AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

We want to get out here and shake a few hands, and we don't want to keep those other 20,000 people waiting. And you'll see the movie. And thank you very much. We're glad to be here.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon in the Harbor Room. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony M. Masiello; Erie County Executive Dennis T. Gorski; and Constance B. Eve, chairperson and founder, Women for Human Rights and Dignity, Inc. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks to the Western New York Community in Buffalo

January 20, 1999

Thank you very much. I think you got so excited that you melted the snow for a mile around this arena. Let me ask you, have you ever seen the Vice President so fired up in your life? [*Laughter*] I want you to know that just before we came in here, we went off into a little room, and he had a quick hit of buffalo wings and Flutie Flakes; that's what he did.

I want to thank the Mayor and Dennis Gorski and Connie Eve and the whole Eve family. Eric worked for us for a long time, then decided to go out and get rich. We forgive him. I want to thank all the community heroes who are here. I want to thank Reverend Smith for that magnificent invocation, which I will remember all my life. I want to thank our wonderful friend, Congressman John LaFalce, one of the most outstanding Members in the House of Representatives, a truly wonderful human being. And I am delighted that Pat and his son, Martin, are here with us today.

I think you could see that Tipper and Al and Hillary and I, we're sort of like a big family. We like going places together. And I love it, because now I don't have to talk about 90 percent of the issues anymore because they already covered them, which was really good. We work together. And we have tried to model what we want America to do.

You know, no one has ever spoken as passionately and consistently for the cause of mental health as well as Tipper Gore has done. I think it's fair to say that at least no one since Eleanor Roosevelt has done as much with the Office of First Lady as Hillary has done. And I am grateful for that. And I am quite confident that in the entire history of the United States no Vice President has had remotely the responsibility and had the positive impact on the people of the United States that Al Gore has had. And I am very grateful to him.

Now, we are here today in this magnificent arena—and I've just got to say one thing about that Vice President. He compared me to the goalie for the Sabres. I was flattered, but I thought—you know, he kept talking about how I was swatting away those flying hockey pucks in Washington. I was flattered, but I thought, I just wish one day they would give me a mask and a few pads when I dodge that stuff.

Anyway, we're delighted to be here. We're here because we are grateful to New York, to western New York, to Erie County, to Buffalo, grateful for the support we received in 1992, grateful for the support we received in 1996, and even more grateful for the fact that this community every day is trying to live and work in the way we want America to live and work in the 21st century.

I know that many of you heard my speech last night. I know that you have listened to the previous speakers. I only want to speak to you about one of the issues, and that is how we're going to meet the challenge of the aging of America, because that affects all of us, not just the old but the very young as well. And I want everyone to understand exactly what I was trying to say last night and why.

But let me make the bigger point. It was, as has already been said, 6 years ago today at noon that I took the oath of office as President. And it seems impossible to me that those 6 years have flown by. They have been, to put it mildly, quite eventful. But I am very, very grateful that we had the chance to serve, grateful for your support, grateful the state of the Union is strong.

But I want you to focus on this: You know as well as I do the world is changing rapidly. You know this community and its economic base and the nature of its society bears not

all that much resemblance to the way it looked 30 years ago in terms of how people make a living, what the diversity of the population is, how we relate to each other, and where we imagine we're going in the future.

So I believe that we can't afford just to sit around and pat ourselves on the back and say, ''Isn't it great? We've got the longest peacetime expansion in history. Isn't it great? We've got the lowest peacetime unemployment since 1957. Isn't it great that we've got the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, that all the social problems, all of them, virtually, are getting better?'' That's fine.

But the real issue is, what are we going to do with this? Do we seriously believe the crime rate is low enough? Do we believe the schools are good enough? Do we believe all our kids are getting an education? Do we really believe that the rate of drug use among our young people is low enough? Do we believe all these things? I don't think so.

So what I want to say to you is, we ought to be focused on two big things. Number one, bringing the opportunities that the last 3 years have brought to most of America to the rest of America. Just like, last night, I said—we put before the American people last night a plan to develop more communities by putting more private capital in the neighborhoods that haven't received it.

Now, let me ask you something. If we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, and the lowest in peacetime in 41 years, how are we supposed to keep growing the economy without inflation? We have to find new markets. Now, if a lot of the world beyond our borders is in recession, where are we going to find the new markets? I'll tell you where. In the urban neighborhoods and the rural counties where the unemployment rate is still twice the national average.

