

people want change badly enough, the Congress will respond. They'll go beyond partisan politics. They'll go beyond interest group politics. If they believe the American people want it bad enough, they'll respond.

Ms. Couric. Mr. President, thank you again for your time. We really appreciate it.
The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:25 p.m. in the Library at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Charlton Heston, president, National Rifle Association. This interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 30. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Memorandum on Assistance to Refugees Fleeing Kosovo

April 29, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-22

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Determination Pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as Amended

Pursuant to section 2(c)(1) of the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2601(c)(1), I hereby determine that it is important to the national interest that up to \$20 million be made available from the U.S. Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance Fund to meet urgent and unexpected needs relating to the program under which the United States will provide refuge in the United States to refugees fleeing the Kosovo crisis.

These funds may be used to meet the urgent and unexpected needs of refugees, displaced persons, victims of conflict, and other persons at risk due to the Kosovo crisis. These funds may be used, as appropriate, to provide contributions to international and nongovernmental organizations.

You are authorized and directed to inform the appropriate committees of the Congress of this determination and the use of funds under this authority, and to arrange for the publication of this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 30.

Remarks Announcing Measure to Address School Violence

April 30, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, in the last several days, like most Americans, I have spent an enormous amount of time following the events in Colorado, talking to family and friends and others. And I have some thoughts on that that I want to share with you today.

Let me begin by saying we got some more good news today on the economic front with the word that our economy expanded by 4.5 percent in the first quarter of this year. This news provides both more evidence that we should stick with our economic strategy and also is a worthwhile reminder that for all the challenges we face at home and abroad we are, indeed, a fortunate people. We are strong enough to meet those challenges.

Over the past 10 days our whole Nation has been united in grief with the people of Littleton, Colorado. We have also been profoundly moved by the courage, the common sense, and the fundamental goodness of Littleton students, teachers, parents, and public servants as they have spoken to us of the tragic events there. I have listened carefully to what they have said and to other young people and parents who have been on the townhall meetings and those whom I have met personally.

We should recognize the simple truth that there is no simple, single answer. We should not be fighting about who takes the blame. Instead, we should all be looking for ways to take responsibility, and we should be doing that together.

As we have united in grief, now we should unite in action. If we ask the right question, "what can we do to give your children safe, whole childhoods?" then there will be answers for parents and children, for teachers, communities, and for those who influence the lives and the environment in which our children live, including those of us in government, religious leaders, the entertainment and Internet communities, those who produce explosives and weapons, and those who use them lawfully.

I am inviting representatives of all these groups to come to the White House on May 10th for a strategy session on children, violence, and responsibility. The First Lady, the Vice President, and Mrs. Gore, all of whom have worked for years to give our children the childhoods they deserve, will join me. I ask everyone to come to this meeting with ideas about how we can move forward together.

As Hillary said yesterday, we need nothing less than a grassroots effort to protect our children and turn them away from violence. If citizens, parents and children alike, working together in their communities, can reduce teen pregnancy, reduce drunk driving, make seatbelt use nearly universal, then working together, we can protect our children.

I want to briefly set out a framework for how this challenge can best be addressed. The push and pull of modern life adds incalculable new burdens to the work of parents. We must strive to find ways to bring parents and children together more, to get parents more involved with their children's lives, to get negative influences and guns out of the lives of our children, and to give families the tools to meet these challenges.

First, we must help parents to pass on their values to their children in the face of a blizzard of popular communications that too often undermine those values. For young people who are particularly vulnerable and isolated, the violent video game they play can seem more real than conversations at home or lessons at school. We've been working to give parents stronger tools to protect their children, and we must do more.

The V-chip will be included in half the new televisions sold this year. And together with the voluntary rating system adopted by broadcasters, it will give parents a new ability to screen the images their children see. Meanwhile, we've launched the most ambitious media plan ever to educate our children about the dangers of drugs.

