

of negotiations between official U.S. and Russian delegations and are evidence that irreversible nuclear disarmament is achievable if we work together. By blending-down HEU derived from nuclear weapons to low-enriched uranium that can only be used as fuel in commercial nuclear power reactors, we ensure that this material can never again be used in nuclear weapons.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Remarks on Earth Day in Great Falls, Maryland

April 22, 1996

Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for being here today and for the work that you do. I want to thank the Vice President for being the constant conscience of our administration and of the national debate on the environment. I thank Anthony Hildebrandt and Ashley King for the example they are setting for the young people of America. I want to thank these young folks with the Montgomery County Conservation Corps and the others who have volunteered to work in this park.

I want to say a special word of thanks to the employees of the National Park Service all over this country and here. They do a magnificent job for America. I want to thank Carol Browner, our EPA Administrator, and Katie McGinty, who represents the Nation's environmental concerns in the Environmental Council in the White House. And I want to thank Secretary Babbitt, who can't be here because he can't be in more than one place at once; even Bruce Babbitt can't do that. And, as the Vice President said, he's at the Sterling Forest event this morning representing us.

I want to thank the Members of Congress who are here for their fidelity to the Nation's environment and their willingness to stand and be counted in some pretty difficult moments over the last year or so. They have helped us to continue our commitment and to protect this country's natural resources. And I want you to know that I never appreciated them more than I have in the last year or so when they've been in some of the dif-

ficult challenges they've been in. I thank them all, these who are here and their counterparts.

You know, I just came back, literally just came back from a remarkable journey all around the world. I flew from here to Alaska and refueled, and then I went to Korea and Japan and on to St. Petersburg and Moscow. And I was thinking, standing here today, I saw some of the most magnificent manmade creations anywhere in the world: the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, the great Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, the entire Kremlin has just been redone and restored to its historical grandeur. But none of it is any more beautiful than this wonderful nature that God has given us right here in this national park.

And not everybody can travel to see the great palaces of the world. Even the great art galleries of the world are beyond the reach of many of our fellow citizens. But everybody can come to this park without regard to their income, their station in life, what their other resources are. This belongs to all the American people, and we have to dedicate ourselves to making sure that as long as there is an America there will be a national park system with these treasures there for every single citizen of this country.

We have done a lot of work since I became President to try to improve our national parks and to preserve them. We are dramatically cutting back on noise from aircraft flights over the Grand Canyon and the Rocky Mountain parks and other treasures. We are moving, I say as I hear the plane, to restore a natural quiet in our parks. We are expanding the Point Reyes National Seashore in California, where Hillary and I spent our second wedding anniversary, by 38,000 acres. We are calling on Congress to pass legislation to designate new wilderness areas and purchase the Sterling Forest in the New York-New Jersey border. And I am directing the Park Service to take more than a dozen other steps to make visiting the parks more pleasurable for America's families and for our guests from all around the world. Our duty is to pass on to future generations these treasures that God has given to us.

Remember, it was a great Republican President, Theodore Roosevelt, who set our

Nation on the path of conservation. In 1908 he said, "Any right-thinking parent earnestly desires and strives to leave a child both an untarnished name and a reasonable equipment for the struggle of life. So this Nation as a whole should earnestly desire and struggle to leave to the next generation the national honor unstained and the national resources unexhausted." It sounded good in 1908, and it's even more important as we stand on the edge of a new century.

Let me say that I consider that I was very lucky as a child to have the privilege of being raised in a national park. My hometown is the only city in America that actually contains a national park, Hot Springs National Park. And I grew up in a State where more than half the land was covered by forests. I took for granted things that many children in our cities never, ever see.

And frankly, I had to grow up a little before I realized that none of that could be taken for granted. And a lot of people along the way had a big influence on me; the most recent, of course, is the Vice President. But since he's here today I want to thank my senior Senator, Dale Bumpers, who has been one of the most courageous conservationists and environmentalists for the last 25 years in America. Thank you. He taught me by the power of example that Governors have a responsibility to the environment as well.

And so I say to all of you, there's something for each of us to do. But the remarkable resurgence in support for clean air, for clean water, for a safe environment in our urban areas as well as our rural areas, for standing up for our national parks, that has not come from those of us in public life. Fundamentally, it has come from those of you who are the citizens who live in our neighborhoods and walk our streets and climb our mountains and walk our trails day-in and day-out. You have given America back its soul, its conscience, and its commitment on the environment. And don't ever give up your responsibility for doing that.

So on this Earth Day, as we stand beneath the eagle in this wonderful treasure that we have been given, let us vow that there is more to do. None of our children should have to live near a toxic waste dump or eat food poisoned by pesticides. Our grandchildren

should not have to live in a world stripped of its natural beauty. We can and we must protect the environment while advancing the prosperity of the American people and people throughout the world.

When it comes to protecting the environment, we can't turn back. We have to go forward, and it has to become a part of our every decision as a people. If we make that commitment and stick to it, then America will have a bright future indeed.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:18 p.m. at the observation deck at Great Falls National Park. In his remarks, he referred to Anthony Hildebrandt of Boy Scout Troop 241, and Ashley King of the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital.

Memorandum on Public-Private Partnerships for Protection of the National Parks

April 22, 1996

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Facilitating Public-Private Partnerships for Protection of the National Parks

Many important efforts are already underway in which the private sector works in partnership with government to protect or maintain public lands. These include the work of the National Park Foundation, an organization created by the Congress in 1967 to receive private gifts and make disbursements to benefit the parks; cooperative agreements between the private sector and State and local parks to share resources and equipment and to provide valuable services, including maintenance services, to the parks; and agreements with willing private parties to acquire conservation easements. In an effort to ensure that the public-private partnerships that can enhance park protection and maintenance are as effective as possible, I hereby direct the following action:

1. The Secretary of the Interior is to provide to me, within 30 days, a specific proposal for ways in which the National Park Foundation's role in fostering public-private partnerships on behalf of the parks can be invig-