And I want to emphasize just one of the suggestions I made last night, that we ought to have an American private investment company or a series of them, that would provide guarantees from the National Government to get private capital into urban and rural areas where there has been underinvestment—$15 billion of it.

You know we have today—we have an Overseas Private Investment Corporation. Why shouldn't we have an ''American Private Investment Corporation,'' when our most important markets are here at home?

I want to say just this one thing about Senator Schumer. The Vice President mentioned him, but before I came here he reminded me. He said, ''When you go to Buffalo, you have got to tell the people that I pledged to them I would bring more jobs and more opportunity to western New York. And you tell them I'm going to be your very best partner.'' So I have kept my word to Senator Schumer.

Now, let me give you some other examples, though. There are people in our midst who have not fully participated, even in areas which are doing well. And I'll just give you a couple of examples; one of them has been mentioned already. We have millions of Americans in the work force that do not read very well. Many of them are first-generation immigrants, and their first language is not English.

I know Mrs. LaFalce has been very involved in the adult literacy program. I asked last night for a huge increase in Federal support to have a national campaign for adult literacy, to make sure all of our workers can read well enough to keep the jobs they've got, get better jobs, and if they lose their jobs, get new jobs. And I think that's very, very important.

Now, your other Senator, Senator Moynihan, is the cosponsor of a bill that is very important to me because I have worked hard, since I was a young Governor, to try to give people with disabilities the ability to live up to the maximum amount of independence and self-fulfillment that was possible. And one of the problems we have today is that people with disabilities that have high medical bills cannot afford to go to work, even if they are capable of working, because under the present law you lose the Government support for your medical insurance if you take a job. So Senator Moynihan is one of the cosponsors of a bill that says, if a disabled person is able to go to work, we will let them keep their health insurance so they can be healthy and at work. And that's good for us. So that's the first thing we need to do.

The second thing we need to do is to deal with the large long-term challenges of America. The previous members of our team have

talked about the long-term environmental challenges, the long-term health care challenges, the long-term education challenges, the long-term community development challenges. I want to talk about the aging of America. And I was pleased when I read a lot of the stories today about my speech last night. I thought they were very good stories, but the implication was that I was speaking to the seniors. That's not true. The aging of America affects everybody.

Why? First of all, the seniors today, by and large, have no sweat unless they live to be 120 years, because—old—because Social Security is fine now, and we have the system that we need. But when we baby boomers retire, there will be a senior boom. In 30 years, the number of senior citizens, people over 65, in America is going to double. Now, that just doesn't affect those of us who hope to live that long. That affects all of our children and all of our grandchildren and society at large.

How will we manage this? We have a lot of responsibilities. We've got to work harder to stay in better shape and be healthier so we try to minimize the burden of our health care bills on the rest of you. It will be very important. There are a lot of implications to this.

But I want you to know that—I grew up in a middle class home in a middle class community where half of my high school classmates, or more, didn't go on to college. And I still keep up with a lot of them, and most of them have very modest incomes. But every single one of us, without regard to our income or background, are obsessed with the notion that our aging should not put an unbearable burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. This is an issue for all Americans.

Now, here's the problem. Social Security alone keeps half the seniors in America today out of poverty. So it's real important. But Social Security is not enough for the vast majority of our seniors to have a comfortable life and maintain the lifestyle they had before they started drawing Social Security.

Medicare is subject to the same pressures that Social Security is and its cost as more and more people retire, live longer, and use more medical care. So the trick is, how do you preserve Social Security; how do you preserve Medicare; how do you give seniors the ability to have other sources of income; and how do you do it in a way that's fair to their kids and their grandkids; and how do we get it done by the time the baby boomers start retiring? That is the issue. So, you see, it's not just a seniors issue. It's an issue for all Americans.

Now, we're going to have a big argument about this. And we should, and I hope it will be a good debate. But I believe, since we have—as the Vice President said—this $70 billion surplus from last year and a bigger one coming this year, since it's projected that over a 25-year period we will average substantial surpluses on an annual basis—now, they'll go up and down with the economy, but the point is we have no permanent deficit anymore, the natural condition is a surplus, okay—so the question is, what do we do with it?

