

Nov. 16 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

The President. What?

Q. Should Gore and Bush meet?

The President. I don't think I should be involved in that.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:20 p.m. at the Royal Brunei Golf Club. In his remarks, the Presi-

dent referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush. A reporter referred to Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Bandar Seri Begawan

November 16, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

Q. President Clinton, do you feel the chaos in Florida makes it difficult for the U.S. to criticize other countries' elections?

The President. Well, first of all, they're having their—let's wait and see how it's resolved here. I think that there will be a lot of pressure to improve the form and ballots and the methods in voting and have more clear standards around the country. But I think as long as this thing is resolved in a way that people perceive as fair and having counted everybody's vote who lawfully went to the polls to vote—I think that it shouldn't be surprising if over 100 million people vote and the result is close—it takes a while to resolve. It depends on whether the people perceive it's fair when it's over.

China-U.S. Relations

Q. Mr. President, what message do you have for your successor on U.S.-China relations?

The President. That I believe we have made some real progress in developing a mature, honest, and open relationship that is basically quite positive. And I'm very pleased that the Congress approved the permanent normal trading relations and that China's going into the World Trade Organization. I'm very pleased that the work we've done together on nonproliferation and a host of other items, and I think we should continue to build on this relationship. I think it's very important for the United States. And I hope that we'll continue to be active across a whole broad range of issues, including through this organization, to build a common economic future. That would be my message.

You probably want to know more about it than my successor will.

NOTE: The exchange began at 5:53 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the Orchid Garden Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Joint Statement by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong on a United States-Singapore Free Trade Agreement

November 16, 2000

The United States of America (USA) and Singapore have agreed to start negotiations on a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

USA and Singapore are both firm supporters of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and are committed to APEC's Bogor Goals of free and open trade and investment

by 2010 for industrialized economies and 2020 for developing economies.

The USA and Singapore reaffirm their strong commitment to the multilateral trading system and the launch of a New Round in 2001.

The FTA will be modeled after the US-Jordan FTA.