FDA of all of its ability to monitor safety and prevent seniors from buying counterfeit drugs, putting their health in danger and their finances at risk.

I urge you to send me the Senate legislation—with full funding—to let wholesalers and pharmacists bring affordable prescription drugs to the neighborhoods where our seniors live. Though this initiative does not address seniors’ most important need—meaningful insurance to cover the costs of expensive medications—it still has real potential to allow consumers to access prescription drug discounts.

I remain concerned that with less than one week left in this fiscal year, Congress has not passed eleven of thirteen appropriations bills; Congress has not raised the minimum wage; and Congress has not passed a strong, enforceable patients’ bill of rights. And, according to your letter, the congressional leadership has given up on passing a meaningful, affordable and optional Medicare prescription-drug benefit.

I am extremely disappointed by your determination that it is impossible to pass a voluntary Medicare prescription-drug benefit this year. I simply disagree. There is indeed time to act, and I urge you to use the final weeks of this Congress to get this important work done. It is the only way we can ensure rapid, substantial and much-needed relief from prescription drug costs for all seniors and people with disabilities, including low-income beneficiaries.

On the issue of the Medicare lock-box, I have endorsed the Vice President’s initiative, which has been effectively embodied in Senator Conrad’s amendment that passed on the Labor-Health and Human Services appropriations bill. I am therefore encouraged by your commitment to passing this legislation; but we must still make all efforts to ensure that the Medicare payroll taxes in the lockbox are used solely for Medicare.

Similarly, I am pleased to learn of your commitment to pass a greatly-needed package of Medicare and Medicaid health care provider payment and beneficiary refinements. As you know, I proposed such refinements in my budget and in my June Mid-Session Review. This includes payment increases for hospitals, home health agencies, nursing homes and other providers as well as access to Medicaid for legal immigrants, certain uninsured women with breast cancer, and children with disabilities; extended Medicare coverage for people with disabilities; an extension of the Balanced Budget Act’s diabetes provisions; and full funding for the Ricky Ray Trust Fund.

Again, I am pleased to learn of your commitment to providing Americans with access to high-quality, lower cost prescription drugs from other nations. There is no reason why we cannot work together to pass and enact such legislation immediately. As we do, we should not give up on passing both a workable, affordable and voluntary Medicare prescription-drug benefit for our nation’s seniors and a meaningful patients’ bill of rights for all Americans. I will do everything in my power to achieve that end, and I look forward to meeting with you on these issues as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National
Emergency With Respect to Angola (UNITA)
September 25, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the National

Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) that was declared in Executive Order 12865 of September 26, 1993.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 25, 2000.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on the National
Emergency With Respect to Iran
September 25, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to

Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, and matters relating to the measures in that order and in Executive Order 12959 of May 6, 1995, and in Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 25, 2000.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Partnership
For Peace
September 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 514 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103-236), and section 205 of the NATO Participation Act of 1994 (title II of Public Law 103-447), I hereby transmit to you a report concerning Partnership for Peace (PFP) developments through July 15, 2000.

The PFP has been an unqualified success since its establishment in 1994. As reviewed in this year's report, through the PFP, Partners have built stronger ties with the Alliance and developed closer cooperative relationships with their neighbors. The PFP, and its political com-

ponent, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, have also provided a means for incorporating Partners into NATO's operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, and assisting those countries that want to join NATO to implement reforms through the Membership Action Plan process. In addition, enhancements to the PFP have provided an improved mechanism for Partners to use in developing the interoperability with NATO that will be necessary for future NATO-led Allied/Partner missions.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Sept. 26 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House

Committee on International Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 26.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Compliance With the Chemical Weapons Convention *September 25, 2000*

Dear _____ :

In accordance with Condition 10(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the United States Senate on April 24, 1997, enclosed is the report on CWC compliance.

The report is provided in both a classified and unclassified form.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; and Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdensen, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 26.

Remarks on the National Economy *September 26, 2000*

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, we're here to talk about some good news for our economy and what it means for hardworking Americans. I want to thank those on our administration team who had a lot to do with the results that I will be announcing today.

I thank John Podesta, and I thank Gene Sperling; our Council of Economic Chair Martin Baily, and the other members of the Council of Economic Advisers; Jack Lew and Sylvia Mathews at OMB and all the people at OMB and the staff at the Council of Economic Advisers; all the folks who work in the White House and those who have been part of the groups that have helped us and our economic team and the Government to achieve the results that the American people have worked for and earned.

As John Podesta just described, when we took office, the deficit was \$290 billion and rising. It was projected to be about \$450 billion this year. Twelve years of irresponsible fiscal policies had quadrupled the debt of the United States,

giving us low growth and very high interest rates. Unemployment was high; confidence was low.

Al Gore and I worked hard to change that, with a strategy of fiscal discipline, investment in our people, and expanded trade. A big part of our strategy was to make sure that all the American people could participate in the growth of our Nation. We expanded the earned-income tax credit, nearly doubling it to make sure that work pays for people who work on modest incomes.

We raised the minimum wage, passed the family and medical leave law, enacted a \$500 child tax credit, passed the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill to make sure people could carry their health insurance with them when they changed jobs, created the HOPE scholarship tax credit and other increases in college aid for the biggest expansion in college opportunity since the GI bill over 50 years ago.

Now, we all know that the American people have done a lot with these changes. We have

the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment ever recorded. So, the 22 million jobs and the longest economic expansion in history have truly had a broad base of benefits. The rising tide has been lifting all boats.

Today I'm pleased to announce that we have reached another economic milestone. In its annual study on income and poverty, the Census Bureau reports that last year typical household income rose \$1,072, to the highest level ever recorded, breaking \$40,000 for the first time.

American incomes have been on the rise for 5 years running now. Since 1993, when we launched our economic strategy, median family income has risen by 15 percent. That means, for the typical family, after inflation, \$6,300 more a year in real purchasing power for the things that matter most: sending their children to college; covering critical health care costs; saving for a secure retirement.

And the poverty rate has fallen to 11.8 percent, the lowest in 20 years. Since 1993, 7 million Americans have moved out of poverty, 2.2 million in the last year alone. The equality part of this recovery is picking up steam. Last year African-American and Hispanic poverty rates took their largest drop ever. Child poverty dropped more than any year since 1966, and elderly poverty fell below 10 percent for the first time in history.

The rising tide of the economy is lifting all boats. Every income group is seeing economic growth, with the greatest gains, in percentage terms, being made by the hardest pressed Americans. In 1999, as the report shows, African-American and Hispanic households experienced the biggest boosts in their incomes ever.

Today, the most important thing we can say about our economy is that it works for working families, and its success belongs to all the American people. If we stay on the path that got us here, the path of fiscal discipline, we can reach even greater heights of prosperity. If we add the new markets initiative and an expansion of the empowerment zone program the Vice President has led so ably these last years, we can extend it even further, to people and places still left behind, so that the gains we are seeing in the cities reach as far as our rural communities and Native American reservations. We can also achieve something once unthinkable: We can make our country debt-free for the first

time since the Presidency of Andrew Jackson in 1835.

Months ago, I presented a budget that sticks to the path of fiscal discipline and makes critical investments in America's future, that saves Social Security, strengthens Medicare, and includes a voluntary prescription drug benefit, invests in education, and increases accountability, and pays down the debt by 2012.

Now, there's less than a week left in this fiscal year, and Congress still has not passed 11 of the 13 appropriation bills. Congress still has not raised the minimum wage or taken other initiatives to keep all Americans' lives improving, along with the economy, including a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefits, or tax cuts for college tuition, child care, and long-term care.

I was, however, encouraged this week that the Republican leadership said that they will work with me and the congressional Democrats in the face of the drug companies' opposition, to give Americans access to prescription drugs that are cheaper in other countries. I think it's wrong when drug companies sell the same drugs for a much higher price at home than they do overseas, even when those drugs are manufactured right here in America. Some of the most vulnerable Americans, seniors and people with disabilities, are paying the highest prices for prescription drugs made in America, in the entire world.

I support the legislation the Senate has passed to right this wrong. If fully funded, the Senate bill meets my condition that the prescription drugs we import here are every bit as safe as the ones already on the shelves of America's pharmacies. With this protection in place, we can preserve the safety of our prescription drug supply and cut prices for the pharmaceuticals Americans need.

The idea has potential, as long as the leadership in Congress sees it as part of a real solution, not part of a campaign strategy. Of course, again I say, it's only part of a solution. A discount doesn't help you much if you've got more than \$10,000 in catastrophic drug costs. What you need, what all seniors need, is something that makes drugs cheaper but helps you pay for them, as well. What you need is a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is optional, affordable, and dependable.

I'm disappointed by the congressional leadership's suggestion that there's not time enough to pass such a benefit, and I disagree. Every day Congress is still in session is another day it could be working overtime to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit and to meet our other pressing national priorities.

There is still time for Congress to raise the minimum wage; to pass the bipartisan new markets legislation; to help close the growing digital divide; to give our American children more opportunities in education; to reduce class size with more highly trained teachers; to fix crumbling old schools and to build new ones; to support after-school programs for all the children in this country who need it; and to increase accountability by requiring States not only to identify failing schools but to turn them around or put them under new management.

The remarkable success of our economy, the rising incomes, the falling poverty rates, show again how much we can achieve when we work hard, make the right choices, and work together. The American people do that every day of the year. So for just a few days, the days left in this legislative session, I hope the Congress will work with me in that same spirit and with the same eye toward achievement.

This is a good day for America. We have proved that we can lift all boats in a modern, global, information-based economy. But we have a lot to do. The success and the progress should urge us on.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

Remarks at Georgetown University Law School September 26, 2000

Thank you very much. Father O'Donovan, thank you for giving me another chance to come back to Georgetown and for your extraordinary leadership over these many years. And Dean Areen, thank you for giving me a chance to come to the law school.

I have to tell you that when they told me I was coming into the moot courtroom—[laughter]—my mind raced back 30 years ago—almost 30 years ago. When we were in law school at Yale, Hillary and I entered the moot court competition, and it was sort of like the Olympics. There were all these trial runs you had to get through, and then you got into the finals, and you tried to go for the gold.

So we finished first and second in the trial runs, and then we got into the finals. And the judge, the moot court judge, was Justice Abe Fortas. You've got to understand, this was the early seventies; it was a sort of irreverent time. [Laughter] Fashion was not the best. [Laughter] Some of us made it worse. [Laughter] And anyway, I had a bad day. [Laughter] Hillary had a good day. I thought she should have won. But Justice Fortas thought that her very seventies outfit, which was blue and bright orange suede—[laughter]—was a little out of order for

a trial. And so he gave the award to a guy, a third person, who is now a distinguished trial lawyer in Chicago. And for his trouble, he has had the burden of contributing to all my campaigns and now to hers. [Laughter] So I suppose it all worked out for the best. [Laughter]

Mr. Hotung, Mrs. Hotung, I thank you for your generosity. I loved your speech. [Laughter] And I'd like to thank you, especially, for what you've tried to do for the people of East Timor. It means a lot to me because I know how important it is to the future of freedom throughout Southeast Asia and, indeed, throughout all East Asia, that we come to recognize that human rights are not some Western concept imposed upon the rest of the world but truly are universal as the United Nations Declaration says.

East Timor is a small place, a long way from here, that many people thought the United States should not care about. And the fact that you did and continue to care about them and the enormous odds they have to cope with still is, I think, a very noble thing, and I thank you very much for that.

I'd like to thank the faculty and staff and students who are here and all the members of my administration and administrations past who

are here and my friends from Georgetown days who are here. Georgetown Law School has given more talent to this administration than any other single institution in America. And I'm almost afraid to mention some for fear that I will ignore others or omit them, anyway.

But among the people in the administration who are Georgetown law grads are: my Chief of Staff, John Podesta; my White House Counsel, Beth Nolan; my Deputy Counsel, Bruce Lindsey; former White House Counsel Jack Quinn; Budget Director Jack Lew; former Trade Ambassador and Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor; Counselor to the Chief of Staff Michelle Ballantyne; Deputy Communications Director Stephanie Cutter. They're all graduates of Georgetown law. And I've had various Ambassadors and other appointees, and Lord knows who else you gave me. So I'm grateful for that.

It's also quite interesting to me that Beth Nolan's assistant, Ben Adams, and my personal aide, Doug Band, are actually working full-time at the White House. In Doug's case, he's working around the clock, because we're traveling and we're working. We haven't slept in 3 weeks. And they're enrolled right now in Georgetown law. *[Laughter]*

Now, therefore, I would like to make a modest suggestion, and that is that when they take their exams in December, they be judged not only on the basis of legal reasoning but creative writing. *[Laughter]*

I also want to credit one other person for the remarkable fidelity Georgetown students and Georgetown lawyers have had to public service over the years. My freshman philosophy teacher, Father Otto Hentz, used to say that the Jesuits are convinced there was only one serious scriptural omission on the first chapter of Genesis: God created politics, and God saw that it was good. *[Laughter]* You would get quite an argument, I think, from some people on that. But Georgetown has always been there for America's body politic, and we are a better nation because of it.

The Eric Hotung International Law Center Building will house work that will, in no small measure, shape the kind of nation we are and the kind of world we live in, in the 21st century.

The 20th century raised a lot of questions of lasting concerns: of ethnic and religious conflict; of the uses and abuses to science, technology, and organization; and of the relationship

between science and economic activity and the environment.

But the 20th century resolved one big question, I believe, conclusively. Humanity's best hope for a future of peace and prosperity lies in free people and free market democracies governed by the rule of law.

What Harry Truman said after World War II is even more true today. He said, "We are in the position now of making the world safe for democracy if we don't crawl in the shell and act selfish and foolish." Sometimes his unvarnished rhetoric was more effective than more strained eloquence. We are, today, in a position to make the world more free and prosperous if we don't crawl in the shell and act selfish and foolish.

The scope of the challenge is quite large. In the 1990's, more people won their freedom than ever before in human history. People in nations like Russia, Ukraine, Nigeria, Indonesia now elect their own leaders. But it is just a first step. Without a strong and independent judiciary, civil society, transparent governance, and a free press to hold leaders accountable, the world's new democracies easily could sink under the weight of corruption, inequity, and poor government.

I read an op-ed piece by the New York Times columnist Tom Friedman a few months ago, which captured the experience I've had in this job for nearly 8 years now when he said, "Americans were born as a nation skeptical of government." Our Constitution was designed to limit government, and then we had a decade when we were told by all of our politicians how bad government is. But the truth is that in many parts of the world today, human freedom is limited by weak and ineffective government, without the capacity to deliver the good, honor the rule of law, and provide a transparent environment so that investment can come in to lift the lives of people. Without democratic elections, laws can too easily be a tool of oppression, not an instrument of justice. But without the rule of law, elections simply offer a choice of dictators.

Building a rule of law is hard work. If you just look at our own history, you get, perhaps, the most persuasive illustration. We established our right to elect our leaders before independence. Even with independence, we still, in 1776, had no national executive, no system of courts, only a weak legislature.

The Articles of Confederation came 5 years after independence but failed. The Constitution was ratified 13 years after independence and was quickly amended. And it was not until *Marbury v. Madison* in 1803, 27 years after the Declaration of Independence, that the courts established their rights to check the power of elected leaders.

Of course, when we started, only white male property owners could vote. It wasn't until the end of the Civil War that African-Americans were treated as citizens. Women didn't gain the right to vote until the 20th century. We are still very much a work in progress, and we need to take that humbling thought into account when we give advice to others in building their future.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, it had no laws relating to private property or public elections or freedom of the press. In 1993 we launched a rule-of-law project that helped Russia draft a new civil code, a criminal code, a tax code, and bankruptcy law. We also helped Russia to separate its judicial system from the executive branch, train judges in commercial law, support Russian law schools. It was not a panacea, but it did help to create the foundation on which Russia can build.

The same need for stronger legal institutions is apparent in China, especially because of its impending entry into the World Trade Organization, which, as all of you know, I think is a very, very good thing. It's more than an economic opportunity, because it can set China on a course that will diminish the role of government in its economy and its people's lives, while involving China in an international system of rules and responsibilities and mutual interdependence.

China will have to make fundamental changes to meet its WTO obligations: restructure its industries, publish laws that have long been secret, establish procedures for settling disputes, create a level playing field for foreign firms. China has asked us for help in developing its legal expertise and legal system. We should provide it. And I expect Georgetown will be part of that effort.

This past summer Professor James Feinerman and Professor John Jackson and other Georgetown faculty met with some 25 senior Government officials in China—from China, to advise them on structural reforms they will be making

as they become fully participating members in the World Trade Organization.

Since a Georgetown law professor helped Germany draft its democratic articles of government after the Second World War, Georgetown law professors have been active the world over, helping nations to establish democratic legal structures, from Estonia to Mexico, from South Africa to Mongolia. Next summer, you will begin an international judicial, educational, and exchange program to allow judges from other countries to come here to discuss with United States judges how to build a judiciary that is both independent and competent.

These efforts illustrate how America's experience should be put to use to advance the rule of law where democracy's roots are looking for room and strength to grow. But in many parts of the world, people still struggle just to plant the seeds of democracy. For the last decade, one of the most important and gripping such places has been the former Yugoslavia. Eight years ago, the region was engulfed by war, caused by Mr. Milosevic's desire to build a Greater Serbia. It's easy to forget how very close he came to succeeding. If he had, it would have led to a permanent humanitarian tragedy and an end to the vision of an undivided, democratic Europe.

But with our allies, we stood against ethnic cleansing and stood by democratic forces fighting for change. From Sarajevo to Pristina, the carnage has ended. Croatia is a democracy. Bosnians are now waging their battles at the ballot box. The control of Milosevic and his dictatorship is now limited to Serbia, and this weekend, it appears, because of brave people casting their ballot, he has lost the last vestige of legitimacy.

The OSCE and the EU have concluded that this election was marred by widespread irregularity. Experienced international observers were prevented from monitoring the election. But still, the people of Serbia showed up in overwhelming numbers. And despite the Government's attempt to manipulate the vote, it does seem clear that the people have voted for change. And the question is, will the Government listen and respond?

I do not underestimate Mr. Milosevic's desire to cling to power at the expense of the people. I have witnessed it, lived with it, and responded to it firsthand. But after this weekend's vote,

we should not underestimate the people of Serbia's determination to seek freedom and a different and more positive force in the face of violence and intimidation.

Neither should Americans underestimate the extent to which this vote is about Serbia, its people, and its future. Indeed, the opposition candidate also disagreed with our policy in Kosovo. I am under no illusions that a new Government in Serbia would automatically lead to a rapprochement between the two of us, and any new leader of Serbia should pursue, first and foremost, the interests of its own people. But if the will of the people is respected, the doors to Europe and the world will be open again to Serbia. We will take steps with our allies to lift economic sanctions, and the people of Serbia, who have suffered so much, finally will have a chance to lead normal lives.

I hope that day is arriving, and when it does, people of good will will, around the world, help the people of Serbia to build and strengthen the institutions of a free market democracy. Some of you in this room will be needed in that effort. The persistence of people with your expertise, the institutions of our country, especially the Georgetown Law Center, will make an enormous difference in the future.

Let me close with just one very personal thought. The law gives people a way to live together, to resolve their differences, to be rewarded when they should and punished when they're particularly destructive. But the idea is, it embodies our most fundamental values and applies it to practical circumstances so that even when we have differences, we find a way to abide a decision that is made.

It will be more and more important in the years ahead because the world is growing more interdependent. It embodies the idea, just because there are rules, that all of us are created equal and that we should be treated blindly, without regard to our race, our religion, our ethnicity, our condition of ability or disability, whether we're straight or gay, whether we're Asian or European or African or Latin American.

The whole idea of the American law, embodied in the ideals of our Constitution and

continuously perfected, is that we are all equal and that we are growing more interdependent. If we were completely independent, we'd have no need for law. We'd just be out there doing our own thing. And if we weren't equal in the eyes of the law, the law would be a monster and an instrument of oppression.

So the law is our society's attempt to reconcile our deep belief in independence and our understanding that interdependence is what enables us to make progress and to give our lives more meaning. The world is more interdependent than ever before. If we can find a way for people to believe that through the law we can create an environment in which everybody is better off, in which no group or individual is seeking to make unfair gains at anyone else's expense, then the world's most peaceful and prosperous and exciting time lies ahead.

Then I'm not worried about what use we will make of the marvelous mysteries of the human genome. I'm not worried about whether some nation will abuse what they find out in the deepest depths of the ocean or the black holes of outer space. I'm not even worried about our ability somehow to find a way to deal with the terrorists and their ability to use the marvels of new technology for biological, chemical, and other weapons. We'll deal with it fine, as long as we remain committed to the integrity of the individual but the interdependence within and beyond our borders, or to go back to Mr. Truman's words, if we're not too stupid and too selfish, the best is still out there, and the law will lead us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:40 p.m. in the Moot Court Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Father Leo J. O'Donovan, president, Georgetown University; Judith Areen, dean, Georgetown University Law School; Eric Hotung, Georgetown University alumnus and benefactor, and his wife, Patricia Anne Shea; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); and Yugoslav opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Violence Against Women Act

September 26, 2000

Yesterday I called on Congress to act quickly to strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. More than 900,000 women across the country suffer violence at the hands of an intimate partner each year, demonstrating the continuing need for this legislation. I am very pleased that today the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act. This vote affirms our commitment to support the work of State and local prosecutors, law enforcement agencies,

and health care and social service professionals throughout the country who every day respond to women who are victims of domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault.

It is now time for the Senate to act. Unless the act is reauthorized by September 30, authorization for critical grant programs supporting the victims of domestic violence will be in jeopardy. With over 70 sponsors in the Senate, there is no reason for delay.

Remarks Following the Premiere of “Remember the Titans”

September 26, 2000

Folks, come on. Give them a hand. *[Applause]* I just want to say two things, besides thanks to Jerry and the director and the stars, for giving us a gift. First thing is, I’ve actually had the honor, as President, of going to T.C. Williams High School. And you might be interested to know that that school district is now the most racially, ethnically, religiously diverse school district in the whole United States of America. That high school now has students whose families come from more than 80 countries and speak more than 50 languages.

And after some of the troubles at schools around America, I went out there because they are a model for the whole country and how different people relate to each other and work together and solve their problems. And it all started here with them, 30 years ago.

The second thing is, I was watching this movie, and you know I grew up in the South, where football was next to religion, except for people who were really serious about football.

And I was watching this, and I was thinking back over the last 8 years and all the times I spent trying to get people in other countries to quit fighting each other because they were different and trying to get people in America to get over their differences. And I was just thinking, if only we could learn over again every day the lesson these young men, when they were young—and they’re still young to me—*[laughter]*—learned from each other.

The reason that’s so powerful is, they won a victory of the human heart. And I hope that all of us will remember the gift they gave us and keep on winning.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10 p.m. at the Uptown Theater. In his remarks, he referred to the film’s producer, Jerry Bruckheimer, and director, Boaz Yakin. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the National Economy and an Exchange With Reporters September 27, 2000

National Economy

The President. Good morning. Yesterday I announced that household income has reached an all-time high and the poverty rate has fallen to its lowest level in 20 years. Today there's more good economic news.

Eight years ago, our future was at risk. Economic growth was low; unemployment was high; interest rates were high; the Federal debt had quadrupled in the previous 12 years. When Vice President Gore and I took office, the budget deficit was \$290 billion, and it was projected this year the budget deficit would be \$455 billion.

The American people, thankfully, chose a better future. They put their support behind a new economic direction of fiscal discipline, greater investment in our people, expanded trade in our products. It's given us the longest economic expansion in history and the strongest fiscal turnaround in memory. Record budget deficits have given way to record surpluses. And this has enabled us to do something that would have been impossible just 8 years ago. We've actually begun to pay down the debt.

Today we received more good news that our strategy is working. According to the Office of Management and Budget, this year's budget surplus will be at least \$230 billion. With this surplus, we've been able to cut the debt over the last 3 years by this figure.

[At this point, the President wrote the number on a chart showing the deficit.]

The President. Three hundred and sixty billion dollars in debt reduction over the last 3 years.

This year alone we've cut the debt by at least \$223 billion, the largest one-year debt reduction in the history of the United States. Like our Olympic athletes in Sydney, the American people are breaking all kinds of records these days. This is the first year we've balanced the budget without using the Medicare Trust Fund since Medicare was created in 1965. I think we should follow Al Gore's advice and lock those Trust Funds away for the future.

We've come a long way since then and a long way since 1993. But we can go further still. If we stay on the path we're on, we can

pay this debt off entirely by 2012, for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835. Paying off the debt will benefit America, just as paying off credit cards benefits the average family. It frees up money for things that matter, and it keeps interest rates lower. That will mean more investment, more jobs, lower mortgage payments, car payments, and student loan payments. This is all terribly important.

Already the benefits of debt reduction have meant about \$2,000 a year—or deficit reduction, and then debt reduction has been about \$2,000 a year in lower interest payments for home mortgages, about \$200 a year in lower interest payments for cars, about \$200 a year for lower interest payments on college loans. And if we stay on this path, rather than go back and spend all the surplus and get back into the Social Security funds, it will keep interest rates about a point lower over the next decade. That will be worth, in home mortgages alone, over \$300 billion.

So this is a very important thing to do. And I hope that we will see a continuation of this trend in this year's final end-game budget negotiations. However, the fiscal year is almost over, and Congress still has sent me only 2 of the 13 spending bills. We need to put our priorities in order and put the broad national interest above special interests.

The key to fiscal discipline, to these kinds of results, is maintaining it each year, year after year. If you look at what's happened in the last 8 years, Federal spending today as a percentage of the economy is the lowest it has been since 1966. The Federal civilian work force is the smallest it's been since 1960, down 377,000 from the day I took office.

I am concerned, frankly, about the size and last-minute nature of this year's congressional spending spree, where they seem to be loading up the spending bills with special projects for special interests but can't seem to find the time to raise the minimum wage or pass a Patients' Bill of Rights or drug benefits for our seniors through Medicare or tax cuts for long-term care, child care, or college education.

And first and foremost, they haven't found the funds for education, for continuing to hire

100,000 qualified teachers to reduce class size, to build and modernize schools, to provide after-school for children who need it, and to have real accountability for failing schools, requiring them to turn around or shut down or be put under new management.

These are the things that need to be done, and I certainly hope they will be. We can finish this year in good shape. We can maintain our fiscal discipline. We can get this country out of debt and still make the right investments and have the right kind of tax cuts, but we have to work together to do it and avoid just throwing money away simply because we're close to an election.

These results today—paying off \$360 billion of the national debt, something that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago; continuing the longest economic expansion in history; knowing that we can get this done, that we can actually get the country out of debt—ought to be an inspiration for all of us to stay on the path that got us here now and in the years ahead.

Thank you very much.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, do you think there will be a final peace settlement in the Middle East before you leave office?

The President. I don't know. We're working on it.

Q. Any progress?

The President. I don't know. They're working, and they're working hard, and they're trying, and we're working as hard as we know how. But I can't say there will be; I can't say there won't. We can do it, but it will require what these difficult things always require, a remarkable convergence of both sides willing to make difficult decisions and kind of leap off into the future together. I hope we can do it.

Hate Crimes Legislation

Q. Mr. President, on hate crimes, Republican leaders have indicated there really isn't much of a chance of a bill passing this year. If that's the case, do you intend to make the issue one of your nonnegotiable priorities in the final budget talks with the GOP? And how much is your speech later in Texas designed to put pressure on Republicans on this issue before the elections?

The President. Well, I think there should be hate crimes legislation. I think they made a mistake in Texas not to pass it, and I think it's a mistake for Congress not to pass it. But we all know what the deal is here. This is not complicated. The Republican majority does not want a bill that explicitly provides hate crimes protections for gay Americans. And I think they think it will split their base or something.

All the surveys show that over two-thirds of the American people believe that no one should be subject to a crime because of who they are. And I just hope and pray we can do it. If we can't do it, what did that Senate vote mean? Was it just some stunt? I mean, they voted for it 57–42. It's not a complicated piece of legislation. It could be put on anything.

So I wouldn't give up yet. I think a majority of the House and a majority of the Senate are for it. So if it doesn't get on, it will require an effort of the leaders to keep it off. In other words, minority rule not majority rule in the Congress. I believe there's—there are Republicans in the Senate and the House who genuinely support this. I don't know how many, but enough, as you saw in the Senate vote, to get a majority, unless the leaders keep it from happening. They'll have to actually keep it from happening.

Possible Lieberman-Farrakhan Meeting

Q. Mr. President, is it realistic for the American public to expect a book on race from you before you leave office? And also, what are your thoughts about Joe Lieberman expecting to meet with Minister Louis Farrakhan to heal the racial divide between the Jewish-American community and the African-American community?

The President. I didn't understand. What did you say about Joe Lieberman and Louis Farrakhan?

Q. Joe Lieberman told me yesterday that he wanted to meet with Minister Louis Farrakhan to help ease the tensions between the Jewish-American community and the African-American community, and also to try to change what he said, the misguided statements that he made at the beginning of Joe Lieberman being announced as the Democratic Vice Presidential running mate.

The President. Well, if anybody has got the standing to do it, he certainly does. That's my objective—I don't know about the other question.

Go ahead.

President's Book on Race

Q. What about the race book, though?

The President. I don't know. I'm working hard.

Yugoslav Elections

Q. Mr. President, how do you assess the situation in Yugoslavia and the likelihood of a run-off election?

The President. Well, Mr. Kostunica and his forces apparently have said at the present time they don't plan to participate in a run-off because they're confident they got a majority. The Government's official election commission has no credibility, whatever. There are no opposition party members on it. There are no independent observers that have monitored its work. And the opposition believes it clearly got over 50 percent, and at least another NGO and other independent observers believe it did, too.

So they have to decide how to respond to this. And I think what Europe and the United States should do is to support the express will of the Serbian people, and it certainly appears from a distance that they had a free election, and somebody is trying to take it away from them. And so we'll just have to see what happens. But whatever we do, I think, should be consistent with the wishes of the majority of the people there.

Legislative Agenda/Possible Vetoes

Q. Mr. President, given what you've said today, why not just tell Congress that you won't sign appropriations measures that grant you more funding than you even requested, as they seem prepared to do?

The President. Well, first of all, the President should never be in a position of, in effect, usurping the Congress's authority. They always add something to what I spend. I have consistently shown more fiscal discipline. But this is a question of the dimensions of it. And the Supreme Court said that I didn't have the authority for the line-item veto, and so I have—the only option I have is a meat-axe option now. And we'll just have to see whether I will be able to sustain those and what the consequences would be, and my main concern here is all the things that are left undone, all this money they're spending, but they still have an inadequate commitment, in my judgment, to

education—at least based on what I've seen so far—and all these other things. The priorities of the Congress strike me as strange. I mean, look at what their—their first priority for tax cuts was something for the wealthiest 2 percent of Americans, and they still haven't done anything for long-term care or college tuition tax credits or child care for average Americans, and they still haven't done anything to raise the minimum wage.

So this is a question of priorities and balance. In terms of whether I would veto one, it depends on how much extra money they spend in the end and what it looks like. So I can't say that. I'd have to study the bills first.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Q. Mr. President, 8 months ago, Vice President Gore said he thought it was a bad idea to tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. You spoke with him last week before announcing your plans in that regard. What's your take on his change in position?

The President. Well, I think the circumstances are quite different. I didn't tap the Strategic Petroleum Reserve 8 months ago either. And as you know—I think it's been reported in the press—we had a very long and serious discussion about this, and we discussed all the pros and cons and decided that after OPEC had set a target range of \$22–28 a barrel—which most of us, certainly me and the producing countries, thought was a reasonable range; that is, we didn't want to go back down to 13 or 12 or 10 again because that was also disruptive—that the accumulated decisions were not going to come near that target and that there seemed to be a trendline going quite high.

And so Secretary Richardson and his experts at the Energy Department argued for a couple of weeks, based on their experience and their understanding of the supply situation, that among the various options we considered—and there were three or four of them, including doing nothing right now, and others—that the most prudent thing to do is what we did.

So I essentially took the advice of Secretary Richardson and the experts at the Energy Department, after discussing it extensively with our whole economic team, including the Vice President.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House prior to his departure for Dallas, TX. In his remarks, he referred

to Yugoslav opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica.

Remarks at a Gay and Lesbian Leadership Council Luncheon in Dallas, Texas September 27, 2000

The President. You've got to calm down now. We've got work to do. *[Laughter]* But I thank you for that welcome. And I want to thank Chuck and Jim for welcoming us. This is a really beautiful place. I love the art. I love the architecture. I love the light. This is the first time I've ever gotten to give a speech under Bette Davis eyes. *[Laughter]* I bet I hear about that one. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Julie and Kay. I'd like to thank Ed Rendell for agreeing, after he left the mayor's job, to do this old part-time job as chair of the DNC. And my friend of many, many years Andy Tobias, who has really done a wonderful job in more ways than most people know. Thank you, Elizabeth. I thank Julian Potter, my White House liaison, and the others who are here from the White House today.

I also want to thank Brian Bond, who is the director of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. And we have one very important candidate for Congress here, Regina Montoya Coggins—*[inaudible]*. And Molly Beth Malcolm, thank you for being here, for getting on that—what was that talk show you were on last night, taking up for our side? That guy just talks louder when he starts losing arguments. You hung in there really well. *[Laughter]* You did a good job.

I want to say to all of you that this is an interesting time for America. It's a time of enormous progress and prosperity but a time of real ferment, too. And people are trying to come to grips with all the currents of change that are running through America: The Fort Worth City Council voted to extend discrimination protection to gays and lesbians; gay Dallas city councilman changes party. Good deal. Regina wants to represent the community, and the Congressman says he doesn't—not sure he does. *[Laughter]* It's a big deal. We're debating all these things.

I'm honored to have had the chance to be President at a time when all these issues were coming to the fore, and to have a record number of members of the gay community in my administration. We are fighting for the hate crimes bill, and basically, we now have a bipartisan majority in both Houses for it. We've got all the Democrats but one, and about—I don't know—12 or 13 Republicans in the Senate voted for the hate crimes bill. And we have 41 Republicans in the House who voted with about 200 of our crowd to instruct the conferees on the defense bill to leave it in there.

I was asked just before I left Washington—a couple of you mentioned it to me that one of—someone in the leadership of the Republican Congress said that he didn't think this would get to be law this year. Well, if it doesn't get to be law, it's because the leadership doesn't want it, because we've got a majority of the votes for it. So I would urge you do to whatever you can.

There's been a sea change movement. Gordon Smith, who is the Republican Senator from Oregon and an evangelical Christian, gave an incredibly moving speech in the floor of the Senate for it. I don't know if you saw it, but there was a Republican State representative from Georgia who gave a decisive speech in the Georgia legislature for the hate crimes bill. And I don't know if you've circulated that, but it's an overwhelmingly powerful speech. And I think it could have, if we can get it around, an impact on some more Members in the House, but we've got the votes. It's just a question of whether the leadership of the Republican Party in the Congress stays to the right of the country on this issue.

The same thing is true of the employment nondiscrimination legislation. I actually hope that we might pass that this year. There are big majorities across the country for this. It is

not just a Democratic issue. It is not just a liberal issue. It's not even just a gay rights issue. It's a fundamental fairness issue in America. And we get a few changes in the Congress, that will pass next time too, assuming the election for President works out all right.

So we're moving in the right direction. But we're dealing with this—this election, in some fundamental way, I think, is a referendum about whether the whole approach we've taken to our national problems in our national life is the right one. I ran for President partly because I just got sick of seeing my country held back by the politics of division, by a sense of political and economic and cultural entitlement, almost, on the part of the people who had been running things for a long time, with absolute confidence that they could divide the American electorate in ways that made their opposition look like they were out of the mainstream and not part of ordinary American life.

And it seemed to me that it gave us bad economic policies, bad social policies, ineffective crime and welfare policies, and a lot of hot air and not much results. So when the people gave Al Gore and me a chance to serve, we tried to adopt a unifying approach that would bring the American people together and that would not make choices that were essentially phony.

We believed we could cut the deficit and invest more in education and the American people, and sure enough, it worked. Today, before I came here, I announced that we would have this year a \$230 billion surplus, the biggest in the history of the United States, that we would, when I left office, have paid off \$360 billion of the national debt. Keep in mind, the annual deficit was supposed to be \$450 billion this year when I took office. So it's gone from \$450 billion projected deficit to a \$230 billion actual surplus.

And yesterday we released the annual poverty figures, which show that poverty is at a 20-year low. Last year we had the biggest drop in child poverty since 1966, the biggest drop in minority poverty in the history of the country since we've been measuring the statistics; 2.2 million people moved out of poverty last year alone; all income groups experienced roughly the same percentage increase in their income. But in America—and the bottom 20 percent actually had slightly the higher percentage in-

crease, which is good because they've been losing ground for many years while working hard.

So I think it makes sense to have economic and social policies that bring people together. And it's rooted in an essential Democratic belief that everybody counts, everybody ought to have a chance, and we all do better when we help each other. It's not complicated, but it turns out to be good economics.

And it turns out to be quite effective social policy. If you look—we said that we ought to put more police on the street, punish people who are particularly bad, but do more to prevent crime in the first place and keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. And lo and behold, it worked. Now, that hasn't stopped people from fighting us, because they're driven by ideology and control, not by evidence.

One thing I respect about our opponents, they are totally undeterred by the evidence. [Laughter] I mean, in a way, you've sort of got to admire that—"I don't care what works. This is what I believe." [Laughter] "So what if they've got the longest economic expansion in history and 22 million new jobs and the lowest minority unemployment rate recorded and the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years. I don't care. I still want to go back to running the deficit and having a big tax cut."

"So what if keeping a half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting handguns, and not interrupting anybody's day in the deer woods, and putting 100,000 police on the street has given us the lowest crime rate in 27 years. I still don't want to close the gun show loophole, and I want to get rid of the 100,000 cops program." That's their position. It's not just about guns; it's about police. They do not favor the Federal program that is now putting 150,000 police on the street, and they have promised to get rid of it. And I could go on and on.

"So what if 18 million Americans every single year are delayed or denied coverage by an HMO when a doctor is pleading for it. I'm still not for the Patients' Bill of Rights."

Now, I could just go on and on, but the point I want to make is, this election is about way more than gay rights. I have a unifying theory of how America ought to work. I've tried to build one America. I'm elated when the human genome project revealed we are all 99.99 percent the same, genetically. [Laughter]

I've been touting to a lot of people this new book by Robert Wright called "Non Zero." He

wrote an earlier book called "The Moral Animal." The essential argument of the book is that notwithstanding all the depravity of the 20th century and the Nazis and the Communists, that essentially society is moving to higher and higher levels of decency and justice, because it's becoming more complex and we're becoming more interdependent. And the more interdependent people become and the more they recognize it, the more they are forced to try to find solutions to their disagreements, in game theory parlance, which are non-zero-sum solutions as opposed to zero-sum solutions—those are where in order for somebody to win, somebody has got to lose.

It's not a naive book. I mean, we're going to have a race for President. It's a zero-sum race. One will win; one will lose. But the general idea is that we ought to organize society in such a way that we more and more and more look for solutions in which, in order for me to win, you have to win, too. We have to find respectful ways to accommodate each other so that we can honor our differences but be united by our common humanity.

So, for me, cutting the welfare rolls in half, adding a couple million kids to the rolls of children with health insurance, being for the hate crimes bill and the employment nondiscrimination bill, being for new markets legislation to expand opportunity to people and places left behind, and continuing to get the country out of debt so interest rates stay low and prosperity stays high, so the rest of the country is secure enough to reach out to people who are different from them—which is easier to do when you're secure than when you're insecure—to me, this is all part of a unified strategy.

And I guess what I would like to ask you to do is to continue to reach out and to keep working. Never allow yourselves to be marginalized or divided against your friends and neighbors, because the progress we're making is because more and more people are identifying with our common humanity. As horrible as it was when young Matthew Shepard was stretched out on that rack to die in Wyoming, it got a lot of people's attention. And when that police commissioner from Wyoming stood up and said, "I was against hate crimes legislation before, and I was wrong. The experience of knowing this young man's family, knowing his friend, knowing what his life was like, and understanding the nature of this crime and why

the people committed it has changed my life—seeing his parents stand up and talk"—obviously, not exactly a liberal Democratic activist living out there in Wyoming—[laughter]—talking about this whole issue in profoundly human terms has helped to change America. And they are trying to redeem their son's life by making sure that his death was not in vain.

And the American people are fundamentally good people. They nearly always get it right once they have a chance to have personal experience, if they have enough information and they have enough time to absorb it.

Now, that's why, in this election, it's important that you keep reaching out and understand that clarity is our friend. I just get so tickled watching this Presidential campaign, maybe because it's interesting for me—I'm not part of it now. [Laughter] Except as I often say, now that my party has a new leader and my family has a new candidate, I'm now the Cheerleader in Chief of the country. [Laughter] But it's sort of like—one week we read in the press that there is something wrong with one of the candidates. Then the next week, "Oh, there's something wrong with the other." And let me tell you something. I totally disagree with that whole thing. I think we ought to posit the fact that we have two people running for President who are fundamentally patriotic, good, decent people who love their country but who have huge differences that tend to be obscured by the daily and weekly coverage of this or that flap.

And sometimes, I get the feeling that the flaps are being deliberately used to obscure the underlying reality. Now, the underlying reality is that these people have huge differences on economic policy—huge. And the Republican position would basically take an enormous percentage of the non-Social Security surplus, roughly three-quarters of it, and spend it on a tax cut. Then, if you partially privatize Social Security, that's another trillion bucks. You're into the Social Security surplus, and that's before you have kept any of your spending promises. That means higher interest rates.

We just got a study which said that the Gore plan would keep interest rates roughly a percent a year lower, over a decade, and that's worth—there's some dispute about it, but somewhere between \$300 billion and \$390 billion over 10 years in lower home mortgages and \$30 billion in lower car payments and \$15 billion in lower student loan payments. That's a big tax cut.

It also keeps the economy going. There are huge differences in economic policy, big differences in education policy. Even though both say they're for accountability, I would argue that the Democratic program on accountability is stronger, because it says we favor voluntary national exams. We favor identifying failing schools and then having to turn them around, shut them down, or put them under new management. So there are real consequences here.

And we favor, in addition to that, which they don't, putting 100,000 teachers out there to make smaller classes and rebuilding or building a lot of schools, because you've got kids just running out of these buildings and a lot of school districts just can't raise property taxes any more.

There are huge differences in health care—a Patients' Bill of Rights, Medicare drug program. You know, all this medicine flap, it obscures—what is the underlying reality here? The underlying reality is, we have the money to give senior citizens, who cannot afford it otherwise, a drug benefit through Medicare. And our position is that we ought to do it and that, over the long run, it will keep America healthier, make lives longer and better, and keep people out of the hospital. It's a simple position—that if we were creating Medicare today, there's no way in the world we would do it without a prescription drug program.

Their position is, "We ought to do that for the poorest Americans, and everybody else ought to buy insurance." Now, half of the seniors who cannot afford their medical bills are not in the group of people they propose to cover, number one. Number two, even the health insurance companies, with whom I've had my occasional disputes, if you've noticed—I've got to hand it to them. They have been perfectly honest in this. They have said, "We cannot write a policy that makes sense for us that people can afford to buy." Nevada passed the bill that the whole Republican establishment is for, and you know how many health insurance companies have offered people drug coverage under it? Zero. Now, so the evidence is not there. But like I said, I've got to give it to them. They are never deterred by evidence. *[Laughter]*

Now, what's the deal here? What's the real deal? The real deal is, the drug companies don't want this. Why don't they want it? You would think they would want to sell more medicine, wouldn't you? They don't want it because—I

can't believe we just don't read these things—they don't want it because they believe if Medicare provides this many drugs to this many seniors, they will acquire too much market power and require them, through market power, not price controls—there are no price controls in this; this is totally voluntary—that they believe they will have so much market power, they will be able to get down the price of these drugs a little bit and cut the profit margin.

Well, we can argue about how much more expensive drugs are here than drugs made here are in other countries—and it's different from drug to drug—but instead of getting into one of these sort of nitpicking deals, let's look at the big picture. The big picture is, you can go to Canada and buy medicine made in America cheaper in Canada. Why? Because all these other—and Europe—because they impose limits on the price.

So we all, Americans, we have to pay for all the research and development for the medicine. Now, we've got great drug companies. We want the drugs to be developed. I personally think we ought to be willing to pay a premium. But I don't think there's a living person who needs the drugs who should not be able to get them. And we can do this for seniors on Medicare now. The fastest growing group of people in America are people over 80.

So it's not just about gay rights. It's about seniors' needs. It's about kids' needs to be in decent schools. It's about what works to make our streets safer. And then, there are the environmental issues.

Now, it's not like we don't have any evidence here. We've got the toughest clean air standards in history. We've got cleaner water, safer drinking water, safer food. And we set aside more land than any administration in history except the two Roosevelts, and now we've got the longest economic expansion in history. So that's the evidence, right?

We also know, in terms of the present energy crisis, that we've been trying for years to get this Congress to give tax credits to people to buy presently available energy conservation technologies and products and that, off the shelf today, there are available products that would dramatically increase the efficiency of our energy uses. We've tried to put more and more money into research for new fuels, new engines, fuel cells, the whole 9 yards, without success.

What's their approach? They still say, "Don't bother me with the evidence. You cannot grow the economy and improve the environment, so put us in there. We will reverse President Clinton's order setting aside 43 million acres—roadless acres in the national forests. We will review even the national monuments, may get rid of some of them. We will relax the clean air standards, because you can't do it. Don't bother me with the evidence." This is about the air gay and straight people breathe. [Laughter]

What I'm saying to you is, this is a big deal. I get so frustrated because I wish—that's why I hope these debates serve to clarify this. I mean, I know it's hard for them, because it's hard for them to get up and say, "I'm sorry, I just think we ought to have dirtier air." I mean, it's hard. [Laughter] I understand it's a hard sell. I understand that.

But you've got to understand, there are differences here that will affect the lives of real people, that will affect the kind of America this young man grows up in. That's what these elections ought to be about. And I'm perfectly prepared to posit that they're all good people. And I'm sick and tired of everybody trying to pick them both apart. That's not the issue. The issue is that people—study after study after study after study shows that people who run for President, by and large, do what they say they will do.

And by the way, there was one independent study that showed that in my first term, even before all the stuff I've done in my second term, I had already kept a higher percentage of my promises to the American people than the last five Presidents.

Now, you couldn't possibly win a Pulitzer Prize or a Niemann fellowship if you said that. But we ought to be better. We do not need to jump on our opponents, personally, but we do need to make darn sure that every single person knows what the differences are. And these Congress—I'm telling you, every House seat, every Senate seat is pivotally important to the future of this country.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. That's one example—assume they are honorable people in the Senate and the House and the people running for the White House. One of them believes in *Roe v. Wade*; one of them doesn't. There's going to be two to four judges on the Supreme Court coming

up. Why wouldn't they each do the honorable thing, that is, what they believe is right?

Now, we ought to have—we've never had a time like this in my lifetime. We may never have another time where we've got so much peace and so much prosperity, where people are secure enough to talk about a lot of things we used to not talk about. I mean, let's face it. Here we are in Dallas, Texas, having this event, right? Because America has come a long way. Your friends and neighbors have. Your fellow citizens have. This is a different country than it was 8 years ago. So now we've got to decide, what do we propose to do with all this? You have friends all over the world. Most of you have friends in virtually every State in America. I am imploring you to talk to people every day between now and the election.

Regina will win if people understand exactly what the choices are. The Vice President will be elected if people understand exactly what the choices are. Hillary will be elected to the Senate if people understand exactly what the choices are. And yet so much of what passes for political discourse is designed to obscure, rather than clarify, the differences. Somebody doesn't agree with me, let them stand up and say what they think the differences are, but let's talk about the things that will affect other people.

Most people I've known in politics have been good people who worked harder than most folks thought they did and did the best they could to do what they thought was right. But we have honest differences here in health care, education, the economy, human rights, gay rights, foreign policy. One side is for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and the other isn't. You talk about something that could have huge consequences on your kids' future.

So I am imploring you. I thank you for this money. We'll do our best to spend it well. We need it. They're going to outspend us, but we proved in '98 we could win at a \$100 million deficit. But there's some deficit at which we can't win, because we've got to have our message out there, too. So we'll be less in the hole because of what you've done today.

But you just remember this. There are a significant number of undecided voters—that's why these polls bounce up and down like they do—and they're having a hard time getting a grip on the election, the undecided voters are, partly because there's not enough clarity of choice.

So I implore you. You wouldn't be here today if you didn't have a certain amount of political and citizen passion and courage and if you didn't have clarity of choice about some issues that are very important to you. So I ask you, take a little time between now and the election, every day, and try to find somebody somewhere that will make a difference and give them the same clarity that you have.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon cohosts Chuck Marlett, Jim Vasilay, Julie Johnson, and Kay VanWey; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, and Andrew Tobias, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; Elizabeth Birch, executive director, Human Rights Campaign; Regina Montoya Coggins, candidate for Texas' Fifth Congressional District; Dallas City Councilman John Loza; and Molly Beth Malcolm, chair, Texas Democratic Party.

Message on the Observance of Rosh Hashana, 2000

September 27, 2000

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Rosh Hashana.

The High Holidays, a time of serious prayer and self-reflection, begin with Rosh Hashana. Signaling the start of a new year, Rosh Hashana asks Jews across the globe to reaffirm their relationship with God and to discover how they might better fulfill God's commandments. But Rosh Hashana is a time for celebration as well, as Jews commemorate the creation of the world and welcome the gift of a new year.

The ten days from Rosh Hashana to the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, provide an opportunity to acknowledge past transgressions and

resolve to learn from them. As the shofar sounds its stirring notes again this year, I encourage all Americans to reflect on how we can help make our world a better place. As we rejoice in our many blessings, let us remember the ways that God's gifts can be used to fulfill our obligation to help others and to create a brighter future for ourselves, our families, and our fellow citizens.

Hillary joins me in sending best wishes for a memorable celebration, a meaningful period of reflection, and a new year sweet with the promise of peace, joy, and prosperity.

BILL CLINTON

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Need for Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act

September 27, 2000

Dear Mr. Leader:

I am writing to urge you to bring the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) to the Senate floor this week. This bill is a top priority for my Administration.

An estimated 900,000 women suffer violence at the hands of an intimate partner each year, demonstrating the urgent need for this legislation. Since VAWA was enacted, the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services have awarded approximately \$1.6 billion in Federal grants to support the work of prosecu-

tors, law enforcement officials, the courts, victim advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs in order to combat violence against women. We must reauthorize these critical programs immediately.

As you know, yesterday, the House overwhelmingly passed VAWA reauthorization by a vote of 415-3. In the Senate, VAWA has similar bipartisan support with over 70 cosponsors. If Congress does not act this week, however, VAWA's authorization will expire on September

30, 2000. The Senate should not delay, and I urge you to pass a freestanding version of the Biden-Hatch VAWA reauthorization bill this week. The women and families whose lives have been scarred by domestic violence deserve nothing less than immediate action by the Congress.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to Richard K. Armey, House majority leader, and Trent Lott, Senate majority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Max Sandlin in Houston, Texas September 27, 2000

Well, first of all, Max, I appreciate your thanks for the great effort I've made to help you. It's really a great effort to come here on a day like this—[*laughter*—to John Eddie and Sheridan's modest little home—[*laughter*—to be with Peter and Christie, whom I normally see on Long Island, now that I'm hanging around New York. [*Laughter*] I don't know why I didn't get here 3 hours earlier. [*Laughter*]

I am delighted to be here. I'm glad to be back in Houston. I want to thank Mayor Lee Brown, who I think is still here. If not, he was here and has got to go to an event; there he is. And I want to thank him not only for being an outstanding mayor but for his terrific service in the Clinton-Gore administration as our drug czar before he became mayor.

I also want to thank Max's colleague from Houston, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, who is here, for being here to support him. Thank you very much. And I want to thank the State representatives and other officials who are here.

But I want to say a special word; I made a passing reference to these two couples up here with Max and me, but let me tell you, I've known Peter and Christie for several years now. I remember once a couple of years ago, they were standing out—remember that—you were standing out on the street when I was driving by. Do you remember that? And I got out and said hello. And they wanted to become more active. They had gotten interested in some important environmental and health issues where they live on Long Island. They wanted to get more active in public life. And they have—I hardly know anybody that has exerted more consistent effort, have a positive impact for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and for our

Democratic candidates around the country than they have over the last couple years, and I just want to thank you for doing it. It's been great. Thank you very much.

And I want to thank John Eddie and Sheridan for being such good friends of mine. This is the second time I've been in their home. I've been once after dark and once before dark, and I liked it both ways. [*Laughter*] But they have been so wonderful to me for 8 years now, in good times and bad. And I'm very, very grateful.

I would like to thank all the people of Texas who have supported Hillary and me and Al and Tipper over these last 8 years. It was never a very easy sell here, but we actually did pretty well in both elections, under adverse circumstances. And I'm very grateful for the support I got here.

I just want to make two or three points here tonight, and I realize I'm—at a deal like this, you're probably preaching to the saved, but everybody here has friends in congressional districts in Texas that are contested and friends throughout the country in States that are contested. I had one guy ask me the other day, he said, "Why are you working so hard?" I learned that this is—I think this is the 142d event I have done for the Democrats this year, in a year when, as you know, I'm not running for anything, for the first time in 26 years. And most days I'm okay about it. [*Laughter*] I've now adopted the official title of Cheerleader in Chief, since my family has a new candidate and my party has a new leader, and I like it very much, and I've enjoyed it.

I am profoundly grateful for the chance that I've had to serve for the last 8 years. And I am very grateful if any of the ideas I had or the work I did, the fights I fought, and some

of the bullets I took helped us to keep America on a progressive path and to resist the reaction that came after we won. But what I want to say to you is that sometimes it's harder for a country to make a good decision in good times than it is in bad times.

I remember back in '92, when the Republicans were trying to scare everybody about me, and they were derisively referring to me as the Governor of a small southern State, and I was so naive I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do. I still do. And I thought to myself, Lord knows how many people walked into polling places saying, "I wonder if I really ought to vote for that guy. I mean, he doesn't look old enough to be President"—that's before my hair turned—"and he is just a Governor of a small southern State. I don't know if I know where it is or not. And everybody—the Republicans have got all these people saying terrible things about him. Oh, well, I'll take a chance."

I mean, come on, it wasn't much of a chance. The country was in a ditch. We had to do something different. [Laughter] And it's worked out, and I'm grateful. But what I want to say to you is that we actually changed the way things were done in Washington, and we've changed what was being done in the White House and, insofar as we could, what was being done through the executive branch of Government and with the Congress. We had a different economic policy, a different education policy, a different health care policy, a different environmental policy. We had a different crime policy, a different welfare policy, a different foreign policy. And we had a different policy toward trying to unify America, as opposed to trying to divide it, based on a simple philosophy that everyone counts, everyone ought to have a chance, and we all do better when we help each other. That's what I believe.

And I just tried to modernize those ideas to fit it with this new information global society we're living in. But when you strip it all away, it has a lot of simple meanings. For example, I believe, and I think all of you believe, that these people that served us tonight ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college that those of us who could afford a ticket have to send ours to college.

So it worked. Max told you a little bit about it. Just in the last 2 days—we were able to announce yesterday that poverty was at a 20-

year low, and that minority—African-American and Hispanic poverty dropped more than ever before from one year to the next, last year, and more than in 34 years for children, that median income was above \$40,000 for the first time in the history of America.

And today we announced that the surplus this year would be \$230 billion. Now, let me tell you, when we were doing it their way, when I took office, the deficit was \$290 billion, and the projected deficit for this year, when I took office, was \$455 billion. So instead of a \$455 billion deficit, we've got a \$230 billion surplus. And when I leave office, we will have paid off \$360 billion of the Nation's debt.

So in education, we changed the policies. Reading scores are up. Math scores are up. The dropout rate is down. College-going is at an all-time high. Are they as good as they ought to be? No where near. But I keep pushing for more accountability, more results, more rigor in identifying schools that aren't working and turning them around or putting them under new management. We can do a lot better.

But what I want you to know is, we know something we didn't know when Hillary and I started on this over 20 years ago. We actually know that you can turn around any failing school, and we know that there are people who know how to do it. I'll just give you one example. I was in Harlem the other day in a school that just 2 years ago—an elementary school—2 years ago—where 80 percent of the children were doing math and reading below grade level—2 years ago. Today, 74 percent of the kids, same kids, are doing reading and math at or above grade level.

You can turn these schools around. But you have to have high standards, rigorous accountability, well-trained teachers, small enough classes, a disciplined environment, and for the kids that come from tough neighborhoods and circumstances, they need preschool and after-school programs and mentoring. If you've got it, you can turn them around. So we can do that. So things are going well. Now, that's point one.

Point two is, what are you going to do with the good times? The point I want to make to you is, there are a lot of big challenges out there and a lot of fabulous opportunities. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that's not just a campaign slogan. I'm not running, and I believe that. I believe the best times for

this country are still out there, if you make the right decisions.

Max talked about a couple of issues. Let me just tell you, there's another thing—I'm sort of frustrated with the coverage of the Presidential campaign in the last few weeks. The press takes about a week, and they tell you everything that's wrong with Governor Bush, and they say, "Oh, my goodness, we may be too tough on him. Let's load up on Gore for a week." And then we'll have a week or 10 days of that. And then they say, "Oh, well, maybe we'll do that. We'll load up on Bush a little." Have you watched this? And it's all about personal stuff or what they remember or how they said this, that, or the other thing.

Let me tell you something. I think it's a bunch of bull in terms of how it affects you. Here's what I believe: I believe you have two honorable people who love their country, love their families, and are going to do their best to do what they believe if they get elected. And I do not think America is very well served by all this rigmarole, trying to confuse people into thinking that, if you can just find which one has the worst quirks, you'll know to vote for the other one. That's a bunch of hooey. That's not true.

Now, what I want to tell you is that there are real, significant differences between the two parties, and every House seat, every Senate seat, and the White House matters. And to pretend otherwise is naive and wrong and risks squandering the best moment in my lifetime to shape the future of our dreams for our children.

Look, they've got different economic policies, the Democrats and the Republicans. The Democrats believe we ought to give a tax cut of more modest proportion that will be focused on child care, long-term care, helping people send their kids to college and deduct the tuition, and helping people save for retirement. They believe that we should save enough money to make sure that we can invest an appropriate amount in education, health care, the environment, national defense, and—big time—keep paying this debt down until we get out of debt, in 12 years, for the first time since 1835, so we can keep interest rates down and the economy expanding. That's what we believe.

They believe that we should give roughly 75 percent of the non-Social Security surplus, which they've already said we should set aside, right? When you hear them saying, "We just

want to give away one in four dollars in taxes," it's not quite right. They believe we should give most of the non-Social Security surplus, which they say we shouldn't touch, in a tax cut. And most of you would make more money in the short run under their program than ours.

Why are you here? I'll tell you why I believe you're here: because you've been there. And if you spend \$1.6 trillion on a tax cut and \$1 trillion to partially privatize Social Security, which is what it costs if we give the young people here 2 percent of your payroll taxes, and all these people that are 55 and over—and I'll be one of them next year—you guarantee them the existing benefits, you've got to fill up the hole of people taking the money away. It costs a trillion dollars.

By the time you pay for that and the Social Security privatization, and you add inflation plus population growth to Government spending, and you take into account either party's promises—just the Republican promises—you are way back in deficit.

What does that mean? Higher interest rates. The Council of Economic Advisers thinks the Gore Democratic congressional plan would keep interest rates a percent lower a year for a decade. Do you know what one percent lower interest rates means? It's worth about \$390 billion in home mortgages, lower home mortgages; \$30 billion in lower car payments; \$15 billion in lower college loan payments; and a much higher stock market, a much higher rate of business investment, more jobs, and higher incomes. It's a big difference. If you want the money now, you should be for them. If you want to keep building America, you should be for us.

But let's not pretend that there's no difference here. It is big and profound and deeply held by both sides. They really believe that the more you cut taxes, the more the economy grows. The last time we tried it, we wound up \$4 trillion in debt.

People ask me all the time, they say, "You had all these geniuses like Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen in your economic team. What great new innovation did you bring to Washington when you became President in economic policy?" And my answer is always the same: "Arithmetic." [Laughter] We brought arithmetic back to Washington, DC.

Now, I'm telling you, we're just six seats away from the majority. His seat matters, not just in Texas, not just in his district; every American

has a stake in seeing this economic policy go forward.

I could go through—I'll just do one more. We have hugely different health care policies. We believe in a strong Patients' Bill of Rights, and they don't. And there's a reason. It's not that they enjoy seeing the 18 million people a year—18 million people a year—who are either denied health care or have the proper health care delayed because someone—not a physician—is not sure that what they need is covered by or should be permitted by their HMO.

Now, I can say this because I have not been opposed to managed care. When I took office as President—let's get the whole truth out here—inflation in health care was 3 times the rate of inflation in the society. We were about to be swallowed up by health care costs. We had to get in there and manage the system better. But the problem with all management systems is, if you lose sight of what the primary goal is, you get in trouble in a hurry. The primary goal is not to maximize profit; it's to maximize profit consistent with the first goal, which is the quality of health care given to every single person in one of those health care systems.

There's 18 million people that are delayed or denied health care. So we say—Max and all the Democrats and our crowd—we say, you ought to have a right to see a specialist if you need it. You ought to have a right to go to the nearest emergency room. If I hear one more person tell me a story about somebody hit by a car and driving by three emergency rooms in a city before they get to one that's covered, I think I'll scream. You ought to have a right to keep the same doctor during a course of treatment, even if you change jobs. And if you get hurt by a delay or denial of service, you ought to have the right to sue. And everybody ought to be covered.

They've got this sort of Rube Goldberg scheme which says, well—theirs is not a Patients' Bill of Rights; theirs is a patients' bill of suggestions. [*Laughter*] They say, "If you don't get it, it's too bad, but we won't let you sue." Although they may be willing to get us into Federal court now—the Republicans—but they don't want to cover everybody. Their initial plan left 100 million Americans out. Now, why is that? Because the health insurance companies don't want it, and they don't want to do anything they don't want to do.

Now, you just have to decide whether you think their management imperatives are more important or whether you think these 18 million people's health care is more important. Now, they will tell you that our plan will cost too much money. But their own Congressional Budget Office says, if our bill passes, it will cost under \$2 a month in health insurance costs. And I think it's worth about \$1.80 a month. I'd gladly pay it to know that if you got hit by a car, you could go to the nearest hospital, and you could keep your specialist. But you've got to decide.

It's the same thing on this Medicare drug thing. The fastest growing group of people in the country are over 80. If you live to be 65 in America today, your life expectancy is 82. The young women in this audience, because of the human genome project, are going to come home with babies in the next 10 years that have little gene cards with them that tell them how to maximize their life, and life expectancy will rapidly rise to about 90 years in this country.

Now, we know, with the miracles of pharmaceuticals, we can stay alive longer and live better. We also know that over half the seniors in this country have medical bills they cannot really afford. So we say, "We've got the money now. Medicare is a very efficient program with very low administrative costs. We'll run a voluntary prescription drug program through here, and we'll let everybody who needs it buy into it, with subsidies for very poor people." That's our position.

Their position is, "We'll help people up to 150 percent of the poverty level. Everybody else can buy insurance, and maybe we'll give them a little help." Now, all the fights I've had with the health insurance companies—let me say something nice about them—the health insurance companies have been completely honest in this debate. They have said to their friends in the Republican Party, "Your plan won't work. We can't offer insurance for people to buy drugs at a price they can afford to pay that's worth having. It can't be done. It won't work."

Nevada passed a bill like the one the Republicans—from the nominee for President, all through the Congress—are advocating. You know how many insurance companies have offered to cover the medical, the pharmaceutical bills of the people of Nevada since they passed the bill? Zero. Not one.

Why do they keep doing it? One thing I admire about them is, they're always undeterred by evidence. [Laughter] We've got a lot of lawyers in the crowd. You know other people like that. [Laughter] The evidence has no impact, whatever. They know what they believe, and "don't bother me with the facts." Now, why would they do that? They say, "Well, let's just help the poor folks first." Over half the people who need this help are above 150 percent of the poverty line. That's about 16 grand for a couple in America, most places, retired couple.

Why do they do that? Because the pharmaceutical companies are against our position. Why would the pharmaceutical companies be against selling more drugs and making a profit on it? Because they think—you need to know the whole story; I'll tell you the whole story—because they believe if Medicare is the purchaser of drugs for all these folks that buy into the program, it will become the biggest drug purchaser in America, and we'll have enough market power to get a better price.

Right now, American seniors pay much higher prices for drugs than people do in other countries, even if the drugs are made here. Now, like all things in life, it's not entirely—there's not all right and wrong on one side. All these other countries have price controls, and one of the reasons we've got the best pharmaceutical industry in the world is that we've invested huge amounts of your money in medical research, but they've invested a lot of theirs. And it costs a lot of money to bring new drugs to market, and they recover both the cost of the development plus the cost of manufacture, sale, and distribution from you because they can't recover any developmental costs overseas. But once they get it all out of you, then they can sell that medicine a lot cheaper in Canada or Mexico or anyplace else.

Well, we're not going to solve all that overnight, but all I know is, that is a very poor excuse for denying needy senior citizens in America their right to medicine that they've got to have to stay alive and have a healthy life.

But you can decide—but let's not pretend there's no difference here. We're for the hate crimes legislation. They're not. The appointments on the Supreme Court will be dramatically different because these people have different views and convictions. And you have to assume that honorable people will act on their convictions if they're in a position to do it.

Study after study after study shows that, notwithstanding the relentless efforts of both parties to paint the politicians of the other party as less than honest and the happy complicity of the press in dumping on both sides, that overwhelmingly, Presidents do pretty much what they say they're going to do when they run. You can look at throughout the whole 20th century, and it's the truth. Sometimes you just have to admit you're wrong; sometimes circumstances change. By and large, people do what they say they're going to do.

So there are big differences here. And I just want to ask you, if you know anybody in Max's district or where another member of my administration—a former member—Regina Montoya Coggins, is running in Dallas or any of the other really contested districts here or you know people in other States that you know are close and are battleground States, you need to tell them, "Look, we've had big successes. There are big differences. People cannot be lulled into complacency, because times are good, to thinking this election doesn't matter."

I'm telling you, it's exciting out there. I think you are going to find out in the next 10 years you're going to have babies born with a life expectancy of 90 years. I think we're going to find out what's in the black holes in outer space. I think we'll find out what's in the ocean depths and things that we never dreamed before. I think that we will find a cure for Parkinson's. I think we may be able to actually reverse the onset of Alzheimer's. The kind of things that are going to happen here are unbelievable. And I think we will find ways to bring prosperity to people in places and neighborhoods that have been totally left out of this recovery, if we make the right decision.

But that's why I'm going all over the country. I worked as hard as I could to turn this country around and get it going in the right direction. But all the best stuff is still out there if we make the right decision. Every House Member, every Senate Member, the race for the Presidency—it's not about who's good and who's bad; it's not about who said this little thing or that little thing in the newspaper yesterday. It's about what they're going to do that affects your lives, your children's lives, your grandchildren's future, and what this country looks like.

And if you believe that we've had a good economy and you'd like to keep changing in this direction, if you believe that all children

can learn but we ought to help them with more teachers and modern schools as well as accountability, if you believe that we ought to get rid of child poverty and that old folks ought to be able to get the medicine they need, if you believe that we can grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time—and I didn't even talk about that tonight; I can keep you here to midnight on that—if you believe that in the world we ought to be doing things like reaching out to our trading partners and building partnerships with Latin America and Africa and being responsible partners in the world, and if you really believe that we ought to be one America across all the lines that divide

us, that we all do better when we help each other, you ought to stick with our side, and the best is yet to be.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts John Eddie Williams, Jr., and his wife, Sheridan; reception cochairs Peter Cook and his wife, Christie Brinkley; Mayor Lee P. Brown of Houston; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen and Robert E. Rubin. Representative Sandlin was a candidate for reelection in Texas' First Congressional District.

Remarks at a "Texas Tribute for President Clinton" in Houston September 27, 2000

Thank you very much. I appreciate what Mayor Rendell said, once again illustrating the complete accuracy of Clinton's third law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you've appointed to high office. *[Laughter]* But I loved it.

I want to thank all of the people who are responsible for this wonderful evening tonight. Jess and Betty Jo, thank you so much; Bill and Andrea. Thank you, Garry. I thank my friend of nearly 30 years, Billie Carr, for being here tonight. And I thank all the State legislators and party officials, and especially Representatives Max Sandlin and Sheila Jackson Lee, who make my life so much easier in Washington.

I thank Lloyd and B.A. Bentsen for being here tonight. I want to tell you, I just was with another group over at John Eddie and Sheridan William's house, and I said, people are always asking me—we had all this great economic news, and they're talking about how brilliant my economic advisers were, how brilliant Lloyd Bentsen was, and how brilliant Bob Rubin and all the others were, and they said, "What great new innovation did they bring to Washington?" I always say, "What they brought to Washington was arithmetic." *[Laughter]*

Lloyd and I tell them, "Where we came from, we weren't very smart, and we thought the numbers had to add up, or it wouldn't work." *[Laughter]* Sure enough, it worked out all right,

and the prosperity our country enjoys today is in no small measure because of the service that Lloyd Bentsen rendered to our Nation. And I thank you so much.

I want to thank my longtime friend Governor Mark White for being here. We were colleagues together back in the long ago, when we were working on improving our schools, and I think the children of Texas are still benefiting from a lot of the work you did, way back then. And I thank you for being here tonight, Mark.

And I want to thank the entertainers. I have special feelings about all of them. Red Buttons and I were together in Los Angeles at an event that we did for Hillary right before the Democratic Convention started. He was funny then; he was funnier tonight. And I was thinking, I wonder if I can tell those jokes when I'm not President anymore—*[laughter]*—or will I have to wait until I'm 81? *[Laughter]* But he was great. I loved it. The last time he spoke, I wrote down some of the jokes. Tonight I didn't even bother to write them down. I know I can't tell them until I get out of office. I let it go. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank my friend Mary Chapin Carpenter for being here. What an immense talent she is. And she's been so generous to me and to our party over these last 8 years. I'm very, very grateful to her.

And I want to thank Billy Ray Cyrus. I, too, will never forget the day we were on the train together going from West Virginia to Kentucky. He told me his father was a local Democratic official and that, even though he'd enjoyed some success in life, he had not strayed from the path his father blazed. We had a great day on that train, and I'll never forget it. And I did ask for that song. Every time Billy Ray Cyrus sings "Achy Breaky Heart," it reminds me of one thing I heard Tina Turner say one time, singing "Proud Mary," which was her first hit. When she sang it to us in Arkansas, it was about 25 years after she recorded it, and the crowd was cheering. And she said, "You know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it." [Laughter] That's the way I feel about him. He was great tonight. Let's give them all a hand. [Applause]

There are people in this room tonight that I first met nearly 30 years ago. There are people in this room tonight that I haven't yet met, and I hope to shake your hand. Most of the people in this room tonight I met 28 years ago, plus, probably—almost 29 years ago—are probably immensely surprised my life turned out the way it did. [Laughter]

But we have been friends all this long time. And fate had it that the first time I ran for President, I had to run against two guys from Texas. And now here I am going out with another nominee of the Republican Party from Texas. And throughout it all, I have really treasured the people who have supported me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore and what we tried to do—there's a very large number of Texans who have actually participated in our administration and served in one capacity or another—and the warm welcome I've always received here.

So the most important thing I could say to you tonight is a simple thank you. I have loved it every time I've been here. I'm grateful, and I'm glad we tried to win it, even when we couldn't. It's been a joy, and I thank you for that.

Now, I want to amplify a little on what Ed Rendell said. I'm working as hard in this campaign as I ever have, and I'm not running for anything. For the first time since 1974, I'm not on the ballot. Most days I'm okay about it. [Laughter] I tell everybody, now that my party has a new leader and my family has a new

candidate, I'm the Cheerleader in Chief in America, and I'm glad to do it.

I'd just like to take a couple of moments tonight to ask you to think about the future. I am very grateful that our country is better off today, by virtually every measure, than it was 8 years ago. And I am grateful for whatever role I and our administration had in it. But I am quite sure that the stakes in this election, though very different in 2000 than 1992, are every bit as high, perhaps higher. And if you'll just give me a couple of minutes, I'll try to tell you why, because I want to ask you to do something about it, even beyond the contribution you've made tonight.

When I ran for President, I know the American people took a chance on me. My opponent, the incumbent President, used to refer to me as, after all, just the Governor of a small southern State. And back in '92, I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And you know what? After all this time, I still do. So I can imagine how many people in 1992 went into the polling place saying, "My God, can I really vote for that guy? He's 46 years old and may not be old enough to be President. He's just been the Governor of that little bitty State, wherever it is. All the Republicans just say terrible things about it, and every now and then the media helps them along a little bit. Maybe I shouldn't do this. Oh, it's a big chance." I just wonder how many people went in there and said, "Oh, heck, I'm going to do it anyway."

But come on, it wasn't that big a chance, because the country was in a ditch. I mean, we knew we had to change, right? [Laughter] Now, it's different. Now we have peace and prosperity, the absence of internal crisis or looming, looming external threat to our existence. And people sort of feel like they're free to do whatever they want with this election.

I don't agree with that. I think I can say that, maybe with greater conviction and credibility because I'm not a candidate. I can't say it much better than I did out in Los Angeles, but I want you to know that all my life I have hoped that my country would be in the position it's in now, with prosperity and peace, where we're coming together, not being driven apart; and where we're not up to our ears in debt anymore; and we've actually got the chance to build the future of our dreams for our children. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing

yet," I know it seems like a campaign slogan, but I actually believe it. I believe it, because it took a good while for us to turn this country around.

I announced today that this year we'd have a surplus of \$230 billion this year, the biggest in the history of the United States; that by the end of the year, when I leave office, over the last 3 years we will have paid down \$360 billion on the national debt. We will have reduced the debt by that much. Now, if I had come here in 1992 and said, "I want you to vote for me, and we'll balance the budget in 1997. And then in '98, '99, and 2000, we'll run surpluses, and by the time I leave, we'll pay off \$360 billion of the national debt." Keep in mind, that year the deficit was \$290 billion, projected to be \$455 billion this year. We had \$4 trillion in debt. We were spending almost 14 cents of every dollar that you pay in taxes just paying interest on that debt. So if I said, "Hey, vote for me, and I'll begin to get us out of debt," you'd say, "You know, he seems like such a nice person. It's too bad he's imbalanced." [Laughter] Nobody would have believed that. Arithmetic.

Now, we also know that, as the study showed yesterday, poverty's at a 20-year low. Now all income groups' incomes are increasing more or less the same percentage terms. Last year we had the biggest drop in poverty every recorded for Hispanics and African-Americans. We had a 34-year—the largest poverty drop for children in 34 years. Two million people moved out of poverty this last year alone. Median income for Americans exceeded \$40,000, for the first time in history. In real dollar terms, after inflation, the average family's income has gone up \$6,300 since 1993.

Now, this is not just about money. You heard Ed Rendell talking about it. It's not just about money. One of my other laws of politics is: Whenever you hear a politician tell you this is not a money problem, 5 will get you 10 they're talking about somebody else's problem, not their problem. What do I mean by that? Work and a decent income gives dignity to life, structure to families, pride to children, and the room, the emotional as well as the financial space to do the other things that we really care most about in life.

So I want to say that I don't think all these things that have happened were an accident. We had a different economic policy, a different

education policy, a different environmental policy, a different health care policy, a different crime policy, a different welfare policy, a different foreign policy, and we had a different policy about what kind of country we were going to be and whether I was going to bring this country together across the racial and religious and other lines that divide us or keep on playing the politics of divide and conquer. And I choose unity, and I think it was the right decision. That's the Democratic decision.

So here we are, all dressed up, and where are we going to go? I want to just say two things about it. Number one, even though there is no apparent internal threat and external crisis, there are big challenges out there. And we can now meet them, because we're in shape to meet them. We were handcuffed from meeting them 8 years ago. I'll tell you what some of them are and what we can do.

We've got the biggest and most racially, ethnically, religiously diverse group of school kids in the history of our country. We can give them all a world-class education. We actually know how to do it, and there are examples in virtually every State where it has been done, against all the odds. But if we want it, we have to have what I would call a standards-plus approach. We've got to have high standards and accountability. But we've also got to be able to invest in modern schools, in Internet connections, in smaller classes, in well-trained teachers, and after-school programs for the kids that need it.

But if we're willing to do it and have accountability, we can get there. We have to decide. I think we'll pay a terrible price if we don't do it. If we do it, we will be the country of all those in the world best prepared for the global information age, because of our diversity.

Second thing, we've got to get ready for the aging of America. You live to be 65 in America today, your life expectancy is 82, highest in the world. Pretty soon, the fastest growing group of people in the world—Lloyd's going to live to be 120, but—fastest growing group of people in the world—in America are people over 80, in percentage terms.

The young people in this audience that have not had their children yet, when you have your children, if you have them over the next 10 years, starting within a couple years, young mothers will bring home from the hospital with their babies a little genome card that will be the inevitable result of the sequencing of the

human genome, which I'm very proud was completed during my tenure. And I'm proud of the support we gave it, although a lot of countries worked on it and it's been worked on for years. But anyway, this little card that will say, now, your little girl or your little boy has the following genetic makeup, and there are the following problems in the gene map of your baby's body which may, for example, make it more likely for your child to develop Parkinson's disease or Alzheimer's or breast cancer. But if you do the following 10 things, you can cut the risk by 80 percent. That's going to happen. And then, pretty soon after that, they'll figure out a way to fix the broken parts of the gene, so that it won't be any time before the young people here, when they have their babies, will be bringing home children who have a life expectancy at birth of 90 years. Now, that's the good news.

But when the baby boomers retire, there's only going to be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. And I think I can speak for my generation when I say, one of our nightmares is, we don't want our kids to go bankrupt or be unable to raise our grandchildren because of our retirement. So we have to protect and save and extend the life of Social Security and Medicare and add that prescription drug benefit, so that old age will be good and full and active as possible, but not a burden on our children and grandchildren—huge challenge. Every advanced economy in the world's facing it.

What are we going to do about global warming, and how are we going to keep getting enough energy to do what we have to do? Will we have to have more energy in the world? Of course, we will. Will we have to conserve more? You bet we will. Can we do both and protect and improve the environment? Absolutely.

I'll give you one example. We've been funding research at the Agriculture Department on how to make ethanol energy efficient. The problem with all these biofuels is, it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But we're right on the verge of a chemical breakthrough that is the equivalent of what happened when crude oil was cracked chemically so that it could be refined and turned into gasoline or heating oil. And when that happens, you'll be able to make 8 gallons of biofuel off any Texas farm from one gallon of gasoline. And when that hap-

pens, it will be like getting 500 miles to the gallon. We're also very close to fuel cells, to alternative energy sources, which will dramatically change the future of transportation.

So, can we grow the economy, have enough energy, and improve the environment at the same time? You bet we can, but not by accident. We'll have to decide. Now, those are just three issues. I could mention a zillion more. But we have to decide.

And the thing that has bothered me about—it bothers me about all elections, but it really bothers me now, because people have got to really think about this. Everybody kind of knew what the deal was in '92. So if you had a lot of that kind of smoke-and-mirrors coverage and it was this issue this week, underlying it, everybody knew what the deal was. Were we going to change or not? And in '96 everybody knew what the deal was. Has Bill Clinton done a good enough job for us to extend his contract? That was the issue. Were we going to build a bridge to the 21st century we could all walk across?

Here we are in the 21st century. We all walked across it. Now where are we going, now that we're on the other side and we have the freedom to decide? And I will say again, sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're bad. There's not a person in this room tonight over 30 years old who has not made a doozy of a mistake at least once in your life, not because your back was against the wall but because things were going so well for you, you thought you didn't have to concentrate. That is a condition of age; I can say that everybody's been there. Countries are no different. We have to decide what we are going to do with this moment of prosperity.

Last point: There are real differences. We don't have to bad-mouth the Republicans, and they don't have to bad-mouth us. They might feel like they do, but they don't. And I'll say again what I said in Los Angeles. I wish we could just all stand up and say, "Look, why don't we say between now and November 7th, we will posit that our opponents are good, patriotic, God-fearing people, who love their families and love their country and will do what they think is right? And why don't they posit the same things about us, so that we could get about the business of making an intelligent choice which requires us to understand what the differences are?"

