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Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979

August 12, 1999

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

As required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1641(c)), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. ×

Statement on Funding for Reading Programs

August 13, 1999

Today I am pleased to announce that the Department of Education is awarding $231 million in grants to help States, school districts, and communities help all of our children learn to read well. Reading is the building block for all learning. Nearly 40 percent of America's fourth graders, however, cannot read on their own. That is why my administration is working to ensure that every child can read independently by the end of the third grade—from working to reduce class size in the early grades to launching our American Reads program. This is an investment in our children and our future. Unfortunately, the Republican tax plan could force us to slash funding for this important initiative by as much as half in the years to come. Every one of us should do our part to help our children learn to read—and I call on Congress to put politics aside and put our children's future first.

Statement on the Anniversary of the Death of Representative Mickey Leland

August 13, 1999

Hillary and I would like to mark a sad occasion in our Nation's history, the death of Representative Mickey Leland (D–TX). Ten years ago this week, while on a hunger mission to Gambela, Ethiopia, Representative Leland died in a plane crash. A six-term Member of Congress, former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and cofounder and chair of the House Select Committee on Hunger, he was instrumental in bringing the issues of poverty and hunger to our Nation's consciousness. Because of his work, the plight of poverty was eased around the world—in Africa, the countries of the former Soviet Union, and within the United States.

Representative Leland's hallmark legislation, the Africa Famine Relief and Recovery Act of 1985, provided $800 million in food aid and humanitarian relief supplies to the poverty-stricken continent. One of his quotes effectively illustrates the human rights and moral aspects of the hunger fight: ''I cannot get used to hunger and desperate poverty in our plentiful land. There is no reason for it. There is no excuse for it, and it is time that we as a nation put an end to it.'' This struggle to make economic prosperity inclusive of more of our population has become a focus of the work of my administration. In another example of his foresight, Leland was an outspoken critic of violence on television long before it became the national issue that it is today.

The work of Mickey Leland must go on, and I would like to thank those individuals and organizations working to carry out his legacy. We must never forget Mickey Leland, the pressing issues for which he worked, the voiceless poor for whom he spoke, and the global principles for which he lived.