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So we need to try to—and I guess there is a lot of consensus here that we have to back up the IMF, ask the countries to have the proper programs to meet the requirements of IMF. And what is important—in the communique it looks like we have made more agreements than predicted because we believe that we have to carry on on the course of freer trade and more movement of capital around the world. That's the way that growth will come, and it is through growth that you can attend to the social problems that exist in all these countries.

President Clinton. I'd like to say one other thing. Just a minute. If you look at—I just want to hammer home this—maybe the best thing we're doing to help the situation is the agreement we've made to push for lower tariffs and open trade in nine new areas, including environmental technology, which will help what we're trying to do on climate change, because that will show that we understand that we're leading the way to growth through increasing trade and investment in the areas that are critical to the 21st century economy.

The Prime Minister has made this point over and over again, but I predict to you that our making that common commitment and going forward and building on what we've done with the information technology agreement will have a significant positive impact in the confidence people have about whether they should be investing in all the countries participating here, including our two.

[*The following question was asked in French. Prime Minister Chretien answered in French, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.*]

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, concerning the IMF, given the fact that Korea and Thailand are already involved, do you think the agreement is sufficiently solid?

Prime Minister Chretien. I think the answer is positive, and we will be helping, if necessary. The IMF is a first line of defense; then perhaps we might need a second line of defense. And I think that the IMF has managed very well the Mexican crisis 3 years ago. This is a very important example. And it will also be able to manage the Pacific crisis. And if there are additional resources that are needed, we will be communicating with members of the IMF, if necessary. And I trust that it will work.

Thank you very much.

Q. Are you prepared for the United States to participate in a backup to any IMF package to aid South Korea?

President Clinton. First of all, I think that the South Korean situation is covered by the statement we put out in Manila. And I think the important thing that we should do now is to focus on how South Korea fits within that framework. South Korea—we should look at that, we should—the IMF is going to look at it; the IMF is going to make a judgment. There are certain things the South Koreans may have to do. And then, under certain circumstances, any country involved—if you look at what we agreed to do in Manila, whether the backup comes into pay or not, depends on what happens in the first two instances—what the country does, what the IMF does, what the judgment is now.

So it's completely premature to make a decision about that. The South Koreans have a very powerful economy with a great amount of potential. And a lot of this is going to be—involves making adjustments now in it and then restoring the natural productive capacity and growth to the economy. I'm—certainly I don't see how anyone could be less than hopeful about the long-term prospects for the South Korean economy given their remarkable achievements over the last few decades.

Prime Minister Chretien. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 153d news conference began at 10 a.m. in the East Room at the Pan Pacific Hotel.

Statement on the Death of Jorge Mas Canosa

November 23, 1997

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Jorge Mas Canosa, Chairman of the Advisory Board for Cuban Broadcasting and long-time champion of a free Cuba.

It was Jorge's vision which ultimately led to the creation of Radio Marti by Congress enacting the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act in 1983, to encourage the communication of accurate information and ideas to the people of Cuba. He served as Chairman of the Advisory Board from its inception.

Jorge was a born leader and organizer, whose tenacity, strength of conviction, and passion I greatly admired. He galvanized his community, his adopted country, and people around the world for the cause of freedom and democracy in Cuba. We have lost a forceful voice for freedom in Cuba and elsewhere, but his dream lives on. He will be missed.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Irma, and his sons, Jorge, Juan, and Jose. Hillary and I join the Cuban-American community and others around the world who care for the cause of freedom in Cuba in mourning his loss.

Statement on the Effectiveness of Anticrime Measures

November 23, 1997

Crime rates continue to fall dramatically throughout the country, and it's no accident. With community police at the center of our efforts, we have worked to give communities the tools they need to rid their neighborhoods of gangs, guns, and drugs. We have made real progress: There are nearly 5,000 fewer murders annually in America today than in 1993.

Now, we need to take juvenile crime head on. The spending bill I will sign next week includes more than $100 million to hire scores of local prosecutors, probation officers, and others to crack down on gangs. With these provisions, coupled with new after-school programs and a $195 million anti-drug media campaign, we can begin to pursue a strategy that works to keep all of our youth on track.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 23, but it was embargoed for release until 6 p.m.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Jiang Zemin of China in Vancouver

November 24, 1997

Situation in Iraq

Q. President Clinton, if we might, could we have a question about Iraq? I wondered why it was so important that U.N. inspectors be able to—why is it critical that they see these palaces which Saddam Hussein now has made off limits?

President Clinton. Well, let me say, first of all, like all issues, this should be looked at on the basis of the real underlying facts. The term ''palace'' has a different meaning in Iraq than it would to the ordinary American. The ordinary American would hear the word ''palace,'' and they would think a very fancy residence for a head of state or a member of a royal family.

There are 78 such palaces in Iraq. Many of them are huge compounds. Some of them actually encompass more land than Washington, DC, does. So to put 78 palaces, when you look at what they really are, off limits according to Mr. Butler and our inspectors would mean that they could not adequately search for chemical and biological weapons operations. Our position is, if the inspector team says they ought to do it, that's a lot of land, a lot of buildings, and they ought to be able to do what they think is necessary.

Q. Well, do you suspect that he's using these palaces to hide illegal arms?

President Clinton. Well, they have acknowledged that in 1995, as late as 1995, that they had quite substantial stores of weapons and potential weapons that would be prohibited and subject to inspection and destruction under the U.N. resolution. And I just want the inspectors to be able to do their job. My suspicions are not important. The only thing that matters here is that the inspectors can do their job under the U.N. resolutions.

Q. President Jiang, does China support—you have one more week as President of the Council—does China support the U.S. position that there should be unimpeded inspections in Iraq?

President Jiang. I'll ask the Foreign Minister to answer your question.