Here's where you come in. There are real differences here, and they'll affect the lives of everybody in this room and especially the young people. And they will determine whether we will make the most of a kind of a chance a country gets maybe once every 50 years to build the future of our dreams for our kids.

Look at the economic choice. Do you like where we are and what we're doing? The Democratic plan is to have a tax cut that's focused on long-term care, child care, college education deductions, and retirement savings, that's small enough to let us invest in education, health care, and the energy and national defense and other issues we have to deal with, and still get this country out of debt in 12 years, so we can keep interest rates coming down, keep the economy going.

Their plan is to spend three-quarters of the non-Social Security surplus, and we all agree that we shouldn't ever spend the taxes you're paying for Social Security again, except for Social Security. That's what they say. They want to spend three-quarters of it on a tax cut that a lot of you here would get more money out of than ours; otherwise—if you could afford to pay the ticket tonight, you'd get more money.

[A portion of the President's remarks were missing from the transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary.]

They also want to partially privatize Social Security, which, if you're good in the stock market and you're under 40, might be good for you. But they say, if they're going to give you back 2 percent of your payroll to invest as you see fit but they're going to guarantee everybody who's 55 or over—which next year will include me—and they're going to give us what we'd be entitled to anyway. Well obviously, if you take the money out, you've got to put it back in, right? So there's a \$1.6 trillion tax cut. Then there's a \$1 trillion payback to Social Security. Okay, you've already spent all the non-Social Security surplus and some of the Social Security tax. And this is before you factor in Government spending going up at not only inflation but inflation plus population growth, which is done for 50 years; before you change the rules so that upper middle class people don't have their income taxed away by something called the alternative minimum tax, just by raising their income. That costs another couple of hundred billion dollars—before you allow for any emergencies—

and we spent \$30 billion on the farms in the last 4 years, because the farm prices have been so low. In other words, they're taking us back to deficits.

But the good news is, you get a nice quick hit, if you're in an upper income group, of a nice tax cut, and then 3 or 4 years later, you say, "Oh, my goodness, we're back in the soup again." And then what happens? Interest rates will be higher. My Counsel of Economic Advisers says that our plan will keep interest rates a point lower, every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to an average person—10 years worth? It—\$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments, from lower interest rates. Never mind what it does for business—more loans, more jobs, more investment, and a better stock market.

So you've got to decide if you want the money now. If you want to take the money and run now, you should be for them. If you like what's happened in the last 8 years, you want us to take advantage of this to deal with the big challenges, to give a tax cut we can afford, and get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835, you should be with us. But no American should be under the illusion that there is not a stark, clear choice that will affect the lives of our children. And that's what this election ought to be about.

You take health care. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights. At least for me, not because I'm against managed care; I was for managed care. When I became President, inflation in medical costs was going up at 3 times the rate of normal inflation. It was going to bankrupt the country. But the problem with any management system is, sometimes it forgets—any system—why you organize it in the first place. The point is not to make the most money you can. The point is to make the most money you can and spend the least money you can, consistent with the real objective, which is the health of the American people covered in the health care plan.

Now, this is a big deal. You know how many people in America today have health care their doctors recommend for them delayed or denied, every year? Eighteen million people. Now, if we pass a law that said, you've got a right to see a specialist if your doctor says so; if you get hurt, you've got a right to go to the nearest emergency room, not one clear across town that happens to be covered by the HMO; if you

change jobs, but you're undergoing a cancer treatment or you're pregnant, you can stay with the same doctor until your treatment's over; if you get hurt by a bad decision, you've got a right to sue—that's our Patients' Bill of Rights. And it covers everybody.

Their Patients' Bill of Rights leaves about a 100 million people out, and they have fought the right to sue. Well, without the right to sue, it's a patients' bill of suggestions, not a Patients' Bill of Rights. So we're for it. They're not.

Why aren't they for it? Well, the health insurance companies don't want it, and they're trying to scare us by saying that it will cost a lot of money. The problem is that their own Congressional Budget Office says it costs less than \$2 a month for insurance policy. Wouldn't you pay \$1.80 a month to make sure that if she gets hit by a car going out of here tonight, she can go to the nearest hospital? And a month later, if the doctor says she needs a specialist and an accountant says she doesn't, she gets to see the specialist? I'd pay \$1.80 a month for that. It's the right thing to do.

But we're different. We're different on this Medicare drug issue. Don't you be fooled by all the smoke and mirrors here. Let me tell you what—our position is simple. People are living longer. The older you get, the more medicine you get. If you get the right medicine and right amounts at the right time, you live longer, and you live better, and eventually you save money because you stay out of the hospital.

Their position is—their stated position is, "We can't afford to have a Medicare drug program that's voluntary but available to all seniors on Medicare. So we want to pay for people up to 150 percent of the poverty line and help other people by insurance, health insurance for medicine. And the Democrats just want a big Government program." Well look, Medicare is not a big Government program, right? We financed it. The doctors are private. The nurses are private. The health care is private, and the administrative cost is under 2 percent. It works.

Now, what's the real difference here? Their program would not help half of the seniors who need to be in this program because they can't afford to buy the medicine the doctor says they're supposed to have. Why are they really against it? Because the drug companies don't want it. Now, that doesn't make any sense, does it? Why wouldn't the drug companies want to go and sell more medicine? Most people in busi-

ness like to increase their sales, not restrict them. Why is that? Because they believe that if the Government has this health insurance that covers medicine, that we'll buy so much of the medicine that we'll be able to use our market power—this is not price controls, our market power—to keep the price of the medicine down. And they charge a lot more for medicine—made in America—in America, than they do in Canada or Europe or anyplace else.

And the Republicans want to say they want to help everybody, so they say, "Well, you can get insurance if you're over 150 percent of the poverty line." The problem is—and here's—with all the fights I've had with the health insurance companies, I take my hat off to them. They have been scrupulously honest in this. The health insurance companies have told the Republicans in the Presidential race and in the Congress that they cannot write a policy that people can buy, that this is not an insurable thing, and that in order for them to write a policy they can justify, the premiums would be so high, nobody would buy it.

Now, the State of Nevada—the amazing thing about the Republicans is, they keep pushing this, in the face of all the evidence. I kind of admire that. Evidence has no impact on them. [Laughter] You know, this is about conviction. Never mind the evidence. "Yes, the Democrats got rid of the deficit, but we still want to cut these taxes until there's nothing left."

This is really serious. The State of Nevada passed a plan just like this. You know how many insurance companies have written insurance for medicine for seniors in Nevada since they passed the plan that the Congress and their Presidential nominee recommend? Zero. Not one. Why? Because the insurance companies know this is not an insurable deal. That's why it ought to be done under Medicare.

Now, why don't they really want to cover everybody? Because they want to keep the prices up. Now, let me be fair; I'm not trying to demonize them. There's a reason they want to keep the prices up: because it costs a lot of money to develop these drugs. We spend a lot of your tax money developing medicine, and they spend a lot of money. And they know that if they can recover 100 percent of the cost of developing these drugs from you, then they can sell them cheap in Canada and Europe and still make a profit, and they won't let them charge that much over there.

Now, I'm sympathetic. I'm proud of our pharmaceutical companies. They do a great job. But I'll be darned if I think they ought to be able to keep American seniors, who need medicine to stay alive and lengthen their lives and improve the quality of their life, away. And it's a big difference in these two parties, and I think we're right and they're wrong. And the American people ought to understand that difference, and you ought to help them understand it between now and the elections.

So these are just three examples: the economy; the Patients' Bill of Rights; Medicare drugs. There are significant and important differences on education, where we favor putting 100,000 teachers in the classroom to lower class sizes. We favor a school construction program to help lower the cost of building new schools and repairing old ones, and they're opposed to it. Both sides favor accountability, but ours is accountability-plus. There are differences on every single issue like that.

There are big issues. The next President's going to appoint between two and four Justices on the Supreme Court. These people—assume they're good people, and they believe what they say. They believe very different things about how the rights of the American people should be defined. And since they're both honorable, we have to assume that they will make appointments to the Supreme Court consistent with their convictions. It would be wrong to assume anything else.

So what does all this mean for you? It means you have got to go out of here; every one of you has got friends that live in Max Sandlin's district or one of these other districts where there's a tough fight in Texas. Every one of you has friends who live in States that could go either way in this Presidential election, and every one of you knows a lot of people who have every intention of voting but have never come to a fundraiser, have never come to a political event, have never met the President or anybody running for President. But they want to be good Americans, and they're going to show up on election day. But they follow all this static that goes back and forth. I mean, I can hardly keep up with it, you know?

One week we're being told that Governor Bush has done something dumb and bad, and blah, blah, blah, and then we're being told, "Well, maybe the press is getting too tough on him." So the next week they really dump on

Vice President Gore, and they give it to him. And then the American people are told, "Oh, he's done something terrible, blah, blah, blah." And the Democrats and Republicans, they jump whichever way the press is going. They're happy or sad, so they all jump in. And the truth is, most of it doesn't amount to a hill of beans. The stuff I'm talking to you about is where the rubber hits the road. There are real differences that will change the lives of the people in this country, depending on the choices made.

So I can't do this to everybody, but you can. And if you made up your mind—you look at how many people are in here—if you made up your mind that every day between now and the election you were just going to talk to one person and explain why you were here, why you feel the way you do, and what a phenomenal opportunity we have, it would be breathtaking.

In our lifetime, we'll see babies born with a life expectancy of 90 years. We will see people cure Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and maybe even get to reverse Alzheimer's. We'll find out what's in the black holes in outer space and the deepest depths of the ocean, which may be even more surprising to us. People will be driving cars that get 80 to 100 miles a gallon or maybe even more if the biofuel thing works out.

We'll figure out how to deal with these frightening prospects of terrorists with chemical and biological weapons, allied with narcotraffickers, and all the problems. The problems will still be there. But I'm telling you, the main thing is, we ought to stick in this election and fight for clarity because we have a candidate for President and Vice President, we have candidates for Congress. We have a party with a record of 8 years proving two things above all: We understand the future, and we'll fight for it. And it's more important to us than anything else that we go forward together.

We believe everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; we all do better when we help each other. I was raised on that, and as modern as the Internet world is, it's still the best lesson you can take into politics, every single day. If you get clarity out there in this election, I'm not a bit worried about how it's going to come out. You make sure everybody understands it as well as you do, and we'll have a great celebration on November 7.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:52 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, and Jess Hay, former finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Mr. Hay's wife, Betty Jo; Bill White, former chair, and Billie Carr, executive council member, Texas State Democratic Party; Mr. White's wife, Andrea; former Texas Land Commissioner Garry Mauro; former Secretaries of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen and Robert E. Rubin;

Secretary Bentsen's wife, Beryl Ann (B.A.); John Eddie Williams, Jr., managing partner, Williams and Bailey law firm, and his wife, Sheridan; former Gov. Mark White of Texas; entertainer Red Buttons; musicians Mary Chapin Carpenter and Billy Ray Cyrus; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands

September 28, 2000

Netherlands-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, why did you invite the Prime Minister? Is there something the United States can learn from Holland? [*Laughter*]

President Clinton. I think there are a lot of things we can learn from Holland. Let me say, first of all, it's a great honor for me to have Prime Minister Wim Kok here. He's been an outstanding leader of Europe as well as The Netherlands, and we've had a very good relationship for 8 years now. And I have admired him for many years.

I always tell everyone that it was he, not I, that was the first real Third Way leader in the world. And if you look at the success of The Netherlands in keeping down unemployment and trying to balance work and family and dealing with the challenges that countries all over the world will face in the 21st century, it's hard to find a nation that's done more different things well. And so it's a great source of honor and pride for me to have him here today and just to have a chance to thank him for the years that we've worked together.

I'd also like to say how grateful I am for the strong support that he and his nation have given to our allied efforts through NATO, to end ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. And we've just been talking about the elections in Serbia, and I'd like to have him say what he feels. But from my point of view, they had an election; it's clear that the people prefer the opposition; and I think we should all say, in unequivocal terms, as soon as there's a democratic government over there, the sanctions should be lifted.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Kok. Well, first of all, I would like to say thank you to President Clinton for inviting me here. He was too kind, as far as The Netherlands and the Dutch Prime Minister are concerned. But I considered the President and still consider the President as a great leader of the United States who, in spite of the enormous difference in size between the United States and The Netherlands, has always been attentive and interested in developments in Europe and in our country. And this indicates that even between the very big and smaller countries, there can be really an excellent relations.

Now, on the Balkans, it was not easy for all of us, of course, to participate in the airstrikes that were necessary in order to bring an end to the genocide that was happening there. And what happened now, a few days ago in the elections, is an extremely clear signal from the electorate that they want to get rid of Milosevic. And this is, I think, the right moment for us to indicate that from the moment on when the opposition would take over that leadership, sanctions have to be lifted, because the sanctions were never directed against the people. They were not directed against the population. They were directed against their wrong leadership.

So this is a very important moment. We still have to see what will happen in the next few hours and days in Serbia. But that double message should be very clear. The people said, "We want to get rid of Milosevic." And we say, "As soon as there will be a new leadership, the sanctions will be over."

Narcotrafficking

Q. Mr. President, what do you make of the fact that Holland is still the biggest importer of ecstasy pills into this country?

President Clinton. Well, we're going to talk about that. I think we've had good cooperation, and we need to tighten our cooperation. There are things we can do about it. But part of it is a function of the fact that Holland is one of the great trading countries of the world, massive ports, and opportunity. And we just have to work harder to shut off the opportunity. I think we'll work together and do that.

Yugoslav Elections

Q. Mr. President, should Milosevic step down rather than participate in a second—rather than go forward with the second round of elections? Should he step down now?

President Clinton. If you looked at the—there are conflicting election reports. The opposition had people in each of the polling places, and they produced some pretty persuasive documentation that they won, Mr. Kostunica won. And the National Election Council had no opposition representation, met in secret, and has not documented its results. But as the Prime Minister said to me before we came out, even they certified 49 to 38; that's a pretty huge margin of victory in a national election.

But I thought the case the opposition made based on their actual numbers, poll place by poll place, were pretty persuasive, especially since it hasn't been refuted by the national commission.

Q. Did you talk about sending Dutch troops to Eritrea?

President Clinton. We haven't talked about anything else yet. We mostly just talked about Serbia. We're going to lunch and talk about the rest.

Tobacco Lawsuit

Q. Mr. President, judges dismissed half of the Government's lawsuit against the tobacco industry. Is that a disappointing blow to the Government?

President Clinton. I'm going to have a Cabinet meeting later, and I'll answer all the domestic questions then. Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:20 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Yugoslav opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica. Prime Minister Kok referred to President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Cabinet Members and an Exchange With Reporters

September 28, 2000

Budget Negotiations/Tobacco Lawsuit

The President. Is everyone in? Good. Well, as you can see, we're about to have a Cabinet meeting, the primary purpose of which is to discuss the budget negotiations that will be going on now until the end of Congress.

Two weeks ago I met with congressional leaders in this room, and we pledged to use the short time left in the fiscal year to do some important things for the American people, to resolve our differences on a host of issues, to put progress over partisanship.

Since then, the Senate has passed normal trade relations with China legislation, and I applaud that. But beyond that, nothing has been

done to finally raise the minimum wage, pass hate crimes legislation and a real Patients' Bill of Rights, pass a Medicare prescription drug benefit for our seniors, to enact the new markets legislation. The leadership promised action, but so far the results don't show it.

Now there are just 2 days to go in the fiscal year, and only 2 of the 13 appropriations bills have passed that are so necessary to keep our Government running. Still the Congress hasn't provided the funds to help build and modernize our schools, to continue to hire 100,000 new qualified teachers for smaller classes in the early grades, to improve teacher quality and strengthen accountability so that we can identify failing

schools, turn them around, shut them down, or put them under new management. And nothing has been done to fund the largest gun enforcement initiative in history to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children, something that Republicans have said that we ought to do more of.

Right now another important decision is pending in Congress, even as we meet here. The Congress is choosing whether or not to lower the national drunk driving standard to .08 percent blood alcohol content, a move that we know, from the experience of States that have already done it, could save hundreds of lives every single year in the United States. I know that Congress is, as always, under a lot of interest-group pressure not to do this, but I hope, for the sake of highway safety and human life, they will.

Later this week, Congress will send me a short-term budget resolution. I expect I'll sign it so that we can continue to meet our responsibilities to the American people, but I ask Congress to finish the work they were sent here to do. Let's sit down for serious negotiations on a budget that preserves fiscal discipline, invests in our people, and produces real results and real progress for America.

I'd also like to say a few words about our efforts to hold tobacco companies accountable. Today the court ruled that our case alleging the tobacco companies were engaged in fraud in marketing tobacco can go ahead, although not on the other counts. This remains a very important opportunity for the American people to have their day in court against big tobacco and its marketing practices. I urge Congress to provide the funding to allow the lawsuit to move forward and not to shield the tobacco industry from the consequences of its actions.

Thank you very much.

Minimum Wage Legislation

Q. Mr. President, the Republican leadership would like to attach certain provisions and amendments to the minimum wage bill, which are opposed by organized labor. Would you sign the bill if it came to you with their additions to it?

The President. Well, I don't believe that we ought to lower the pay of many tens of thousands of Americans under present Federal law to raise the pay of people who plainly deserve a minimum wage. I do not believe the minimum

wage should be a vehicle to wreck fair labor standards that have been well established in our law and that could not be repealed on their own.

I think some tax relief for small business is appropriate. The initial package was more than 3 times as high as the one that Congress attached when we raised the minimum wage in 1996. And if we're going to have that much tax relief, then I want to talk about what it's going to be and who is going to benefit.

But this Congress has some interesting priorities. It didn't take them any time to repeal the estate tax or to pass other big tax cuts that benefited people in very high income levels, but they can't seem to get around to raising the minimum wage. The last time we raised the minimum wage, they said that it would hurt unemployment, hurt the economy, hurt the small businesses of the country. We set a new record for small business starts every year since. We've got a 30-year low in unemployment. This is just a simple question of whether we're going to give 10 million hardworking Americans a chance to have a decent life and to take care of their children in a decent way. And I hope they'll pass it.

Yugoslav Elections

Q. Mr. President, if you're convinced, as you said a couple of minutes ago, that Yugoslav opposition has made a persuasive case that they've won the election outright, why have you not explicitly called for Mr. Milosevic to step down?

The President. Well, I thought we did say that. I think when the head of the Serb church says that he considers Mr. Milosevic's opponent to be the new President of Yugoslavia, I think it's—and when the commission that is totally under the thumb of the Government, without any outside observers, even they acknowledge that he won 49 to 39 or 38 percent, and when they have evidence that by no means all the votes for the opposition candidate were counted, I think that's a pretty good case that it's time for democracy and for the voices of the people of Serbia to be heard. And that's what I think should happen.

And as I said, when that happens, I would strongly support immediate moves to lift the sanctions.

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

by all Canadians. Hillary joins me in offering the condolences of the American people to his two sons and to the people of Canada.

Statement on Deferring Deportation of Liberian Refugees *September 28, 2000*

Today I directed the Attorney General and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to defer for one year from September 29 the deportation of certain Liberians who are present in the United States on that date. This action is aimed at promoting stability in Liberia and West Africa. In particular, I am concerned that a decision by our Government to deport Liberians who have enjoyed the protection of our

country for many years could cause the involuntary repatriation of many thousands of Liberian refugees from other nations in West Africa. This would severely burden Liberia and cause instability in Liberia and in the region. I understand that Congress is actively considering a legislative fix for this problem, and I would welcome any solution that would provide relief for Liberians with longstanding ties to the United States.

Memorandum on Measures Regarding Certain Liberians in the United States *September 28, 2000*

Memorandum for the Attorney General

Subject: Measures Regarding Certain Liberians
in the United States

Over the past 10 years, many Liberians were forced to flee their country due to civil war and widespread violence. From 1991 through 1999, we provided Liberians in the United States with Temporary Protected Status because of these difficulties. Although the civil war in Liberia ended in 1996 and conditions improved such that a further extension of Temporary Protected Status was no longer warranted, the political and economic situation continued to be fragile. On September 27, 1999, based on compelling foreign policy reasons, I directed you to defer enforced departure of certain Liberians in the United States for 1 year from September 29, 1999.

There continue to be compelling foreign policy reasons not to deport these Liberians at this time. In particular, there is a significant risk that such a decision would cause the involuntary repatriation of many thousands of Liberian refugees in West Africa, causing instability in Liberia and the region.

Pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States, I have determined that it is in the foreign policy interest of the United States to defer for 1 year the deportation of any Liberian national who is present in the United States as of September 29, 2000, except for the categories of individuals listed below.

Accordingly, I now direct you to take the necessary steps to implement for these Liberians:

1. deferral of enforced departure from the United States for 1 year from September 29, 2000; and
2. authorization for employment for 1 year from September 29, 2000.

This directive shall not apply to any Liberian national: (1) who is ineligible for Temporary Protected Status for the reasons provided in section 244(c)(2)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; (2) whose removal you determine is in the interest of the United States; (3) whose presence or activities in the United States the Secretary of State has reasonable grounds to believe would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States;

(4) who voluntarily returned or returns to Liberia or his or her country of last habitual residence outside the United States; (5) who was deported, excluded, or removed prior to the

date of this memorandum; or (6) who is subject to extradition.

These measures shall be taken as of the date of this memorandum.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Richard E. Neal September 28, 2000

Thank you. First of all, after what Richard Neal said, if I had any sense, I would just shut up and sit down. *[Laughter]* I'm delighted to be here with you and Maureen and the whole clan of your family. And thank you, Senator Kennedy, for what you said.

I want you to know one thing about Ted Kennedy. He's a good friend of mine. I think, in a lot of ways that I could never even describe, he's been there for me and for Hillary, and he's just been wonderful. And I've just got 4 months to be President, right? Every single time, for 8 long years, I have seen him, he says hello; he is polite; he says hello—*[laughter]*—then, within 30 seconds I get a card like this. *[Laughter]* And this card tells me what I haven't done as President that I should have done and that, if I would just do these things, the whole world would be a much better place. *[Laughter]*

I have all these cards. *[Laughter]* I must have done 90 things in the last 8 years on Ted Kennedy's wish list, and I'm still getting it. *[Laughter]* That ought to tell you something. He's been there a long time, but he's not tired of the job. He is still doing a great job, and I'm very proud of him. And you should be proud of him.

I'd like to thank Father Leahy, the president of Boston College, for being here. You know, I'm going to be unemployed after January, and I'm looking for somebody to ask me to come give a talk every now and then. *[Laughter]* They say I'll get lost on the way for 3 or 4 months because nobody will play a song when I walk in a room anymore. *[Laughter]* But I'm interested in it.

I'm glad that our FAA Administrator, Jane Garvey, has come here in support of you, Congressman Neal. And your colleague, Lloyd Doggett, from Texas, is either here or was here.

He and his wife, Libby, they represent Austin, Texas, and that's a long way from Springfield, Massachusetts, but it's a great place.

And I want to thank Peter King for coming. I always wonder whether every time I appear with Peter King, how long he can use Ireland as an excuse to keep from being thrown out of the Republican caucus. *[Laughter]* But I want to tell you, I love this guy and his family and his mother. And these two men have been anchors for America's role in the Irish peace process and the support I've gotten in the House of Representatives. And of course, so has Senator Kennedy, Senator Dodd, and others in the Senate.

But it was, to put it mildly, a sea change in American foreign policy when I took the position I did and we got involved in the Irish peace process, and I was mildly unpopular in Great Britain for a day or two. And there are all kinds of crazy theories about it. And finally, I told the British Prime Minister, whom I actually like very much, "Mr. Major," who was Mr. Blair's predecessor, I said, "you know, this is going to be good for you because you just can't have this thing going on forever, and there are 44 million Irish-Americans, Catholic and Protestant. It's the big diaspora. And we can help Ireland if they can make peace. And you should be glad we did this. In the end, it will be good."

I think now most people in Great Britain would tell you that it was a good thing the United States got involved and tried to bring about some, first, movement and then reconciliation. We're not entirely there yet. They're having a few minor arguments about the details of the Patton report. But for those of you who care about it, you should be very grateful to the people on this stage, including your representative in Congress, Richard Neal. They

were great, and we could never have done it without him.

Now, I must say, the only bad thing about the Democrats winning the majority in the House of Representatives and increasing his influence is, I hate to see Peter King cry. [Laughter] Otherwise, it would be a total unmixed blessing for America if we won the majority.

Let me say, too, how grateful I am to the people of Massachusetts for what you've done and been for me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore. In 1996, I got—Ted Kennedy never tires of telling me—the highest percentage of the vote in the country in the State of Massachusetts. You were good to me, and I appreciate it. And the second highest in '92, but as he always says, "Massachusetts is bigger than my home State, so I got more votes out of Massachusetts." He's always working an angle, Ted is. [Laughter] That's what I heard when I got the first letter. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, one of the things I admire about your Congressman, besides the fact that he's a really good person and wonderful to be around, is that he has, I think, the right kind of balance in a Representative. He cares about all the local issues. There's not a single local issue in your congressional district that can be dealt with in any way, shape, or form at the Federal level that he couldn't stand up here and give a discourse on. He cares about national policy and how it affects people who live in his district.

But he also cares about how America relates to the rest of the world and whether we are a stronger, more secure, more decent country. And he knows that that helps people all over America, including the people who live in his district. And that's about all you can ask for somebody in Congress. If everybody thought that way, if everybody worked that way, if everybody had the same willingness to work with people who have good ideas, whether they're Democrats or Republicans, and if everybody would rather get something done than have another fight and get 15 more seconds on the evening news, we'd get more done here, and we'd move even faster.

This is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. Most days, I'm okay about that. [Laughter] My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. [Laughter] I'm sort of the Cheerleader in Chief in America now. But as I think about all the progress our

country has made, first, I'm grateful for whatever role that our ideas and actions had in it, and our administration. But secondly, I'd just like to say that, to me, when the Vice President says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," it sounds like a campaign slogan, but I actually believe that.

The country is kind of like a big ocean liner, and it's hard to turn it around. That's how come the *Titanic* hit the iceberg. They saw it, but not in time. So we've been working for 8 years to turn this thing around. And you heard—Richard gave you all the statistics; we're going to pay off \$360 billion off the national debt before I leave office—not just get rid of the deficit—to pay the debt down.

But the question is before us here, in the national races—the race for President, in every Senate race, every House race—is, now what? Okay, so unemployment is down; poverty is down; business starts are up; homeownership is at an all-time high. The poverty rate among minorities is the lowest ever recorded. The poverty rate among women is the lowest recorded in 46 years. Unemployment rate among women the lowest in 40 years, which is truly astonishing since the participation of women in the work force is so much higher today than it was 40 years ago. Crime is at a 30-year low. Welfare is at a 32-year low. We've proved you can improve the economy and the environment, because the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We've set aside more land than any administration except Theodore Roosevelt's, in the history of the country.

So what are you going to do with that? That's really the big issue here. I say this all the time, but sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than it is to make a good decision in bad times. I'm sure a lot of people voted for me in 1992 thinking, "God, I'm really taking a chance. This guy, he doesn't look old enough be President." I didn't have gray hair then. [Laughter] "He's from this little State. I'm not sure I know where it is. His opponents all say he's terrible. I'm really taking a chance here." But you really weren't taking much of a chance, because the country was in trouble, and we had to do something different.

Now, the country is in good shape, and you have to decide what to do. There are a lot of young people here, but I think I'm confident in saying that, maybe even including Father Leahy, there's not a person in this room who's

over 30 years of age who hasn't at least on one occasion in your life made a significant mistake, not because times were so tough but because times were so good you didn't think you had to concentrate. That happens to countries as well as people.

So the reason I'm going around the country trying to help people like your Congressman and talking everywhere I can about this: I just don't want America to miss this magic moment. You heard Richard say, we can be out of debt in 12 years. Should we do it? I think we should. Why? Because if we do, if we keep paying that debt down, interest rates will stay lower; businesses will borrow more money, expand more, hire more people, raise wages more; the market will be higher. And if you keep interest rates a percent lower, it's worth about \$390 billion in lower home mortgage payments, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower student loan payments in 10 years. That's pretty good money.

We could revolutionize our schools over the next 10 years. We could have every child in a school that's functioning at a national level of educational efficiency and excellence. We could have all the kids that need to be in Head Start, in Head Start. We could have all the kids that need to be in after-school programs and not on the street, in after-school programs getting mentoring, new computer instruction, all that stuff. We could do it.

We could provide health care coverage to all the working families in this country who don't have it. We could reverse the tide of global warming and actually increase the rate of economic growth by an explosion of the development of new engines, new fuels, and new conservation technologies in America. We could do it.

We could use the human genome project to tell every mother what her newborn baby's future health will likely be like, what all the problems are, by the time she brings the baby home from the hospital. It could change childrearing and take life expectancy, within 10 to 15 years, to 90 years. We could do it.

We could become a much greater force for ending the plagues of AIDS, TB, malaria, poverty in the world in a way that would actually increase America's wealth because we'd have better trading partners. And that's just a partial list of what we could do. I also think you're going to find out what's in the black holes in

outer space and the deepest depths of the ocean, which, ironically, may be even more surprising.

But you have to decide to do it. It means you've got to make the right decisions in these elections based on economic policy, crime—you can make America the safest big country in the world. Gun crime down 35 percent; crime has dropped 7 years in a row for the first time ever. You could make America the safest big country in the world. You could do all this stuff, but you've got to decide to do it.

And I know I'm a Democrat, and I know I'm prejudiced—[laughter]—but that's the only thing I'm prejudiced about. But I think you've got a good person representing you in Congress. And I think I know now; after 8 years, I know.

And I also agree with what Richard Neal said about Ted Kennedy. He is probably the most effective legislator in the Congress, I think. I've said this before, and I like to turn his Irish face red, but I think that I'm something of an American history buff. I think I know a little bit about the history of this country, and I believe that any historian who is well informed who had to list the 10 greatest United States Senators in the history of the Republic would have to put his name on that list. I want you to know why I said that. Because every time I say that, I earn the right to hand him a little card for something. [Laughter]

So I want you all to be happy. I want you to be happy about this good time. But I don't want you to be careless about the election. It's not so much a matter of party as it is philosophy. I really believe that this country works best when we say, "Everybody counts. Everybody deserves a chance. We all do better when we help each other."

And I'll just close with this thought. There's a new book out which is selling reasonably well, called "Non Zero," by a man named Robert Wright. He wrote a book a few years ago some of you probably read, called "The Moral Animal." And "Non Zero" is a reference to game theory. A zero-sum game is like the Presidential race: In order for one person to win, somebody has to lose. A non-zero-sum game is a game in which in order for you to win, the other person playing the game also has to win. And the argument of the book is that as societies become more and more complicated and we become more and more interdependent, both

within our Nation's borders and beyond our borders, humanity has a chance to improve and progress because we are inevitably forced to try to find more and more non-zero-sum solutions where we all win.

You know, I never thought I was right about everything. And on those important occasions—all too few—when I could work across party lines, I think I've learned some things, and America has been strengthened. I've learned some things about Ireland from Peter King. I think we made a good balanced budget agreement, because it was bipartisan. I could go through a lot of others. But this country does not need dividers. This country needs unifiers, and it needs people who have enough sense to understand the connection between what goes on in Springfield, Massachusetts, connected to Washington, DC, connected not just to Ireland but what happens half a world away.

You're lucky enough to have a person like that in Congress. I hope you'll leave him there forever, and I hope between now and November you will share some of these thoughts with your

friends not only in Massachusetts but in other States.

This is a very important opportunity for the American people to make a good decision. In my lifetime we've never had a chance like this to build the future of our dreams for our children—never. We've never had so much prosperity and social progress with the absence of internal crisis or external threat. It may not roll around again for another 50 years, so you make the most of it. And meanwhile, take care of him.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:06 p.m. at the Phoenix Park Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Neal's wife, Maureen; Father William B. Leahy, president, Boston College; and former Prime Minister John Major and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the of the United Kingdom. Representative Neal was a candidate for reelection in Massachusetts' Second Congressional District.

Remarks on the Children's Health Insurance Program *September 29, 2000*

Thank you very much. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you, Debbie. She did a good job, didn't she? Let's give her another hand. *[Applause]* Thank you. I would also like to ask the rest of her family to stand: her husband, Chris; and her son, Brian; her daughter, Melissa. Let's give them a big hand there. *[Applause]* There they are. Thank you for being here.

I also want to thank the advocates, whom Secretary Shalala mentioned, and three elected officials who have strongly, strongly supported our efforts. First, in the Congress, Representative Sandy Levin and Representative Robert Underwood, thank you for your help. And Linda Cropp from the DC City Council, thank you for being here.

Let me announce, before I get to the subject at hand, that I just signed the continuing resolution which Congress sent me yesterday, necessary because our fiscal year ends tomorrow and we have to have a stopgap funding measure for the Government to run. But I hope we can

now pass the remaining appropriations bills. September has come and gone, and Congress still has obligations to fulfill.

These children behind me have been back in school for a month, but we still don't have the first assignment turned in from Congress, ensuring that our schools have the resources to meet the high standards we expect of them.

Now, let's get back to this story. Deborah's story is all too common in America. There are millions of our fellow citizens, like her and her husband, who get up every day, go to work, play by the rules, and still have a tough time finding affordable health insurance.

For 8 years now, Secretary Shalala and Hillary—who I wish could be here today for this happy announcement—and I have worked as hard as we could to make sure families get more health insurance. Yesterday we had more evidence that our approach is working. The census data shows that the number of uninsured Americans fell by 1.7 million in 1999, the first major drop in a dozen years.

Nearly two-thirds of these newly insured are children, like many of those who are here with us today. Since I signed the CHIP program into law, 2.5 million children have been able to get insurance through this program. In our budget, Vice President Gore and I have proposed a family care initiative, which would take care of the second part of Debbie's statement. It would expand CHIP to cover the parents of eligible children.

If we do this, we could cover a quarter of all the uninsured children and families in America and, I might add, those that are most at risk and need the health insurance most. Parents like Deborah and Chris Bredbenner know what a difference health insurance can make—you just heard it—not just in emergencies but for routine care.

Consider the child who doesn't get treated for an ear infection, who might suffer permanent hearing loss and, certainly, while in pain, would have a harder time learning in school. Consider the toll of untreated asthma, which will cause American students, listen to this, to miss 10 million school days this year alone.

That's why we need to keep pushing forward until all our children are covered. To help accomplish this, the Department of Health and Human Services is awarding \$700,000 in grants today, to develop new and even more effective ways to identify and to enroll uninsured children. These grants will be used not only to get children enrolled but to keep them enrolled, so they can get the care they need. They will build on our recent success in improving outreach and enrollment around America.

If you look at how the States are doing with CHIP, you'll see that those with the best outreach programs have the most success in boosting the number of children covered. States like Indiana, Ohio, and Maine have done a remarkable job. I hope others will look to them for leadership.

There was a story in one of our major papers yesterday, outlining the dramatic differences in enrollments from State to State, and making it clear that the States that had the most systematic, determined effort and a strong leader, got kids enrolled, and those that didn't try as hard, didn't. This is a simple matter of systematic effort and real dedication.

I also hope that every working parent searching for children's health insurance will call the

toll free number on every one of these children's T-shirts: 1-877-KIDS-NOW.

We need to remember that the rising number of uninsured didn't develop overnight; it won't disappear overnight. In some ways, it reminds me of the challenges we faced when Vice President Gore and I took office in January of 1993. Some people said there was nothing we could do to stop the rising tide of red ink. The numbers on the national debt clock in New York were flashing so fast, people's eyes were glazing over.

But we made some tough choices: we cut some spending; we raised some money; we invested in the American people and eliminated hundreds of programs we didn't need and together, we turned a \$290 billion annual deficit into \$230 billion of surplus this year. That didn't happen by chance. It happened by choice. That's what is happening now with health coverage. If we make the right decisions, if we make smart choices and see them through, we can reduce the number of uninsured people in America.

First, as I said, it's very important to recognize that the laws on the books, we believe, would enable us to insure up to two-thirds of the uninsured children in America—8 of the 12 million—if every State did everything possible to enroll children in the CHIP program and got those who are Medicaid-eligible into Medicaid.

Second, we ought to expand CHIP eligibility to the parents of these children. It's very important.

Third, we ought to focus on another group of people that are having great difficulty getting health care, those who are over 55, but not 65, therefore are not old enough for Medicare, and many of them have taken early retirement or lost their jobs, or they're working in a place where the employer doesn't offer health insurance coverage.

We think they ought to be able to buy into Medicare, not to weaken the Medicare program. Our proposal is, give them a tax credit to defray some of the cost of buying into Medicare, so that we would, in effect, cut the cost for them of buying into Medicare but get the whole amount of money into Medicare, so that it would in no way, shape, or form weaken the financial stability of Medicare. This is very, very important.

And I might say to you, we ought to do this now, because this group is only going to get larger as the baby boomers age. Next year, exhibit A—[laughter]—the oldest of the baby boomers will be 55. For 28 years after that, you will have some portion of the baby boom generation in that 55- to 65-year-old age group. It's very, very important that we do this.

Next, Congress should pass our tax credit for small business, to strengthen their hand in negotiating quality affordable health insurance options for their employees. A lot of businesses try to offer health insurance, but as you just heard Debbie say, the cost to them is so high, and they have to pass so much of the cost on to their employees, that many of the employees can't afford it, even if it's offered.

Next, Congress should restore Medicaid benefits to the most vulnerable of our legal immigrants, including children. A few days ago, a bipartisan coalition on the House Commerce Committee voted to pass this important measure, and I applaud them for doing so. Surely now that the committee has supported it, we can work together to restore these benefits and do it this year.

Finally, there are some other items on our agenda. The American people still need Congress to pass a Medicare prescription drug benefit, a \$3,000 tax credit for long-term care, very important for families that are caring for family members who are disabled or aging, who have long-term care needs, and a strong Patients' Bill of Rights.

When Hillary and Donna and I started working on this back in 1993, we proposed a solution that would have covered all Americans, would have the Patients' Bill of Rights, would have the provisions of the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill, would take care of children who age out of foster care. And it was too much for the system to accommodate at once, so we've gone back, piece-by-piece, trying to achieve that.

We have now the children's health insurance coverage. We've taken care of the kids that age out of foster care. We passed a bill that protects you if you get sick or if you change jobs from losing your health insurance. But we need for people to make maximum use of this law. Every child in this country, like the children standing here and like the Bredbenner kids, who is eligible for CHIP, ought to be in it. The parents

who need it, ought to be able to buy into the program. We can afford this now. It's quite manageable. And we absolutely know there are only two ways that you can provide health insurance for working people on modest incomes. There either has to be some sort of subsidy from the Government, or the employers have to provide it, or you have to have a combination of both. Next, we need to deal with the 55- to 65-year-old age group. And finally, we need to deal with the fact that there are so many of our seniors who don't have prescription drug coverage. And we need to deal with the long-term care challenge facing our country. And we need to pass this Patients' Bill of Rights that we've been working on since 1994. This is all very, very important.

The good news is, we know this approach will work. We know that the number of uninsured is going down, and I might say, we don't have the figures yet, but we know there are several hundred thousand children who, because of the CHIP program, have been enrolled in Medicaid.

So we just have to keep working on this. So I implore you to make sure every State in this country is making the most of the laws that are here and to do everything you can to get Congress, in this time of unprecedented prosperity, that enables us to do things—we could not do this 6 years ago, because we did not have the money. We now have a surplus. We can do this. We still have a reasonably sized tax cut to help people with education and child care and saving for retirement and pay this country out of debt in 2012. We have the money to keep America's economy going, to get the country out of debt, and to provide more health insurance to families like those that are represented by these children here today. We ought to do it and do it now.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deborah Bredbenner, whose two children are covered by the Children's Health Insurance Program but who could not afford health insurance for herself.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee/Democratic Business
Council Luncheon
September 29, 2000

Thank you. I don't know what I feel about getting all those golf balls. *[Laughter]* Is he telling me I should quit working altogether? He should at least tell me that he expects me to live long enough to lose all of them. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very much, and thank you for the warm welcome. I want to thank John Merrigan, who has been a wonderful friend to me and a wonderful friend to the Democratic Party, a generous and indefatigable person. And he got us a clap for everybody else, but he really deserves a lot of the applause today. Thank you.

I thank Bill Berkley and the other chairs and the vice chairs. The only thing I don't know about that I've seen today is that story that John told about Paul Equale in the steam bath. *[Laughter]* I thought he was going to say that he offered to get dressed if the guy would give him \$5,000. *[Laughter]*

Anyway, I want to thank Jason and the staff and all the folks here from the Democratic Party—Janice Griffin, Carol Pensky, Andy Tobias, Loretta Sanchez, and Ed Rendell. And I thank Ed for his generous remarks, but he has also worked like a demon this year.

It is true that in the early part of this election cycle, when the polls didn't look so good and everybody was in sort of a constant state of hand-wringing, I kept telling Ed, I said, "Just send me out there. I'll tell them it's going to be all right," because I believed it. And as John said, I told him that every election has its rhythm, and you have to wait for it. That's true. Every election is almost like a different symphony being written by the American people, and the language is always the same, just like musical notes, but you have to go and listen to the people and hear them, the way they speak, the way they talk, the way they feel about what this is. But also, the American people nearly always get it right if they have enough time and enough information. And that's why we're all still around here after over 200 years.

I always felt, as anybody here who talked to me about it, that this election would be all right, because I knew Al Gore and because I know what the underlying realities are. I know the country is in better shape than it was, that we're

moving in the right direction, that people want to keep changing in that direction. And I know, and I feel even more strongly now that Joe Lieberman has joined the ticket, that these two leaders will be very good for America. And I think the American people will agree with that on election day, and I'm very grateful.

But I know something else, too, which is that our friends on the other side suffered a time or two in this election process because they were already picking out their offices in the West Wing. You know, they thought it was over. They thought that they had won some kind of contest based on the tilt of the press for a given month or so or whatever. And I like all kinds of contests. I like sports—I don't know why; I'm not very competitive—*[laughter]*—I love the Olympics. I don't sleep enough when the Olympics are on. But one of the things I really love about the martial arts is that the opponents always bow to each other before the contest begins. And why do they do that? To remind them that you should always respect your adversary, never take anything for granted, and that anyone can be defeated.

What do you think the odds were on the Wyoming farm boy defeating that Russian wrestler for the gold medal? He wasn't as svelte, and he hadn't gone 13 years without losing a match. But you breathe that thin air long enough, and you lift all that heavy farm equipment and bales of hay and do all the things you do, you develop an enormous aerobic capacity—*[laughter]*—that all the weightlifting in the world can't overcome. And, poof! There he was.

I say that to say that this whole decision is ultimately in the hands of the American people. And make no mistake about it, they can make any decision they want. So it is well for us to remember to be like the martial artists and bow out of respect for our adversaries and for the process and then work like crazy and don't leave anything out there on the floor on election day.

I don't think I've ever worked any harder in an election than I'm working this time, for the last year. It's kind of interesting because it's the first time in 26 years I haven't been

on the ballot. [Laughter] Maybe I'm just celebrating. Who knows? [Laughter] But I've enjoyed working for Al and Joe, and I've enjoyed working for Hillary and a lot of other individual House and Senate Members and for the Democratic Party and for our Senate and House committees. I know we're going to be outspent. We always are. We were outspent \$100 million in 1998. We won anyway. And the lesson of all this in public life is that you don't have to have as much money as your opponent, but you do have to have enough to make sure your message is out and that, if there's an incoming assault, you can answer it. Then if they have more, it's nice for them, but it's not the end of the world for you. If you have a better message, better candidates, and clarity of choice, you can still win.

So I thank you for your help. And I thank you for the support you've given me these last 8 years and the opportunity that I have had to serve. I'd like to ask you to think just for a minute or two about what you're going to do when you leave here, between now and election day, because I don't think it's enough for you to contribute. I think that this is an election in which there is still some elasticity, in which people are still trying to get a handle on the issues and the candidates. Although it's beginning to settle down and settle down in a way that's good for us, we have to keep working.

And I have always had a simple theory about this election. It's not very complicated. I think if people focus on where the country was 8 years ago, where it is today, what kind of change they want, and they can keep thinking about not the stuff that occupies the daily headlines but who will make the decisions that will be best for my country, my community, and my family, and they clearly understand the honest differences—we win.

To the extent that people forget about where we were 8 years ago, where we are now, what kind of change they want, who would make decisions that are best for the Nation, the community, and the family, we have more difficulty.

Now, since I'm not running, I can say this. I get frustrated from time to time. Vice President Gore got a lot of bad press early on in the election, and then he wins all the primaries, and all of a sudden he's a genius again. John Kennedy once said, "Victory has a thousand fathers, and defeat is an orphan." Then, after our convention, he gave a terrific speech, and basi-

cally the Vice President's speech at the convention showed what I think the theme of this election was. In 1992 it was about the economy. In 2000 it's about the issues. People understand that they're hiring someone to make decisions that will affect their lives and our future, and they want to know what you're going to do if you get the job. I think that's a very healthy thing.

And so he had a big boost there because he actually said, "If you hire me, here's what I'll do." And now you've had an interesting thing the last 3 or 4 weeks where, first of all, Governor Bush was just getting pulverized, you know, and people were saying they were the gang that couldn't shoot straight and all that. And then they want to argue about the Vice President's mother-in-law's medical bills or some—but that comes after the Bush people say, "Oh, you're being too mean to us. The press is liberal"—which they hate, which is, by the way, manifestly not true. [Laughter] And I don't blame them. The press shouldn't like it when people level untrue charges against them. I don't like it. You don't like it either.

So then Gore gets a little of the treatment Bush was getting. But the truth is, I think all this stuff is fluff on the surface. Let me tell you what I think. I think both these people are good Americans who love their families and love their country and will do their best to do what they believe is right, if they get elected. Now, that's what I believe. And I believe that, based on over 30 years of working in public life.

Politicians, by and large, are better people than they are made out to be. Most of them are honest. Most of them work hard. Most of them try to do the very best they can. If you want to make a good decision, you have to know what the real consequences of your choice are, not what the superficial consequences are, based on whatever the sort of issue of the day is designed to make you think that one or the other of them is too craven, too dumb, too this, too that, too the other thing. That's all a bunch of hooley.

Now, you might not want to hear this. You may want to think, "Our guy's all good. Their guy's all bad." That's a bunch of bull. Most people in public life will do their best to do what they think is right. And I believe that the Vice President and Senator Lieberman should be elected because they've got more relevant

experience; they've got a record of greater success; their ideas are right, and the things they want to do will have better consequences for the American people than their adversaries. That's what I believe. And we ought to argue that case, because that's something that means something to the American people, to every business person and working family and—[*ap-
plause*].

Let somebody else spend all their time sort of psychoanalyzing them or trying to find some bad thing or another thing to say or making jokes, or something like that. We don't have time for that. Let's talk about how this is going to affect our future.

Now, today, I have the great pleasure, as Ed Rendell said earlier—I've had three announcements this week that have made me very happy. First, we announced that this year the budget surplus would be \$230 billion. It was projected to be a \$455 billion deficit when I took office. And that was good. And over the last 3 years, we will have paid down \$360 billion on the national debt.

Then the next day we announced the poverty figures, which show that poverty is at a 20-year low. It's under 10 percent for seniors for the first time in our history. Median income in America is above \$40,000 for the first time in our history; and after inflation, income has increased by \$6,300, more than 15 percent, since 1993. And the gains in the last couple of years for the lowest income Americans and for minority Americans have been greater than the average gains in percentage terms.

Then, today I announced that in 1999, for the first time in a dozen years, we had a reduction in the number of uninsured Americans, almost 2 million fewer uninsured Americans, largely because in the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, we passed the Children's Health Insurance Program for kids of lower income working parents who were not poor enough to be on Medicaid but whose parents could not afford health insurance. And we had one of those parents there today, she and her husband and their two kids—they had a little 6-year-old boy, a darling little boy with asthma, that they could never have properly cared for and kept their jobs. Because they're in the Children's Health Insurance Program, both parents are still working; both kids are doing fine. The little boy and his sister have health insurance. And there are

2.5 million of those kids out there now, in 2 years.

So the last social indicator that wasn't going in the right direction, is now. Now, there is a dramatic difference from State to State in how many kids have been enrolled, but as one of the major papers pointed out in an analysis a couple days ago, it's almost exclusively due to whether the States are making the appropriate effort or not.

So the big question is, now what? What do we do with the surplus? How do we keep the economy going? Can we continue this expansion? Can we spread its benefits to the people and places that have been left behind? Can we now take on some of the big, long-term challenges of the country? The aging of America: When all us baby boomers retire, two people working for every one drawing Social Security and Medicare. The children of America: The largest and most racially and ethnically and religiously diverse group we've ever had, can we give them all a world-class education? The families of America: Can we actually find the ways to balance work and childrearing for all working families?

There are a lot of other questions. Can we meet the challenge of global warming, which the oil companies admit is real now, and still grow the economy, something we're very sensitive to now because the price of oil has gone up? How much can we do in conservation? How much can we do with alternative energy development? Are fuel cells a realistic alternative, and when will they be in cars, and how much mileage will they get? What kind of new energy sources do we need, and how do we do it without messing up the environment? These are the things that are going to affect your life.

How are we going to continue to increase trade in the rest of the world in a way that gets the support of ordinary citizens, so we don't have a riot every time in every city we have a meeting of the World Trade Organization or somebody else, some other international group? These are the huge questions that will shape the 21st century. Will the discoveries of the human genome, which will soon lead to a life expectancy, I believe, at birth of 90 years in America—will we be able to spread those benefits to all people and still protect the privacy rights of Americans who will have all their medical and financial records on computers?

So I ask you to think about that. To me, this election ought to be a feast for the American people. We have worked for 8 years to turn this country around and get it going in the right direction. So now you've got the longest economic expansion ever and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years and the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded and the highest homeownership in history, highest small business rate of creation in history—every year we break records—lowest crime rate in a quarter century, lowest welfare rolls in 32 years.

So what are we going to do with all this? This election should be an exuberant experience for the American people, including those that are still in distress, because they know there is something we can do about it now.

And what I want to ask you to do is to think about anything you can do between now and November to talk to the people that you know and live and work with, who will never come to an event like this but who have every intention of voting. They're good citizens. They know they ought to show up and vote. They want to make the right decision. They'll watch at least one of the debates. They'll follow this on the evening news and in the newspapers. But what is the choice here?

And we have very different views, and we ought to talk about it. We have a very different economic policy here. The Vice President wants a tax cut of about \$500 billion over 10 years. Governor Bush wants one of \$1.6 trillion over 10 years. Most of you would make more money out of the Republican tax cut. Why are you here? [*Laughter*] You've got to be able to answer that. You get more money up front out of their tax cut.

What's our argument? Our argument is, number one, we have responsibilities to our children and education and health care and the environment. We're going to have to spend more money on national defense. We've already put another \$100 billion back in defense, and Vice President Gore has promised to put, so far, twice as much as Governor Bush has. Why is that? Because we got a big benefit from the end of the cold war, but because we had to deploy our forces in a lot of places, we cut the procurement of new weapons and old equipment back to keep up training, to raise pay, to provide for quality of life, to keep recruitment up because it's harder to recruit people into

the service when they can make more money doing other things.

We want to have a tax cut the American people need and can afford, but he knows we have to invest in other things, and we should do it in the context of keeping this debt coming down, running a surplus every year until we get this country out of debt over the next 12 years, for the first time since 1835. Now, that's why you're here. That's your answer to the business people. Why? Because if you do that, as opposed to—now keep in mind, the projected non-Social Security surplus, the most liberal number is \$2.2 trillion. That's the Congress. We think it's much smaller, at 1.8. If you do a \$1.6 trillion tax cut, that leaves you \$600 billion, right, for 10 years, if all the rosy scenarios are right.

Now that, however, scenario assumes that Government spending does not grow at inflation plus population, which it has done for 50 years. If that happens, that takes away another \$300 billion. That leaves you \$300 billion. Then it assumes that we will not extend the tax credits that are in the law now, like the research and development tax credit. Since the high-tech industry has accounted for one-third of our growth, with only 9 percent of the employment, don't you think we ought to extend it? Of course we should. So we will.

And it assumes, furthermore, that as incomes grow, we won't bump up the level at which the alternative minimum tax takes effect. You really think we're going to let middle-class people start paying the alternative minimum tax, so they don't get the basic tax deductions? Of course we're not. That's another \$200 billion. That leaves you with \$100 billion left.

Then he's proposed a partial privatization of Social Security, which means all of you under X age, let's say 40, can take 2 percent of your payroll and go invest it in the market and try to earn more money than you could from Social Security. The problem is, Social Security runs out in 37 years. So as you take yours out, I'll be retiring, and he's going to promise me that I can keep all that I'm guaranteed under the present law.

So what do you have to do? You have to fill up the hole of everybody taking their payroll tax out. That costs at least \$900 billion. So you're \$800 million in the hole before you spend

a penny for education, health care, the environment, or whatever else. That's why most economic advisers believe that interest rates will be a percent lower under the Gore plan than under the Republican plan. One percent lower interest rates will have a huge impact on business loans, business investment, job growth, income growth, the stock market, not to mention \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, and \$15 billion in lower college loan payments.

I think our economic plan is better. I hope you can argue it. It's clear to me that this is the right thing to do.

We have a different education program. Both sides are for accountability. We're for accountability-plus. We think we should hold people accountable, but we ought to give them the tools to succeed—after-school and preschool for all the kids who need it, modernize schools, 100,000 teachers for smaller classes in the early grades. People can make up their mind which one they think is better, but they need to know what the real differences are.

There are vast differences in health care policy. Look, here's what the Patients' Bill of Rights is about—and I can say this because I've actually supported managed care. When I became President—everybody has forgotten this now—inflation and health care costs were going up at 3 times the rate of inflation. It was about to bankrupt this country. We had to manage our resources better. But as someone who has supported it, I know that with any institution in society, if you're not careful, you forget about what your primary mission is. The primary mission is to save as much money as possible, consistent with the care of the patients.

So we say we ought to have a Patients' Bill of Rights, and it ought to cover everybody. They say we ought to have suggestions that don't cover everybody. And to be fair to them, they say, "We don't want to do anything else to add to the cost that business bears and that people bear in health insurance." So a lot of you are interested in that. Now, their Congressional Budget Office says—not me, they say—that it would cost less than \$2 a month a policy to fully implement the guarantees of the Patients' Bill of Rights. That's what they say. I would pay a \$1.80 a month to know that when you leave this hotel room, if, God forbid, you get hit by a speeding car, you could go to the nearest emergency room and not have to pass three

to get to one covered by your plan. I would pay that, and I think we should.

So that's a real difference. And we don't have to hide around—we can argue it both ways, and you should hear them. Let them say what they think. But let's not hide the differences.

This Medicare drug issue is a very interesting issue. If you live to be 65 in this country, you've got a life expectancy of 82. We know that pharmaceuticals can keep people alive longer and improve the quality of their lives. We know there are lots of people choosing between food and medicine every day. We know this.

Now, so we say, "Look, we've got the money now under Medicare." When I was elected President, Medicare was supposed to go broke last year. We've added 27 years to the life of Medicare already. We have a plan to add more. We'll have to reform it some. But we say we ought to have a voluntary prescription drug benefit under Medicare, which has 2 percent or less administrative cost, totally voluntary, but everybody that needs it ought to buy it.

They say, "Well, it might cost more than the Democrats say." I'll make the best case for their argument. They say, "It might cost more than the Democrats say. So let's cover up to 150 percent of poverty, and then everybody else can buy insurance, and we'll give them a little help." Their side sounds pretty good. And why would you deny poor people, the poorest people the right to have health insurance?

Here's the debate. Over half the people who can't afford their medicine are above 150 percent of the poverty level. That's only about \$16,000 for a couple. Over half the people who need the help are above there, number one. Number two, after all the fights I've had with the health insurance companies, I've got to hand it to them. They have been scrupulously honest in this debate. They have told us over and over and over again, you cannot design an insurance policy that is affordable to people that won't bankrupt us on medicine.

The State of Nevada has already adopted the present Republican plan. Do you know how many insurance companies have offered drug insurance under it? Zero, not one. But I've got to give it to them. Evidence never phases them. They just go right on. I kind of admire that. [Laughter] You know, I kind of admire that. "Don't tell me about paying down the debt and 22 million jobs and all this." Say, "Here's the right thing to do. Don't bother me with the

evidence.” [Laughter] But the truth is, we tried their plan, and it doesn’t work.

Now, here is what is really going on. What is really going on is that the pharmaceutical companies badly don’t want our plan, but they don’t want to act like they don’t want older people who need medicine not to have it. And they’ve got a real problem. They do have a real problem. Here’s what their real problem is. Their real problem is, they’re afraid if we have a Medicare drug program and we enroll a lot of people in it, we will acquire so much power in the market that we’ll be able to get drugs made in America almost as cheaply as the Canadians pay. [Laughter]

Now, to be fair to them, it is—here’s their real problem. Look, I’m not demonizing them. I’m glad we’ve got these pharmaceutical companies in our country. I’m glad they find all these lifesaving drugs. I’m glad they provide good jobs to people. I’m glad they’re here. They do have a problem. You know what their problem is? It costs a fortune to develop these drugs, and they can’t sell them in other countries, except under very rigorous price control regimes, in Europe and other places. So the reason that Americans have to pay too much is, they have to recover 100 percent of their research and development costs from American consumers, because of the price controls in other countries. However, once they do that, they can still make good money selling those drugs in other countries.

So I’m sympathetic with their problem. But there’s got to be another way to solve their problem than keeping American seniors without the drugs they need. So that’s the difference in our two positions. You’re not going to read this in the paper very often. They all argue about this other stuff. If you strip it all away, that’s the truth.

And you don’t have to demonize anybody. They have a problem, and they’re worried about losing the ability to recover high profit margins from American sales of drugs made in America, because they can’t recover them overseas, even though once they do recover them from us, they can make a lot of money selling the drugs at discounts overseas. That’s the real issue. Nobody’s explained this to most Americans.

I think the Vice President is right. I think the most important thing is, take care of our people. We have tax benefits. We do a lot of medical research on our own that helps the

pharmaceutical companies. So we’ll find a way to solve their problem, but let’s don’t keep old people without the medicine they need. Provide the medicine. We can afford it. Do that, then focus on this other problem. Let’s get our priorities in order. There’s a big difference between the two parties, and I think we’re right, and I think they’re not.

But how are the American people going to know, unless somebody clarifies this? And there are lots of other examples, on the environment, on arms control. We’re for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and they’re not. You talk about something that could affect your kids future. This is big. This is not some sort of casual walk in the park deal here.

So here’s the main point. You’re leaving here. I hope you feel good about what you’ve done. I hope you will continue to feel good about it. I am profoundly grateful for the support you’ve given me and the reception you’ve given me today and the kind things that have been said. But in America’s public life, the subject is always tomorrow, not yesterday. That’s why we’re still around here, after all this time. The subject is always tomorrow.

I worked as hard as I could to turn this country around and pull this country together and get us pointing together, toward tomorrow. In fact, I think the biggest difference between our parties is that even though they have dramatically modified their rhetoric, and to some extent their substance—and I’m grateful for this—we’re still far more committed to one America than they are. That’s why we’re for the hate crimes bill, the employment nondiscrimination legislation, equal pay for women, stronger enforcement of civil rights, because we think we’ve got to go forward together.

But the point I want to make to you is, every one of you will come in contact, probably, with hundreds of people before the election, that will never come to an event like this. And you need to promise yourself when you walk out of here today that you are going to do something every single day to make sure not that people think ill of our opponents but that they clearly understand the choice before them. And I am telling you, if everybody understands that the Democratic Party believes every American counts, everybody deserves a chance, we all do better when we help each other, we’re committed to change, and here are the changes, and here

are the differences—if they understand that, then the election will take care of itself.

Trust the people, but give them clarity of choice and the information they need. You can do that with more than your money. Every one of you has lots of friends. You're going to touch a lot of people between now and the election. If you do that, we'll have a great celebration November 7.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:46 p.m. at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to

John Merrigan, chair, Jason Bovis, director, and Paul Equale, vice chair, Democratic Business Council; Bill Berkeley, chief executive officer, W.R. Berkeley Corp.; Janice Griffin, chair, Women's Leadership Forum; Carol Pensky, finance chair, Andrew Tobias, treasurer, Loretta Sanchez, general cochair, and Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Rulon Gardner, U.S. Olympic gold medalist, super heavyweight Greco-Roman wrestling; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at Press Secretary Joe Lockhart's Last Press Briefing and an Exchange With Reporters September 29, 2000

The President. Most people think Joe's leaving for purely selfish, monetary reasons, but the truth is, he told me that I was no longer in enough trouble to make it interesting for him—[*laughter*—that getting up every day and going to work and making policy and helping the Democrats, you know, it's boring him to tears. [*Laughter*] And he said he couldn't stand to be alone in his office crying anymore, and so he had to leave.

So I have one little gift for him, a memorial of our one and only day playing golf together. [*Laughter*] It happened a couple of weeks ago. Here's Joe. [*Laughter*] And the caption is, "Joe, typical day as Presidential Press Secretary, lost in the weeds." [*Laughter*] "Unlike the press corps, I'll give you a mulligan." [*Laughter*]

Let me say seriously, I know what a difficult job this is, and I know it takes a toll on everyone, and I know Joe's spent a lot of time away from his wonderful wife and beautiful daughter, who are here. I remember when I appointed him, there was all this yapping about whether he was heavy enough to do the job. [*Laughter*] He leaves with *gravitas* and gravity toss—[*laughter*—and a lot of gratitude.

I know that I have a different perspective than the members of the press corps, but I've been following this business a long time, a long time before I showed up. I don't believe I've ever seen anybody do this job better. I admire

you. I'm grateful to you. I'll miss you, and I'll try to keep you bored. Thank you, friend.

Press Secretary Lockhart. You don't have to hang around for this part. You don't really want to talk to them. [*Laughter*] I'm still on the clock. [*Laughter*]

The President. You want us to go? Well, wait, I've got to do one thing. I have a gift for your successor, Jake. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the President presented Press Secretary-designate Jake Sievert with a helmet.*]

The President. They're going to try to get even with you, and they're also going to try to get even for everything they couldn't get away with with Joe, so I thought you ought to have this. I hope you'll wear it to your first briefing. [*Laughter*]

Press Secretary-Designate Jake Sievert. I worked enough on the Dukakis campaign not to put this on. [*Laughter*]

The President. Joe?

Press Secretary Lockhart. No, I won't put it on. [*Laughter*]

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, can I ask you, I guess on a serious note, about the violence in Jerusalem, and what that might mean to the peace process, and whether you would like to contact Chairman Arafat to see what you can do?

The President. I'm working on all that right now, but I think the less I say about it, the

better. I may have something to say tomorrow, but I think today I'd like to say less and try to keep working.

2000 Campaign

Q. What about the campaign? You seemed to be having an awful good time at that fundraiser a little while ago. [Laughter]

The President. I was having a good time. It's easier for me when you don't have to run. It's easier. I'm having a good time.

Do the briefing, Joe.

Press Secretary Lockhart. Okay. [Laughter]

The President. Keep me out of trouble. Stay bored. [Laughter] Bored.

Press Secretary Lockhart. I can do that.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 2 p.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Mr. Lockhart's wife, Laura Logan, and daughter, Clare. A reporter referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. The President's remarks were included in the transcript of the press briefing by Press Secretary Lockhart.

Statement on the Jewish High Holidays in Russia *September 29, 2000*

On behalf of the American people, I want to wish the Jewish community in Russia a happy, enriching, and peaceful New Year. People across the United States are profoundly moved by the flowering of religious life for all faiths in Russia. Jewish life, in particular, is flourishing, with synagogues and Jewish cultural centers opening in regions all across the country.

Russia's support for democratic principles, religious freedom, and inter-ethnic tolerance will have a direct impact on its standing in the inter-

national community and our ability to support Russia's international integration.

The United States stands with Russia's Jewish community as it advances the cause of religious freedom, builds a more inclusive society, and counters the forces of hatred and bigotry. In our tightly interwoven world, the advance of freedom in one country strengthens freedom everywhere. Your community's efforts are truly historic. Our hopes and prayers are with you for the coming year. *L'Shanah Tovah!*

Statement on Signing the First Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2001 *September 29, 2000*

Today I have signed into law H.J. Res. 109, a short-term continuing resolution for FY 2001.

The Resolution provides 2001 appropriations for continuing projects and activities of the Federal Government through October 6, 2000, except for 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. We need realistic levels of funding for critical Government functions that the American people expect their Government to perform well, including education, law enforcement, environ-

mental protection, preservation of our global leadership, air safety, food safety, economic assistance for the less fortunate, research and technology, administration of Social Security and Medicare, and other important programs. None of the funding bills for the programs that support these functions have been sent to the White House.

I urge the Congress to approve the 11 remaining 2001 spending bills as quickly as possible, in an acceptable form.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 29, 2000.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 109, approved September 29, was assigned Public Law No. 106-275.

The President's Radio Address *September 30, 2000*

Good morning. This has been a good week for America. As our athletes continue to pile up medals in Sydney, our economy continues to break records at home. This week we learned that household income had reached an all-time high, poverty a 20-year low; the budget surplus is the largest on record; and for the first time in 12 years, thanks largely to the Children's Health Insurance Program, the number of Americans without health insurance has declined by over 1½ million.

Today I want to talk with you about making the most of this moment, by putting our children's education first and building better schools for them.

This fall our schools opened their doors to the largest number of students in history. We have to work hard to give them the best education in history. We're working to turn our schools around, with higher standards, stronger accountability, and more investment. Reading, math, and SAT scores are up. So are high school graduation and college-going rates. We dramatically increased Head Start, after-school, and summer school programs. The number of students in States with core curriculum standards has increased from 14 to 49, and in State after State, failing schools are being turned around. With the Vice President's E-rate program, we've helped connect 95 percent of our schools to the Internet, and we're in the process of hiring 100,000 high-quality teachers to reduce class size in the early grades.

But it's hard for students to lift themselves up in schools that are falling down. Across our Nation, students are struggling to learn in schools that are crowded and crumbling. I visited schools all over the country where this is so: a school in Florida where classes were held not in one or two but 12 trailers; a school in Queens, where there were 400 more students than the school was built for; a school in Virginia, where the electrical service in some classrooms is so poor that if you plug in a new

computer in the wall, the circuit breaker cuts off. This is a challenge all across our country. In cities and rural areas, small towns and Native American communities, the average American school building is now more than 40 years old. The estimated price tag to bring our schools into good condition—\$127 billion.

Today I'm releasing a new Department of Education analysis that highlights the nationwide need to build new schools and modernize existing ones. The study provides a State-by-State report card that shows that at least 60 percent of the schools in every State are in need of repair. Many States and local communities are working to fix their schools, but too many school districts simply don't have the tax base to handle the burden alone.

That's why I've proposed a school construction tax credit to help communities build or modernize 6,000 schools and, also, grants and loans for emergency repairs in nearly 5,000 schools a year for 5 years.

The good news is, we have a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives ready right now to pass school construction relief. But the Republican leadership continues to stand in the way and refuses to bring it to a vote. Every day they stall is another day our children are forced to go to school in trailers, overcrowded classrooms, and crumbling buildings. Congress must act now.

In a larger sense, this is about our priorities and values. The schools I attended as a child were fairly old, but they were very well-maintained. They sent every student a clear message: You are important; we take your education seriously. That's how my parents' generation kept faith with us, and how we must keep faith with our children.

But the clock is ticking. At midnight tonight the fiscal year runs out. Congress still hasn't sent me a budget for education and other pressing priorities. Yet, they have found the time, first, to pass huge, fiscally irresponsible tax cuts

and then, after I vetoed them, to load up the spending bills with hundreds of millions of dollars in special interest projects. In one appropriations bill alone, there is \$668 million in extra projects. That's enough to do emergency repairs in 2,500 schools, to send another one million children to after-school programs, to hire over 15,000 teachers to lower class size.

Not long ago, Senator McCain said porkbarrel spending, and I quote, "has lurched completely out of control." Well, it's time to turn off the porkbarrel spigot and deliver for our children's future.

That's why I've told my budget team to seek final negotiations on an education budget that stays true to our values and our children's long-term needs. We're not going to leave the table until we invest in modernizing our schools and continue our efforts to hire 100,000 quality teachers for smaller classes. We're going to keep

fighting to strengthen accountability, to turn around failing schools or shut them down or put them under new management, to expand after-school programs and college opportunities for young people, and to ensure a qualified teacher in every classroom. Our children deserve 21st century schools.

In this time of prosperity, we have a responsibility to make sure they get no less. By building stronger schools, we'll build a stronger America in the future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:48 p.m. on September 29 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks on College Financial Assistance October 2, 2000

Give her another hand. Wasn't she great? *[Applause]* Good job. Thank you. You know, I thought I'd be having withdrawal today, after the Olympics—*[laughter]*—and I was wondering what I would do for an encore, and the answer was, meet Raquel. *[Laughter]* Thank you very much for being here and for your example.

And Secretary Riley, to you and to all these wonderful people at the Department of Education, I thank you for the astonishing work you've done on the student loan program and on student assistance, generally.

When I ran for President in 1991, late 1991 and 1992, I talked a lot about redoing the student loan program and increasing access to financial assistance through grants, work study, tax credits, and an improved student loan program. I'll never forget one night; it was about 1990, I think. I was then serving as Governor of my home State, and I was up in Fayetteville, Arkansas, which is the home of the University of Arkansas, and a friend of mine and I went out to a coffee shop to have a cup of coffee. And I did what I always do; I went around and shook hands with everybody at all the tables in there. *[Laughter]* And there were three young

students there having coffee, so I sat down and started talking to them. Two of them were planning to drop out of school. They were already in college—I'll never forget this. And I asked them why in the world they would do that, given the fact that the economy that they would live in for their adult lives put a higher premium on education than ever before. And both of them said they had to go ahead and get out and work for a couple of years because they knew they could not meet their student loan repayment schedule. And they didn't want to take the money and not be able to pay it back. And it had a searing impact on me. So I said, "Surely, these people are the exception to the rule," so I started nosing around and come to find out there were a lot of people like this. And that's basically how we got into the idea of the direct student loan with the option to repay as a percentage of your income.

I also found a lot of young people who wanted to be teachers, like Raquel, or police officers or nurses, who instead were taking jobs that they found less rewarding but paid more money so they could meet their loan repayment schedule.

The background to all these things that we're going to talk about here in a minute, for me at least, came alive through the stories of young people I met. And then when I went around the country in 1992, I met more and more and more of them. So, Raquel, I'm grateful to you, but I'm also grateful to all those young people, many whose names I don't even know, who took the time to share their stories and tell me about the personal challenges they faced. And it was very important to me because I never could have gotten through college and law school without loans and grants and jobs. And I wanted everybody else to have those opportunities, as well.

Now, one of the big problems we faced in 1993, when I took office, is that the student loan program itself was in danger because its credibility, its very financial underpinnings were threatened by a very high default rate. Nearly one in four students was failing, for a variety of reasons, to repay their student loans. And yet, again I say, we all knew that we needed more people going on to college, not fewer people. So the trick was how to figure out how to get more people to go to college and do a better job of collecting on the student loans and get people to be more responsible in discharging their student loans.

Since 1993, as Secretary Riley said, we have more than doubled our investment in student aid. We've increased Pell grants; expanded work-study slots from 700,000 to a million; created AmeriCorps, which has now given more than 150,000 young people a chance to earn money for college while serving in our communities; created education IRA's, the \$1,500 HOPE scholarship tax credit for the first 2 years of college, and then a lifelong learning credit for the junior and senior years and for graduate school. More than 5 million families already have taken advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit in '98 and '99. We made it easier and cheaper to get loans and for students now to pay them back as a percentage of their future income, and you heard Raquel talking about that.

The Direct Student Loan Program we started, also by fostering competition, have saved students more than \$9 billion in loan repayment costs, just from lower interest rates alone. Taken together, these actions amount to the largest increases in college access and opportunity since the passage of the GI bill after World War II.

And we can now say to every student in America, "The money is there. You can actually go on to college." This is profoundly important.

Students are getting the message; two-thirds of them are now going to college. That's up more than 10 percent over the last few years. We have also tried, as I said, to increase responsibility for repaying these loans. Otherwise, the whole thing would be undermined over the long run. And here's what the Department of Education did, and again, it's just another example of Secretary Riley's sterling leadership and the great qualities of the people there. But here's what they essentially did to reduce the student loan default rate.

First, identified more than 800 schools with consistently high default rates that were obviously not serving their students, and they were eliminated from the program.

Second, more flexible repayment schedules were offered. Students no longer have to default on their loans simply because they're going through a period in their lives where they don't have all the resources they need to make full repayments.

Third, we slashed the cost of the loans, themselves, so it's more affordable to pay them back. A typical \$10,000 student loan today costs \$1,300 less in fees and interest costs than it did 8 years ago. That's astonishing—\$1,300 less on a \$10,000 loan. I guess that sort of explains why some people thought our attempts to establish this program so—[laughter]—that \$1,300 was going somewhere. [Laughter]

Fourth, students are borrowing less than they otherwise would have because of the increases in Pell grants, HOPE scholarships, and other tax credits, and the work-study aid and other student aid. And finally, of course, a stronger economy has made it easier for students to repay their loans.

But listen to this. Thanks to all these factors, today, the student loan default rate has been cut by two-thirds—actually, more than two-thirds. When I took office, the default rate was 22.4 percent; today, it is 6.9 percent. Here's a really impressive thing: This is the lowest default rate in the history of the student loan program, and it has been achieved while tripling the number of loans given every year. Normally, you think if you give more loans, you'll be loaning more at the margin of risk. This is an astonishing achievement. And Secretary Riley, you

should be very proud. I thank your whole team. This is an amazing, amazing thing.

By cutting defaults, increasing collections, and making the system more competitive, we have saved taxpayers and students—the students have saved \$9 billion, and the taxpayers have saved twice that much, \$18 billion, because of the reduction in student loan defaults since 1993. That is very good news for the American people, a total of \$27 billion in savings.

Let me say that this lesson—invest more and have more accountability and have the programs work based on how the real world, the real lives of these students is unfolding—that's the kind of thing I think we ought to do in education generally. And I'd like to say just a few words about the education budget and priorities now pending before the Congress.

For more than 7 years, we've tried to invest more in our schools, in more teachers, smaller classes, more Head Start, more after-school and summer school programs, hooking up 95 percent of the schools to the Internet. We've also demanded more from our schools: higher standards, more accountability for results, more responsibility for turning around failing schools. Secretary Riley points out when we took office, there were only about 14 States with real standards and a core curriculum. Today, there are 49 States. And we got a change in the Federal law to require the States to identify their failing schools and have strategies to turn them around.

We wanted to go further, in terms of the standards for the tests that the students take, through the nonpartisan national association for student testing, called NAGB. And we also would like to pass legislation that requires States to turn around the failing schools in a fixed amount of time or shut them down or put them under new management.

But we have made a lot of progress. Math and reading scores are rising across America—some of the greatest gains in some of the most disadvantaged schools. The number of students taking advanced placement courses has risen by two-thirds in 8 years: among Hispanic students, by about 300 percent; among African-American students, by about 500 percent—taking advance placement courses. College entrance exam scores are rising, even as more students from more disadvantaged backgrounds take the test. That is not an education recession; that is an education revival.

But on the other hand, no serious person believes that American education is where it ought to be. We have the largest and most diverse student body in the history of our country. We have what is immensely frustrating to me, which is evidence that every problem in American education has been solved by somebody, somewhere, but we have still, after almost 20 years of serious effort in education reform, not succeeded in institutionalizing what works in one or two schools right across a school district or right across a State.

So there are lots and lots of challenges still out there. And what I believe we should be doing is to emphasize further changes in the direction we have been moving. We need more investment, and we need more accountability. And we need to understand the central importance of teachers, of principals, of modern facilities, and of genuine, effective accountability systems.

Now, that's my problem with the present congressional budget. The majority in Congress is pushing a budget that would neither increase investment or accountability. It abandons the bipartisan commitment we made just last year to hire 100,000 new highly qualified teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. It fails to guarantee investments in building or modernizing classrooms, when we know that the construction and repair deficit in America's classrooms is over \$120 billion today. It shortchanges investment in after-school programs, in improving teacher quality, in our efforts to turn around schools or shut them down or reopen them under new management.

Even though they claim to be for accountability, the one proven strategy we've gotten that I've seen over and over and over work—from small rural schools in Kentucky to urban schools in California and New York and Ohio—a strategy to identify the schools, turn them around, shut them down, or put them under new management, they failed to support this strategy.

It underfunds our GEAR UP program to get disadvantaged students focused on and prepared for college. It fails to give hard-pressed middle class families a \$10,000 tax deduction for college tuition, which they desperately need.

Now, we've got a \$230 billion surplus, folks. This Congress voted to get rid of the estate tax, to give a \$6.5 million tax break to some Americans. They voted for a marriage penalty

relief that didn't just relieve the marriage penalty but gave other upper income Americans huge tax breaks. The least we can do is adequately invest in education. More Americans will make more money, including already wealthy Americans, by having an educated work force in this country, than by anything we can do in giving specialized tax cuts. And we ought to do it and do it now.

We have evidence that, if you invest more and demand more, you can turn the schools around, improve student achievement, get more of our young people going to college, and, as we've seen today in stunning fashion, make the student loan program work better for more students and for the American taxpayers, as well.

This is worth fighting for. We now have lots and lots of evidence that if we invest more, and do it in an intelligent way, we can produce real results for the American people. There is no more powerful example than what Secretary Riley and the Department of Education, along with people that have worked with them throughout the country, in college and university

after college and university, and more responsible, active students, have done to turn this student loan program around.

Now, it will be available for more and more and more students, and it will do more good for more and more and more students. We need more stories like Raquel Talley's. We need more young people like her, who want to give their lives to the education of our children. And we ought to do whatever is necessary to make sure, number one, they can go to college, get out, and succeed, and number two, when someone like her goes in the classroom, the rest of us do whatever we can to make sure she succeeds in the classroom, as well.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. in Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Raquel Talley, student loan recipient who introduced the President; and NAGB, the National Assessment Governing Board.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional and Religious Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

October 2, 2000

Debt Relief for Poor Countries

The President. Just before you all came in, I looked around this table and I said, "I imagine this is the most amazing group of Americans who has gathered together here in this room since Theodore Roosevelt inaugurated it in 1902." And I thank them all for coming. I think it shows you the depth and breadth of commitment of congressional, religious, and civic leaders to convince Congress to appropriate the entire \$435 million that we pledged in debt relief to the world's poorest countries and to authorize the International Monetary Fund to do its share, as well.

It's not often we have a chance to do something that economists tell us is the financial imperative and religious leaders say is a moral imperative. It's not often that we find an issue that puts John Kasich and Maxine Waters on the same side, economists and evangelicals in

the same room. All of us feel a common obligation to do the right thing.

In the most indebted countries, one in ten children dies before his or her first birthday; one in three is malnourished; the average adult has only 3 years of schooling. This is a terrible omen for our shared future on this planet, and it is wrong.

More than a year ago, religious leaders organized a very successful global campaign for debt relief. It touched many of us here today and generated strong bipartisan support in the Congress. The United States developed a plan with other creditor nations to triple debt relief available to the world's poorest nations, provided they agreed to put the savings from debt payments into health and education. Here are the results so far.

Last year Bolivia saved \$77 million and spent it on health and education. Uganda used its savings to double its primary school enrollment.

Honduras now intends to offer every child 9 years of schooling, instead of 6. Mozambique is buying much needed medicines for Government clinics, especially important there in light of the terrible floods they experienced.

Now, other nations are watching to see if the United States will do its part. If we don't, it's possible that some nations will do all the work that we should have done to qualify, or that they needed to do to qualify, but they won't get any relief at all.

Now, let me remind you, we are talking here about one-five-thousandth of our budget to lift the burden of debt around the world for years to come. We're talking about giving as many as 33 nations a chance for a new beginning and about doing good works that our different faiths demand of us. This is a remarkable opportunity that we must seize now, and we must not let other issues divert us from it.

Again, I'm profoundly grateful to all of you for coming and to you, especially, Representative Kasich, for making sure that this is a broad bipartisan group. So I'd like to open the floor to you to say a few words.

[At this point, Representative John R. Kasich, Representative Nancy Pelosi, and Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick of the Archdiocese of Newark, NJ, made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you. I'd just like to make one more point that I think none of us made, but it's worth making. And again, I want to say this is an amazing group. Rabbi, we thank you for coming. Reverend Robertson and all the Members of Congress—Bono, thanks for coming back from Ireland.

