

will find themselves increasingly isolated. Tough new trade controls will prohibit anyone from selling them ingredients for chemical weapons, making it more difficult for them to build the weapons.

The treaty will increase the safety of our citizens at home as well as our troops in the field. The destruction of current stockpiles, including at least 40,000 tons of poison gas in Russia alone, will put the largest potential sources of chemical weapons out of the reach of terrorists. And the trade controls will deny terrorists easy access to the ingredients they seek.

Of course, these controls can never be perfect. But the convention will give us new and vital tools for preventing a terrorist attack involving chemical weapons. By tying the United States into a global verification network and strengthening our intelligence sharing with the international community, this treaty can be an early warning that is essential for combating terrorism.

Congressional action on the Chemical Weapons Convention will also strengthen the hand of our law enforcement officials while protecting our civil liberties. Right now we have a limited ability to investigate people suspected of planning a chemical attack. Today, for example, there is no Federal law on the books prohibiting someone from actually cooking up poison gas. The legislation that is needed to put the treaty into place would change that and give us the most powerful tools available to investigate the development, production, transfer, or acquisition of chemical weapons, as well as their actual use.

We in America have been very fortunate in never experiencing a terrorist attack with chemical weapons. Japan, the only country that has suffered such an attack, saw the value of the Chemical Weapons Convention instantly. Within one month of the sarin gas attack in Tokyo, Japan completed ratification of the convention.

Let's not wait. For the safety of our troops, and to fight terror here and around the globe, the Senate should ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention now.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:50 p.m. on September 6 at the Church Street Station in Orlando, FL, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 7.

Statement on the Death of Arthur Flemming

September 8, 1996

Arthur Flemming was a close friend to me and the First Lady. He was a wonderful human being and great public servant who thought of nothing more than the health and well being of his fellow Americans. He transcended party, generation, and race in search of consensus on some of the great issues of our day. The First Lady and I, and the country, will greatly miss him.

Remarks Announcing Counter-Terrorism Initiatives and an Exchange With Reporters

September 9, 1996

The President. Thank you. Let me begin by thanking the Vice President and the commission for all their hard work and for this excellent action plan. This is partnership at its best, Government and private citizens, Democrats and Republicans, joining together for the common good.

As the Vice President has said, we asked the members of this commission to do a lot of work in a little time. They rolled up their sleeves; they delivered. We know we can't make the world risk-free, but we can reduce the risks we face, and we have to take the fight to the terrorists. If we have the will, we can find the means. We have to continue to fight terrorism on every front by pursuing our three-part strategy: first, by rallying a world coalition with zero tolerance for terrorism; second, by giving law enforcement the strong counter-terrorism tools they need; and third, by improving security in our airports and on our airplanes.

The Vice President's action plan goes to the heart of this strategy. So I want everyone to understand that whenever this plan says, "the commission recommends," you can understand it to mean, "the President will."