

as clear. We will stand with the new democratic government as it pursues economic and political reform, meets its international obligations, and works with neighboring countries to promote lasting stability throughout the region.

We helped launch the Stability Pact last year with a common understanding that an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe will be a reality only when the countries of southeast Europe are integrated with the rest of the continent. To achieve this goal, the governments of the region are pressing ahead with reforms; the international community is supporting the region's economic development and integration;

and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia can now play its own indispensable role in that effort.

At previous Stability Pact conferences, we invited participation by the political opposition in Serbia and by the democratic government in the Republic of Montenegro, both of which had the courage to stand up to the violence and corruption of the Milosevic regime. But we always kept open a chair for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Now the dramatic changes in Belgrade allow the chair for Yugoslavia to be filled. This is a major step towards realizing our shared vision of a region committed to peace, to healing the wounds of war, and to taking its place in a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe.

Statement on the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety

October 26, 2000

I am pleased that the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety released today by the Departments of Justice and Education shows that crime and violence in our Nation's schools continue to decline. Since 1992, rates of serious crime, including violent crime, have declined steadily in our schools, and the number of non-fatal crimes in schools is down by more than 21 percent. Between 1992 and 1997, the number of students who report carrying a weapon to school decreased by 25 percent. School homicides, which remain extremely rare, are also on the decline. This report provides encouraging data that our efforts to protect our children are having an impact.

Since Vice President Gore and I took office, we have encouraged communities to come together to ensure that our schools are safe places for learning. By making school safety a top priority, our administration has helped provide more and better trained police officers in

schools, vastly increased funding for after-school programs, required zero tolerance for guns in schools, and funded more mentors and school counselors to help our kids stay on the right track.

We owe it to our children to make sure that crime in school continues to decline. We can continue our progress by supporting comprehensive, locally based efforts such as the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. Across the Nation, 77 communities have received \$147 million under this innovative program to fund enhanced educational, mental health, and law enforcement services. Programs such as this one allow us to promote the healthy development of our students and to identify those children who may be having problems and get them the help they need to turn things around. By working together, we can continue our success in making America's schools safe for each and every student in our Nation.

Statement on Reaching the Nation's Highest Homeownership Rate

October 26, 2000

Today I am proud to announce that our Nation has broken a new record. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Develop-

ment, America has reached its highest homeownership rates ever. This is tremendous new evidence that more and more American families