There is another point that should be made here. Some of the people who have not supported us have said, "Well, so many countries have problems of their own making, they've got to solve their own problems." The unique thing about this debt-relief initiative is that the money has to go to meet the human needs of the people. It cannot go to pad the government; it cannot go to pad private pockets; it cannot go to build military arsenals; it can only go to meet long-term human needs.

So that if we can do this, one of the best long-term benefits will be we will be providing a breathtaking incentive for good governance in these countries, which will enable them to do things for their own people that would have been unimaginable just a few years ago. So

that's another reason that I am profoundly grateful to all of you for this.

Now, we'll take a couple of questions and we've got to——

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, two questions. First, over the weekend, did you personally see the videotape of the 12-year-old Palestinian boy who was shot over the weekend, and have you got a reaction to it? And secondly, sir, what assurances have you received in the last 24 hours from either Prime Minister Barak or Chairman Arafat that they are doing all that they can to bring a cessation to the violence?

The President. The answer to your first question is, I did see it.

Q. Your reaction, sir?

The President. The first time I saw it, I didn't know what the result was, and I kept wondering if there was something else that the father could do to shield the child. I mean, I was literally watching as if it were someone I knew. It was a heartbreaking thing to see a child like that caught in the crossfire.

I've talked to Chairman Arafat. I've talked to Prime Minister Barak. We've had virtually constant contact with them. I am convinced that they must do everything in their power to stop the violence, and I think they are now trying. And we're going to do everything we can. We have—as you know from the statement I put out yesterday, we've offered some ideas, and we've been working on this all day. So we'll just have to see if we make some more progress tomorrow morning over there. I think it will be better tomorrow. I hope it will.

Debt Relief for Poor Countries

Q. On the debt relief issue, the holdup seems to be Senators Gramm and McConnell. What can you offer them to get this moving?

The President. Well, I don't know what else we can offer them but the evidence. I think if we just keep working at it, we might get there. We have such a good, broad bipartisan group here that I think in the end that we'll be able to work it out with them. And we're certainly working on it.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, in your talks with the Israelis and Palestinians, do you get the impression that the recent violence is helping them

move along towards wanting to reach an agreement? Or is it hurting things?

The President. Well, in the short run, it's hurting them, because they can't do anything on the peace process until people stop dying and the violence stops. But when the smoke clears here, it might actually be a spur to both sides as a sober reminder to what the alternative to peace could be. So we have to hope and pray that will be the result.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. M.G. (Pat) Robertson, president, Christian Coalition; Rabbi David Saperstein, director, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; musician Bono; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Representative Kasich, Representative Pelosi, and Archbishop McCarrick.

Statement on Energy and Water Development Appropriations Legislation *October 2, 2000*

Today Congress passed a deeply flawed energy/water appropriations bill that threatens major environmental harm by blocking our efforts to modernize operations on the Missouri River. An anti-environmental rider attached to the bill would not only jeopardize the survival of three threatened and endangered species but would also establish a dangerous precedent aimed at barring a Federal agency from obeying one of our Nation's landmark environmental statutes. Accordingly, I will veto this bill when it reaches my desk.

While this bill funds scores of special projects for special interests, it fails to provide sufficient funding for priorities in the national interest,

including environmental restoration of the Florida Everglades and the California Bay-Delta and our strategy to restore endangered salmon in the Pacific Northwest. It also fails to fund efforts to research and develop nonpolluting sources of energy through solar and renewable technologies that are vital to America's energy security.

I urge Congress to resolve these issues in an environmentally sound manner and to quickly produce an energy/water bill I can sign. While we are now in the first week of the new fiscal year, Congress still has sent me only 2 of the 13 appropriations bills. Congress should complete its work without delay.

Statement on Caribbean Basin Initiative and African Growth and Opportunity Act Beneficiary Countries *October 2, 2000*

I am pleased to release today a list of countries eligible for trade benefits under the Caribbean Basin Initiative and African Growth and Opportunity Act, legislation enacted last spring. By expanding our trade relationship with 34 sub-Saharan African countries and 24 Caribbean Basin countries, we will help promote economic development, alleviate global poverty, and create new economic opportunities for American workers and businesses. This action truly marks a

new era of stronger relations between the United States and our friends in the Caribbean, Central America, and Africa.

NOTE: The proclamations are listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Reception for Montana Gubernatorial Running Mates

Mark O'Keefe and Carol Williams

October 2, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, first of all, thank you for your warm welcome, and thank you for being here for Carol and for Mark O'Keefe. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for making the trip from Montana. Thank you, Senator Baucus, for your friendship and support and wise counsel to me over these last 8 years. Thank you, Pat Williams, for casting that deciding vote, putting your own neck on the line, and giving America a lifeline. I want to thank the other Members of Congress and former Members who are here, including Bob Matsui and his wife, Doris. And thank you, Bruce Morrison, for being here. I know your wife runs this joint. [Laughter] Nancy, thank you very much.

Carol, thank you for running. And I want to say a little more about this wonderful house in a moment. Thank you, Maggie O'Keefe, for coming out here from Montana and for being a teenager involved in public life. I think that's a good thing. And I want to thank Carol and Pat for something else. I want to thank you for your wonderful daughter, Whitney, who's been so great to Hillary and me these last several years, who is here.

You know, I love Montana. I think that the vacation that Hillary and Chelsea and I had in Montana when Ted Schwinden was Governor and took us around and up in a little helicopter at dawn over the Missouri River, in 1985, was one of the best family vacations we ever had. I still have a vivid memory of every part of it. Chelsea had the opportunity to work there last summer—the summer before last, now—for a few weeks on a ranch, for which I am very grateful.

And I had the opportunity to campaign there and to meet, among other things, with a large number of tribal leaders. I never will forget the experience I had there in 1992, which was one of the seminal events for me in steeling my determination to try to do something to get the relationship between the United States Government and our tribal governments right, and to try to do more to empower the Native American population to be part of our prosperity and part of our national life. And I think that's one of the important parts of our administration's

legacy. I've worked very hard on it, and I thank the Indian leaders who are here.

I think it's quite appropriate that Carol came here tonight to represent the ticket and to let me know that Pat and I are going to be part of an imminent spouses club here in the next few months. [Laughter] Actually, I kind of like it. The only thing I do not like about it is that—Hillary used to tell me how nervous she was when I would go into a debate and how she actually hated to sit in the audience because she would claw at the side of chairs. And at least if she watched it on television, she could scream and yell and beat the table, you know?

So I watched her debate on television the other night, and I was absolutely a nervous wreck. [Laughter] And my mother-in-law was so upset, she actually went in another room to watch it on another television. I said, "You can misbehave in front of me. I'm going to." She said, "No, I want to do this all by myself when I'm pounding the table." [Laughter] So I finally know now what she and you, Carol, have been through all these years. But except for those moments, I kind of like being a spouse.

It's appropriate that we're meeting here at this beautiful place. The Sewell-Belmont House, I believe, is the oldest house in Washington, DC, outside Georgetown. And someone told me tonight that I might be the first President to come here since Thomas Jefferson. When you go back through, just imagine that Thomas Jefferson was here. This does have one of the largest collections of suffragist memorabilia in the United States, and it was one of the first places designated as one of America's treasures by my wife and her millennium commission when they were going around the country trying to identify the places that were profoundly important to our past.

I say all that because I think it is obvious to anybody who even goes to the Jefferson Memorial and reads what Mr. Jefferson had to say about slavery, that when he wrote the Declaration of Independence and the Founders wrote the Constitution, they knew good and well that they were setting out perfect ideals that we were

nowhere near realizing. After all, when we got started, only white male property owners could vote. And it took us a long time—and we still haven't completely integrated our ideals with the reality of life in America.

But to be here in honor of a great woman from Montana and her running mate, Mark O'Keefe, who had the vision to want to be her running mate, in a place where so much of the history of American women is memorialized, at a time when—we just left a century where women didn't get to vote until the second decade of the 20th century—and now we're celebrating a great frontier State that not only gave us Jeanette Rankin but now has given us a woman nominee for Lieutenant Governor, and a wonderful woman, a longtime friend of mine, nominee for the House of Representatives. This is a great night, indeed.

The only thing I need to say to all of you about all this is that you know what I feel about the national elections, and you know how important I think it is to build on the changes and the prosperity of the last 8 years and why I think it's important for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to be elected and why I think it's important that we win the Senate and the House. Yes, I want Hillary to be the Senator from New York. I think it will be good for New York and good for America. But I think it would be a great thing if the policies and the ideas we have embraced could be ratified by the American people in a vote, in which we are going to be outspent nationwide, way over \$100 million in these national elections but where the American people know that we have been right on the issues, and we're right on the issues facing our future.

But what's that got to do with a Governor's race, a Lieutenant Governor's race in Montana? A great deal, for two reasons. Number one is, we have to keep the American economy going in order for Carol and Mark to be able to successfully implement their economic plans for Montana, to make sure every person in that State is a part of our future, and in order for them to have the economy that would generate the tax revenues to implement their education plans for Montana.

But second, and more important, it runs the other way. Most of the important social progress we have made in the last 8 years—whether it is cutting the welfare rolls in half or seeing a steep decline in crime or any of the other

things that have happened here to improve the fabric of our Nation, including an increased high school graduation rate, a record college-going rate, increased test scores in math and science, a two-thirds increase in the number of our kids taking advance placement courses, all these things—the Federal Government can do certain things here, but who runs the politics of a State and who drives the vision of a State is pivotal to the success of anything that the next President and the next Congress can do to shape the future of Americans at home.

I was just looking the other day, for example—one of the things that I'm proudest of is that the Democrats insisted on including in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 a Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest expansion of health care for our kids since Medicaid was established when Lyndon Johnson was President. And in 2 years and a couple of days, we have enrolled 2½ million people in that program.

But there are at least 6 million children eligible for that program. There is a dramatic difference—dramatic—in the enrollment levels from State to State. And what is the determining event? The leadership at the State level, starting with the Governor and someone else who is passionately committed, who is assigned to do this. That's just one example.

So I know that most of the people in Washington, a lot of you may be here because Pat and Carol are old friends of yours. Maybe you're here because you have ties to Montana. But what you need to understand is, if you believe in what we have been doing the last 8 years and you want more positive changes to occur in this direction, it is profoundly important not just to help in the congressional races and to make sure we prevail in the Presidential race but to make sure that we win every single solitary Governor's race and Lieutenant Governor's race we can.

That's why this is important, quite apart from the way I feel about Carol and Pat and Whitney and my feelings for Montana and the gratitude I feel because we won there in 1992. This is a big deal. If you really believe that we changed America, we turned it around, we're going in the right direction, and you want it to amount to something, then you've got to help them.

And I'm very grateful to all of you. I just saw Congressman Pomeroy back there, from

neighboring North Dakota. Thank you for being here.

So remember what Carol said. Thanks for being here. And if you can send her a little more money between now and election day, you ought to do that, too.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:20 p.m. at the Sewell-Belmont House. In his remarks, he re-

ferred to Mark O'Keefe, candidate for Governor in Montana, and his daughter Maggie; Carol Williams, candidate for Lieutenant Governor in Montana, and her husband, former Representative Pat Williams; Bob Ream, chair, Montana Democratic Party; former Representative Bruce Morrison and his wife, Nancy; the President's mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham; and Nancy Keenan, at large congressional candidate in Montana.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Dennis Moore October 2, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to thank all of you for being here today. I want to thank Dennis and Stephane for presenting themselves to the people of Kansas and for giving the people of Kansas a chance to send a Democrat to Congress who represents what the Republicans say they're for. *[Laughter]* And I really appreciate that.

I'd also like to say, I thank the Members of Congress who are here, but I am particularly grateful to Jim Slattery and Peter Hoagland, who are here, because without them, I wouldn't be here, because they helped me turn this country around in 1993 and 1994, and I thank them for that.

Now, after Secretary Glickman sort of threw down the gauntlet—*[laughter]*—I completely forgot what I was supposed to talk about because I wasted 2 minutes back there thinking about whether there was anything I could still do to him. *[Laughter]* Now, I'm at a loss. There's a lesson in that somewhere. *[Laughter]*

Actually, I was thinking that I kind of resented that Al Gore has gotten all this credit—*[laughter]*—for naming Joe Lieberman to the ticket. I mean, I know it's a big deal to have the first Jewish Vice Presidential nominee. But I mean, come on, now, look at American history. That is nothing compared to the first Jewish Agriculture Secretary. *[Laughter]* I mean, just with a decision, I destroyed one of the great stereotypes in American life. *[Laughter]* Nobody thinks "Jewish farmer" is an oxymoron anymore. *[Laughter]*

Not only that, if those Republicans would have listened to Dan and me back in 1995,

we wouldn't have had to have all these bailouts the last 3 years with the farmers because of their failure to farm act that I warned about back then, which is just one of the reasons Dennis ought to be reelected, because he'll have a chance next year to rewrite the farm law. And I hope it will be done in a way that really supports the farmers of this country—all the farmers of this country, without regard to where they live, what they produce, or how big they are. And it's very important that we have people who have Democratic values and the understanding of agriculture that anyone from Kansas has to have in order to serve in the United States Congress.

Let me just say a word or two very briefly. I realize that I'm preaching to the saved here—I'll explain that later, Dan. *[Laughter]* Glickman and I get a lot more leeway since we're not on the ballot. *[Laughter]* It's amazing what you can say. *[Laughter]* I say, this one story. Jon Corzine, who is our nominee for Senator in New Jersey, and who spent like \$38 million of his own money winning the nomination, got up and—Rush Holt and I—he may still be here—I did a deal for Rush Holt the other day in New Jersey, in Princeton.

So Jon comes to the event, and we were elated to see him. He's a great friend of mine, has been for many years. So here's Corzine, a candidate now, gets up and tells the following story, as a candidate. He said, "You know, I spent almost \$40 million getting nominated, so I was convinced that everyone in New Jersey knew who I was—everyone." So he said, "I was campaigning the other day in a nursing home,

and I went up to this lady, and I said, 'Ma'am, do you know my name?' And she said, 'You know, Sonny, I don't, but if you go up to the nurse's station, they'll tell you.'" [Laughter]

I told him, I said, "Jon, that's not a bad joke, but you need to let me tell that." [Laughter] "Until you get past the election, I don't believe I'd tell that one again." [Laughter]

So anyway, here we are. Let me be serious just for a moment. This is a different country than in it was in 1992. The country is in better shape. We have done it by a combination of new ideas and old-fashioned values. I was down in Texas the other day with my first Treasury Secretary, Lloyd Bentsen. And I said to him something which is true. People, now that I'm about to leave office, they come to me all the time and say, "What great new idea did you bring to the economic policy process in Washington?" People ask me questions like that all the time, you know—"what great new sweeping reform?" And I always have a one-word answer: Arithmetic. We restored arithmetic. That's what the Democrats brought back. And those of us in the heartland, we still think 2 and 2 ought to add up to 4.

So I'm profoundly indebted to people like Steny Hoyer, who helped me turn this budget deficit around. And last week we had a couple of announcements—let me just mention the announcements we had last week. Last week the annual report came out which showed that the Government budget—which was supposed to be \$455 billion in the hole this year; when I took office, that was the estimate—will have a \$230 billion surplus, the biggest in history. It showed that poverty figures were the lowest in 20 years, the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years, the biggest recorded drop in Hispanic and African-American poverty in history. And furthermore, it showed that for the first time in a dozen years, there were actually more people with health insurance this year than there were last year, thanks largely to the Children's Health Insurance Program that the Democrats insisted be part of the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

What's that got to do with the House race in Kansas? I'll tell you exactly what. Those of us who have been here for the last 8 years, or who were part of any segment of it, worked very hard to turn this country around. And the economy is going in the right direction. The crime rate is going down. The welfare rolls have been cut in half. The school dropout rate is

down. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. Now, with the change in the trendlines on health insurance, every single major social indicator is going in the right direction. And notwithstanding all the troubles around the world today, this country has been an unmitigated force for peace and reconciliation across racial and religious and ethnic lines on every continent in the globe.

Now, the question is, what do we mean to do with this? Have all the problems gone away? Not on your life. There are still big challenges out there, and there are still great opportunities out there. And I said this over and over again—there are a lot of young people in this audience tonight, so I want to make this point, and maybe you will avoid this. There is nobody in this room tonight who is over 30 years old who has not made at least one mistake in your life of some significance, not when times were really tough but when times were going so well, you thought you didn't have to concentrate. Now, that is the big challenge in this election.

Things are going well. People feel good. I want everybody to feel good. Not only that, our Republican friends, after we beat back the contract on America and we beat back their attempts to shut the Government down and we beat back several other of the more extreme things they tried to do, they now sound more like us than ever before. It's really encouraging. I don't mean to put it down. The rhetoric is important. But if you strip the rhetoric away, there are huge differences between what our policies would be—differences in our economic policies, our education policies, our health care policies, our commitment to grow the economy and preserve the environment. And there will be big differences in our farm policies next year, when I'm not around, but I think that our crowd will be sticking up, as I said, for farmers of all sizes, from all parts of the country.

There will be differences in how we'll deal with the challenge of the aging of America. The fastest growing group of people in America are people over 80. Within just a few years, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. We'll have to re-imagine the whole nature of getting older in America, what it means, how we're going to work, and what we're going to do. And it is really, really important. The one thing I have learned, every single House seat and every single Senate seat is important.

And when I made the comment I did about Dennis at the beginning, I was not just kidding. Every time I go out into the country and I listen to our friends in the other party speak, I normally don't have much objection to what they say. They talk about being fiscally conservative. They talk about being compassionate. They talk about this, that, and the other thing. All I can tell you is that this guy does that. And he has had a remarkable impact in a short time.

He is widely respected in the House. You look at all the House Members that have come here tonight. Believe me, every one of them had something else to do. He must have a dozen House Members here, including one of the most senior and most respected and important leaders in the House, Steny Hoyer. And I'm just telling you, it really matters. When a person like Dennis gets elected from a district like his district in Kansas and then does everything that he hired on to do, keeps his word, and serves well, that person needs to be reelected.

And this country has huge challenges to face. You know, when Al Gore says the best is yet to be—I mean, some people probably think it's a campaign slogan, but I'm not running for anything, and I have to tell you, I believe that. Because the country is kind of like a big ocean liner, you know, you just can't turn it on a dime. That's how come the *Titanic* hit the iceberg. [Laughter] They saw the iceberg, but they didn't see it in time to turn it around.

So we got turned around, and we're going in the right direction, but all the far horizons are still out there. The young people in this audience, the young women in this audience, when you have your first children, you'll come home from the hospital with your baby and with a little gene card, made possible by the human genome project. And it will be a little scary, because it will tell you every little problem in your child's genetic make-up. But it will also tell you what you can do to minimize the impact of those problems, maybe even thoroughly correct them surgically or with medicine. And within a decade, I'm convinced that young women will be bringing babies home from the hospital that have a life expectancy of 90 years. Now, you can just remember 10 years from now, look back and see if I was right.

Dan Glickman has worked so hard on research on biofuels, and we're just that close in cracking the chemical mystery that will allow

the efficient conversion of biofuels, so that instead of taking 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol, you'll be able to do it with one gallon of gasoline. Then everybody will have the equivalent of 500 miles to the gallon. And when you put that with fuel cells, alternative fuel vehicles, mixed fuel vehicles, it will radically alter the future of our country.

It is clearly the most effective thing we could be doing to change the energy future of America and to make ourselves more secure. Because if we pumped all the oil that was available to us that's on land owned by Americans, it wouldn't keep us going very long. The only way to have a secure energy future is to take available energy conservation technologies and the development of alternative fuels and different kinds of engines, and go into the future in a whole different direction. We can do that. That's going to all happen while you're around.

But we still have these big questions. We've got the most diverse student body in history and the biggest one; can we give them all a world-class education? What is it going to mean to be 85 in 20 years, and how is it going to be different from now? And it better be different, unless we want it to financially burden the country in an awesome way. How are we going to deal with the fact that AIDS, TB, and malaria now kill one in four people around the world, and we need those people to be our trading partners? What are our responsibilities to alleviate the debt of the poor nations of the world? I think they're quite heavy.

I had a meeting today—I never thought I'd see a meeting like this in the White House. We had in the White House today John Kasich; Connie Mack; Representative Baucus, a Republican from Alabama; Senator DeWine; Senator Lugar; Congressman Leach—all these Republicans—and Maxine Waters and Nancy Pelosi, Joe Biden, Pat Leahy—we had our whole crowd there. We had David Sapperstein, a rabbi friend of mine who is one of the most liberal religious advocates in Washington, sitting three seats down from Pat Robertson. [Laughter]

Why were they there? Because they believe that we have a moral obligation to alleviate the debt of the world's poorest countries. And they know if we do it in a way that allows them only to spend the money on education and health care, those countries will be stronger, better partners for us. It means less war, less

famine, more prosperity, less bloodshed for the Americans of the future.

And as soon as we walked out that door, the leadership of the other party in the House attacked me and attacked us all. Now, when you get to the right of Pat Robertson, you're working at it. *[Laughter]* You're working at it, and they worked at it.

Meanwhile, Dennis Moore has worked at your business. He deserves to stay in. And it will be an important signal about whether our country is really rewarding centrist, moderate, progressive, unifying politics. That's what got us

where we are, and that's what will take us into the future, if we make the right decisions on election day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:08 p.m. at the Frederick Douglass Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Moore's wife, Stephanie; former Representatives Jim Slattery and Peter Hoagland; and Rev. M. G. (Pat) Robertson, president, Christian Coalition. Dennis Moore was a candidate for reelection in Kansas' Third Congressional District.

Remarks at a Luncheon for Hillary Clinton in Miami, Florida October 3, 2000

Well, thank you very much for coming and for coming on such short notice, on this typically Florida sunny day. *[Laughter]* Actually, on the way over here, Chris, I was speculating about whether this beautiful pond of yours out here would come into the house if the rain came. *[Laughter]*

So I want to thank you. And thank you, Irene, for opening your home to me once again. And I want to thank Philip and Michael and Stuart and Alex and all the others who worked on this event today. I'll be quite brief. I hope you're all going to watch the debate tonight. I think it will go well.

This has been a very interesting election to me, because the American people have an unusual decision to make in every one of these Senate races and House races and in the White House, because things are going very well for the country. The economy is moving in the right direction; the society is moving in the right direction. In every major area of our national life, there has been substantial progress in the last 8 years.

And what the people of every State and the people of our Nation have to decide is, what do we intend to make of this moment? And it's very interesting to me that the political rhetoric of our friends in the other party has changed rather dramatically, so they're now arguing over whether they or we are the real new thing, instead of whether we should take some big move to the right, which was their

preferred line of rhetoric until the voters decisively rejected it over and over again.

And I can just tell you, I see this everywhere. But there are these big issues out there. Are we going to have a tax cut we can afford, that will permit us to save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation, continue to invest in the education of the largest number of children in American history in our schools, and meet our responsibilities to the future by paying down the debt? Or are we going to say, "Times are good. I want my mine now," and have a combination tax cut and Social Security privatization plan that will throw us back into deficits, raise interest rates, and get this country in trouble? You listen and see if that's adequately debated tonight.

I am telling you, I've spent a lot—I think that I have earned the right to make comments about the state of the American economy. I believe I have. And people ask me all the time, "Well, it's amazing what's happened here. What great new innovation did you bring to economic policymaking?" And I always smile and say, "Arithmetic." *[Laughter]*

I remember back in '92, when the then-Presidential candidate, George Bush, used to refer to me in disparaging terms as the Governor of a small southern State. Remember that, when he used to say that? I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. *[Laughter]* And I still do. *[Laughter]*

But I knew something about arithmetic and not having rosy scenarios and not pretending money was there that was wasn't. So we brought arithmetic back and made a lot of people mad doing it. In 1993 I had an economic plan that raised taxes and cut spending so that it displeased everyone, but it got rid of the deficit. This year we had a surplus of \$230 billion, instead of the deficit of \$290 billion I inherited. When I leave office, we will have actually paid the national debt down by \$360 billion. That's worth about \$2,000 a year on a home mortgage, average home mortgage. It's stunning. So all I can tell you is, I think that this is a big issue. It's a big issue in the New York Senate race. It's a big issue in the national Presidential race.

Second thing I think is a big issue is health care. And we're having this huge debate which I think has been muddled. Our friends in the Republican Party have desperately tried to muddy up the debate over this Medicare prescription drug issue. Look, here's the deal. The pharmaceutical companies, mostly Americans, but sometimes the Europeans, have helped to develop drugs that lengthen and improve the quality of life. Everybody knows that. The older you live, the older you get, the more likely you are to need medicine. Everybody knows that, right? If you get to be 65 in America, you have a life expectancy of over 82 years, the longest in the world. Everybody knows that. What a lot of people don't know is that more than half the people in this country who are over 65 cannot afford the medicine that their doctors prescribe for them to either lengthen or improve the quality of their life. So the question is, what are we going to do about it?

For most of the time when I was around here, our friends in the other party said nothing. At one time we had a chance to give drugs, at least, to poor people, when we had a deficit, and they said no. So now we've got a surplus, and our position is, led by the Vice President and Hillary and others, is that we ought to have a Medicare-based prescription drug benefit that goes to everyone who needs it; that the poorest people ought to get it for free, and others ought to pay in proportion to their ability to pay a little bit but that we ought to provide it to everyone who needs it.

Their position is that we ought to subsidize the cost for up to 150 percent of the poverty rate, after which people ought to buy insurance.

And their position is, therefore, with heavy money from the drug companies to attack our position as being a huge expansion of big Government. Now here are the facts.

Did you ever follow this debate and wonder what's really going on? It's hard to figure out what's really going on, right? Like why in the wide world would they be against people getting these drug benefits?

Over half the people who can't afford their drug prescriptions have incomes above 150 percent of the poverty line, which is about, as I remember, it's about \$16,000 for a couple or something. Hardly a king's ransom. Now, why would they be against this? And why would they call it a big Government program, since Medicare is Government financing of private medicine, right? That's what we propose, public financing of private medicine. That's what Medicare is. It has an administrative cost of 1½ percent, as compared with an average administrative cost in private health insurance companies of about 12 percent, 14 percent. It is not big Government. It's private medicine financed by the American people.

Now, why are they for what they're for, and why are we for what we're for? Here's the problem. You see all these stories about people going to Canada to buy drugs, and now we may pass legislation which says that you can—that our pharmacies in America can re-import drugs from Canada, made in America, and sell them cheaper. Do you ever wonder what that's about? Here's what that's about.

We are blessed to have these pharmaceutical companies in America. They do great things. They hire tens of thousands of people and give them great jobs. They uncover medical miracles. It costs a lot of money to develop these drugs, and then they spend a whole lot of money to advertise them, once they develop them, while they're still brand named, before they become generic. And every other place they would like to sell their drugs has price controls, which means they have to recover from Americans only, 100 percent of the cost of developing the drug and advertising the drug. Once they do that, it then becomes profitable for them to sell the same drug a lot cheaper in Canada or Europe. Now, they are afraid, the drug companies are, if all the seniors in the country can get their drugs through Medicare, that Medicare as a big buyer will acquire so much power in the market, we can buy drugs for our seniors

made in America almost as cheaply as seniors in Canada can buy drugs made in America. And they don't want that to happen. Why? Because they're afraid they can't recover all their costs and their profits.

Now, they have a legitimate problem, because they labor under price controls in Europe. But the answer to their problem is not to keep seniors in Florida and throughout the United States away from the medicine they need to lengthen their lives. That's what this whole thing is about. You're never going to read that in a newspaper. That is what this is about. That's why the drug companies are putting millions and millions of dollars into the Republican campaigns from President on down.

Now, I'm not demonizing them. I'm glad there are American companies. I'm glad we've got them in our country. I understand they've got a problem because there are price controls in Europe and Canada and other places. But their idea is, it is an acceptable price to pay to maintain the status quo to keep the senior citizens of this country without the medicine they need, and they're wrong about that. The Republicans are with them, and Al Gore, Hillary, and the other Democrats are with the people of this country, and I think we're right about it.

What I would do if I were still in office, I'd go to them and say, "Look, this is not a way to solve your problems. Sticking it to the American senior citizens is not a legitimate way to solve your problem." This insurance deal is phony. Let me just tell you—I've got to say something nice about the health insurance companies, after all the fights I've had with them.

The health insurance companies, to be absolutely fair to them, told the Republicans from the get-go their idea would not work. They told them that they could not write an insurance policy that people could afford to pay the premiums on that would provide adequate drug coverage. They told them that.

Nevada, the State of Nevada, a small place, a laboratory of democracy—that's what our Founders said the State should be—passed the Republican plan. You know how many insurance companies have offered the insurance to buy the drugs? Zero. We've got some State legislators here. Ask them. Zero; not one. Why? Because it doesn't work economically for them. And they're not going to do it.

So this really comes down to the fact that the Republicans would help a few of our seniors, because we've moved the debate so far, and they don't want to be out there three sheets to the wind lost in it. But they don't want to help all of them, because they're afraid that if Medicare can buy drugs for seniors in the private marketplace, they will have so much market power, they'll get the price down, and it will cut their profit margins because they can't make up any of the cost of production in Europe or Canada.

My view is, let's take care of the American citizens, and then the drug companies will find a way to get all the rest of us to help solve their problem. We'll find a way to solve their problem. They're not going anywhere, and they're not going broke. And I'm proud they're in America, and I'm proud of what they do. I'm not demonizing them, but they're wrong about this. Their idea is, the only way to maintain their profit margins is to keep the American people from making sure the senior citizens of this country have the medicine they need. They're wrong about it. Let's solve their problem once we fix the health care needs of the seniors. This is a huge issue.

Same thing on the Patients' Bill of Rights. Health insurance companies don't want it because every now and then they'll have a big settlement when somebody gets the shaft. Well, that's the whole point of protecting people. But even the Republicans admit it will cost less than \$2 a month per premium, per health insurance premium—less than \$2 a month to have the protections of the Patients' Bill of Rights. You get to see a specialist if your doctor says so. If you've got a doctor for cancer treatment or an obstetrician and you're pregnant and you change jobs before the treatment is over, you get to keep your doctor. If you get hit by a car going out of here, you get to go to the nearest emergency room. You don't have to pass up three other hospitals to get to the emergency room 40 miles away that your health care plan covers. If you get hurt, you get to sue. Otherwise, the bill of rights is just a bill of suggestions.

Now, that's what we say. They say it will add to the cost of health care. It will. I did it for the Federal Government. You know how much it cost us? I put in all these rights for

everybody insured by the Federal Government—Medicare, Medicaid, the Federal employees—do you know how much it cost? One dollar a month. So they say—and even the Republicans admit it will cost less than \$2 a month. Now, would you spend \$1.80 a month to make sure that if one of the other people here at this event got hit by a car—God forbid—on the way out of here, could go to the nearest hospital? I would. And I think most Americans would.

Now, that's what this debate is about. And so the American people have got to decide. There are big differences on education. There are big differences on all these issues. And I want you to watch the debate tonight. And I thank you for helping Hillary. As you know, there's a lot of interests that would like to whip her, and I think half of them think it's their last chance at me. [Laughter] But she's doing well. She did well in her debate. I'm immensely—I'm so proud of her. But it's very important that she not be outspent, three to one, on the way in.

In politics, you can get outspent. But you have to have enough to get your message out and to answer all the incoming fire. And you've helped make that possible today. And one thing I have learned is, every one of these Senate and House seats is important. This is not just important to me, although, obviously, it is. It's important to you and to the American people.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I took a little time today on the economy and on the Patients' Bill of Rights and on the drugs to make a point. The American people are very oriented toward the issues this year. They want to make an intelligent choice. Clarity of choice is our friend. I think our friends in the other party have moderated their rhetoric a lot from the Gingrich years, but a lot of their policies haven't changed all that much.

So in order for the American people to make the right decision, they need to be quite clear on what their choices are. And while most people are very issue-oriented, how many people do you know who could tell you the real difference in Gore's economic plan and Bush's; in Gore's position on Medicare drugs and Patients' Bill of Rights, and Bush's? It may be more important in Florida even than the senior issue and Gore's education plan and Bush's. I read the papers, and sometimes I see people

writing about it who don't really understand what the differences are.

So the last thing I'd like to ask you—I thank you for helping Hillary. If you know anybody else who's not here and would want to help us in the last month, ask them. [Laughter] But after this debate tonight—every one of you knows people who don't come to events like this, who have never been to a political fundraiser, who have never been involved in public service.

I want to thank Buddy MacKay for being here, for doing such a good job. Let me just say, in his service as our Special Envoy to the Americas, we passed an historic Caribbean trade initiative, and we passed the sweeping plan to help Colombia, and the nations bordering Colombia, to try to roll back the tide of the narcotraffickers and their relationship with others that are trying to bring down democracy in that country. So I'm very proud of him.

You all know people. Chris said that he had somebody minding the store, because he didn't like to come to political events. But you know people that are going to show up and vote on election day, because they're patriotic; they love their country; they think they ought to be there when the voting comes. But they'll never come to an event like this. Maybe they can't afford to come, maybe it doesn't interest them, but they will sure vote.

So the last thing I want to ask you is, you know, I think that the Clinton/Gore administration has done a good job for Florida. We moved the Southern Command here. We had the Summit of the Americas here, the first one in 30 years. We have worked very hard with all the affected interests to save the Everglades, and that's just the beginning. I think we've dealt well with all the natural disasters.

I just wish that you would do what you can, every day, to make sure people understand where we were in '92 and where we are today, what we've done in Florida, and what the real differences are. And I only dealt with two today, on health care and the economy, but as I said, I could have gone on about the environment and education and nuclear arms control, where the differences are breathtaking and, I think, very troubling—very important to our future.

So I ask you, do what you can. This is a close race. By the nature of things, if you look at all of American history, when you have this kind of setup, unless one candidate can preform

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reverse plastic surgery on another, the way George Bush did to Michael Dukakis in '88, these kinds of races tend to be quite close. But the Vice President and our party, we've got the record; we've got the ideas; we've got the issues. What we need is clarity, clarity. So please—please—go out and tell people that.

And the last point I want to make is this: There's an overriding philosophy behind everything that I've tried to do. I like the fact that there are more people than ever that can afford to live in homes like this. But I also think the people that are catering this event ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college that Chris and Irene do, and Democrats believe

that. We believe everybody counts; everybody has a role to play; and we all do better when we help each other.

So if you can get the issues out and that simple message, I think we'll have a good night on election night.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Chris and Irene Korge; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and former President George Bush and his opponent in the 1988 Presidential election, former Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts.

Statement on Congressional Action on a National Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

October 3, 2000

Congress took a courageous step today to save lives by keeping drunk drivers off the roads. This morning House and Senate conferees approved a transportation spending bill that includes a critical measure to help set a nationwide impaired driving standard of .08 blood alcohol content (BAC). This commonsense nationwide limit will save an estimated 500 lives a year and prevent thousands of injuries.

Our progress on .08 BAC marks a new milestone in our ongoing effort to crack down on drunk driving. It is the result of years of hard

work by safety advocates across the country. I applaud Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the more than 400 young people visiting Washington today who have put a national spotlight on this critical safety measure. I also want to commend the tireless efforts and leadership of Senators Frank Lautenberg and Richard Shelby, Representatives Frank Wolf and Nita Lowey, as well as U.S. Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater. Today's remarkable achievement shows that when we work together, we can make America's streets and highways safer for all.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Conservation Appropriations

October 3, 2000

I am pleased by the bipartisan agreement approved by the House today providing guaranteed funding to protect critical lands across America. By doubling our conservation investment next year and guaranteeing even greater funding in the years ahead, this agreement is a major step toward ensuring communities the resources they need to protect their most precious lands—from

neighborhood parks to threatened farmland to pristine coastlands.

While we had hoped for even more, the very real gains achieved in the Interior appropriations bill would not have been possible without the many conservation, wildlife, and recreation groups, and citizens around the country, who worked so hard to secure dedicated conservation funding. I commend the many Members of

Congress who came together in a true bipartisan spirit to make this a national priority.

I also am pleased that the bill provides critical funding for cleaner water, energy security, Native Americans, and the arts, and that objectionable riders that threatened serious harm to our environment have been fixed or dropped.

A century ago, President Theodore Roosevelt put America on the path of land stewardship. With this agreement, we enter a new century better prepared to honor and fulfill this vital conservation vision.

Telephone Remarks to a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Dinner in Jupiter, Florida October 3, 2000

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

The President. —on the tarmac at the Miami airport for over an hour, and the pilot said we still couldn't take off because of the heavy rains and winds. And I really looked forward to coming. I must say, I feel a little jinxed. Every time I come to Jupiter or try to, something happens. Once before, when I was coming there, you may remember, I tore my leg up, and it took me a couple years, but I finally got back there. And I hope I can come back and see you.

I want to thank the Barots for hosting this dinner tonight. I want to thank Congressman Wexler for being there and for being such a good friend and supporter. I want to thank the candidates who are there, my longtime friend Elaine Bloom, Patsy Kurth, Jean Elliott Brown. Thank you for running for Congress.

And I want to tell the young dance troupe how sorry I am I didn't get to see you dance. I looked forward to it, and I hope I can see you dance either here or in Washington at the earliest possible opportunity. But I really thank you for the efforts you made.

And I want to thank all of you who came out tonight to help our House Democrats and our candidates. I feel good about this election, but it's a long way between now and election day and we have to work very, very hard.

I think it should be clear from the campaigns that have been run by the challengers here in Florida what the stakes are and what the differences are. And the only thing I promised myself is that I would do everything I could between now and election day to help us win the House back and to win as many Senate

seats as possible. As you know, I'm especially interested in the one in New York.

But I have learned that 8 years of experience teaches that every single Senate seat, every single House seat is profoundly important. We have a different economic policy. We have a different crime policy. We have a different education policy, a different health care policy, a different environmental policy, and we have a very different view about what our relationships with other countries around the world ought to be, and America's responsibilities beyond our borders. And for all these reasons, I think it is imperative that we elect every person we possibly can.

I want to thank those of you who have supported me these last 8 years. It has helped us do the things that we've done in America and, especially, in Florida, from saving the Everglades to moving the Southern Command here to trying to help revive the economy in every part of the State.

I want to thank those of you who have come to our country from other nations and who have made it a stronger, more diverse, more interesting place, far more well prepared for the new century. And I want to urge you to do everything you can, to talk to all your friends, people who would never come to an event like this, between now and election day, about why it's imperative that we keep this economy going and keep paying down the debt; why it's important that we invest in the education of our children and the health care of our seniors; why it's important that we find ways to preserve the environment, even as we grow the economy; and why it's important that we make a safer world for our children.

The Democrats are right on all these issues. And I can tell you that there is a huge difference between having the votes of a majority, and not. And so every one of these people deserves your support. And again, I am profoundly grateful, and I am just sick I'm not there. I really looked forward to being there, and I didn't give up until we had sat on the tarmac for an hour, and the Air Force said there was no way. And they told me it would take over 3 hours to drive there, because the fog is so thick in Miami, you can't see your hand before you.

So I hope you'll give me a raincheck. And I thank you again for being so generous and

good and supportive to our candidates for the House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. by telephone from the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, FL. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Gopi and Dilip Barot; and State Representative Elaine Bloom, State Senator Patsy Kurth, and Jean Elliott Brown, candidates for Florida's 22d, 15th, and 16th Congressional Districts, respectively. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the complete opening remarks of the President.

Remarks at a Rally for Representative Corrine Brown in Jacksonville, Florida

October 4, 2000

Thank you. Now, I would say that you're ready to win this election. Senator Holzenorf, thank you for getting us off to a good and rousing start. I want to thank Corrine's colleague Representative Alcee Hastings from Florida, my great friend and a great Representative. Thank you for being here.

And I'm here to say, based on personal experience, that Corrine Brown does deliver. I saw this beautiful elevated rail coming in here. I know how hard she's fought for transportation, for affordable housing, for Head Start and education, for a Patients' Bill of Rights. Not only that, I saw those billboards. I think you're the prettiest candidate in this race. You're pretty to me. *[Laughter]* When I was a little boy, my mother used to say, "Pretty is as pretty does." *[Laughter]*

Didn't the Vice President do a great job last night in that debate? *[Applause]* I was so proud of him. Look, this is a rally, and we can cheer, and I know I'm up here preaching to the saved, but I want to ask you just for a few minutes to kind of listen and let me say a few things from the heart. I'm not running for anything this year, and most days I'm okay about it. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. Thanks for the plug, Corrine. I wish you could vote in New York, but we need you here. But I want to tell you something.

This is a big race, not just for President but every Senate seat and every House seat counts. If anybody has learned that over the last 8 years, I have. Every one of them counts. If I've been able to do any good for you and for our country, it's only been because of people like Alcee Hastings and Corrine Brown, who stood with me and helped me to build this country and helped me to move it forward.

I want to thank the people of Florida. The first electoral victory I got, of any kind, when I ran for President, was in December of 1991 in the straw poll at the Florida Democratic Convention. I am grateful. We nearly won here in 1992, and we only spent a little bit of money, and they spent millions. And so, in 1996 I said, "Look, we've been good for Florida. We had the Summit of the Americas. We moved the Southern Command to Florida. We saved the Everglades. We brought the economy back. We're going to win in Florida." And we did. And when we won Florida, everybody said, "The election is over. Bill Clinton and Al Gore have been reelected. If they can win in Florida, they're going to win America."

I tell you that not to look back but to look forward. In America, our public life is always about tomorrow. I have worked as hard as I could to turn this country around. And what I want to say to you is, it is all on the line

in this election. We made some big progress last night in clarifying for the American people the choices before them. But what I want to talk to you about for a few minutes today is a little more about those choices, because every one of you when you leave here, between now and election day, will come in contact with scores, maybe even hundreds, of other people, your friends that you work with, go to church with, go to social events with, take your kids to events with, who never have come to a political rally like this but who will vote on election day or who may decide not to vote on election day. And I want you to pledge to yourselves, for yourselves and your children and our future, that when you leave here, you're going to do your dead-level best to make sure every single American understands the nature of the choice and why they should vote—why they should vote for Corrine Brown, and why they should vote for Bill Nelson, and why they should vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman in this election.

First of all, there's that minor matter of the record. I don't want to comment on all the stuff we saw last night, but I got tickled in that debate when they were talking about the economy, and the Republican nominee said, "Well, you know, I think the economy has done a lot more for Clinton/Gore than Clinton/Gore has done for the economy; the American people brought America back." And Al Gore said, "The American people did bring America back, and they do deserve most of the credit, but they were working pretty hard in 1992, also, and it didn't come out this way."

Now, look, there are big differences here. And the clearest ones, in a way, are on the economy. They want to go back to the way they did it before. And they think they can afford to do it because we cleaned up the mess that they left before.

Now, let me just remind you of something. Before I took office, the deficit was \$290 billion. It was supposed to be \$455 billion this year. The debt of America had quadrupled under the 12 years of the Republican administration. And don't let them tell you the Democratic Congress did it. The Congress actually appropriated less money than they asked for in the previous 12 years.

Now, what's happened since then? We turned the biggest deficit in history into the biggest surplus in history. And when I leave office, we will have paid down \$360 billion of the Nation's

debt. What has that meant to you? What has that meant to you? Twenty-two million new jobs; the lowest unemployment in 30 years; the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded; the highest homeownership ever recorded; the most number of small businesses ever created, year after year after year; lower interest rates that save money on home mortgages, car payments, college loans, credit cards, the whole 9 yards. It has been good for America.

Now, what is Al Gore's plan? What is Corrine advocating? We want to give you a tax cut out of part of this surplus for retirement savings, to send your kids to college, for child care, for long-term care. We want to give extra tax cuts for low-income working people, especially if they've got a lot of kids. We want to do all that, but we're not promising as big a tax cut as they are. When you take account of all the calculations, ours is barely more than a third of what they promise. Why? Because we think we need to save money for education, for health care, for the environment, and we want to keep paying down the debt.

Now, here's something that didn't get pointed out that I hope will come out later. Every economist that has studied this—just about every one will say interest rates will be a percent lower for another 10 years if we stay with the Democratic plan as compared with the Republican plan. Why? Because they can't pay off the debt. They've got this huge tax cut. Their plan to partially privatize Social Security will cost another trillion dollars. And that's before they make all their other spending promises and keep them, which means you're right back in the soup again. And they just hope we've got enough cushion built up that nobody will notice.

But interest rates will be a point lower if you stick with them. Do you know what that's worth to you in 10 years? Another \$400 billion-plus in effective tax cuts; \$290 billion in lower home mortgages—\$390 billion—\$30 billion in lower car payments; \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. I think that's the kind of tax cut America needs. And it will be good for you, and we'll get this country out of debt.

You heard the Vice President say last night that they want to give tax cuts to people making over a million dollars, that are more than they proposed to spend extra in education and health care. What we want to do is give wealthy people a tax cut if they'll invest in the areas of America

that aren't part of our prosperity today, so that we can all go forward together.

Now, these are big differences, folks. And it's not like you hadn't had a test run. We tried it their way for 12 years and our way for 8 years. If you liked it their way, you should vote for them. If you liked it our way, you better vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Bill Nelson, and Corrine Brown.

Now, let's look at health care. There's a big difference here. When I became President, Medicare was supposed to go broke last year—broke. We added, through reforms of Medicare, 27 years to the life of the Medicare program—27 years. And we passed a bill that said you could keep your health insurance if you changed jobs, if you got sick. And we did more for preventive care on breast cancer, prostate cancer, diabetes—big issue, diabetes. The Diabetes Federation said we've done more than anybody since the creation of insulin.

And we passed the Children's Health Insurance Program that's now provided health insurance to 2½ million kids. And last year, for the first time in 12 years, the number of uninsured people in America dropped by more than 2 million. We are making progress.

So what's our health care plan, and what's the difference in where she is and where they are—Corrine? Well, we're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We're for a Medicare drug program that all seniors can buy into on a voluntary basis.

Now, let me say, there's a lot of discussion about that, but I saw the other side's ad they're running down here on the Vice President's drug program. Folks, it's a bunch of bull. I saw it. They say that our seniors are going to be forced into a Government-run HMO. They paint this big, dark picture about it. Have you seen the ad? It's unbelievable. The only good thing about it is, it's hard to follow, so maybe nobody will pay too much attention to it. *[Laughter]*

Let me tell you, that big, Government-run HMO—they're talking about the Medicare program. It's not Government medicine. Medicare goes to private doctors, private hospitals, private nursing homes. It's not a Government program. It's a financing program that has an administrative cost of under 2 percent, as compared with 10 to 14 percent for HMO's.

Now, this drug program of ours is totally voluntary. Do you know what the difference in our program and theirs is? We just let every-

body who needs it buy in. And if you're poor, we pay your premium. If you have catastrophic illnesses and you have huge drug bills, we pay it. Otherwise, you've got to pay a monthly premium and a co-pay, but at least you get drug coverage if you need it.

Now, their program is—although, they phase it in over several years—their program is, if you've got 150 percent of the poverty line or less, they'll do more or less what we do, and if you're over that, you've got to buy an insurance policy. Now, the problem is, the health insurance companies say they can't write a policy that you can afford that will be worth having. The health insurance companies—I've got to give it to them, because I've been in a lot of fights with them. I take my hat off to them on this. They've been perfectly honest. They said, "This is crazy. You cannot write a health insurance policy for drugs that people can afford that will be worth having." And half the people who need this help are over 150 percent of the poverty line. That's just about \$14,500, I think, for a couple. So it's not real.

Nevada adopted the Republican plan—whole cloth. You know how many health insurance companies have offered to provide drug insurance? Zero. Not one. You've got to give it to the Republicans, though. Evidence never phases them. Don't bother them with the facts. They just stick with their story. You've got to give it to them.

Now, this is a huge deal. If you live to be 65 today, your life expectancy is 82. With the human genome project, young women in this audience will soon be bringing babies home from the hospital that have a life expectancy of 90 years. But if you want people to live longer and live better, they've got to be able to get the medicine they need.

You've got to explain this to people. You know what's really going on? You couldn't tell it from the debates, and you sure can't tell it from looking at the ads. You know what's really going on? The big drug companies don't want this to pass. Now, that may not make any sense to you. I mean, why wouldn't the company making drugs want to sell more of their product? Most of you who are in business like to sell more of whatever it is you're selling.

Here's why. They do have a legitimate problem. And I'm glad they're in America; they do a great job. They develop all these lifesaving

drugs, and they give tens of thousands of Americans good jobs, and I'm glad they're here. Here's their problem. They develop these drugs; they spend a lot of time and money developing the drug. Then they spend a lot of money advertising the drugs. And they can't recover either their cost of developing the drugs or the cost of advertising the drugs from their sales in Europe or Canada or anywhere else, because all those other countries have price control. So they make you pay 100 percent of the cost of developing and advertising the drugs. And once you do that, they can sell those drugs in Canada, in Europe, and anywhere else, and make a ton of money because they've already taken their overhead out of you.

Now, I'm still glad we've got those companies here, and I'm glad that we're getting those good medicines. But what they're worried about is, if Medicare buys drugs for the seniors in America who join this program, they'll have so much market power that America's seniors might be able to get their medicine made in America almost as cheaply as Canadians can get medicine made in America.

That's what this whole deal is about. And every time you see one of those ads, you just remember that. This is all about why the drug companies don't want Medicare to provide life-saving, life-lengthening, life-improving medicine to seniors, because they're afraid that they won't have anyplace they can recover the cost of developing and advertising the drug.

So they've got a real problem. But it is nothing compared to all these old folks choosing between food and medicine every week. So my answer to that is, let's take care of the American people, and then we'll figure out a way to take care of the drug companies' problem. We'll take care of their problem but not at the expense of the American people.

This is a huge difference. And she's right, and they're wrong. You've got to decide, but I think it's pretty clear. You've got to make this clear to people. We have the money to keep people alive. We have the money to keep people healthy in their later years. And we approve and applaud these pharmaceutical companies, but they shouldn't be trying to solve their problem at the expense of America's seniors. Take care of America's seniors. Then we'll find a way to take care of the drug companies' problem. That's what we've got to do.

Take education. You heard them both talking about education last night. I've been working at this for over 20 years, and I can tell you something I couldn't say 20 years ago, when I started working with then- Governor Bob Graham, and later, Governor Lawton Chiles. We now know something we didn't know when we started. We actually know how to turn around failing schools. We know that all our children can learn.

So you've got two candidates focused on accountability. I actually think our accountability measures are better than the ones that the Republican nominee proposed, but we don't have time to go through that. Anyway, they're both genuinely for accountability. And they think the Federal dollars ought to follow performance. That's good.

Our focus is on failing schools: turn them around; shut them down; or put them under new management. But the difference is, our proposal is accountability-plus, and theirs is accountability-minus. That is, their proposal is accountability: block-grant the money; let people decide how to spend it, whether it works or not, and give people vouchers if it doesn't work. Our proposal is accountability: If people are in failing schools and they want out, let them go to a public charter school or have other public school choice and help the schools succeed.

What is our record? When we started on our program to connect all the schools and classrooms to the Internet, 14 percent of the schools were connected; 3 percent of the classrooms were. Today, 94 percent of the schools are connected; 65 percent of the classrooms are. That's our proposal.

Our proposal is, with all these teachers retiring, let the National Government help the school districts pay for 100,000 more teachers to get classroom size down in the early grade. Our proposal is, with the largest and most diverse school population we've ever had, help the schools build or drastically re-alter 6,000 schools and repair another 5,000 a year for the next 5 years, so the kids will have decent places to go to school; double the number of kids in after-school programs and summer school programs and let every kid who needs to be in a preschool program be in one. We've got the money. We ought to do it. Help the schools succeed. Accountability plus support. Big difference. Huge difference. She's right, and they're not.

Now, on health care—let me just say this again—we can do the following thing: We can provide the Medicare prescription drug benefit; we can provide a long-term care tax credit for people who are taking care of their elderly or disabled relatives at home of \$3,000 a year; we can take the parents, the working parents of the children that are now eligible for the Children's Health Insurance Program and put them in the program—that will take care of 25 percent of the people in America without health insurance—we can provide—in our budget we've got \$220 million to help low-income women deal with breast and cervical cancer and get treatment they otherwise could not get; and we fully fund the Ricky Ray Fund in honor of the young man from Florida who died shortly after I was elected—a young man who I had the pleasure to meet, and he and his family—I'll never forget them. That fund now provides care for people who got infected with HIV through blood transfusions. We can do all of that if we want to do it. That's in our budget.

These are choices you have to make. There are choices on the environment. Do you like what we did on the Everglades? Don't you think we ought to keep cleaning up the environment and growing the economy? Big choices. We favor doing both. They say you've got to relax the air pollution rules. They say maybe we ought not to have these 43 million acres I set aside in the national forests. They say maybe we ought to take another look at the national monuments I protected for all time to come.

We don't have to do that. We proved you can grow the economy and improve the environment. We've got cleaner air, cleaner water, more land saved than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt. We proved that. We cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps as they did in a dozen years in our 8. But again, the evidence doesn't get in the way of them. They're sticking with their story. Never mind the evidence. You've got a clear choice here.

Same thing on crime. Crime's come down 7 years in a row, the lowest crime we've had in 27 years now. And we've done more to put 100,000, now 150,000 police on the street and to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. And there hasn't been a single hunter in north Florida miss a day in the woods in a hunting season yet—not a day, not a minute, in spite of all the stuff they said.

So what's their proposal? "We've got no business putting these police on the street," and they want to reverse it. I mean, we got the lowest crime rate in 27 years, and part of it's because we put these police on the street. They want to reverse it. You've got a clear choice here. She's right, and they're not. And you've got to think about it. So I ask you to think about these things.

If I could be given one wish for America, as I look out on this vast and diverse crowd, believe it or not, it would not even be for a continuation, unbroken, of our economic prosperity. I would wish, if I only had one wish, that we keep making progress and learning to live together across the racial and religious and other lines that divide us, because this is one thing I think we all agree on, without regard to party. The most important thing about America is not its Government, it's its people. And if we're getting along together, we're plenty smart enough to figure out how to solve any problem that comes along. If we're getting along together and we celebrate our own heritage but we believe that what God has given us in our common humanity is more important than what's different about us, even though we're proud about what's different about us, then everything else is going to work out.

Now, I think the Government does have a role in that. We're for strong hate crimes legislation. Their leadership is against it, including their nominee. We're for strengthening the law that requires equal pay for equal work for women, and they're not for that. We're for that, and they're not for that. So that's one where Corrine and Alcee are right, and their leadership is wrong.

So I want you to go out from this place and say, yes, we had a good rally, and we cheered for Corrine. But you better think about it. If you like what's happening to the economy and you want it to go on, you better keep paying this debt down and invest in America's people and not reverse our economic policy. You better keep investing in education and not only have high standards for our kids but put the investments there that will enable the children to meet those standards, and support the teachers in teaching those kids. And we want a health care system that doesn't mess up our drug companies and doesn't bankrupt our HMO's. But we can have a Patients' Bill of Rights and a Medicare drug benefit and a long-term care tax

credit and do these other things for our health care system and still take care of the people that are giving us the medicine and the health care. And we want America to keep going until we're the safest big country in the world. And we want to keep cleaning up the environment, while we improve the economy. And most important of all, we want to build one America. And on every single one of these issues, there are huge differences.

Look, folks, I've done everything I could to turn this country around, to get us together, and move us forward. But when the Vice President says—when the Vice President says in these debates, “You ain't seen nothing yet,” that's not just an election year slogan. I'm not going to be there, and I believe that. I believe that, because it takes a long time to turn a country around. It's like a big ocean liner in the ocean—that's why the *Titanic* hit the iceberg. They saw the iceberg, but they didn't see it in time to turn it around. Now, we got it turned around before we hit the iceberg, but

we still haven't reached the far shore of our destination.

So the best is still out there. But now it's all back in your hands. We've got to make the right choices. There is a clear choice. It just has to be clear to every single American.

I will never be able to thank you enough for what you have done for me. But the most important thing is what you will do for yourselves, your children, and your grandchildren by getting out, voting for her, voting for Bill Nelson, voting for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman on November 7th.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:10 p.m. in the Exhibit Hall at the Prime Osborne Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to State Senator Betty S. Holzendorf; Bill Nelson, candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Representative Brown was a candidate for reelection in Florida's Third Congressional District.

Remarks to the Uncommon Women on Common Ground Conference in Jacksonville October 4, 2000

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

The President. —and when the actors were supposed to get their curtain call, they pulled back the curtains and all the real people were standing there. It was an amazing thing. But Kerry, you know her husband, Andrew, is in my Cabinet, of course. And her mother is a great friend of mine, and one of her brothers served in Congress with me during my Presidency. But she has done an astonishing thing here, and I urge you to look at the book and read it. It's really amazing. There are a lot of brave women out there around the world, doing things that stiffen the spine when you read about it.

Let me just say a few words about a couple of women's issues that I think are quite important. And I hadn't really prepared anything to say, but we're close to an election in which I believe the American people will make choices which, whether we consciously are aware of it or not, will shape a lot of how we live for

the next 20 years. And one of the biggest challenges we face, I think, is how to broaden the circle of prosperity to include people that aren't part of it and then how to figure out how both to continue to open opportunities for women and allow people to balance work and family, because the most important work of society is still raising children, and so we have to figure out how to balance these things.

And the truth is that our country is better at creating jobs, starting businesses, and expanding the economy than nearly any country in the world. In the last several years, we've been, by far, better than anybody else in the world, but if you look over a long period of time, we do pretty well with that. But we lag significantly behind a lot of other countries in figuring out how to balance work and family.

So I would just like to say that, for whatever it's worth, I think the family and medical leave law has now allowed some 25 million people to take some time off when a baby is born

or a family member is sick without losing their jobs. I think it should be expanded. A lot of you are small-business people. The big debate that we always have is, how burdensome will it be to small business if we expand it? Should we exempt smaller businesses? If so, where should the cutoff be at number of employees, and what kind of leave should we have?

But that's something I hope all of you will sort of debate, discuss, and go forward with, because when we finally—it was the first bill I signed as President and, I think, still one of the finest pieces of legislation I've ever been involved in. It's made a huge difference. Still, after all these years, it's not unusual at all for me in any given crowd of any kind of people to have at least one person come up to me and thank me for the family leave law and explain how it's affected their lives. It's already happened to me once today, and it happens everywhere.

But it's still rather limited in its reach. And we've got to decide what to do about it. But it's important. It's an important part of balancing work and family.

Another, I think, very important thing is strengthening the equal pay laws that the country has. I've got some legislation before the Congress now I've been trying hard to pass for more than a year to strengthen the equal pay laws. And there's an even more extensive bill up there that goes beyond what I have proposed, that maybe should be a law, but I can't even pass what I've got up there. *[Laughter]*

And again, the issue is, how much can we do on this? What kind of burden is it? Is it a burden for small businesses? And I think a lot of women who are active in business are in a unique position to offer the right kind of perspective. But the main thing is, we need to keep taking action on this, because there is still, even though we've made dramatic progress since President Kennedy signed the first legislation, there's still significant differences in providing equal pay for equal work. There's still a big gender gap in access to high-tech jobs. There's still a significant gender gap in people who hold positions of big responsibility in corporate America. Maybe Cathy talked about that a little bit; I don't know. But we've got to—there's a lot of these challenges that are out there, and I believe the National Government does have a responsibility, at least on the equal pay front.

And for the whole time I've been President, I've had six or seven women Cabinet members, including the first female Secretary of State and the first female Attorney General, who is from here in Florida. So we've tried to set a good example, but I think that these are very important issues that we will have to continue to work on.

Then there's a whole big cluster of health care issues that I think need a lot of emphasis. I've got legislation before the Congress now to spend a couple of hundred million dollars to provide medical care to poor women with breast or cervical cancer who otherwise wouldn't be able to access medical care. I think that's important.

But there are a lot of big issues here that I think need tending to. This whole issue of whether we should have a Patients' Bill of Rights or not, that essentially says you have a right to see a specialist if your doctor says you should; you have a right to keep your treatment if you're undergoing chemotherapy or you're pregnant and you change jobs and your employer changes health care providers, you should still be able to keep the same physician during treatment; and if you get hit and you have to go to the emergency room, you get to go to the closest one, not the one that is otherwise covered by your HMO; and if you get hurt really badly by a bad decision, you can sue. Otherwise, it's a bill of suggestions, not a bill of rights. This is a big issue.

Now, a lot of the HMO's are not for it because they think it will add to the cost of health care. And if you provide health care for your employees, you've got to be concerned about that. All I can tell you is, I have two pieces of evidence that it's affordable. One is, I put it into effect for all people covered by Federal health plans—Medicare, Medicaid, Federal Employees Health Insurance, military's and the military retirees'—and it's cost us a buck a month a premium.

The Congressional Budget Office of the Republican majority estimated, even though they won't support it, that it would cost less than \$2 a month a premium, about \$1.80. And their argument is that the population as a whole is a little bit higher risk than those that are insured by the Federal Government, which may or may not be so, but there's an argument for that. But anyway, I'd pay \$2 a month so that you could go to the nearest emergency room if—

God forbid—you got hit by a car leaving here. But this is a big family health issue, and there are others. So I just would point that out.

Then, let me say, something else that I think may not be seen as a women's issue but I think it's quite important is, what are the implications of the human genome project, and how does it relate to the explosion in Internet and computer technology? This is going to affect all of you. Young women coming home from the hospital within the next decade, I predict, will give birth to babies with a life expectancy of 90 years. I believe we'll move pretty quickly from where we are now, 77, to 90.

Now, secondly—and the reason that will happen is not because everybody will start having perfect babies but because you'll get a gene map—mothers and fathers will get gene maps of their kids that will tell them what their problems are. And then over the course of their life, a lot of those problems will be solved because we'll be doing experiments we haven't done and people will know to take their kids in for the solution. Or if you have, for example, a 50 percent probability, your baby does, of developing some kind of cancer in his or her thirties, you'll also learn that there are five or six things you can do that will cut the odds of that dramatically. So it will be a good thing.

Simultaneously, all your health records are going to be on somebody's computer, and so are all your finance records. How do we enable the people that do business, how do we enable the Internet economy to flourish, and protect your rights of privacy? I think you ought to be able to say so before somebody gets into the health or financial records. And working through that is going to be a big issue, and it will affect women, particularly those that are trying to manage a home and a work life. And they go to basically the core of family values in our society.

So they will provide a—that will be a big challenge, too. And I've sent some legislation up to Congress—I don't think it will pass this year because it's controversial, because some of the people involved don't think we ought to have as many protections as are in my bill for the privacy of medical and financial records. But it's something, no matter who the President is, you all have to deal with. And it ought not to be a partisan issue. It ought to be something that we deal with almost in a family way, as well as a business way. But it's an issue that

I would think that the women of America who are in the work force would have a special concern about. And so I hope you'll think about that.

So those are just some of the things that I wanted to mention. I think that we're moving into what should be the most exciting and prosperous time in the history of the country, if we make the right decisions. And I'll just mention two big ones that I think are important.

I think we ought to keep paying the debt down, because I think one of the reasons that we were able to—for example, our Small Business Administration in the last 8 years tripled the number of loans to women entrepreneurs over the previous 8 years. But one of the reasons we were able to do it is, the economy was growing against the backdrop of lower interest rates. And it's very significant, because if you pay the debt down over the next 12 years—basically, if you keep interest rates a percent lower over the next decade—it means lower business loans, more business investment, more growth. It also means about \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments.

And I would like to see it become an American commitment, not a party commitment, because I think it makes sense. In a global economy, where all these financial markets are global, fiscal conservatism should be embraced by the more liberal and the more conservative party as good economics and good social policy, because if you keep interest rates lower, obviously you spread the benefits of the economy wider. So I think that is very, very important, and I would hope that everybody would agree.

The other thing that I think is hopeful is that we are engaged in a massive national debate now about how we can go about providing world-class education to all of our children. The only thing I can tell you is this: In 1979 Hillary and I started working on these issues when Bob Graham was the Governor of Florida. We did a lot of work together. And then when Lawton Chiles became Governor, he and I were very close, and we worked on these things. We didn't really know 20 years ago what we know now about how to have uniformity of excellence in education and whether every failing school could be turned around. We now know that they can be turned around and that all children can learn. It's not just a slogan.

And it's actually happening out there. In the last—in the decade of the nineties, reading and test scores went up. The dropout rate went down. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. The number of kids taking advance placement increased by two-thirds. The number of Hispanic kids taking advanced placement increased by 300 percent. The number of African-American kids increased by 500 percent, taking advanced placement tests.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day where 2 years ago—a grade school—2 years ago 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level—2 years ago. Today, 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in only 2 years. They've got a new principal. They adopted a school uniform policy. They adopted a high expectations/high accountability policy. They lowered the class sizes. They cleaned up the school, and they turned it around in 2 years.

I was in a poor school in western Kentucky a couple months ago that 4 years ago was one of the worst schools in Kentucky. Over half the kids were on school lunch programs. They were desperately poor. And in 4 years they went from—listen to this—12 percent of the kids doing reading at or above grade level to almost 60 percent; 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; zero percent of the kids doing science at or above grade level to 63 percent.

And the trick for America is not—this is not rocket science now. People know how to do this. This is happening. It happens in Florida. It happens in every State in the country. And what we have not learned how to do is how to do it on a uniform basis.

And so I hope that one of the things that will be debated—I spent—both Hillary and I probably spent more time in the 12 years before we came here working in schools than anything else we did. And I still think it's the key to the future of the country. You've got the largest and most diverse student population in the history of America, the first time we've had more kids in school than we did in the baby boom generation after World War II. And the good news is the schools are getting better, and the real good news is we actually know how to turn them all around. But it requires more than even a debate in the Presidential election. It requires

much more than legislation from Congress. It also requires people's involvement.

But for whatever it's worth to those of you that are involved in the schools, we're now awash in evidence that this is a problem we can solve, and therefore, when you have that, there's no excuse for not solving it. So I urge all of you, in whatever way you can, to make your contribution to that.

I've already talked longer than I meant to. And I didn't have any idea what I was going to say when I got here. *[Laughter]* But I'm glad I got invited. There is one thing I'd like to say officially—I don't know how many of you are here from Dade County in south Florida, but they had the worst weather down there yesterday that I have seen in the 17 years I've been going down there. And there's still a lot of serious flooding. The Governor has asked for an emergency declaration, and we're reviewing it now, and I hope to have it issued shortly. But we're going to do what we can to help. But for those of you who have friends and neighbors down there who don't know, it was really bad—I mean, really bad.

And among other things, for all us political junkies, the flood, lightning and wind knocked out the cable system last night, and we had to race to another place that had satellite TV so I could see the debate. *[Laughter]* But there are a lot more serious problems down there, and we're going to do what we can to help them.

I want to thank all the people here on the platform for putting this together. And I want to thank you for meeting here. Thank you for having me. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. at the Prime Osborne Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to author Kerry Kennedy Cuomo and her husband, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Andrew M. Cuomo, her mother, Ethel Kennedy, and her brother, Joseph P. Kennedy II; Cathy Bessant, president, Bank of America (Florida); and Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary did not include the complete opening remarks of the President. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Corrine Brown in Jacksonville October 4, 2000

The President. Now, listen, we're going to forgive you for that minor election year exaggeration. [Laughter] Let me tell you folks, were you all—you weren't in the rally, were you?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Well, we had a good one, and I thank you for making it possible. I just want to say more briefly what I said in there. I am grateful to the people of Florida for the opportunity they've given to me and Hillary and to our administration to serve. The first victory I won, of any kind, running for President was the December 1991 straw poll at the Florida Democratic Convention, and I'm very grateful.

We almost won here in '92 and spent no money. And I had a big fight within our own camp. I kept telling them, "We can win in Florida." So when we didn't win in '92, I said, "There will be no debate in '96. We're going all out." In the meanwhile, of course, we had the Summit of the Americas here; we moved the Southern Command here; we saved the Everglades; we helped to bring the economy back; and we got a big victory in Florida in 1996. And what Corrine said was true: When it came on the television early on election eve that Bill Clinton and Al Gore had carried Florida, everybody said, "Katie bar the door. It's over," and all that. And I would like it if you would send that message again on the night of November 7th.

I also want to say that if I have been able to help our country, it's important to me that you understand that it wouldn't have been possible had it not been for the support of people like Alcee Hastings and Corrine Brown. And she has done a great job in Congress. She does deliver. As a matter of fact, she works me to death. [Laughter] When people see her coming in the White House, if she wants something, we finally decided just go on and tell her yes before we even hear what it is—[laughter]—because we know if we don't, we just know she'll wear us out until we're all exhausted, and we'll wind up saying yes anyway. [Laughter] So we just say yes on the front end now. [Laughter]

She has done a really good job for you, and she deserves to be reelected. And in a larger sense, her election and every election this year,

from anybody who has been involved in the last 8 years, is a decision by the people about whether to keep changing in the direction we're going or whether to turn back around and go back to where we were and change in another direction.

And I can only tell you again—I don't want to repeat everything I said out there, but there are huge differences. I thought the Vice President did an excellent job in that debate last night. I was very proud of him. But it's important to me that you understand that—like I said, I'm not running for anything. We've got another candidate in my house now—[laughter]—and she's going to win, I think. But it's important to me that you understand that everything that I have tried to do this last 8 years to turn the country around, to bring the country together, to get it moving forward, is sort of like setting the table for a banquet, but the banquet hasn't been held yet.

And I can give you—we're paying off the debt, but we're not debt-free. We've had the longest economic expansion in history, but it hasn't extended to everybody who's willing to work. We've reduced, just this last year, the number of uninsured people, for the first time in a dozen years, but there are still working families with children out there that need health insurance and senior citizens that need medicine.

We've got—the test scores in our schools are going up, and the dropout rate's going down, and the college-going rate is at an all-time high. There's been a huge increase, two-thirds, in the number of our kids taking advanced placement courses; 500 percent increase in the number of African-American children taking advanced placement courses for college in the last decade. But we're not anywhere near where we need to be yet.

So the question is, what is it that we propose to do? We've got the country turned around, pulled together, moving in the right direction. We're going to change. The question is, how are we going to change? And the point I've tried to hammer home—and I want to, by the way, before I go any further, I want to acknowledge the presence in the audience of somebody

else who hasn't been introduced here, your former Lieutenant Governor, my Special Envoy to the Americas, Buddy MacKay. I want to thank him for the great job he's done.

But there's a big difference in the Republican and Democratic economic approaches. You heard a little bit of it last night. But just to simplify, basically, they want a tax cut that's almost 3 times as big as ours, the one that the Vice President and Corrine support, and a partial privatization of Social Security, which would cost another trillion dollars to fund. And that's before they keep any of their spending promises. So that puts them into spending the Social Security money or into a deficit, the way we talk about it.

That's why the Vice President says, "I'd like to give you one that big, but I can't, not responsibly, because we've got to have money for education, for health care, and we've got to keep paying the debt down."

But what you should understand is, every time I go to one of these big-dollar fundraisers where we've got a bunch of rich people, I say, "Why are you for us? You know, if you go to them, he's going to give some of you millions. Why are you for us?" And I make them say what I'll say to you, what they always say is, "Because your deal worked. It's better to have low interest rates, where businesses can borrow money and expand, the stock market grows, people can be hired, incomes go up. And I'd rather pay a little more money on a higher income than less money on a lower income, where more people are working and the economy's growing." This is a huge, huge idea difference here.

You know, they really believe if you lower taxes, mostly on upper income people and you give them more money to invest, it will grow the economy, even if the Government's in deficit. We really believe that if you have a Government that's in deficit and you're growing the debt, you're going to have high interest rates; it's going to stagnate the economy; and nothing else is going to work very well; plus which low interest rates is the best middle class tax cut in the world.

I have an economic study which indicates that the difference between our plan and theirs would keep interest rates a percent lower for a decade. That's \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. That's a \$435 billion tax cut, in the form of

lower interest rates. And you get that for free by paying down the debt. So it's a huge choice. You've got to decide.

We have big differences in health care. We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights. They're not. We think all Americans ought to have—all seniors ought to have access to affordable, voluntary prescription drug coverage, and they don't. We think that this Children's Health Insurance Program, which has insured 2½ million kids, should be expanded to include the working parents of those kids. That would take care of 25 percent of all the people without health insurance in this country. It would also, by the way, dramatically alleviate the burden on hospitals today for uncompensated medical care.

We believe that families ought to have a long-term care tax credit to take care of their elderly or disabled family members. More and more people are doing that, and more and more people are going to have to do that because we're all living longer. If you live to be 65 in America, your life expectancy is 82. And with the human genome project—I said to a woman's group I just met with, and I'll tell you again—I believe that the young women who are still having kids, in this audience, within the next 10 years will be coming home with babies that will have a life expectancy of 90 years. But it means we have to plan for this; we have to prepare for this; we have to adjust our society for this.

So these are big differences. There are big health care differences. In education, both our sides are for accountability. I think our accountability plan is a little better than theirs, and I won't go into why now because you don't have all day to talk about it. But the difference is, in addition to accountability, we want to help people meet the standards.

So I'll just give you one example. When Al Gore started leading our efforts to hook all the classrooms and schools up to the Internet, 3 percent of the classrooms and 11 percent of the schools were connected. Today, 65 percent of the classrooms and 95 percent of the schools are connected to the Internet. We want to put 100,000 teachers out there, for smaller classes in the early grades, and make sure they're certified to teach what they're teaching, qualified.

We want to build—provide States with tax relief on school bonds to build 6,000 new schools or radically remodel them and to repair another 5,000 a year for 5 years—huge issue

in Florida. You've got people in all the house-trailers and coming out of the windows in these old schools, and there are more kids than ever before in the schools but a smaller percent of the parents owning property and being in the—elections than ever before. And I think—we've got the money; we ought to have some tax relief here and some direct funding to help repair these schools and modernize them. It's a big issue. I think it's important.

So, we're for that, and they're not. So there are big differences in the economy, health care, education; big differences in the environment; big differences in crime; big differences in how we go about living together on equal terms. We're for strengthening the equal pay for equal work law for women. We're for a hate crimes bill that covers everybody, and they're not.

So I believe, on all these issues, in addition to what Corrine does for the district, she's right, and they're not. That's what I believe. If you believe that and if you believe the same about the Presidential race, then it's very important that between now and election, you give her some more money if you can, because she's being outspent. But beyond that, you think about all the people you come in contact with every day who are your friends. Some are Democrats; some are Republicans; some are independents. Nearly every one of them intends to vote. Almost none of them come to things like this. Is that right? Most of your friends never come to events like this and would never have a chance to have an encounter like this.

So I think it's very important that in addition to everything else, if you just make up your mind that part of the duties of citizenship for you—since you came here, you heard this, you know something about it already, otherwise you wouldn't be helping her—is that every day between now and the election you're going to take a little time to talk to somebody. You might make the difference in whether they vote or

not. You might make the difference in the person they vote for.

Because the most important thing—I've always believed if the American people have enough time and enough information, they nearly always get it right. Otherwise, we wouldn't still be here as the oldest democracy in the world. We'd be on the ash can of history. We'd be history. And the reason we're still here doing better is, not necessarily—not primarily because of the leaders but primarily because people are pretty smart, and they're fundamentally good, and our system is fundamentally wise. And freedom works, but for it to work, people have to have enough information and enough time to digest it, and they have to understand what the differences are and the nature of their choice.

So the way I want you to think about this is: Confusion about the choice helps them; clarity about the choice helps us. I believe that with all my heart. I think if people say, "I want somebody that will meet the big challenges of the future. I want somebody that understands the future. I want somebody that supported the right kind of change in the past, and here are the choices before me in the economy and education and health care, the environment, crime, the whole 9 yards," we win, if they understand.

You can help that. So I want to ask you for her, for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, for Bill Nelson, go out there and make sure people understand with clarity the choice before them. If you do, trust the people will have a great celebration the night of November 7th.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in Boardroom A at the Prime Osborne Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Bill Nelson, candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida. Representative Brown was a candidate for reelection in Florida's Third Congressional District.

Statement on Smaller Learning Communities Grants

October 4, 2000

I am pleased that today the U.S. Department of Education is awarding \$42.3 million in grants to help school districts create Smaller Learning

Communities in large high schools across the country. Nearly three-quarters of American high schools have more than 1000 students enrolled,

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and the grants announced today will help States and local communities create smaller learning environments to enhance the safety and academic achievement of our Nation's teenagers. The Vice President and I have a longstanding commitment to ensuring that all children have access to a first-class education, and these grants provide support to State and local communities to work toward this goal by investing in what works. We know that smaller schools provide more personal attention and greater academic support than larger schools and outperform large schools on most measures of school success, including grades, test scores, attendance, and graduation rates—and this impact is even greater for minority and low-income students.

Today I challenge Congress to extend the benefits of Smaller Learning Communities to more districts and schools by funding this program at the \$120 million level proposed in my FY 2001 budget. Right now, the Republican leadership has proposed an education budget that shortchanges America's students by flat-funding the Smaller Learning Communities Program, and by failing to provide adequate funds to: reduce class size; improve teacher quality; turn around failing schools; expand after-school opportunities; build and modernize new schools; help students prepare for college through GEAR UP; and make college more accessible and affordable for all Americans. Congress must act now so that our children can receive the first-class education they deserve.

Statement on Senate Passage of the “Breast and Cervical Cancer Act of 1999”

October 4, 2000

I am extremely pleased that the Senate unanimously passed legislation today providing an important new health coverage option to low-income, uninsured women with breast cancer. With passage of the “Breast and Cervical Cancer Act of 1999,” the Senate has virtually assured that the Congress will present me with legislation that I was pleased to include in this year's budget and that I will be proud to sign into

law. I would like to thank my wife, Hillary, for her constant advocacy on behalf of this legislation. Her longstanding advocacy for women with breast cancer is well known and has been the inspiration behind this administration's unwavering commitment to this issue. I look forward to final passage of this important bill and the new security it will provide for thousands of women with breast cancer.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate John J. Kelly

October 4, 2000

Let me say, first of all, I'm here for several reasons. One is, whatever I've been able to accomplish these last 8 years would have been impossible without the support of the Democratic Members of Congress. And in some ways, their support when we were in the minority in Congress has been even more vital than when we were in the majority, because if they stick with me, we can still do most of what we want to do for America.

As some evidence of how important this race is to them, we have one of the true leaders

of our Democratic caucus, Representative Nancy Pelosi from California, is here. Thank you, and Representative Brad Sherman from California back there. Congressman David Minge from Minnesota was here; he just walked out. Is anybody else here, Tom? Is anybody else here? I don't want to make anybody mad. *[Laughter]* I'm getting to you.

I also—I want to thank Tom Udall, who took me around Santa Fe a few days ago. We had a wonderful time, and I actually got to do something I rarely do. I got to shop a little. And

I informed him that he took me to the right places, and the women who live in my house are very happy with the selections he helped me make. [Laughter] And I thank him for that.

The second thing is, I feel deeply indebted to New Mexico. New Mexico voted for Al Gore and me twice, gave us strong support, and has contributed immensely to the success of this administration. And Bill Richardson, who was here earlier, has done a fabulous job. Ann Bingaman served in the Justice Department with great distinction. Of course, John was an outstanding United States attorney, and Jeff Bingaman has been a leader on technology and environmental issues, on so many issues where what we're trying to do in the White House can only be done because he's been out there for years in the Senate doing the same things, even better. And I'm very grateful to you, Jeff Bingaman. Thank you.

Now, if John hadn't asked all the Georgetown people to raise their hand, I was going to do it, because the press, which is covering this, is always looking for the dark underbelly of these fundraisers. [Laughter] There is always some sordid, hidden motive behind everything we're doing. And I just wanted to know what it is. [Laughter] For the first time in 26 years, I am not on the ballot. And you all were about to have the DT's—[laughter]—and so now you've got somebody to help. And I appreciate, more than I can say, all of our classmates for being here.

John was a year behind me at Georgetown. I met him 35 years ago. I liked him then. I admired him then, and I still do. You heard him talk a little about his career. I think we need more people in the United States Congress who spent big chunks of their lives helping people that most of the rest of us forget about, who know what life is like for people who will never be able to come to a fundraiser in Washington or even in Albuquerque. I think that's really important.

I also think he and Suede are the kind of people we want to hold up as Representatives of the Democratic Party in the new century. They represent everything that I think is the best about America. And the other thing I want to tell you is, he can win this race. In 1998—little known fact—our nominee for this congressional seat in 1998 won the election on election day and was defeated by the advance balloting in New Mexico, 3 weeks in advance, because

it all moved to us in the last 5 days there. But he won; our guy won on election day. And we weren't in harness enough with the national mood until the last week, so that that's one more House seat we would have won had we been where we were on election day 3 weeks out. So he can win.

