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Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for the Arts

July 11, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

It is my pleasure to transmit the Annual Report of the National Endowment for the Arts for 1996.

One measure of a great nation is the vitality of its culture, the dedication of its people to nurturing a climate where creativity can flourish. By supporting our museums and theaters, our dance companies and symphony orchestras, our writers and our artists, the National Endowment for the Arts provides such a climate. Look through this report and you will find many reasons to be proud of our Nation's cultural life at the end of the 20th century and what it portends for Americans and the world in the years ahead.

Despite cutbacks in its budget, the Endowment was able to fund thousands of projects all across America—a museum in Sitka, Alaska; a dance company in Miami, Florida; a production of a Eugene O'Neill play in New York City; a Whistler exhibition in Chicago; and artists in schools in all 50 States. Millions of Americans were able to see plays, hear concerts, and participate in the arts in their hometowns, thanks to the work of this small agency.

As we set our priorities for the coming years, let's not forget the vital role the National Endowment for the Arts must continue to play in our national life. The Endowment shows the world that we take pride in American culture here and abroad. It is a beacon, not only of creativity, but of freedom. And let us keep that lamp brightly burning now and for all time.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
July 11, 1997.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

July 5

The President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Palma de Mallorca, Spain, where they were greeted by King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia of Spain and toured Bellver Castle.

In the evening, they toured the cathedral.

July 7

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Madrid, Spain.

In the evening, the President met with NATO Secretary General Javier Solana in the Miguel Angel Hotel.

Later, the President and Hillary Clinton attended an informal dinner for NATO leaders and their spouses hosted by Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar of Spain in the Garden of the Official Residence at Moncloa Palace. Following the dinner, the President met with Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom at the Miguel Angel Hotel.

The President declared a major disaster in Texas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe thunderstorms and flooding beginning June 21 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Wisconsin and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding June 21–23.

July 8

In the morning and afternoon, the President attended NATO Summit sessions in the Palacio Municipal de Congresos. In the late afternoon, he met with President Jacques Chirac of France.

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended a dinner for NATO leaders and their spouses hosted by King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia at the Royal Palace.