The Vice President and Internet service providers have given parents the ability to block access to violent or otherwise inappropriate websites. The Vice President will continue to work with industry to find ways to help parents guide their children through

cyberspace, and we'll have more to say on that in the days ahead. We have worked to give our parents the tools to protect children from violence and to take guns out of the hands of children. The policy of zero tolerance for guns in schools led to 6,000 expulsions or suspensions in the last year alone.

This week I proposed new measures to keep guns away from criminals and children; requiring background checks for buying guns at gun shows, as they are required at gun stores now, and background checks for the purchase of explosives; banning handgun ownership for people under 21; and restoring the Brady bill's cooling off period; and closing the loopholes in the assault weapons law.

Even on these contentious issues, I believe we can reach across party lines and find common ground. I hope that sportsmen, gun manufacturers, and lawmakers of all parties will see these steps for what they are, common sense measures to promote the common good. We all love our children. I respect the rights of hunters and sportsmen. Let's bury the hatchet and build a future for our children together.

We must help parents fulfill their most important responsibilities. We all say we want parents to talk to their children more, but we all know that too many families have too little time even to have dinner together.

Because parents too often have too little time, we've passed the Family and Medical Leave Act, and we're working to expand it. Because too many children leave school at 3, with nowhere to go and no adult to talk to, we've giving a quarter million kids access to after-school and summer-school programs, and we're working to triple that number. Because many parents need help in recognizing the signs of illness in their children, we're working to expand access to mental health care for children of all ages. Next month, Mrs. Gore will host the first White House Conference on Mental Health. We are also working to expand counseling, mentoring, and mental health services in our schools.

Most important of all, and perhaps most difficult, parents must be more active participants in their children's lives. It is not for us to pass judgment on how those two young men in Colorado descended into darkness. We may never know what can be or even

what could have been done. But this should be a wake-up call for all parents. We can never take our children for granted. We must never let the lines of communication, no matter how frayed, be broken altogether. Our children need us, even if they don't know it sometimes.

This terrible tragedy must not be an occasion for silence. This weekend I ask all parents, if they have not already done so, to sit down and talk to their children about what happened at Littleton and what is happening in their schools and their lives.

If we are not careful, when our children move through their teen years and begin to create their own separate lives, the bustle and burden of our daily lives can cause families to drift too far apart, to ignore the still-strong needs of children for genuine concern and guidance and honest conversation. This is sometimes the hardest thing of all, but it is vital, and lives depend on it.

Finally, I ask students to do more to help each other. Next week, if you have not already done so, I ask every student in America to look for someone at school who is not in your group. You know, there have always been different crowds in schools, and there always will be. This, too, is an inevitable part of growing up and finding your own path through life. But it should not be an occasion for disrespect or hostility in our schools. After all, our children are all on the same journey, even if they're trying to chart different paths. And this can be profoundly important in building a safer future.

The spirit of America can triumph in this troubling moment, and I am convinced it will. But we must build the energy and will and passion of our country and the fundamental goodness of our people into a grass-roots movement to turn away from violence and to give all our children the safe and wholesome childhoods they richly deserve.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on the National Economy

April 30, 1999

Today we received more good news for America's working families about our economy. In the first quarter of this year, the U.S. economy expanded at a robust 4.5 percent annual rate. Driven by high investment and vigorous consumer demand, America's expansion continues to grow steady and strong.

Strong growth, high investment, low inflation, and low unemployment are a winning combination and more evidence that we should stick with an economic strategy that has helped usher in a new era of prosperity for the American people.

Memorandum on Emergency Refugee Admissions Consultations Relating to Kosovars

April 30, 1999

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: FY 1999 Emergency Refugee
Admissions Consultations Relating to
Kosovars

In accordance with section 207(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(b)), you are authorized to consult with the appropriate committees of the Congress concerning the authorization of 20,000 emergency refugee admissions during FY 1999, which would be allocated to Europe for the purpose of admitting Kosovar refugees to the United States.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.