Now, in a larger sense I want to say, I know I'm kind of preaching to the saved here, but there are a lot of people here who have friends not only in New Mexico, but a lot of John's friends have come here from other States. Some of you have come from New York, and if you did, I hope you'll vote for Hillary. I'll get a little plug there.

But I would imagine most of you watched the debate last night. I thought the Vice President did an outstanding job. But I want you to know what I believe. I believe when Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," it's more than a campaign slogan. I believe that the best stuff for America is still out there.

We spent an enormous amount of time in the last 8 years kind of turning around the ship of state, and that can't be done on the dime like that. It's like a big ocean liner. You know, the *Titanic* hit the iceberg in spite of the fact that the crew saw it way before they did it. They just didn't see it in time to avoid the iceberg. It takes time to turn around. And we've done that. And now, virtually every indicator is going in the right direction: Not just the lowest unemployment in 30 years, but welfare has been cut in half. We've got the lowest crime rate in 27 years. We had, last year, for the first time in a dozen years, we had a decline in the number of people without health insurance in America, a huge turnaround. And things are going in the right direction. So the question is, what do we do with all this?

You heard John tell you what he thinks we ought to do about it. What I want to say to you is, I've been here 8 years, and I'm not running for anything, but in America, our public life is always about tomorrow. That's why we're still around here after over 200 years. And we may never get a chance in our lifetime like we have now, to seize all the big opportunities, to meet all the big challenges, to build the future of our dreams for our kids.

And I believe I know better than any single American, that in that endeavor, every last Senate seat and every last House seat matters—every single one. And I hope—I believe after

last night the American people have more of an idea of what the genuine differences are. But let me tell you, I spent a lot of time not only living this job but studying the respective positions of the candidates. And there's a huge difference in where not only our nominees for President but our whole party is on economic policy, on health care policy, on education policy, on environmental policy, on arms control and national defense policy, on what it will take to build one America that brings us together across all the racial and religious and other lines that divide us—massive differences.

And the only reason I'm taking this time to talk to you is that every one of you will see hundreds of people between now and election day. And most of you have most of your friends among people who will never come to an event like this, but they will vote, because they love their country, they want to be good citizens. They will show up and vote. But they will never have an encounter like this. They do other things with their lives. You need to be sure that every day you take every opportunity to tell everybody you really have a chance to talk with about what the choice is. What is the nature of the choice?

Last night you heard in the debate the discussion about tax policy. And the Republican nominee said to the Vice President, "Well, your tax cut leaves some people out." Well, our Democratic tax cut is only about a third of the size of theirs. But there's a reason for that. We think we have to save some money to invest in education, health care, the environment, and we think we've got to keep paying the debt off.

Now, keep in mind, if you pay the debt off, as opposed to continuing—or returning to deficit spending and getting into the Social Security surplus, which their plan inevitably will do—when you add up their tax cut, the trillion dollars it costs to partially privatize Social Security without bankrupting it for the people who will be guaranteed their benefits, and all their spending promises, they go back to deficit spending.

Interest rates will be a point lower over the next decade under the plan John Kelly will vote for. Do you know what that's worth? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in home mortgage savings, \$30 billion in car payment savings, \$15 billion in college loan savings, God only knows how much in credit card savings. Lower business loans means more businesses started, more jobs

added, more incomes raised, and a higher stock market.

And it also means you get rid of the third biggest item in the budget. Interest on the debt is the third biggest item in the budget—Social Security, defense, interest on the debt, Medicare—and we'll get rid of it.

When I took office, they told me the deficit would be \$455 billion this year, and we'd be spending almost 15 cents a dollar on the debt. We got it down to 12 cents. And we will have paid \$360 billion of the debt off when I leave office. But this is something that the progressive party ought to be for, even though it sounds conservative. Why? Because we live in a global economy where we're competing for dollars. We need to free up money for the private sector to invest and create jobs. And keeping interest rates low is a broadbased, middle class tax cut that benefits everybody.

How do I know? We've had the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment ever recorded in America, the lowest poverty rates among those minority groups ever recorded in America. Are they too high? Yes, but we're moving them in the right direction. Last year we had the biggest drop in child poverty since 1966 because we have a stable and growing economy. And now we've got to spread it to everybody.

The point is, people have a choice to make here. To pretend that there's no choice is dead wrong. There is a clear choice. And you have to decide, since a lot of you here, since you could afford to be here, would get more out of their tax cut than ours in the first year, you have to ask yourself, "Why am I here?" I went to Georgetown. I have to be, right? [Laughter] No, I mean besides that.

And the answer is, you and everybody else in America will be better off if we focus tax relief where it's most needed, to help people deal with child care and long-term care and college education and saving for retirement and if we keep those interest rates down and keep the economy going strong, where everybody will make more money.

It's not as if we haven't had a test run. We tried it their way for 12 years. We tried it our way for 8 years. The evidence is there. People need to understand the difference.

We have a very different health care policy. We're for the Patients' Bill of Rights that really is a bill of rights, not suggestions, and they're

not. And to be fair to them, they say, "Well, this may cost too much on the health insurance premiums for small-business employers, and it may cost the HMO's too much. And they may raise health care premiums, and they're too high already." That's their argument.

So the problem is, we have evidence. I put in a Patients' Bill of Rights for everybody insured under the Federal Government—Medicare, Medicaid, military, Federal employees, and the retirees who get their health care under the Federal Government. Do you know how much it costs us? One dollar a month per premium. And their office, the Republican Congressional Budget Office, estimates that the cost for the general population would be less than \$2 a month. Now, I would pay \$1.80 a month to know that if one of you goes out of this fundraiser—God forbid—and gets hit by a car, you can be taken to the nearest emergency room; you won't have to pass three on the way to get to the one that is covered by your health plan. And I think you would, too. This is a big issue, and it's a difference.

But there's a choice here. This Medicare drug deal—I can't do a better job than the Vice President did last night. I thought he made a great show of it, because he said what our position is. But you need to know what's going on here. We've got the money to provide prescription drugs under Medicare. If we were starting Medicare today, would we do it without a drug plan? Of course not. But in 1960—Medicare was enacted when we were beginning our Georgetown careers, and medicine was about doctors and hospitals. Now, medicine may be about staying out of the hospital by taking medicine that makes you live longer and live better. And every day there are older people in this country choosing between medicine and food.

Now, we say, "Since Medicare is an efficient, popular, effective Government program, let people buy into Medicare and get drug coverage. It also has, by the way, an administrative cost of about 1½ percent, as opposed to 10 to 14 percent for most HMO's, so it's the most efficient way to do it. And let everybody who needs it have a chance to buy it. We'll give poor people—we'll pay their premiums. And then if people have catastrophic bills, over a certain amount, we'll pay that, and everybody else will pay a co-pay and a monthly fee."

They say, "Let's don't do that. Let's phase it in over 5 years, cover people up to 150 per-

cent of the poverty line, and then cover everybody else by letting them buy an insurance policy." The problem is—and I have to give it to the health insurance companies. As many fights as I've had with them, I have to take my hat off to them. They've been scrupulously honest in this debate. They have been terrific. They have said, "Look, this is nuts. You can't design a health insurance policy that anybody can afford to pay for that will cover an acceptable amount of medicine. The insurance market won't do it."

Nevada has adopted the Republican plan. That's what they adopted. Do you know how many health insurance companies have offered drug coverage in Nevada since they adopted it? Zero. None. Not one. Why? Because it won't work. I've got to give it to our adversaries; evidence never phases them. [Laughter] You've got to kind of admire that.

But what's this whole deal really about? Do you know what it's about? It's about the drug companies, and they're not for this. And you may say to yourself, "That doesn't make any sense. I'm in a business where the more customers I have, the better I do. How could you be in the business of making drugs and not want to sell more of them?" It's a good question, and here's the answer. Now, let me say, you don't have to demonize the pharmaceuticals to do this. I am proud of the fact that those companies are part of America. They have—every single week they come up with some new breathtaking discovery. They provide tens of thousands of wonderful jobs to Americans, and I thank God they're in our country. You do not have to demonize them. But they're wrong on this, and let me explain why.

Here's their problem. It costs a fortune to develop these drugs, and then they spend a whole lot of money advertising the drugs. And they want to sell the drugs worldwide, but because Europe and Canada and everybody else is under price controls, they have to recover 100 percent of their development and their advertising costs from us. That's fine for me; I can pay it. And what they're worried about is if Medicare, all of a sudden, is representing millions of American seniors—it's not price controls—they're just worried that Medicare will become such a big buyer, they'll have so much power in the market, that senior citizens in America will be able to buy drugs made in America almost as cheap as they can buy them

in Canada. And they're worried, therefore, that since they can't recover their costs anywhere else, that their profits will be drastically reduced, thereby undermining their ability to continue to develop new drugs and do all that. It's a legitimate problem. But surely to goodness, the answer to the problem is not to tell old people they can't have medicine they need.

Now, what's our position? Our position is, "We've got the money. Take care of the people who need the drugs. Keep them well. Let them live longer. And then we'll help the drug companies figure out how to solve their problem. They're big. They're strong. They've got a lot of influence around here. We'll figure out how to solve this." [Laughter] But surely, the answer to the problem is not to deprive people of the medicine they need. This is crazy. We're right on this, and they're wrong. It's a big reason to be for John Kelly.

I could go through the same drill on energy and the environment. And Jeff Bingaman could give a speech better than me.

I could go through the same drill on education. Both sides are now for accountability. That's good. I would like to point out that when we took office there were only 14 States with core academic standards, and we required it as a condition of Federal aid. There are now 49. We tried to have a voluntary national test that could then be administered and judged and used as a basis of giving out Federal aid, and the other side said no. So we required all the States to identify their failing schools and take steps to turn them around.

And what Al Gore wants to do is say, "Turn them around; shut them down; or put them under new management." They say the answer to the need for more choice is to go to vouchers. We say the answer to the need for more choice is, since we don't have enough money in the school system as it is, since we only give 7 percent of the total budget—it was 9 in the sixties. When we came to Georgetown, the Federal Government was giving 9 percent. It got down to nearly 5 when I took office. We got it back to 7. We've got the biggest bunch of kids in school ever, and we know how to turn these schools around. So we say, "Create charter schools and other forms of public school choice, and let the kids go wherever they want to. But don't take the money—that money—out of the school system, because we don't have enough money as it is. You need competition."

Now, and we say, "And by the way, we ought to help them. So we ought to finance more teachers for small classes in the early grades. We ought to finance after-school and summer school and preschool programs for everybody that needs it. And we ought to help them build schools or repair schools. And we've got a plan to build 6,000 schools and repair 5,000 a year for 5 years."

Why? Because they need help. You've got more kids than ever before, but a smaller percentage of their parents are property owners. And therefore, it's not like at the end of World War II, when even in Hillary's hometown in Park Ridge, Illinois, which voted 4 to 1 for Goldwater, they had high school millages, because they wanted to make their schools good. And they could do it. It's different now.

So we say, accountability-plus. Big difference. Anyway, I could go through all these issues. If you—on arms control, we're for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and they're not. I think that's a big difference.

So here's the deal. If somebody comes up to you on the street and they say, "Why should I vote for Al Gore," if you live in New York, "Why should I vote for Hillary," if you live in New Mexico, "Why should I vote for John Kelly—that incumbent Congresswoman seems a perfectly intelligent, nice person to me," you need to be able to say, "Look, we're not into personal criticism. We're not into personal attacks. We just want the American people to understand what the choice is."

I'm telling you, if the people understand what the choice is and what the possibilities are, we're going to be fine. John will win if they understand what the choices are.

Now, the money is important. Why? Last year, in '98, when we won seats in the sixth year of a Presidency for the first time since 1822, we got outspent by \$100 million. So you don't have to have as much money as they do. And we have too many positions that are against the money to have as much money as they do. [Laughter] Just on the Patients' Bill of Rights and the medicine alone, we can't get there. But that doesn't matter. That doesn't matter. What matters is that you have enough to get your message out, and you have enough to answer the incoming fire. If you do and they have more, well, that's nice for them, but it's not fatal for you. So that's important.

But I am telling you, you have got to be able to say, not just with your checkbooks but with your voice, why are you for these people? What difference would it make if John wins, or not? You need to be able to say, "There are economic consequences, health care consequences, education consequences, environmental consequences, public safety consequences, and national security consequences."

And finally, there's a lot of one-America consequences. One of the reasons I'd like to see him in the Congress is that I know how much he cares about Native Americans and about righting our relationship with the Native American tribes, not just in New Mexico but around the country. We're for the hate crimes legislation, and they're not. We're for stronger equal pay laws for women in the workplace, and they're not.

But having somebody who knows and cares about what's happening to people on these reservations and in the vicinity is profoundly important. I went to Shiprock the other day with Tom, and we were talking about this at the Navajo reservation. And it's magnificent. God, it is so beautiful. It's magnificent. And the people are so impressive. But I was introduced by a 13-year-old girl that won a contest in her school and won a computer. And she couldn't log onto the Internet because her family didn't have a telephone. Over half the families don't have telephones. Over half the families don't have jobs.

And here we are with 4 percent unemployment, and they're stuck there because they made a deal with America over 100 years ago that said they'd give up their land and their

mineral rights and everything else in return for the Federal Government meeting certain responsibilities in a nation-to-nation relationship. And frankly, we took the money and ran. And ever since then, even though there have been a lot of well-meaning people involved, they've been kept in a kind of semi-dependency that has never, never been fair. It has never worked, and it's all the problems of the old welfare system times 50.

And if you believe, as I do, that intelligence and enterprise are equally distributed among all people, this is an unconscionable situation. I have done everything I could to turn it around. This new markets legislation that I think we will pass this time will help. But whether you live in New Mexico or not, whether you ever know a Native American or not, I'm telling you, as an American citizen this ought to be important to you. We need somebody who cares, who knows, who has worked among and understood these issues. This is profoundly important.

It is an important part of redeeming the promise of America that we keep working on this until we get it right. So you give people those answers, and we'll win.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:32 p.m. at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, Ann K. Bingaman, wife of Senator Jeff Bingaman; Mr. Kelly's wife, Suedeen; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Mr. Kelly was a candidate for New Mexico's First Congressional District.

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton October 4, 2000

Thank you. You are doing nothing to disabuse people of their stereotypes about Irish politicians—[laughter]—nothing. I want to thank Ted and Vicki for letting us come to this beautiful place, and thank you all for being here for Hillary.

The things that Ted says are so brazen, it's almost hard to get up and talk after him. [Laughter] I mean, you've got to go some to

have more of that whatever that is than I do. [Laughter] He makes Terry McAuliffe look repressed. [Laughter] I'm having a good time, actually, going out and campaigning for other people. Now, 6 years ago, I went to Massachusetts to campaign for Senator Kennedy. It was more fun then, because it was quite bracing. He actually had a race then, and Massachusetts was the only place I was still popular. [Laughter]

So we needed each other. It was wonderful. [Laughter] It was great.

I'd like to begin by once again thanking Senator Kennedy for 8 years of support, advice, friendship, prodding, and stunning production, for being one of those people that didn't go in a hole and feel sorry for himself when we went from being in the majority to the minority in the Senate but just got up the next day and tried to figure out a new strategy to get done what we needed to get done and to stop those things from being done that we oppose. There is nobody like him in the Congress, nobody.

When I was a young man, one day in the summer of 1966, I received a call from a man named Lee Williams, who was then the administrative assistant to Senator Bill Fulbright. And he said, "How would you like a job working on the staff of the Foreign Relations Committee?" I was an undergraduate at Georgetown. And I, frankly—as it turned out, it was just a few months before I discovered that my father had cancer, and we were going to be in terrible financial straights, and if I hadn't gotten this job, I couldn't finish college, it turned out.

So he offered me a job. He said, "Are you interested in a job?" I said, "Sure I am." I had slept about 2 hours the night before. You know, I was 19 years old. I thought I was going to live forever. And he said, "Well, you can have a part-time job for \$3,500 a year, or you can have a full-time job for \$5,000 a year." I said, "I'd like two part-time jobs"—[laughter]—which I thought wasn't bad for 2 hours sleep. So he laughed, and he said—this was a Friday morning—he said, "You're just the guy I'm looking for; be here Monday."

So I packed my bags, and I went to Washington. And I was not quite 20 years old, and I was just full of awe for everything. And there were some truly great figures in the United States Senate then, people who argued about civil rights and argued about foreign policy, including the war in Vietnam, and argued about what we ought to do to help the poor and how we were going to deal with the great issues of the day. And it made a searing impression on me.

Those 2 years I worked in the Senate, in my last 2 years at Georgetown, I watched the Foreign Relations Committee hold those great hearings on Vietnam, on whether there was a domino theory, what China's future was going to be. And I watched, obviously, a President

that I admired very much, President Johnson, try to push through legislation I believed in and kept getting in deeper and deeper trouble over Vietnam. I learned a lot about America and American politics.

And I saw the young and handsome Senator Edward Kennedy inspiring all these young people, along with his brother Robert, to public service in those years. It's a long time since then. And I want you to know, I asked him a question at dinner, and everybody around the table heard it. I said, "Are you as idealistic today about our country and our system as you were when you entered the Senate, shortly after your brother was elected President?" He said, "More." That's why he's one of the 8 or 10 greatest Senators in the history of our country.

And by the way, I said, "Me, too." I feel I will leave office more idealistic than I was the moment I took my hand off the Bible from taking the oath of office on January 20, 1993. I will. I feel that way about our country. Just look at the last 8 years. We've got a lot of evidence that our challenges as a people yield to intelligent, sustained effort in the same way that all other challenges of life do.

So that brings me to how come you're here and why he threw this party for us. When Hillary—I'll never forget this—the last thing in the world I expected to be doing about a year and a half ago was this. [Laughter] I mean, I thought, we were talking about what a great last year we were going to have; we were going to take all these trips together; we were going to do all this stuff and how great it would be. And then Senator Moynihan announced that he wasn't going to run. I can't remember exactly when that was. And then a few days later, Charlie Rangel and, I don't know, several other House Members, called Hillary and said, "You really ought to think about doing this." They knew that we were going to move to New York when we left, I think, and so they said that.

She said, "Bill, this is crazy." I said, "I don't know; you want to do it?" She said, "I don't know." So she went up and started looking around and talking to people, and she came back, and she said, "I think I'd like to do this. Do you think I should?" I said, "I'll give you the same advice I give young people fresh out of college that ask me this. If you can stand to lose—can you stand to lose? If the answer to that's yes, then you go to question two. Do you have a reason for wanting the job that's

bigger than the fact that you'd like the title, something that relates to the people you want to represent and not to just the fact that it would be nice to be a Senator? If the answer to that's yes, then the third question is, are you prepared to pay the price it takes to win?"

I said, "You've got to understand. This means that all those trips we were going to take we're not going to take. All those relaxing weekends we were going to have at Camp David, just sitting around with our friends and watching movies, we ain't going to have them." And I went through a lot of other things. I said, "Now, if the answer is you're not paralyzed by the thought of defeat; you have a reason for wanting the job that's bigger than the fact that you'd like to have it, that relates to the people you want to represent; and you're prepared to do what it takes to win, then I think you should do it." I think she wanted me to say yes or no. [Laughter] So about a day or so later, she said, "Okay, I want to do it. So here we go."

I'd just like to say a couple things. First of all, on a purely personal note, for 30 years, all she's done is helped other people, mostly me. But she also served on the board of the Legal Services Corporation, under President Carter, and she started the legal services clinic at the law school, when she and I were teaching at the law school, almost 30 years ago. Her first job was with what was then called the Washington Research Project, now known as the Children's Defense Fund, when we got out of law school. Then she went on the board of that. Then she helped me get elected attorney general and Governor. And then when I got elected Governor, she founded something called the Arkansas Advocates for Families and Children and built the State's first neonatal level three nursery so we could keep these tiny little infants alive. And now in our little State, that children's hospital is the seventh largest children's hospital in America.

And for 30 years, I just watched her do stuff for other people—mostly me, but also for other people. And this is the first time she ever asked anybody to help her. So I'm trying to do my part. And I'll never get even; I'll never get caught up. But I really appreciate it, because what I want you to know is—you heard that debate last night, so we'll start with that. I thought the Vice President did a really good job, and I was really proud of him. I hope that over the course of these three debates—

I think we made a good start last night—that the American people will see two leaders representing two parties, that show genuine respect for one another but have clear differences. And I hope that these debates will clarify those differences, so people will know what the choices are. And I think we made a big start last night. And I think Mr. Lehrer deserves a lot of credit, because he had a little flexibility there, and they spent at least 3½ minutes on every topic, instead of 90 seconds on this, and we'll go to 90 seconds on that, 90 seconds on the other thing. So we're doing that.

But I was happy when she decided to do this, because I think it's important that we have people in the Senate who understand these big issues and understand the big choices and who are capable of clarifying them, number one.

Number two, one thing I've learned watching Ted is that he's effective because he's both dogged and flexible, because he has both passion and organizing ability. He stays with stuff. And I personally have never worked with anybody that had the same combination of intellectual ability and passionate commitment and organizing ability and doggedness that Hillary does. And I think she's really well-suited for this kind of job. And I know how much she cares about this stuff.

I say this all the time, but I'm not running for anything. I don't have to say this. I really do believe when Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that may be a campaign slogan, but I happen to believe it's true. I feel like we've just sort of set the banquet table in the last 8 years, but we haven't served the meal yet. It takes time to turn a country around. I mean, this country was in a—I know people took a big chance on me 8 years ago, but it wasn't that big a chance, because the country was in a ditch, and we had to change. [Laughter]

I've often wondered, late at night, how many people strolled into the voting place and said, "God, I just don't know if I can vote for this guy. He's just Governor of this small southern State, and he looks like he's 30 years old, and they said terrible things about him, but, oh, heck, what the heck, I'll give it to him."

So now it's different, and things are going well. And the last bad social indicator we had began to bend when we learned a couple days ago that last year, for the first time in a dozen years, we had 1.7 million fewer people without

health insurance, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program that we fought so hard for in 1997. But we have still a long way to go.

So we got things moving in the right direction, and the real question is, what are we going to do with this? Are we going to sort of splurge it away, saunter through it, wait for it to come to an end, or build an edifice? You know, build the future of our dreams for our kids. That's what this is all about.

The reason I wanted Hillary to run, once she answered yes to the three questions, is that we need every good hand we can, every stout heart we can, every good mind we can, and everybody with a steel will we can, determined not to squander but instead to make the most of this moment. And we need every voice we can, bringing clarity to the choice, so the American people, whatever they decide, it's always got to be all right with those of us that are in the arena. I mean, they usually get it right. Otherwise, we wouldn't be around here after 224 years. America would be on the trash heap of history. So you've got to believe in the system. Every time people get enough information and enough time, with the right argument, they nearly always get it right. Otherwise we wouldn't still be here, still rocking along, still building a more perfect Union.

So we need people with talent. And I can just tell you, I know I'm biased, but I've known hundreds of people who do this stuff, and I've never known any citizen activist who had remotely the combination of qualities that would make a great Senator that she does. That's what I really believe. I always—I remember when we were going together. I said, "This is terrible. I'm going home to Arkansas, and I'm going to try to run for office, and I feel terrible that you're going to do this, because you ought to be doing it, too." The only thing that anybody can say anymore, after all I've been through, that makes me mad, is when somebody suggests that the only reason she can do this is that she's my wife and First Lady. If she hadn't been my wife and First Lady, she could have done it 25 years ago. Now, that's the truth.

So, thanks. We're in a hard fight. We're a little ahead. I think she's going to win. I think the Vice President and Senator Lieberman are going to win. But I think the big problem is making people understand, number one, this is a gift, this moment—countries just get a mo-

ment like this once every 50 years or so—and number two, understanding what the nature of the choice and the consequences are. I am absolutely convinced, if people get the feeling this is a really important election and then have a pretty clear idea of what the choices are and what the consequences are, we're going to do great.

Clarity is our friend; cloudiness is our foe. And you helped us tonight by making sure that she'll be able to hold up her end of the deal in New York. I just want to urge you to keep doing whatever you can and not just financially, I mean really just talking to people. People have got to understand, this is a big deal. I mean, I feel that we spent so much time just trying to get all the things going in the right direction and get the country coming together and giving people a sense of possibility again, and I think people have that. They have this. Why do you think the issues are so important?

One reason Al Gore got such great ratings out of the speech at the convention, and it lasted more than Governor Bush's did, is it was more specific. I once said to him, I said, "the Presidency—the election for President is the world's greatest job interview. And sometimes people forget that. You're asking people to hire you. And unlike a lot of other jobs, you get to both interview for the job, and tell people at the same time what you think the job is. And it changes over time."

So that's what we're doing. You've done a good thing here, helping Hillary tonight. She won't let you down. And we need every great soul we can get in the Senate. You're doing a good thing by helping our side in this election. You've just got to make sure that we have—that people really understand and care about it.

I've lived long enough now to see tragedy change things. I've seen Senator Kennedy go through tragedy after tragedy and keep serving, but the times that he had to serve in changed. He's going to have the best time to be a Senator that he's had since the first term he was in the Senate, if we win the White House, if we pick up some Senate seats, we pick up some House seats. It will be the best time you've had since you started.

And you have to wait a long time when things go bad to make them just right again. And so I say to you, not in a maudlin way, that this is a gift. We have been given a gift. If I had

any role in it, I'm grateful. I did the best I could, and I've got a few more cards to play before I'm done. But you've got to make sure you do this election right, because it may be 50 years before we get another chance. We've got to do it right.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Senator Edward M. Kennedy and his wife, Vicki; Terence McAuliffe, chair, 2000 Democratic National Convention; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and PBS news anchor Jim Lehrer, who moderated the first Presidential debate.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters *October 5, 2000*

"Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act"

The President. Good morning. I want to thank Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt and the distinguished Members of the House and Senate who have come here today for a meeting on education. And I want to direct my remarks toward that and then call on Senator Robb and Representative Berkley to talk. But before I do, I would like to say a few words about the "Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act," which passed the Senate unanimously yesterday.

This bill will help thousands of low-income women with cancer get the early, affordable treatment which can save their lives. I just spoke with Speaker Hastert, and he said that he expected the bill to pass the House immediately, so that help can start flowing to women for whom it could be a matter of life and death.

I was glad to include this initiative in my budget, and I'll be proud to sign it into law. It is a good example of how we can work together for the good of the American people.

Education Legislation

Unfortunately, so far we still don't have that same approach on our most important priority, education. So far, the majority party has not joined us in providing the investments necessary to support a strategy that has been working to improve our schools for 7 years now. We have pursued this strategy relentlessly, under the leadership of Secretary Riley, and we have pursued investments which will support that strategy. Every year we've had to fight for them, but every year we've been successful in the end in getting enough bipartisan support to prevail.

Unfortunately, this year education seems to be almost the only thing on Capitol Hill where they don't want to spend a lot of extra money. As all of you know, lots of extra money has been added to many appropriations bills; billions of dollars has been spent on special projects and other things that cannot possibly be characterized as the Nation's highest priorities, over and above what were the budget limits back at the beginning of the year when we didn't know that the budget would be in as good a shape as it's in.

We have worked over the last several years to restore billions of dollars in educational funding, and we are prepared to fight for it again. I'd like to explain why and talk about the latest evidence we have that our strategy is working.

For 7 years we've had a straightforward approach. We've worked to increase standards, raise accountability, and make critical investments in education. We promoted standards in every State, required States to identify failing schools and make efforts to turn them around. We've increased Head Start dramatically and begun to provide funding for after-school and summer school programs. We have worked to connect 95 percent of our schools to the Internet, and we provided more choice through charter schools. We've hired more teachers and improved teacher quality. We're gaining ground.

For example, in 1993 only 14 States had real standards and a core curriculum. Today, 49 States do. In 1993 only 14 percent of our schools and 3 percent of our classrooms were connected to the Internet. Today, 95 percent of the schools and 65 percent of the classrooms

are connected. In 1993 there was only one charter school in the entire country. Today, there are 1,700. In 1993 there was no Federal funding for after-school and summer school programs. Today, there are 600,000 children in such programs instead of on the streets. In 1993 there were no nationally certified master teachers. Today, there are almost 5,000, and by the end of the year, there will be well over 10,000.

All over the country States are turning around troubled schools. And I might say, this is due in no small measure to the leadership of the Secretary of Education, who will be talking later to the press about the report I'm going to discuss. But since 1993, he has reduced, by two-thirds, regulations imposed on States and local school districts under the previous administrations. And a new GAO report just came out showing that 99 percent of the funds appropriated by the Congress for the 10 largest Federal education programs actually are received by the local school districts for the purpose for which they were intended.

Math and reading scores are now rising across America. Some of the greatest gains are in the most disadvantaged schools. The number of students taking advance placement tests has increased by two-thirds in 8 years, the increase among Latino students, 300 percent; among African-American students, 500 percent. College exam scores are rising—entrance exam scores—even though more students from more disadvantaged backgrounds are taking the tests. The high school dropout rate is down, the college-going rate at an all-time high.

But no one believes that we have finished the job of renewing American education, so that all students can get the world-class skills they need. The students who went back to school this fall are the biggest, most diverse group in our history. We owe it to them to make sure they're prepared to succeed in the high-tech information society in which they will live. That's what we have to do.

For example, we've been working for years to reduce class size, because study after study from Tennessee to Wisconsin to California has shown that smaller classes boost test scores and learning, especially among the most disadvantaged students who need the most personal attention. Two years ago we launched a class size reduction initiative to put more teachers in the classroom and train better those that are already there. It has allowed school districts across our

country already to hire 29,000 new, well-trained teachers.

Today the Council of Great City Schools issued its second annual report on the results of the class size initiative. Last year alone, according to the report, 25 of our biggest city school systems used Federal funds to hire more than 2,700 teachers and to train 25,000 more. In Philadelphia, the teacher-student ratio in kindergarten and first grade has been cut to 15 to 1. San Francisco used the funds to get eighth grade math and language-arts classes down to 20 to 1, from a high of 33 to 1.

Just as all previous academic studies have shown, urban schools across the country report that test scores are up in smaller classes. Student confidence and teacher morale are higher; disciplinary problems are down. Michael Casserly, who runs the Council of Great City Schools, is with us today. I want to thank him for his commitment to our schools, and I want to thank him for this report, which he just gave me. And as I said, he and Secretary Riley will be discussing it later out in front of the White House.

I have been fortunate to visit schools like the ones documented in this report. From small-town Kentucky to inner-city New York, around the country, what you see clearly, based on the evidence, is an education revival, not an education recession. The report is more unequivocal proof that cutting class size and investing in teacher quality does produce results, whether the schools are urban or rural, large or small. But every year we have to fight the majority in Congress for funding the class size initiative. The budget proposed by the Republican leadership does nothing to meet our goal of hiring 100,000 new teachers to reduce class size in the early grades.

Our budget would help build or dramatically remodel 6,000 schools and repair another 5,000 a year for 5 years. Their budget fails to guarantee investment in building or modernizing classrooms, although our school construction deficit is now \$127 billion. And I do believe that we have a bipartisan majority in both Houses for this initiative if we could just get it to a vote.

The budget also shortchanges funding for after-school programs and for teacher quality. We have a proposal that could allow us to put over 2 million kids in after-school programs. It underfunds our GEAR UP program, denying as

many as 600,000 children help in preparing for college. And perhaps worst of all over the long run, it walks away from our \$250 million commitment not only to identify failing schools but to help them turn around, or to shut them down and reopen them under new management.

It fails to give middle class families a \$10,000 tax deduction for college or to provide a tax credit to help local school districts build new schools. And it fails to fund our billion-dollar initiative for teacher quality.

We get returns on every cent we spend for teacher quality. We should be using some of it to reduce the number of uncertified teachers in our classrooms. In the schools with the highest minority enrollment in this country, students have less than a 50 percent chance of having a math or a science teacher with a license and degree in the field. There is no excuse for this. We have the money to address it. We can do better, and we must.

We have lots of evidence now if you invest more in schools and teachers, if you demand more of them, you can turn schools around and change young people's lives for the better.

Now, as I said, this is not a strategy for micromanaging our schools. We've reduced regulations on them by two-thirds. It is a strategy for making national priorities out of what educators have told us and proved time and time again will work to give all our kids a world-class education.

Everyone here is committed to staying at the negotiating table until we have an education budget worthy of America's children in the 21st century. We're going to keep fighting to strengthen accountability, to hire 100,000 new teachers, to help communities build or modernize schools, to expand after-school programs and college opportunities, to put a qualified teacher in every classroom in America. That is our commitment. We owe it to our children to keep it.

Now I'd like to call on Senator Robb, who has been a real leader in this effort, to speak.

[At this point, Senator Charles S. Robb and Representative Shelley Berkley made brief remarks.]

The President. Let me just say in closing, obviously we wanted Representative Berkley to speak because she's been a leader in this whole effort for smaller classes, more teachers, and modernized schools and because she represents

a district which is exhibit A of the problem. But it is a national problem.

We wanted Senator Robb to speak because he has been a leader in the school construction and class size initiative but also because he's a former Governor who, while he served, clearly had one of the finest records in America in education. And I say that because one of the things that we keep being told by the leadership is that somehow we're, again I'll say, "trying to tell the States what to do." We have three people here who were Governors for a total of 20 years, and we know we have not designed programs to micromanage education. What we have done is listened to educators, looked at the results, and we understand there's a national priority here.

Look, when I became President, Federal spending as a portion of all the education spending had dropped below 6 percent. When President Johnson was here, it was 9 percent. And we, first of all, had to turn it around when we got the budget under control. We've got the budget under control; we've got it back up to 7 percent. It's still just 7 cents on the dollar.

We have got to spend this money where it will have the biggest impact on learning for children. That's what this is about. And so I just wanted to make that clear. I thank them for what they've said, and I thank all the others who have taken the trouble to come here today and stand here, because we feel very, very strongly about this.

Now, I've said before, I'm a little concerned about some of the money that is being spent in these appropriations bills, but I've always been willing to work with Congress. I know there are always some special projects, but surely to goodness, if we're going to have however many billion dollars there are in special projects that don't reflect national priorities, we could come up with the modest amount more necessary to fund a truly aggressive education budget that would get the job done.

Thank you.

Situation in Yugoslavia

Q. Mr. President, the situation in Belgrade appears very critical. Citizens have stormed the Parliament building. What message today, sir, do you have both to those folks who have stormed the Parliament and to President Milosevic himself?

The President. The United States stands with people everywhere who are fighting for their freedom. We believe in democracy. I have said before, the opposition candidate who, according to all unbiased reports, clearly won the election, obviously also has strong differences with us. This is not a question of whether he agrees with us. All we want for the Serbian people is what we want for people everywhere, the right to freely choose their own leaders.

And it's been a hardcore dictatorship. They had an election. The election results were then, apparently, altered and then—now the court has made this decision. I think the people are trying to get their country back. And we support—we support democracy and the will of the Serbian people.

Q. Sir, will the U.S. in any way intervene if force is used against the citizens in Belgrade or other parts of Serbia?

The President. I don't believe it's an appropriate case for military intervention, and I don't believe that the United States should say or do anything which would only strengthen Mr. Milosevic's hand. The people of Serbia have made their opinion clear. They did it when they voted peacefully and quietly, and now they're doing it in the streets because people tried to—there's been an attempt to rob them of their vote.

And I think if the world community will just stand with—stand for freedom, stand for democracy, stand for the will of the people, I think that will prevail. It did all over Eastern Europe. We've had a peaceful transition, democratic transition, with an election in Russia. The world is moving toward freedom and democracy, and the United States should support those forces, and we will do so strongly.

Yes.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, the latest crisis in the Middle East comes at a politically sensitive time in Israel and, actually, for this country, as well. Do you still hold out hope that before you leave office a comprehensive peace agreement can be reached, or is there a point where you just say it has to wait for the next President, the next Congress, and the next Israeli leader?

The President. Well, first of all, the timetable has to be dictated by the leaders in the Middle East. But the answer to your question is, we know what the issues are; we know what the

differences are. And what my obligation will be, and what the next President's obligation will be, is to do whatever we can to either help make the peace agreement or make sure it takes hold.

But our timing should be completely irrelevant to this. I should be available around the clock, every day, as long as I'm here, and we should try to do it as soon as we can because it will keep more people alive and give a much brighter future to the people in the Middle East. So our timing here should be completely irrelevant to that. But let's get back to basics here. The first thing we've got to do is to stop this violence and to get beyond it.

Now, yesterday Prime Minister Arafat—I mean, Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak—excuse me—and Secretary Albright had what I think was a very productive meeting. They made clear commitments which they communicated from Paris to their people to take steps to shut this violence down. They're trying to work out a process, in which we've offered to be involved, that would evaluate what happened and why, and what went wrong.

But the most important thing is to stop people dying and then to get back to the negotiating table. So the commitments that were made yesterday and communicated by the leaders back to the Middle East now have to be implemented on the ground. That's the most important thing. There will be ample time for reassessments. There will be ample time for evaluation. But the most important thing is to stop the killing and the dying and the violence.

Now, the next most important thing is to get on with the peace process. That's, by far, the next most important thing, because it's obvious that on both sides, there's still underlying anxiety and fear and misunderstanding. And we've just got to get beyond all this. We've come too far in the last 7 years, 7½ years now, to turn back. We've just come too far. We've got to stay after this.

Oil Supply

Q. Mr. President, the United States has taken steps to increase the oil supply. Do you feel the United States Government can still do more? Is there anything else your Government can do in the United States or abroad to increase the oil supply?

The President. Well, I'm going to watch it every day. We've been fortunate that the price has dropped several dollars a barrel, after the

last step we made. But there are still significant questions about how soon the product will be—can go to the refinery and whether we not only can get fuel but fuel oil out of the refinery and into the supply chain in time to make sure there's no adverse price impact for the winter. I do think we're going to have enough supplies to get through the winter. And I'm just going to watch it every day and do what seems indicated.

I would just say this, since you raised that question—and then I have to let these Members of Congress go, and Mr. Casserly and Secretary Riley will go out and talk more about the education report—but what I would hope is that what we're going through here would prompt the majority in Congress to work with us on some longer term strategies on which we ought to be able to agree.

We are very close to the development of very high mileage vehicles with fuel cells, alternative fuels, blended fuels. We are within sight of cracking the chemical mystery of the conversion of biomass to fuels at a ratio that would make it—change the whole future of this issue. Right now it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol or any other biomass fuel, but the chemists believe they can get the conversion down to one gallon of gasoline for 8 gallons of fuel. When that happens, then all of you will drive to work every day with the equivalent of 500 miles a gallon. And this will be a very different world. We will be living in a different world when that happens.

And we ought to be investing money in that. There are technologies available today off the shelf that pay out in 2 years or less that would permit us to dramatically reduce energy consumption in homes, offices, and factories all over America. We ought to give people a tax break to buy them, and we ought to do it now. We ought to create a market that will move quickly to a very different energy future that will actually grow the economy faster.

So you know where—we differ over—and there are some production incentives we could adopt now that we agree on. The most significant difference we have I think is over whether there should be drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. And that's an issue that's being debated in the election; the American people can draw their own conclusions. I think we're right. They think they're right. They can hear the debate. But that should not be an excuse to walk away from the long-term elements of an energy strategy that I've been trying to pass for more than 2 years, that we can do today at very modest cost and enormous return.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:27 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael D. Casserly, executive director, Council of Great City Schools; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks to the Conference on the Progressive Tradition in Princeton, New Jersey *October 5, 2000*

Thank you very much. Thank you for the wonderful welcome. Thank you, President Shapiro, for your distinguished leadership here and the vital work you did during the course of our common Presidencies. It occurred to me that this might be the only place in America where people thought Woodrow Wilson got a demotion when he was elected President of the United States. *[Laughter]*

Thank you, Dean Rothschild. And thank you, Ruth Miller, for putting off your retirement so

I could come here today. I want to thank Professor Sean Wilentz for putting on this conference and for his many acts of generosity and kindness and support for our efforts over the last 8 years.

I'd like to thank the Congressman from Princeton, Representative Rush Holt, for coming here. Thank you. I know this is not really a political event, but I can't help noting that Rush Holt is the only bona fide scientist in the Congress, and Lord knows, we need at least one.

Another Member of Congress wanted to come here today, Senator John Edwards from North Carolina, a good friend of mine, whose daughter Katherine is in the freshman class. And I promised to give his excuses to his daughter and the rest of you, but they are voting in the Senate today. And part of the Progressives' tradition is showing up. [Laughter] And so he's showing up down in Washington.

And I thank you, Katharine Strong Gilbert, for giving me this Whig-Clio Award.

You know, James Madison is a very important figure to every American and every President who cares, in particular, about the framework and history of the Constitution. But it's interesting to me that he actually participated in debates here in the 18th century, including one with Aaron Burr, where Madison was the Whig and Burr was the Clio. It was that debate that produced a memorable line that is too often attributed to me: The era of Whig Government is over. [Laughter]

I must say, when I first saw the program for this conference, I felt some ambivalence. The student in me wanted to come here and stay for the whole thing. But the politician in me wondered what in the living daylights I was doing here. I'm supposed to lead off a group of people whose books I have read, who know more about the subject I'm supposed to address than I ever will.

I can say that I had some unique experience in carrying on the progressive tradition. I always felt that the work we did the last 8 years made us the heir of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson—Al Gore and me, our entire administration. And I have a fascination with that period of history.

I own a lot of Theodore Roosevelt's books in the first edition, including a fascinating account of how he organized the Rough Riders. I've also got a wonderful book that Owen Wister, the writer of westerns, wrote about his friendship with Theodore Roosevelt, when, like many of you, they were undergraduates together at Harvard. The other day I acquired Joseph Tumulty's book—he was Woodrow Wilson's private secretary—about his relationship with President Wilson, both as Governor and as President. It's a fascinating account of the time, by someone who was admittedly biased but still had a unique perspective.

So I've thought a lot about this period. And I suppose as a politician, I should give myself

the leeway of quoting Theodore Roosevelt, who said in his speech on the new nationalism, "I do not speak merely from a historical standpoint. It is of little use for us to pay lip service to the mighty men of the past, unless we sincerely endeavor to apply those qualities to the problems of the present."

It is in that spirit that I would like to say a few words today, about the Progressive tradition, about what it means for today and how it is part, I believe, of a larger ongoing debate in American history about the whole idea of America. What does the Nation mean? What does it mean to be an American?

The Progressives thought we could only keep faith with the past by keeping faith with the future. Their time had much in common with ours, and therefore, our responsibilities have much in common with theirs, to preserve what is enduring but to adapt our Nation time and again to what is new.

Woodrow Wilson said, "It behooves us once again to stand face to face with our ideals, to renew our enthusiasm, to reckon again our duties, to take fresh views of our aims, and fresh courage for their pursuit." These words ring with relevance for your time. Not simply because we stand at the dawn of a new century, as Wilson and Roosevelt did, but because this time, like theirs, is characterized by swift and stunning change.

Like the industrial revolution, this information revolution is a true seismic shift. It alters forever the way we work, live, relate to each other and those beyond our borders. The consequences of the digital chip, nano-technology, the Internet, and the sequencing of the human genome will be every bit as profound, if not more profound, than those of the telephone, the assembly line, and the vast migration of Americans to the cities and the opening of America to its first great wave of immigrants.

But these are only the most obvious parallels between the Progressive Era and what I call this time, the last time I came to Princeton, a new progressive era. I also believe in a larger sense the Progressive Era and this time represent two of the five pivotal points in American history, when we have been called upon to reaffirm and to redefine not just the role of Government for new times but the very idea of the American Nation. That debate has gone on from the beginning.

First there was the debate which George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and John Marshall won over Thomas Jefferson and his friends, about whether we were preeminently going to be one Nation or a just a little bit stronger confederation of States. I have to say out of deference to Mr. Jefferson that after he became President, I suspect he was glad he lost the argument, as he sent out Lewis and Clark, imposed the infamous embargo, and bought Louisiana, which at the time cost the equivalent of one full year's budget of the Federal Government.

Can you imagine what would happen if I came to the Congress and said—[laughter]—“Have I got a deal for you.” [Laughter] “Just \$1.9 trillion. What difference does it make?” [Laughter]

The second great debate we had about the idea of the Nation occurred obviously in the days leading up to and during and immediately after the Civil War, when Abraham Lincoln saved the Union by moving it closer to the true ideals of the Declaration of Independence and, as Gary Wills has so brilliantly argued, literally redefining the Constitution closer toward those ideals, in the Gettysburg Address.

The third great point was in the Progressive Era, when Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt presided over an America fully entering the industrial revolution.

Then the fourth time was during the New Deal, the Second World War, and its immediate aftermath with the dawn of the cold war, when Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman gave us our first comprehensive social safety net and an institutionalized commitment to American leadership for peace and freedom in the world.

Now, at the dawn of this global information age, Al Gore and I have been working to adapt all of the domestic and foreign policies of the United States to these sweeping changes in science and technology, in social diversity and pluralism, and in increasing global interdependence.

History has taught Americans not to stand passively in the face of change. What the Progressive Presidents understood so clearly, from Teddy Roosevelt to Wilson to FDR and Truman to Kennedy and Johnson, is the understanding that America either will shape change or be shaped by it. As I've already said, I believe the time in which we live bears the most resemblance to the Progressive Era. But there are

also elements of those other great hinge-points in American history in this time, too.

You can see it in the fight we had with the Republican Congress that led to the shutdown of the Government. You can see it in our efforts to build one America across all the lines that divide us. You can see it in our struggle to end genocide and ethnic cleansing in the Balkans and to build binding ties to Africa, Latin American and Asian nations with whom we have not been closely aligned in the past.

The central lesson of the progressive is that you either have to shape change consistent with your values, or you will be shaped by it in ways that make it more difficult for you to live by your values. To retreat from responsibility is to invite instability. To embrace the obligation of leadership has consistently under progressive times led to better lives for all Americans.

Wilson and Roosevelt made an enemy of outdated orthodoxy, replacing them with what Teddy's famous cousin Franklin Roosevelt called “bold, persistent experimentation.” As many of the scholars here have argued, and doubtless will argue with greater clarity than I can, the progressive legacy is not primarily a set of programs that no longer have great relevance to us but a vital set of principles: the idea that new conditions demand a new approach to Government.

When Teddy Roosevelt became President, few Americans looked to him, to his office, or even to their Government to solve their problems. At the end of the 19th century, the White House was weak; the Congress was at the mercy of special interests. Roosevelt's genius was to redefine the role of Government and the role of the President, to protect the public interest and to act as an accountable agent of change. This is an ideal as old as Madison, but Roosevelt and Wilson gave it new meaning for a new era. What is its meaning today?

When I ran for President in 1992, our Government was discredited. In fact, you could hardly run for President unless you had something bad to say about the Government. Indeed, part of the political genius of the ascendancy of President Reagan and his associates was to attain power by discrediting the very idea of Government. They basically were able to say things like, “Government couldn't run a bake sale. The Government would mess up a two-car parade.” And they found huge majorities of Americans sort of nodding their heads.

Those in the progressive tradition, I believe, had given them some ammunition by clinging to old programs, bureaucracies, and approaches that no longer worked. Then the conservatives used the failures as an excuse to do nothing on the domestic front. Some of our leaders literally made a virtue of their endless capacity to tell the American people how bad the Government was. And then when those who were reacting against the progressive tradition took power, they seemed determined to prove it by digging us a huge budgetary hole, quadrupling the Nation's debt in 12 years. So our economy sank; our society became considerably more divided; and predictably, public confidence in our democratic Government collapsed.

That's why, when I ran in 1992, I said that it would be necessary to change our party, change our national leadership, and change our Nation. Al Gore and I believed that we had to find a new way, something now popularly called around the world, "a third way," a way back to enduring values, a way beyond a Government profoundly indifferent to people's problems, a way forward to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

We committed to reinvent Government so it could function as it does best in an information society, as a catalyst, a partner to the private sector in creating opportunity, jobs, and hope and providing our citizens with the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. That, too, of course, is a principle as old as our Republic, opportunity for all.

And whether we're talking about the information age, the industrial age, or the turn from the 18th to the 19th century, economic growth and opportunity have always gone hand in hand. That's why we set out to build an economic strategy that would work for this time, rooted in fiscal discipline, investment in our people and our future, and expanding our economic ties with the rest of the world. Well, lucky for us, or I wouldn't be here talking today, it's worked out pretty well.

We've gone from record deficits to record surpluses. Our economy has created 22 million jobs. We're in the midst of the longest economic expansion in history. But in the progressive tradition, to use President Kennedy's words, the rising economy is lifting all boats. The Census Bureau reports that in the last year, typical household income rose to the highest level ever recorded, breaking \$40,000 for the first time—

up since 1993 by \$6,300, after inflation. The poverty rate has fallen to 11.8 percent, the lowest in 20 years. Senior poverty is below 10 percent for the first time ever. Child poverty dropped by the largest amount since 1966. Hispanic and African-American poverty are the lowest since separate statistics have been kept. Since 1993, 7 million Americans have moved out of poverty, over 2 million last year alone.

Now, a century ago, economic growth was generated by large industrial organizations, popularly called the trust then. Today, economic growth is largely generated by big ideas, which is why there are so many young people like you making a fortune in dot-com companies.

The antitrust provisions and worker provisions that were developed in the Progressive Era to make the economy work and to give more people a chance to share in it still matters today. And they have been built on, modified, and changed, but they still matter today. But today we need even more focus on boosting ideas and innovation, creating the conditions for prosperity, and again, giving everybody the tools they need to succeed in a very different and, in some ways, much less organized world.

You can see our efforts there, just for example in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, where the Vice President and I fought for the E-rate so that the poorest schools and hospitals and libraries could all afford to be hooked into the Internet and where we fought for a framework that favored competition from new companies over giving all the business of the new information economy to existing big enterprises. Again, it's worked reasonably well. There are hundreds of thousands of new jobs, thousands of new companies out there, and it's an example of how we tried to change the laws and the framework to meet what was best for opportunity for the largest number of Americans, and to give all of our people, especially our young people, the tools they need to take advantage of the age in which we live.

So, in that sense, the nature of opportunity, a constant value, is changing. At the time our Nation was founded, opportunity most of all meant the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the industrial age, the progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational training, preserving competition, protecting American workers from abuses,

and keeping children out of the workplace when appropriate.

Today it means mastering new tools and technologies, being able to think broadly, adjust quickly, and being able to keep learning for a lifetime. This morning, for example, at the White House, I met with House and Senate Democrats to push the Congress again to adopt our educational proposals, because I think they are more than ever before at the core of the concept of opportunity and at the core of our ability to keep changing and building an ever more progressive society.

Even though we balanced the budget these last 8 years and run a surplus and we've eliminated hundreds of programs, we've also doubled investment in education and training. More than 10 million Americans this year will take advantage of the HOPE scholarship and lifelong-learning tax credit. We reorganized the student loan program to save students \$8 billion in student loan repayments since 1993. We raised the minimum wage, an old tool that I think is still very important in new times, and I hope we can raise it again before the Congress goes home.

But we took a new tool, the earned-income tax credit, and doubled it so that it's helping this year alone 15 million families to work their way into the middle class. We adopted an empowerment zone program that the Vice President ran so ably, which has enabled thousands of jobs to be created in communities that otherwise would have been totally left behind in this economic recovery because they were remote or poor, because they didn't have people with a lot of skills that were well-suited to the trends of the times.

We created community development financial institutions to get capital to people who couldn't go into a normal bank and produce a record that would generate a loan. We also did as much as we could to try to help people move from welfare to work and to take maximum advantage of the new economy by investing in education, child care, and transportation, recognizing that we live in a place where very often the pool of available workers is here, usually in a city, and the pool of available jobs at their skill level is here, usually in the suburbs, usually with no public transport in between.

To try to help people balance work and family, the United States began to join what most other industrial nations have been doing for

years, by adopting the family and medical leave law, which now over 20 million Americans have used to take some time off when a baby is born or when a family member is sick without losing their job.

And I just predict to you, all of you young people out here, this will be one of the big debates over the next decade, because we're the best country in the world at keeping the hassles of starting a business down, providing capital to start businesses, providing an environment in which people can flourish, but we lag way behind a lot of other nations in the progressive tradition in simply saying that the most important work of any society is raising children and that work will be more productive if people who are working who have kids don't have to worry about the welfare of their children.

That's why we have to do more for child care. That's why we should expand family leave. That's why we should work more on flexible leave. When I became President, only 3 million people were making a living primarily in their own home. When I ran for reelection, 20 million people were making a living primarily in their own home. By the time you vote in November for the first President of the 21st century, we may be up to 30 million people. I don't have the latest figures, but it's stunning.

Part of the reason is technology makes it possible; the Internet makes it possible. But part of the reason is we haven't done as much as we should have to help people succeed at society's enduring work, raising children, and all the new work we're doing and the fact that more people than ever want to work or have to work and ought to be able to do so.

I am very glad that more and more Americans are sharing in our prosperity. But the other thing I want to say is that still a lot of folks have been left behind. Most of them live in inner cities or small rural towns or on or around Native American reservations. And one of the big challenges now to sort of perfect this progressive movement is to figure out how to bring those people into the circle of opportunity.

I hope very much that, before I leave office, the Congress will pass the new markets initiative that I worked on with the Speaker of the House in a bipartisan fashion. I won't go through all the details, but essentially what it says is we ought to give wealthy Americans with money the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America we provide to invest in poor areas

around the world, because we believe that we can do this. And we ought to put the infrastructure there.

For those of you who have never been on an American Indian reservation, let me tell you, just for example, at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, one of the most historic parts of American history, the home of the Lakota Sioux, who were the tribe led by an Indian chief named Crazy Horse that dispatched General Custer in the late 19th century—the unemployment rate is 73 percent.

I was at Shiprock in northern New Mexico, one of the most beautiful places in our country, the other day at the Navaho Reservation, where the unemployment rate is over 50 percent; 70 percent of the people don't have homes—telephones in their homes. I was introduced by a young woman who won a contest, an academic contest at her school, the prize was a computer, and she couldn't log onto the Internet because there was not a phone line in her home. In our country, at our level of wealth, that is unconscionable. And this cannot rightly be called a full Progressive Era until we have addressed these challenges.

We still have to be constantly, restlessly searching for ways to expand the circle of opportunity. This, too, is a principle rooted firmly in the Progressive Era but also in our Nation's founding. Remember what the Framers said: They were committed to forming "a more perfect Union." They never said the Union would be perfect, that we would ever reach complete harmony in our living with our ideals, but that we had a constant, endless lifetime obligation to perfect the Union.

And if I could leave any of you with a thought that I hope you will have in your mind as you, as citizens, go to the polls, and then as you, as citizens, build your own lives, it is that we get a chance like we've got today maybe once every 50 years, maybe even more seldom, where we have both prosperity, social progress, coupled with national self-confidence and the absence of serious crisis at home or threat abroad, to really imagine the future we would like to build and then go about building it. And in my view, one of the most important things we have achieved is not any of these specific things people always talk about but just giving you the chance to build the future of your dreams. And I hope that decision will be made consistent

with the values, the vision, and the record of the Progressive Era in America.

Theodore Roosevelt said, "The people have emphatically expressed their desire that our principles be kept substantially unchanged, although, of course, applied in a progressive spirit to meet changing conditions." That's what you have to do.

I just want to make one other point that I think is of equal importance. I believe that in order to preserve a new Progressive Era, we must go much further than we have in our own national consciousness in understanding that our continued prosperity, as well as our security, requires us to continue to be involved in the world, to lead in the world, and to cooperate in the world.

Almost a century ago, Woodrow Wilson described the vision of collective peacekeeping, global security, the rights of nations against the backdrop of the looming threat, and then the fact, of a brutal modern, all-consuming war, a war that is difficult for young people to imagine. In one European battle in World War I, 900,000 people were lost, because they had modern technology and they were stuck in old patterns of fighting—digging trenches and shooting each other and moving up, line after line after line, that might have worked fine if they'd had bows and arrows or even Civil War era rifles and cannons but was an absolute disaster when modern technology was married to old ideas—both geopolitical ideas, which led to the war, and the ideas of military strategy with which it was carried out. You should remember that today and try to make sure that the ideas you have are equal to the technology and the realities of modern life.

When Woodrow Wilson painted this idealistic vision few of his fellow countrymen and women listened. A lot of people thought he was an idealist who'd passed his prime. And after he was no longer on the scene and the reaction prevailed, as it always does after periods of progressivism, Professor Schlesinger has told us in his writings on the cycles of history, we had to learn in a very hard way that America could not safely or responsibly withdraw from the world.

Now we've had two cold wars and a long and bitter—two World Wars—excuse me—and a long and bitter cold war. We live in a time when new democracies are emerging around the world. When you walk out of here, if you turn

on CNN, you'll see the emergence—I hope—in Serbia, with a lot of young people like you fighting for the future you take for granted. More people live under free governments of their own choosing today than ever before. For the first time in history, more than half of the people on this planet live under governments of their own choosing, throwing off the yoke of oppression. Many of them, but not all, are also enjoying newfound prosperity.

We are closer than ever to redeeming the vision of Woodrow Wilson, of reaching his dream of a world full of free markets, free elections, and free peoples working together. But we're still not there. And there are a lot of obstacles in the way, not least of which is the continuing bedrock of reluctance in our own society to pay our fair share and do our fair part, on the part of some conservatives, and on the part of some progressives who embrace the change that is the global economy and shape it, instead of denying it and pretending that as if we were Luddites that we can make it go away.

And you have to think about that. What does it mean to you what Wilson said and what Roosevelt said. They understood at the start of what has been called the American Century, Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman understood when they created the U.N. and NATO and the Bretton Woods institutions, that the United States simply cannot be partly in the world, dipping in when it suits our purpose, hunkering down when it doesn't—that we can't relate to our friends in fits and starts; we can't lead just when it suits us and then tell people we're too busy when it doesn't.

We have not made that decision yet. You can see it in the ambivalence the Congress has felt when they supported me on NAFTA and the World Trade Organization and bringing China into the WTO and when they wouldn't go along with giving me the same trade authority that Presidents have had for nearly 30 years now, to negotiate comprehensive trade agreements with other countries, and have them voted up or down. You can see it in the fact that a strong conservative bloc in the Senate and in the House have actually spent 8 years demanding—8 years—the most prosperous years in our country's history, saying that the most important thing to do at the U.N. is to lower America's share of peacekeeping and lower our percentage of the total dues of the United Na-

tions. You can see it in the breathtaking, and I think horribly shortsighted defeat in the U.S. Senate of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the first major treaty to be defeated since the Senate defeated Woodrow Wilson with the League of Nations Treaty. I must say, for my country's sake, I certainly hope it doesn't have a life-risk consequence, and I don't think it will, if the American people decide that these matters are important.

We live in a time when people have lots of opinions on lots of things. They're absolutely flooded with information. So if you took a survey in America and you said, "Should America pay its fair share to the U.N.; should America responsibly participate in peacekeeping, because other people share the load; should we have the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and have a cooperative approach to reducing the nuclear threats and other threats of weapons of mass destruction in the future?" you'd get big majorities that would say yes. But most Americans don't understand how important this is and what a significant piece it is of building a new era of progress. So it doesn't tend to be a voting issue.

And whenever important new things are not voting issues in a free society, then entrenched, old interests tend to prevail, and we get in trouble. So I ask you all to think about that. The challenges of this new century are far more diverse than our predecessors could have foreseen. But all the good things that we have don't make all the bad problems go away.

Information technology will not resolve all conflicts between nations. Indeed, it creates some new challenges. It enables, for example, networks of terrorists, narcotraffickers, international criminals to communicate with each other with greater speed, clarity, and often with less chance of being caught.

New technology allows people to imagine weapons of mass destruction that are made smaller, just like computers, encased in small plastic containers that don't show up on airport metal detectors, that present new threats in the ongoing historical battle between the organized forces of destruction and the organized, and sometimes not so well-organized, forces of civilization.

So, for all the good things that are happening, we can't make all the problems go away. Therefore, the expansion of global commerce, the growth of democracy, the rise of other centers

of economic activity does not diminish our responsibility to lead. It heightens it, and it requires that we do so in a more cooperative fashion.

As American interests evolve, I believe we can stay rooted to the principles of Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt. I think we stay true to those principles when we change. For example, I think we're being true to the principles of the Progressive Era when we provide debt relief to the world's poorest countries. It's unconscionable that these countries are making interest payments that are often half or more of their annual Government budget, instead of spending the money on education and health care and the development of their nation. And they can't pay the money back to us anyway. Why are we doing this? It doesn't make any sense.

So we have a new idea. Don't just give uncritical debt relief. Give debt relief to countries that can demonstrate they're not putting the money in Swiss bank accounts or building military or other instruments of oppression but only putting the money into education, health care, and responsible development. That is, in my judgment, a critical component of progressivism in a global age, just as I think it's important to fight maladies like AIDS, TB, and malaria. Those three things claim one fourth of the lives that are lost in the world every year today. One quarter of all the people who will die in the year 2000 will die of AIDS, TB, or malaria. And we have it within our power to do something about it and also to lead the world toward the development of an AIDS vaccine and to make the drugs more widely available and to do more about TB and malaria. We ought to do that.

In an interdependent world, we'll be better off if people who are plagued have their plagues alleviated. We ought to do more, in my judgment, to support poor villagers in remote countries by giving them loans so they can start businesses and build a self-sustaining life, to reinforce democracy, and to build from the grassroots up, countries that can be good partners with us in the future. We ought to do more to insist that a more open economy also be a more fair one or, in the common parlance, to put a human face on the global economy.

We also stay true to the vision of Wilson and Roosevelt when we do our part to keep the peace and to support brave people strug-

gling for the quiet miracle of a normal life, whether they're in the Middle East, Northern Ireland, in a small place like East Timor, a long way from here, in a poor country like Haiti or a country plagued by narcotraffickers and civil war like Colombia, and especially in the Balkans, where the First World War began. There especially, the fight for freedom should still be our own.

Freedom has made steady advances in Bosnia and Croatia and Romania and Bulgaria and, today, as I said earlier, in Serbia, where a decade ago the forces of destruction began their march across the Balkans. Now the march of freedom is gaining new ground. Yesterday, the Serbian police went into the coal mines and refused to fire on the coal miners. Today, in the Parliament building, there are, as I said, thousands of young people, like you, and not so young people, like me, standing up there, saying they want their country back. They want to be free. They voted, and they want their vote respected.

The people of Serbia have spoken with their ballot; they have spoken on the street. I hope the hour is near when their voices will be heard and we can welcome them to democracy, to Europe, to the world's communities. When they do, we will move as quickly as possible to lift the sanctions and build the kind of responsible partnership that the people there deserve.

We have made the world, I believe, more safe against force and selfish aggression. But we know, like Roosevelt and Wilson before us, that no peace is lasting unless it is backed by the consistent, dedicated leadership of nations that have the wealth, size, and power to do the right thing. Here in America and in more and more nations around the world, progressive parties are in power. Every now and then, we all get together and have dinner and try to help each other. And we try to figure out how to keep this going, how to keep up the fight for reform, for justice, for opportunity for all, for freedom.

I believe that the continuation of this legacy in our time depends as much as anything else on whether we actually believe in our common humanity and the primary importance of acting on our increasing interdependence.

There's a fascinating book that's been published sometime in the last year, I think, by Robert Wright, called "Non Zero." Some of you have perhaps read it. The title refers to game

theory. A zero-sum game is one that in order for me to win, you have to lose. A game like the Presidential election. A non-zero-sum game is one where in order for me to win, you have to win, too. And Wright attempts to make a historical argument through all the tragedies, travesties, brutalities of human history, including the gross abuses of science and medicine under the Nazis and the gross abuses of organization under totalitarian regimes of the 20th century—attempts to prove Martin Luther King's moral assertion that the arc of history is long, but it bends towards justice, by arguing that, we are consistently growing more interdependent; and that the more interdependent we become, the more we are forced to look for solutions in which in order for me to win, you have to win, too—non-zero-sum solutions.

The whole idea of the Progressive Era was that everybody should be treated with dignity; everybody deserves certain minimal things in life; that the power of government should be arrayed against private power, so that individual people who are equal under the law, all had at least a fair chance at life. In this era, I often say, in my sort of Arkansas way, that everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; and we all do better when we work together. That's what I believe.

That, I think, is an enduring truth of the American dream, going back to the Founders, going back to all the voluntary societies that de Toqueville chronicled so eloquently, almost 200 years ago. In this time, we can have a progressive era that outlasts the one you came here to study, if we are faithful to its values, if we understand we have to change even more rapidly and perhaps even more profoundly than they did, and if we acknowledge that a pre-

condition of true independence, in the old-fashioned American way in this very new age, is having some humility and compassion and understanding of our interdependence, which is founded on an acknowledgement, an acceptance, a celebration of our common humanity.

That, after all, is what led to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It's what led Abraham Lincoln to lay down his life to hold the country together. And it's what gave us the Progressive Era, the sense that we all matter, that we were all connected, and that we were all entitled, each in our own way, to have a chance to play a part in the endless effort to create "a more perfect Union."

The progressives have been important to America. They have redefined the idea of a nation in ways that were sorely needed. But you are in the middle of what could be the longest and most significant Progressive Era in American history. I ask you to study the one that happened before but to fully live the one that is unfolding before your eyes.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:23 p.m. in Richardson Auditorium at Princeton University. In his remarks, he referred to Harold Shapiro, president, Princeton University; Michael Rothschild, dean, and Ruth Miller, assistant dean, Woodrow Wilson School; Sean Wilentz, director, Program in American Studies, and Katharine Strong Gilbert, president, American Whig-Closophic Society, who presented the President with the James Madison Award for Distinguished Public Service; and historian Arthur Schlesinger. The conference was entitled "The Progressive Tradition: Politics, Culture, and History."

Statement Urging Congressional Action On Tobacco

October 5, 2000

Today the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association, and the American Lung Association issued a report showing that while some States have devoted a substantial portion of their tobacco settlement to reduce youth smoking, most have committed only modest or minimal

funds. Tobacco companies are spending 10 times more to market their product than all 50 States combined are spending on tobacco prevention and cessation. I encourage all States to commit a significant part of their settlement to address the harm that tobacco companies

have caused through decades of deceptive marketing, especially to youth.

With a clear ruling last week by a U.S. District Court allowing the case to proceed to trial, the Attorney General today reaffirmed her intention to hold tobacco companies accountable for their actions. Tobacco companies have saddled generations of Americans with unnecessary health costs and premature death by fraudulently marketing their products to youth and deceiving the American public about the dan-

gers of tobacco use. More than 400,000 Americans die each year from smoking-related diseases, and 80 percent of them started smoking as children. Today I renew my call to Congress to reject special protections for big tobacco and provide the funds necessary to allow this case to be decided in the courtroom, not the back room. Together with our partners in the States, we can and must make the health of our children a priority. The American people deserve their day in court.

Statement on Proposed Hate Crimes Legislation

October 5, 2000

Today the Republican leadership made a serious mistake by stripping the hate crimes legislation from the Department of Defense Authorization bill, despite strong bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. The Republican leaders have turned their backs on legislation designed to send the message that all persons should be treated the same under the law—no matter what their race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

This legislation would enhance the Federal Government's ability to prosecute violent crimes motivated by race, color, religion, or national origin and would authorize Federal prosecution of crimes motivated by sexual orientation, gen-

der, or disability. This legislation also recognizes that State and local law enforcement still have primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes.

It has been over 2 years since the brutal dragging death of James Byrd, Jr., and about 2 years since the heinous death of young Matthew Shepard. We owe their families—and all the families of hate crimes victims across this country—no less than to pass this legislation this year. Working with the bipartisan coalition that supports hate crimes legislation, I will continue to fight the Republican leadership in Congress to make sure this important work gets done this year.

Remarks at a National Leadership PAC Reception in New York City

October 5, 2000

The President. Thank you for the standing ovation. [Laughter] Thank you for being here to—

Audience member. New York loves you!

The President. You guys calm down. This is a rowdy crowd here. Look, I'm not as young as I used to be. I don't know if I can quiet this crowd. I'm tired. Go easy on me tonight. It's almost the end of the week. [Laughter]

I want to thank Charles Rangel for giving me a chance to be here tonight with Alma and Alicia. I want to thank the other Members of Congress who are here. I've got them some-

where. [Laughter] Congressmen Crowley, Nadler, and Lowey of New York are all here. Thank you for being here. I want to thank the New York Democratic Chair; Judith Hope is here. I want to thank Jane Rosenthal for being our host and for gathering up all of you tonight.

I have a lot of friends here. I want to say a special word of appreciation to one person who is or just was in the audience, Chevy Chase, who was with me when I was nominated for President, when I won the California primary in June of '92. And I was running third in the polls, and no one wanted to come to my victory

party, and Chevy Chase showed up. So thanks for being here again tonight.

I want to thank Ron Silver for being here and for being my friend and for representing the entertainers of this country so well. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Kevin Spacey. You know, getting to be friends with Kevin has been one of the best perks of being President. [Laughter] Franklin Roosevelt used to say that the President had to be America's best actor. Well, I'm the second-best actor in America. Kevin Spacey is the best actor in America, and I'm glad to be here with him.

Now, look, why are we here? Why are we here? I mean, Charlie Rangel couldn't get beat if he expired before the election—which he's not about to do. He's been waiting a long time to be chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and after November 7th, he will be.

I just want to say one thing to you seriously. For whatever success we have had these last 8 years—whether it was in turning the country around or in giving poor people more opportunity in the empowerment zones or providing more affordable housing for people who desperately need it or reaching out to Africa the first time the American Government ever had a serious outreach to our friends in Africa or fighting against cuts in education and fighting to improve it—none of it would have been possible for me to do if it hadn't been for Charles Rangel, and I'm very, very grateful to him.

Don't you think Al Gore did a good job in the debate? [Applause] I do, too. And Hillary was no slouch in her debate. You know, this is an interesting time for me. My party has a new leader. My house has a new candidate. [Laughter] It's the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot, and most days I'm just fine about it. [Laughter] I'm having a good time getting out here campaigning for everybody else.

For those of you from New York who have been helping my wife, I want to thank you. She will be a magnificent Senator. She will do you proud, and you'll be glad.

I just want to say one thing quite seriously, though, because I know that the Democratic ticket is well ahead in New York. But a lot of you have friends all across this country. And a lot of you have friends that you see at work, that you see when you go out, that you see with your kids, who will never come to an event like this. But they will vote, because they want

to feel that they're good citizens, so they'll show up and vote. But they never come to anything like this. And I was wondering, what were these folks thinking when they were watching the debate? What did they get out of it, and what did they not get out of it?

I wondered what they were thinking in '92, right before they gave me and Al Gore a chance to change the country. You know, they were told that, after all, I was just the Governor of a small southern State. Remember when President Bush used to say that? [Laughter] And I was so naive, I thought it was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do. They said, "This guy is only 46 years old. He doesn't look that old"—you took care of that. [Laughter] "The Republicans say he's terrible. Why should I take a chance on this guy?" But I mean, come on, it wasn't that big a chance. The country was in the ditch. We had to turn it around.

But now things are good, and we have to decide what to do with good times. And anybody in this audience who's over 30 years old can remember at least once in your life when you made a doozy of a mistake, not because times were so bad but because they were so good you thought you did not have to concentrate. Isn't that right? Everybody over 30 has made a mistake like that.

So what I want to ask you to do—I thank you for your money; Charlie thanks you for your money; Jane thanks you for making her look good; Kevin and I thank you because we hate to play to an empty house. [Laughter] We're all real happy. But what are you going to do between now and election? You need to take this seriously. If somebody asks you tomorrow morning, if somebody called you on the phone from a State that's really tight—if somebody called you from Michigan, Ohio, tomorrow and you said, "What are you doing?" And you said, "I went to this deal last night with the President and Kevin Spacey and Charlie Rangel, and we had a pretty good time." And they said, "Why?" What would your answer be?

I'm telling you, we're still around here as a country after over 225 years because—or 224 years—even I can still add—[laughter]—because most of the time the American people get it right if they have enough information and enough time. So having a clear idea in the minds of every voter, an accurate idea of what the choices are in this election is very important. We have profound differences.

I went today over to Princeton University, where they're having this big conference on the last Progressive Era, when Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson remade America for the industrial age, when New York City was full of factories and full of the first great wave of immigrants. And they basically preserved America by changing it.

That's what we're trying to do, to preserve the fundamental values and ideas of America by changing it for this new time in which we're living. And there are huge differences here between the two candidates for President and Vice President but also between the parties in the House and Senate. And I'm telling you, I know every Senate seat, every House seat really matters.

If somebody asks you, you've got to be able to tell them, "We've got a different economic policy. We've got a different education policy. We've got a different health care policy. We've got a different environmental policy. We've got a different crime policy. We've got a different foreign policy. And we have got a very different policy on how we're going to build one America that brings us together across all the lines that divide us."

Compared to their leadership, we're for a hate crimes bill, and they're not. We're for employment nondiscrimination legislation; they're not. We're for stronger equal pay laws for women, and they're not. There are big differences about how we're going to pull this country together. We support a woman's right to choose, and they don't. And the next President gets a bunch of appointments to the Supreme Court.

You know, people ask me all the time—I see all these articles—every day the paper is full of articles about who's right on the economic plan, the taxes, the spending, and all that. I think that I have—at least, let me say this, I hope I've earned the right to make a comment or two about the economy. So people ask me all the time, "What great new, brilliant idea did you and Bob Rubin bring to Washington on economic policy?" You know what I always tell them? Arithmetic. *[Laughter]* We brought arithmetic back to Washington. And we got rid of that deficit. We got the biggest surplus in history. We're paying the debt down. We've got low interest rates and the economy. You have taken care of the rest.

Now, you've got to decide. If you like the way it's going, you've got to decide. They want

a bigger tax cut than we do, and a lot of you in this room would get more money under their deal. A lot of you in this room would do better under our deal. Why would people who are really wealthy still come here and support us when they could get a whole lot of money out of their tax cut? Because they understand arithmetic.

If you spend a trillion and a half dollars on a tax cut and you spend another trillion dollars to shore up Social Security after you partially privatize it and then you keep all your spending commitments, we're back in deficits; we're back in higher interest rates; we're back in a slower economy; we're back in fewer jobs.

Look, just last week we learned that poverty last year dropped to a 20-year low. We learned that for the first time in 12 years we had fewer people without health insurance. We learned that child poverty had its biggest drop in 34 years. Why? Because—partly because of arithmetic. Now, this is serious business.

You cannot go out here and promise to spend all this money and then keep your commitment when you get there, knowing it's going to produce a deficit, and expect anything other than what you're going to get, which is higher interest rates. The Council of Economic Advisers told me that the Democratic plan would keep interest rates about a percent lower than the Republican plan a year, for a decade. Do you know what that's worth in tax cuts? That's worth \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments, Lord only knows how much money in lower credit card payments, plus it's cheaper to start a business and hire new help.

This is not rocket science. He's right, Charlie Rangel is, on economic policy, and they're wrong. And you need to be able to explain that to people and tell them that's why you showed up here tonight.

On health care policy, they're not for the Patients' Bill of Rights, and we are. We're for a Medicare drug program that all the seniors can get, and they aren't. And we're right, and they're wrong, and you need to be able to explain that to people. And I could just go on and on, but you get the picture.

I'm telling you, you cannot assume that the outcome of this election—in Hillary's race, for who controls the House, for who wins the White

House—is not in doubt. The people are in control, and until they show up and vote, it's in doubt. And you need to be able to say, you need to be able to tell people why you came here tonight, beyond the fact that you like Charlie or you wanted to see Kevin or you wanted to see if I'm still standing on two legs with 4 months to go. I'm telling you, you've got to be able to say that.

Now, when Al Gore stands up before audiences and he says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," that sounds like a campaign slogan, I know. But I'm not running, and I believe that. I've spent as much time as I could, I worked as hard as I could to turn this country around, to pull us together, and to get us moving forward. But it's almost like setting a banquet table, but the feast hasn't been served.

We're going to have young women having babies within 5 to 10 years with a life expectancy of 90 years, thanks to the human genome project. We are going to see economic explosions in places that we never thought we could bring economic opportunity to, in the inner cities and the rural areas and Native American reservations, if we make the right decision.

We're going to be able not just to bring the crime rate down to a 27-year low, we could make America the safest big country in the world, if we make the right decisions. We put 100,000 police on the street and did more to take guns out of the hands of criminals and children. They're not only against the common-sense gun safety measures that we've been for—we're now putting another 50,000 police on the street—they want to abolish the program.

You've got to admire that about the Republicans; evidence never fazes them. [*Laughter*] I mean, they know what they're for, and they don't want you to bother them with the facts or the results or anything else. You've got to kind of admire it, but you'll also have to live with the consequences.

So if you want to keep the crime rate coming down, if you believe you can clean up the environment and grow the economy, if you want to keep this prosperity going and spread it to other people, and maybe most important of all, you look at all the troubles around the world

today where people still can't get along because of their religious, their racial, their ethnic differences—the most important thing is we're all in this together, and we better get along together. And we've worked hard to say that.

We've worked hard to say whether you're—whatever your race is, whatever your religion is, whether you're straight or gay, whether you're old or young, if you show up, play by the rules, and you try to do your part as an American, you're part of our America, and we're going forward together. That's a big deal. That's a big deal.

So I know we all want to have a good time. We're in this festive atmosphere, and I thank our hosts for letting me come. I believe I've been here three or four times since I've been President. But I just want you to be serious enough. This deal is not over yet. Charlie is not the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee yet. He ought to be, and I think he will be, but it depends on what you do.

So you've got to promise yourself, every day between now and the end of the election, you find somebody that will never show up at one of these deals and you say, "Let me tell you why I'm for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman; let me tell you why I'm for Hillary and Charlie Rangel; let me tell you why you ought to support the Democrats." And tell them what the difference is on the economy, on the environment, on health care, on education; run it right down so they understand.

Don't let this be one of the times when we made a mistake because times were so good we didn't think we had to think. We do have to think. You may not get another chance like this in your lifetime, and if I had anything to do with it, I am grateful you gave me the chance to serve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. at the Supper Club. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Rangel's wife, Alma, and his daughter, Alicia; actors Chevy Chase, Ron Silver, and Kevin Spacey; and former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin.

Remarks at a Reception for Governor Tom Carper in New York City October 5, 2000

Thank you very much. First, I will try to be brief tonight, because most of you have heard what I have to say. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Mark Fox for sticking with his friend Tom Carper and for helping again, and for being so kind and generous to me over these last couple years. I want to thank Denise Rich for letting me come back into her home again. I don't think that Hillary and I have had a better friend anywhere in America than she's been to us for the whole time I've been President. Denise, you've been wonderful, and I'm grateful to you. Thank you very much. Yes, give them a hand. *[Applause]*

I want to thank Brian Kennedy and Sarah Clancy for singing. Some of you know this, but I'm half Irish. And Brian Kennedy sang for me on November 30, 1995, in Belfast—he's from Belfast—with another Irish singer you might know, by the name of Van Morrison. *[Laughter]* Van and Brian sang to a crowd of about 50,000 people in the streets of Belfast, who came there to see Hillary and me, when I turned on the Christmas lights. They came because we had turned on the lights of peace in Northern Ireland. I loved hearing him sing again.

But the Irish have meant a great deal to me. James Galway, the great Irish flutist, probably the greatest living flutist in the world, has played at the White House. And Bono, the lead singer of U2, has been a great friend of mine—now better known as the leading advocate for debt relief in poor countries in the entire world. He has that great sense of humor. When I left Brian, and I went to Dublin, we had a big rally in the square there. There were over 100,000 people. And after—Bono was there, and he had brought me a signed copy of W.B. Yeats' plays, and had William Butler Yeats in his little-bitty handwriting. And underneath, there was Bono's handwriting. It said, "Bill, this guy wrote some good lines, too." *[Laughter]*

So the Irish have their way, you know, and they worked their way with us tonight. They were wonderful. I want to thank Tom Carper for running for the Senate. When I met Tom years ago, I was a Governor, and he was a Congressman. And we worked together in writing the first major overhaul of the welfare laws,

back in 1988. I liked him then; I like him more now. He's been a remarkable Governor. He told you a little bit about his record.

I think that of all the Governors in the country, I can honestly say in during his period of service, no one was more innovative or made more progress on a wider range of social problems. And he's got that sort of disarming "Aw, shucks, I'm from the 49th biggest State; you better watch your billfold when I talk to you for 5 minutes"—*[laughter]*—way about him, which allows him to be very effective.

But it takes a lot of guts to make the decision, especially when he made it, to run against the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. I told Tom, I said, "Two years ago we were outspent by \$100 million in the congressional races. This year you may be outspent by \$100 million." *[Laughter]* So you're helping make sure that doesn't happen.

