

by-day continuing resolutions. We'll do everything we possibly can to pass all this education agenda, to pass as much of our health care agenda we can, and to do it in a fiscally responsible way.

But when you leave here, you just think about this. Tell people to remember the way it was 8 years ago; to think about the way it is now; to look at the changes in crime, welfare, the environment, health care, and the economy; and to ask yourself not whether we're going to keep changing but what direction will we change in? The country's changing so fast and the world is changing so fast, change will be the order of the day next year and 5 years from now and 10 years from now. The issue is not whether

we're going to change; it is, which direction will we take as we change?

And you just think about—think of yourself as America's weather corps. They want cloudy, and you want clear. [*Laughter*] And if you can bring clarity to this debate, you get more done here. Then I'll stay with you every step of the way, and we'll all have a great celebration in about 3 weeks.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room at the Cannon Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Statement on Congressional Action on Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Legislation

October 19, 2000

I am pleased that Congress today passed a VA/HUD bill that will open the doors of opportunity in America for those who need it most, improve veterans' medical care, build on our agenda for national energy security, and strengthen our commitment to the environment.

This legislation builds on my opportunity agenda with increased funding for economic development through empowerment zones and enterprise communities and community development financial institutions—all part of my new markets initiative—and with 79,000 new housing vouchers for low-income families. This agreement also increases support for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's emergency food and shelter programs, which work with States and communities to help the homeless and hungry. We are also strengthening our commitment to national service with additional support for the Corporation for National and Community Service, the first increase since the inception of this critical volunteer agency in 1993.

With this legislation, we also support the significant expansion of cutting-edge basic scientific research at the National Science Foundation. This includes research in nano-technology—the manipulation of matter at the molecular and atomic level—which holds the promise of sci-

entific breakthroughs in a wide range of fields. It also advances scientific research through support for space exploration at NASA.

Especially at this time of elevated fuel prices, I am also pleased that this bill provides resources for technologies to increase fuel efficiency, an essential part of our long-term strategy to reduce dependence on oil. This bill also contains increased funding for enforcement of the Nation's environmental laws and for the cleanup of polluted waterways. In addition, it drops or fixes several objectionable riders that threatened to harm our environment. Yet, while we were able to ameliorate the impact of the remaining riders, we were not able to rid this bill entirely of objectionable provisions, in particular the rider relating to ozone.

This legislation also provides the additional \$1.5 billion I requested for the Department of Veterans Affairs, the largest increase ever requested by any administration. This funding will support efforts to improve veterans' medical care and the delivery of key services, including disability benefits.

I also am pleased that, in response to my veto, Congress has dropped a rider on the Energy/Water bill that would have undermined key

environmental protections by preventing a return to more natural flows on the Missouri River. These forward steps are clear proof of

the progress we can achieve when we work together to address the Nation's priorities.

Joint Statement With Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh *October 19, 2000*

Today, in their first meeting since President Clinton's historic trip to Bangladesh in March, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and President Clinton renewed and strengthened the excellent ties enjoyed by our two democracies and expressed their conviction that U.S.-Bangladeshi relations should deepen and broaden in the years ahead. The two leaders also expressed satisfaction with continuing constructive consultations between government officials of both countries.

The United States and Bangladesh are two of the world's most populous democracies. In keeping with the commitment to democracy our two nations enthusiastically endorsed in Warsaw in June 2000, Bangladesh and the United States expressed their common commitment to the free and fair conduct of elections, strengthening democratic institutions and the rule of law. The President appreciated the Prime Minister's reiteration of her commitment to strengthening democracy and democratic institutions and the expression of her determination to further encourage efforts for independent election monitoring, particularly for national elections under a caretaker government.

The President expressed satisfaction and appreciation for Bangladesh's role in fostering international peace and cooperation, as well as the Prime Minister's efforts to reduce tensions in the South Asian region. The two leaders agreed it is essential for the United States and Bangladesh to coordinate positions on major issues that come before the United Nations Security Council and other international fora. Regarding the Middle East, the two leaders lauded the call, made at Sharm el-Sheikh, for an end to violence and resumed efforts toward peace. The President also praised Bangladesh's significant commitment to international peacekeeping. The Prime Minister assured the President that Bangladesh will maintain this commitment and will actively support a United Nations Scale of

Assessment reform that will place that organization on a solid financial footing. The two leaders discussed their mutual interest in promoting greater cooperation in regional fora, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The President pointed to the settlement of the Chittagong Hill Tracts conflict and the Ganges Water Sharing Agreement as excellent examples of peacemaking and dispute resolution in the region.

The President expressed satisfaction that Bangladesh was the first country in South Asia to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and reaffirmed the American intention to work for ratification of the Treaty at its earliest possible date. Both leaders welcomed the work of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization's Preparatory Organization in establishing a seismic auxiliary station in Chittagong. They welcomed the extension of our bilateral Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy Agreement. The Prime Minister expressed Bangladesh's interest in participating in the United States' program to dispose of spent fuel.

The Prime Minister and President noted with satisfaction the significant improvement in U.S.-Bangladesh economic relations over the last several years, in which continuing development assistance has been accompanied by a rapid increase of American investment and an increase in bilateral trade. The President praised the rise of Bangladesh as a partner in development, a supporter of private/public partnerships, and a participant in the world economy. The leaders emphasized the positive effect the implementation of investor-friendly policies has on attracting foreign investment. The Prime Minister and President welcomed progress on the conclusion of negotiations on gas production and exploration in east-central Bangladesh. Given the important role that natural gas can play in Bangladesh's development, the two leaders applauded the work of Petrobangla and the United