

Were you there? Some of you were there. And I still have a picture in my little office off the Oval Office of Hillary and me standing here in this lobby with the confetti coming down on Saint Patrick's Day. I've had it there every single day for 8 years to remind me that Chicago and Illinois made me President.

I thank you for voting for us overwhelmingly in '92, in '96. I thank you for a fabulous convention in 1996, which was a joy. And I thank you for sticking with us in the year 2000, which you did. I thank you for that.

I thought—it was really important to me to come here before I leave office to say thank you. And I also want to bring you greetings from the new Senator from the State of New York. Hillary said to tell you hello. And I told Senator Durbin that you should just sort of consider that Illinois also has two Democratic Senators again.

I am honored to have been President at a time when a lot of changes were going on in America and in the world. And as I look back, I am profoundly grateful that our country is so much stronger and more united and more successful and so much more future-oriented and self-confident today than it was 8 years ago when we started. And you had a lot to do with that.

I believe politics and public service is a team sport. And you can have a great quarterback; you can have a great captain; but if you don't have a team, you're going to lose every time. So you were my team, and we won for America together.

So when you think about the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years or the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded or 22.5 million new jobs or 25 million people taking advantage of the family leave law or 13 million more people getting college tax aid through the

HOPE scholarship tax credit or over 3 million more kids with health insurance or 90 percent of our little kids with immunization against serious diseases for the first time or more land set aside for protection for all time than any time in 100 years—when you say all those things—that wasn't just me; it wasn't just us with the Democrats and the Congress; it was you, too. We did it together. We were a team, and I thank you for that.

The last thing I want to say is this. I want you to keep fighting for the future. And I'll be there with you. I'll just be a citizen, but I can serve well. I've still got a voice. I've still got a heart, and I've got a mind to spend the rest of my life trying to pay America back for all the good things the American people gave me these last 25 years.

So don't get discouraged; don't be frustrated by what happened in November. But don't be passive. Just take a breath and keep looking forward and keep doing what will come naturally, to fight for the things we believe in, to build the future we want for all of our children together.

I can honestly tell you that in 11 days at high noon, when I walk out of the White House for the last time as President, I will leave more optimistic and more idealistic about the people of this country and their potential, and especially about the young people of this country, than I was the day I took the oath of office in 1993.

I love you. Thank you. God bless you. Good-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:37 p.m. in the lobby of the Palmer House Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago and Gore 2000 campaign director William M. Daley. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## **Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq** *January 9, 2001*

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_:*

Pursuant to section 575 of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001 (Public Law 106-429), enclosed is a report on plans for the provision

of humanitarian assistance for the Iraqi people and for the commencement of broadcasting operations by the Iraqi National Congress.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Robert C. Byrd, chairman, and Ted Stevens, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey,

ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 10.

## Interview With Allison Payne of WGN-TV in Chicago January 9, 2001

### *Accomplishments in the Final Days*

*Ms. Payne.* Congratulations, sir.

*The President.* Thank you. Hi.

*Ms. Payne.* I understand you're working just as hard these last few weeks as you have been the last 8 years. What's driving you?

*The President.* Well, I get paid until January the 20th. I think I ought to show up for work. Also, I think there's a lot of things to do. We just had, in some ways, the best legislative year we've had, certainly in the last 4 years. We had the biggest increase in investment in education, the first time we've ever gotten any funds for school repair and construction, a big increase in funds for the after-school programs that have been so important to Chicago. We got the new markets initiative that I worked hard on here with Congressman Danny Davis and Speaker Hastert, across party lines, to get more investment into poor areas in America, and a big debt relief initiative for the poor countries. We're doing a lot of stuff here.

And I went to Vietnam. I was able to set aside some more land, preserve it. I'm still working, and I'm going to work to the very end. And of course, I'm trying one last time to make peace in the Middle East. I'm doing the best I can.

### *Chicago*

*Ms. Payne.* What are you going to miss most about Chicago?

*The President.* Oh, the people. I love it here. But I'll still come a lot. It's still Hillary's home; a lot of her people are from here. A lot of her friends are here, and I've got the friends of a lifetime here. So I'll still come a lot. And I hope that for the rest of my life I can be a good citizen and really do some good things for America and around the world. So I'll be around. I just have—I fell in love with Chicago

the first time I came here, and nothing ever changed. It just got better.

### *Richard and William Daley*

*Ms. Payne.* Tell me something about your relationship with the Daley brothers we don't already know. I know it's a good one.

*The President.* It is good. Well, the mayor I've known for some time, and I knew Bill actually a little before then. I just think Mayor Daley is a great mayor. In addition to being a friend, he's a great mayor. He's not afraid of new ideas. He'll work with anybody. He's always trying to get something done. And he enabled me to be an effective President, because we had these—whether it was welfare reform or housing or economic development or you name it, whatever we were doing, I knew Chicago would be on the cutting edge—community policing, sensible gun safety measures, all of that stuff.

And Bill Daley, of course, and I have been very close, because he was in my Cabinet. He was an absolutely superb Secretary of Commerce. I know he's hated to leave it, but he answered Vice President Gore's call. And what I said tonight was true; we were way behind when he took over, and we won the popular vote, and when they get all the votes counted in Florida, we'll see what happened there. But Bill Daley's got a lot to be proud of, and Chicago should be very proud of him.

### *Administration Accomplishments*

*Ms. Payne.* What are you most proud of, sir?

*The President.* I am most proud of the fact that all Americans, not just a few, are better off than they were 8 years ago and that there's a greater sense of community here. I was very worried when I took office that dividing our country was becoming a habit, and a bad one. And I think the country's more united now across racial and income lines and religious lines. And I think we understand we need each other.