I'd just like to make a couple of general points. First, I thought Al Gore did a really good job in those debates, and I was proud of him. Second, I'm sorry I'm making you miss Joe Lieberman's debate, and I'm going to shut up so you can watch it. Third, a lot of you here have helped Hillary, and I want you to know how grateful I am for that. I'm very proud of her, and she was no slouch in her debate, either. I thought she was very good. I was really proud of her.

She's going home tonight, and we're going to get ready for another one on Sunday. But when I was watching that debate, what I was thinking is that all you should really hope for, in a great free society like ours, is that somehow people will understand the nature of the choices before them. Because we wouldn't be around here, after 224 years, if people didn't nearly always get it right. The American people nearly always get it right, if they have enough time and enough information. There's some mysterious center that anchors us in our freedom and our sort of forward progress.

And the only thing I've ever really worried about this election is that I've lived long enough now to know that anybody over 30 can look back on at least one occasion in his or her life when you made a colossal mistake, either

a personal mistake or a business mistake, not because times were tough but because things were going so well you thought you no longer had to concentrate on life. If you live long enough, you'll make one of those mistakes. And countries are no different than people. They're just a collection of people, even a great country like ours.

So here we are with the best economy and the longest expansion we've ever had, welfare rolls down, crime rates down, all the social indicators going in the right direction. We learned last week we had a 20-year low on poverty, biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years, first time senior poverty ever went below 10 percent. We've got, for the first time in 12 years, even the number of people without health insurance is now going down again, because of our Children's Health Insurance Program.

So you wonder whether people will say what I'll hope they'll say, which is, holy goodness, you have a chance like this about once every 50 years, to build the future of your dreams for your kids, to sort of let all your hangups go and do what Tom said, just get together, identify the problems, identify the opportunities, paint your dream picture, and go out and do it. Or will they say, "Well, what difference does it make whether I vote now? Things are going along all right. Maybe there's no real differences." And they just sort of, kind of stumble through the election. Countries, like people, pay a price when they think they don't have to concentrate.

If the American people understand clearly the choice before them and the consequences for our kids, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman are going to do just fine. Tom Carper is going to win. Hillary is going to win. And we'll keep moving forward. But it's very important that you understand—a lot of you have been so generous to us, but I'd just like to ask you, just imagine how many people you will come in contact with from States beyond New York, between now—some of you aren't even from New York. Jeff lives in Atlanta; Georgia's a close State. We might win it; we might lose it. You think about all the States that you know people in, all the people you'll come in contact with between now and the election. If they ask you why you were here tonight, what answer would you give?

Listen, I think this is really important. I think a lot of—if you look at the undecided voters, a lot of them are going to be persuaded by

conversations they had with their friends. And if you just look around this table tonight, literally more than 10,000, maybe more than 20,000 conversations will occur—maybe 100,000 conversations will occur between all of you collectively and the people with whom you come in contact between now and election day.

So if they said, "Tell me three good reasons I should vote for Gore instead of Bush; now tell me why you want me to support Tom Carper or Hillary or someone else that's running," could you do it? And that's very important, because what I'd like to ask you to do is to take every chance you can to do that. Because I really do believe that a lot of these decisions are going to be made by people who never get a chance to come to dinners like this. Even if they could afford to come, they wouldn't do it, because it's just not their thing. But they will vote, because they're patriotic citizens; they love our country. They want to make a good decision, but they've never had an encounter like this and probably never will.

And all I can tell you is—just a couple of things—this economic issue is big. I read all the newspaper articles on all this. I think I've earned some credibility on the economy. People ask me all the time, "What great new innovation did you and Bob Rubin bring to Washington?" And I always tell them, arithmetic. We brought arithmetic. [*Laughter*] I tell everybody I had a fairly basic upbringing, and I thought 2 and 2 had to add up to 4. So we got rid of the deficit and started running balanced budgets and surpluses, and interest rates came down. The economy went up. You did the rest.

Then we opened markets abroad, and we had the right kind of telecommunications bill, so we opened markets at home. We were pro-competition. And we invested in the American people, in their education, in their future, and tried to find ways to solve the big problems people face so that they could grow the economy. And that is pretty much what has happened.

Now, I'm just telling you, you cannot cut taxes—I don't care—and most of you would be better off under the Republican plan than under the Democratic plan in the short run. But you've got a bigger stake in the long-term health and welfare of the American society, and the economy. You cannot cut taxes a trillion and a half dollars, spend another trillion dollars on a partial privatization of Social Security—it costs you a trillion dollars, because if those of you

that are under 45 take your money out, somebody has got to put it back in, because you're going to guarantee all the old geezers like me, who are 55 and over, and I'll be next year, that we get to keep what we've got. So you've got to fill it up. So then you've spent \$2½ trillion.

Then whatever they tell you about the surplus, take my word for it—I know something about arithmetic—the surplus is at least \$500 billion less than they tell you it is, because Government spending has grown at inflation plus population for 50 years—that's \$300 billion, because they only measure it as inflation; and because all these middle class people are going to start paying the alternative minimum tax just because their incomes will grow, unless we change it, and that costs 220 to change—or 200 and change. So believe me, it's at least 500 billion less.

So that's one and a half trillion in taxes, a trillion in privatizing Social Security, a half a trillion because the deficit's not that big, and that's before you spend any money that the Republicans have promised to spend.

Now, our tax cut is about a third the size of theirs, because we think we've got to save some money for education and health care and the environment and our responsibilities around the world, defense and other responsibilities, and because we think we ought to keep paying down the public debt. It turns out, did you ever think you'd see the Democrats to the right of the Republicans on the question of fiscal responsibility, even in rhetoric?

The reason—there's a progressive reason for that. You keep interest rates down, you have more people working; you have more capital available. It's the best social policy in the world. Jonathan Tisch and I were talking on the way over here. He's a member and now the leader of our welfare to work partnership. He got 12,000 companies committed to hire people off welfare and put them to work. It's the best social policy there is. And they've hired—these 12,000 companies have hired hundreds of thousands of people off the welfare rolls. And if we keep interest rates down, the economy going, they'll hire more.

So I can just tell you, I think it is a mistake for us to return to deficit spending, to start to erode the Social Security taxes for other things, to let interest rates get higher. Most people estimate, that I've talked to, estimate that

the plan that the Vice President has advocated, that Carper would vote for, because he'll be at least as conservative as the administration on fiscal matters, will keep interest rates one percent lower for a decade. Now, that's worth \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, and \$15 billion in lower college loan payments. That's a \$430 billion tax cut in lower interest rates. And I didn't even count credit card payments and business loans and all the things that will follow from that. You need to tell people that.

We cannot afford this. It is not the responsible thing to do. We quadrupled the debt from 1980 to 1992. When I leave office, we'll have paid off \$360 billion of it. I'm telling you, we need to keep paying it down, keep the interest rates down, keep the economy going, and the rest of it will take care of itself. I hope you can tell people that.

Let me just give you one other issue, because I think it's important, because there's lots of advertising on this both ways, and there was a lot of yapping about it in the debate. I don't mean that in a pejorative way. They argued about their positions on health care. I would hope—because these things affect so many million people, I'll just deal with this. We're for this Patients' Bill of Rights that covers all Americans and all managed care plans, that says simply if your doctor tells you you ought to see a specialist, you can, and nobody in the HMO can tell you you can't. If you change jobs and change providers, but you're taking chemotherapy for cancer treatment, or you're pregnant and you've got one ob-gyn, you don't have to change them during the treatment, even if you change plans. If you get hit by a car, walking across the street in Manhattan, you can go to the nearest emergency room; you don't have to pass three before you get to one covered by your plan. And if you get hurt, you can sue, because if you can't do that, it's a bill of suggestions, not a bill of rights, unless there's some other mechanism that's binding on this.

So they say, to be fair to them, "Look, this is going to be burdensome." The Republican leadership that are against this, they say, "This is going to be burdensome to small businesses and to insurance companies, and it's going to raise the cost of health care. And we don't want to do that, particularly to people who self-insure. So it's too bad that we can't do it, but we

can't afford to do it. So we'll give you a much weaker bill."

Now, here's what it costs. I covered all the Federal employees, everybody that's covered by Federal health payments, Medicare, Medicaid, they're already covered by this. I did it by Executive order. You know what it cost us? A buck a month a premium. You know what the Republican Congressional Budget Office says it would cost to cover everybody else? Less than \$2 a month. I would pay \$1.80 a month to make sure that the people that serve this dinner here tonight, if they walk out from here and they get hit in an accident, can go to the nearest emergency room. I would do that. I think most Americans would, of all incomes. It's a big issue. Somebody needs to lay it out like that.

All this fight they're having over Medicare drugs, they never did get down to what the real issue was. Here's the deal: If we were starting Medicare today, if you were designing a program for Medicare today, could you even think about not providing prescription drug coverage? Of course not. If you live to be 65, your life expectancy is 82, and pretty soon it will be a lot higher. And the older you get, the more medicine you take. And if you take the right medicine in the right way, and you halfway take care of yourself, it can dramatically increase not only the length but the quality of your life. It's a big deal. You would never think of doing this if we were starting all over.

Medicare was created in '65, when medical care was about doctors and hospitals and surgery and there was no—and our life expectancy was a lot less than 82, so you wouldn't do it. So we say, "Look, let's use Medicare; it's got one percent administrative cost. And we'll let people buy into Medicare. If you're poor, we'll give you the premiums; or if you have huge drug costs every month, catastrophic costs, we'll cover those. Otherwise you've got to pay, pay your fair share, and we'll give you a good drug plan. And if you're eligible for Medicare, no matter what your income, and you need this, you can buy in, but it's totally voluntary."

They say, "We don't want to do it that way. We're not sure it won't cost too much, and we don't want the Government regulating the drug market." We don't propose to regulate the drug market. We're selling insurance here: go out and buy the drugs, and people will pay the premiums. There's no price controls here. But they say, "No, the Government shouldn't

do that, but we will pay the premiums for people up to 150 percent of the poverty line, which is about \$15,000 for a couple"—not a lot of money, \$16,000—"and everybody over that can buy insurance, we'll make insurance policies available."

Now, here's the problem with that. Half of all the seniors in America that need that medicine, they're above 150 percent of the poverty line. Second problem, and I've got to give it—I've had a lot of fights with the health insurance companies for 8 years, but I have to tell you, I have really been impressed by the way they've handled this, because they've been very close to the Republicans in Congress, but they have refused to take a dive on this. They have told the truth. They have said over and over and over again, you cannot have a private insurance policy that is worth having that is affordable. We cannot make a private insurance policy market for seniors to have prescription drugs.

Now, Nevada passed the Republican plan over a year ago. You know how many insurance companies have offered these people coverage? Over a year ago they passed it. Zero; not one. Now, I kind of admire that about our Republican friends. Evidence has no impact on them at all. *[Laughter]* You know, it's basically—I mean, you've got to admire that. "I know what I believe, and don't tell me the facts. I don't want to be confused; I know what I'm for." *[Laughter]*

Now what's really going on here? You see all these ads that are confusing; you hear all these arguments. Here's what you need to know. There is a real issue here. The pharmaceutical companies don't want this bill. And I am not demonizing them. I want to explain why they don't want it. And the Republicans in Congress and the Bush campaign, they're close to them, and they get a lot of support from them.

Now, I am delighted that we have these companies headquartered in America. They develop all these miracle drugs. They've changed lives for nearly—most everybody in this room has taken some medicine that's been developed in the last 10 years, if for nothing more than allergies, and you're better off for it. And we are very fortunate that these companies are in our country. They provide tens of thousands of wonderful jobs. They do a terrific job.

They've just got one problem. It costs them a fortune to develop the drugs, and then it costs them a lot of money to advertise. And every

other rich country in the world, including Europe, Japan, and Canada, is under price controls. So they have to recover 100 percent of all their development and advertising costs from you and me and the rest of America, whether they're poor, rich, or middle class. And if they don't do that, their profit margins will get cut so much they fear they won't be able to develop new medicine.

Once they do that, it becomes very economical for them to sell the rest of the medicine anywhere in the world, which is why you see all these people going to Canada buying their medicine. You've seen all these stories; people in upstate New York, they go over to Canada. The reason this happens is, the rest of America's consumers have covered the cost of developing the drugs and advertising them. And once you get those costs covered, it costs minuscule just to make another pill or two. And that's why you can go to Canada and get it cheaper.

Now, what they're worried about is, if Medicare becomes the biggest drug buyer in America, that we'll use market power to get the prices down so that American seniors will buy drugs made in America almost as cheap as Canadian seniors can. See, this is a real issue. These people have a real problem. And we want them to succeed; we want them to keep doing it. But here's our position. This is the Gore/Lieberman position and the Democratic position.

It cannot be that the way to solve this problem the drug companies have is to keep medicine away from American senior citizens that they need. That can't be the only way to solve this problem. Those people have got plenty of money, plenty of power. We need to solve the problem that the seniors have, and then we need to go solve the drug company problem that will be created when we solve this. But let's take care of America's health first, and then let's go try to figure out how to solve their problem. But we've got the cart before the horse here. I think we're right and they're wrong.

Now those are just three issues. But you need to know the answer to the difference in their education plans, the environment, crime, the whole nine yards, and you need to be able to answer. Because I'm telling you, we need to elect Tom Carper. And we've got a chance to win the Senate, a chance to win the House; I believe we're going to win the White House.

And then when we get there, we have to be faithful to the positive change of the last 8 years.

That's the last thing I'll say. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," it may sound like a campaign slogan when a candidate says it. But I'm not running for anything, and I believe that too. Because it takes a long time to turn a country around. It's like a big ocean liner. That's what happened to the *Titanic*. The crew saw the iceberg; they just didn't see it quick enough. And you can't turn it on a dime. A country is like that. So it takes time to turn it around. I've done everything I know to do to turn the country around, to pull us together, to move us forward. But all the best stuff is still out there.

I mean, young women in this country, within 10 years, I think they'll be having babies with life expectancies of 90 years, because of the human genome project. I think we'll be curing Alzheimer's. I think we'll be able to take women within, I don't know how many years, but some period of years, women in their thirties that have the gene predictors for breast cancer, and correcting it so they never develop it in the first place. I think these things—unbelievable stuff is going to happen. You're going to find out what's in the black holes of the universe, and what may even surprise you more, what's in the deepest depths of the ocean. It's going to be an amazing time.

But we've got to also get rid of child poverty. We could bring free enterprise to Indian reservations and inner-city neighborhoods and poor little country towns that never had it. We can provide health insurance to working families that have never been able to get it. We could dramatically cut AIDS, TB, and malaria deaths around the world that kill one in four people every year that die. We can do anything you ever dreamed of, if we make the right decisions. But if we get careless and we don't understand what the choice is and what the consequences are, we'll pay for that as a Nation, just like all of us who are of any age have paid for it in our personal lives in the past.

So in my lifetime we never had a chance like this. So thank you for helping Tom. Thank you, those of you who have helped Hillary, for doing that. It means more than I can say. But just do it for yourselves and your kids and your grandkids and your future. Every chance you get between now and November 7th, you tell somebody, "Let me tell you why I hope you'll

vote, and what I think the choice is, and what the consequences are.” Because if everybody knows, we’re going to have a great celebration.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:43 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to

event cohosts Mark Fox and Denise Rich; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin. Governor Carper of Delaware was a candidate for U.S. Senate in Delaware. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Situation in Yugoslavia and the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 6, 2000

The President. Good afternoon. I’d like to say a few words about the historic developments in Serbia.

First and foremost, this is an extraordinary victory for the people of the former Yugoslavia, who endured oppression and deprivation, who saw through the propaganda, who took their country back with nothing but courage, principle, and patriotism. They will now define the shape of their future. They have said they want to live in a normal country, at peace with its neighbors, and a part of the world. The rest of us will welcome them.

This is a victory for newly elected President Kostunica, for his integrity and leadership in bringing this new day. As Yugoslavia’s new leaders work to build a truly democratic society, we will move with our European allies to lift sanctions and bring them out of isolation.

This is a victory for all southeast Europe. As long as Mr. Milosevic was in power, the danger of more violence in Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia remained high. A dark cloud has lifted. And though tensions and challenges clearly remain, prospects for enduring stability in the Balkans have greatly improved.

Finally, this day is also a victory for the steady, persistent position of the international community. Think where we were less than a decade ago. Mr. Milosevic was trying to build a Greater Serbia through conquest and ethnic cleansing. His forces attacked Slovenia, then Croatia, then Bosnia, unleashing violence that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people in the heart of Europe at the dawn of what was supposed to be a new era of peace. And he was winning.

Had the world allowed him to win then, the people of Yugoslavia could not have won today. But America and our allies, took a stand, rejecting the idea that the Balkan tragedies were too hard to solve and too distant to matter. Together, we ended the war in Bosnia, reversed ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, supported forces of democracy and tolerance in Croatia and Montenegro, blocking Milosevic’s efforts to prolong his rule by provoking new conflict, until the only remaining outpost of repression was Serbia itself, where it all began.

Now history has come full circle. It is not just the end of dictatorship in Belgrade. In a real sense, it is the end of the war Mr. Milosevic started in the former Yugoslavia 10 years ago. Democracy has reclaimed every piece of ground he took. The greatest remaining obstacle to the long-held dream of a peaceful, undivided, democratic Europe for the first time in history has now been removed.

So now is not the time for the United States or our allies to retreat from the Balkans in complacency. Now is the time to stay the course and stick with people who have won their freedom, the time to build the economic and civil institutions that will allow democracy to endure, reconciliation and cooperation to develop, and the economy to grow.

Legislative Agenda

Now, before I take your questions, I’d just like to mention a couple of domestic issues. First, this morning, we received the good news that unemployment last month dropped again to 3.9 percent, a 30-year low, with the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment

rates ever recorded. Our economic strategy is working, and we need to keep it on course.

That leads to the second point. I just signed yet another short-term funding measure to keep the Government running and meet its responsibilities to the American people. We're now a week into the new fiscal year, and Congress still has not acted on pressing budget priorities from education to safer streets to health care. At the same time, I am profoundly troubled by some of the things they have found the time to do.

Yesterday the Republican leadership thwarted the will of a bipartisan majority in both Houses and the overwhelming majority of the American people by stripping away legislation to outlaw deadly hate crimes. It was plain wrong. And on behalf of the families of people like James Byrd and Matthew Shepard, I pledge to keep fighting for hate crimes legislation this year.

I am also deeply disappointed by their decision to water down the prescription drug import legislation. We had an agreement to work in a bipartisan fashion, which they rejected in favor of writing a bill on their own, which is more acceptable to the drug companies, all right, but as a consequence will clearly provide less help to seniors and others who need but can't afford drugs and, indeed, could provide no help at all.

So once again I urge Congress to focus on the Nation's priorities and to work in a genuine spirit of bipartisanship, not to weaken, water down, or walk away from what we need to do but, instead, to finish the job of a fiscally responsible budget that builds on our progress, invests in our people, and produces real results.

Thank you.

Situation in Yugoslavia

Q. Mr. President, does your statement mean that the United States would object if Slobodan Milosevic were to try to remain active in Yugoslavia or if he were to try to go away quietly into asylum in some other nation?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't want to get into all the hypotheticals. The most important thing is to make sure that this moment is consummated; that is, the President who has been elected should be authoritatively sworn in. That's the most important thing.

Now, I think it would be a terrible mistake for him to remain active in the political life of the country. That is not what the people

voted for. And I believe that we cannot ignore the action of the War Crimes Tribunal. I think we have to continue to support it. We'll have to deal with all the possible permutations that develop in the days ahead, and we'll work with our allies as closely as we can to see what the right thing to do is.

But let's not, even in the rain, water down the impact of this day. The people there have done an astonishing thing. This is just as big a blow for freedom as we saw when the Berlin Wall was torn down, when Lech Walesa led the shipyard workers in Poland, when the transformations occurred in all these other former communist countries. And it reverses a 10-year effort. It is an extraordinary day.

Q. Mr. President is it your understanding that the Russians are brokering a deal or trying to broker a deal with Milosevic or that they're delivering a blunt message for him just to step aside?

The President. Well, there have been two different reports, and so it's not clear. Let me say that we have always said, all of us, that the Russians could play a constructive role here and that we hope that they would, as soon as they felt they could do so, make it clear that Mr. Milosevic should respect the results of the elections.

Today even the Constitutional Court, which just a few days ago had invalidated the first election, even the Constitutional Court said, "Hey, this guy won, fair and square, and he's the President." So when I heard the report that Mr. Ivanov had delivered a congratulatory letter to President Putin and was clearly looking forward to a new Yugoslavia, I thought that was consistent with the policy that all the Europeans had held and that the United States had held and that we would be working together again, as we have worked together in Bosnia and Kosovo. Then we were later given reports that I think are on the news that, instead, maybe what he said was he was congratulating him on a strong showing in the election but leaving open the prospect of when he should become President.

So I will say again, I don't think there should be a deal brokered here. I think the only issue—should the will of the people of Serbia be honored, should the integrity of an election that has even been recognized by a court, that just a couple of days ago tried to thwart it, be upheld? If the Russians will take that position

as soon as they feel that they can, that can make a big, positive difference.

Effectiveness of Peacekeeping Forces

Q. You said a short time ago, Mr. President, that now is not the time to retreat from the Balkans in complacency. Is that a response to Governor Bush in the debate the other night, when he expressed doubts about the value of using American troops for peacekeeping?

The President. Well, he wasn't the only one. If you go back, there are a lot of people who didn't agree with what we did in Bosnia. There are a lot of people who didn't agree with what we did in Kosovo.

I felt very strongly that we did have profound national interests in stabilizing Europe and permitting it to be united, not divided; all democratic, not partly so; and free of ethnic cleansing and slaughter. I felt very strongly about that. I still believe we were right, and I think that subsequent events have ratified the direction that we've taken from the beginning here.

And I'm very proud of the fact that—it took us about 2 years after I became President to get strong consensus among our European allies, but I'm very proud of what they've done in their own backyard and the leadership they've taken and the stands that they've taken.

But that's not what I meant. I don't mean to get into a discussion of the current political campaign. What I was referring to is that, if you remember, we had a big conference after Kosovo on the need to give the Balkans something positive to look forward to, not just to say, "Stop all these bad things you've been doing, but here's a way to build a united economic bloc; here is a way to work together; here is a way to rebuild all these countries; and that there ought to be a Balkan stability pact."

And I said at the time that the only difficulty with this concept was that Serbia, which has always been a big anchor of the Balkans, could not be a part of it because of Mr. Milosevic's policies and actions. So the reason I said what I said today was to make it clear that I think Serbia, once democracy has clearly and unambiguously been restored, should definitely be a part of the Balkan Stability Pact and that the United States should play its role there.

The Europeans are carrying the lion's share of the financial burden, which was the agreement we made when we carried the lion's share

of the burden during the conflict in Kosovo. But we have responsibilities there. And I was referring to the imperative of our meeting our responsibilities there, not trying to go back and revisit the history for any political purpose.

I think what I want everybody to do is get beyond the politics and look at the enormous potential now. But the United States and our European allies, having done so much in Bosnia and Kosovo, having supported the institutions of a free election in this last process in Serbia, we owe it to those people now to reward the decision they have made as well as to reward and redeem the sacrifice that has been made in those other countries.

Upcoming Meeting With North Korean President Kim Chong-il

Q. Mr. President, what are you going to talk about with the North Korean leader next week? Are you looking for a major breakthrough in improving the relations with that country?

The President. Well, first, I'm going to listen, and I'm going to tell them that I am encouraged by the work done by President Kim in South Korea and by Kim Chong-il in North Korea, and I want to encourage that development.

You know, the United States has had—when I became President in 1993, everybody thought the most serious problem we faced in terms of world security was the potentially imminent development of nuclear weapons by North Korea, because they were so good at building missiles which could deliver them, a development which would have been very ominous, not only because of what it might have meant on the Korean Peninsula and to Japan but also what it might have meant should North Korea have sold both missiles and warheads to others.

So we worked very hard, with the support of the South Koreans, to establish a direct relationship with North Korea to try to stop the nuclear program. And you know about all the consequences there: building a lightwater reactor, getting the financing, giving crude oil—giving oil for the North Koreans to meet their energy needs.

Beyond that, however, we refused with great discipline to go beyond that until there was some movement at reconciliation between South Korea and North Korea. We didn't want to get separated from South Korea. We wanted to stick with them. And now, the President of South Korea, who deserves the lion's share of credit

for all that has happened here—although he had to have a response from Kim Chong-il, and he deserves credit for what he has done—has encouraged me to have whatever contact the North Koreans deem appropriate at this time.

So what I want to do is just explore the possibilities. We're very concerned about a reconciliation between our two countries. That would be a good thing. But it also has to be good for South Korea, and I might add, the interests of Japan are quite important here, and the Japanese have interests that are not quite identical to the South Koreans, but they are very legitimate. Our relationship with Japan is profoundly important to us over the long run.

So I'm working through this. I believe the Chinese strongly support this meeting and what we're trying to do, and we've tried to coordinate with them. So, on balance, this is a big plus. I will explore what the possibilities are and consider what actions they're willing to take, what actions we should take, consistent not only with our own interests but with those of South Korea and our other friends in the region.

Situation in Yugoslavia

Q. Returning to Yugoslavia for a minute, do you recognize Kostunica as the President of Serbia, not just the President-elect? And will you still lift sanctions even if Kostunica sticks by his campaign promise not to turn Milosevic over to The Hague?

The President. Well, let me answer the second question first. I think that we have to make an aggressive effort to reward the courage and heroism of the people there in restoring democracy. We have to do something immediately, because they're under great distress. They're under great economic distress. They've suffered a lot because of these sanctions.

Now, there are a lot of sanctions and a lot of layers of them, almost, and we should make an opening move here, I think—the Europeans and United States, all the countries that have supported this, the U.N.—that makes it clear that we support what has happened and we intend to help them. Then what happens after that will have to be determined based on events within Serbia and also events—and also in consultation with our allies.

Now, the second question that you asked, or the first one you asked is I do consider him the President, but I think, they have a Constitution, and I think he has to be ratified by their

Parliament. So I'm hoping—I was hoping it would happen today, and what I've been told is they're literally having trouble physically getting the people who are in the Parliament to come in so enough of them can be there so he can get the two-thirds required.

But I think the people have taken care of the transfer of power, but it needs—so I consider him the duly elected President of Serbia and the former Yugoslavia, in its present form, but I think probably he would say, if he were here answering this question, that he considers himself the President, but that he still needs to be formally ratified.

Legislation on Cuba Embargo

Q. Mr. President, the Congress of the United States has come to an agreement on wording to ease the embargo on Cuba on food and medicines. Do you agree with the way it's being worked out that puts certain restrictions on travel, on American banks, what they can and cannot do?

The President. Well, let me tell you what I understand it to do, and all I can say is I hope I'm wrong. I will posit this. I have not read what they have finally voted for. But what I have been told is that it looks like it eases the embargo on food and medicine, but it probably doesn't very much, because it doesn't provide any financing credits, which we give to other poor countries, whereas it definitely restricts the ability of the executive branch to increase people-to-people contacts between Americans and Cubans, thus further punishing and restricting the possibilities of the Cuban people.

So I think this is one of those things where somebody can go home and say, "I made a good deal for the farmers," and it's so close to the election nobody will know whether it's real or not. But it certainly restricts in, I think, a completely unwarranted way the ability of the United States to make travel decisions on policy that I do not believe should be made, written in law in stone by the Congress. I think it's wrong.

So I hope I'm wrong about it. I hope at least that the food and medicine provisions are real. But that's not what I've been told. So I think a lot of people voted for it because they probably couldn't think of a way to say they voted against food and medicine, knowing it wasn't real, so they got a lot of votes for a travel restriction that I can't believe a majority

of the Congress really believes in. And I think it was a big mistake, if it's what I think it is. But I don't want to—I want to reserve some room for judgment when we have a chance to review the actual language.

Estate Tax Legislation

Q. Mr. President, some Republicans have advanced a new version of an estate tax relief proposal that is more scaled back than their original one in the last few days. Would that be acceptable to you, if it reaches your desk?

The President. I'm sorry, because of the background music, I didn't hear. I don't hear very well in my dotage. Just ask it again.

Q. In the last few days, some Republicans have advanced a new estate tax relief proposal that is more scaled back than their original one. If that were to reach your desk, would it be acceptable to you?

The President. I'd like to see what it does. I have said repeatedly that I thought that we ought to have some modification of the estate tax law, because it's like everything else. It has to be changed, in my judgment, with the growth and the changes in the economy. And I think that we had a proposal in the Senate that would have taken two-thirds of the estates out from under the estate tax law but would not have repealed it, wouldn't have cost whatever the huge amount of money it cost, up to—I think it would be up to \$100 billion a year or something, a massive amount—in the next decade—not this one but the next one.

So I would like to look at that, and I would be open to it. Let me just say this. While I agree that some of that is warranted, I would like to see some more comprehensive approach in which we also did something to help average people, either with the marriage penalty or saving for retirement, and we provided the tax credit for long-term care and for college tax deduction, for child care, things that working people need. At some level, we could work it out together.

And we ought to raise the minimum wage. If we're going to give estate tax relief, surely we can raise the minimum wage. There's 10 million people out there depending on that, and they need it. And all it would do is bring us back to the real value of the minimum wage in 1982.

Middle East question?

Middle East Peace Process

Q. The cease-fire doesn't seem to be holding. Can you comment on that and also give us some insights on how you have been balancing these two extreme situations in the Middle East and in Yugoslavia this week?

The President. Well, it's been kind of an emotional and intellectual roller coaster, so much good news in one place and so much trouble in another, where we've done our best to do what was right by the people. Let me say, it's been a difficult day in the Middle East. I had actually feared it could be worse, and I'll tell you why. Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak, when they met in Paris, reached some understandings on the security steps they would take.

And I think they plainly tried to implement them, particularly today. You saw a removal of Israeli forces off the Temple Mount or the Haram, as the Muslims say. And you saw an early attempt, after the prayer service, by the Palestinian forces to restrain activities by some of the Palestinians, some of the rock throwing. What happened was I think because it's a very sensitive day, because some had called for it to be a day of rage. Because it was the holy day of the week for the Muslims, I'm not sure that they could stop everything that happened today.

So I would say to all of you, I don't believe that we have enough evidence that the two sides aren't trying to keep the agreement they made. And I think we need to give this another day or two, to see if we can calm it down. I was very afraid that this could have been the worse day of all, because of the other circumstances. So even though it was a very tough day, we do believe that both sides tried to take some steps to defuse the violence.

And let me just say again, I know there are all kind of other questions being asked, but by far, the most important thing is to put an end to the violence and to see this as a sober reminder of the imperative of getting on with this peace process.

Situation in Yugoslavia

Q. Is Putin taking your phone calls, Mr. President? Are you trying to reach him? It seems like they're stonewalling. We don't seem to know what they're up to.

The President. What who's up to?

Q. The Russians. Are you talking to Putin?

The President. Well, I've talked to President Putin, and Madeleine Albright has been in virtually constant contact with Foreign Minister Ivanov. I do think that we—but I think what happened is—they might not have done anything inconsistent, but when we first heard they were going to Belgrade—which originally we thought they wouldn't—we had been urging them all along not to try to mediate, because we don't think that's a good idea, but just to take a clear and unambiguous stand for what was an evident result of the election. That's what we've urged them to do, because we know that they could have a positive impact if they do that, not mediate but take a clear stand for the will of the Serbian people.

And so the only thing I was commenting to you today on is, there had been two different reports coming out about what, in fact, the message was. So we're, at this moment, trying to determine exactly what their position is and where we go from here. But I will just say again, if the Russians are prepared to deliver a clear and unambiguous message at the earliest possible time, that will be a plus.

I think trying to split hairs here, after all that's happened in the streets and after what clearly happened in the election, is not a good idea. But again I want to say, we ought to take a little time to appreciate where we are. Ten years ago we could not have even had this conversation about Russia. Now they've had the first peaceful transfer of power in a legitimate election in their own country in a thousand years. So now, we look to the President of Russia to do what we looked to the Prime Minister of France or the Prime Minister of Great Britain or the German Chancellor to do, or the American President, for that matter.

I know this is a—believe me, this is a difficult waiting period for me because of the belief that I have always had that we should stand against ethnic cleansing in the Balkans and stand up for freedom and because—let me just say one other thing. The estrangement of the United States and Serbia has been painful because we have so many Americans of Serbian origin, something I meant to say in my opening statement. Everywhere from Ohio to Texas, this country is full of Serbian-Americans who have made terrific contributions to our country.

So I hope we can get this worked out. But to go back to your question, we've been in very

close contact with the Russians. They've been up front with us. They haven't misled us about where they are, and we certainly have not misled them about where we are. And we're trying to get to a common position, just like we had to work to get to a common position in Bosnia, in Kosovo, on all these other issues involving the Balkans. I think they'll get there, but sooner is better than later.

Q. Mr. President, how much credit do you think your administration deserves for what is happening in Yugoslavia?

The President. Well, I think I'll just let my statement stand for itself. You can't apportion percentages when something like this happens. The lion's share of the credit belongs to the people. Finally, after enduring so much, they, first, showed up to vote, with 75 percent turnout. And when the government tried to take their vote away, they came and got it back. And it's an awesome thing to see.

And second, you've got to give a lot of credit to Mr. Kostunica. I'm learning to pronounce his name; it's the second syllable, Kostunica. And I think that he never hesitates to disagree with Europe and the United States when he disagrees with us. He's clearly a Serbian nationalist. He's a patriot. But he appears to be profoundly devoted to the rule of law and to constitutional procedures.

That's all we ever asked for. We don't ask people to go around and agree with us on everything. All we want to do is deal with a country where they believe in the rule of law and they don't believe in killing their opponents and killing people who are of different religious or ethnic backgrounds and where they want to argue their positions out in an appropriate way. So I think you have to give them a lot of credit.

I think the people who stood for freedom and against ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo and Croatia and Montenegro, they deserve a lot of credit for this. But I think it is unlikely that this day would have happened if we hadn't—not we, the United States; we, all of our allies, all of us together—had not prevented Mr. Milosevic from having his way in Bosnia and Kosovo and encouraged the forces of tolerance and freedom in Croatia and Montenegro, tried to help little Macedonia make its way into the future.

So I think you've got a mix here. I don't think it's possible to apportion percentage, and I don't think any of us should worry about that.

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.

Statement on the Death of Representative Sidney R. Yates

October 6, 2000

Hillary and I are deeply saddened to learn of the death of Congressman Sidney Yates.

From his 2 years in the Navy during World War II to his more than four decades representing the people of Chicago and the North Shore in Congress, Sid Yates was always a fighter—for his district, for the environment, and most notably, for the arts. He once said, “I’ve always wanted Washington to be the artistic capital of the country as well as the political capital.” To that end he succeeded in getting Congress time and time again to finance the National Endowment for the Arts. In appreciation, Congressman Yates was honored in 1998 by the

National Symphony Orchestra at a performance at the Kennedy Center. No public official battled harder or more successfully to support our Nation’s cultural and artistic life than Sid Yates. In recognition of that effort, I had the pleasure of presenting him in 1993 with the Presidential Citizens Medal. After retiring from the House, he continued serving the public as a member of the council of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Everyone who knew Sid will miss his warmth, urbanity, and dedication to his country.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Addie, and to his family and friends.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Legislation

October 6, 2000

I applaud the House of Representatives for passing vital legislation today to combat trafficking in humans and strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). The “Trafficking Victims Protection Act” will provide important new tools in the campaign to combat trafficking, a modern form of slavery and an insidious human rights abuse. VAWA,

which expired on September 30, has significantly improved the lives of thousands of women who are victims of domestic violence and has assisted State, local, and tribal law enforcement to combat domestic violence and sexual assault. It is imperative that this law be reauthorized this year, and I urge the Senate to pass this legislation without delay.

Statement on Congressional Action on a National Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

October 6, 2000

I congratulate the Congress for passing landmark legislation today that will help save lives by keeping drunk drivers off the road. Earlier today the Congress overwhelmingly approved a bill that will help establish the first-ever national drunk driving standard at .08 blood alcohol con-

tent (BAC). This groundbreaking measure, which I have long advocated, will save hundreds of lives a year and represents a major victory for public safety and American families all across the country.

Statement on Assistance to Small Business Exporters and Dislocated Workers

October 6, 2000

I am pleased to sign an Executive order today creating a small business exports task force to help small businesses, especially those in underserved communities, participate fully in the benefits of the new trading arrangements Congress approved this year with China, Africa, and the Caribbean Basin. This order will also expand the Federal Government's outreach to workers and communities eligible for dislocated-worker assistance, helping them to learn about and take advantage of these benefits more rapidly. I

thank Representative Sheila Jackson Lee for working so closely with my administration in developing this Executive order and for championing efforts to translate our expanding trade and dynamic, new economy into opportunities for small businesses and workers all across America.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Increasing Opportunities and Access for Disadvantaged Businesses

October 6, 2000

I am pleased today to sign an Executive order strengthening our efforts to increase contracting opportunities between the Federal Government and disadvantaged businesses—in particular, small disadvantaged businesses, 8(a) businesses, and minority business enterprises. These businesses play a vital role in our Nation's economy but historically have been underutilized and at times shut out of Federal procurement opportunities. Accordingly, this Executive order directs Federal departments and agencies with procurement authority to take aggressive and specific affirmative actions to ensure inclusion of disadvantaged businesses in Federal contracting.

I want to thank Representatives Kilpatrick, Menendez, Velazquez, and Wynn, and the many others who have worked with us to ensure that the private sector recognizes the importance and utility of contracting with disadvantaged businesses. I particularly commend those members of the advertising community who are working to increase the representation of minorities within advertising—both on the creative end and in transmission to the public. It is critical that the private sector help lead this effort and take advantage of the diverse and creative views that underrepresented groups will bring to the advertising process. I want to commend the American Advertising Federation (AAF) for responding to

the Vice President's challenge and working with interested parties to develop the principles for effective advertising in the American multicultural marketplace, a strategic plan for boosting minority representation in the advertising industry.

Certainly, the Federal Government must play a leading role as well. Advertising and the broader information technology industries play an increasingly expansive role in our society. Therefore, in this Executive order, I am directing each Federal department and agency to ensure that all creation, placement, and transmission of Federal advertising is fully reflective of the Nation's diversity. Further, this Executive order directs each Federal department and agency to take clearly defined and aggressive steps to ensure small and disadvantaged business participation in procurement of information technology and telecommunications contracts.

This Executive order will ensure that Federal departments and agencies are held accountable on these issues. It does so by clearly listing the responsibilities and obligations of each agency to expand opportunities for disadvantaged businesses and requires the agencies to report to me within 90 days of the issuance of this order the steps they plan to take to increase

contracting with disadvantaged businesses. Subsequently, the agencies will be required to submit annual reports on their ongoing efforts in this area to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to ensure at the highest levels the executive branch will sustain on un-

flagging and aggressive efforts to achieve this important goal.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur, 2000 *October 6, 2000*

Warm greetings to all those observing Yom Kippur.

This Day of Atonement, the most solemn of all the days of the Jewish calendar, is a time for intense prayer, fasting, and reflection. For the duration of Yom Kippur, Jews across America and around the world separate themselves from the comforts and distractions of everyday life to focus on repairing their relationship with God. It is a time to look back on the failures and transgressions of the past year, to make amends, and to seek God's forgiveness.

In neighborhoods across our nation, as Jewish families gather for Yom Kippur services, they

offer people of all faiths an extraordinary witness. They remind us of the power of faith that changes lives, the love of family that strengthens spirits, and the blessing of God's forgiveness that allows us to repent of our sins and begin anew.

At this difficult time for all of us who have worked for peace, let us pray for an end to the violence and for a new beginning in the Middle East. Hillary joins me in extending best wishes to all for a meaningful Yom Kippur.

BILL CLINTON

Remarks at an AFL-CIO Reception *October 6, 2000*

Thank you. Well, first of all, madam, I want to thank you for letting all these fairly scruffy characters come in your home. *[Laughter]* Many of us are well-accompanied, though. *[Laughter]*

You know, I was thinking. We had Morty and Linda and John and I up here talking. This is an introduction that looks like America. We span these vast ethnic gaps. We had an Irish-Catholic and Irish-Protestant at the end. *[Laughter]* Thank you, Morty, and thank you for having us here, and thank you for being such good friends to me.

You know, I really believe in this issue. John and I worked very hard together to beat that initiative in California a couple of years ago. And we raised money, and you all spent it very well—*[laughter]*—and intelligently. I mean that, intelligently. And you won, and I think you'll win again.

But I just wanted to say a couple of things about the environment in which this debate will take place. One is I will never be able to thank you enough for the support that you've given to me and the Vice President, Hillary, our whole crowd these last 8 years. It's been a joy.

One of my objectives when I became President was to take away the ability of our friends in the other party to demonize us just for being what we are, for being the progressive party. And I was determined I would take away the budget issue; I would take away the crime issue; I would take away the welfare issue; I would take away the foreign policy issue; and I would do it in a responsible, progressive way, but that we would not be vulnerable on these things anymore.

And I was determined that, if we could turn this economy around, the Republicans would

never be able to make a lot of hay with their sort of knee-jerk, anti-union propaganda. And I think it's pretty well happened. There are no votes in America for running against people because they organize themselves into labor groups to protect the interests of their members and their families and working people at large. There is just not any votes in that anymore. Anybody that responds to that kind of stuff anymore, they weren't ever going to be for us anyway.

I hope that I have helped you not only on the specific things we fought for and the specific things we stopped from happening but in changing the climate in America so that America's labor leaders and rank-and-file men and women in the unions can not only feel proud of the organizations they're a part of but feel that they're not going to be looked at in some prejudiced and unfair way by their fellow citizens. And I think we're just about there.

I also have to say I think your own leadership deserves a lot of credit for that. I think you deserve a lot of credit for that, John. I think all of you have been so smart in the way you've taken the issues that you care about to the American people.

I think that if you look at how the parallel initiative was defeated in California 2 years ago, basically what you made sure of was that everybody knew what it really did, not what they said it did, and understood what the consequences of its passage were. And I think that's the same way you've got to be to win in Oregon. But I think it is also a metaphor for what this whole election ought to be about.

The reason that I felt good about the Presidential debate is that I thought the Vice President not only acquitted himself well but had an opportunity to clearly state his position and what the differences were on several issues. The reason we had a good convention is that we had a chance to clearly state not only where we were 8 years ago and where we are now but exactly what we would try to do if the American people ratified the progress of the last 8 years by electing Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and all of our candidates to the Senate and House that we hope will win.

So that's the only other thing I would say. I think that we now know that the American people feel secure enough that, even if they're not sure we're right on certain things, they will give us a hearing. And we know that we want

clarity on the issues and the choices and the consequences far greater than our opponents. They want to kind of fuzz the issues and the differences. What does that tell you about where the American people would be if they understand not only this issue but the issues in the Presidential race and the congressional races?

So I would just like to urge you all to be of good cheer. You know, for the first 6 months of this year, I was a little lonely. I was kind of like the little happy camper—[laughter]—going around the country telling everybody not to worry; it was all going to be all right. Everything is going to be fine. The underlying circumstances were good. Our candidates were good. It was going to be all right. Now, it looks like it's going to be all right. [Laughter]

But we've got to be clear here. We've got to be very disciplined. We're often arrayed against greater money, but we've all learned. They outspent us \$100 million 2 years ago, and we won anyway, because we had clarity. People understood what the choice was, what the consequences were. They had a fair grasp of what was at issue.

If the people in Oregon have a fair grasp of what is at issue in this, you'll win here just like you did in California. And if they have a fair grasp of what is at issue in the Presidential races and the pivotal congressional races, we'll do just fine there, too.

The only other thing I'd like to say on a purely personal note is that a lot of you have gone out of your way to help Hillary in New York, and it means more to me than I will ever be able to say, and you will be very, very proud of her when she gets elected.

Thank you, and bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Morton Bahr, president, Communications Workers of America, and his wife, Florence; and John J. Sweeny, president, and Linda Chavez-Thompson, vice president, AFL-CIO. The President also referred to California Proposition 34 and Oregon Ballot Measure 92, measures to prohibit using payroll deductions for political purposes without written employee consent.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Tom Udall October 6, 2000

Thank you very much, Mark. Thank you, Jill. I'd like to thank some other Members of Congress who have joined us tonight. Representative Nancy Pelosi from California, thank you for being here. I don't know if they're still here, but I saw Representative Nick Rahall from West Virginia and Representative Brad Sherman from California. Thank you, Brad. And I know Brian Baird from Washington was here and has left. But I want to thank all of them.

You know what I was thinking about when I was getting ready to come up here? Look at all the young people. People say they're worried about American politics. Folks, it's 10 o'clock on Friday night, and we've got all these young people at a political rally. I mean, this country is in good shape. I'm not worried about anything. You're doing great.

Let me say very briefly, it's late. I want to tell you, first of all, why I'm late here. Starting about 2 o'clock today, my schedule was knocked an hour off, and I haven't caught up since for a very good reason. After several days, the deep, profound grassroots demand of the people of Serbia for democracy resulted in Mr. Milosevic tonight publicly acknowledging that his opponent, Mr. Kostunica, has won the election for President.

I say that to say the great lion's share of the credit belongs to the people of Serbia who, first of all, showed up with a 75 percent turnout, after we had been told for years and years that they were listless and divided and wouldn't show up; 75 percent of them showed up and in an environment that is somewhat less than congenial.

And then they had a leader, a leader who has often publicly disagreed with me and our policy, who is a patriotic nationalist of his country, but who believes in the rule of law and the primacy of the democratic process. And Mr. Kostunica has prevailed in a quiet and dignified and persistent way. It's a great tribute to the people who stood up for freedom in Montenegro and Croatia and all of the other countries of the Balkans and southeastern Europe. And I do believe that it's very important that the United States and our friends have stood for 8 years now against ethnic cleansing and the

killing of innocents and the end of freedom there.

What we stopped in Bosnia and what has gotten started, what we reversed in Kosovo and what has gotten started, I think, were pivotal to this. And so for freedom-loving people everywhere, this is a night to celebrate, a night of joy, a night of gratitude.

So even though it's late, and we've been working on this and the troubling situation in the Middle East—which I hope and pray will get better over the weekend—I'm, therefore, a little tired and perhaps only marginally articulate. *[Laughter]* I hope you will indulge me for a moment.

I'm also honored to be here because I like the Udall caucus. *[Laughter]* When I was a boy, a young man in college—the age of many of you—and later when I was a young person starting out in public life and a teacher profoundly interested in the environmental movement, which really took hold in America in the early 1970's, the Udall caucus in America then was Stuart Udall, who was President Kennedy's Secretary of the Interior, and Mark's father, Mo Udall, one of the best, ablest, and certainly one of the funniest people ever to serve in the United States House of Representatives.

We were talking about when I had the great honor of giving Mo the Medal of Freedom. I thought to myself: I can't put this in the citation, but one of the reasons I want him to have it is, if we laughed more in Washington, we'd get twice as much done; we'd have fewer headaches, fewer ulcers; and we might actually understand how fortunate we are to be an American and that we have the chance to serve in public life. Mo Udall always made us laugh.

And when I got here, my staff would tell me repeatedly all the jokes I couldn't tell because they weren't Presidential. *[Laughter]* So I learned to make people laugh by allusion, like I just did. *[Laughter]* Now you're all imagining every funny joke you ever heard that you can't tell in public. *[Laughter]* So that's another great thing we owe to the Udalls.

And it is true that Mark and the whole crowd, they jumped on me about the Grand Staircase Escalante, what some people call Red Rock, in

southern Utah. And as Jill said, it's true that Tom and I went to Shiprock, to the Navajo reservation. And if you have never been there, let me just say, to be able to land on a clear, beautiful day in a helicopter, to fly just above the rock and then land and see the breathtaking beauty of the ancestral home of the Navajo is one of the most extraordinary experiences I have ever had.

I'm also here tonight because I think Tom and Mark are committed to seeing that our country makes a sustained, long-term effort to have the proper relationships with the Native American tribes of this country. Among the people who came with me tonight is Lynn Cutler, who has been my liaison to Native America since I've been President, and she's done it in my second term. She has done a brilliant job. We have become obsessed with this issue. I know I'm preaching to the saved, by and large, here. We've made a lot of progress, but we've got a long way to go. We've got a lot of good things in the Interior bill this time for the Native American tribes, and I want to thank the Democrats who are here and Tom, in absentia, and Mark, especially, for the work that has been done to do that.

You know, I was introduced by a perfectly beautiful 13-year old girl at Shiprock, in front of thousands of people. And this young woman had just won a big prize in her school, this big academic contest, and the prize was an up-to-date, modern laptop computer. That's the good news. The bad news is she couldn't log onto the Internet because she lived in a home without a phoneline, like over half the other people who live on the reservation at Shiprock.

So I am grateful for the commitment that Mark has, that Tom has to closing the digital divide as well as to protecting the environment and the other issues he mentioned: prescription drugs for seniors, improving education.

I normally—I'm going to relieve you of this because the hour is late, but normally when I speak to groups like this, I try to emphasize how important it is for those of you who are here to go out and talk every day to those who are not here, between now and the election, about what is at issue; what the differences are between the two candidates for President and those for Vice President, the candidates for Senate and Congress; and what the consequences of the election are to real people.

And I normally go through the economy and education and health care and really try to explain it so people like you can go out—you know, every one of you has a lot of friends who will vote in the election who never come to an event like this. Therefore, because they don't do that, and they're good citizens but less political, they are more likely to be undecided voters. And this election could literally be decided based on what somebody says to somebody else about why they ought to make the decision that you hope they'll make.

Now, I'm not going to go through all that tonight because it's late; and because I'm so tired, I'm afraid I'll make a mistake. [Laughter] What I do want to do, however, is use one example, because there are so many young people here. I want to talk about the environment.

Now, when I became President in 1992, I went all over the country saying, "Look, we need a unifying theory of our national politics. If you want to get rid of the deficit and turn the economy around and clean up the environment and improve health care and have the country come together, you can't be pitting these good things against one another. So you have to be able to reduce the deficit and increase investment in education. You have to be able to be pro-business and pro-labor. You have to be able to be pro-economic growth and pro-environmental protection. You have to be able to say people should be proud of their ethnic and their racial heritage, their religious differences, and believe that their common humanity is the most important thing."

I remember a lot of people here—not all but a lot of people here—who were used to talking about politics saying I was either being naive or disingenuous because politics was about having big cleavages in the electorate. And I said, "Not where I come from; and if we'd just run our politics the way we try to run our lives, we'd do better."

So we set about trying to improve the environment. Now, 8 years later, the air is cleaner; we have the toughest air regulations ever to try to get bad particles out of the air; the water is safer, both the water generally and drinking water in particular; the food supply is safer. And we have set aside more land in perpetuity, including Red Rock—Grand Staircase Escalante—than any administration except that of Theodore Roosevelt. And it wasn't bad for the economy, was it?

So there's a choice. So Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary in New York—[*laughter*—and Mark and Tom, they say, “Look, we want to keep growing this economy, but we've got to keep improving the environment, and furthermore, we have to make a much more aggressive effort to deal with the problems of global warming.” We just had another test 2 weeks ago in a big icecap, which documented conclusively that the 1990's were the warmest decade in a thousand years. And even all the—virtually all; not all but virtually all—the oil companies now acknowledge that global warming is real. We have to deal with it. So we want to do that.

Now, here is a choice. Every single year I have been President that our friends in the Republican Party have been in the majority, every year we fight these brutal battles over antienvironmental riders. We win just about all of them, but it's hard because the Republicans, sometimes they want the antienvironmental riders so much, they offer the Democrats a bunch of money hoping they'll vote for the bill, and continuing to assert, “This is terrible for the economy, all this environmental protection the Clinton administration does.”

One of the things I kind of like about the Republicans is that evidence has no impact on them. [*Laughter*] No, I'm serious. I mean, we were laughing, but you've got to respect somebody whose political convictions are so strong that even when it is demonstrable beyond any shadow of doubt they're wrong, they stick with it. You kind of have to like that. [*Laughter*] “Don't bother me with the facts, man. I know what I think, and I'm going to—”[*laughter*].

Now, this is a huge deal. A huge deal. Why? I'll just give you a few examples. This is a big deal. And every Congress seat and whether we win the House back and every Senate seat and this Presidential race is important. And I'll just deal with the environment. Why? Because their candidate for President—go back and read all the stuff that was said in the primary. They think I've gone way overboard on this clean air deal: it's just terrible for the economy; it's going to be unduly burdensome.

Let me tell you something. You talk to the kids that are here. I'll bet you they can tell you this. Do you know what the number one cause of children missing school in America today is, millions of school days a year? Asthma and breathing problems, all over America.

But this is a choice you've got. And if you agree with them, if you think that we just can't achieve a sustainable, an acceptable level of economic growth, if you think we'll never bring economic opportunity to Indian country unless we weaken our commitment to air quality, you can be for them. But if you would like to believe that we can live in harmony with nature—and the last 8 years are good evidence of it—you ought to stick with us.

I'll give you another example. The Audubon Society says that the Executive order I issued setting aside 43 million roadless acres in our national forests was the most significant conservation move in 40 years. Their nominee for President says that he will reverse it if elected. So it's not like you don't have a choice here, and you can get on either side, but don't pretend there's no difference. There is a clear choice.

I'll give you another example. You heard Mark talking about Grand Staircase Escalante. I've made ample use of the power of the President, enshrined when Theodore Roosevelt was President almost a hundred years ago, to protect important lands through national monuments. We set aside a million acres around the Grand Canyon the other day just to protect the watershed. [*Laughter*]

Their nominee says, if elected, he will review all my designations and may undo some of them. I actually don't know if he's got the legal authority to do it, but you get the drift. There's a significant difference here. [*Laughter*] There is a difference here.

I don't know if you heard the Presidential debate the other night. I thought the Vice President did a really nice job, a good job. But there was one issue on which I thought they both did a good job in stating their positions with great clarity. And that was on whether, because of the current energy situation and the higher prices, that it's time to get off the dime and go drill the arctic national wildlife refuge and get the oil out of there.

Now, Governor Bush pointed out that there is a lot of oil up there, and he thought it could be drilled without environmental incident. Now, let's look at the facts. Look at all the oil spills you've seen, everything else. He might be right. They would spend a lot of money. They would try not to do it. Nobody would intentionally mess up the environment. He might be right. But he might be wrong, because in any human

endeavor none of us are free of error. No endeavor is free of accident if you do it long enough. So he might be right. But he might be wrong.

Vice President Gore pointed out that there were other ways to increase domestic energy production, number one. Number two, there was a world of oil out there that was going to be drilled anyway and natural gas around the world, not subject to the OPEC pricing system, that was going to be brought online. And number three, we had not even scratched the surface of our ability to use presently available energy conservation technology—not even scratched the surface—that, beyond that, we were going to develop fuel cells, fuel-injection engines, mixed and blended engines. And if we ever crack the chemical mystery of how to really convert any kind of biomass into fuel, which, as those of you know right now, it takes about 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol—but the chemists that are working on this through research funded by your Federal Government tell us that, if they can do the equivalent of what was done when crude oil was cracked and the refining process was made possible, they can do that with biomass fuels, you'll be able to make 8 gallons of biomass fuel with one gallon of gasoline. Then we will be getting the equivalent of 500 miles to the gallon. All this is out there.

So Al Gore said, look, why take a chance on an irreplaceable national treasure when, if we drilled it, it's just—if we got all our oil out of there, it would last, what, 6 months, a few months anyway—when we can get more energy out of sensible conservation available now? The higher mileage engines are about to come on-line, and pretty soon we'll have different kinds of fuels, anyway. And that's what we ought to do.

They both forcefully, clearly, articulately made their case, and there is a difference. Now, I think we're right, and I think they're not. But the main thing is you can't let anybody you know show up to vote without understanding that there are going to be huge consequences to the way you live. Same thing is true in education. Same thing is true in health care, and it's not just seniors and medicine; it's a lot of other things, as well. The same thing is true in the right to privacy. The same thing is true in how we're going to build one America. Everybody is now for one America. You never see

people using divisive rhetoric in national politics anymore, and I am proud of that. And I give the Republicans credit for not using words that wound anymore. We shouldn't demean—words matter. And I'm glad they've come closer to our position.

But underneath the words, we're for the hate crimes legislation, and their leadership is against it. And they're going to kill it, unless I can figure out how to save it. And if you can figure out how to save it and you'll help us, the Democrats, believe me, we'll be trying until the last day we're here to put it on—to pass it. We've got a bipartisan majority now. There are enough Republicans, including another cousin of Mark's who is in the United States Senate, who every now and then kind of drifts off to the Udall side of his family and votes with us. *[Laughter]* I won't call his name because I'm afraid it will hurt him. I don't want him to be run out of the Republican caucus. *[Laughter]* But they're not for that.

They're not for the employment non-discrimination legislation that says that gays shouldn't be discriminated against in the work force. They're not for our legislation to strengthen the enforcement of equal pay laws for women, still a huge challenge in our country. We had the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, but we still have a big pay gap for doing the same kind of work, and it's wrong. You have all these young women here. You're looking forward to getting out of high school, going to college, getting out of college, going to work. Why should you be paid less than a man if you do the same work with the same responsibility? It's been illegal for 35 years, but we don't enforce it.

Anyway, you get the drift here. This is not a personality contest. I think we should posit that our opponents are good people who love their families, love their country, and will do their dead-level best to do what they think is right when they get in. They have told us what they think is right. We sometimes have trouble unpacking it. But if you look with great clarity on this environmental issue, you can be under no illusion that there will be dramatic differences depending on how this election comes out.

And everybody you know between now and election who will never come to something like this but would never consider missing the vote, you better talk to, because we need Mark Udall;

we need Tom Udall; we need to have a Senate that has a lot more people who think like us; and we need to win this Presidential race. And we will do it. The good news is the American people get it in general. They want this election to be about the issues. They have a sense that this is an extraordinary opportunity. And that's the last thing I'll say.

Al Gore sometimes says, "You ain't seen nothing yet." And I guess, when somebody running says that, it sounds like a campaign statement. I'm not running for anything, and I believe it. I have done my best for 8 years to turn this country around. I've done my best to turn the country around, pull the country together, and move the country forward. But it takes time to turn a country around, to get all the indicators going in the right direction.

Maybe once in 50 years does a great democracy find itself with prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, the absence of domestic crisis or external threat. This just doesn't happen where all this stuff happens at once. We've got a chance for you young people to actually build the future of your dreams. But we have to decide. We have to choose. We cannot pretend that this is not important.

And I'm glad you came here. And I guess in any election year, Mark and Tom and their families could pull out this kind of crowd at 10 o'clock on a Friday night. *[Laughter]* But this election year, you mark my words, this is a big deal.

I was 18 once, the last time we had low unemployment, high growth, low inflation. We had a civil rights challenge, but we thought

there would never be riots in the streets, and it would all be resolved in Congress and the courts. And we sort of kind of drifted off and got our attention divided and found ourselves kind of embroiled in Vietnam. And then before you know it, it had divided the country. We had riots in the streets. Dr. King was killed. Senator Kennedy was killed. President Johnson, who had done so much for civil rights and to alleviate poverty and so much to help education, had a country so divided, he said he wouldn't and probably couldn't run for reelection. And before you knew it, the last time we had an economy like this and a sense of possibility, it was gone like that.

Now we have to concentrate, and we have to argue. We don't have to be mean. We don't have to be negative. All we've got to do is be clear, honest, and energetic. The best is still out there. You need to go get it.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:58 p.m. at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Jill Cooper Udall, wife of Representative Tom Udall; former President Slobodan Milosevic and President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), who was sworn in on October 7; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Representative Tom Udall was a candidate for reelection in New Mexico's Third Congressional District. Representative Mark Udall was a candidate for reelection in Colorado's Second Congressional District.

The President's Radio Address

October 7, 2000

Good morning. Every year more than 56,000 Americans die from colorectal cancer, and another 130,000 are diagnosed with the disease. These are people we know and love, our families, friends, and neighbors. Today I want to talk about our common fight against this quiet killer and what we can do as a Nation to save more lives.

Many people are uncomfortable talking about cancer, especially colorectal cancer. And while

all of us may be able to appreciate this reluctance, our silence protects no one, least of all those we love most. That's why so many Americans, tens of thousands of them, led by Katie Couric, have come to Washington this weekend to speak out and rally against colorectal cancer.

For 8 years now, the Vice President and I have made the fight against cancer one of our top priorities, nearly doubling funding for cancer research and treatment. We've also accelerated

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the approval of cancer drugs while maintaining the highest standards of safety. We've strengthened Medicare to make prevention, screening, and clinical trials more available and more affordable. During Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the Senate voted to fund our proposal to provide health coverage to uninsured women with breast and cervical cancer.

These efforts are paying off. Earlier this year we learned for the first time that cancer deaths in the United States are no longer rising. We need to build on that progress by encouraging more early detection and treatment. Colorectal cancer is the second-leading cancer killer in America. The good news is that caught soon enough, more than 90 percent of the cases can be cured. That's why in 1998 Hillary helped to launch the first national campaign against colorectal cancer, much as we've been working for years to defeat breast cancer.

Our family, like so many American families, knows all too well the terrible toll cancer can take, and we want to do everything we can to help others avoid that loss. Today I'm announcing several new actions in the war against cancer. First, the National Cancer Institute will invest \$30 million over the next 5 years to help doctors expand and improve screening procedures for colorectal cancer. We need to address the chronic underuse of these lifesaving tools, and this new investment will encourage physicians to make regular use of the most effective procedures.

Second, we're launching a new initiative to educate Medicare beneficiaries about the importance of regular checkups and cancer screenings. Beginning next year, every senior and every American with a disability using Medicare will get a screening reminder, starting with one on colorectal cancer, every time they go to their doctor or use Medicare's toll-free hotline.

Third, I'm urging Congress to pass bipartisan legislation that expands Medicare to include more sophisticated colorectal cancer screening

tests for people over the age of 50. Congress should not adjourn before sending me this legislation. They should also pass my proposal to eliminate all cost-sharing requirements for colorectal screening and other preventive procedures under Medicare. If we take these steps, we'll remove major barriers to older Americans getting the preventive care they need.

And finally, once again I ask Congress to pass a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, one that ensures that cancer patients, along with all patients, have access to the specialty care they need. It's time to put progress before partisanship and get people the medical care they need and deserve.

While the war against cancer is not yet won, we all have reason for new hope. Even as I speak, scientists are fast unlocking the secrets of the human genome, and revolutionary treatments are sure to follow. As they do, Americans should know that we'll do everything necessary to safeguard their privacy and to outlaw genetic discrimination in both employment and health insurance.

In the meantime, we must all stand watch against cancer, even if that means confronting at times our worst fears. None of us will ever die of embarrassment, so go to the doctor and get that screening done. Remember, with early detection, quality care, love from our families, and the grace of God, we can all lead longer, healthier, and better lives.

Thank you.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:13 p.m. on October 6 in the East Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 7. In his remarks, the President referred to Katie Couric, cohost of NBC's "Today Show" and cofounder of WebMD Rock 'n Race to Fight Colon Cancer. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 6 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Telephone Remarks to a Rally for Representative Julia Carson *October 7, 2000*

Let me say, first of all, I'm just sick I can't be there. But I think you know that for the

last 2 days I've been up day and night, literally. I was up all night last night because of the

continuing violence in the Middle East and the responsibility the United States has to do everything we can to get things calmed down and get back to the peace process. Nothing else would keep me away.

I want to say to all my friends in Indiana, you ought to be very proud of Joe Andrew. He has done a great job with the DNC. And I think I can speak for every Democrat outside Indiana; we are proud of Bart Peterson and thrilled that he is the mayor of Indianapolis.

I want to thank Governor Frank O'Bannon for working so closely with me, and Lieutenant Governor Kernan and your attorney general. And I want to tell you that I've known Evan Bayh since he replaced me as the youngest Governor in America, and he and Susan do you great credit in Washington every single day. I have no doubt that the future is unlimited for him.

Most of all, I want to tell you that there is nobody in Congress I like any better than Julia Carson. She is one of a kind. And when she kind of sidles into a room and takes a stand for education or children or moving people from welfare and poverty into work, everybody listens to her. And she's acquired an unusual amount of influence in Congress in a very short time because she deals with people so effectively and she has such credibility and she's so compelling when she makes a point. I've just sort of learned to do what she asks me to do without her having to argue it now. [*Laughter*]

I'd like to just make a simple argument tonight in Indiana, because you've got a lot of Republicans there, but the Democrats are doing better. Why are the Democrats doing better? Because you deliver.

And I just want to say to you that, you know, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on a ballot at election time. So I'm telling you this as a person who, within a matter of 4 months, will be like most of you out there, just another American citizen. This country is in good shape. We are moving in the right direction. We are better off than we were 8 years ago, and we need to keep changing in the right direction. That is the strongest argument for why every election this year is important, every Senate seat, every House seat, every governorship, and of course, most important of all, the election for President and Vice President.

Now, in Indiana, you've done well because people have seen you produce results. And I

want you to go out there, between now and election day, and ask everybody you know in Indiana and in the States bordering Indiana, all of which are critical to our success, to remember what it was like 8 years ago. Look at what it's like now. That's because we changed the direction of the country. We've got a better economic policy, a better education policy, a better health care policy, a better environmental policy, a better foreign policy. And we need to keep changing in that direction.

And people need to understand that once in a lifetime, maybe once in 50 or 60 years, a country gets a chance to do what we've got to do now, with all this prosperity and progress and confidence, with no crisis at home and no threat to our security abroad. We've got a chance and a responsibility to build the future of our dreams for our kids, and we need to put in office people who are committed to that. Every voter needs to understand there are real differences between our party and theirs and our candidates and theirs, starting at the top and going all the way through.

We've got a different economic policy. We want to keep paying down the debt, give people a tax cut we can afford to send their kids to college, to save for retirement, for child care when they're working, for long-term care when they've got their folks or disabled children living at home with them. But we've got to have enough money to invest in education and pay down the debt.

They offer everybody a bigger tax cut, but that and their privatization of Social Security plan and their promise to spend will put us right back in deficits. The Democratic Party is the fiscally responsible party in America today that will keep interest rates lower, and every American will have lower home mortgages, car payments, credit card payments, college loan payments. Businesses will borrow money for less, and they'll create more jobs and higher incomes.

If you want to keep this prosperity going, vote for the Democrats. That's the message that you've got to get out there all over America.

But if you look at all the other areas where we're different—we're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We're for a Medicare prescription drug program that every senior who needs it can buy into on a voluntary basis, and they only want to help half the people who need the medicine. Their plan won't work. It

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has already been tried in one State, and they keep on doing it. It's wrong. We are the party that wants to help provide the medicine that our seniors need and deserve, and every American needs to understand that. Every American needs to understand that we are the party for smaller class sizes and modern schools and after-school and summer school and preschool programs for the kids who need it and a tax deduction to pay for the cost of college tuition so that everybody's child can have 4 years of college. That's the Democratic Party, and people need to know that, and I want you to help them know that.

And for all of you there, the most important thing I want you to do is make sure Julia Carson

wins an overwhelming reelection. She's a wonderful woman and a great Representative in Congress.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:25 p.m. from the Residence at the White House to the rally at the Indianapolis Colts Complex in Indianapolis, IN. In his remarks, he referred to Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Gov. Frank O'Bannon, Lt. Gov. Joseph E. Kernan, and State Attorney General Karen Freeman-Wilson of Indiana; and Senator Bayh's wife, Susan. Representative Carson was a candidate for reelection in Indiana's 10th Congressional District.

Statement on Returning to the House of Representatives Without Approval Energy and Water Development Appropriations Legislation

October 7, 2000

Today I vetoed a deeply flawed energy/water appropriations bill that threatens major environmental harm by blocking our efforts to modernize operations on the Missouri River. This antienvironmental rider would not only jeopardize the survival of three threatened and endangered species but would also establish a dangerous precedent aimed at barring a Federal agency from obeying one of our Nation's landmark environmental statutes.

Additionally, this bill funded scores of special projects for special interests. It failed to provide

sufficient funding for priorities in the national interest—including environmental restoration of the Florida Everglades and the California-Bay Delta, and our strategy to restore endangered salmon in the Pacific Northwest. It also failed to fund efforts to research and develop nonpolluting sources of energy through solar and renewable technologies that are vital to America's energy security.

I urge Congress to quickly produce an energy/water bill I can sign.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Energy and Water Development Appropriations Legislation

October 7, 2000

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval, H.R. 4733, the "Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2001." The bill contains an unacceptable rider regarding the Army Corps of Engineers' master operating manual for the Missouri River. In addition, it fails to provide funding for the California-Bay Delta ini-

tiative and includes nearly \$700 million for over 300 unrequested projects.

Section 103 would prevent the Army Corps of Engineers from revising the operating manual for the Missouri River that is 40 years old and needs to be updated based on the most recent scientific information. In its current form, the manual simply does not provide an appropriate balance among the competing interests, both

commercial and recreational, of the many people who seek to use this great American river. The bill would also undermine implementation of the Endangered Species Act by preventing the Corps of Engineers from funding reasonable and much-needed changes to the operating manual for the Missouri River. The Corps and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are entering a critical phase in their Section 7 consultation on the effects of reservoir project operations. This provision could prevent the Corps from carrying out a necessary element of any reasonable and prudent alternative to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of the endangered least tern and pallid sturgeon, and the threatened piping plover.

In addition to the objectionable restriction placed upon the Corps of Engineers, the bill fails to provide funding for the California-Bay Delta initiative. This decision could significantly hamper ongoing Federal and State efforts to restore this ecosystem, protect the drinking water of 22 million Californians, and enhance water supply and reliability for over 7 million acres of highly productive farmland and growing urban areas across California. The \$60 million budget request, all of which would be used to support activities that can be carried out using existing authorities, is the minimum necessary to ensure adequate Federal participation in these initiatives, which are essential to reducing existing conflicts among water users in California. This funding should be provided without legislative restrictions undermining key environmental statutes or disrupting the balanced approach to meeting the needs of water users and the environment that has been carefully developed through almost 6 years of work with the State of California and interested stakeholders.

The bill also fails to provide sufficient funding necessary to restore endangered salmon in the Pacific Northwest, which would interfere with the Corps of Engineers' ability to comply with

the Endangered Species Act, and provides no funds to start the new construction project requested for the Florida Everglades. The bill also fails to fund the Challenge 21 program for environmentally friendly flood damage reduction projects, the program to modernize Corps recreation facilities, and construction of an emergency outlet at Devil's Lake. In addition, it does not fully support efforts to research and develop nonpolluting, domestic sources of energy through solar and renewable technologies that are vital to America's energy security.

Finally, the bill provides nearly \$700 million for over 300 unrequested projects, including: nearly 80 unrequested projects totaling more than \$330 million for the Department of Energy; nearly 240 unrequested projects totaling over \$300 million for the Corps of Engineers; and, more than 10 unrequested projects totaling in excess of \$10 million for the Bureau of Reclamation. For example, more than 80 unrequested Corps of Engineers construction projects included in the bill would have a long-term cost of nearly \$2.7 billion. These unrequested projects and earmarks come at the expense of other initiatives important to tax-paying Americans.

The American people deserve Government spending based upon a balanced approach that maintains fiscal discipline, eliminates the national debt, extends the solvency of Social Security and Medicare, provides for an appropriately sized tax cut, establishes a new voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit in the context of broader reforms, expands health care coverage to more families, and funds critical investments for our future. I urge the Congress to work expeditiously to develop a bill that addresses the needs of the Nation.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
October 7, 2000.

Telephone Remarks to a Reception for Representative Julia Carson *October 7, 2000*

Well, first of all, I want to thank Jeff for hosting this event tonight and for the many years of friendship I've enjoyed with him. I've

been told that Evan and Susan Bayh are there and Frank and Judy O'Bannon and your other State officials. I heard you talking about Mayor

Peterson. And Joe Andrew—I want to say again what I said this afternoon—he’s really done Indiana proud here at the DNC. I’m really proud of him.

If you’ve been following the news today, you know why I couldn’t come. I’ve been up for virtually 2 days now trying to stop the violence in the Middle East and get the peace process back on track. It’s a difficult situation. We’re down to all the hard issues now, and it’s just something I couldn’t leave. I can’t get away from the phone because of what’s going on there and in the U.N. and in other countries. I have to be available here 100 percent of the time.

I’m really, really sorry to miss this because I had looked forward to coming back to Indiana, and I wanted to do anything I could to help Julia Carson. She’s one of my favorite people in American politics. She’s a real treasure for you. She’s done a great job, and she is so effective.

You know, she’s got a style that reminds me of all these big, white country judges I used to deal with in Arkansas. *[Laughter]* She kind of eases up to you and talks to you, and then, before you know it, your billfold is gone. *[Laughter]* We have learned in the White House just to go on and give her what she wants the first time she asks, because we know we’re going to give in sooner or later. *[Laughter]*

Seriously, she’s acquired an unusual amount of influence here in a short time because she is so good at what she does and because everybody likes and respects her, and I’m at the head of that list. So I’m very grateful to you for helping her.

The only other thing I’d like to say tonight is that perhaps more than anyone in America, after these last 8 years, I know how important every Senate seat, every House seat is, and I know how important this election is. The resurgence of the Democratic Party in Indiana is perhaps the best example anywhere in America of what can happen if you take good Democratic values and common sense and get things done and produce results. And that’s what we’ve tried to do. I just hope that all of you will take every opportunity you can between now and the election to remind people of where we were 8 years ago and where we are now and why we ought to keep changing in the same direction and not turn around and go back.

The consequences of this election are very profound, and sometimes I get a little concerned

that people may not believe that because times are so good. But it’s often more difficult to make a good decision in good times than it is in hard times. We have a clear difference here between the two parties, between the candidates for Congress and for the Senate and certainly for the White House.

We’ve worked hard nationally to do what Evan Bayh and Frank O’Bannon have done in Indiana, to prove that you can be fiscally responsible, balance your budgets, and still take care of people. And that is, in some ways, maybe the biggest difference between the Democratic and Republican approaches today. If Al Gore’s plan is adopted, tax cuts will be smaller, and some of you will get less money, but we’ll pay the debt off, and interest rates will be lower. And over the next 10 years, the estimates are that, under his plan, interest rates will be a percent lower, and that’s \$390 billion in home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car loans, \$15 billion in lower student loans, lower credit card payments, lower business loans, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market. It’s not very complicated.

You simply cannot get this country back into deficit, which is what would happen if the Republican plans for the huge tax cut, the privatization of Social Security, and their spending promises go into effect. We’ll be right back where we were, and we can’t afford to do it. It’s a big difference.

And I just want to ask all of you to make sure that people understand that the choice is real and the consequences will be real, too. And I think the choice is clear. We have a different economic policy, a different health care policy, a different education policy, a different environmental policy, and a different foreign policy. And I think the results speak for themselves.

You can cite Indiana as an example, and you can cite the record of our administration in the last 8 years. Nothing I have done, however, would have been possible without people in Congress like Senator Bayh and Representative Carson. I am just profoundly grateful.

And I want to say a special word of thanks because it’s still hard for a Democrat running for national office in Indiana. And for those of you who stood up for me, you deserve some sort of Purple Heart, and I want to thank you for that, as well. *[Laughter]*

But now you have something you didn’t have so much of—you didn’t have any of in ’92 and

not so much of in '96. You have evidence. Some of our Republican friends, I've got to hand it to them. When it comes to the budget or how we ought to pay for prescription drugs, evidence doesn't faze them. They don't care about the evidence. They just know what they think.

But most people, I think, in Indiana and the States bordering Indiana—a lot of you have friends there, in States that could go either way—really care about whether what we're doing is consistent with our values and will actually work. That's one of the reasons that I wanted so badly to be there for Julia today, because she works and she gets things done. Again, I just can't thank you enough for helping her.

And thank you, Jeff, for indirectly having me in your home. I hope I can have a raincheck.

I've been trying to visit you for a lot longer than I've been President. So maybe some day we'll get it done.

Thank you all very, very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:02 p.m. from the Residence at the White House to the reception at a private residence in Indianapolis, IN. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Jeffrey Smulyan; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana and his wife, Judy; Senator Bayh's wife, Susan; Mayor Bart Peterson of Indianapolis; and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee. Representative Carson was a candidate for reelection in Indiana's 10th Congressional District.

Telephone Remarks to a Reception for Hillary Clinton

October 7, 2000

The President. Well, I'm just sorry I'm not there. I've looked forward to coming to visit you in Indiana for a long time. I want to begin just by thanking you and Mel for being such good friends to Hillary and me. I've been with you in Colorado and Florida, and I really wanted to come up there and see you.

And I want to thank Cindy and Paul for hosting this tonight. And I want to thank all the people who are there to help Hillary. I really—as I said, I looked forward to being there. But as I told Bren a few hours ago, I've been up almost without sleep for 2 days trying to deal with the situation in the Middle East. It's quite violent, and it presents a real threat to the peace process that everybody there has worked for, for 7½ years now. I just couldn't leave the telephone and my responsibilities here. I hope you'll forgive me for not being there with you.

Bren Simon. Well, we certainly understand. We do want you to know that Senator Evan Bayh and Susan are with us tonight, and they send their best regards to you.

The President. I'm just trying to get another vote for Evan up there in the Senate. *[Laughter]* He doesn't need a lot of help, but he could use all the help he can get. I want to say to all of you there, Evan and Susan have been

friends of Hillary's and mine for a long time, since Evan knocked me out as being the youngest Governor in America. We like them. We respect them. We care for them, and I'm just thrilled that they've done as well as they have for Indiana and for the United States in Washington. Evan has really, really had an impact on the Senate, and you should be very proud of him.

The only other thing I want to say is that I know how difficult it is to raise funds for a candidate from another State a long way away, even somebody who is the First Lady. But this is really a worthy cause. The other side has raised, I think, between the two candidates that have run against Hillary, a total of \$50 million. So we've had to work real hard and get support from our friends around the country.

She has done so well. She's got a big debate tomorrow morning, and keep your fingers crossed for her. I must say, I'm absolutely convinced, based on over 30 years of working in politics and seeing people in public life, that she will be one of the great United States Senators of the last several years, if we can just get through these next 4 or 5 months. And I think all of you will be very proud that you came there and helped her win. I just can't tell you how grateful I am.

Mrs. Simon. Well, we agree with you, as far as Hillary's campaign is concerned, and we're all here to support her. And I wanted you to know also that George Hamilton flew in from L.A. especially to be with us tonight, so he's a little disappointed, too.

The President. I'm sorry I didn't get to see George. [Laughter] I kind of resent it. You know, when I came here, I was like George. I looked younger than I am, and now I look like I'm about half-dead. [Laughter] I still feel pretty good for a guy with a lot of miles on him. [Laughter] Thank you for coming, George.

Mrs. Simon. Mr. President, is it possible for Ian, our grandson, to say hello to you?

The President. Absolutely.

Mrs. Simon. Ian, say hello.

Ian Skjodt. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. Hello, Ian, how are you?

Ian. Good.

The President. How old are you?

Ian. Six.

The President. I think you're on your way to being a good public speaker. [Laughter]

Mrs. Simon. Would you like to say hello, Samantha? Come up here, Eric and Samantha. They're very, very disappointed you couldn't be here, but they're excited to say hello to you.

Samantha Skjodt. Hello?

The President. Hello, Samantha.

Samantha. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. How are you?

Samantha. Fine.

The President. And how old are you?

Samantha. Eleven.

The President. That's great. Well, I'm sorry I didn't get to meet you.

Mrs. Simon. Eric and Samantha are twins, so Eric is going to say hello to you now.

Eric Skjodt. Hello.

The President. Hi, Eric.

Eric. Hi. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. Good job. I think you ought to bring them to see me in the White House before I go.

Mrs. Simon. You know, we were excited to find out that we'll probably come in and see a movie or something in the near future with the children, if that's okay.

The President. Absolutely. We'll set it up.

Mrs. Simon. Okay, great.

The President. I'm so grateful to all of you who are there. And let me say just one little serious word. I'm also very grateful for the chance I've had to serve, and I'm glad our country is in such good shape. But this is a really important election, because the decisions we make will determine whether we stick with an economic policy that's working, build on a health care policy, stick with an education policy that's working, and continue to change in the right direction or do something entirely different that I think won't work nearly as well.

This is an election that's going to have real consequences for the American people, and sometimes I'm concerned that because times are good, people think it doesn't much matter. It matters a lot. I guess you know that, or you wouldn't be there tonight, even for Mel and Bren and Cindy and Paul. But I'm very grateful to you, and I thank you very, very much.

