

**President Clinton.** So it's your proposal for the Government to buy this land on behalf of the other people, if they will accept them?

**President Aleman.** That would be the ideal situation. The problem is that the co-op with those 50 people—and it's very, very good land; they know that land, very fertile land. This co-op got it back in the Sandinista days. So I don't think they're going to want to give it up. They're not going to give it to anyone or sell it.

They prefer it, as he was saying, to rent it, to lease it, because it's better business for them. We'll see what measures can be taken. And the discussions we're trying to hold—we'll see how we can change this. Because the other problem we have, Mr. President, is there's land, but not in this area, not on the Pacific side.

**President Clinton.** Too far away?

**President Aleman.** This has been traditionally farm land. But we'll see what solution we find. Faith in God.

Juan Pablo, you have to go and study now. Do you promise you're going to study?

**Juan Pablo.** Yes.

**President Aleman.** Are you going to study? You promise?

**Juan Pablo.** Yes.

**President Clinton.** You can learn a lot and pray to God to take care of your mother and father. And they will know and be very proud of you.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 3:45 p.m. in the auditorium at the Cotton Research Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement on the Death of Joe DiMaggio**

*March 8, 1999*

Today America lost one of the century's most beloved heroes, Joe DiMaggio. This son of Italian immigrants gave every American something to believe in. He became the very symbol of American grace, power, and skill. A brilliant individual performer, he led his magnificent Yankees to the World Series 10 out of his 13 years. His electrifying 56-game hitting streak, unequaled to this day, is one

of the most remarkable achievements by any athlete in any sport.

He stood tall off the field as well. In 1943 he volunteered for the Army and swapped his Yankee paycheck for \$50-a-month private's salary. He and the foundation he started gave mightily to help poor children benefit from the world's best medical care. And he was an incredibly devoted father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

I have no doubt that when future generations look back at the best of America in the 20th century, they will think of the "Yankee Clipper" and all that he achieved. Hillary and I extend our thoughts and prayers to his family.

### **Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation**

*March 8, 1999*

The Republican leadership continues to block a vote on an amendment to finish the job of hiring 100,000 teachers to reduce class size. Communities across the country need to know that Congress will live up to the bipartisan commitment we made last fall to fund this effort. The American people expect us to work together to improve the education of our students. I call on the Republican leadership to allow an up-or-down vote on more teachers and smaller classes.

### **Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty Compliance**

*March 8, 1999*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

In accordance with Condition (5)(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of November 19, 1990, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 14, 1997, enclosed is the Report on CFE Compliance.

The Report is provided in both a classified and unclassified version.

Sincerely,

**William J. Clinton**

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

### **Remarks to the Community at the Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras**

*March 9, 1999*

President Flores, Colonel Ramirez, General Wilhelm, Colonel Rosner, members of the Honduran and American militaries, to the people of Honduras, the American delegation and Members of Congress who came here with me, ladies and gentleman. Yesterday in Nicaragua, today in Honduras, we see that this disaster has taught us that what happens to one in the Americas affects us all. It reminds us that in good times and bad, *todos somos Americanos*.

Mr. President, I thank you for your kind words about the First Lady. I spoke with Hillary last night, and she asked me to give you her best. She remembers so well her trip here, and she wishes you well.

Mr. President, as our military leaders know, at this Honduran air base, our Armed Forces trained together for this sort of disaster just a few months before the storm. When the real test came, they passed with flying colors.

This long runway, turned into a lifeline, connected the countries all over the world. Over 47 million pounds of supplies came through here. Helicopters performed daring rescues and delivered food; engineers repaired roads; medical teams gave treatment and comfort; relief workers provided clean water, built schools and shelters, and restored faith in the future that nearly washed away.

Operation Fuerte Apoyo turned into one of the largest humanitarian missions performed by the United States military since the Berlin airlift 50 years ago. To all who

were a part of it, I thank you for your courage, your confidence, your compassion.

I believe the United States must do more. I have asked Congress for \$956 million to support the reconstruction effort in Central America. We expect almost a third of that to come to Honduras to improve public health, to build homes and schools, to rebuild roads so farmers can move their produce to market, and to prepare for future hurricanes. It will also forgive and defer Honduran debt, and it will be targeted to local communities to make sure the people who need it get the assistance.

I would also like to announce \$56 million to expand our New Horizons program which brings civilian guardsmen and reservists to the region for 2 weeks of training and relief work.

Mr. President, I know Hondurans are determined not just to rebuild but actually to create something better out of this tragedy: to build a reconstruction that protects the environment so that people are not exposed to unnecessary risks in the next storm; to build a reconstruction that ensures that those who suffered most participate fully and benefit equally; to build a reconstruction that consolidates democracy by engaging local government, NGO's, and the private sector.

I would like to especially thank the members of our Armed Forces for their hard work to advance these goals, for their enthusiasm and good cheer, even when you have to sleep in hootches in Tent City—[laughter]—for your cooperation between the services and between our U.S. personnel and our Honduran hosts. You have shown the people of Central America the true colors of our men and women in uniform.

Today I am proud to announce the award of Humanitarian Service Medals to all those members of the U.S. Armed Forces who served in support of the relief effort in Central America. And to announce that I have just presented to Colonel Rosner a Joint Meritorious Unit Award to JTF Bravo for its sustained commitment to our mission in this region. Congratulations on a job well done.

Later today I will see the Juan Molina Bridge in Tegucigalpa. It was built jointly with U.S. assistance and Honduran efforts.