We could give it all back to you and hope you spend it right. But I think—here's the problem. If you don't spend it right, here's what's going to happen. In 2013—that's just 14 years away—the taxes people pay on their payroll for Social Security will no longer cover the monthly checks. So we have to get into the Social Security Trust Fund, the savings account. By 2032, it will be gone. After that, if we haven't done something, we can only pay a little over 70 percent of the benefits. By then, the cost of living will be higher and it will be devastating.

Even before that, by 2010, the Medicare fund will run out of money. Why? Because the fastest growing group of people—this is a high-class problem; this is a high-class problem; we should be so lucky to have only problems like this—the fastest growing group of people in America are people over 80. And I hope to be one some day, and so do you, right? And so does—I hope, every child in this audience will live to be over 80. The kids in this audience actually will have a life expectancy of about 85 years if medical science keeps advancing.

But the older you get, the more you need a doctor, or the more you need drugs or the more you need something just to kind of get through the day. I'm finding that out already. [*Laughter*] Everything kind of hurts when it's

cold, and you've got to stretch your legs more. So that's going to happen by 2010.

So what I said last night is not as popular as what others can tell you. Others can say, "We've got this surplus now. I just want a big tax cut. I'll give it back to you. You'll figure out what to do with it." But I believe if we save 60 percent of this surplus for Social Security, here's what we can do. We can make the Trust Fund all right to 2055. We can protect Social Security for 55 years. We have a list of other options that are all a little controversial, but if we can get the Republicans and Democrats to hold hands, we could do it. It wouldn't hurt anybody very much. They're really good things for the program over the long run.

And if we did that, we could protect Social Security for 75 years, and we could reduce the poverty rate among elderly women on Social Security. They're twice as likely to be poor. And we could remove the earnings test which now limits what seniors on Social Security can earn for themselves. So I think that's a good use of the surplus that will help our parents, our children, our grandchildren.

Now, same thing with Medicare. If we just save one-sixth—one in very $6 of this surplus—for 15 years, and set it aside for Medicare, then we save Medicare to 2020. Then if we can get the Republicans and Democrats together—and in March we're going to have a report from a bipartisan commission that will start the debate—we can make a few other changes, save it till 2020, and begin to provide for prescription drugs. It's the single, biggest need that senior citizens on Medicare have.

Now, let me tell you what else you'll get. You're going to have everybody say that Government doesn't know how to spend this money. Look, folks, Social Security and Medicare work. I'm not talking about spending this money, I'm talking about saving it.

Now, here's what I think about it. This is the other thing I want you to understand. If we save three-quarters of this surplus for 15 years only, to solve Social Security and solve Medicare well into the 21st century, what else will happen? We will, by holding this money—we've got to do something with it. What do you do with this money? You buy back the privately held debt. We will be reducing the debt of the country. We will take the debt of America in relationship to the size of our economy, the level of debt held by the public, to its lowest level since before World War I in 1917.

Now, why should that matter to you? You say, "Fine, Mr. President, give me the money, I'd rather have a new car. I don't care about World War I. Why does that matter?" Here's why it should matter to you. If we keep driving the debt down, then you will keep interest rates down; you will keep home mortgage rates low; you will keep credit card interest rates low; you will keep the interest rates that you pay on your car payments low; you will keep more investment coming in to Buffalo and Erie County; you will have more jobs here. And that's something we have to do together. It will protect us.

You see all this financial upheaval around the world. That's because these countries, their budgets are out of balance, and if people run off with their money, they have to put their interest rates through the roof just to get the money to come back. If we start paying down on our debt a little bit—which I remind you, we quadrupled the debt, quadrupled the debt between 1981 and 1993—if we just started paying down on it a little bit, saving this money, protecting Social Security and Medicare, then you would be somewhat more protected from these global economic events, and long after I'm gone from the White House, you would have stable interest rates, affordable lives, and the knowledge that investment would come into Buffalo and Erie County to build a better future. So I hope you will support what I have advocated last night.

Now, let me just say two other things I think we ought to do to deal with the aging of America that help not just the elderly but the rest of us. Number one, Social Security was never intended to be the sole source of income. Even when President Roosevelt signed it, he said we need more pensions; we need more private savings. But a lot of people retire today and don't have any.