Mrs. Simon. Thank you very much. Thank you for calling.

The President. Thank you all, and good night.

Mrs. Simon. Good luck with everything.

The President. Thanks. Keep your fingers crossed. Thanks, Evan.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 p.m. from the Residence at the White House to the reception at a private residence in Indianapolis, IN. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Bren and Melvin Simon, their daughter Cindy Simon Skjodt, son-in-law Paul Skjodt, and grandchildren Ian, Samantha, and Eric Skjodt; Senator Bayh's wife, Susan; and actor George Hamilton.

Interview With Joe Klein of the New Yorker in New York City July 5, 2000

President's Historical Perspective

Mr. Klein. Do you essentially agree with my sense that you had—that the big issue has been moving from the industrial age to the information age, and that—I mean, the toughest thing—

The President. Yes. The short answer to that is yes.

Mr. Klein. —to explain to people is, you take something like—how can being in favor of affirmative action and being in favor of welfare reform be part of the same vision? How can being in favor of free trade and being in favor of universal health insurance be part of the same vision? There are people on the right or the left who would say, “You can’t do that.” And yet, I think that they are part of the same vision. But my first question is, how would you describe that vision?

The President. I think my view—I saw my Presidency as a transformational period, and basically, America has gone through two before. Maybe it could start if we did it in historical times. There were basically—I look at American history in the following—we had the creation—how we got started and sort of filling out the elements of the National Government and defining what it meant. And that basically went from the Declaration of Independence to the Constitution, Washington’s Presidency, and the appointment of John Marshall as Chief Justice—which is a very important thing—and then, ironically, through Jefferson’s Presidency, with the purchase of Louisiana and the Lewis and Clark expedition, and then the next big challenge was, how would we adapt that to our growing industrialization? And how did we get rid of slavery, which was inconsistent with our principles? So obviously, that’s what Lincoln and the Civil War and the constitutional amendments—and everything that happened on civil rights after that was about slavery. But there was no single President that managed the process, if you will, or laid out a framework from the agricultural society to an industrial society. But that’s part of what the railroads, the canals was all about, and it’s part of what—and Lincoln was a part of that with the Morrill Land Grant Act, with the colleges.

Mr. Klein. This happened too slowly for—

The President. But it happened over a long period of time. Then, there was the transformation from the—you know, it happened over a long period of time as we slowly became a balanced society. But then, when we burst onto the world scene as a major national industrial power, that process was basically defined by Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. And I sort of saw this period in parallel with that.

The rest of the 20th century was mostly about dealing with the rise of—first, the Great Depression; then the war and the need to defeat totalitarian systems, which was part of the war and the cold war; and dealing with the specific challenges at home, principally civil rights, the women’s movement, and the growth of environmental movement in America.

So here, we are moving into, basically, from an industrial society—an industrial economy to an information economy, and at the same time moving into an ever more globalized economy, which also is more and more of a global society in that we share common challenges and common interests that go beyond economics. And the globalization of the media has accelerated that.

So I saw my challenges trying to, first of all, maximize America’s presence in the information economy; second, to try to maximize our influence in the welfare of our country and like-minded people around the world in a globalized society. And then, the other—and I’ll get to your questions—and then the third big thing for me was trying to make people have a broader and deeper vision of the American community and how to handle diversity and how we would finally get a chance to see, in ways we never had before, what it meant to make one out of many, what our national motto meant.

And I think the—and you ask me, well, how can you reconcile those things? It seems to me that the two operational strategies we had to pursue those three great goals were, one, the Third Way political and social philosophy. If you believe in opportunity and responsibility and community, then it’s perfectly clear why you would be for affirmative action and a global

trading system, you know, why you would be for health care for everybody and whatever else you said—what was the other thing?

Mr. Klein. Free trade. No, I said that.

The President. Welfare reform.

Mr. Klein. Welfare reform.

The President. Welfare reform, because first of all, work is the best social program. Secondly, it is imperative to have a basic work ethic if you believe in individual responsibility and you believe it gives meaning and direction to life, and I do. But if you do, you also recognize that there is no society—no society has succeeded in providing access to health care to everybody without some governmental action.

Mr. Klein. But there have been people all along, as you know—I mean, you and I had this same conversation in 1991. People all along said, “This is just an electoral strategy. It isn’t a Government strategy.”

The President. It was never just an electoral strategy to me.

Mr. Klein. Well, me, neither, as you know. And the question—I guess my question is, do you feel that you were ever able to really communicate the depth and breadth of this to the public?

The President. Yes, but only—probably only at the State of the Union Addresses, because it’s probably the only time I ever got to say it unfiltered. If I made an error in those, even though they always received very high public approval ratings, they said it always took me so much time to explain my specific ideas in education or whatever, I’m not sure I ever took full advantage of the opportunity to lay the coherent philosophy out—because I do think at those points, that people got it.

But what I was going to tell you, if I could go back—I think we had the transformation from the industrial economy to the information economy, from the idea of a national society to an idea of a more global society in which nation-states matter. I think the nation-state will matter more in some ways in the 21st century. We can talk about that some.

And thirdly, the whole idea of defining America where our diversity was something to be cherished and celebrated because—because our common humanity and common values were more important.

And then, operationally, I think, the two things I think that mattered, I made some—the whole Third Way political and social philos-

ophy, one; and second is sort of a relentless focus on the future, making people always—trying to force people to always think about not only what we’re doing, how does it affect today, but what’s it going to be like 5 years from now, 10 years from now, 20 years from now? And I think that is often—that hasn’t often been the business of the Government.

But if you go back to Roosevelt’s focus on conservation or Wilson’s struggle of—failed attempt at the League of Nations, I think what made them both great Presidents for the transformational period America was in is that they were not only successful in the moment, by and large, but they had this focus on the future; they kept trying to spark the public imagination with the future. And that’s—I hope very much that the announcement of this genome project, although I think it fills people with foreboding as well as hope, will tend to spark future orientation on the part of the voters, so the issues that are plainly before us, but won’t be felt for a few years will have more effect on the debate and also on people’s voting rights.

Trade

Mr. Klein. But it’s a difficult thing. Charlene Barshefsky said to me that there are times that you’ve really been concerned, that the expression you used was that you hadn’t found your voice on trade, which is the equivalent of—

The President. Well, one of the things—she, of course, has to deal with it. But the two things in trade that have frustrated me most, although I think we’ve got a great record—and you can go from NAFTA to the WTO, to the Africa/CBI, to launching the free trade of the Americas to—China.

Mr. Klein. The reason I raised it was because what you just said about the genome reminded me—I just read your remarks about NAFTA in October ’93, and it was very similar, too.

The President. Yes. And then, of course, China, and then in between we had 270-odd agreements, and we had the Mexican financial crisis and the Asian financial crisis. But the thing that bothered me about trade—the two things that have bothered me about trade, I think, are: One, I have so far not created a consensus within my own party, at least among the elected officials, for the view of trade which I hold. And two—and I think it’s genuine; that is, I don’t think this is just politics. I think it’s how people view the world—the second thing, and

closely related to that, is that—I went to Geneva twice, and I went to Davos once, and then I went out to Seattle to try to make the case that you can't have a global trading system apart from a global social conscience, anyway, where there is a legitimate place for the voices of those who care about the rights of workers, the condition of children in the workplace, the impact of economic development on the environment, both nationally and globally. I haven't yet, at least, been able to convince people that there is a synthesizing vision here that has to drive not only a global trading system but these other initiatives as well. And I suppose I shouldn't be surprised, because it's a fairly new debate.

And one of the great things that always struck me is, if you look at the people who were demonstrating in Seattle, while I think they were all sincere—that is, they believed in what they were demonstrating against—their sense of solidarity was truly ironic, because they had completely conflicting positions.

Mr. Klein. What?

The President. I mean, for example, a lot of the labor union people that demonstrated believe that even though—for example, they think that even though this China deal is a short-term benefit to American industry because China drops their barriers, that they're so big that there will be so much investment there that they will develop a great deal of industrial capacity and that wage levels will be so low that it will cost the developed world, and particularly America because our markets are more open than the Europeans, a lot of our industrial base within a fairly short term. And that's what they really believe. I don't believe that, but that's what they believe.

And then you have the people that are demonstrating on behalf of the Third World, and they believe our concern for labor and the environment is a protectionist ruse to protect American high-wage jobs.

But they're all out there in the streets in Seattle demonstrating together, because they're genuinely frustrated about the way the world is going and they kind of don't like this whole globalization thing. They think it's going to lead to further loss of control by ordinary people over the basic circumstances of their lives, and that bothers them.

Mr. Klein. I think that this is—to kind of put a cap on the first question—I mean, that's so much at the heart of what you've been trying

to overcome. I was talked to Zoe Baird, who said that she always remembers the statistics that you used, I think in around '95, that more jobs had been created by companies owned by women than had been lost by Fortune 500 companies. You always tried to make the future less frightened for folks. And yet, I'm not sure you're convinced that you made the case.

The President. Well, I think I made the case to the people that were open to it, but I believe that—I think that it's hard. Everybody's for change in general, but normally against it in particular. You know, what's that Dick Riley used to say? "Let's all change. You go first." [Laughter] That's his sort of formulation of it. It shouldn't be surprising. But I still believe, first of all, I think that what I said to the American people is true and right. Secondly, I don't think there is any alternative to change. So I think the real question is, how do you bring your, basically, values that don't change—how do you translate them into specific approaches and policies that have the greatest chance of enhancing those values in the world you're going to live in? That's the way I look at this.

And I think that for the United States to have essentially turned away from this world, I think, would have been a terrible mistake. And in fact, I think the only mistake we've made in this whole thing is not accelerating the integration of the free trade area of the Americas more—more rapid.

Deficit Reduction

Mr. Klein. Let me ask you some specific questions. Let's take a walk; start in '93. The First Lady said to me the other day that she believed that deficit reduction was a predicate for doing all the rest of the stuff.

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Klein. She compared it to education in Arkansas when you were reelected.

The President. The '93 economic plan made all the rest of this possible.

Mr. Klein. There were a fair number of people on your staff that were saying, you know, it would throw the economy into recession. And you were dealing—it was a theory at that point that if you lowered the deficit, interest rates would come down, and you would achieve the kind of growth that you have achieved. I mean, what made you think that—

The President. First of all, let me back up a little bit. The people on the staff who favored

somewhat—there was nobody on my staff that was against vigorous deficit reduction. There were some who were afraid that to make the decisions we would have to make to get the \$500 billion, which is what Lloyd Bentsen and Bob Rubin felt was sort of the magic psychological threshold we had to cross to get the bond markets and the stock market to respond in an appropriate way, they were afraid that if we did that, we would have to shelve too much of our progressive commitments in the campaign.

Now, what finally happened was, we came up with a plan that raised income taxes only on the top 1.2 percent of the people, which I had, after all, promised to do in the '92 campaign. It wasn't like I didn't tell upper income people who supported me I wouldn't try to raise their taxes. But we had to raise them at the very end. Bentsen came in with a plan that essentially lifted the income cap off the Medicare taxes, which closed the gap. And we stuck with the gas tax, which Charlie Stenholm and some of our conservatives who were big deficit hawks were worried about, because they were afraid it would make our guys vulnerable, and I think it did. It was the only thing that average people had to pay, except that there were, I think, 13 percent of the Social Security recipients paid more because we began to tax Social Security income more like regular pension income.

But it was the Republicans who believed that tax increases by definition were recessionary and that—so they unanimously opposed the plan.

You asked me what convinced me. What convinced me finally was that I believe fundamentally, unless we got interest rates down and investment flowing, that we would never be able to see a decline in unemployment and growth in new businesses, particularly in this high-tech sector which depended on vast flows of venture capital, confidence capital, if you will, that it seemed to me was just out there bursting, waiting to happen.

I think—and maybe it was my experience as a Governor that informed all this—but I really did believe there was this huge, vast, pent-up potential in the American economy that had been artificially repressed ever since the deficit spending recovery at the end of President Reagan's first term. Basically, what happened at the end of the first Reagan term is, interest rates weren't too high because we had such a terrible

recession and so much inflation and such high interest rates at the end of President Carter's term, so when the interest rates came down, then inflation—naturally inflation around the world came down. Those huge deficits brought us back a little bit. But the long-term potential of the American economy, I was convinced, could never be unleashed until we got rid of the deficit.

So finally, I just decided that if I didn't get the economy going, nothing else would matter in the end, and I believed that the pent-up potential of the American economy was so great, that if we did get the interest rates down and we did get investment up, everything else would fall into place. And I thought that I ought to listen to Bentsen and Rubin because they knew a lot more about it than I did.

Earned-Income Tax Credit

Mr. Klein. But you didn't listen to Bentsen on the EITC. That was one place where you absolutely didn't bend at all.

The President. No, but we had promised that, and I believed in it. I thought—and again, I'm confident that not only what I saw in the campaign but my experience as Governor of a State that was always in the bottom two or three in per capita income had an impact on this. But I just believe that we had to use the tax system to dignify the work of low-wage workers and to make it possible for them to raise their children more successfully. I didn't think I could go out there and argue for a tough welfare reform bill and a tough deficit reduction package, and say I was going to have to slow down my increases in education spending and some other—social spending, housing, and all these other things that I would otherwise like to do—if we weren't prepared to give lower income working people more income.

I also thought it was good economics, because they were going to spend it. They needed to spend it.

Congress and Taxes

Mr. Klein. Did you ever think that—was there any way that you could have gotten Republicans to go along with this?

The President. I don't know, and I'll tell you why. In retrospect, maybe there were some things I could have done.

Mr. Klein. What if you had invited Dole and Michel to that dinner in Little Rock?

The President. Yes, or invited them down even on their own it might have worked. The real problem I see with it—in retrospect, the reason I say I don’t know—first of all I wish I had done that, because later on I started bending over backwards. I had Gingrich in and Arme y in, and I met with them exhaustively, and I tried. Often it didn’t work, but we did get some things done from time to time.

I think they had made a decision to oppose all tax increases because of the Gingrich position vis-a-vis President Bush. And he was pretty well in the ideological saddle, the political saddle in the House then. And I think because Senator Dole obviously hoped to run for President in ’96, I think the Republicans in the Senate were going to be reluctant to break ranks once it was obvious that the House Republicans were going to oppose any kind of deficit reduction package that had any tax increases in it.

And I didn’t believe—if we hadn’t gone for some upper income tax increases, then number one, we would have had to adopt cuts that the Democratic majority in the House would not have supported, even under me. And number two, we could not have kept our commitments on the earned-income tax credits on education, where we did have a substantial increase, or on the empowerment zones or a lot of the other things I did that I believed in.

Washington Politics

Mr. Klein. Did the atmosphere surprise you, the vitriol, the difficulty?

The President. Yes, it did, I think, basically, but I now know things I didn’t know then.

Mr. Klein. What do you know now?

The President. Well, they really believed—first, I know now something I didn’t know, which is that some of the people on the Republican side—actually, I did know this, but I didn’t believe it when I got a call from the White House early—before I decided to run in the summer of 1990—from a guy I knew who worked there who was saying, “You know, you shouldn’t run.” Bush was at like 80 percent then or something. I couldn’t believe—so I had this serious talk with him about how President Bush had used his popularity to try to deal with the economy.

And after about 5 minutes, the guy said, “Now, let’s just cut the crap. We’ve looked at this crowd, and we can beat them all. All the guys in Congress have votes. We can beat them

all. And we think Governor Cuomo’s too liberal, but you’re different. You might beat us, and so if you run, we’re going to take you out early.” Then I realized that they somehow thought it was serious.

Then, after I got up here and started dealing with them, what I realized is that they had been in for 12 years, but they basically had been in since President Nixon won, except for the Carter interregnum, which they thought was purely a function of Watergate, and therefore they saw it as an historical accident that they had quickly corrected, and that’s the way they saw it. I actually think Jimmy Carter and, before him, Bobby Kennedy were the precursors of the sort of New Democrat, Third Way stuff I’ve tried to do here. And I think, therefore, it’s not fair, but that—exactly, to diminish—but that’s the way they viewed it, anyway.

So I think they believed that there would never be another Democratic President. I really think a lot of them thought they could hold the White House forever, until a third party came along to basically offer a competing vision. And so, they just never saw me as a legitimate person. They just thought I was, in President Bush’s words, the Governor of a small southern State. And as I often crack on the trail, I was so naive that I actually thought that was a compliment. [Laughter] And I still do.

So anyway, it did surprise me. I mean, I knew it was there, and I’d seen the Democrats do things—in my view, I guess I’ve got a warped view, but I never thought it was nearly as bad as what they did to me. But from time to time, the Democrats did things I didn’t approve of. I didn’t like the nature of their arguments against John Tower or the fact that somebody checked out the movies that Bob Bork—and I knew there was some of this up here.

But I never thought I would see it in the kind of systematic way that I saw it unfold. But when I got to know Newt Gingrich and actually had a lot of candid conversations with him, I realized that that’s just the way they thought politics worked.

Mr. Klein. War without blood.

The President. Yes, that’s what they thought.

Mr. Klein. That’s what Newt called it.

The President. I had a fascinating conversation with one Republican Senator in the middle of the D’Amato hearings when they were impugning Hillary. And I asked this guy, who was pretty candid, I said, “Do you really think that my

wife or I did anything wrong in this Whitewater thing? Not illegal, even wrong?" And he just started laughing. He said, "Oh, you've got to be kidding." He said, "Any fool who has read the record would know you didn't do anything wrong." He said, "How could you do anything wrong? You didn't borrow any money from the S&L which failed. It was a very small S&L failure. And you lost \$40,000 or whatever you lost on the real estate deal." He said, "Of course, you didn't do anything wrong." He said, "That's not the point of this. The point of this is to make people think you did something wrong."

But so, it was funny. Yes, I was surprised by their vitriol, and yes, I was surprised, and I must say I was surprised that they believed—and they had an electoral—and they turned out to be right, but I made a mistake or two that helped them. They believed that they could win the Congress if they could just say no to everything, and they did. And I think it rested on basically three things. One is, we did the economy, the budget plan, which we had to do, and we had to expect some loss of midterm seats. And some of those seats we had for a long, long time were naturally Republican seats, anyway. So that was the first thing.

The second thing is—but the people hadn't felt the benefits of it. Then the second thing we did that cost us some seats, but I am absolutely convinced is the right thing to do, was the Brady bill and the crime bill, which had the assault weapons ban. But there again, we got that done in 1994. Had it happened in '93, I think it would not have hurt us so bad. But in '94 there wasn't enough time, between the time that bill passed and the time people voted to convince the world—people that voted, against our Congressmen on the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban that there wasn't anything going to happen to them and their hunting and sport shooting and all that.

By '96, the issue was working for us, because I could go to places like New Hampshire and say, "I want everybody that missed a day in the deer woods to vote against me. But if you didn't, they didn't tell you the truth, and you ought to get even." That's what I said. And our winning margin in New Hampshire went from one point to 13 points or something. But in '94 my party's Members bore the brunt of that.

Then the third problem we had, and this is where I think you were right, is I was trying so hard to keep all of my campaign commitments and the way I made them—I should have done welfare reform before health care. You were right about that.

Mr. Klein. I don't know that I took that position. In fact—

The President. I thought you were saying that.

Mr. Klein. Well, I might have said it, but—

The President. And it was right.

Welfare Reform

Mr. Klein. I'll tell you where I was wrong, is that when it came to doing welfare reform, I chickened out, and I wrote a column the week you signed it telling you not to sign it. I talked to Elwood last week, and he's turned around on it as well. We were both wrong.

The President. But the reason is, I think, if you go back, there's one thing that nobody in the press has picked up—and we ought to talk about this later—is why I vetoed the first two bills and signed the third one. We'll come back to that.

But if I hadn't done welfare reform first, that would have given the Democrats a chance to appeal to more conservative and moderate voters. And the system—one thing I've learned is, since I've been there, is actually the system is capable of great change, but it can only digest so much at once. So in '93, they did a big economic plan and NAFTA, and in '94 they did this big crime bill. And they might have been able to do welfare reform, but there's no way the system could digest the health care thing. Either that, or if we were going to do health care first, then the mistake I made was saying I would veto anything short of 100 percent coverage, because—

Mr. Klein. Why did you say that?

The President. —it was one of those decisions we made practicing for the State of the Union, and I just shouldn't have done it. It was a mistake. I was trying to bring clarity to the debate, and I was afraid that they would try to run something bogus by.

Health Care Reform

Mr. Klein. You're saying that you think there is no way you could have gotten a health insurance deal in '94?

The President. No.

Mr. Klein. You don't think so?

The President. No.

Mr. Klein. What about—

The President. Let me tell you what happened.

Mr. Klein. What if you had gone and just dumped your bill and gone over to Chafee's press conference and said, "I'm with him"?

The President. Well, maybe, but—

Mr. Klein. He had universality. He had a tax increase to pay for it, and he had Bob Dole.

The President. Well, he sort of did, but let me tell you what happened. What happened was, I offered and Hillary offered not to submit a bill. We offered to do two different things. We offered to submit sort of a generic bill and let Congress fill in the blanks, and Rostenkowski asked us—this is a little more detail, but—then we offered not to submit our own bill at all but instead to submit a joint bill with Dole, which I thought was good politics for him, because then he couldn't lose anything—

Mr. Klein. What was the timeframe for this? When did you make that—

The President. Well, before we introduced a bill. I can't remember exactly when.

Mr. Klein. So this is while the task force was—

The President. Yes, before we introduced the bill. And Dole said to me—I'll never forget this, because we were at a leadership meeting in the Cabinet Room, and he said, "No." He said, "That's not the way we should do it." He said, "You introduce a bill. We'll introduce a bill. Then we'll get together. We'll put them together. We'll compromise and pass them."

Then after that, Dole got the memo from Bill Kristol, I think, which said—which basically took the Gingrich line. "The way you guys are going to win in the Congress and weaken them is to have nothing happen. If anything happens, the Democrats will get credit for it, so you guys have to make sure nothing happens." After that, I don't think we really had a chance, because Mitchell killed himself to try to figure out a way to get to Chafee, do something and—maybe if I had gone to Chafee's press conference, maybe that would have worked.

Mr. Klein. Or if the First Lady had.

The President. You know, I hadn't thought of that, but all I can tell you is that I really believed, because Dole—with that single exception, all my other dealings with Dole, whatever he said was the way we did it. In other words,

not the way we did it, but I mean, if I made a deal with him, it always was honest.

Mr. Klein. He was as good as his word.

The President. Exactly. And in this case, I just think, you know, he saw a chance to win the majority, saw a chance to get elected President. Bill Kristol told them don't do it; they didn't do it. And that's what I think happened.

Mr. Klein. But this is the thing that people on the left point to, that would have been your big achievement, the big, New Deal kind of achievement. And when you look back on it, do you regret the substance of what you did? Do you think that going with an employer mandate was the wrong thing? And also, do you regret the detail in which you did it, the fact that you did the 1,300 pages and—

The President. I think politically it was bad politics. On the substance, I think basically it was a privately financed plan that relied on managed care but had a Patients' Bill of Rights in it. And I think the two things that made it unpalatable to Republicans were the employer mandate and the Patients' Bill of Rights. I think the thing that made it unpalatable to Democrats, a few of them, was the employer mandate. But if you're not going to have an employer mandate, then you have to have a subsidy where people buy into either Medicare or Medicaid. And probably, that would have been simpler.

Mr. Klein. That's what you're going to have eventually.

The President. That's what you're going to have eventually. And if I could do it now, that's what I would offer. But the problem is, I couldn't do it in '94, with the deficits the way they were, without a tax increase. And I didn't feel that I could ask the Congress to vote for another tax increase, even if it was a dedicated thing, after we had just had that big one in '93.

Mr. Klein. Plus the reporting was way out of whack at that point, because you weren't getting credit for the savings, the managed care—

The President. We were getting killed by the scoring. The scoring was all wrong, and we knew it was wrong, but I was stuck with the scoring. So if you look at it, the position I was in is, I was stuck with the scoring. I didn't want to ask for another tax increase; I didn't think that was right. So I had to try stay with the private insurance system.

And I would have thought that the insurers would actually have liked that, because they were going to get a lot more customers. But basically, they didn't like it because we couldn't just let them have all those mandated customers and have no Patients' Bill of Rights and no restrictions on managed care, so they then developed this whole argument that it's a Rube Goldberg machine, it's a Government takeover of health care, and all this stuff. And that sort of stuck because they had all that money to put behind it.

But the truth is, in defense of what we offered, if you go back and look at all the early soundings from all the experts when we first laid it out there, everybody said, "This is a moderate plan. This is not too far left. They've tried to keep their private insurance system. They've certainly left the private health care delivery system intact." Because nobody said it was some big Government takeover until all the people spent whatever they spent, \$100 million, \$200 million, whatever they spent in there later, to try to perform reverse plastic surgery on it.

But I think that in the context you ask the questions, to go back, I think that the combined impact of the economic plan, with people not fully feeling the benefits in '94; the gun deal, where people had their fears fully allayed; and the health care thing, where the people that wanted it didn't get it and the people that didn't like it knew what they didn't like about it. That tended to depress the Democratic voters. And the three things together produced—plus the fact that the Republicans had this contract on America, and people didn't really know what it was; they just knew they had a plan—gave them the big win they got.

Mr. Klein. Just to stay with health insurance for a minute, do you regret structurally the way you went about doing it? If you had to do it all over again, would you give it to the First Lady? Was that a mistake?

The President. I don't think it was a mistake to give it to her. I think the mistake I made was, I either should have insisted on having her say, "Okay, here's all of our work. Look at it. Here are the basic principles we want. You guys draft the bill," or I would have insisted that we had a joint bill. If we were going to draft the bill, I would have made the Republicans draft it with me. That was the mistake I made.

Neither one of those things was her doing. She gets a total bum rap on this. The plan she came up with, which was—she was told, "We ain't going to have a tax increase, right, and therefore it's not going to be a total Government program, but you have to try to get 100 percent coverage," so there was no other way to do it except with an employer mandate. And she was also told that "managed care is going to happen, and we favor it," which she did favor it, "but we've got to have some protections in there for people."

I don't know how many doctors I've had come up to me since then, tell me that we were right and that basically it was a good plan. So in a way, I think she really got a bum rap on that deal, because she was operating within constraints that were, we now know, impossible.

What I should have done is to let her do all the work, publish all the findings, say, "Here are our principles. You guys write the bill." Or I should have said, "If you want me to do a bill, I will only do it if we have a bipartisan agreement on the bill." That would have produced something less than 100 percent of coverage, but at least it would have produced something that would have passed and gotten us up to 90 or maybe above 90 percent. That was the mistake I made.

But it was my mistake, not hers. She, I think, has gotten a totally bum rap on this deal. All she did was what she was asked to do.

Mr. Klein. I asked Ira about it, and he pointed to his E-commerce protocols, and he said, "What I did was, I decided to do everything the exact opposite of what we did with health insurance, and it worked."

The President. But the interesting thing there was, it worked because number one, we didn't have to pass a big bill because of the Telecommunications Act, which was a great success—which we ought to talk about later—was a big part of the economic program, was operating on a parallel track. And all we had to do there was to basically invite them to help us make Government policy that would maximize economic growth. It was a much simpler problem.

There was absolutely no way to get to 100 percent of coverage, to have universal health coverage, unless you had an employer mandate or the Government filled in the difference. If we were doing it today, we could do it. And

the next administration could do it, because now we have the money to do it. But then, we didn't.

Mr. Klein. You're going to come down closer to get what you want in reconciliation if you move the CHIPS program to cover the parents, and only—

The President. The CHIPS program, the parents, and you let people between 55 and 65 buy into Medicare. Then the only people that won't be able to get health insurance are young, single people who think they'll live forever and just don't want to do it, or very wealthy people who just would rather go ahead and just pay their doctor.

Mr. Klein. The reason why I was always for universal was because I thought those people had a moral responsibility to pay in to help the risk pools.

The President. I don't know if I can get this CHIPS thing, but if I can, it will make a huge difference.

White House Operations/Gays in the Military

Mr. Klein. I don't want to stick on the bad stuff in the first term too long, but—things—in retrospect, things seemed pretty much a mess in the White House for the first couple of years. And there were times—several people have said to me that you came to them at various times and said, "Look, I'm in the wrong position. I'm to the left of where I should be," or "Things just don't feel right," or "Things are out of control." And I guess two or three questions you could answer in a bunch: How did that happen? I mean, how do you come out of the box doing gays in the military, for example, which I assume—well, you believe in the policy—it probably wasn't the best thing to come out of the box with. Why did you surround yourself with—why were there so few—

[At this point, a portion of the interview was missing from the transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary.]

Mr. Klein. At what point did you get a White House that you were really happy with the way it was working?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that in retrospect, I think if you compare the functioning of our White House, for example, with the Reagan White House in the first term, I think ours looks pretty good. And I think that the problems we had were fundamentally—most

of the mistakes we made were political, not substantive.

I mean, Bruce Reed was there; Sperling was there; McLarty was there; and Rubin was there. So I don't think—I don't think it's fair to say—and Laura Tyson agreed with us. I don't think we had a bad—I think we did have people who were, philosophically and substantively and on policy terms, consistent with our New Democrat philosophy. And I think that budget, from the empowerment zones to the charter schools we got in the beginning, to the Goals 2000 program, to what we did on the student loan program—which was terrific; it saved \$8 billion in student loan costs for kids—to the overall economic plan, I think it was consistent.

I think the economic plan was consistent—I mean, the crime bill was completely New Democrat. I think family leave and the Brady bill were. A lot of the most important things that were done that made possible all the stuff we've done in the last 4 years—

Mr. Klein. You left out NAFTA and reinventing Government.

The President. Yes, we had NAFTA, and we did RIGO, and we did the WTO—all that in the first 2 years.

Mr. Klein. But even given all that—

The President. But what was wrong was that the political image was different from the reality. The substantive reality, I think, was quite good. I've heard Bob Rubin defend the White House repeatedly and talk about how the things that worked well later, especially the sense of camaraderie and teamwork and joint decisionmaking, were all put in place in that first year and a half.

But let's just go through the problems, and you'll see. Part of it was, I think, none of us were sensitive to the way—sufficiently sensitive to the way Washington works and to the way little things would look big to other people.

Now, let's just start with the gays in the military. How did that happen? It is not true that we brought it up first.

Mr. Klein. Andrea Mitchell brought it up in a press conference on November 11th.

The President. Yes, but why? What happened? Dole introduced legislation—Dole deserves credit for this. The Republicans should give Dole credit for this. They always say he was too moderate and all that. They should give Dole credit for this. And I give him credit for it. I've thought a lot of times about how I could

have outmaneuvered him on it. But I had two things going—and the Joint Chiefs obviously agreed with him, which helped.

But what put this on the front burner early? Not me; it wasn't my decision. Dole introduced a bill in Congress which was going to fly through there, because Nunn agreed with him, to keep the present policy. That was like the first thing he did. And then the Joint Chiefs demanded a meeting with me. The President can't refuse to meet with the Joint Chiefs. So it was those two things that put this thing front and center. I did not want this—

Mr. Klein. The bill came in after you said—after Andrea Mitchell asked the question and you responded the way you did. I always thought that was because she needed a vacation and hadn't taken it.

The President. No, no, it was because—but he was going to put that in anyway. We knew what he was doing. So what happened was, between the Joint Chiefs and the Dole bill, we were forced to put it up. I was going—what I intended to do was to get all the stuff, my basic stuff organized, lead with that, and figure out how to handle the gays in the military. And they basically forced me to deal with it from the beginning.

And then the thing that—then I got a lot of heat, obviously, from the gay community for what I did. But everybody ignores what precipitated “don't ask, don't tell,” which was a vote in the Senate, essentially on the Dole position, that passed 68–32, i.e. by a veto-proof margin. There was no vote in the House.

In retrospect, given the way Washington works, what I probably should have done is issued a clean Executive order, let them overturn it, and basically let them live with the consequences of it. And I might have actually gotten a better result in the end, more like the one I wanted.

But when General Powell came to see me about the “don't ask, don't tell” policy, the commitments that were made were very different from the way that it worked out in practice later on. And so there was no question in my mind, given the way they laid out what their policy was going to be, that gay service people would be better off under the new policy than they were under the old one. It didn't work out that way, but the commitments that I got and the descriptions that I gave when I announced it at the War College, there's no ques-

tion that if that had been followed through, the gays in the military would have been better off than they were under the old policy.

And the thing that I didn't understand about the way things play out in public, because I really was inexperienced in the way Washington worked when I got there, is that sometimes you just need clarity. And even if you lose, it's better to lose with clarity than ambiguity.

And what had not sunk in on, I think, even the press writing about this was that once the Senate voted 68–32, the jig was up. It was over, because everybody knew there were more than 300 votes in the House against the policy. So we had a veto-proof majority in both Houses in favor of legislating the present policy, unless I could find some way to go forward. So that's what I tried to do. But the reason it came up first was essentially because the Joint Chiefs and Dole were determined—

Mr. Klein. So it wasn't the Andrea Mitchell question on November 11th?

The President. No.

Mr. Klein. It was up—

The President. Because I had lots of options there. I mean, Harry Truman basically, if you go back and look at what he did with integration of the military, he basically signed an order that said: Integrate; come back within 3 years and tell me how you did it.

Mr. Klein. You could have signed an Executive order.

The President. I could have done that. And like I said, in retrospect, we would have had greater clarity. And since there had been so many problems with implementing the policy, I'm not sure that for the past 6 years it would have been better. Now I think Secretary Cohen has really taken hold of this thing, and there have been some changes in the last 6 months that I think really will make the future better than the previous policy was.

Mr. Klein. But to go back to the original question, I have a strong sense that during that first year, year and a half, you weren't satisfied with the way the White House was working.

The President. No, because I thought we were often—first of all, we had to do some stuff that was tough, that was going to get us out of position. Our foreign policy team, I think, was working very well, and—except for it took us too long to build an international consensus in Bosnia. But we eventually did it and did the right thing there. We were doing well in the Middle

East. We took a big, bold step away from the traditional American position to get involved in the Irish peace process. And on balance, I was pleased with that.

And actually, a lot of people have forgotten this, but when I came back from Jordan, from the signing of the peace agreement in the Wadi Araba in Jordan in late '94, right before the election, we were still in reasonably good shape, because my numbers went back up and that helped the Democrats.

But I still believe that the underlying problems were the reasons for the election results. But the political problems of gays in the military hurt. I think that we had a lot of—I was more frustrated by operational things, like leaks on Supreme Court appointments that weren't even accurate, and I thought that the White House was not operating politically in a way that I thought was effective.

I thought, policywise, we weren't out of position on anything except the retrospective on health care. And I've already said what I thought the political mistake was there, about how I should have handled it, given the fact—

Mr. Klein. If you had to do it over again, you would have done welfare reform in '94 and the crime bill?

The President. If I had to do it over again, I would have tried to do the welfare reform and the crime bill in '94, together, and started a bipartisan process on health care. I would have had Hillary up and meeting, issue the report with basic principles—that whole 600-page—however long it was, the stuff we did, I would have given it all to the Congress and said, "Either you write a bill, or we write a bill together."

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Mr. Klein. Let me give you another, I think a tough "if you had to do it all over again." When I look back on this period, you were rolling at the end of '93. You did NAFTA. You gave the speech in Memphis. I mean, even I was writing positive stuff about you at that point. And then came the wave of stupid scandal stories, the Troopergate story, the Whitewater stuff. That December the Washington Post asked for all the documents. And there was a meeting that you had, maybe the only time in recorded history that George and David Gergen agreed and said you should turn over all the data, ev-

erything. And you didn't do it. Do you regret that? Do you think that that changed things?

The President. I don't believe, given the subsequent coverage of the Whitewater thing, it would have made any difference. What I regret is asking for the special counsel, because under the law that existed before and the law that existed after, under neither law could a special counsel be called. They had one—

Mr. Klein. Why did you do it? I was there the night you did it. You were in Ukraine, Kiev.

The President. Yes. I did it because I was exhausted, because I just buried my mother, and I had poor judgment. And I had people in the White House who couldn't stand the heat of the bad stories, and they suggested that I do it and that I'd have to do it. And I knew that there was nothing there. I knew it was just one guy lying. And I had Bernie Nussbaum and Bruce and a few other people screaming at me not to do it. They said, "You don't understand."

I knew that Janet Reno would appoint a Republican, even though all other Presidents had been investigated by people who had basically supported them. Lawrence Walsh supported Reagan; Sirica—no, what's his name?

Mr. Klein. Sirica.

The President. No, Sirica was the judge. Jaworski supported Nixon. I knew Reno wouldn't do that. I knew Reno would appoint a Republican, but I knew that there was nothing there. I knew she'd appoint an honest, professional prosecutor. So I just did it, but it was wrong, because the decision to appoint a special counsel is a decision to bankrupt anybody who's not rich. I mean, by definition, there's a penalty associated with it. But if Fiske had been allowed to do his job, this whole thing would have been over in '95 or '96. And of course, that's why he was replaced, because he was going to do his job.

Mr. Klein. Just staying on this for a minute—

The President. But do I think so? No, because I think—I mean, I don't want to get into this. I shouldn't talk about this much until I'm out of office. But I believe that the desire, the almost hysterical desire to have something to investigate was so great that it wouldn't have made any difference, because, look, what did this thing hang on? There was nothing in those private papers that we—we gave it all to the Justice Department. There was nothing in there that

did anything other than support what the report said, which was that we lost money on a real estate investment. And if you noticed, when Starr got ahold of this, he immediately abandoned that and just went on to other stuff. There was never anything to it.

And I do not believe—I have no reason to believe, given the coverage of the events of Whitewater, that it would have made any difference. I think they would have found some way to say, “Oh, there are questions here; let’s have a special counsel.” But do I wish I had done it? I mean, I don’t know.

Criticism of the President

Mr. Klein. Last week you talked about the clanging tea kettle, and you know I’ve written this continuum—I’ve wrote that this era is going to be remembered more for the severity—for the ferocity of its prosecutions than for the severity of the crimes. And there’s never been anything proven. And yet, the hatred and the vitriol has been relentless. What do you think it is about you? Do you think it’s you? Do you think it’s us, our generation?

And what about the Steve Skowronek theory, the Yale professor who talked about Third Way Presidents like you, like Wilson, substantively like Nixon, people who take the best of the opposition’s agenda, sand off the rough edges, implement it, and are therefore distrusted by their own party and hated by the opposition?

The President. Well, I think that that—I read his book, and it’s a very good book. But I think in this case that’s not accurate, for the following reasons. Number one, if you go back to ’93 and ’94, the Democrats in Congress supported me more strongly than they had supported—a higher percentage of Democrats voted for my programs than voted for Kennedy, Johnson, or Carter. It was that the Republican opposition was more unanimous.

Number two, the Republicans never owned crime and welfare. They owned them rhetorically, but they didn’t do much about it. And at least in the tradition that I came out of as a Governor, we thought we were supposed to act on crime and welfare. Nobody—when you check into the morgue, they don’t ask for your party registration. And I never knew that anybody had a vested interest in poor people being out of work.

And so I just never accepted that, and I found that there were a lot of Democrats in the Con-

gress that were eager to deal with those issues. And if you look at it, we had—I don’t know—more than two-thirds of the Democrats in the House and more than 75 percent of the Democrats in the Senate voted for welfare reform. And we had a higher percentage of Democrats than Republicans in the Senate voting for it and slightly higher percentage of Republicans than Democrats voting for it in the House but not huge.

So I think that maybe transformational figures generally inspire that, because most times people like to deal with folks they can put in a box. Maybe it’s just—maybe it’s something about me that made them mad. You know my favorite joke about the guy that’s walking along the edge of Grand Canyon and falls off—so this guy is hurtling down hundreds of feet to certain death. And he looks out, and he grabs this twig, and it breaks his fall. He heaves a sigh of relief. Then all of a sudden he sees the roots coming loose. He looks up in the sky and says, “God, why me? I’m a good person. I’ve taken care of my family. I’ve paid my taxes. I’ve worked all my life. Why me?” And this thunderous voice says, “Son, there’s just something about you I don’t like.” [*Laughter*]

I don’t know. I don’t think—

Mr. Klein. The folks like you. They never cared about this stuff.

The President. But I believe the Republicans thought—I told you, I think that they thought—

Mr. Klein. It wasn’t just them. It was us, too.

The President. Yes. The press, I think—I wasn’t part of the Washington establishment, and I think that the press didn’t know what to make of me. I think this travel office deal, it was largely a press deal. I mean, I didn’t know that they thought they owned the travel office. It was a weird deal. And of course, all I ever heard was one guy in the press who happened to be the head of the White House Correspondents at the time said, “I wish you’d have somebody look into this because the costs are going up and it’s not working well.” I didn’t realize that everybody else didn’t care what happened. It was a strange thing.

But I think that—all I can tell you is that the same guy that told me—the same Senator that told me that it was about making people think I’d done something wrong in Whitewater also said that the Republicans had learned a

lot from my Presidency. He said, before, that they thought there was a liberal press. And he said, "Now we have a different view. We think that they are liberal and that they vote like you, but they think like us, and that's more important." And I said, "What do you mean?" And he said, "Well, we just don't believe in Government very much, but we love power." And he says, "You know, the press wants to be powerful, and we both get it the same way, by hurting you." There could be something to that.

But I'm sure—maybe there were times when I didn't handle it all that well in the early going. But all I can tell you is, if you look back over it, the Whitewater thing was a total fraud. Now, I've got a friend named Brandy Ayres, who is the editor of a little newspaper in Addison, Alabama. Do you know who he is?

Mr. Klein. I've met him, yes.

The President. He wrote an editorial that said, "This is what always happens when Republicans get in the majority. They did it when they got in the majority after World War II. They tried to convince us Harry Truman and Dean Acheson were Communists. And then the second time, they gave us McCarthy. And now, they gave us this."

I don't know. I think part of it is how you view power. But for whatever reason, there is something about me that they didn't like very much. But it all worked out all right. Like I said, I'm sure that my not being familiar with Washington mores may have had something to do with the way I didn't handle the press right. Maybe I didn't—

Mr. Klein. Yes, you know—I mean, I've said this in print, so I can say it to your face. You're the most talented politician I've ever come across, and you're not a slow study. That's the other thing we know about you.

The President. But I think in the beginning, for the first 2 years, I thought I was pushing a lot of rocks up the hill. I was obsessed.

Thomas Patterson, who has written books about the Presidency and the media and all that, he said in '95 that I'd already kept a higher percentage of my campaign promises than the previous five Presidents, which I felt really good about. We had just lost the Congress. I needed something to feel good about.

But I do believe in '95 I was—and '93 and '94, I was just fixated on trying to get as much done as quickly as I could, and also on trying

to learn the job, get the White House functioning, all that kind of stuff. And I think that I did not spend enough time probably at least working with the media, letting them ask me questions, at least trying to get the whole—letting them get something in perspective. And I think maybe I was just the last gasp of 25 years of scandal mania. We may be swinging the other way on the pendulum now.

Oklahoma City

Mr. Klein. I think, after '98, maybe we've learned. I think we're doing a little bit better this year. You might see that in a different way.

Let's talk about '95 for a second. To my mind, the period of this Presidency that is most touching to me, I think, are the weeks after—well, the 2 days, April 18, 1995—

The President. Oklahoma City?

Mr. Klein. No, the press conference the night before Oklahoma City when you said the President is still relevant here. I thought, "Oh, my God, that must be the rock bottom for him."

The President. Well, actually, it wasn't. I didn't have the same reaction to it than maybe—you know, we often don't perceive ourselves as others see us. But that question, I learned something from that, which is, if someone asks you a question that you want to answer directly, but there's a word in it that's dynamite, you should answer it without using the word, because actually, what I was doing in April of '95 in my own mind was prefiguring the fight which occurred at the end of '95 and the end of '96. That is, I honestly didn't feel pathetic or irrelevant or anything. I knew that in the end, if a veto-proof minority of my party would stay with me, after the terrible licking they'd taken in '94, if they would stay with me, I believed in the end we'd have our chance to make our case to the American people. In other words, I believed it would turn out the way it did turn out at the end of '95 and the beginning of '96.

So actually, to me, it wasn't the worst point of the Presidency. When they asked me that question, a light went on in my head. I actually felt good about it. But because I used the word, it came out—people perceived it differently than I did. I didn't feel that about it.

Mr. Klein. But then, a week later, you said—at Michigan State, you said, "You can't love your country and despise its Government." And that's

when a light went off in my mind: He's figured out how he's going to go up against these folks.

The President. Yes, that's what I believed. I think the Oklahoma City thing was awful. It was awful. But I think it began a kind of reassessment, a kind of breaking of the ice. And I don't mean that—God knows—

Mr. Klein. Someone told me that you said, you told them that you wouldn't use the word "bureaucrat" again in a speech after that.

The President. Yes. I did. It affected even me. I realized that I had played on the resentments people feel about Government. And I thought that when Government did something stupid or indefensible, they ought to be taken on. But I realized that even when you do that, you have to be careful what word you use. And I did say that. I said, "How many times have I used the word bureaucrat, and there are people there." And I didn't mean to say that I or even Newt Gingrich was responsible for Timothy McVeigh. I don't want to get—that's what he did. Are the liberals responsible for Susan Smith, the one throwing her kid out the window? I didn't want to get into that. But Oklahoma City had a profound impact on me, too.

I went down there, and I was sitting there with the relatives, and one of the people that was killed had been in my Inaugural, and I was talking to his kinfolk. And I said, you know—I just made up my mind I would try never again to discuss the Government, even people's frustrations with it, in a way that could be directed against categories of people. It really had a big impact on me, and I think it did on the country.

Mr. Klein. Would it be fair to say that by the time you gave that speech at Michigan State, you were ready for battle?

The President. Yes. Yes.

Balancing the Budget

Mr. Klein. Now, this is a really interesting part of your Presidency to me. You had at that point a brilliant strategy in place to screw them. It was, smoke them out. You could have just sat there and said, "Well, what's your plan?" You could have done to them what they did to you in '94. And yet, you insisted, ultimately—against, from what I can gather, your entire staff, including people like Bob Rubin—you insisted on coming out with your own budget, your own balanced budget, that June. Why did

you do that? I mean you didn't have to politically, right?

The President. No, probably not. In other words, I could have done to them what they did to me. And that was the argument, that we'd just say no to them like they just said no to us. But governing is important to me. And I thought that in the end we would all be judged by how we had performed and by whether we had performed. And this may sound naive, but I believed that in the end, we could change the politics of Washington.

See, one of the reasons I ran for President is, I didn't just want to prove that I could play the game they'd all been playing with each other: "I got an idea. You got an idea. Let's fight, and maybe we can both get our 15 seconds on the evening news." That's basically the operative mode. I didn't want to do that. I came here to do things. I wanted to be President to do things, to change the country, to be relevant. And I thought that the Democrats—I didn't think the Republicans would take us up on it initially, because Gingrich had basically made it clear that he wanted to basically be prime minister of the country and turn me into a ceremonial and foreign policy President. We'd have the French system, in effect.

Mr. Klein. Not only that, he told me on the phone one night he was personally going to lead a Wesleyan revolution that year.

The President. So that's basically what he wanted to do. But I just felt that the Democrats could not sacrifice—what I was trying to do was to build the Democrats as a party of fiscal responsibility. I wanted to prove that you could be socially progressive and fiscally responsible. And for us—and I went out there saying, "Look, our credo is opportunity, responsibility, community." I just didn't see that I could stand there and say, "What do you expect of me? I'm just the President. They're in the majority." That's just not my way. I believe that you have to do things if you can. And my own view of politics is that there's always plenty that the parties are honestly divided about at election time, no matter how much you get done.

Furthermore, I really did believe that the Democrat Party, in the end, would be successful by developing what is now known as the Third Way, but which I really saw as basically an information age version of what we'd always been for.

Second Term Agenda

Mr. Klein. What was your fantasy for a second term? If you'd had everything you wanted the day after you were reelected, what would it have been?

The President. Well, the validation of the economic strategy has been a part of it. I would have finished the job in health care and enacted my entire education budget. And the rest of it is still sort of pending. The Irish peace process worked out the way I'd hoped. I'm still hoping that we'll get more done in the Middle East. It's very difficult, but I'm hoping we will. And then, on the foreign policy front, it's going to pretty much work out the way I'd hoped it would, I think.

Mr. Klein. When I look back at your speeches, if there were a couple of paragraphs where you best describe your political philosophy, the Third Way, they were in the 1998 State of the Union Address, and nobody paid any attention. And you know why?

The President. Because I was standing—what I got credit for there was just getting up, standing up. [Laughter]

Mr. Klein. What was the opportunity cost of that scandal? What did it cost you?

The President. I don't know yet, because actually we did—in '98 we won seats in the House of Representatives, the first time a President's party has done that since—

Mr. Klein. I mean, substantively.

The President. Well, I don't know, because I don't know whether the Congress, the Republicans would have been more willing to work with me or not.

Social Security/Medicare Reform

Mr. Klein. What about things like Social Security reform—could you have made a—

The President. Maybe. What I wanted to do with Social Security—I am disappointed there. We still may get some Medicare restructuring out of this. And in any case, Medicare is going to be okay for 30 years, which is the longest it's been okay for in forever and ever. And I think —

Mr. Klein. Yes, but that's a problem, for God sakes. I mean, the generational transfer issue, I think, is something that you're really concerned about.

The President. I am concerned about it. But—

Mr. Klein. You can't keep a fee-for-service—

The President. But, but, but both Medicare taxes and Social Security taxes, in fairness, since 1983 have been paying for everything else. So we've had a little of that in reverse.

Mr. Klein. That's very good.

The President. Everybody has forgotten that. We've been dumping all these Social Security and Medicare taxes into the general economy all this time. I personally believe, though, that—I regret we didn't get to do Social Security because I would have—what happened was, I think maybe we could have gotten it if we hadn't had that whole impeachment thing. But there was more resistance in both parties to do anything than I had imagined there was.

They'll have to come to terms with this. It will have to be done. And I think you've either got to raise taxes, cut benefits, or increase the rate of return. What I proposed in '98 on Social Security, I think, was a very good beginning, and I really thought we'd get something. Was that '98 or '99?

Mr. Klein. That was '98. And there was also the Breaux-Thomas, later Breaux-Frisk commission on Medicare. You could have, with your abilities, you could have gotten some kind of deal if you'd been able to at that point.

The President. Maybe. But they—

Mr. Klein. Breaux was your guy, right?

The President. Well, I don't agree with what he wanted to do there, and he knows that. I mean, I thought—I agree with some of what they proposed, but some of what they proposed I think would not be good for Medicare. On policy grounds, he and I have had long discussions about it. I think there are a couple of things in that report that I just simply didn't agree with.

Safety Net

Mr. Klein. In general, when you talk about an information age safety net, what would it be, and what would be the guiding principles? I don't think that you can have the kind of centralized, top-down sort of programs that Social Security and Medicare—

The President. I think if you had—yes, but there's a great article—let me just say this. There's a great article in the New York Times Sunday Magazine the day before yesterday—

Mr. Klein. The Sara Mosle article?

The President. —about voluntarism. And I don't believe—I think you have to have some sort of—if you believe there should be a safety net, there has to be some sort of safety net. Now, there's all kinds of options to get it done, and I think there should be more—you can have some more room for private initiative. But if you had a safety net that worked, you'd have something for the poor and the disabled, the people who through no fault of their own were in trouble. You would have genuinely world-class education for everybody who needed it, which is everybody. You would have access to health care at an affordable rate and decent housing, and you'd have to have a lifetime learning system.

And then I think you'd have to have some more generous version of the new markets initiative I proposed, because there will always be unevenness in the growth of the market economy. That's part of its genius, because you have to have opportunity for new things to branch out. But in my view, this new markets thing has been underappreciated.

Mr. Klein. I was out there a year ago watching Al From and Jesse Jackson cavort along beside you.

The President. And it may be one of the great opportunities for bipartisan achievement in this session. It may be one of the great opportunities because Hastert is completely committed to it. He's been as good as his word on everything. And I think Lott knows it's the right thing to do. I've talked to them both a lot. We do have a good working relationship now, even though we have our differences. I think the Senate has been far too grudging on the judges, particularly since I appointed basically mainstream judges. But they want more ideologues, and they hope they can get them next year. And I hope they can't, and we'll see what happens.

But anyway, I think a part of the safety net ought to be viewed as a willingness of the Government to make continuing extraordinary efforts, including big tax incentives, to keep the people in places that are left behind in the emerging global economy—keep giving them a chance to catch up.

And I think this whole digital divide is a—I prefer to think of it as a digital bridge. I think if you think about what this means, basically, this information economy can collapse distances in a way that telephones and railroads and electrical—I mean, I think about it in terms

of Arkansas. When they brought us REA and the Interstate Highway System and I put all these little airports up in remote towns and all that, it all helped to bring, like, small-scale manufacturing to places that had been left behind. But there was always the factor of distance.

And then I got to a place like the Shiprock Navajo Reservation, where they make really beautiful jewelry, for example, where the unemployment rate is 58 percent and only 30 percent of the people have telephones. And you realize that if they really were part of an information age economy, there are ways in which they could do—I remember when I became President there were a lot of banks in New York shipping their data processing to Northern Ireland every day—every day—and then bringing it back. There are all kinds of opportunities that we never had before. And I think people ought to start thinking about that as a part of the safety net.

Information Technology

Mr. Klein. You know, this raises an interesting point about you, personally. Shalala said to me that she thought that just as you were obsessed and voracious about social policy when you were Governor in the eighties—that's one of the things I first noticed about you, is that you knew everything. I mean, you knew about the schools up here in East Harlem, more than Cuomo did, in fact. But as you were to social policy in the eighties, you've been hungry in the same way for knowledge about science and technology in the nineties. And I talked to Harold Varmus about it, and other people have said the same thing. Is that true? And in that regard, talk to me a little bit about the policy that you pursued in high-tech and information age things that I don't understand that well, like telecommunications and—

The President. Well, let's talk about that. The one thing in our mantra about our economic policy which we always repeat—fiscal responsibility, expanded trade, and investing in people—those three things really were the sort of three stools of our economic policy. But one thing I think that tends to understate is the role that technology, particularly information technology, has played in this remarkable growth and the productivity growth and the long economic expansion.

And I think our major contribution to that, apart from getting interest rates down so capital

can flow to that sector, was in the Telecommunications Act of '96. And there were—our major contributions to that act—I might say, Al Gore deserves a lot of credit for because he was our front guy on it—were two. One is we insisted that the Telecom Act would be very much pro-competition, which required us to get into a very difficult political fight principally with the RBOC's, operating companies, many of whom I've had very good relationships with because they do great stuff. They've helped us on all of our digital divide stuff, a lot of the new market stuff.

But I just thought that we had to bend over backwards to maximize the opportunity for people with ideas to start new companies and get in and compete. And we fought that through, and it delayed the passage of the Telecom Act, but eventually we got what we wanted. And as I remember, while there were more Democrats than Republicans for our position, there were actually people on both sides of both parties. But we very much wanted to have a pro-competition bias.

The other night, interestingly enough, I was at dinner in New York with a friend of mine who was in the telecom business and then got in the venture capital business with telecom. He had a dinner for me, and I had dinner with like 40 people, all of whom headed companies that didn't exist in 1996. I went out to UUP, which is an Internet connection company, which had 40 or 80 employees, something like that, in 1993, when I became President, and they have 8,000 now. I mean, it's amazing.

So that was good. And the second thing we did was to fight for the E-rate, which democratized the Internet and democratized the telecommunications revolution. We've got—95 percent of our schools have at least one Internet connection, and 90 percent of the poorest schools have an Internet connection.

So I think that those are the two things that happened. And then I also continued to push relentlessly these last 8 years for greater investment in science and technology. It was interesting; I've had an interesting relationship with the Congress since the Republicans won the majority, because they look around for things that they can spend more money on than me.

Mr. Klein. NIH.

The President. Yes. And it's been very interesting. They knew they would always be—whatever defense number I proposed, they'd always

be for more. And they liked to—I'm always for a balance between mass transit and highways, and they're always a little more on the highways side. But the big area was NIH. And Harold Varmus did a brilliant job; when the Republicans won the Congress, he brought all these freshmen Congressmen out, showed them the NIH, showed them what they were doing, explained the genome project to them. And I think John Porter was the head of the subcommittee in the House that had this. He's a good man. He's smart, and he wanted to do the right thing. And so, anyway, I figured out after the first go-round that whatever I proposed, they'd propose more, which suited me fine because I basically don't think you can spend too much on those things.

But the problem I had early on and the problem I still have is, notwithstanding how much money we have, the Republicans do not, in my view, spend enough money on non-NIH research. For example, they just took out all the money that I proposed for nanotechnology, this highly microscopic technology which could increase the power of computer generation by unfathomable amounts.

Now, why is that a mistake? Because as—one night Hillary had—we had all these millennial evenings at the White House. And then we had one the other day on outer space and the deep oceans; we did it in the afternoon. But we had one on the human genome project, and we had Eric Lander from Harvard, who is a biological scientist, and we had Vint Cerf, who was one of the developers of the Internet. He actually sent the first E-mail ever sent, 18 years ago—or 19 years ago now—to his then profoundly deaf wife, who now can hear because she's got a microdigital chip that's been planted deep in her ear. She heard, at 50—she said she's sure she's the only person who's ever heard James Taylor sing "Fire And Rain" at the age of 50 for the first time. She came and sort of stood up and was exhibit A.

But the point they were making is that the biomedical advances that would flow out of the human genome project, which the Republican majority will support lavishly, depended upon the development of the computer technology, and that without the development of the computer technology, you could never parse something as small as the human genome and get into all these genes and understand all the permutations.

For example, there was a fascinating article the other day about one of the implications of the human genome, saying that—talking about these two women who had a form of cancer, and that basically, if you look at the historical studies of all women in this category with this kind of cancer, diagnosed at this point in their illness, that you would say they had a 45-percent chance of survival. But now they can do genetic testing showing that they actually have very different conditions, and that one of them had a 20-percent chance of survival, the other had an 80-percent chance of survival.

Now, the reason they can do that is because not only of the biological advances but the non-biological advances that make it possible to measure the biological differences. And I could give you lots of other examples.

And again, I owe a lot of this to Al Gore. He convinced me in 1993 that climate change was real. And he wrote that book in '88, and they're still making fun of his book. And I remember as late as last year we had a House subcommittee that treated climate change like a conspiracy to destroy the economy of the United States. But now, you've got all the major oil companies admitting that it's real, that the climate really is warming at an unsustainable rate. And that's why we pushed the Kyoto Protocol and why I want to spend a lot more money, and also have tax incentives, for people to keep making advances in energy technologies and environmental conservation technologies.

So my frustration about where we are now is that I'm really grateful that the Republican majority has embraced NIH, because it's been good and it's enabled me to present budgets under the old budget caps that I knew they would break, so I could get adequate funding for education, for example, and still know we're going to do a really good job on NIH. But I think we need a much broader commitment in the Congress to research in other areas of science and technology, going beyond the biological sciences.

[At this point, a portion of the interview was missing from the transcript.]

Events of 1998

Mr. Klein. —when it became clear to you—I mean, I know this is prompting you to sound braggart, but so be it. There must have come a time when you realized, “Hey, our economic

policy worked. This whole thing is taking off, and my larger sense of us moving from the industrial age to the information age is really true, and all of a sudden we have these surpluses.” Was there a moment when the bolt of lightning hit and knocked you off the donkey on the way to the West Wing? Was there a day when you realized that—

The President. I spent a lot of '98 trying to dodge bolts of lightning. [Laughter]

Mr. Klein. Well, that's the irony of this, I think, is that that was probably going to be the moment that the press was going to realize that there had been a coherence to this whole project all along, and we managed to work our way out of that.

The President. In '98, I spent a lot of '98—

Mr. Klein. Is it fair to say '98 was the time that this—

The President. Yes, yes. And I spent a lot of '98 sort of wrestling with three overwhelming feelings. One is, obviously there was a lot of pain involved because I had made a terrible personal mistake, which I did try to correct, which then a year later got outed on—or almost a year later—and had to live with. And it caused an enormous amount of pain to my family and my administration and to the country at large, and I felt awful about it. And I had to deal with the aftermath of it.

And then, I had to deal with what the Republicans were trying to do with it. But I had a totally different take on it than most people. I really believed then and I believe now I was defending the Constitution. And while I was responsible for what I did, I was not responsible for what they did with what I did—that was their decision—and that I had to defend the Constitution.

And so I felt that—I still believe historically two of the great achievements of my administration were facing down the Government shutdown in '95 and '96, and then facing this back, and that those two things together essentially ended the most overt and extreme manifestations of the Gingrich revolution.

And then the third thing I felt was this “Gosh, it is all working, and it's coming together, and all these things will be possible.” And I still believe if we can get one or two things straight for the future, that a lot of the good stuff is still ahead.

Mr. Klein. I'm not going to let you off that so easily. Were there days, were there moments

that you remember where you saw, hey, this is happening?

The President. Yes, I was really happy. I just was happy because I thought—to be fair, I don't think any of us thought in '93—if you asked me in '93, "What level of confidence do you have this economic plan is going to work," I would say very, very high. And if you asked me, "What do you mean by 'working,'" when I started in '93, I would say we'd probably have between 16 million and 18 million new jobs. I never would have guessed 22.5 million and maybe more.

I would have said—I was fairly sure that we'd get rid of the deficit by the time I left office. I didn't know in '93 that we'd be paying off nearly \$400 billion of the national debt when I left office and we'd be looking at taking America out of debt, which is a goal I hope will be ratified by this election. And I hope the American people will embrace that, because I think that's quite important.

So in '98 I began to imagine just how far we could go, you know, and to think about that.

Race Relations

Mr. Klein. There's another aspect to this that we haven't talked about that I think has really been central. In '93 would you have predicted that the state of race relations would have gotten to the point that it's gotten to now? I mean, I don't know whether you can sense—I sensed it out on the trail this year. Bob Dole went to Bob Jones in '96 and didn't pay any price at all, did he? This year you couldn't do it. And everywhere you go in this country, people of different races are having lunch together and holding hands.

The President. I confess, you know, I like Senator Dole very much, but I would have made him pay a price if I had known he went to Bob Jones University. I just didn't know.

Mr. Klein. You didn't know about the dating policy?

The President. No, I didn't know he went to Bob Jones University. I didn't know about the dating policy, but I knew about Bob Jones because I'm a white southerner. And I think the Bob Jones thing—I think Governor Bush going there mattered more maybe to white southerners my age who supported civil rights than maybe to even other Americans, because

it has a whole—because of the history there. It was a big deal to me. I just didn't know.

But I do believe we have come a long way. And I think—I hope I made some contribution to that, because I think it's really important. I've tried to get Americans to understand that how we handle this—I still believe how we handle this is, in a way, the most important thing, because we're a great country and we're full of smart people and we nearly always get it right, unless we get in our own way. And it's just like me—nations are like people, individuals, in the sense that very often all their greatest wounds are self-inflicted. And this whole state of racism, it's a self-inflicted wound.

Mr. Klein. This was where I was wrong on affirmative action, I think, in the end, when I kicked you around on that.

The President. I never wanted it to last forever, and I think that we had to clean up some of the contracting policies and some of the other things. But we—

Mr. Klein. Have those been done?

The President. Well, we made some changes, and I hear a lot of complaining about it from people that have been affected by them. But I still believe that—and to be fair to my critics or skeptics, it's a lot easier to sell an affirmative action in good economic times than in tough economic times.

I believe what launched the assault on affirmative action in the beginning was that, number one, it did seem to be that nobody was ever reexamining it, its premises. But secondly, the big start was in California because California was suffering so much from a recession in the late eighties and early nineties. And people felt that they were being disenfranchised, and they felt that the circumstances were squeezing in on them anyway, and they didn't want any other burdens that they lost just because they happened to be in the majority. So I think maybe the acid test of whether I was right or not won't come until there's another period of economic difficulty.

Welfare Reform

Mr. Klein. People argue the same on welfare reform, as well, although—

The President. But I think there's enough evidence in on that. I think if there are adversities coming out of welfare reform in the next economic downturn, or as far as there are now,

it may be because—it's largely because of decisions States have made about how to spend or not to spend properly the big extra money they got because we grandfathered them in at the amount of money they were getting when welfare rolls were at their height in February of '94. I think that's when we did that. Maybe it was '96, but I think it was '94. I think we grandfathered them—anyway, whatever month it was, we grandfathered their cash flow in when welfare rolls were high, on the theory that we wanted them to spend this money on education, on transportation, on housing assistance, on training people to not just take jobs but to be able to keep jobs, or find new jobs if they lost them. And there are some stories coming in which are troubling, but which have more to do with decisions that were made at the State level.

The thing that some of the people who criticized me on the left for welfare reform never understood, I don't think—they said, "Oh, gosh, he's ending this national benefit." But that was a joke, because for more than 20 years, by 1996, States had been able to set their own rate. So you had the family support—monthly support for a family of three on welfare varied anywhere from a low of \$187 a month to a high of \$665 a month on the day I signed the welfare reform bill.

So to pretend that there was somehow some national income safety net was a joke. Nobody was going to go below \$187 a month. And if there was a political consensus for a higher level, they weren't going to go out and gut people. And the idea of spending this money to empower people to go into the workplace and then require people who could do so to try to get their personal act together and access the benefits and go in there, and then letting them keep their medical coverage for a while, is very, very important.

The only thing I didn't like about the welfare reform bill was not that; it was the immigrant thing. But the two I vetoed—everybody acted at the time—the only thing that really disturbed me, and I realized I had not succeeded in getting people into the intricacies of welfare policy, was that I had people, both liberals and conservatives, who said, "Well, he vetoed two of them, but he signed the third one because it's getting close to the election, and he wants credit for that." That's not true.

The thing we were fighting about was whether or not, if you required people on welfare to go to work and they refused to meet the requirement—that is, they acted in a way that violated the responsibility portions of the law—how do you minimize the impact on their kids? And what I was unwilling to do, because there was a uniform national benefit there, was to scrap the food stamps or the Medicaid coverage for the children, where we did have a uniform national standard and nowhere near the variations that already existed in the monthly cash payment.

So I thought that finally when they agreed to put those back in, I believed, given the way the budget fights were unfolding—and by then I was in my second one, in '96—that within a couple of years I would be able to restore most of the immigrant cuts. And sure enough, we did.

So I still think that some of them are not right and that we haven't restored, but I think, on balance, the welfare reform bill was a big net advance in American social policy and the right thing to do.

Budget Negotiations

Mr. Klein. That's an interesting phrase, "given the way the budget fights were unfolding." There seems to have been a pattern since '95, and I think that that may be part of the reason why people might not see the whole of what has gone on here—is that a lot of the stuff you've gotten since '95 has come in budget reconciliations at the end of the year—

The President. Huge. And I've got to give a lot of credit to Panetta and Bowles, who was brilliant at it, and John Podesta and Ricchetti and all these people that worked the Congress, because they—and the congressional leadership in our party. Keep in mind, any time that our support among the Democratic minority drops below a third plus one, I have no power in the budget process. So I think that—but we have gotten enormous amounts done for poor people, for the cause of education—we've gone from a million dollars a year in 3 years to \$445 million a year, something like that, in programs for after-school. And my budget this year, if we get that, we'll really be able to put an after-school program in every failing school in America—if we get what I asked for this year. Amazing stuff.

I think that's one of the reasons that a lot of what we did in education has not been fully appreciated.

Education

Mr. Klein. Ten million people taking advantage of HOPE scholarships and lifelong learning credits this year, according to Gene.

The President. That's right.

Mr. Klein. I mean, are you frustrated that this kind of stuff isn't more known?

The President. Oh, a little bit. But the main thing for me now is that it's happening. And the other thing that I think is really important I'd just like to mention, that I think almost no one knows, that I think is, over the long run, particularly if we can get—it's interesting, the Republicans say they're for accountability, but they won't adopt my "Education Accountability Act," which would require more explicit standards, more explicit "turn around failing schools or shut them down," and voluntary national tests, which they're against, but we're working on it still.

But just what we did in '94—in '94, in a little-known provision of our reenactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, we required States to identify—getting Title I money—to identify failing schools and to develop strategies to turn them around. States like Kentucky that have taken it seriously have had a breathtaking result. I was down at that little school in Kentucky, in eastern Kentucky, the other day. And it was a failing school, one of the worst in Kentucky, over half the kids on school lunches—now ranked in the top 20 elementary schools in Kentucky, in 3 years.

Mr. Klein. What did they do?

The President. Well, let me tell you the results they got. In 3 years, here's what happened. They went from 12 percent of the kids reading at or above grade level to 57 percent. They went from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent. They went from zero percent of the kids doing at or above grade level in science to 63 percent—in 3 years. And they ranked 18th in the performance of elementary schools in Kentucky.

Well, smaller classes, good school leadership, heavy involvement by the parents, and basically measuring their performance. It's stunning; I mean, it's just amazing.

I was in a school the other day in Spanish Harlem that in 2 years went from 80 percent

of the kids doing reading and math at or below grade level to 74 percent of the kids doing reading and math at or above grade level—below grade level, 80 percent below, to 74 percent at or above grade level—in 2 years. And I know what they did there because I spent a lot of time there. They got a new principal, and they basically—they went to a school uniform policy, one of my little ideas that was falsely maligned, had a huge impact. And they basically went to—they established goals and results, and you either met them, or you didn't. It's amazing. And these children, the pride these children felt was breathtaking.

So one of the things—I mean, I think one of the most important accomplishments of the administration was basically opening the doors of college to everybody with the HOPE scholarships and the direct loans. And if we could just get this tuition tax deductibility, then we haven't made it possible for every person making \$40,000 to send all their kids to Yale, but we made it possible for everybody to send all their kids somewhere.

Mr. Klein. That's not refundable, is it?

The President. Not refundable, but it is deductible at the 28-percent level for people that are in the 15-percent income tax bracket.

Mr. Klein. Oh, I see. So it's a kind of semi-deduction.

The President. Yes, well, in our proposal you get to deduct up to \$10,000 at the 28-percent level even if you're in the 15-percent income tax bracket. So it's not refundable, but for the people that need refundability, they have access to the Pell grants and to loans they can pay back now as a percentage of their income under the direct loan program.

Mr. Klein. You're getting restless. Let me ask you one last—well, I'm not going to guarantee this is one last. I might want to ask you—if I have a few more over time, is there some way I can get in touch with you?

The President. Sure. You've interviewed 50 people. You've taken this seriously, so I want to try to—

Foreign Policy

Mr. Klein. Well, it's the last 8 years of my life, too, you know. [Laughter] And I haven't even asked you about foreign policy, for God sakes. We'll do two things. Let me ask you about foreign policy. It seems to me that if you look at what you did, there are two big things you

did in foreign policy. One was raise economic issues to the same level as strategic issues, which was crucial, and the other was to demonstrate over time that America was going to be involved and use force when necessary in the rest of the world. The second one is, obviously, more messy and dicey than the first. The third thing you did was essentially not do anything wrong and do really right things when it came to the big things like Middle East, Russia, China.

The messy part of it is the dustups in places like Bosnia, Kosovo. People have told me that you really feel awful that you didn't do more in Rwanda. Is that true?

The President. Yes. I don't know that I could have. Let me back up and say, I had a—when I came here, came to the White House, I sat down, basically, and made my own list of what I wanted to accomplish in foreign policy. I wanted to maximize the chance that Russia would take the right course. I wanted to maximize the chance that China would take the right course.

I wanted to do what I could to minimize these ethnic slaughters, which basically the end of the cold war ripped the lid off. It's not that they didn't occur before, but now they became the main problem with the world.

I wanted to try to create a unified Europe, which included an expanded NATO, supporting European unification, and dealing with all the countries around. I wanted to try to get Turkey into Europe as a bulwark against fundamentalist terrorism. That required some progress between Greece and Turkey, and we made some, not enough to suit me.

I wanted to try to minimize the turbulence—the possibility of war and nuclear war between India and Pakistan, which is something that was not right for my involvement until rather late in my term. But one of the things that—and I wanted to try to—and I'll leave this until last—I wanted to try to broaden the notion in America of what foreign policy and national security was, to include health issues, to include—like we made AIDS a national security threat—to include climate change, to include the globalized society, all these issues we started talking about.

So the one thing I would say to you is that I think this has all occurred kind of under the radar screen—I'll come back to Rwanda—but one of the things I think should be mentioned is, we have spent an enormous amount of money and time and effort focusing America on how

to minimize the threats of biological warfare, of chemical warfare. What are we going to do? Will the miniaturization of the information revolution lead to small-scale chemical, biological, even—God forbid—nuclear weapons? How are we going to deal with that? So we've done a lot of work on that.

And to come back to Rwanda, one of the things I've tried to do with Africa is to—and Sierra Leone is giving us a good test case here—is to increase the capacity of the African nations to deal with their own problems, to support the regional operations like ECOWAS or OAU. And I developed something called the African Crisis Response Initiative, where we would go in and train African militaries. When I was in Senegal, for example, I went out to the community—to the training site there, on our trip to Africa, and saw the American soldiers training with the Senegalese to dramatically increase their capacity.

What happened basically with Rwanda is, we were obsessed with Bosnia and all the other stuff, and it was over in 90 days. I mean, they basically killed hundreds of thousands of people in 90 days. And I just don't think we were—any of us focused on it and whether we could have done something. But I made up my mind that we would certainly try to increase the capacity of Africans to deal with it and we would move in as quickly as we could. And like I said, what happens in Sierra Leone is going to be a little test of that.

Mr. Klein. Do you think you were prepared for being a foreign policy leader when you came in? What are the things that you've learned in terms of—

The President. I would say yes and no. I think—

Mr. Klein. You had it in principle.

The President. I think I had a very—because I'd been interested in it since I was a student in college, and I'd always been fascinated by world affairs. So the fact that I had not been a Senator or served in a previous administration I don't think was a particular disadvantage.

I think all the economic stuff I think I had right and the fact that there was a lot more in economics involved, and it was about democracy; it was about minimizing war; it was about lifting people's sights so they had something better to do than killing their neighbors, be they were of a different religion or ethnic group—I think we had that right.

I think we basically had the nuclear issues right, and the big power issues right with Russia, with China, what we tried to do in the Korean Peninsula.

Where I felt—I think where I felt some frustration is maybe where even a President with a lot of experience would have felt frustration, a lot of experience in this, which is building the post-cold-war alliances, which proved to be very frustrating. I mean, we had a lot of frustrations—and we got panned a lot, and maybe we deserved some of it, and maybe we didn’t—in ’93 and ’94, trying to put together some kind of coalition of our European allies to move in Bosnia.

In Kosovo, having had the Bosnia experience, even though there were differences in the alliance, I have nothing but compliments for my allies. They were basically—we had our arguments. We should have. Nobody has got a monopoly on truth. But basically, we got together; we moved quickly; we did the right things.

And I think that the idea of how we might even go about mechanically, operationally, dealing with something like Rwanda just wasn’t there. The French and others that had been more active in that part of Africa, I think they may have had a better sense of it, although they went in late.

Mr. Klein. But you were acting with more confidence, too. You weren’t asking; you were telling.

The President. Yes, well, it happens once you’ve been around and you know people, you know what it was. But it was—I think that some of that, when you’ve got to have some support from other countries and you can have an uncertain result but you think you have to try, it just takes a while until you get your sea legs and you get everything worked out, particularly when there aren’t sort of institutional structures and policies and rules of the road there. And so I think we did get it right.

If you take another sort of sad moment of the administration, when we lost our soldiers in Somalia—

Mr. Klein. Almost at the same time as the ship turned around in the harbor in Port-au-Prince.

The President. When we lost our soldiers in Somalia, it was a very sad thing. But that happened, I think—and I hope the Congress will never decline to put people in peacekeeping missions because of it, because basically our

guys did a terrific job there. But there was an operational, I think, decision made there, which, if I had to do it again, I might do what we did then, but I would do it in a different way.

I remember General Powell coming to me and saying, “Aideed has killed all these Pakistanis, and they’re our allies. Somebody needs to try to arrest him, and we’re the only people with the capacity to do it.” And he said, “We’ve got a 50-percent chance of getting him, and a 25-percent chance of getting him alive.” And so, he said, “I think you ought to do it.” And I said, “Okay.” But today, with that number of people there—and then he retired. He left, like, the next week. I’m not blaming him; I’m just saying that he was gone.

So what happened was, we had this huge battle in broad daylight where hundreds and hundreds of Somalis were killed, and we lost 18 soldiers, in what was a U.N. action that basically, if I were going to do it again, I would treat it just like—if we were going to do that, I’d say, “Okay, I need to know what’s involved here, and let’s do this the way we planned out the military action we took against Saddam Hussein, for example, or the military action I took to try to get Usama bin Ladin’s training camps, or anything else.”

It doesn’t mean America shouldn’t be involved in peacekeeping, but it means if you go beyond the normal parameters that you decide on the front end, then the United States has to operate in a very different way.

Mr. Klein. There doesn’t seem to be a uniform set of ground rules yet in place.

The President. I don’t think there is, but we’re getting there.

Mr. Klein. Should there be? Could there be?

The President. I think it’s pretty hard, but I think you—anyway, I will always regret that. I don’t know if I could have saved those lives or not, because I think what we were trying to do was the right thing to do, and the people who were there on the ground did the best they could. But I would have handled it in a different way if I had more experience, I think. I know I would have.

The only other thing I was going to say about this is that—we talked about earlier how I hope in the future that the Congress will give more support to science and technology, beyond NIH. I hope in the future the Congress will give more support to our national security budget beyond the defense budget. As well-off as we

are, one real big problem, we should be spending much more than we're spending, in my judgment, to fight global disease, to promote global development, to facilitate global peacemaking and peacekeeping.

I think that we need to succeed in getting the bipartisan majority in Congress with a much broader view, because people look at us, and they know how much money we've got, and they know what our surplus is. And all these other countries are struggling, and we shouldn't be so begrudging—I fight with the Congress all the time—in our contributions to peacekeeping and to creating the conditions in which democracy and peace will flourish.

I'm encouraged by how Congress voted in this Colombia package because it's a balanced package, and it has a lot of nonmilitary, non-police stuff in it. And I'm hopeful that we'll have a more—I saw Ben Gilman had a very good article—somebody else—he and a Democrat, I can't remember who it was, wrote an article in the L.A. Times yesterday talking about the importance of the United States taking the lead in the international fight against global disease. That's one thing that I hope, after I'm gone, I hope that the next President will be more successful at than I was.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Klein. Let me ask you—this is it—after you're gone, you're going to be the youngest ex-President since Teddy Roosevelt. If there was one thing that Teddy Roosevelt did absolutely awful, it was be an ex-President. I mean, he was really terrible at it because he was so engaged, so involved, and he couldn't quit kibitzing.

The President. Well, he felt, to be fair to him, that the Republicans had abandoned his philosophy. He felt Taft had kind of let him down.

Mr. Klein. You also have a restraining amendment in the Constitution that he didn't. But do you worry about that?

The President. No. Well, I do, because—[laughter]—but not in the way you think. I don't think that the next President, whoever it is, will have problems with me acting like I wish I were still President. I mean, I think I know how to behave, and I've been here, and I want my country to succeed. And for my country to succeed, the Presidency has to function. And I don't want to complicate that.

So the challenge I have is to figure out how to have a meaningful life, how to use all this phenomenal experience I've got and what I know and the ideas I have in a way that helps my country and helps the things I believe in around the world and doesn't get in the way of the next President. And that's what I have to do. I've got to figure out how to do it.

Mr. Klein. Any thoughts?

The President. I've thought about it, but I'm not ready to talk about it yet. But the one thing that I—[laughter]—

Mr. Klein. You've talked about everything else today. [Laughter]

Philosophy of the Presidency

The President. Yes, but the one thing that I—the reason I wanted to spend so much time with this interview—if you want to talk to me anymore, just call, and we'll talk more on the phone—is that you always knew—and even when you got mad at me, it was because you thought I'd stopped it—that I would take this job seriously. I mean, the basic thing that I can tell you about this is, I will leave Washington, believe it or not, after all I've been through, more idealistic than I showed up here as, because I believe that if you have a serious Presidency, if you have ideas and you're willing to work and you're not so pig-headed that you think you've got the total truth and you work with other people and you just keep working at it and you're willing to win in inches as well as feet, that a phenomenal amount of positive things can happen.

And you always thought that I was trying to have a serious Presidency. That's all I ever wanted.

Mr. Klein. I got pretty pissed off at times.

