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minority lawyers at the IRS, as a dear friend in so many ways. Marty Slate was the quintessential public servant. I'm proud that I appointed him to direct the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation in its hour of crisis and need. It's one of the best decisions that I have made as President. Thanks to him, millions of workers like Marian here can sleep better at night knowing their pensions are safe and secure. I really wanted to have a chance to say that one more time in public, and I'd like to thank Marty's wife, Cookie, for being here today. Thank you, and God bless you.

We have made great strides in protecting the pensions of a growing number of workers who are now saving for their own retirement in 401(k) plans. While the vast majority of those plans are safe, we've stepped up our enforcement against employers who spend or borrow their employees' pension contributions. In just 2 years, the pension and welfare benefits administration 401(k) enforcement project has recovered over $20 million for more than 40,000 employees.

New rules we've put in place for faster deposit of 401(k) contributions will result in increased earnings—listen to this—increased earnings just by faster deposit, averaging $70 million a year over the next 10 years to stabilize the pension plans and benefit the workers who are saving.

But we have to do more. We're going back to Congress this year with a proposal that didn't quite make it into law last year, reforms that will ensure that our pensions are audited thoroughly. The audit reform proposal will do three things. First, it will address the fact that, today, more than $950 billion in pension plans assets are not meaningfully audited, leaving more than 22 million workers in the dark about the health of their pensions. Our proposal closes the loophole that permits these cursory audits. Second, it will require prompt reporting if criminal acts are discovered during an audit. And third, it will assure that only qualified professionals conduct audits of ERISA plans. I urge Congress to pass the audit reform this year so that our workers can have the peace of mind they deserve.

Finally, we are putting more power for protecting pensions in the hands of employees themselves. Today the Labor Department is activating a toll-free pension hotline that workers can call to get publications about their rights and to help them identify the early warning signs of pension problems. The toll-free number is 1–800–998–7542. I love to do this. [*Laughter*] That's 1–800—[*laughter*]—998–7542.

All the steps we announced today—getting the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation in the black, fighting for audit reform, and giving employees better tools to protect their pensions—are part of our overall commitment to achieving basic retirement security for America's working families. Our people deserve to know that if they work hard throughout their lives, the money they work for and that they saved is not being squandered or left unprotected.

Thomas Jefferson once said, ''In matters of style, swim with the current. In matters of principle, stand like a rock.'' Today we affirm our common commitment to stand like a rock for our working families and their right to a secure retirement they have saved for, paid for, and earned.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks he referred to Marian Jones, president, glass workers union, Salem, NJ; and Acting Secretary of Labor Cynthia Metzler.

Statement on the Nomination of General Wesley K. Clark To Be Supreme Allied Commander, Europe

March 31, 1997

I am pleased to announce that I have nominated General Wesley K. Clark, United States Army, to succeed General George A. Joulwan as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. This nomination is subject to the approval of the North Atlantic Council. I also intend to send forward to Congress General Clark's nomination to serve as Commander in Chief, United States European Command.

General Clark has had a long and distinguished career spanning three decades, with significant policy and diplomatic experience as well as impeccable credentials as a military

commander. He has vast experience in armored and mechanized forces, including a combat tour in Vietnam, service in two armored units in Germany, and command of the 1st Cavalry Division. This experience is enhanced by his tours at the Army's National Training Center, and the Army Training and Doctrine Command, all of which focused on training and preparing the Army for the future. Additionally, while assigned to the Joint Staff as the Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, he served as the senior military member of the U.S. negotiating team that crafted the 1995 Dayton peace accords, which ended the fighting in Bosnia. In these postings, as well as in his current role as Commander in Chief of the U.S. Southern Command, Panama, he has demonstrated both the military expertise and political acumen needed to fill one of our most important security postings.

General Clark will assume the post of Supreme Allied Commander, Europe at a time when NATO is demonstrating its important role in European security by helping bring security and stability to the people of Bosnia as well as during a time of profound adaptation within the Alliance as NATO contributes to building a secure and undivided Europe. NATO's ongoing adaptation includes further streamlining of the NATO military command structure, the establishment of a European security and defense identity (ESDI) within the Alliance, the integration of new NATO members and, we expect, the development of a strong NATO-Russian partnership. I look forward to General Clark's continuing the work of General Joulwan as SACEUR takes on the challenge of guiding NATO military forces through this important period of transition and the completion of the work of NATO's Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia. I have the utmost trust and confidence in his ability to do so.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With King Hussein I of Jordan and an Exchange With Reporters

April 1, 1997

The President. Let me say, it's always an honor to have His Majesty King Hussein back in the White House. I believe this is our 15th meeting since I became President. I want to have the chance to thank him for his continuing devotion to peace, the particularly courageous trip he recently took to Israel. And I want to discuss with him what our next steps are.

I think it's clear that we would not have gotten the agreement in Hebron had it not been for his leadership, and his leadership is essential as we go forward. So this is a difficult time for the peace process, and we have a lot to talk about. We also have a lot to talk about in terms of the relationships between the United States and Jordan, and I'm looking forward to that.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, I think you would agree that——

Q. Mr. President——

The President. One at a time, one at a time.

Q. I think that you would agree that the establishment of the—or attempt to establish a settlement in East Jerusalem, with soldiers and bulldozers, is the real cause of violence, in contradiction to the Oslo agreements. So what are you going to do to restore that faith, that confidence in the agreements?

The President. Well, that's what we're going to discuss here today, and we'll have a——

Q. I mean, this is not—I think you'd agree it wasn't——

The President. As you know, I just sent Dennis Ross out to the region. We've just—we've had two meetings, one yesterday—an extended meeting yesterday and an extended meeting this morning about it. What I think we have to do is to restore the environment of security and of confidence so we can go forward with the negotiating process. And we've got some ideas about it, but I want to talk to the King about it first.

And you may be sure we're working on it. It's an urgent thing for me and for the whole peace process.

Q. Mr. President, there was an incident in Gaza today, and the U.S. line—I don't mean that in an unfavorable way—last week was that you needed a clear signal from Yasser Arafat that he disapproves of violence, terrorism as an instrument. Did you get that