And a lot of you young people today—I don't know how many people—young people I talk to, in their twenties or late teens or even up to their early thirties, who say, "You know, this is not going to be enough." Last

night, I proposed setting aside more than 10 percent of the surplus to actually give people an incentive to save, a targeted tax cut to say, if you will set up this universal savings account, a USA account, the Government will give you, in effect, a tax cut; we will match the money in your savings account; and you can invest it however you want for your own retirement.

And if you have—now, this is very important. And very low income, working people who have great difficulty saving, it takes every penny they've got to put clothes on their kids' back and pay the utility bills and the rent and make the car payment. We have a provision in our plan to give extra help for those least able to save. I want every American to have a savings account and to have a part of this country's wealth. If everybody was a part of the wealth, you would see the income gap shrinking instead of growing, and that's what this is about. This is a good way to have a tax cut because it's a tax cut that benefits you today and tomorrow and 10 years from now and 30 years from now.

So let me also say, when you hear the tax cut debate, remember, we've got tax cuts in our plan, a $1,000 tax credit—that's a $1,000 tax cut for long-term care for seniors, for disabled people, for ailing people, or the families that care for them. That's one of the biggest problems families have today. And with the aging of America, it will get bigger and bigger. We ought to support and give people a tax cut for long-term care.

We ought to have tax cuts for child care including, as was said earlier, for people who provide care by being stay-at-home parents for very young children. We ought to have these tax cuts. We ought to give people tax incentives to deal with our environmental problems. Every one of the tax cuts that are in my budget we have paid for so we can keep the budget balanced, keep the surplus coming, and deal with the long-term problems.

So I'm sorry if I made the atmosphere too serious. We've had a lot of fun today. But I want you to think about this. We cannot afford to squander this moment. When have we ever had this many resources, this many things going right at one time in this country? It has been a long, long time. We have to make the most of it. We have to look at the long-term challenges facing America.

So I ask you to think about this. I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors about it. When people come out and disagree with my approach, listen to them and sit down and have a discussion about it. But you just remember this: We've been in debt for 30 years. And for the 12 years before I became President, we were so deep in debt, we couldn't even think about the kind of money we've invested in Buffalo for police on the streets, to help more housing projects, people have houses, to deal—all the things that have been done. And we are out of debt now, but we have a big responsibility now to think about the long-term challenges.

This country is going to change in a breathtaking way. We're on the verge of finding cures or preventions for diseases from Alzheimer's to Parkinson's to arthritis to all kinds of cancers. I think it will happen, probably in my lifetime. There are children here in this audience who either they or their contemporaries will be walking not on the Moon but on Mars. This world is going to change.

And we have to do our very best to prepare. So I will say again, it may sound good if somebody says, ''This is your surplus, and we ought to give it back to you.'' But you ought to ask yourself, what's America going to look like 10, 20, 30 years from now? How are all the families going to deal with the retirement of the baby boom generation? How are we going to deal with our responsibilities for the medical care of our parents through Medicare? And can we keep interest rates low and the economy going?

If you like this improving economy, what I'm trying to do is to give you a way that will maximize the chances that we will have a strong economy for the next 10 to 15 to 20 years and prepare for the aging of the baby boomers. I hope you will support it.

I thank you for one of the great days of my Presidency here. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. at the Marine Midland Arena. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony M. Masiello; Erie County Executive Dennis T. Gorski; Constance Eve, chairperson and founder, Women for Human Rights and Dignity, Inc., and her son, Eric; Rev. Bennett W. Smith, who delivered the invocation;

and Patricia LaFalce, wife of Representative John J. LaFalce, and their son, Martin. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Notice—Continuation of Emergency Regarding Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 20, 1999

On January 23, 1995, by Executive Order 12947, I declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process. By Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995, I blocked the assets in the United States, or in the control of United States persons, of foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. I also prohibited transactions or dealings by United States persons in such property. On August 20, 1998, by Executive Order 13099, I identified four additional persons, including Usama bin Ladin, that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. I have annually transmitted notices of the continuation of this national emergency to the Congress and the *Federal Register*. Last year's notice of continuation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1998. Because terrorist activities continue to threaten the Middle East peace process and vital interests of the United States in the Middle East, the national emergency declared on January 23, 1995, and the measures that took effect on January 24, 1995, to deal with that emergency must continue in effect beyond January 23, 1999. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 20, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 21, 1999]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency Regarding Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 20, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 1999, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1998.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration on January 23, 1995, of a national emergency has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities with the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process, and which are hostile to United States interests in the region.