

Statement on the Circuit Court of Appeals Decision in the Elian Gonzalez Case

June 1, 2000

I am pleased with the decision today of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals. As I have said before, this is a case about the importance of family and the bond between a father and son. I have supported the Justice Department's conclusion that Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, is the one best suited to speak for his child, and I am pleased that the court has upheld the Justice Department's determination.

Statement on the Death of Tito Puente

June 1, 2000

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of the Latin jazz band leader Tito Puente. For more than 50 years, Puente was more than a musician—he was a trailblazer. The five-time Grammy award winner's countless recordings are classics in the genre he helped define.

In 1997 I was honored to welcome Tito Puente to the White House and present him with the National Medal of the Arts. At that ceremony, I said, "Just hearing Tito Puente's name makes you want to get up and dance. With his finger on the pulse of the Latin American musical tradition and his hands on the timbales, he has probably gotten more people out of their seats and onto the dance floor than any other living artist." This is truly his legacy—music that brings joy to young and old, to people of any background and in many nations, all around the world. We will miss Tito Puente's vibrant presence both on stage and off, but we know his spirit will endure in the music he has given us.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and many friends.

Remarks Following Discussions With Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany in Berlin, Germany

June 1, 2000

First, let me thank Chancellor Schroeder for making me feel welcome again in Germany and Berlin. I am delighted to be here, and I have enjoyed this visit. And I'm looking forward our dinner tonight and the Conference on Progressive Governance, beginning tomorrow, and of course, my trip to Aachen in the morning.

The Chancellor has faithfully reported on our lengthy conversation. We spent virtually all of our time discussing Russia, the question of missile defense, and the really heart-rending child custody cases that he mentioned.

I would like to also, though, publicly thank the Chancellor for the leadership of Germany in the cause of European unity and in our efforts to bring peace and freedom and human rights to the Balkans, something that is very important to the United States.

Let me say to all of you that the relationship the United States has with Germany has been profoundly important for the last 50 years. But I think it may well be even more important for the next 50. And I intend to do whatever I can in the time I have left as President to make sure this relationship is on solid ground for the new century.

I am particularly grateful that a number of our citizens will be participating in Expo 2000 here, in the American Voices program, having conversations with the German people directly. And I thank Commissioner Rollnick and the others who are responsible for that.

Finally, just one word on a development back in the United States today. I was very pleased with the decision of the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in the Elian Gonzalez case, upholding the decision of the Justice Department that he should be with his father. We have tried to honor the principles that the Chancellor and I discussed today in the cases involving our two countries in that