The President. Yes, that was all right. But at least—but when you were mad, it was because you thought I was abandoning something I said I would do, that I was trying to do. I never had any—my frustration was with the people in your line of work that I thought didn't take all this seriously, that thought it didn't matter one way or the other, that thought it was some game, or who was up or who was down, or where was the power equation, or something.

Because it really does matter. There are consequences to the ideas people have. One of the worries I have about this election is all these people writing as if there is no differences and

there are no consequences. The American people should make a judgment knowing that there are differences and there are consequences and it matters what you do.

The thing that I think the last several years has shown is that a lot of these problems yield to effort. And if you're willing to just put in a few years of effort, you can push a lot of rocks up a lot of hills. People should feel really good about that.

One of the things that I hope when I leave office that people will say is, I hope that there will be a greater sense of self-confidence about what America can achieve. But it requires you—everybody has got to play politics, and I understand all that. I don't want to get sanctimonious about that just because I'm not running for office for the first time in 26 years. That's part of the political system. And everybody will take their shots and do this. But in the end, the Presidency should be informed by a set not just of core principles and core values but ideas—that there ought to be an agenda here. People ought to always be trying to get something done. And you shouldn't be deterred by people saying it's not big enough, or it's too big, or all that. There ought to be a broad-based view of where the world should go and what the role of the Presidency is in taking America where it should go. And as long as there is, I think our country is going to do pretty well. In that sense, I will leave office phenomenally optimistic.

And everything I ever believed about the American people has been confirmed by my experience here. If they have enough time and enough information, no matter how it's thrown at them, in how many pieces and how slanted it is or whether it's inflammatory or whether it's designed to produce sedation, no matter what happens, they nearly always get it right. That's the only reason we're around here after—the Founding Fathers were right. Democracy, if given a chance to work, really does. If there's enough time and enough information, the American people nearly always get it right.

So, in that sense, I just—I'm grateful I've had the chance to serve. I've had the time of my life. I've loved it. Probably good we've got a 22d amendment. If we didn't, I'd probably try to do it for 4 more years. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Klein. Well, I'll tell you something—turning this off—two things. One is, every last campaign I've covered since '92, I found myself judging against that one, in just big ways and

little ways. And the other thing I promised my son I'd tell you—he's just finishing up his first tour as a foreign service officer in Turkmenistan, and he said his proudest possession is his commission document with your signature on it.

The President. Wow. Well, if you go back to that '92 campaign, it just shows you, though—the only other thing I would say is, I think I was so advantaged by having been a Governor for 10 years when I started running, or however long I'd been serving, and having had the opportunity to develop these ideas over time and then to measure them against the experience I've had.

I still think ideas and organized, concentrated effort mattered. No President with an ambitious agenda will fail to make errors. Things happen in other people's lives. Maybe something will happen to the next President. God knows they won't go through what I did, but maybe their kids will get sick. Things happen in people's lives, and mistakes get made. And sometimes you just make a wrong call. But if you've got—if you're serious and you've got a good agenda and you have good people and you work at it in a steady way, you get results.

It really is a job like other jobs. That's another thing—I think it's important—you said something in your letter to me, which I think is true, that maybe we had removed all the mystery around the President—

Mr. Klein. I didn't even get a chance to ask that question.

The President. —and maybe that's not good. And maybe that's not good, but I do believe that we need to demystify the job. It is a job. And if you love your country and you've got something you want to do and you've thought it through and you've put together a good team and you're willing to be relentless and to exhaust yourself in the effort, results will come.

That's what I would like the American people to know. They should be very optimistic about this.

Diversity

Mr. Klein. You know, they are. They're in such great shape right now. I noticed it traveling around this year. It's not just everybody is getting along, but they appreciate the thing that you always said way back when, which is that diversity is a strength.

Sandy was telling me about your first G-7 conference, which I don't expect you to talk about on the record, but he was telling me about how the Japanese were lecturing you about how to run an economy. And when you took office, most people believed that we were going to get taken to the cleaners by the Japanese and the Germans, because they were homogenous and we were mongrels. And now most people—you know, most of those Archie Bunkers out in Queens have a niece or a nephew who is dating a Puerto Rican at this point. And most people—

The President. Or an Indian or a Pakistani. I went to a school in Queens the other day, and I mean, I thought I was—there was one guy there, I could swear the kid was from Mongolia. There were a lot of East Asians. There were a lot of South Asians. There were all the Puerto Ricans. There were all the other Latins, you know.

But the test that—that's not over, but I think people are beginning to feel good about it.

Mr. Klein. Well, I mean, kids my kids' age, your kid's age, think it's a positive value.

The President. It is a positive value. It makes life more interesting. I keep telling everybody, the trick is to figure out how to respect all these people's—other people's traditions, reli-

gions, the whole thing, cherish your own, and then—but the only way to make it work, which is why I keep citing this human genome finding that we're 99.9 percent the same, is to realize that the differences make life interesting, but the similarities are fundamental.

If you can get people to think that—what we have in common is fundamental, but the differences make life more interesting—then I think we'll be okay. And I still think that's still the most important thing of all. It's even more important than the right economic policy, because eventually we'll get all that stuff. We'll make mistakes; we'll correct it. But if your whole heart and mind and spirit is wrongly turned, then you can do everything else right, and you still come a cropper. You'll have problems.

So I really—I think this advance in race relations is profoundly important. I'll give you one—exhibit A was old Gordon Smith's speech for the hate crimes bill. Did you see that?

NOTE: The interview began at 5 p.m. in the Presidential Suite at the Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 10. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Interview With Joe Klein of the New Yorker August 15, 2000

2000 Democratic Convention

Mr. Klein. I'll tell you what. I was nostalgic enough, and then you had to stop at McDonald's on top of it?

The President. It was nice. We didn't get much sleep last night. It was a nice setting, though, today, and it was nice last night. That convention was nice. The stage seemed more in the audience than the previous ones we've had, didn't it?

Mr. Klein. Yeah. And they were up for it, that crowd last night.

The President. They were ready, weren't they?

Mr. Klein. Yeah. If I remember correctly, in '92 there was still some skepticism in that audience, when you gave your acceptance speech.

But you know, the difference between then and now is pretty—

The President. A lot of these people have been with me for 8 years now, you know. They have—a lot of those delegates—I've run into several people that tell me they were at the previous conventions, one or the other of them, going in—

Mr. Klein. How are you feeling right now?

The President. I feel fine. I'm a little tired. You know, we just—all I did in L.A. was run around and try to prepare for the speech. Except I did get to play golf one day, which was quite nice.

Mr. Klein. You did? Where?

The President. I played a public course there. What's it called? El Rancho? It's a public course

right near Hillcrest that used to be the site of the L.A. Open. They were very proud of it. They mayor wanted to play on it. The bad thing about it was lots of folks out there. It took a good while to get around, but it was really nice.

AmeriCorps

Mr. Klein. Steve said, when he called me, that you wanted to talk a little bit more about foreign policy and—

The President. There were some things we didn't talk—and I made a few notes. I don't think we said anything last time about foreign policy. I just thought you might have some questions you wanted to ask. I also thought we didn't talk much about environmental policy. And I couldn't remember whether we talked about AmeriCorps.

Mr. Klein. About AmeriCorps? Did we talk about AmeriCorps? No, we didn't. We don't have to.

The President. You know how important that is to me.

Mr. Klein. Yeah, I know how important that is.

The President. Did you see what Bush said 2 days ago?

Mr. Klein. What did he say?

The President. He said he was going to get rid of the 100,000 cops program, and he was going to take another look at AmeriCorps.

Mr. Klein. Really? But so many Republicans have turned around on that. I mean, I thought that the adjustment that you announced in Philadelphia at the voluntarism summit was just the icing on the cake for that program. That really—

The President. I think the only reason he would get rid of it is just for personal—

Mr. Klein. Did you ever hear the story about John Kasich going to Jeff Canada's program in Harlem?

The President. Yeah.

Mr. Klein. And Kasich saying, "God, you know, this is the kind of thing that AmeriCorps should be." And Jeff said to him, "Every one of those kids in there are AmeriCorps kids."

The President. And Kasich has turned around.

Foreign Policy

Mr. Klein. Yeah, Kasich has turned around. Santorum has turned around. Let me ask about—let's go to foreign policy for a minute.

In going through this thing, I've now written a mere 31,000 words. Every time you have to make a decision about global economic security during the last 8 years, you make it like that. Mexico, Asia, time and time again, you seem to have a really good sense of what global economic security is about. But international security decisions seem to be tougher.

The President. Well, if you look at it, for one thing, if it's a decision that involves the use of force, almost without exception—Haiti being the exception, I guess—we have—particularly in the Balkans, we thought we had to have first a consensus within NATO and then, if possible, some sanction from the United Nations. It took us a long time to put together that consensus in Bosnia. It took a couple of years.

Mr. Klein. You were saying last time that first, especially Somalia, you hadn't—that you didn't have the procedures in place that you later would.

The President. I think Somalia was a special case. I don't feel that way about Bosnia. Bosnia was literally—Christopher went to Europe early on. We tried to build a consensus. We failed. We didn't think we should go in there unilaterally. We finally got the country to, I think, eventually—we're proud of what NATO did in Bosnia and proud of the peace process.

And ironically, we didn't have the kind of delay in Kosovo that I was afraid we'd have. You know, it actually worked out pretty well.

So I think you're going to see this from time to time where, if there's a question on the use of force, whenever possible, the American people will want the United States to act with others. And whenever possible, it would be a good thing if we do and if it's sanctioned by the U.N. or at least if there's a darn good argument that it's covered by a U.N. resolution.

But Somalia was a special case. And I hope that Somalia will never be used as an excuse for the United States not to be involved in United Nations missions. We're training those soldiers in West Africa now that are going to go into Sierra Leone, which I think is a very good thing. And we have been working, ironically, for several years on the Africa Crisis Response Initiative, trying to generally train soldiers in Africa to be ready to deal with the problems.

But what happened in Somalia, as I say, was a special case because you had—the Americans were there under U.N. command. And I think

we learned a lot from Somalia, but I think that we shouldn't overlearn it. That is, we shouldn't refuse to go into another situation with soldiers from other countries. It's just that I think, if it happened again, we would have a much clearer notion of the rules of combat. And before we would have an engagement that could literally have led to several hundred casualties on their side and 18 deaths on our side, we would have much greater involvement in the details of it.

Mr. Klein. I talked to McCain about your foreign policy and other things. He was actually very supportive in a lot of other areas, especially high-tech areas. But the argument that he made on foreign policy is one that you hear from the foreign policy priesthood all the time about your foreign policy. They use words like "ad hoc" and "untidy" and that you move from issue to issue and there isn't the kind of sustained interest in it.

He uses an example—they use the example of you calling China our strategic partner, and he says Japan's our strategic partner. What do you say to the critics who say that you haven't had a sustained and coherent foreign policy?

The President. Well, I know they say it, but I disagree. A lot of those people didn't want us to be involved in the Balkans. They didn't think it was worth it. A lot of those people didn't think we should have gone into Haiti. They didn't think it was worth it.

I think we have had a consistent policy toward China. We've had to do different things in response to developments there. I think we've had a consistent policy toward Russia, and I think that we've had—basically, if you go back to some of the foreign policy speeches we gave, I think it's obvious that we've tried to meet the new security threats of the 21st century. We have tried very hard to support a united Europe. We've tried very hard to support the development of democracy in Russia and the reduction of the nuclear threat and removal of nuclear weapons from the other states of the former Soviet Union.

We have tried to engage with China. We have tried to contain or reverse the North Korean nuclear threat, and we have supported a dialog between the North and the South. And I think the things that we did and the things that we refused to do in North Korea have some bearing on the ultimate decision of Kim Chong-il to engage Kim Dae-jung.

We had an unusual and systematic outreach to our neighbors south of our border. And I regret that one of the few defeats of my administration—legislative defeats that I really regret was the fast-track defeat which sort of slowed up our initiative in building a free-trade area in the Americas, because I think it's important. And the United States has actually paid a price for that as a lot of the South American nations have actually started doing much more business with Europe rather than the United States.

But I just frankly don't agree with him. I think that—what I think—that if they're looking for some simple explanation of the world, a lot of them didn't agree with my outreach to Africa. A lot of them didn't agree with our designation of the global AIDS crisis as a national security threat.

But I think that—I don't know if you were—I gave a few remarks kind of ad hoc to the NDI luncheon yesterday. I think that we should see our foreign policy and national security in terms of the traditional alliances and challenges that we have that haven't changed, even though the cold war is over, in terms of the new possibilities opened up either by the end of the cold war or the emergence of this sort of global information society and then the new security threats. And I think a lot of the security threats of the 21st century will come not from other nation-states but from the enemies of the nation-states.

I think that you will see a convergence of terrorists, narcotraffickers, weapons merchants, and kind of religious and racial nationalists. I think you will see a lot of that. And then I think you will see a convergence of information technology in weaponry which will lead to the miniaturization of seriously dangerous weapons, both conventional and biological and chemical weapons. And I think the likelihood is that sometime in the next 10 years, people will come to think that there will be kind of cross-national threats which will threaten our security as much as one particular other nation.

I understand why they're all saying that. But the truth is, a lot of them didn't think I was right in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Mr. Klein. They never disagree on the big picture stuff. I talked to Tony Lake, and I read the book that he has coming out in October. And one of the things he posits as a kind of a central principle of your years that was something different was the fact that we were more

threatened by the weaknesses of other countries than their strengths. Is that something you agree with?

The President. Absolutely. I think the United States can be threatened more by another nation's weakness than by its strength. And I used to tell—I don't know how many times I've said to our crowd over the last 8 years, when we're dealing with a country that has interests that are in conflict with ours, I would rather have a strong leader of that country than a weak leader, because a strong leader can make an agreement and keep it and is capable of kind of distancing himself from the more destructive elements in the relationship and within their societies. So I believe that.

I also believe—let me be more specific. We want to preserve democracy in South America. But you still need to be strong to keep Colombia from collapsing, for example. There needs to be—you have to have to have a certain amount of discipline and strength to do what Museveni did in Uganda and reverse the AIDS rate—the infection rate of AIDS. There has to be a certain amount of strength in the state to rebuild the public health systems which are breaking down all over the world.

Laurie Garrett, who wrote "The Coming Plague"—do you remember that book? She's got a new book coming out—I've just seen it in galleys—about the breakdown of public health systems all over the world, in the states of the former Soviet Union, in developing countries, and speculating what it might mean for us. You've got to have a strong state with some fair measure of strength to deal with the challenges of climate change, for example, a lot of these big questions. So I absolutely agree with that.

I think that, to take a more traditional national security problem: the continuing agony between India and Pakistan and the centrality of Kashmir to that conflict and that relationship, it would take a pretty strong Government in both countries to really come to grips with the compromises that would be required to make an agreement that would have any shot at all of putting an end to that problem and also putting an end to it as a potential trigger of nuclear exchanges.

Mr. Klein. So, is the story of Camp David II the fact that one country was stronger than the other, and they weren't able to make com-

promise? You don't have to answer it if it's undiplomatic.

The President. Well, I think we're using—no, because—I understand what you mean, but I don't mean it in the same sense you do.

There, Israel has land and army coherence; the Palestinian state has existed in the minds of its adherents and implicit in these U.N. resolutions. So in that sense, that's a different kind of strong and weak. That is, if you don't have land, an army, and everything, maybe you have to adhere to words and ideas more, and compromise is more difficult.

I don't mean it like that. I meant actually—but both Arafat and Barak are strong, even though Barak didn't have a big margin in the Knesset.

Mr. Klein. No, I was meaning it in the way that you were meaning it. I was wondering whether Arafat's coalition—I mean, I've been over there, and I've seen all the various—I know how good a politician he's had to be to, you know, to survive.

The President. My gut is that if the other—three or four of those other people who will take whatever—if we can affect a compromise on Jerusalem that other Arab leaders will take, he can make whatever other arrangements he wants to make.

But that's different from whether the Colombians can physically recover 30 percent of their land now in the hands of narco-traffickers and terrorists or whether the Russians can actually rebuild their health care system.

Mr. Klein. Whether the Chinese can collect taxes from Guangdong Province?

The President. Yes, that's right. Your fellow journalist Friedman, Tom Friedman, has written a lot of very interesting essays on this whole subject of the weakness of government as opposed to the strength of government threatening freedom and progress. You know. You've written a lot of very interesting pieces on it. I just come in contact with it over and over and over again. So it's something that I'm concerned about.

Public Figures and the Public

Mr. Klein. One thing my boss was really interested in. He's spent a lot of time in Russia—David Remnick. But this had nothing to do with that.

It was something that you said in the very end when we were talking last time, when we

started talking about the loss of mystery and the fact that the distance between the leader and the public has evaporated during your time as President. And you were saying that you thought that was a good thing. And I understand the point that you made. Do you remember that? Do you remember? You said—

The President. Yeah, but let me say this: I would like to make two points. Number one, I think that it's a good thing if the American people, through television or through journalistic writings, have a better, deeper sense of what a person—the Presidency, for example—not only what we're doing but why we're doing it and how it fits into the larger scheme of things and how it fits into the pattern of our lives.

And you can get enough—I think what you get out of the greater exposure and a more consistent pattern of exposure is worth as what you give up in majesty.

Mr. Klein. What you give up in majesty?

The President. Mystery or majesty. So I approve of that.

I do not believe that the kind of invasion into public figures' private lives for the stated purpose of exploring their character but for the real purpose of destroying them for some political end is a very good thing. But I think it is unlikely to occur to the extent to which you've seen it in the last 8 years again for a long time.

Mr. Klein. You don't think the Presidency has just changed forever because of that?

The President. No. For one thing, the Democrats don't have anything like the infrastructure or the stomach or the desire to do that that the Republicans do. So there will have to be an actual abuse of power in office in some way that affects the public interest.

We don't—the guys that make money—we've got a lot of rich people to support us. They wouldn't do what Scaife did. They wouldn't waste \$7 million going on 15 wild goose chases to try to run somebody down. We're just not that kind of people. We're actually interested in government, and we care more about what we do with power than power.

So I think that's part of it. And I think shutting the Independent Counsel law down was part of it. Finally, when it finally was hijacked as basically the private property of the party not in the executive branch, I think its legitimacy was destroyed. So I think, if there ever comes a time again when we really need one,

we'll get it, the same way we got it back in the seventies. The press and the public will say the only appropriate response is for the Attorney General to name someone or to ask the court to name someone that's clearly independent.

Mr. Klein. Even short of those kind of spectacular, disgraceful, disgusting, awful kind of investigations, the Presidency after you—the Presidency exists in people's kitchens. You've been living in our kitchens for the last 8 years.

The President. Part of that's television and part of that's my predisposition to work hard in an open fashion. So I don't—as I said, I believe the ability to share with the public at large what you're trying to do and why and to take everybody along on the journey is worth the extra exposure in terms of the price you give up. Whatever the value of the mystery is, I think it's worth it. And I think most future Presidents will attempt to establish a more—I don't know; "intimate" may be the wrong word, but you know what I'm trying to say—a more sort of closer bond with the American people not just on an emotional level but actually in terms of having them understand what you're trying to do and why.

And if you do lots of interviews, if you're real accessful, if you work crowds, if you do townhall meetings, all these things that I did, you run the risk of making mistakes and paying some price and also sort of being demystified. But I think the benefit you get from it, in terms of keeping the energy flowing through a democratic system, is quite great.

If you think about it, after the Republicans won the Congress, a lot of people thought we'd never get anything done again. But we got a big bipartisan balanced budget. We got a big bipartisan welfare reform. We got a lot of bipartisan education reforms. We've even gotten some environmental work done. We got the Safe Drinking Water Act, we got—

Conservation and Environment

Mr. Klein. An awful lot of public land. I mean, I've been through these budgets line by line over the last 3 or 4 months.

The President. I worked with—Pete Domenici and I worked together to do this Baca Ranch deal in New Mexico. It's a huge thing. And we may actually get this whole CARRA legislation through where we're really trying to make the right kind of compromises with the Republicans that would, in effect, take the royalties we get

from offshore drilling and put it only into environmental preservation, buying land—a small part of it for the Federal Government but a lot of it for States—and then restoration of coastlines and all that kind of stuff. If this thing passes, it's huge.

What do you think the odds are we can pass this CARA legislation? It's a really big thing.

Chief of Staff John Podesta. It's up against some tough rightwing filibusters.

Mr. Klein. Is this last round of negotiations going to happen during the next 2 or 3 weeks?

The President. On the environmental stuff?

Mr. Klein. No, I mean the budget. Is that in the budget?

The President. No, it's a separate—it's a stand-alone bill, because it takes a funding stream that's already there and directs it only to basically long-term land preservation and conservation work at the State and local level, primarily, and the Federal level.

But the fact that some of these Republicans, including Don Young from Alaska, they're willing to work with us to institutionalize this sort of thing on a permanent basis is, I think, really encouraging.

I still believe there's a lot to be said for showing up every day, and you just keep trying to push the rock up the hill.

Reaction to Scandal

Mr. Klein. Can I say something that might piss you off? And you can even turn that off if you want.

Deputy Press Secretary Jake Siewert. We're landing. You just don't have to answer it.

Mr. Klein. When Lewinski happened, I was more pissed off at my colleagues and at the Republicans than I was at you. I'm sitting there, writing this piece, and I go through this whole section of the trench warfare, line-by-line battles that you've won against the Republicans during those 3 or 4 years. And all of a sudden, I get to Lewinski, and I got to say, I got pissed off at you. It doesn't change the bottom line of the piece—

The President. I was pissed off at me.

Mr. Klein. I was surprised. I was surprised by my own reaction to that moment because the stuff you had done you didn't get any credit for, you weren't going to get any credit for. Unless a lot of people read this piece and it changes other people's minds, you wouldn't get credit for it. But it was the stuff that you did

for working people. You're probably the best President for the working people in the history of the country. And then—

The President. Robert Pear actually wrote a good story the other day about what we had done for the working poor that nobody noticed over 8 years. That's why we were able to get it done.

But I think—well, you know, for us to talk about that would require a longer conversation than we have. But I think the interesting thing was, I viewed the way they overreacted to it as sort of like the last—as the second step of the kind of purging our national life of the hard-core, rightwing aspects of the Gingrich revolution, which was the Government shutdown.

We rolled that back, and then we rolled this back, and then we had this unbelievable congressional election. And I think you see it in the tone and tenor of the Republican campaign this year. Although I told you before, I'm not sure their policies have changed very much, but at least in the tone and tenor of it, I think you can see basically a decision within their camp that, "Okay," that, you know, "we don't have to get beat a third time over this. We want to stay in."

Mr. Klein. I think we've changed, too. A little bit late for your benefit.

The President. Yes, I think so.

Mr. Klein. But I think that Bush is getting a little bit of the benefit of the fact—

The President. Huge.

Mr. Klein. —that we've realized—that my colleagues realize that we went way overboard in '98. I mean, our poll ratings—yours—

The President. But I think it was even before that. I don't think—well, sometime we'll have more time to talk about it. But I hope that nobody will ever have to undergo what I did from 1991 through 1998 again, or at least, I hope that if it happens, the media will know that it's happened, instead of being so willing to be basically suborned by it and kind of enlisted and all these other things that happened.

In fact, if that is one result of it and it changes our politics and makes it a little less hostile and personally destructive, even if the changes last for 10 or 15 years, that would be a very good thing. I can't say that I think it would have been worth it, but it certainly would be a very good thing.

President's Best Memories

Mr. Klein. Let's end on an up. I don't want to end on that note. What's your favorite moment when you look back? What was your biggest high?

The President. Well, it's very difficult to say because we did so many things, and one of the things that—that I'm sitting here with you now. We just left the handoff deal, and I'm thinking what—I mean, it seems like I just got inaugurated the first time. I can't believe that 8 years are gone. But I knew, when we won the economic plan, that it would turn the country around economically. I felt that when we passed AmeriCorps we had a chance to create a new citizen ethic in the country, which I thought was important.

I loved going to Ireland when we made the peace there. I loved—a lot of the things we did in the Middle East meant a lot to me. You know, when we—just a lot of things.

I feel very strongly that we did the right thing with welfare reform. I think I told you, when I was at the trial lawyers' meeting the other day and I was just shaking hands, I met two women. One had a master's degree, and one had a law degree. They told me they were on welfare when I became President.

I went home—I say I went home—I went back to my political home in New Hampshire earlier this year on the eighth anniversary of my victory in the New Hampshire primary, and I met a woman in the crowd who was a nurse who had gotten some appointment from our administration and was on welfare when I got elected President.

I suppose, in a funny way, those personal encounters are the biggest highs I get. There was a guy—I don't know if you were out there when I spoke today and introduced Al and I started talking about the HOPE scholarship? There was a guy over to my left that said, "Yeah, I got one of those here." He screamed out in the audience. Because I said it would pay for the community college there. He said, "Yeah, I know. I'm there. I got one."

You know, I run into people all the time that have taken the family leave law. I met a woman the other day who told me that her sister had taken the family leave law to take care of their mother, and then she had gotten cancer and taken it and now had a clean bill of health.

And I think that in some ways, even bigger than all the 100,000 people in the street in Dublin and all of the huge emotional crowd events, when you actually look at somebody who says, here is something you did, and my life is better because of it, that's probably the most rewarding thing of all.

Mr. Klein. Well, it was 9 years ago just about now that it was just you and me and a State trooper in Maine. And it does feel like—

The President. Maine?

Mr. Klein. The State trooper was a source for the American—

The President. We also got beat in Maine. Jerry Brown won in Maine. Remember that?

Mr. Klein. I was thinking about that out there today. I was just thinking about the first time I went out with you in Maine. And I remember we were stuck on the tarmac in Boston. You had to catch a plane to Chicago. And I looked at you, and I said, "Do you realize a year from today you could be giving your acceptance speech, and you'll have a fleet of cars and Secret Service and planes to take you anywhere you want to go?" And you looked at me as if to say, you're out of your mind, boy.

The President. And now it's all over—or just beginning. A new chapter is beginning. I've got to figure out—after you write this, you ought to talk to me about what you think I ought to do next.

President's Future Plans

Mr. Klein. I have a couple of ideas. I know a guy, the guy who runs the Ford Foundation in Asia is really interested in funding ways to move new technology and biotechnology to Third World areas. He would give you a bunch of money for your collaborating on that.

The President. Well, I'm going to spend a lot of time working on that.

Mr. Klein. My guess is that, just from hearing you talk, that's the kind of stuff that floats your boat these days.

The President. Oh, yeah. Yeah, I want to do stuff that keeps my juices running.

Mr. Klein. I don't think you're going to have any problem with that.

The President. No. I'm going to have a good time. But I've got to—if my wife wins the Senate seat and my daughter stays in school, I have to make a sizeable income. [Laughter]

Mr. Klein. One or two speeches a month. But we've still got to play golf next year.

The President. You've got a deal. We can also play this year, if you want to come.

Mr. Klein. By the way, I broke 90 for the first time between last interview and this.

The President. That's great.

Mr. Klein. Two birdies.

The President. Two?

Mr. Klein. That meant I screwed up some other holes.

The President. That's great. If you want to come to Washington and play, I'd like that.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:55 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route from Monroe, MI, to Andrews Air Force Base, MD. In his remarks, the President referred to former Secretary of State William Christopher; and conservative philanthropist Richard Mellon Scaife. Mr. Klein referred to former National Security Adviser Anthony Lake. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 10. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on Signing Legislation on Permanent Normal Trade Relations With China

October 10, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary Albright; Mr. Speaker; Senator Roth; Senator Moynihan; Chairman Archer; Representative Rangel. I thank you all so much for your steadfast leadership in this important cause.

I also want to thank Senator Lott and Senator Daschle in their absence and, indeed, all the Members who are here. And if you would just indulge me in one personal remark, this is probably the largest gathering of Members of Congress anywhere in Washington today, except in the Chambers of the House and Senate.

And I would like to take a moment to pay my respects to the memory of our friend Congressman Bruce Vento, who passed away earlier today, a great teacher, a great Representative, a wonderful human being.

I also want to join the previous speakers in thanking all those who worked so hard on it, Charlene Barshefsky and Gene Sperling, who accompanied her to China, and they worked on this deal until the 11th hour. We knew it would take until the 11th hour. We only hoped by then they wouldn't be too tired to tell time, so we would be able to finish.

I thank Secretaries Glickman, Summers, and Mineta; and Secretary Slater, Secretary Shalala, who are here, John Podesta and Sandy Berger. I can't thank Bill Daley and Steve Ricchetti enough for the extraordinary job they did to lead our efforts to secure passage of this initiative, along with Chuck Brain and Mary Beth Cahill.

I want to thank all the State and local officials, the retired officials and business leaders who helped us, and I would like to acknowledge two great champions of trade who I just saw in the audience, just because I'm glad to see them, former Congressman Sam Gibbons and former Congressman and Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy. Thank you both for being here.

This is a great day for the United States and a hopeful day for the 21st century world. This signing ceremony marks the culmination of efforts begun almost 30 years ago by President Nixon, built on by President Carter, who normalized our relations with China, pursued firmly by Presidents of both parties to normalize ties with China in ways that preserve our interests and advance our values.

During that time, China has grown more prosperous and more open. As the world economy becomes vastly more complex and interconnected, China's participation in it, according to the rules of international trade, has only become more important for America, for Asia, and the world. Today we take a major step toward China's entry into the World Trade Organization and a major step toward answering some of the central challenges of this new century. For trade with China will not only extend our Nation's unprecedented economic growth, it offers us a chance to help to shape the future of the world's most populous nation and to reaffirm our own global leadership for peace and prosperity.

I guess I ought to point out that our work's not over when I sign the bill. For China must

still complete its WTO accession negotiations and live up to the agreements it has negotiated with us and our partners before it can join. But when it happens, China will open its markets to American products from wheat to cars to consulting services, and our companies will be far more able to sell goods without moving factories or investments there.

Beyond the economy, however, America has a profound stake in what happens in China, how it chooses to relate to the rest of the world, and whether it is open to the world, respectful of human rights, upholding the rule of law at home and its dealings with other nations.

Of course, opening trade with China will not in and of itself lead China to make all the choices we believe it should. But clearly, the more China opens its markets, the more it unleashes the power of economic freedom, the more likely it will be to more fully liberate the human potential of its people. As tariffs fall, competition will rise, speeding the demise of huge state enterprises. Private firms will take their place and reduce the role of government in people's daily lives. Open markets will accelerate the information revolution in China, giving more people more access to more sources of knowledge. That will strengthen those in China who fight for decent labor standards, a cleaner environment, human rights, and the rule of law.

We also will continue to press China to meet its commitments on stopping the transfer of dangerous technology and deadly weapons. We will continue to be a force for security in Asia, maintaining our military presence and our strong alliances. We will continue to support, from the outside, those who struggle within China for human rights and religious freedom.

I want to say a special word of thanks to Congressmen Levin and Bereuter. Because of them, we will have both normal trade relations and a good new policy tool to monitor our human rights concern. They made this a better bill, and all Americans are in their debt. Thank you.

There are so many Members here today, I can't introduce them all, but some who had no institutional mandate to do so also joined us in fighting hard for this bill. Among them, Senator Baucus, Congressman Matsui, Congressman Dooley, Congressman Dreier, Congressman Kolbe, and Congressman Crane. I, in particular, thank those of you who worked so closely with

me in this regard, and all the rest of you who fought hard for this.

Let me say, in case you've all forgotten, this thing was hard to pass. *[Laughter]* This was a lot of trouble. And I would just like to close in reiterating something that I often said in these endless meetings we had in that room right up there on the third floor where, ironically, President Franklin Roosevelt had his office during World War II.

I do think this is a good economic deal for America. I think it will increase our exports and, over the long run, will strengthen our economic position in the world. But I think, by far, the most important reason to ratify this agreement is the potential it gives us to build a safer, more integrated world.

You heard Senator Moynihan talking about the day he joined the Navy. In the last 60 years of the 20th century, we fought three major wars in Asia. We can build a whole different future there now. We concluded a trade agreement with Vietnam. Today a very high official from North Korea came into the Oval Office to bring a message from the leader of North Korea. But nothing—nothing—can enhance the prospects of peace and the prospects of a very different 21st century like having China take the right path into the future.

Like all people in the United States, the Chinese people ultimately will have to pick their own path. And they will make their own decisions. We can't control what they do, but we can control what we do.

We overcame fears, misgivings, honest disagreements, to come together in a stunning bipartisan coalition. One Republican House Member shook hands with me today, and the first thing he said is, "Well," he said, "I'm glad to see you, Mr. President. This is the first time I've ever come here since you've been here." *[Laughter]* And I thought, "Well, if there had to be just one time, this is the time," because we did something together here that gives our children and our grandchildren the chance the live in a world that is coming together, not coming apart. It gives all of us the chance to meet the common threats of the future together as free and interdependent people.

Our children will live in a world in which the information technology revolution, the biotechnology revolution, and the increasing globalization of the economy will force them to find ways to meet our common challenges

and seize our common opportunities together. It's hard to imagine how that future will work if China is not a part of it.

So to every one of you, from every part of America, those in Congress and those who lobbied the Congress, I hope for a long time to come you will remember this day and be proud of what you did to bring it about. And I hope and believe that our children and grandchildren will be the beneficiaries of your labors.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:52 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks,

the President referred to former Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley; and National Defense Commission First Vice Chairman Cho Myong-nok and President Kim Chong-il of North Korea. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Speaker of the House J. Dennis Hastert, Senator William V. Roth, Jr., Representative Bill Archer, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and Representative Charles B. Rangel. H.R. 4444, approved October 10, was assigned Public Law No. 106-286.

Statement on Signing the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act

October 10, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act, which significantly strengthens efforts to make America's beaches clean, safe, and healthy. America's coasts are not only a natural treasure—they are also the number one destination for vacationing families, making their health vital to our Nation's tourism industry. Yet each year, pollution forces thousands of beach closures or health advisories. The Beach Act will ensure that in the future fewer families arrive at the beach only to discover that it is too polluted for fishing or swimming. It requires States to adopt enforceable standards for water quality, regularly test coastal waters for health-threatening pollution, and notify the public of unsafe

conditions. In addition, it provides assistance to States to carry out these efforts.

This act builds on my administration's strong efforts to ensure healthier beaches and cleaner coastal waters, greater protection for endangered and threatened marine species, sound fisheries management, and support for marine protected areas. I urge Congress to fully fund ocean and coastal conservation programs for the coming fiscal year so that communities around the country may enjoy healthy beaches and clean waters for years to come.

NOTE: H.R. 999, approved October 10, was assigned Public Law No. 106-284.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Health Care Legislation

October 10, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am writing to express my serious concerns that the Congressional Republican Leadership is preparing to pass unjustifiably large Medicare health maintenance organization (HMO) payment increases while preventing passage of a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. Managed care reform in the 106th Congress should focus on

patient protections, not on excessive payments to managed care plans. Moreover, these reimbursement increases are effectively diverting resources from critically important health care priorities.

This past weekend marked the 1-year anniversary of the overwhelmingly bipartisan passage of the Norwood-Dingell Patients' Bill of Rights.

Despite the bipartisan majority supporting this bill in the Senate, parliamentary and political tactics have blocked an up-or-down vote on this long-overdue legislation.

At least as disconcerting is that Congress is proposing to dedicate \$25 to \$53 billion in increased payments to managed care—without a sound policy basis. The Congress is currently contemplating dedicating 40 to 55 percent of their total investment in provider payments and beneficiary services to increase managed care payments—over twice the amount they plan to spend on hospitals and over five times the amount that they plan to spend on beneficiaries. The Congress is proposing this investment despite studies showing that Medicare managed care plans are overpaid by nearly \$1,000 per enrollee and that their payment rates have grown faster under the Balanced Budget Act than the payment rates for traditional Medicare.

It is important to note that increased payments provide no guarantee that Medicare HMOs will stop dropping benefits or abandoning seniors' communities altogether. It is clear that increasing payments to managed care plans did not work this year—we invested an additional \$1.4 billion in Medicare+Choice, yet watched nearly 1 million seniors and people with disabilities lose access to plans. Without explicit accountability provisions, it will not work next year either.

The unwarranted managed care payment increases would deprive funding for initiatives that would have real effects on peoples' lives, such as: restoring State options to insure vulnerable legal immigrants; fully funding the Ricky Ray Relief Fund; providing health insurance to chil-

dren with disabilities; funding grants to integrate people with disabilities into the community; improving nursing home quality; eliminating Medicare preventive services cost sharing; targeting dollars to vulnerable hospitals; assuring adequate payments to teaching hospitals and home health agencies; and funding other critical health priorities. These high-priority initiatives are outlined in additional detail in the attached document.

These initiatives represent our highest health priorities. In contrast, Congress is increasing reimbursement to managed care plans at a time when Medicare managed care plans are about to receive billions of dollars in increased Medicare payments, which are linked to increases in fee-for-service payments to hospitals, nursing homes, and other providers.

It is long past time that we work together in a bipartisan fashion to respond to the Nation's highest health care priorities. It is irresponsible to provide excessively high reimbursement rates for HMOs without ensuring that they are accountable through the Patients' Bill of Rights and through commitments to provide stable and reliable services to Medicare beneficiaries. I urge you to produce more balanced legislation that puts Medicare beneficiaries and the Nation's taxpayers first.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, Senate majority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Robert E. Wise, Jr. *October 10, 2000*

Thank you. Well, let me say, I'm delighted to be here for a number of reasons. One is, I'm kind of tied down, you know, working and trying to get the Congress out of town, and I don't have much time to travel. And I meant to go see Versailles this month, so "Chez Rockefeller" is almost as good. *[Laughter]* And I always love coming back here.

Secondly, Jay and Sharon have been great friends to Hillary and me for many, many years. We served as Governors together. We sat together. We cogitated together. We voted together. We did a lot of good things together. And our States were remarkably similar in the years when we served as Governors. And maybe the similarity in part explains the fact that the people of West Virginia had been so very good

to me in 1992 and 1996, something for which I am profoundly grateful. And so I wanted to be here for all those reasons.

I also wanted to be here because Bob Wise has also been good to me in the Congress. He has been an excellent Congressman for West Virginia and for the United States. He's been a great ally of the good things that we have done. He has also been a ferocious advocate for West Virginia.

And finally, I wanted to be here because I believe, as Jay said, that it really matters who's the Governor. I was Governor for a dozen years. I don't think I ever would have gotten tired of doing it. And if I had thought that the country was being aggressively moved in 1991, I think I'd probably still be doing it.

But what I'd like to say tonight is to try to tie together the decision the people of West Virginia have to make in national politics with the decision you have to make in State politics and explain why they are so important.

When I was a Governor in Arkansas, we didn't have an unemployment rate below the national average in the last 10 years I served as Governor, except one. The year I ran for President, we were first or second—I never saw the final figures—in job growth, and we finally got going. But it took 10 years to turn—to take our State through the kind of economic transition that a lot of the rural States with agricultural-based economies and industries that were fading away needed to go through. And they've done very well in the last 8 years, and I'm grateful for that.

But the first thing I want to say is it's hard for Governors to see if the Nation has a bad economic problem. Therefore, the country has a big decision to make about whether you want to continue to change in the direction that we're in, which means that people like Jay, as he said, have to take a tax cut that's much less than the one you'll get from the other side, but we'll have a tax cut that will deal with the things people need most in terms of education and child care and long-term care and retirement savings, and we'll have enough money left to invest in education and to keep paying this debt down.

If you have their tax cut plus the Social Security privatization plus all their spending promises, we're back in deficits, which means higher interest rates, slower job growth, and you all know that States like West Virginia and Arkansas

get hurt the worst when the economy turns down, job growth slows down, interest rates are higher. It costs more to borrow money to start new businesses and expand them. It means fewer jobs, less wage increases, and a lower stock market. So I think our deal works pretty well for everybody up and down the income scale, and I think we should continue it.

Now, having said that, I can tell you that, if you have a good economic policy, how well a State does depends, in no small measure, on how aggressive and creative and consistent the Governor is. And Bob Wise is aggressive, creative, and consistent. I would put those adjectives in different order, depending on what day it is. But he is always there. This guy will work. He'll show up every morning; he'll be there at night; and he'll be thinking about something new he can do. And he'll push, and that's important.

The second thing I would like to say is there's a great interest in this country today on education, and the voters have to decide. Both the candidates for President favor accountability. I personally think that the Vice President's accountability system is better than Governor Bush's, but I don't want to get into that, because it takes—that's an hour discussion. But we favor accountability-plus. That is we believe we should help have smaller classes, more well-trained teachers in the early grades, modernize schools. I did an event on all this at a West Virginia school—[inaudible]—Senator Byrd, you may remember—preschool, after-school, and summer school programs for all the kids who need it, and tax deductions to send your kids to college. That's what we believe.

The Federal Government only provides 7 percent of the total education budget of the Nation. It was 9 percent under President Johnson. It slipped with—it was heading to 5 when I took office, and we've reversed it. But I think it's a mistake to do this voucher proposal, in part because we only have 7 percent of the money, and it costs a lot of money to do a little good. Even if you assume it's a good thing, it costs a lot of money to do a little good.

And we now know something that we did not have the research on when Jay Rockefeller and I served as Governor. We now know, from research, how to turn around failing schools. We have the research. There is no excuse, therefore, for us not to be doing it. But I can tell you, if you make the right decision in the

Presidential race and we get a good result in the congressional races, it still won't amount to a hill of beans if the Governor has no consuming, passionate, consistent interest in education.

Now, I'll just give you one other example. In 1992—in '91 and '92, when I ran for President, I used to talk to Jay Rockefeller all the time about health care, because I knew how much he cared about it. I knew he knew more about it than I did, and he had a big influence on me on this issue. When Governor Bush tells you that we had 8 years and didn't do anything, that's just not true.

When we took office, Medicare was supposed to go broke last year. It's now alive until 2026. We put 27 years on the life of Medicare. That's the longest life it's had since it was created in 1965. And you can now keep your health insurance if you change jobs or in a period of sickness. We have a lot more preventive care for—under Medicare—for breast cancer screenings, for prostate screenings; we've dramatically improved diabetes care; we've insured 2½ million kids under the Children's Health Insurance Program; and the number of uninsured people in America went down last year for the first time since 1987.

So we've done a lot, but there's still a lot to do. And we're in a big debate. Jay and I were just talking about the debate we're having with the Republicans now. We actually cut too much money out of the Medicare program in the Balanced Budget Act. We have to put some back in. We believe that we ought to help the hospitals, the nursing homes, and the community and home providers, and make sure that we can maintain the fabric of health care. Fifty-five percent of the money in the Republicans' budget goes to the HMO's. This is a huge issue that will affect the ability of the next Governor of West Virginia to protect the health care of the country.

So there's big partisan issues here: whether you're for the Patients' Bill of Rights; whether you believe everybody, all the old people in the country, the retired people—I hope to be one of them one of these days—should have access to affordable medicine. Sixty-five is not old anymore. If you live to be 65 in America today, your life expectancy is 82. And the human genome project will mean young women within a decade—I'll predict it; you wait and see if I'm right. I believe within a decade young

women will come home from the hospital with babies that will have a life expectancy of 90 years. That's what I believe will happen because of the human genome project.

But I think this is all-important, and this is a matter of national policy. Now, having said that, let me tell you that when we made the agreement with the Republicans in 1997, on the balanced budget, we agreed to give the money to all the States to design a Children's Health Insurance Program. And you've got States that are just doing fabulously with it.

In States, you can never predict. Alaska, with a lot of desperately poor people living all strewn out from here to yonder, has an enormously high enrollment. Why? Because the Governor wanted the kids enrolled. Arizona has a very low enrollment. Why? Because the legislature asked to be passed a bill prohibiting the children from being enrolled in the schools where they are, because the legislative majority there—I need to say, of the other party—saw this as some great scheme to socialize medicine. All they're doing is paying for medicine, for medical coverage for kids in low-income working families. And everybody else is somewhere in between.

But you get the point. If you want children in West Virginia to have good health care, it doesn't matter what we do in Washington, even if we have good policy, unless the Governor cares enough to make sure that maximum efforts are made in an intelligent way to take care of the families. And West Virginia is just like Arkansas. You've got a whole lot of people who work like crazy, work 40 or 50 hours a week for low incomes, who cannot afford health insurance. This is a big deal to you.

So what I want to say is, obviously, I'm interested in the races for Congress, especially one Senate race, and I'm passionately committed to the campaign of the Vice President and Senator Lieberman. But I'm telling you, I spent a dozen years as a Governor, and I worked with some of the ablest people I ever met in that period, and I think I know something about West Virginia. It really matters. You need somebody that is creative, aggressive, and consistent, somebody that understands the economy, education, and health care. He does. He should win, and I hope you won't quit helping him tonight.

I know this is a close race. Listen, it's hard to beat any incumbent Governor when the economy is doing well. I used to tell everybody,

"If the economy was better, I could have a lobotomy and get reelected"—[*laughter*—when I was running. It's hard. But he is doing very well, and he's doing very well because people sense these things about him. So we still—we've got more than a month left in this campaign, folks. And if you can give him any more money, you ought to. And if you can't give him any more money, you ought to go home and start talking to people about why this matters.

But I'm just—we have got a chance here to see States that have been left out and left behind for a long time if we could just keep this economy going, really balloon, and do well. But it will matter profoundly who the Governor is. And I think, again, you need somebody that

understands how Washington works and how it affects West Virginia, somebody that's committed to jobs, schools, and health care, and somebody that's intelligent, creative, aggressive, and consistent. He is.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:05 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Senator John D. Rockefeller IV and his wife, Sharon; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Gov. Tony Knowles of Alaska; and Gov. Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia. Representative Wise was a gubernatorial candidate in West Virginia.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Joseph Crowley October 10, 2000

Thank you. Let me say, first of all, I am delighted to be here for many reasons. First of all because I love Rosa, because—and Rosa does that sort of born-in-a-log-cabin routine better than anybody I know—[*laughter*—what she neglected to tell you was that her mother, the seamstress, is the best politician I have ever met in my life to this day—[*laughter*—and because her husband, the man who shares this house, Stan, had so much to do with my becoming President in 1992 and is now, tonight in Florida working with the Vice President as he prepares for this important debate, and has also helped my friends Tony Blair and Prime Minister Barak and other good people around the world, and because Rosa's been there for 8 years now with me working on many of the things that have helped turn our country around.

I'm here because I really like Joe Crowley, because he's been real good to Hillary, which means a lot to me—[*laughter*—and because—I'll tell you another Queens story, because I love Queens. And in early '92, you know, we were pretty desperate to get press in early '92. I mean, here I was from Arkansas; nobody in New York knew who I was.

Harold Ickes says, "We're going to meet with the Queens Democratic Committee, and Tom Manton is for you, and I think they will endorse you." I said, "They're going to endorse me?"

I was like fifth in name recognition in New Hampshire at the time. And he said, "Yes. Yes, it's going to happen. But we're going to take a subway out there," which I thought was great. I like to ride the subway.

So we took a subway there, and there was this typically passive New York press person with us with a camera, in my face, lights everywhere, and all these people who had been sort of uprooted on the subway watching the filming of this thing, thinking, "Why are they taking that guy's picture? Who is this strange person they've got this camera on?"

So then we walked down this beautiful tree-lined street, and we walked up some stairs. I remember—whoever—the Queens Democratic meeting was on the second floor of some building, and all of a sudden they introduced me, and I was terrified, right. So I'm walking down the aisle, and I passed this African-American guy, and he reaches out and puts his arm around me and says, "Son, don't worry about it. I was born in Hope, Arkansas, too, and we're going to be for you." [*Laughter*] True story. So the rest is history, as they say. So I'm deeply indebted.

I am grateful to all these Members of the House of Representatives who are here. Whatever success I've had as President would have been literally impossible without them, both in

the majority and maybe especially in the minority, because virtually every good thing that's happened in Congress in the last 6 years would not have happened if they hadn't known for sure that my veto would be upheld. That was the only incentive to work with us to make constructive progress. So if it hadn't been for them, it wouldn't have happened.

Now, I just would like to say a couple of things. First of all, I do feel an enormous amount of gratitude for what's happened in the last 8 years. This last week has been an emotional roller coaster for me because we had that stunning election in Serbia, validating the stand the United States took, year-in and year-out, when it was very unpopular, sometimes in our country, for the freedom of the people of Bosnia, the freedom of the people of Kosovo, the principle of democracy in Serbia, the idea that Europe ought to be united and democratic and whole. And I was so happy.

And we had about 30 minutes to celebrate before all hell broke loose in the Middle East, where I have worked as hard as I could to find a just and lasting peace. And Joe, we talked a lot about Ireland tonight. Let me just say briefly on Ireland first, I'm very pleased about how far we have come. We are not out of the woods yet. We have still got to get this police issue right. It's got to be done right, but I hope that people on both sides and particularly some of the people on the other side—for most of you—who have been talking about, well, maybe they would bag the Good Friday agreement, I hope they have been watching what is going on in the Middle East, and I hope they understand how easy it is to let these things get away from you.

Keep in mind, these people are represented by teams that sat at Camp David, and they've been working together for 7 years. They know each other's children. They know how many grandchildren they have. And still, think about how quickly it slipped.

So I say to all of you interested in peace in Ireland, I'll keep working on it, and you keep working on it, and just remind them that it's a fragile thing. And sometimes you're most vulnerable in life when you think you're least vulnerable. We cannot take our good fortune for granted.

Now, on the Middle East, I don't want to say too much except we had a pretty good day today. And we, our whole American team, we've

been working like crazy for the last several days trying to help do our part. I just have to believe they're not going to let this thing spin out of control.

But there are lots of things going on there, including things that are not apparent, developments in other countries that are having an impact on this. So we're working as hard as we know how to end the violence and get the folks back to the negotiating table, and I hope you will all say a prayer for that.

Let me just say a word about this election. No one in America understands as clearly as I do how important this election is, not just for President and Vice President but every Senate seat, every House seat—nobody.

And since we're in the business of being humble here, because you realize how quickly things can change, it's important to recognize that—I'm absolutely convinced the only danger we have in this election is if people will think the consequences of their vote are not particularly significant, and our crowd may not go, and some may not understand what the consequences are. But I'm telling you, we have never had a better chance to literally imagine the future we want to build for our kids and just go do it. But if we're careless with it, it could get away from us.

So you've got these huge economic differences. Rosa mentioned that. You know, I just got back from Jay Rockefeller's house. At least one of you was there with me tonight. And Jay Rockefeller, you know, he pays those taxes George Bush wants to cut. *[Laughter]* I told old Jay tonight, I said, "You know," I said, "I just came over here because I'm busy in Washington, and I felt the need to go on vacation. And I really wanted to see Versailles, and I couldn't, so I thought I would come to your house instead—next best thing." *[Laughter]*

But I want you to think about it. I mean they want a tax cut that's way bigger than the one our side wants. We want to have as much as we think we can afford to pay for college education, long-term care if somebody in your family is sick, child care, retirement savings. But we want to save something to invest in education and health care, and we want to keep paying down the debt.

Now, this is an interesting juxtaposition. The Democratic Party is now the fiscally conservative party in America and has been for some time. Why? I must say, the first person I ever heard

argue this case was former Congressman Joe Kennedy from Boston. But it's true. If you pay down the debt and you keep interest rates lower, that does more to help lower income working people and middle-class people than anything else, because it grows the economy quicker; it gets labor markets tighter; it raises wages at the low end, creates more jobs there; and it spreads the benefits broadly.

Now, if they get their way, you cannot cut taxes as much as they say they're going to, partially privatize Social Security, which costs another \$1 trillion—something they never talk about. Although I was proud to see the Governor acknowledge that in the last debate—said—“Well, where are you going to get the money?” He said, “Out of the surplus.”

So if you have a \$1.6 trillion to \$9 trillion tax cut and a \$1 trillion Social Security privatization program and then you've got all these other spending programs they promise, you're back in deficit again.

I believe that the Gore/Lieberman economic plan, which the Democrats broadly support, would keep interest rates about a percent lower over a decade, and I believe that's about \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments, not to mention lower credit card payments, lower business loan costs, and higher growth. So we've got a big choice here.

You know, there are still neighborhoods in New York, in New York City and in upstate New York, in Buffalo, in Rochester, in other places that have not fully participated in this economic recovery yet. One of the good bipartisan things we're trying to do is to pass this new markets initiative that all the New York delegations have been so helpful on, that Speaker Hastert and I have worked on. But in order for it to work, the overall economy has to be working. In order for it to be attractive for us to give extra incentives to people with money to invest in the areas that aren't growing, the overall economy's got to be working.

This is a huge deal. It may be the biggest difference. And you've got to make sure people know that between now and the election. David Bonior, he's actually—he's got a race out there in Michigan. He lives in a competitive district. There's no way in the world he wouldn't win with the biggest percentage of the vote he has ever had if the people of his district clearly understood the difference in what their eco-

nomic plan would do and what ours would do for their long-term welfare.

I could go through the education issue, the health care issue. You know, we're for the Patients' Bill of Rights, and they aren't. And if you want to know why, look at the Medicare budget they voted out today.

We're trying to put some money back in the Medicare program. We actually cut it too much in the Balanced Budget Act of '97. We want to see it fairly distributed. We want to take care of the hospitals, the urban hospitals, the rural hospitals, the teaching hospitals. We want to take care of the nursing homes and the community providers.

Fifty-five percent in their budget goes to the HMO's, the same people they killed the Patients' Bill of Rights for—big difference here. The American people need to know that.

The prescription drug plan—Joe's been active in this, and Rosa talked about it. I'm so glad about this. This business of being able to go to Canada and buy the drugs, they tried to water that down. They have fooled with it a little bit—considerably.

But do you ever wonder what this prescription drug deal is all about? Do you really know why we're fighting with them? Here's the deal. Here's the real deal on prescriptions. The drug companies aren't for a Medicare prescription drug program that all seniors can voluntarily buy into.

Now, that doesn't make any sense, does it? Did you ever see anybody that's in business that didn't want more customers? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? Right? Did you ever meet a car salesman that didn't want to sell more cars? Did you ever see anybody running a media empire that didn't want their audience share to go up?

Here's why. Here's the deal. You need to know. Why are drugs cheaper in Canada than they are in America, even though they're made in America? Why are they cheaper in Europe, even though they're made in America? Because it costs a lot of money to develop these drugs, then they spend a lot of money advertising them, but America is the only country in the world that doesn't have price controls.

So if they develop some great new drug, they've got to get us to pay, all of us, all the money they put in, in development and advertising. Once they do that, it doesn't cost anything to make another pill. Once you get your

embedded cost back, another pill is cheap. Then they can afford to sell them under price controls throughout Europe, Canada, and elsewhere.

So when—I'm saying this so you don't have to demonize the drug companies, so you'll understand. So they've got a real problem. What is their problem? They think if Medicare can buy drugs for millions and millions of seniors who need them, Medicare will acquire so much market power—they know this is not price fixing; this ain't close to price fixing—but we'll have a big buyer. And they know Medicare will acquire so much market power that maybe they will be able to get American seniors drugs made in America almost as cheap as they can get them in Canada. And they're afraid that their profit margins will go down so much that then they won't have the money they would like to have either for profits or research or advertising.

Now, that is a real problem for them. But can the answer to their problem be to keep seniors who need it from getting the medicine they need? That's my problem. The Republican plan only covers half of the seniors who need the coverage. And this idea that you can have a private health insurance policy that people can afford to buy that's worth a flip is just not true. The insurance companies—I just jumped on the health insurance companies. Let me brag on them. They have been perfectly honest. They say there is not an insurance market out there for prescription drugs that people can afford. That's what they said.

So I'm just telling you this because this is the kind of thing—I get frustrated because I don't think most people really understand what the nature of the fight is. You don't have to demonize the drug companies. Lord knows, I'm glad they're here. They do wonderful work. They employ tens of thousands of people. I'm proud they're American, and I would help them solve their problem.

But the answer to their problem cannot be to keep seniors away from the medicine they need. Now, that's what this is about. And he's out there, trying to do the right thing. *[Laughter]* Oh, come on, you're time and a half my size; don't whine. *[Laughter]*

Now, wait a minute. This is a big deal. You all have got friends all over America. You've got people living in these battleground States. I'm telling you, if people know what the differences are, Senator Lieberman and Vice President Gore win. We win the House. We pick

up at least four, maybe six, Senate seats if they know.

We are for hate crimes legislation; they're not. They gave us a vote in the Senate. It turned out it wasn't real. Some of their guys got well on the vote. It's 57–42 for the hate crimes legislation. But when it comes time to leave it in the bill, poof! It vanishes. Now, we've got to find some bill to put it on, and their leadership doesn't want it on any bill. People need to know that.

You know, there are lots of differences here in terms of our ideas of one America, in terms of our ideas of health care policy, in terms of our education policy. I'm just telling you the differences are clear. Those are just three.

You mentioned gun safety. Did you see that ABC—did anybody see that ABC special Peter Jennings did on the NRA? Did you see it? Did you see all those people there, good Americans, going to these NRA conventions? They're good citizens. And Peter Jennings going around interviewing them, saying, "Do you really believe that Al Gore will take your gun away?" "Absolutely; I do. Bill Clinton and Al Gore, they're a threat to our second amendment rights."

There's not one living, breathing American that missed a day in the deer woods because of me. But 500,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers could not get handguns because of the Brady bill. So, the program says that when Mr. LaPierre said that I wanted those people to die in some of those horrible shootings so then I would have some political basis to take people's guns away, their membership went up 200,000 according to the ABC—*[inaudible]*.

Now, let me tell you something. The American people are smart and solid, and they nearly always get it right if they've got enough information and enough time. But you know, that's just not true. And it's not true that Al Gore proposed to take their guns away. What he said was, "If you're going to buy a handgun, you ought to have a license like you have to drive a car, that proves that you don't have a criminal background, you've got enough sense to use a gun safely." That's the radical idea he proposed.

Will any one of those NRA people lose their guns? Not unless they're crooks and shouldn't have it and present a danger to society. So I'm just imploring you. You came here tonight. Every one of you are politically active; you all show up. Every one of you know scores of people that will never come to a deal like this,

not a time in their lives. But they will vote. They want to believe they are good citizens. They are good citizens. They're patriotic. They love their country. They'll vote. But if they don't hear from you, they might just be getting this stuff over the airwaves.

So I would just say to you, this is a profoundly important election. Just remember the Middle East: One day we're about to make peace; the next day we're trying to keep people from killing each other. You cannot predict the future. Life is a funny thing.

We may not have a time like this again in our lifetime. And as a nation, we will not forgive ourselves if we squander this opportunity. The public needs to clearly understand the differences, the choices, the consequences. I am completely comfortable with whatever decision they make if they do.

So that's the only thing I would like to ask you to do. Think of everybody you know, anywhere in this great country, between now and the election, and every single day, for the next however many weeks we've got—5 weeks and

some odd days—take some time to make sure that they understand the differences, the choices, the consequences. And we'll have some more people like Joe Crowley in the Congress and a great celebration in the Presidential race on election eve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Representative Rosa DeLauro, her husband Stanley Greenburg, and her mother, Luisa DeLauro, member, New Haven, CT, Board of Aldermen; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; former Deputy White House Chief of Staff Harold Ickes; Queens County Democratic Organization Chair Thomas J. Manton; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; ABC News anchor Peter Jennings; and National Rifle Association Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre. Representative Joseph Crowley was a candidate for Congress in New York's Seventh Congressional District.

Remarks on Signing the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, and an Exchange With Reporters *October 11, 2000*

The President. Good morning. I want to thank Representative Norm Dicks and Representative Ralph Regula for their extraordinary bipartisan leadership. I thank Secretary Babbitt, NEA Chairman Bill Ivey, National Endowment of the Humanities Chairman Bill Ferris, the Institute of Museum and Library Services Director Beverly Sheppard, OMB Director Lew, Millennium Council Director Ellen Lovell, and all the other many people who are here who have worked so hard with chairman Regula and Congressman Dicks and members of both parties in both Houses to protect the environment and strengthen our Nation's artistic and cultural life.

I have just signed this year's Department of Interior Appropriations Act. It is a remarkable piece of legislation that provides a lasting legacy for our grandchildren by establishing for the first time a dedicated and protected fund that States, communities, and Federal agencies can use to buy and protect precious Federal land,

from neighborhood parks to Civil War battlefields to parcels of pristine wilderness. It doubles our investment in land conservation next year and ensures even greater funding in the years to come.

While we had hoped to gain even more and will continue to work for these priorities in our budget negotiations, this new lands trust unquestionably represents a major leap forward in the quest to preserve our environment, a quest begun by President Teddy Roosevelt a century ago.

This bill will also do much more. It will provide much-needed additional funding for health, education, and law enforcement in our Native American communities, something that has been of particular interest to me. It will provide better funding to take better care of our national parks and deal with a lot of long pent-up maintenance needs.

It will increase support for firefighters in preventing forest fires, something America has seen all too much in the last few months. It increases our efforts to combat climate change and to provide more energy security by increasing funds for research and to energy-saving technologies, including more energy-efficient buildings and automobiles. It supports the partnership for the next generation vehicles, which the Vice President has led, and strengthens our energy security through providing funding for the Northeast heating oil reserve.

The bill also increases support for arts and humanities, including the first funding increase for the National Endowment for the Arts since Congress proposed to eliminate it in 1995. The birds like it. [*Laughter*] It will help to expand our efforts to bring the experience of art to children and to citizens no matter where they live, from inner cities to remote rural areas. We're also pleased that the bill includes a third year of funding for the Save America's Treasures program, the largest historic preservation effort in our Nation's history, which the First Lady has led.

Just as important is the fact that the bill does not include contentious riders which would have damaged our environment. This legislation is proof positive that when we sit down together and work in a bipartisan spirit, we can do things for the American people. And again, I want to thank Mr. Regula and Mr. Dicks and all of the others who have worked with them to do that.

We still have a lot of work to do. We've got 10 appropriations bills to pass, an education budget that invests in accountability and what works, including the continuation of our 100,000 teacher program, funds to modernize and repair schools, an expanded after-school and college opportunity program, qualified teachers in every classroom; a criminal justice budget that gives us safer streets and stronger communities; a budget that enforces civil rights and ensures stronger efforts for equal pay for women, creates opportunities for all Americans to share in our prosperity through the new markets initiative.

I would also like to ask one more time for Congress to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, which passed the House of Representatives with a large vote exactly a year ago this week.

Unfortunately, it appears that instead of passing patient protections, legislation intended to restore reductions in the Medicare program is

unduly tilted toward the HMO's who killed the Patients' Bill of Rights or have so far.

Last night I sent a letter to the leaders rejecting that allocation of funds. There are rural—urban teaching hospitals, community service providers, nursing homes, any number of other recipients of these funds that would be substantially disadvantaged if the present allocation goes through.

So I hope that we can put the needs of the patients ahead of the HMO's and do the right thing on health care. But let me say again: I think it is very important that the American people understand this is a truly historic achievement, achieved in a genuine, bipartisan spirit to create a permanent basis for preserving our natural heritage and advancing our common artistic and cultural values. I am profoundly grateful.

Thank you very much.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, did your peace plan for the Middle East ever contemplate sovereignty for the Palestinians in East Jerusalem?

The President. Well, the last thing I think we need to be doing now is talking about—I think you know what we talked about at Camp David, and what we've talked about since has been fairly well publicized.

Q. No, it hasn't. I don't know what your plan is.

The President. But I do not believe that any of us should be saying or doing anything now except focusing on putting an end to the violence, keeping people alive, calming things down, and getting back to the negotiating table.

And I do believe, by the way, that a plan to get back to the negotiating table is an important part of ending the violence in a substantial way. And so for me, that's what we're doing. That's what I've been working on for several days now, almost a week.

Q. Do you think you will be traveling to the Mideast or elsewhere to meet with the leaders from—Palestinians and the Israelis?

The President. First of all, as always, I'm prepared to do whatever I can to help. But I think the most important thing is that we all keep working to calm things down, keep them calm, and then find a way to get the peace process going again.

I think Secretary Albright or I might go; maybe in time we'll both go. I had a long talk

this morning with Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and we've been working together in an attempt to make sure we've got a substantial calm there.

I can do a lot here on the phone. I've been spending a lot of days and nights on the phone, and I hope that the United States is having a positive impact. But the first thing we've got to do is to get this situation calmed down and figure out where to go from here. But I do believe where to go from here must include a resumption of the peace talks because that's one of the reasons that we've had things so calm for so long, that we've basically had these talks going along, moving in the right direction.

We have to reach an agreement on this fact-finding effort to determine what happened and how to keep it from happening again, and I think we can do that. So we've just got to keep working on it.

Q. Can I followup on that for one second? A followup on that for one second? This is sort of a pointed question about the Middle East. At this point, if you're frustrated about possibly setting up a summit over there, do not the Israelis and the Palestinians at least owe you the courtesy of participating in such a summit, considering what you have tried to do to bring peace to the region?

The President. Oh, yes. I'm not worried about that. I think—that's not what's at issue there. I think we can do that. But the main thing we have to do is, we don't need just another meeting. We need to know what we're going to do and how we're going to do it.

I wouldn't over-read the fact that there won't be a big meeting imminently in Egypt. I don't think you should over-read that as a reflection that either the Israelis or the Palestinians do not want to continue the peace process. I think everybody is shocked at how quickly and how deeply it got out of hand. And I think the most important thing now is to restore calm.

We've had a couple of pretty good days. People are really trying, and we're trying to put together a way forward, which will increase the chances that things will stay calm and more peaceful. So that's what we're working on. And I just have to tell you, it's very important to us to keep all of our options open. It's important that you know that I'm willing to do whatever I can to help, but these things have to take place in a certain way in order for them to

make sense, and I'm doing the very best I can with it.

Q. Some critics of the administration's policy blame some of the—

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—spoke of factfinding as an agreement to return to negotiations. Do you need to see those before you agree to go to the Mideast or send a representative?*

The President. Well, no. First of all, I don't need to see anything before I send representatives. We've been involved with them too long, and we have been already—keep in mind, we've had people already in the region, and then Secretary Albright met with them in Paris, and now lots of others are coming in.

I have been talking to them all for extended period of times, really since the beginning of the difficulties. So that's not it. The point is, everything that the United States does should be designed toward, number one, trying to preserve the calm and, number two, trying to restore the peace process. And so I will do whatever I think is likely to advance those objectives. So that's the only thing I was saying. We're in this for the long haul. We have been from the beginning, and we'll stay.

Q. Are you disappointed at Mr. Arafat, Mr. President? Are you disappointed in Arafat's attitude?

Q. Some of the administration's critics blame some of the violence on the failed Camp David talks and charge that summit was called too soon. Do you think that's unfair? What's your response to that?

The President. I think if there had been no talks at Camp David, it would be worse now, because the pressure on the Palestinians to unilaterally declare a state would have been far worse, because their level of misunderstanding would have been even greater, because they had never—in all of these 7 years, they had never talked about these big, deep, underlying issues, not in a serious, formal way.

So I think, certainly, the Israelis, I think, were disappointed that they were as forthcoming as they were, and they thought more progress should have been made, but I think that everybody had a sense—I announced that at the time. But then after that, they continued to talk and everybody had the sense that they were moving forward. So I don't think that the evidence will support that conclusion.

Keep in mind, we were running out of time and the Palestinians, Chairman Arafat delayed

the date that he had previously set for unilateral declaration. So the facts on the ground and the behavior of the parties do not support that conclusion.

The truth is, we got down to the tough issues where there were no easy answers. And I think that what this tells everybody is that, after all these years of working together, there are still underlying different perceptions that have to be worked on. And we slid off into a sense where both sides felt as if they had been victimized and abused.

There is no alternative here but to get back together and to go back to work.

Q. How would you like to live under military occupation for 50 years?

Q. What exactly are you recommending on how to calm things down?

The President. Well, they're working on that. They have worked together on that. They have common security understandings and a very detailed set of things that both sides have been doing, and they're talking about it some more. So I think first, you have to do that, and then they have to figure out, beyond the security operations, how they're going to get back together.

Q. You are reportedly disappointed by Arafat and puzzled by his attitude. Are those reports true?

The President. I don't think that anything I say that stirs this up is very helpful. I think that, look, there's a lot of people dying over there. We need to stop people dying. And there's been enough people saying enough things that have contributed to that.

My goal is to stop people dying and then get them back together. We can all have our judgments—you have yours; they're somehow implicit in some of the questions you're asking—but what I have noticed in these circumstances is, if they do good things, there is enough credit to go around, and if the wheel runs off and people start to die, then there's enough blame to go around.

This is not the time to be assessing that. This is a time to make a primary first commitment to end violence, to keep calm, to start the peace process again, and then they can establish some mechanism to evaluate what happened and why and how to keep it from ever happening again.

Both of them have agreed to that. They haven't exactly agreed on the modalities, but they both agreed to that. So we can't lose sight of the fact that the most important thing right now is to stop people from getting shot and wounded and killed and to get the peace process back on track and to give a sense of safety and security back to all the people there.

When you get—when things are most explosive in the Middle East, when both sides feel victimized—and we were slipping toward that at a rapid pace over the last several days—now both sides are feeling—are taking responsibility here for moving out of this, and I think the statement that Prime Minister Barak made in the middle of his night-long cabinet meeting a couple of nights ago was very helpful in that regard and a wise thing to do. And then he and Chairman Arafat have been doing some specific things here on this security front, and we need to support that and not—look, there will be plenty of time in a calmer atmosphere for people to say whatever it is they've got to say in a political nature.

But we can't bring any of those kids back to life. We can't bring any of those young people back to life. We can't bring—Lord knows how long it will take to reestablish some of the relationships that have been severed there, and none of us need to do anything to make this worse. We need to calm this down.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:50 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. H.R. 4578, approved October 11, was assigned Public Law No. 106–291.

Statement on Signing the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

October 11, 2000

Today I have signed into law H.R. 4578, the "Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001." I want to commend the Congress for agreeing on an acceptable version of this bill that provides critical funding for many priority needs—our national parks, national forests, wildlife refuges, and other public lands; State and local grants for land conservation and preservation; Native American programs; cleaner water; energy security; and the Arts. I am pleased that, unlike earlier versions of the bill, the final bill excludes a large number of highly objectionable provisions that would change our environmental protection and natural resource conservation laws without adequate public and congressional scrutiny.

In particular, I am very pleased that this Congress has agreed to establish a new budget category to provide dedicated and protected funding for the conservation and preservation programs in my Lands Legacy Initiative and other related activities. This agreement will nearly double our investment next year in these programs and move us toward providing communities with the resources they need to protect their most precious lands. By establishing this new budget category and fencing off more than \$10 billion over the next 5 years, we are fulfilling our commitment to make the single largest annual investment in protecting our green and open spaces since Theodore Roosevelt set our Nation on the path of conservation nearly a century ago.

The bill provides a significant increase in funding for key components of my Native American Initiative program, including most of the requested investments in Indian school construction and law enforcement. It also provides the largest funding increase for the Indian Health Service in its history. The bill also helps to protect the environment by increasing funds for the Clean Water Action Plan and promotes the Arts by providing the first funding increase for the National Endowment for the Arts in 9 years. In addition, the increase provided for the National Endowment for the Humanities will enable the NEH to continue to implement its Re-

discovering America through the Humanities initiative.

The bill provides strong support for a number of other national priorities. It expands funding for weatherization of low-income homes, which will help low-income households prepare for the coming winter season. It includes funding for research into energy efficiency to reduce our dependence on oil and address climate change, through initiatives like the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles, which will aid in the development of a new generation of ultra-efficient cars. In addition, the bill provides funding for a Regional Home Heating Reserve for the Northeast. I note that there is also a provision in Title VIII of the bill that violates *INS v. Chadha* because it purports to condition the availability of certain appropriated funds on the provision by congressional committees of a list of specific acquisitions to be undertaken with such funds. As a result, I will treat that provision as being advisory only, and not as legally binding.

In addition, all of the funds in Title V of the bill have been designated by the Congress as emergency requirements. I hereby designate those amounts in Title V, totaling \$87,515,000, as emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended. The Congress has provided other important emergency funds in the bill to assist States that have been ravaged by wildfires in the West. My Administration is reviewing the current situation, and these firefighting funds will be released as needs dictate.

In conclusion, by dedicating future funds for conservation and related programs, investing in Indian schools, assisting energy conservation, and supporting the Arts, this bill represents a major step forward. The American people both expect and deserve nothing less.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: H.R. 4578, approved October 11, was assigned Public Law No. 106–291. An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks at a Rally for Representative Ron Klink in Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania
October 11, 2000

Thank you very much. I always learn something when I come to Pittsburgh. [Laughter] Today I learned, never ask for another pat of butter. [Laughter] And never rent a mule. [Laughter] Let me say, I am delighted to be back in western Pennsylvania, and I'm delighted to be in this State again with Ron Klink and his wife, Linda, and their two fine children and all the people associated with their campaign. And Senator, thank you for your speech, your leadership of the party. Mayor Murphy, thank you for being such a good friend to me in these years we've worked together to help Pittsburgh reach its full potential.

I thank all the candidates who are out here. I think Catherine Baker Knoll is here, and I thank her for being here. Thank you, Catherine. And I want to mention your former mayor, Sophie Masloff, who was a good friend of mine, and State Senator Christine Tartaglione. And thank you, Franco Harris, for being here and for being my friend and supporter all these years.

Now, let me say, I want to thank you for giving some money to Ron Klink. [Laughter] And I'll tell you one thing I'm absolutely sure of. If more people had done what you did today, he would be ahead, not behind, in the polls. Why is that? Because when the American people have enough information and enough time to digest it, they nearly always get it right. Now, do you have any doubt at all that if every voter in Pennsylvania knew what the real records and the real differences between these two candidates are, that Ron Klink would win? Do you have any doubt at all?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. All right. If you have no doubt at all, then he can still win if you get out there and cover the gap between now and election day. That's what I want to tell you. I believe that. And I came out here—I have been calling people all over the country saying, "You ought to send Ron Klink some money. We can win in Pennsylvania."

The people of this State have been very good to me, and I am profoundly grateful. We won a big victory here in '92. In '96 I didn't get

to campaign as much as I wish I had in Pennsylvania because we were trying to win some places we hadn't won in a long time, including Florida, where we did win. But the people of Pennsylvania stayed with me.

I think this is a pretty simple election here. But what I want to tell you is, every one of these races is important. No one in America understands more clearly than I do how important every single House race is, every single Senate race is, and of course, the race for the White House.

You need to go ask people whether we're better off than we were 8 years ago. That's what they used to say the test was. My favorite point in the last Presidential debate—we're going to have another one tonight. We all have our little moments, but my favorite moment was when their nominee said, "Well, I think that Clinton/Gore got a lot more out of the economy than the economy got out of Clinton/Gore. The American people did this with their hard work." Now, when they were in, they took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. You remember that? [Laughter] "It's morning in America. Vote for us." It's morning, right? [Laughter] So they said that. And then the Vice President said, "Yes, the American people and their hard work do deserve credit. But they were working just as hard back in 1992 and getting different results." [Laughter] And I thought, goodbye. That was a good answer.

Now, look, here is the deal. There are differences. They're real, and they have consequences in people's lives. And if every voter in Pennsylvania understands that and what the differences are and what the consequences are, Klink wins. To the extent that there are voters who don't understand it, it's harder for him to win. To the extent there are voters who think there are two perfectly nice moderate guys running and maybe we ought to stick with the moderate guy who's in, it's bad for him.

And this is what they're doing all over the country. They want to blur these differences, you know. I mean, butter wouldn't melt in their mouth today. It's hard to remember the rhetoric they used just a couple of years ago, isn't it?

“Oh, we’re so moderate. We’re so nice. We feel so bad about all these problems America has. We really want to do something about it.” [Laughter] “We’re glad the Democrats got rid of the deficit and put us into surplus and gave us the longest expansion in history. We’re glad they put 100,000 police on the street, even though we fought them. We’re glad they cut the welfare rolls in half without taking food and medicine away from the kids, like we tried to. We’re glad it all worked out. Now, please let us stay in.” [Laughter]

That’s their pitch. I’m laughing because I don’t want to cry here. [Laughter] And then you ought to ask yourself, well, why is it then, if we did the right things, why do they have more money? What does that tell you? Because we decided a long time ago, a long time before I ever came along, that we thought that the best politics and the best economics and the best social policy was what allowed us all to go forward together, not just what took care of the people who had the ability to give you a financial advantage in a campaign.

Now, look, we’re better off than we were 8 years ago. Ron Klink supported the economic policies of this administration. His opponent didn’t. Ron Klink, you heard him say, supported putting 100,000 police on the street. They tried to take it away. Even when the crime rate was coming down, they tried to undo what was working. And by the way, they promise to undo it if they win the White House and the Congress next time.

We’re going up to 150,000 police on the street. We’ve got crime down 7 years in a row, down to a 27-year low. And their major commitment on law enforcement is to promise to undo the Federal Government’s commitment to put 150,000 police on the street because they don’t think we have any business doing it. Never mind the fact that we’re all safer. Now, how many voters in Pennsylvania know that? Not enough. If they did, would it make a difference? I think it would. I believe it would.

You look at this economics issue. This may be the thing that will have the biggest impact on you. We’ve got a chance now to spread this recovery to people and places left behind, to inner-city neighborhoods and rural communities and places that lost industries and Native American communities—people that still aren’t fully part of this. But we’ve got to keep the economy going. We’ve got to keep the labor markets

tight. We’ve got to keep the general progress going if our initiatives to spread the economic recovery are going to work and benefit everybody.

Now, our policy is, we want to give you a tax cut, but we’ve got to be able to afford it, which means we’ve got to save some money to invest in education, in health care, in the environment and national defense, in science and technology. And we’ve got to keep paying down the debt, because when we pay down the debt, we keep interest rates lower and the economy stronger. That’s our position.

Their position is, “Vote for us. We’ll give a much bigger tax break.” Most middle class people are actually better off under ours, but some of you who can afford to buy a ticket today would be better off under theirs. So why are you here? You’ve got to be able to answer this. Listen, this is important.

Their tax cut—the Vice President’s is about \$500 billion. Theirs is about a trillion six, I’d say—maybe a little more. They say a little less, but it’s clearly about that. Now, here is the problem with their tax cut. Number one, it’s a trillion six. That’s lots of money.

Number two, they have also promised, as Ron said, to partially privatize Social Security. He told you about one problem, which is, if you take your 2 percent payroll and you lose money, then you lose income. But there is another problem with that. Forget about that. Let’s suppose everybody here under 45 took the 2 percent and made money. There is another problem. They’re going to guarantee the benefits for everybody over 55, which by the time they get it passed will be me. [Laughter]

Now, here is the problem. If Social Security is supposed to go broke in 35 years, and you start pulling money out of it like no tomorrow because all the young people think they can do more in the stock market, but you guarantee everybody’s benefits who is 55 or over—and keep in mind, if you live to be 65 in America, your life expectancy is 82 now and going up—what happens? Well, the money starts running out just as your guarantee goes up. So what do you have to do? You have to put more money in it.

And I want to compliment the nominee of the Republican Party. In the last debate he acknowledged that he would take a trillion dollars from our surplus and put it into Social Security to make the commitments to the people over

55—55 and over—in order to let everybody else take money out. Now, if you've got a \$1.6 trillion tax cut and a \$1 trillion Social Security hold, you've already spent \$400 billion more than the most wildly optimistic estimate of the surplus, which, you can take it from me, is probably \$400 billion to \$500 billion overstated because of built-in costs of the Federal Government. And they haven't spent any of the money they promised, plus all the Star Wars things they promised and all that. I'm telling you, they're going to put us back in debt. That's why the economic analysis that I've seen indicates that the Democratic plan, the Gore-Lieberman plan, will keep interest rates a point lower a year for a decade.

Now, do you know what a percent a year a decade—you need to go out and talk to people here in western Pennsylvania about that. It affects this Senate race. Do you know what it means to you if you keep interest rates one percent lower a year for a decade? That is the equivalent of \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments, not to mention lower credit card payments, lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a stronger stock market.

Now, so you've got a \$435 billion tax cut to ordinary Americans by getting this country out of debt for the first time since 1835. One party will do it. The other won't. And people that vote for President and people that vote for Senator ought to know that, because it will have a huge impact on whether we can keep western Pennsylvania coming back in the next 10 years. I want you to make certain people know that.

Now, let me just give you another example, health care. When I became President, they told me Medicare was going to be broke in 1999, last year. We added 27 years to the life of Medicare and did more to cover preventive coverage for breast cancer, for prostate cancer. We dramatically improved diabetes care. You can keep your health insurance now when you change jobs or somebody in your family gets sick. We've insured 2½ million under the Children's Health Insurance Program that Ron Klink supported, that has given us a reduction in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in a dozen years.

We have big challenges. You heard him talking about the Patients' Bill of Rights. It failed by one vote. If he'd been in the Senate, instead of his opponent, I would have signed into law the Patients' Bill of Rights already. Now, this is a huge deal. This is a huge deal. Do you have a right to see a specialist if your doctor says? Do you have a right to keep your doctor if you change health care providers in the middle of a pregnancy or a cancer treatment? That's what the Patients' Bill of Rights says. Do you have a right, if you get hurt, to go to the nearest emergency room, or can they drag you past three or four to get to one covered by your plan? And if you get hurt, do you have a right to sue because you've been hurt? And if you don't, it's just a patients' bill of suggestions, not rights. And most important, does it cover everybody, or does it leave a bunch of folks out?

Now, the HMO's say they don't want this, because they say by the time they get sued and everybody gets covered, your health care premiums will go up. That bothers me. But guess what? I already put it in for everybody covered by the Federal Government. Now, people need to know this. In western Pennsylvania, you need to know this. I put the protections of the Patients' Bill of Rights in for everybody on Medicare, Medicaid, veterans' health, Federal employees' health insurance, Federal retirees being covered by health care. Do you know what it did to the premiums? They went up a buck a month—a buck a month—to give you those kind of protections.

Even the Republicans' own Congressional Budget Office says that for the population at large, it would go up less than \$2 a month. Now, I would pay a \$1.80 a month on my health insurance to make sure that—God forbid—if you get hit by a car walking out of this rally, you could go to the nearest emergency room. And I think most of you would, too. There's a big difference here. The people in western Pennsylvania need to know where he is and where his opponent is.

Now, let me just give you one more, the prescription drugs for seniors fight. First, we were for it, and they weren't for anything. And then they realized they were in deep trouble. You remember that phrase the former President Bush used to use for that—that deep whatever it was he used to say. [Laughter] They knew they were in a world of hurt. So they came up with a plan, and they said, "Well, you know,

this thing might be too expensive, giving Medicare-financed drug coverage to all seniors who need it." Our plan does that. It says, under Medicare you have a voluntary option to buy in. If you're poor, we'll pay your premiums. If you're not, you've got to pay a little. If you have catastrophic bills, we'll help you with those. That's our plan.

So they said, "Well, we can't be caught out here with no plan." So they went to the drug companies, and they said, "I'm sorry, guys. We can't carry your water unless you give us something to be for." This is the way Washington works, folks. I'm just telling you. They went to the drug companies, and they said, "Look, we can't carry your water anymore. They're going to blow us away here."

So they did all these surveys and everything and did this research. And they came up with this plan that says, "The Democrats want the Government to take over your drug business, and they want to fix prices. And what we want to do is help the poor people get their coverage and let everybody else buy insurance and put it all in the private sector, which is so much better." They tested all this. They got the phrases where they sounded right and all that.

So that's what the fight is between Congressman Klink and Senator Santorum, and all over the country. Now, you must be sitting out here asking yourself, why wouldn't the drug companies want to sell more drugs? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? Did you ever meet a car salesman that didn't want to sell more cars? Did you ever meet an insurance salesman that didn't want to sell more insurance? What is this? Why don't the drug companies who want everybody who needs the drugs to buy them? It doesn't make any sense, does it?

Here is what is going on. You need to understand this. This is a big issue. First of all, the Republicans' plan won't work. They pay for people up to 150, 175 percent of the poverty line; 175 percent is \$18,700, more or less, for a couple. The problem is, half the people that need the medicine, because they've got big drug bills, make more than that. And there is no private insurance for these people. Nevada adopted the Republican plan. Do you know how many insurance companies offered drugs under it? Zero. Not one—not one. That's one thing I admire about our Republican friends: Evidence never fazes them. I admire that. *[Laughter]* You've

got to admire it, you know? "Don't bother me with the facts. Yes, their economic approach worked. Let's reverse it anyway and give our friends a big tax cut that we can't afford."

So I'm just telling you, this is a big issue. Now, here is the problem. You need to make sure people understand this in western Pennsylvania, because I'm sure there will be all these ads about how they're both for drugs, Klink wants the Government to take it over. Medicare is a private health care delivery system, right? You all go to a private doctor, private hospitals, financed through Government. It has an administrative cost of about 1.5 percent. There is no price fixing here.

You want to know what the real problem is? Why can you go to Canada and get drugs cheaper, made in America, than you can here? Because the drug companies have spent a lot of money developing these drugs, and they spent a lot of money advertising them, and they can't recover those costs anywhere but America, because everywhere else fixes prices. Then once you pay enough for those drugs to get their advertising and development costs back, it's then cheap for them to make another little pill, and they can sell it in Canada, Europe, or anywhere.

And the reason they don't want this bill to pass is, if we get enough market power with enough seniors in the same plan, they're afraid, not through price fixing but through bargaining, we'll be able to get prices that are almost but not quite as cheap as you could buy American drugs in Canada. And they think that will cut their profit margins down and limit their ability to do research and advertise. That is what is going on. That's what this whole deal is about. You never read that in the paper, did you?

Now, I say that so you don't have to demonize the drug companies. It's good that we've got them in America. It's good they're developing these medicines that keep people alive and improve the quality of their lives. But it is wrong to say we're going to solve their problem by keeping American seniors from getting the drugs they need to stay alive and have good lives. Let's solve the problem of the senior citizens. And then, those people have plenty of money and power; let them come down to Washington, and we'll help them solve their problem. That's what we ought to do.

I've taken the time to talk about these issues today, unconventional at this kind of event, because I know I won't be back in western Pennsylvania, in all probability, between now and the election. And I want you to go out and talk to everybody you can find between now and the election. Look, these elections are close. Ron Klink can win if people understand what the differences are and what the consequences are to them, their families, your community, and your country.

So I ask you, please go out there. Talk to people about where we were 8 years ago, where we are today, what Congressman Klink's role has been in it, and talk to people about the economic issues, the health care issues, the education issues out there. Remember, clarity is our friend. We may never have another chance in our lifetime, have a country that is this prosperous, making this much progress, and pulling together.

You look at the children in this audience. We've got to do it right for them. We may not have another chance in our lifetime to have an election like this.

Again, let me tell you I am profoundly grateful for everything the State of Pennsylvania, and especially this part of Pennsylvania, has done for me and Al Gore and our administration.

The only thing I can tell you is, I've worked as hard as I could to turn this country around, pull this country together, and move us forward. Now it's up to you. Don't miss a person. Every one of you knows hundreds of people who will vote on election day but who will never, ever come to an event like this, never, never have the chance that you've had to engage in this kind of thinking.

So go out there and tell them what the economic differences, the health care differences, the education differences are. And tell them the future depends upon making a good decision for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Ron Klink, and the rest of our crowd.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in Room S-2 at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Klink's children, Juliana and Matthew; State Senator Leonard J. Bodack; Mayor Tom Murphy of Pittsburgh; Catherine Baker Knoll, candidate for State treasurer; Sophie Masloff, former mayor of Pittsburgh; former Pittsburgh Steelers running back Franco Harris; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Representative Klink was a candidate for the U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania.

Remarks to AmeriCorps Volunteers in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania October 11, 2000

Let's give Ardelia another hand. [*Applause*] She was great, wasn't she? I thought she was great. Good job.

I also want to say to all of you how grateful I am to be here and how grateful I am to Pennsylvania's own Harris Wofford for doing such a great job in heading our Corporation for National Service. He's worked in the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps. He's worked for Presidents from Kennedy to Clinton. He worked with Martin Luther King, and he's still helping people walk their road to freedom. Thank you, Senator Harris Wofford, for everything you have done.

Eight years ago about this time I was crossing the country with Vice President Gore, talking about all the ideas I had to try to change our

Nation, if the people would vote for me for President. Eight years later one of the ideas that always got an applause line on the stump, national service, giving young people a chance to serve their countries in their communities and giving them some funds so they could further their education, it is reality. You are that reality, and you have changed America for the better. I am very, very grateful to all of you for that.

Today, people who wonder what national service is can hear it in the swing of a hundred hammers helping families to build homes, see it in the sight of a thousand saplings taking root on a charred mountainside, burned in a fire, and hear the sound of a million children

learning to read. You get things done, and I thank you for that.

It is quite appropriate for us to meet in Philadelphia to reaffirm our commitment to national service, not only because of the extraordinary effort made by the State of Pennsylvania and this great city to have a disproportionate number of young people involved in community service through AmeriCorps programs but also because it was here that our Founders declared our independence and, in so doing, expressed a commitment not only to the individual liberty and independence of all of us alone but said that we could only fulfill our own desires and our own personal dreams if we committed ourselves to forming “a more perfect Union.”

Every day you work, every person you help, you help America become that more perfect Union of our Founders’ dreams.

All across the country, AmeriCorps volunteers are serving as a catalyst for community action. Studies show that every one of you generates on average a dozen more volunteers, and that adds up. Over the past 6 years, not only have over 150,000 young Americans served in their communities in AmeriCorps—and, I might add, we had more AmeriCorps volunteers in 5 years than the Peace Corps did in its first 20—you are really moving to change America. But even more than that—listen to this—AmeriCorps members have recruited, trained, or supervised more than 2.5 million volunteers in community projects.

In Pennsylvania, older volunteers for the National Senior Service Corps serve as foster grandparents to 9,000 children. Thousands of RSVP volunteers are passing on their wisdom to a younger generation. In Philadelphia, nearly a thousand AmeriCorps members have been working with local organizations, running after-school programs, restoring parts, helping Habitat for Humanity to build homes, bridging the digital divide in poor communities and poor schools, engaging other young people in community service.

We know now from experience that when young people volunteer in their communities, they’re less likely to get in trouble and much more likely to succeed in school. That’s why the work of AmeriCorps volunteers with our young people, helping them to succeed, is perhaps our most important mission.

In 1996 I issued the America Reads challenge. I asked AmeriCorps and college students across

our country to join in a crusade for childhood literacy, to make sure that every 8-year-old in our country could read—read well before being promoted. Thanks to AmeriCorps members like Ardelia, hundreds of thousands of children have now been tutored, mentored, or enrolled in after-school programs, and 1,000 colleges have given us their students to help go into our elementary schools to help teach our kids to read. Thank you very, very, very much.

In a profoundly inspiring effort, members of the National School and Community Corps, CityYear, VISTA, and AmeriCorps have helped Philadelphia schools expand their pioneering program for student service. As part of this initiative, 11th and 12th graders are trained to tutor second graders one-on-one in after-school reading programs. The students that do the tutoring say they learn just as much as the youngsters they teach.

What I’d like to see is to have this done in every school system in America. I think if all the juniors and seniors in America were committed to making sure all the second graders in America could read by the time they got out of the second grade, it would revolutionize education in America. That is the symbol that Philadelphia represents to our future.

Today I’m releasing an independent study that shows that these efforts are working. Over the past school year, AmeriCorps members served in programs tutoring more than 100,000 students in grades one through three. Sample tests given at the beginning and the end of the school year showed that children’s reading skills in the programs where the AmeriCorps volunteers tutored improved significantly and exceeded significantly expectations.

In one case, an AmeriCorps member in Atlanta set out to recruit eight college students to tutor struggling kids 4 hours a week. Today, that program has 250 volunteers in 30 schools. Seventy percent of the second and third graders participating in the program have increased their test scores—listen to this—by at least two reading levels, two grade levels.

So we actually have some objective evidence that the enthusiasm that you all displayed when Harris called each of your projects and you stood up and cheered actually is making a difference, a positive difference in the lives of individual Americans and, in so doing I might add, bringing us together across lines that divide us.

One of the most important things about AmeriCorps I think is that it gives the volunteers, who come from all different backgrounds, all different races, all different religious backgrounds, a chance to meet and work with and get to know people who are different from them, to tear down barriers of distrust and misunderstanding and old-fashioned ignorance, and build a genuine American community.

You know, I think it's a great thing that America is so diverse and growing more diverse. It makes it more interesting. But it's also important to recognize that, as we celebrate our differences, we have to reaffirm our common humanity. You look anywhere in the world today where they're having trouble, and chances are they can celebrate their differences, but they're having trouble affirming their common humanity, and misunderstanding occurs.

If America wants to be a force for good and peace and freedom in all these places we see today—from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to the Balkans to Africa where they're having tribal conflicts—we have to first be good at home. You are helping us to be good at home and do the right thing.

So it turns out this idea that was just sort of an applause line in my '92 campaign speech, it was a pretty good idea after all. *[Laughter]* You proved it. We know it works. We have made it completely nonpartisan. We've tried to take it completely out of the normal day-to-day arguments of American politics, because it seems to be, as Harris said, the quintessential American idea.

That's why it is so important that the Congress this year rise above politics and reauthorize the Corporation for National Service with the necessary funding for a robust AmeriCorps.

We've succeeded out in the country, as you heard Senator Wofford say. We have a letter from 49 of the Nation's 50 Governors. That's 98 percent. You don't get 98 percent of people agreeing on anything. So we've got 98 percent of the Governors saying, "Please reauthorize AmeriCorps." Governor Ridge says it's a vital resource because you get things done in Pennsylvania.

I have talked with the congressional leaders about this. I hope they will follow the Governors' lead and act in a bipartisan spirit. I came to Philadelphia today because sometimes, every now and then, no matter how bipartisan an issue is out in the country, something happens when

you cross the border into the District of Columbia, and somehow it becomes a partisan issue, even though no one in America thinks it is.

So I came out here to you because I want people to see—in Washington, DC, I want them to see your faces tonight, I want them to hear your cheers tonight. I want them to know about your good deeds tonight. I want them to see in your lives that AmeriCorps does get things done, and I want them to get something done to reauthorize this bill.

A generation ago, Senator Robert Kennedy, who inspired so many young people when I was your age, spoke of the power of the single person to affect change. And he said that each person and each act of bravery or kindness or service sent out a ripple of hope, but that together those ripples could become a tidal wave that could tear down the worst wall of oppression and break down the biggest and sternest barriers to change. You are the living embodiment of those ripples of hope, and you are changing America in profound ways. You do it in the work that you do. You do it in the way that you do it. You do it in the way your lives are changed when you leave AmeriCorps and you go on about the rest of your lives.

We are all in your debt. And so I hope, for goodness sakes, that the Congress will give us the funding and the reauthorization we need so that hundreds of thousands of more young people can have this experience over the next 5 years, and millions and millions more of our fellow Americans of all ages, beginning with our youngest children, will be the better for it.

Thank you very, very much. *[Applause]* Now, wait. Wait, wait. I've got a job to do. I have to swear in the newest AmeriCorps class in the United States. So I want them to stand up, all the new class. Stand up, please, all the new class, people who have not been sworn in. Anybody that has not been sworn in, stand up. All right. Raise your right hand, and repeat the pledge after me.

[At this point, the new members repeated the oath after the President.]

I will get things done for America, to make our people safer, smarter, and healthier. I will bring Americans together to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflicts, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere. I will carry this commitment with me this year

and beyond. I am an AmeriCorps member, and I will get things done.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:13 p.m. at Memorial Hall. In his remarks, he referred to

AmeriCorps volunteer Ardelia Norwood-Ross, who introduced the President; Harris Wofford, chief executive officer, Corporation for National Service; and Gov. Tom Ridge of Pennsylvania.

Remarks at a Reception for the Pennsylvania Democratic Coordinated Campaign in Philadelphia October 11, 2000

Thank you. Well, thank you for the welcome. Thank you, Mayor Street. I was honored to help you win because I wanted Philadelphia to win, and I'm glad you won, and you're doing great.

Thank you, Senator Tartaglione, for being the chair of our party and for doing such a good job. Thank you, Bill George. I got here in time to hear Bill George's speech. *[Laughter]* You know, Bill is so restrained and laid back. *[Laughter]* I loved it. He said everything that needed to be said and said it well. And he's been a great friend to me for more than 8 years now, and I thank him for that.

And I can't tell you how grateful I am to Ed Rendell for being willing to take over the leadership of our party, and you should be so proud of him. He's done a great, great job.

I came here to campaign for the Democrats, and this is a pretty nostalgic trip for me. As John said, it may be the last time I come to Philadelphia to give a speech as President; maybe not, though. If I get a chance, I'll come back. I love it here.

One of the young men who has been with me for more than 8 years now, Kirk Hanlin, is out there smiling. He said, "Do you remember how many times we've been to this hotel since 1992?" *[Laughter]* What a wonderful time, and then we talked about every hotel we've been in, in Philadelphia. And we started talking about, you know, going all the way back to early 1992 and our wonderful trips here.

I feel a deep sense of gratitude to the State of Pennsylvania. You've been good to me and to my family and my administration family. You've given us your electoral votes twice. And both times the great magnet was this breathtaking vote out of Philadelphia, which reverberated into the region here and all over this part of eastern Pennsylvania. We did better than

Democrats normally do, and I just cannot thank you enough. So coming here to be for the Democratic ticket, for my long-time friend, Catherine Baker Knoll and Jim Eisenhower and Bob Casey, Jr., but especially for Ron Klink, it's not only easy, it's an honor.

I just want to say a couple of things very candidly. John said them before. I know Ron Klink pretty well. We have worked together for a long time now. He represents a district in western Pennsylvania where the biggest city has 27,000 people. And so as you might imagine, they have a lot of concerns that are somewhat different than the ones Lucien used to represent here in Philadelphia. You know, it's different.

And it's hard for a Member of the House of Representatives from an essentially rural and smalltown district way across this vast State to be well enough known on the eastern side of the State for people to know who he is, what he stands for, what the differences are between him and his opponent.

I want to tell you something, folks. I think I know Pennsylvania by now. You know, my wife's family is from here, from Scranton. My father-in-law's family is there. He's buried up there. I've spent lots and lots of time here over many years. I have absolutely no doubt that if a hundred percent of the registered voters who will vote on election day knew Ron Klink's record, knew his opponent's record, and knew what the differences between them on the issues facing the United States Senate and the United States of America over the next 6 years are, Ron Klink would win and win handily.

Number two, he's working as hard as he can. He's working hard. Therefore, if he doesn't win, it's our fault, all the rest of us that are for him. Now, I don't know how else to say it. It's hard to beat an incumbent, particularly the

incumbent of the other party, because everybody with lots of money—they spend overtime trying to make sure they stay happy. And they work at it, steadily, and then when they run, they are able to run.

But we don't have to have as much money as they do. All we have to have is enough. And enough means enough for everybody to know who you are, what you stand for, what the differences are. And if they give you a little incoming fire, you can give a little answer. That's all you need. And you need a lot of word of mouth.

And I'm just telling you, if people really understood the true story of the last 6 years, Ron Klink would get as good a vote out of Philadelphia as I did in 1996. And I want you to understand this: 18 million people every year in this country, 18 million, have care delayed or denied because we don't have a Patients' Bill of Rights. We lost it by one vote in the United States Senate. If he had been your Senator, I would have signed the Patients' Bill of Rights into law already.

We passed hate crimes legislation in the House and the Senate, and then the Republican leadership turned around and took it out of the bill. If he were in the Senate, it would be one more vote to stop that kind of nonsense from happening. If you voted for something, you would send it to the President so he could sign it and make it the law of the land.

You heard what Ed Rendell said to you about school construction. The average school building in this city is 65 years old. I've been to schools that have 12 trailers out behind it. I've been to other schools where you couldn't wire all the classrooms for the Internet or the circuits would go out. I've been to schools where whole floors had to be closed down because they couldn't be properly insulated or rendered safe because they couldn't afford to fix the roof.

We've got the biggest group of school kids in history. We say they're the most important things in the world to us. We now know how to turn failing schools around, something we didn't know a few years ago. And I could give you lots of examples. All we propose to do is to share the cost of financing school bonds with local school districts. So if you want to undertake a school building program, we'll cut the cost to the taxpayers some to make it easier for you to do it.

Now, while we've got more school kids than ever before, a smaller percentage of the property owners have children in the schools than they did 50 years ago when this happened before. So we need to do this. There's a limit to how much the property tax will bear. We can afford to do it. It's not even that expensive. But we cannot pass it through the leadership of the other party. If Ron Klink were in the Senate, he'd be out there fighting for, not dragging against, school construction legislation that will help our children have the school buildings they need.

Now, those are just three things. Now, let me back up and put it in some larger context. I'll say much more briefly what I tried to say in Los Angeles. And you heard a little of it today. When you gave—when Pennsylvania voted for Bill Clinton and Al Gore, you gave us a chance to try out some new ideas. And people ask me all the time, now that we've got the best, longest expansion in history and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years and 22 million new jobs, they say, what great new idea did you bring to Washington. And I say, "Arithmetic." [Laughter] We brought arithmetic to Washington. And that's what caused the Republicans—they always talked about balancing the budget. Remember that? They always told you how they wanted a constitutional amendment to balance the budget. They wanted everything to help keep them from having to make a decision to balance the budget. Why? Because if you're spending more than you're taking in, there is no way to balance the budget except to spend less, take in more, or do a little of both. It's arithmetic.

And for 12 years they quadrupled our national debt, and they ran the interest rates up and ran the economy into a ditch. And so I brought arithmetic back. And frankly, we lost the House of Representatives and the Senate in part because we had Members with enough guts to stand up to the kind of attacks that were rained down on people like Ron Klink in 1993 and 1994, for saying, "Hey, you want to balance the budget, get growth back, get interest rates down? Arithmetic."

And oh, they said it was going to be the end of the world. We'd have a recession, the whole thing. It would be terrible. People would quit working because we asked the top one percent to pay a little more in taxes. They would quit working, and nobody would do anything.

The whole thing would go haywire. [Laughter] Well, time has not been kind to their predictions. [Laughter]

Now, look, we're all laughing. I want you to have a good time, but I am dead serious. Look, we changed the economic policy. We changed the crime policy. We changed the education policy. We changed the health care policy. We changed the environmental policy. We changed the foreign policy of the country. And we certainly changed our policy on building one America and bridging all the divides that exist in our very complicated society, trying to pull people together instead of drive a wedge between us. Now, we changed all that. And it's a better country. We've come together. We're moving forward. We're doing it together.

You have to decide by your votes whether you're going to ratify that direction and keep changing in that direction or say, "Well, who knows. We're doing so well, it probably doesn't make any difference. Let's take a U-turn and try it the other way." Now, make no mistake about it, that's what's going on. The differences in this election between the two candidates for President, their counterparts for Vice President, the two candidates for Senate in the State of Pennsylvania, on the economy, on education, on health care—just to take three—are huge.

Now, you can have a tax cut so you can send your kids to college, pay for long-term care, pay for child care, pay for retirement, and still be small enough to invest in education and health care, the environment, and keep getting us out of debt so interest rates will stay down. Or you can take their tax cut, which is 3 times bigger, and then partially privatize Social Security, which costs another trillion dollars, and then take their spending promises, and you're right back in the ditch. You're back in deficits. You're back in high interest rates.

Now, let me just tell you this. Tell this to your friends. Our plan will keep interest rates—what Klink will vote for—will keep interest rates one percent lower a year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower student loan payments. And those alone are a \$435 billion effective tax cut for working-class Americans and everybody else with those expenses. That's the right thing to do.

Now, the same thing—we're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're not. We're for a

Medicare drug benefit that every senior who needs it can buy into. They're for a Medicare drug benefit that leaves out half the seniors who need it. They tell them to buy insurance, with the insurance companies screaming there's no such thing as an insurance policy for medicine that people can afford to buy that's worth having.

Do you ever wonder why they did that? Did you ever hear of anybody in any business that didn't want more customers? [Laughter] Don't you think it's funny? Don't you think it's weird, this drug debate?

Where the Democrats and Vice President Gore and Congressman Klink—they want a Medicare drug benefit that all seniors who need it can buy into on a voluntary basis. And Governor Bush and the Republicans and the drug companies say that we're trying to have the Government take over—give me a break—the Government take over the drug business and set prices. And they don't want that many customers. They only want half the people that need it.

Well, originally, they didn't want us to do it all. And then the Republicans went to the drug companies, and they said, "Look, guys, we can't carry your water anymore. They're going to beat our brains out here. You can't be against everybody having medicine who needs it."

And so the drug companies said, "Okay, take this bill and give it to half the people who need it." Does that make any sense? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? [Laughter] Did you ever meet a car salesman that didn't want to sell cars? Now, this is serious. I want you to understand it. You need to know what's going on. It's a big deal.

If you live to be 65 in America, your life expectancy is 82. The young women in this audience that will still have babies, because of the human genome project they'll be having babies in a few years with a life expectancy of 90. It matters whether seniors can get the medicine they need to lengthen their lives and improve the quality of their lives.

The reason they don't want to do that is, if Medicare represents the seniors, they can use market power to squeeze down the price of drugs in America so they're almost as cheap when they're made in America, bought in America, as they are when they're bought in Canada.

That's what is going on, because the drug companies have to recover all their research and all their advertising costs from us.

Now, I say that not to demonize them. I'm glad they're here. They give us great jobs, and they save our lives. They've got a problem. All these other countries have price controls.

So this is a big example, though, in the difference in the two parties. Their party says, "Let's solve their problem, even though we'll leave a lot of old people without the medicine they need." Our party says, "Let's give the seniors the medicine they need, then we'll figure out how to solve their problem." We're not going to hurt them, but we're not going to let them use their problem as an excuse to keep hurting other Americans. That's the differences in the two parties.

So I ask you, why am I doing this? I know I'm preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*] Because every single one of you will come in contact with a lot of people between now and election, day who have never come to an event like this and never will, but they'll vote. And all they may know, unless you talk to them, is what they see in a paid ad.

So I want to ask you to do two things. Number one, if you haven't given him a contribution, give him one, even if it's just \$10. Give him more money. If people know the difference between him and his opponent, he wins. And believe me, he can still win. The other guy is nowhere near over 50 percent. And it's all about eastern Pennsylvania, name recognition, and clarity of understanding of their position.

Number two, I want you to promise yourself when you leave here today, every day between now and the election, you're going to talk to them about Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Ron Klink, the Democrats, where we were 8 years ago, where we are now, what we want to do, what the differences are, how we'll affect people's lives.

Look, this is real stuff. I am grateful you gave me the chance to serve. I hope I've made some contribution to the well-being of Philadelphia, as the mayor said, and the State of Pennsylvania.

But listen to me. All of our public life is always about the future. And the future now, for me, is getting back to New York in time to celebrate my 25th anniversary. And the future for you is Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Ron Klink, and the New Democrats that brought America back. You go tell people that.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:20 p.m. at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor John F. Street of Philadelphia; Christine M. Tartaglione, chair, Democratic Party of Pennsylvania; William M. George, president, Pennsylvania AFL-CIO; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Catherine Baker Knoll, candidate for State treasurer; Jim Eisenhower III, candidate for State attorney general; Bob Casey, Jr., gubernatorial candidate; Representative Ron Klink, candidate for U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania; and former Representative Lucien E. Blackwell.

Statement on Suspending the Immigration of Persons Impeding the Peace Process in Sierra Leone

October 11, 2000

I have signed a proclamation suspending the entry into the United States, as immigrants and nonimmigrants, of all persons—and the spouses, children, and parents of all persons—who plan, engage in, or benefit from activities that support the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) or that otherwise impede the peace process in Sierra Leone. These visa restrictions will immediately apply to President Charles Taylor, senior mem-

bers of the Government of Liberia, their closest supporters, and their family members.

I call upon the Liberian Government to end immediately Liberia's trafficking in weapons and illicit diamonds, which fuels the war in Sierra Leone, and instead to use its influence with the RUF to restore peace and stability to Sierra Leone. Members of my administration have repeatedly made this request of President Taylor. The absence of any positive response from his

government leaves us little choice but to impose these restrictions. Only when the Government of Liberia ends its participation in activities that support the RUF will the United States review this policy.

NOTE: The proclamation of October 10 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on Congressional Action on Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Legislation

October 11, 2000

I congratulate the Congress on its bipartisan work to pass the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, which contains legislation to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as legislation to strengthen and reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). These initiatives have been important priorities of my administration, and I look forward to signing this bill into law.

My administration strongly supports this comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation as part of our vigorous campaign to combat trafficking in persons, a modern day form of slavery, and to punish the international criminal organizations that engage in it. Trafficking is one of the fastest growing criminal enterprises in the world, ensnaring up to 2 million additional victims around the world each year, including 50,000 annually here in the United States. On March 11, 1998, I issued an executive memorandum directing my administration to combat this insidious human rights abuse through a three-part strategy of prosecuting traffickers, providing protection and assistance for trafficking victims, and preventing future trafficking. This strategy has established the framework for our work in this country and abroad. The legislation approved by Congress today will strengthen this approach, providing new tools to protect trafficking victims and punish traffickers. It will institutionalize our Government's response, laying the groundwork for fu-

ture administrations to carry this important work forward, and will ensure that trafficking of persons assumes the prominent place on the world's agenda that it deserves until we put an end to this horrible practice.

I signed VAWA into law as part of my crime bill in 1994, and during the last 6 years, VAWA has made a crucial difference in the lives of hundreds of thousands of women and children. The Violence Against Women Act has enabled communities to expand prevention efforts, enhance the safety of more victims, and hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable for their acts. But more needs to be done. From 1993 through 1998, on average, 22 percent of all female victims of violence were attacked by an intimate partner. The legislation approved by the Senate today will do more to help these women by reauthorizing critical VAWA grant programs, providing important protections for battered immigrant women, reauthorizing the domestic violence hotline, and helping State and tribal courts improve interstate enforcement of protection orders. It is especially fitting that Congress passed this crucial legislation in the month designated as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

NOTE: The National Domestic Violence Awareness Month proclamation of September 29 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Appendix A—Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this book.

June 27

In the morning, the President returned to Washington, DC, from Chappaqua, NY.

The President declared a major disaster in Minnesota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on May 17 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in North Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and ground saturation beginning on June 12 and continuing.

June 28

The President announced his intention to nominate Kenneth Y. Tomlinson to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

June 29

The President announced his intention to nominate Norman Y. Mineta to be Secretary of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to nominate Everett L. Mosely to be Inspector General of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to nominate Marjory E. Searing to be Assistant Secretary and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service of the Department of Commerce.

The President announced the nomination of Donald Mancuso as Inspector General of the Department of Defense.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kitty Dukakis, Michael C. Gelman, Stephen D. Sussman, and Burton P. Resnick to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint William M. Wardlaw as a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Partnership Council:

Charles Richard Barnes;
Colleen M. Kelley;
Janice R. Lachance;
Edward B. Montgomery; and
Kevin L. Thurm.

June 30

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and later to Englewood, NJ. In the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Arthenia L. Joyner to be a member of the Federal Aviation Management Advisory Council.

July 1

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton went to Camp David, MD.

July 3

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Chappaqua, NY.

July 4

In the morning, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to New York City, where they reviewed and visited ships participating in Operation Sail 2000.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, where he addressed participants in Independence Day celebrations on the South Lawn.

July 5

In the afternoon, the President traveled to New York City, and in the evening, he and Hillary Clinton traveled to Chappaqua, NY.

July 6

In the morning, the President traveled to Columbia, MO, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President had a telephone conversation from the Oval Office with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia on postponing President Ben Ali's scheduled state visit.

July 10

In the afternoon, the President traveled to State College, PA. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia.

Later, at the Penn Stater Hotel, the President met with Sherry Pope, wife of retired U.S. Navy officer Edmond Pope, who was detained by the Russian Federal Security Service in Moscow on April 4 on charges of espionage.

In the evening, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and later returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Leslie Beth Kramerich to be Assistant Secretary for

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the Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration at the Department of Labor.

The President announced his intention to appoint Rolland A. Schmitt as U.S. Commissioner of the International Whaling Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sara Castro-Klaren to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Nigeria on August 25–27.

July 11

In the morning, the President traveled to Camp David, MD.

In the afternoon, the President met separately with Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel on the back porch of the Aspen Cottage. He then attended a plenary session of the Middle East Peace Summit with Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak in the Conference Room of the Laurel Cabin.

Later, the President met separately with Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak in the Living Room of the Holly Cottage.

In the evening, the President met with Chairman Arafat in the President's office at the Laurel Cabin.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ronald W. Burkle to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint John Tull as a member of the Board for International Food and Agriculture Development.

July 12

In the morning, the President met with Prime Minister Barak at the Aspen Cottage.

In the evening, the President met with Chairman Arafat at the Laurel Cabin.

The President announced his intention to appoint Mark K. Shriver as a member of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Guy R. McMinds as U.S. Commissioner of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission.

July 13

In the morning, the President traveled to Baltimore, MD, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC. Later, he traveled to Camp David, MD.

In the evening, the President met with Israeli Minister of Internal Security Shlomo Ben Ami on the back porch of the Aspen Cottage. Later, he had separate bilateral discussions with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat.

The President announced his intention to nominate Judith A. Winston to be Under Secretary of the Department of Education.

The President announced his intention to nominate Bonnie Prouty Castrey to be Chair of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

The President announced the appointment of James S. Gordon as Chair and the following individuals as members of the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy:

George M. Bernier, Jr.;
George Thomas DeVries III;
William R. Fair;
Joseph J. Fins;
Wayne B. Jonas;
Charlotte Rose Kerr;
Dean Ornish;
Conchita M. Paz;
Buford L. Rolin;
Julia Scott;
Thomas M. Chappell; and
Effie Poy Yew Chow.

July 14

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Barak at the Aspen Cottage. Later, he met with Chairman Arafat at the Birch Cottage.

The President announced the nomination of John E. McLaughlin to be Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

The President announced his intention to appoint Maynard H. Jackson to the Fannie Mae Board of Directors.

The President announced his intention to appoint Larry D. Welch as a member of the Security Policy Advisory Board.

July 15

Throughout the day, the President participated in the Middle East Peace Summit. In the evening, he had a working dinner with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat. Later, he met with his foreign policy team.

July 16

In the afternoon, the President met with members of the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams, and later, he met with members of his foreign policy team.

In the evening, the President met separately with Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak.

July 17

In the morning, the President met with his foreign policy team, and in the afternoon, he met with Prime Minister Barak. Later, he met again with his foreign policy team.

In the evening, the President met with Chairman Arafat and twice with Prime Minister Barak.

July 18

In the morning, the President met with Chairman Arafat.

In the evening, the President met separately with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat.

The President announced his intention to nominate Seymour Martin Lipset to be a member of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The President announced his intention to appoint Frances B. Craig to serve on the Advisory Committee on Expanding Training Opportunities.

July 19

In the morning, the President met with his foreign policy team, and later, he met separately with Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak.

In the early evening, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Barak, and later, he met again with Chairman Arafat. In addition to the meetings, the President had several telephone conversations with Middle East leaders apprising them of the status of negotiations.

Throughout the evening, the President met several more times with Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak until shortly after midnight, when he traveled to Okinawa, Japan.

July 20

The President announced his intention to appoint D. David Eisenhower, Alfred Geduldig, Susan B. Harris, and Rocco C. Siciliano as members of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Peter A. Seligmann as a member of the Enterprise for the Americas Board.

July 21

In the morning, the President arrived in Okinawa.

In the afternoon, the President participated in a G-7 meeting in the Conference Hall at the Bankoku Shinryokan convention center. In the evening, he attended a G-8 working dinner in the Reception Hall at the convention center.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on May 3 and continuing through June 30.

July 22

In the morning, the President participated in a tree planting ceremony in the garden at the Bankoku Shinryokan convention center. Later, he attended sessions of the G-8 summit in the Conference Hall at the convention center, ending in the afternoon.

In the evening, the President attended a G-8 reception and dinner in the Shuri Castle.

The President nominated Miguel D. Lausell to be a member of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President nominated George A. Omas to be Commissioner of the Postal Rate Commission.

July 23

In the morning, the President attended the final session of the G-8 summit in the Conference Hall at the Bankoku Shinryokan convention center.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

Later, the President went to Camp David, MD, where he met with his foreign policy team concerning the ongoing Middle East Peace Summit. Later in the evening, he met separately with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority, and then met with members of the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams into the following morning.

July 24

In the morning, the President met with members of the Israeli and Palestinian negotiating teams, ending in the afternoon.

The President announced his intention to nominate David Z. Plavin to be a member of the Federal Aviation Management Advisory Council.

The President announced his intention to nominate Margrethe Lundsager to be Alternate U.S. Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund.

The President announced his intention to nominate Geoff Bacino to be member of the National Credit Union Administration.

The President announced the appointment of Tieraona Low Dog to the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy.

July 25

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Fayetteville, AR, and in the evening, they returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Jonathan Talisman to be Assistant Secretary for Tax Policy at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to appoint the following individuals as members of the National Veterans Business Development Corporation:

Richard W. Danielson;
Robert A. Glassman;
Craig W. Hartzell;
Arthur M. Lopez; and
Ruth Lillian Young.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Ned W. Bandler, Chaskel Besser, and Rachmiel Liberman as members of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The White House announced that the President directed the Department of Health and Human Services to release Low Income Home Energy Assistance program emergency funds for States affected by a heat wave.

July 26

The President announced his intention to nominate Sue Bailey to be Administrator for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

July 27

The President announced the nomination of Edward Kaufman and Alberto J. Mora to be members of the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

The President declared a major disaster in Vermont and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on July 14–18.

The White House announced that President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan of Croatia will make a working visit to Washington on August 9.

The White House announced that President-elect Vicente Fox of Mexico will visit the White House on August 24.

July 28

In the morning, the President traveled to Providence, RI, arriving in the afternoon. Later, he traveled to Boston, MA, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his July 27th nomination of Troy Hamilton Cribb to be Assistant Secretary for Import Administration, International Trade Administration at the Department of Commerce.

The President announced his July 27th nomination of Robert N. Shamansky to be a member of the National Security Education Board.

The President announced his July 27th nomination of Paula M. Junghans to be Assistant Attorney General for the Tax Division at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his July 27th nomination of James H. Atkins to be a member of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

The President amended the disaster declaration for Minnesota issued on June 27 to include assistance for families and local governments affected by the tornado that struck the town of Granite Falls in Yellow Medicine County on July 25.

July 29

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton attended a staff picnic on the South Lawn at the White House. Later, they traveled to New York City, arriving in the afternoon.

Later, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Chappaqua, New York.

July 30

In the morning, the President traveled to Chicago, IL, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

July 31

In the morning, the President traveled to Tampa, FL. In the afternoon, he visited the National Football League Tampa Bay Buccaneers training camp facility.

In the evening, the President traveled to Coral Gables, FL.

August 1

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving in the evening.

The President announced his intention to appoint Craig J. Mundie as a member of the President's Na-

tional Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to appoint G. William Ruhl as a member of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

August 2

In the morning, the President was interviewed by telephone by former Senator John C. Danforth, the Justice Department-appointed Waco Special Counsel, concerning the investigation into events surrounding the 1993 siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, TX.

The President signed new Federal guidelines governing petitions for executive clemency regarding death row inmates convicted in Federal capital cases.

The President announced his intention to appoint Joe C. Adams to the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

August 3

The President announced his intention to nominate David W. Ogden to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division at the Department of Justice.

The President recess-appointed Carl Spielvogel as Ambassador to the Slovak Republic.

The President recess-appointed Robin Chandler Duke as Ambassador to Norway.

The President recess-appointed James A. Daley as Ambassador to Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The President recess-appointed Bill Lann Lee as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights at the Department of Justice.

The President announced the recess appointment of Sue Bailey as Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration at the Department of Transportation.

The President announced the recess appointment of Francisco J. Sanchez as Assistant Secretary for Aviation and International Affairs at the Department of Transportation.

The President announced the recess appointment of Ella Wong-Rusinko as Alternate Federal Co-Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

The President recess-appointed Art Campbell as Assistant Secretary for Economic Development at the Department of Commerce.

The President recess-appointed Franz S. Leichter as a member of the Federal Housing Finance Board.

The President announced the recess appointment of W. Michael McCabe as Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The President recess-appointed Sally Katzen as Deputy Director for Management at the Office of Management and Budget.

The President recess-appointed Randolph D. Moss as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice.

The White House announced that the President will award the Presidential Medal of Freedom during an August 9 ceremony at the White House to the following individuals:

James Edward Burke;
the late Senator John Chafee;
Gen. Wesley K. Clark, USA (Ret.);
Adm. William Crowe, USN (Ret.);
Marian Wright Edelman;
John Kenneth Galbraith;
Msgr. George G. Higgins;
Rev. Jesse Jackson;
Mildred (Millie) Jeffrey;
Mathilde Krim;
George McGovern;
Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan;
Cruz Reynoso;
Rev. Gardner C. Taylor; and
Simon Wiesenthal.

August 4

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Martha's Vineyard, MA. In the evening, they traveled to Nantucket, MA, and later returned to Martha's Vineyard.

The President recess-appointed George T. Frampton, Jr., as Chair and Member of the Council on Environmental Quality.

The President recess-appointed John D. Holum as Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs at the Department of State.

The President recess-appointed Robert S. LaRussa as Under Secretary for International Trade at the Department of Commerce.

August 5

In the afternoon, the President traveled from Martha's Vineyard, MA, to Hyannis Port, MA. Later, he returned to Martha's Vineyard.

August 6

In the evening, the President attended a New York Senate 2000 dinner at a private residence.

August 7

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Harold P. Freeman as Chair and member of the President's Cancer Panel.

August 8

In the morning, the President traveled to Burgdorf Junction, ID.

In the evening, the President traveled to Charlottesville, VA, where he attended a Democratic National Committee dinner. Later, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to appoint Martha Choe as Chair of the Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

The President announced his intention to appoint Shelby White as a member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

August 9

In the afternoon, the President met with President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan of Croatia in the Oval Office.

In the evening, the President traveled to McLean, VA. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

August 10

In the morning, the President traveled to Chicago, IL, and in the evening, he traveled to New York City. Later, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

August 11

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Los Angeles, CA.

August 13

In the afternoon, the President attended a luncheon for his Presidential library at the home of entertainer Barbra Streisand. In the evening, at Union Station, he met with the Arkansas delegation to the Democratic National Convention.

August 14

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Beverly Hills, CA, and later returned to Los Angeles.

August 15

In the morning, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Monroe, MI. In the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

August 16

The President had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia concerning the Russian submarine accident in the Barents Sea.

The President announced his intention to appoint Najeeb E. Halaby to be a member of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Tanzania on August 28 to meet with former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa in support of the Burundi peace process.

August 17

The President declared a major disaster in the District of Columbia and ordered Federal aid to supplement local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe thunderstorms on August 7.

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and mudslides on August 12 and continuing.

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August 18

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Saranac Lake, NY. In the evening, they attended a picnic at the Saranac Lake Civic Center hosted by the Democratic Parties of Franklin, Essex, and Clinton Counties. Later, they traveled to Lake Placid, NY.

August 20

The President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Chappaqua, NY.

August 21

In the morning, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Ohio and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding July 29 through August 2.

August 22

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Bingham Farms, MI. In the evening, he traveled to Bloomfield Hills, MI, and later returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will attend the United Nations Millennium Summit in New York City on September 6–8.

August 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Monmouth Junction, NJ, where he met with students and teachers in Mobile Classroom 103 at Crossroads Middle School.

In the evening, he traveled to Princeton and Cherry Hill, NJ, and later returned to Washington, DC.

August 24

The President announced his intention to appoint Trudie Kibbe Reed as a member of the President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kevin J. Conlon as a member of the Advisory Committee on Expanding Training Opportunities.

August 25

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Abuja, Nigeria.

August 26

In the afternoon, the President met with President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria in the Drawing Room of the Presidential Villa.

August 27

In the morning, the President and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Ushafa, Nigeria. In the afternoon, they returned to Abuja.

August 28

In the morning, the President participated in a farewell ceremony with President Obasanjo at Abuja

International Airport, after which he and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Arusha, Tanzania.

In the afternoon, the President met with President Benjamin William Mkapa of Tanzania in the VIP Lounge at Kilimanjaro Airport.

In the evening, the President met with former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa and President Pierre Buyoya of Burundi at the Arusha International Conference Center.

The President announced his intention to appoint Beth Newburger as a member of the Women's Progress Commemoration Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Soy Williams as a member of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Marilyn Mason to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

August 29

In the morning, the President and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Cairo, Egypt, and in the afternoon, they returned to Washington, DC.

August 30

In the morning, the President and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Cartagena, Colombia. In the afternoon, they toured the Port of Cartagena, where they met with widows of Colombian National Police and Colombian Armed Forces law enforcement officers killed in counternarcotics activities. The President then met with President Andres Pastrana of Colombia in the President's Office at the Casa de Huespedes. Later, he visited the new Cartagena Casa de Justicia, where he participated in a dedication and plaque unveiling ceremony.

In the evening, the President and Chelsea Clinton returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Robert B. Pirie, Jr., to be Under Secretary of the Navy.

The President announced his intention to appoint Doris Matsui as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

The President announced his intention to appoint Frank Soares as a member of the National Veterans Business Development Corporation.

The President declared a major disaster in Montana and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by wildfires on July 13 and continuing.

August 31

The President announced the recess appointment of James Charles Riley as a Commissioner of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.

September 1

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Syracuse, NY.

The President announced his intention to appoint Harold Holzer and James Oliver Horton as members of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

The President declared a major disaster in Idaho and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by wildfires on July 27 and continuing.

September 2

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton visited the New York State Fair in Syracuse. In the afternoon, they traveled to Cazenovia, NY, and in the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

September 5

In the morning, the President met with Democratic congressional leaders in the Oval Office.

In an afternoon ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Davorin Kracun of Slovenia, Kgosi Seepapitso IV of Botswana, Andres Bianchi of Chile, S Tu'a Taumoepeau-Tupou of Tonga, Atan Shansonga of Zambia, Yusuf Abdulrahman Nzibo of Kenya, Przemyslaw Grudzinski of Poland, Teodoro Biyogo Nsue of Equatorial Guinea, Francisco Javier Ruperez-Rubio of Spain, Leila Rachid-Cowles of Paraguay, Yang Sung-chul of South Korea, Bader Omar Al-Dafa of Qatar, and Jan Kenneth Eliasson of Sweden.

The President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom concerning trade between the United States and the European Union.

In the evening, the President traveled to New York City.

The President announced his intention to nominate David A. Nasatir to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frederick Slabach to be a member of the Board of Trustees of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Connecticut and New York on September 11.

September 6

In the morning, the President met with President Tran Duc Luong of Vietnam at the Waldorf-Astoria. In the afternoon, he had separate meetings with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority at the Waldorf-Astoria.

In the evening, the President had separate meetings with Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and King Abdullah II of Jordan at the Waldorf-Astoria. Later, he attended a Progressive Governance dinner in the Hilton Room at the Waldorf-Astoria.

The President announced the nomination of Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., and Senator Rod Grams to be

U.S. Representatives to the 55th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

September 7

In the morning, the President met with President Ahmet Sezer of Turkey at the Waldorf-Astoria. In the afternoon, he had separate meetings with President Jiang Zemin of China, President Jacques Chirac of France, President Vladimir Putin of Russia, and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at the Waldorf-Astoria.

September 8

In the afternoon, the President had separate meetings with Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland and President Hugo Banzer of Bolivia at the Waldorf-Astoria.

September 9

In the morning, the President met with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel in New York City. Later, he traveled to Flushing Meadows, NY, where he attended the U.S. Open tennis tournament. In the afternoon, he returned to New York City.

September 11

In the morning, the President traveled to Scarsdale, NY, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Danbury, CT. In the evening, he traveled to New York City and Chappaqua, NY.

The President announced his intention to nominate Toni Fay to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Melvin E. Clark, Jr., to be a member of the Board of Governors for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President announced his intention to nominate Elwood (Elgie) Holstein, Jr., to be Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, at the Department of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael Prescott Goldwater, Hans Mark, and Lynda Hare Scribante to be members of the Board of Trustees of the Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation.

September 12

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton visited the Douglas Grafflin Elementary School, where they voted in the New York Democratic senatorial primary. Later, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate the following individuals to be members of the National Council on the Humanities:

Nina Archabal;
Betty Bengtson;

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Ron Chew;
Henry Glassie;
Mary Hubbard;
Naomi Shihab Nye; and
Vicki Ruiz.

September 13

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward Francis Meagher to be Assistant Secretary for Information Technology at the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Philadelphia, PA, on September 17, to California on September 23–25, and to Texas on September 27.

The White House announced that Prime Minister Giuliano Amato of Italy will make an official working visit to the White House on September 20.

September 14

The President announced his intention to nominate Sheryl R. Marshall and Thomas A. Fink to be members of the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Paulette H. Holahan to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

The President declared a disaster in California and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by an earthquake on September 3.

The White House announced that the President will attend the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) eighth economic leaders meeting on November 15–16 in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei. After the meeting, the President will travel to Vietnam to meet with President Tran Duc Luong.

September 15

The White House announced that the President will travel to Flint, MI, on September 21.

September 17

In the morning, the President traveled to Philadelphia, PA, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

September 18

In the morning, the President met with former Prime Minister Shimon Peres of Israel in the Oval Office.

September 19

In the evening, the President attended a book-signing at the West 24 restaurant for former aide Paul Begala's new book.

The President announced his intention to appoint Leslie Russell Jin as Staff Director of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The President announced his intention to accord David R. Andrews the rank of Ambassador in his capacity as Special Negotiator for U.S./Iran Claims.

The President announced his intention to appoint Alfred Cho, Arthur Jaffe, Elizabeth Neufeld, and William Lester as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

September 20

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Giuliano Amato of Italy in the Cabinet Room.

September 21

In the morning, the President traveled to Flint, MI, where he toured the Disability Network and viewed a demonstration of handicapped-accessible technologies. Later, he traveled to Detroit and Livonia. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Daniel P. Burnham to be the Chair of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald Fixico to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities.

September 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Palo Alto, CA. In the afternoon, he traveled to San Jose, and in the evening, he traveled to Brentwood and Beverly Hills, CA.

September 24

In the morning, the President traveled to Pacific Palisades and Bel Air, CA, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Hidden Hills. In the evening, he returned to Beverly Hills.

September 25

In the morning, the President traveled to Santa Fe, NM, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Donald L. Robinson to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

The President announced his intention to nominate for reappointment Arthur A. McGiverin and Robert A. Miller to be members of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

September 26

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel concerning the Middle East peace process.

The President announced the nomination of Mary Lou Leary to be Assistant Attorney General in the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice.

The President announced the nomination of John J. Wilson to be Administrator of the Office of Juvenile

Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to nominate Isabel Carter Stewart to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities.

The President announced his intention to nominate James F. Dobbins to be Assistant Secretary of European Affairs at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Betty Bumpers to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The President declared a major disaster in Ohio and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and a tornado on September 20.

September 27

In the morning, the President traveled to Dallas, TX. In the afternoon, he traveled to Houston, TX, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to appoint Raynard C. Soon as a member of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

The President announced the nomination of John L. Palmer and Thomas R. Saving to be public members of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund (Social Security). They will also be nominated to be public members of the Board of Trustees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance Trust Fund (Medicare).

The President announced his intention to nominate Shibley Telhami to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

September 28

The President announced his intention to nominate Sophia H. Hall for reappointment to the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute.

September 29

In the afternoon, the President participated in outgoing White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart's final press briefing.

September 30

The President had separate telephone conversations with Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel concerning the recent outbreak of violence between Jews and Palestinians in the Middle East.

The President had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia concerning the elections in Yugoslavia.

October 2

The President had a telephone conversation with President Ahmet Necdet Sezer of Turkey concerning

a congressional resolution to recognize accusations of Turkish genocide against Armenians in 1915.

The President announced his intention to nominate Philip N. Bredesen to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science.

The President announced his intention to nominate Reginald Earl Jones to be Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate Randolph J. Agley to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate Mark A. Weinberger to be a member of the Social Security Advisory Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate Hsin-Ming Fung to be a member of the National Council on the Arts.

The President announced his intention to nominate Edward F. Reilly, Jr., to be a member of the U.S. Parole Commission.

The White House announced that the President will meet with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh in Washington on October 17.

October 3

In the morning, the President traveled to Miami, FL, where he attended a New York Senate 2000 reception in the afternoon at a private residence.

In the evening, at a private residence, the President watched the Presidential candidates debate. Afterwards, he had a telephone conversation with Vice President Al Gore to congratulate him on his performance. Later, the President traveled to Coral Gables, FL.

The President announced his intention to appoint Kate Fitz Gibbon as a member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Gary J. Lavine as a member of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storm Helene beginning on September 21 and continuing.

October 4

In the morning, the President met with His Holiness Guru Pujya Swami Maharaj at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, FL. Later, he attended a New York Senate 2000 breakfast at the hotel. In the afternoon, the President traveled to Jacksonville, FL, and later returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding beginning on October 3 and continuing.

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October 5

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Princeton, NJ, and later to New York City. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to nominate Anita Perez Ferguson to be Chair of the Inter-American Foundation.

The President announced his intention to nominate John M. Reich to be a member of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

October 6

In the evening, the President attended an AFL-CIO reception at a private residence. He then attended a reception for Representative Tom Udall at the Washington Court Hotel.

October 10

In the morning, the President met with Special Envoy Vice Marshal Cho Myong-nok, First Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission of North Korea, in the Oval Office.

Later in the morning, the President had separate telephone conversations with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority concerning the Middle East peace process.

October 11

In the morning, the President traveled to Pittsburgh, PA, and in the afternoon, to Philadelphia. In the evening, he traveled to Chappaqua, NY, where he watched the Presidential candidates debate.

The President declared an emergency in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area affected by the West Nile virus on July 15 and continuing.

Appendix B—Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted June 28

Donald Mancuso,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Department of Defense, vice Eleanor Hill.

Kenneth Y. Tomlinson,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a term expiring January 31, 2006, vice Henry J. Cauthen, term expired.

Submitted June 30

Roger L. Gregory,
of Virginia, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit (new position).

Everett L. Mosely,
of Virginia, to be Inspector General, Agency for International Development, vice Jeffrey Rush, Jr.

Marjory E. Searing,
of Maryland, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service, vice Awilda R. Marquez, resigned.

Submitted July 10

Leslie Beth Kramerich,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Labor, vice Richard M. McGahey, resigned.

Submitted July 13

Bonnie Prouty Castrey,
of California, to be a member of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of 5 years expiring July 1, 2005, vice Donald S. Wasserman, term expired.

Arthenia L. Joyner,
of Florida, to be a member of the Federal Aviation Management Advisory Council for a term of one year (new position).

John E. McLaughlin,
of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, vice Gen. John A. Gordon.

Judith A. Winston,
of the District of Columbia, to be Under Secretary of Education, vice Marshall S. Smith.

Submitted July 17

Norman Y. Mineta,
of California, to be Secretary of Commerce, vice William M. Daley.

Submitted July 18

Seymour Martin Lipset,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2003 (reappointment).

Submitted July 20

Andrew Fois,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of 15 years, vice Eugene N. Hamilton, term expiring.

Miguel D. Lausell,
of Puerto Rico, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2000, vice John Chrystal.

Miguel D. Lausell,
of Puerto Rico, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2003 (reappointment).

Submitted July 21

Susan Ritchie Bolton,
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona, vice a new position created by Public Law 106-113, approved November 29, 1999.

Mary H. Murguia,
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona (new position).

James A. Teilborg,
of Arizona, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Arizona (new position).

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George A. Omas,
of Mississippi, to be a Commissioner of the Postal
Rate Commission for a term expiring October 14,
2006 (reappointment).

Submitted July 25

Margrethe Lundsager,
of Virginia, to be U.S. Alternate Executive Director
of the International Monetary Fund for a term of
2 years, vice Barry S. Newman, term expired.

Jonathan Talisman,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treas-
ury, vice Donald C. Lubick, resigned.

Submitted July 26

Geoff Bacino,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National Credit
Union Administration Board for the term of 6 years,
expiring August 2, 2005, vice Norman E. D'Amours,
term expired.

Edward E. Kaufman,
of Delaware, to be a member of the Broadcasting
Board of Governors for a term expiring August 13,
2003 (reappointment).

Alberto J. Mora,
of Florida, to be a member of the Broadcasting Board
of Governors for a term expiring August 13, 2003
(reappointment).

David Z. Plavin,
of New York, to be a member of the Federal Aviation
Management Advisory Council for a term of one year
(new position).

Sue Bailey,
of Maryland, to be Administrator of the National
Highway Traffic Safety Administration, vice Ricardo
Martinez, resigned.

Withdrawn July 26

John R. Simpson,
of Maryland, to be a Commissioner of the U.S. Parole
Commission for a term of 6 years (reappointment),
which was sent to the Senate on July 19, 1999.

Submitted July 27

Christine M. Arguello,
of Colorado, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Tenth
Circuit, vice John C. Porfilio, retired.

James H. Atkins,
of Arkansas, to be a member of the Federal Retirement
Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring
September 25, 2004 (reappointment).

Jose Collado,
of Florida, to be a member of the Advisory Board
for Cuba Broadcasting for a term expiring December
20, 2000, vice Marjorie B. Kampelman, resigned.

Jose Collado,
of Florida, to be a member of the Advisory Board
for Cuba Broadcasting for a term expiring December
20, 2003 (reappointment).

Paula M. Junghans,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General,
vice Loretta Collins Argrett, resigned.

David Stewart Cercone,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the
Western District of Pennsylvania, vice Robert J.
Cindrich, upon elevation.

Troy Hamilton Cribb,
of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Sec-
retary of Commerce, vice Robert S. LaRussa.

Harry Peter Litman,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the
Western District of Pennsylvania, vice Alan N. Bloch,
retired.

Robert N. Shamansky,
of Ohio, to be a member of the National Security
Education Board for a term of 4 years (reappoint-
ment).

Submitted September 6

Joseph R. Biden, Jr.,
of Delaware, to be a Representative of the United
States of America to the Fifty-fifth Session of the
General Assembly of the United Nations.

Rod Grams,
of Minnesota, to be a Representative of the United
States of America to the Fifty-fifth Session of the
General Assembly of the United Nations.

Submitted September 7

Valerie K. Couch,
of Oklahoma, to be U.S. District Judge for the West-
ern District of Oklahoma, vice Wayne E. Alley, re-
tired.

Marian McClure Johnston,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern
District of California, vice Lawrence K. Karlton, re-
tired.

David A. Nasatir,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the Board of
Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term
expiring September 17, 2003, vice Terrence B. Adam-
son, term expired.

Robert B. Pirie, Jr.,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of the Navy, vice
Jerry MacArthur Hultin, resigned.

Frederick G. Slabach,
of California, to be a member of the Board of Trust-
ees of the Harry S Truman Scholarship Foundation
for a term expiring December 10, 2005, vice Norman
I. Maldonado, term expired.

Submitted September 12

Steven E. Achelpohl,
of Nebraska, to be U.S. District Judge for the District
of Nebraska, vice William G. Cambridge, retired.

Joel Gerber,
of Virginia, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court
for a term of 15 years after he takes office (reappoint-
ment).

Stephen J. Swift,
of Virginia, to be a Judge of the U.S. Tax Court
for a term of 15 years after he takes office (reappoint-
ment).

Submitted September 13

Richard W. Anderson,
of Montana, to be U.S. District Judge for the District
of Montana, vice Charles C. Lovell, retired.

Submitted September 14

Nina M. Archabal,
of Minnesota, to be a member of the National Council
on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26,
2006, vice Nicholas Kanellos, term expired.

Betty G. Bengtson,
of Washington, to be a member of the National Coun-
cil on the Humanities for a term expiring January
26, 2006, vice Ramon A. Gutierrez, term expired.

Ron Chew,
of Washington, to be a member of the National Coun-
cil on the Humanities for a term expiring January
26, 2006, vice Robert I. Rotberg, term expired.

Melvin E. Clark, Jr.,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the
Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment
Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2002
(reappointment).

Toni G. Fay,
of New Jersey, to be a member of the Board of
Directors of the Corporation for National and Com-
munity Service for a term expiring October 6, 2001,
vice John Rother, term expired.

Thomas A. Fink,
of Alaska, to be a member of the Federal Retirement
Thrift Investment Board for a term expiring October
11, 2003 (reappointment).

Henry Glassie,
of Indiana, to be a member of the National Council
on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26,
2006, vice Martha Congleton Howell, term expired.

Michael Prescott Goldwater,
of Arizona, to be a member of the Board of Trustees
of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence
in Education Foundation for a term expiring October
13, 2005, vice William W. Quinn, resigned.

Elwood Holstein, Jr.,
of New Jersey, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere, vice Terry D. Garcia,
resigned.

Mary D. Hubbard,
of Alabama, to be a member of the National Council
on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26,
2004, vice Theodore S. Hamerow, term expired.

Stephen B. Lieberman,
of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the
Eastern District of Pennsylvania, vice Edward N.
Cahn, retired.

Hans Mark,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of Trustees
of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence
in Education Foundation for the remainder of the
term expiring April 17, 2002 (reappointment).

Sheryl R. Marshall,
of Massachusetts, to be a member of the Federal
Retirement Thrift Investment Board for a term expir-
ing October 11, 2002 (reappointment).

Naomi Shihab Nye,
of Texas, to be a member of the National Council
on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26,
2006, vice Bev Lindsey, term expired.

Vicki L. Ruiz,
of Arizona, to be a member of the National Council
on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26,
2006, vice Harold K. Skramstad, term expired.

Lynda Hare Scribante,
of Colorado, to be a member of the Board of Trustees
of the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence
in Education Foundation for a term expiring October
13, 2005 (reappointment).

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Submitted September 22

Mary Lou Leary,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice
Laurie O. Robinson, resigned.

Submitted September 25

Donald L. Fixico,
of Kansas, to be a member of the National Council
on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26,
2004, vice Alan Charles Kors, term expired.

Paulette H. Holahan,
of Louisiana, to be a member of the National Com-
mission on Libraries and Information Science for a
term expiring July 19, 2004, vice Mary S. Furlong,
term expired.

Marilyn Gell Mason,
of Florida, to be a member of the National Commis-
sion on Libraries and Information Science for a term
expiring July 19, 2003, vice Joel David Valdez, term
expired.

John J. Wilson,
of Maryland, to be Administrator of the office of Juve-
nile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, vice Sheldon
C. Bilchik.

Submitted September 26

Betty F. Bumpers,
of Arkansas, to be a member of the Board of Directors
of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring
January 19, 2001. (new position)

Betty F. Bumpers,
of Arkansas, to be a member of the Board of Directors
of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring
January 19, 2005. (reappointment)

James F. Dobbins,
of New York, a Career member of the Senior Foreign
Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assist-
ant Secretary of State (European Affairs), vice Marc
Grossman, resigned.

John L. Palmer,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Trust-
ees of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance
Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust
Fund for a term of 4 years, vice Marilyn Moon, term
expired.

John L. Palmer,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Trust-
ees of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for
a term of 4 years, vice Marilyn Moon, term
expired.

John L. Palmer,
of New York, to be a member of the Board of Trust-
ees of the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance
Trust Fund for a term of 4 years, vice Marilyn Moon,
term expired.

Thomas R. Saving,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of Trustees
of the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust
Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund
for a term of 4 years, vice Stephen G. Kellison, term
expired.

Thomas R. Saving,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of Trustees
of the Federal Hospital Insurance Trust Fund for
a term of 4 years, vice Stephen G. Kellison, term
expired.

Thomas R. Saving,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of Trustees
of the Federal Supplementary Medical Insurance
Trust Fund for a term of 4 years, vice Stephen G.
Kellison, term expired.

Submitted September 28

Sue Bailey,
of Maryland, to be Administrator of the National
Highway Traffic Safety Administration, vice Ricardo
Martinez, resigned, to which position she was ap-
pointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Holly J. Burkhalter,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the
Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace
for a term expiring January 19, 2005 (reappointment).

Arthur C. Campbell,
of Tennessee, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce
for Economic Development (new position), to which
position he was appointed during the last recess of
the Senate.

James A. Daley,
of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to
Barbados, and to serve concurrently and without addi-
tional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to
St. Kitts and Nevis and to St. Lucia, to which position
he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Robin Chandler Duke,
of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to
Norway, to which position she was appointed during
the last recess of the Senate.

George T. Frampton, Jr.,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the
Council on Environmental Quality, vice Kathleen A.

McGinty, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

John David Holm,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security, Department of State (new position), to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Sally Katzen,
of the District of Columbia, to be Deputy Director for Management, Office of Management and Budget, vice G. Edward DeSeve, to which position she was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Robert S. LaRussa,
of Maryland, to be Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade, vice David L. Aaron, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Bill Lann Lee,
of California, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Deval L. Patrick, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Franz S. Leichter,
of New York, to be a Director of the Federal Housing Finance Board for a term expiring February 27, 2006, vice Daniel F. Evans, term expired, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

W. Michael McCabe,
of Pennsylvania, to be Deputy Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, vice Frederic James Hansen, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Arthur A. McGiverin,
of Iowa, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2003 (reappointment).

Robert A. Miller,
of South Dakota, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2003 (reappointment).

Randolph D. Moss,
of Maryland, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Walter Dellinger, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

David W. Ogden,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Attorney General, vice Frank Hunger, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

James Charles Riley,
of Virginia, to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term expiring August 30, 2006 (reappointment), to which

position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Donald L. Robinson,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science for a term expiring July 19, 2002, vice Gary N. Sudduth.

Francisco J. Sanchez,
of Florida, to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation, vice Charles A. Hunnicutt, resigned, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Barbara W. Snelling,
of Vermont, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2005 (reappointment).

Carl Spielvogel,
of New York, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Slovak Republic, to which position he was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Steven Clayton Stafford,
of California, to be U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of California for the term of 4 years, vice Stephen Simpson Gregg, resigned.

Isabel Carter Stewart,
of Illinois, to be a member of the National Council on the Humanities for a term expiring January 26, 2006, vice David Finn, term expired.

Shibley Telhami,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2001, vice Thomas E. Harvey, term expired.

Shibley Telhami,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2005 (reappointment).

Ella Wong-Rusinko,
of Virginia, to be Alternate Federal Cochairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission, vice Hilda Gay Legg, resigned, to which position she was appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Submitted October 2

Randolph J. Agley,
of Michigan, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for National and Community Service for a term of one year (new position).

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Reginald Earl Jones,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission for a term expiring July 1, 2005 (reappointment).

Hsin-Ming Fung,
of California, to be a member of the National Council on the Arts for a term expiring September 3, 2006, vice Speight Jenkins, term expired.

Edward F. Reilly, Jr.,
of Kansas, to be a Commissioner of the U.S. Parole Commission for a term of 6 years, vice John R. Simpson, term expired.

Mark A. Weinberger,
of Maryland, to be a member of the Social Security Advisory Board for a term expiring September 30, 2006, vice Harlan Mathews, resigned.

Submitted October 3

Philip N. Bredesen,
of Tennessee, to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science for a

term expiring July 19, 2005, vice Walter Anderson, term expired.

Melvin C. Hall,
of Oklahoma, to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma, vice Ralph G. Thompson, retired.

Richard A. Meserve,
of Virginia, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the 44th session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Submitted October 6

Andre M. Davis,
of Maryland, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, vice Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr., deceased.

Sophia H. Hall,
of Illinois, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the State Justice Institute for a term expiring September 17, 2003 (reappointment).

Appendix C—Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary which are not included in this book.

Released June 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released June 28

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Gregory L. Schulte as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Southeast European Affairs at the National Security Council

Released June 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Announcement of nomination for Secretary of Commerce

Released June 30

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Fourth Circuit

Released July 4

Fact sheet: New Class of Ship Named After Admiral Zumwalt

Released July 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by NSC Senior Director for Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs Eric Schwartz on the United Nations Protocols on Child Soldiers and the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography

Fact sheet: United Nations Protocols on Child Soldiers and the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography

Released July 6

Statement by the Press Secretary: Postponement of Tunisian State Visit

Released July 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Jake Siewert and Assistant Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs P.J. Crowley

Released July 10

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton's Trip to Africa

Announcement of designation of Acting Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Released July 11

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Haiti's Elections

Announcement: The Middle East Peace Summit at Camp David: Official Delegations

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Federal Claims Chief Judge

Released July 12

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released July 13

Fact sheet: Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement: Historic Strengthening of the U.S.–Vietnam Relationship

Released July 14

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released July 16

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released July 17

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs Lael Brainard and Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the President's upcoming participation in the Group of Eight summit in Japan

Statement by the Press Secretary: Administration Updates, Encryption Export Policy

Released July 18

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on Title III of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act

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Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Martin Baily on the consumer price index

Transcript of remarks by Chief of Staff John Podesta to the National Press Club on electronic privacy

Released July 19

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's decision to delay his trip to Japan

Statement by the Press Secretary on the conclusion of the Middle East Peace Summit

Announcement: Official Delegation Accompanying the President to Japan

Text of a letter from Chief of Staff John Podesta to House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert on congressional spending

Released July 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Announcement: Revised Official Delegation Accompanying the President to Japan

Announcement of nomination for the Superior Court of the District of Columbia

Released July 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Fact sheet: Education Initiatives

Fact sheet: Illicit Diamonds and Conflicts

Announcement: Disposition of United States and Russian Federation Weapon-Grade Plutonium

Released July 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the President's meeting with Prime Minister Mori of Japan

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economic Affairs Lael Brainard on the G-8 summit

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Philippine President Joseph Estrada

Text of a letter from Chief of Staff John Podesta to House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert on willingness to meet with congressional leaders

Text of a memorandum from Office of Management and Budget Director Jacob J. Lew to the President on the effect of congressional legislative action on the budget surplus

Fact sheet: U.S.-Japan Bilateral Issues

Fact sheet: Majority of G-8 Mobilizes Billions To Combat Infectious Disease in Developing Countries

Announcement of nominations for U.S. District Judges for the District of Arizona

Released July 23

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the education initiative for developing countries

Fact sheet: President Clinton and the Okinawa Summit: Protecting the Global Environment

Released July 24

Transcripts of press briefings by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released July 25

Statement by the Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee of India

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President directed the Department of Health and Human Services to release Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program emergency funds

Released July 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released July 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan of Croatia

Statement by the Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of President-elect Vicente Fox of Mexico

Statement by the Press Secretary on the 10th anniversary of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of Belarus

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Tenth Circuit

Announcement of nominations for U.S. District Judges for the Western District of Pennsylvania

Released August 2

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's interview with Waco Special Counsel John Danforth

Released August 3

Statement by the Press Secretary on the upcoming Presidential Medal of Freedom award ceremony

Fact sheet: Export Controls on Computers

Released August 4

Fact sheet: Presidential Decision Directive on the Colombia Initiative: Increased U.S Assistance for Colombia

Released August 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients

Released August 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of excerpts of the President's speech at the Democratic National Convention

Released August 16

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's upcoming visit to Tanzania in support of the Burundi peace process

Released August 22

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's upcoming visit to New York City for the United Nations Millennium Summit

Released August 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the President's upcoming visits to Nigeria, Tanzania, and Colombia

Released August 26

Transcript of a press briefing by NSC Senior Director for African Affairs Gayle Smith and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice on the President's visit to Nigeria

Announcement: Official Delegation Accompanying the President to Africa, August 25–29, 2000

Fact sheet: Nigeria

Fact sheet: Nigeria: The Challenging Transition to Democracy

Fact sheet: U.S.–Nigerian Cooperation on Peacekeeping and Military Reform

Fact sheet: United States–Nigeria Open Skies Agreement and Other Transportation Initiatives

Fact sheet: The United States and Nigeria: Energy, Labor, Law Enforcement, Environment, Democracy, and Biotechnology

Released August 27

Transcript of a press briefing by White House Office of National AIDS Policy Director Sandra Thurman and Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice on the President's visit to Nigeria

Fact sheet: Nigeria: Bridging the Digital Divide and Improving Access to Education

Fact sheet: The United States and Nigeria: Expanding Trade and Investment

Fact sheet: The United States and Nigeria: Joining Forces to Fight AIDS and Infectious Diseases

Released August 28

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, NSC Senior Director for African Affairs Gayle Smith, and Special Envoy to Africa's Great Lakes Region Howard Wolpe on the Burundi peace process

Announcement: U.S.–Tanzania Bilateral Relations

Released August 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Ambassador Dennis Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator, on the President's meeting with President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt in Cairo

Released August 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert on U.S. assistance to Colombia

Announcement: Official Delegation Accompanying the President to Colombia, August 30, 2000

Fact sheet: Cooperation Between the United States and Colombia on Programs To Counter Money Laundering and Counterfeiting

Fact sheet: Human Rights and U.S. Assistance for Plan Colombia

Fact sheet: Increased U.S. Assistance for Colombia on Counter-Drug Programs

Fact sheet: USAID/Colombia Casas de Justicia National Program

Released August 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released September 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the August 31–September 1 meeting of South American Presidents in Brasilia, Brazil

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Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on national missile defense
Fact sheet: National Missile Defense

Released September 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Chief of Staff John Podesta, Office of Management and Budget Director Jack Lew, Office of Management and Budget Deputy Director Sylvia Mathews, and Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on the legislative agenda

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger on the President's upcoming visit to the United Nations Millennium Summit

Announcement: Official Delegation Accompanying the President to New York for the U.N. Millennium Summit

Released September 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a readout to the pool by Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Senior Adviser to the Under Secretary for International Security and Arms Control Jim Timbie on the President's meeting with President Vladimir Putin of Russia

Fact sheet: U.S. Support for the United Nations: Engagement, Innovation, and Renewal

Released September 7

Transcript of a press briefing by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright on the meeting of the U.N. Security Council

Fact sheet: President Clinton and the Millennium Summit: Protecting the Global Environment

Fact sheet: U.S. Efforts on the Millennium Report "Call to Action" on Poverty and Economic Development Issues

Fact sheet: U.S. Efforts on HIV/AIDS and Infectious Diseases

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of California

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma

Released September 12

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Press Secretary Jake Sievert and Assistant Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs P.J. Crowley

Statement by Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Giuliano Amato of Italy

Announcement of nomination for the U.S. Tax Court

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the District of Nebraska

Announcement: Official U.S. Delegation to the 2000 Olympic Games

Released September 13

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Chief of Staff John Podesta, Commerce Secretary Norman Mineta, NOAA Administrator Jim Baker, and NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Affairs Rollie Schmitten on U.S. action on Japanese whaling

Statement by the Press Secretary on release of declassified documents relating to Chile during and prior to the Pinochet era

Fact sheet: President Clinton Directs U.S. Actions in Response to Japanese Whaling

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the District of Montana

Released September 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: President Clinton Travels to Brunei and Vietnam

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania

Released September 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs P.J. Crowley, Near East and South Asian Affairs and National Security Council Senior Director Bruce Riedel, and Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Rick Inderfurth on the President's meeting with Prime Minister Vajpayee of India

Released September 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Assistant to the President for Health Policy Chris Jennings on a report on a low-income prescription drug plan

Released September 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

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Released September 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Special Assistant for Economic Policy Tom Kalil and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on digital opportunity for all Americans

Statement by the Press Secretary on Independent Counsel Robert Ray's Whitewater investigation

Statement by Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands

Fact sheet: President Clinton Accepts German Media Prize

Released September 21

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's reaction to the Iranian Court of Appeals decision in the espionage case against Jewish Iranians

Released September 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on guests of the First Family at the White House and at Camp David, MD

Released September 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling and Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Martin Baily on the President's announcement on income and poverty

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Mary B. DeRosa as Special Assistant to the President and Legal Adviser

Released September 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Northern Ireland peace process

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Marshal for the Southern District of California

Released September 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Chief of Staff John Podesta on the national economy

Released October 1

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's discussions with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority

Released October 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Statement by the Press Secretary on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh

Released October 3

Statement by the Press Secretary on pipeline safety legislation

Announcement of nomination for U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Oklahoma

Released October 6

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Fourth Circuit

Released October 10

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Transcript of a press briefing by Special Adviser to the President and Policy Coordinator on North Korea Wendy Sherman on the visit of the North Korean delegation

Appendix D—Presidential Documents Published in the Federal Register

This appendix lists Presidential documents released by the Office of the Press Secretary and published in the Federal Register. The texts of the documents are printed in the Federal Register (F.R.) at the citations listed below. The documents are also printed in title 3 of the Code of Federal Regulations and in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents.

PROCLAMATIONS

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7326	June 29	To Extend Nondiscriminatory Treatment (Normal Trade Relations Treatment) to the Products of Albania and Kyrgyzstan	41547
7327	July 1	Spirit of the ADA Month, 2000	41865
7328	July 6	To Amend the Generalized System of Preferences	42595
7329	July 7	President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home National Monument	43673
7330	July 14	Captive Nations Week, 2000	44641
7331	July 21	Parents' Day, 2000	45701
7332	Aug. 1	Helsinki Human Rights Day, 2000	47825
7333	Aug. 24	Minority Enterprise Development Week, 2000	52287
7334	Aug. 26	Women's Equality Day, 2000	52639
7335	Aug. 27	To Modify Duty-Free Treatment Under the Generalized System of Preferences	52903
7336	Aug. 31	America Goes Back to School, 2000	53887
7337	Sept. 5	Health in Aging Month, 2000	54397
7338	Sept. 14	National Hispanic Heritage Month, 2000	56457
7339	Sept. 14	National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, 2000	56459
7340	Sept. 14	National POW/MIA Recognition Day, 2000	56461
7341	Sept. 15	National Farm Safety and Health Week, 2000	56767
7342	Sept. 15	Ovarian Cancer Awareness Week, 2000	56769
7343	Sept. 17	Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 2000	56771
7344	Sept. 22	Gold Star Mother's Day, 2000	57935
7345	Sept. 22	National Older Workers Employment Week, 2000	57937
7346	Sept. 29	National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, 2000	59311
7347	Sept. 29	National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 2000	59313
7348	Sept. 29	National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, 2000	59315
7349	Sept. 29	Child Health Day, 2000	59317
7350	Oct. 2	To Implement the African Growth and Opportunity Act and To Designate Eritrea as a Beneficiary Developing Country for Purposes of the Generalized System of Preferences	59321
7351	Oct. 2	To Implement the United States-Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act	59329
7352	Oct. 5	German-American Day, 2000	60567
7353	Oct. 6	Afterschool Week, 2000	60569
7354	Oct. 6	Fire Prevention Week, 2000	60571
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7356	Oct. 6	National Children's Day, 2000	60575
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7358	Oct. 6	Leif Erikson Day, 2000	60579
7359	Oct. 10	Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Persons Impeding the Peace Process in Sierra Leone	60831
7360	Oct. 10	Eleanor Roosevelt Day, 2000	60833

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13161	June 29	Establishment of the Presidential Medal of Valor for Public Safety Officers	41543
13162	July 6	Federal Career Intern Program	43211
13163	July 26	Increasing the Opportunity for Individuals With Disabilities To Be Employed in the Federal Government	46563
13164	July 26	Requiring Federal Agencies To Establish Procedures To Facilitate the Provision of Reasonable Accommodation	46565
13165	Aug. 9	Creation of the White House Task Force on Drug Use in Sports and Authorization for the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy To Serve as the United States Government's Representative on the Board of the World Anti-Doping Agency	49469
13166	Aug. 11	Improving Access to Services for Persons With Limited English Proficiency	50121
13167	Sept. 15	Amendment to Executive Order 13147, Increasing the Membership of the White House Commission on Complementary and Alternative Medicine Policy	57079
13168	Sept. 22	President's Commission on Improving Economic Opportunity in Commu- nities Dependent on Tobacco Production While Protecting Public Health	58217
13169	Oct. 6	Assistance to Small Business Exporters and Dislocated Workers	60581
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	June 30	Notice: Continuation of emergency with respect to the Taliban	41549
	July 5	Memorandum: Delegation of responsibilities under Section 1232 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001 (Public Law 106–113)	43213
2000– 26	July 7	Presidential Determination: Proposed Turkey-U.S. peaceful nuclear coopera- tion agreement	44403
	July 28	Notice: Continuation of Iraqi emergency	47241
	Aug. 3	Notice: Continuation of emergency regarding export control regulations	48347
	Aug. 21	Memorandum: Delegation of responsibility under the Open-market Reorganization for the Betterment of International Telecommunications (ORBIT) Act	52289
2000– 28	Aug. 22	Presidential Determination: Waiver of certification under Section 3201 “Conditions on Assistance for Colombia,” in Title III, Chapter 2 of the Emergency Supplemental Act, FY 2000, as enacted in Public Law 106–246	52291

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	Sept. 22	Notice: Continuation of emergency with respect to UNITA	57721
2000– 31	Sept. 28	Presidential Determination: U.S. contribution to the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO)	59695
2000– 32	Sept. 29	Presidential Determination: FY 2001 refugee admissions numbers and authorizations of in-country refugee status	59697
2000– 33	Sept. 29	Presidential Determination: Military drawdown for Tunisia	59699

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