

Egypt's Role in the Peace Process

Q. There has been criticism of Egypt's role. What is your view?

The President. The fact is that all that has happened since the original Camp David in September 1978, including Madrid and Oslo, is a vindication of the courageous and visionary policy of Egypt. Egypt was a pioneer for peace and continues to be a key partner for the United States. We agree on the fundamentals of the peace process, and we will not be able to reach an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on these core issues without close consultation with Egypt. We are engaged in such a process today.

NOTE: The responses referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. The questions and answers were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 11. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Statement on the Executive Order
To Improve Access to Services for
Persons With Limited English
Proficiency**

August 11, 2000

Today I am issuing an Executive order to help people with limited English proficiency (LEP) access Federal services. Many people who are eligible for Federal services cannot effectively use those services because they are not proficient in English. The Executive order directs Federal agencies to improve the language-accessibility of their programs by December 11, 2000. This initiative complements our commitment to promoting programs to help individuals learn English.

I am concerned that language barriers are preventing the Federal Government and recipients of Federal financial assistance from effectively serving a large number of people in this country who are eligible to participate in their programs. Failure to systematically confront language barriers can lead to unequal access to Federal benefits based on national origin and can harm the mission of Federal agencies. Breaking down these barriers will allow individuals with limited

English proficiency to more fully participate in American society.

This Executive order directs Federal agencies to break down language barriers by implementing consistent standards of language assistance across agencies and among all recipients of Federal financial assistance. Under this flexible standard, agencies and recipients must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities, taking into account a variety of considerations. Among the factors to be considered are the number or proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population, the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program, the nature and importance of the service provided by the program, and the available resources.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks at a Reception for
Representative Xavier Becerra in
Los Angeles, California**

August 11, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Let me say, first, how delighted I am to be here with Xavier and Carolina. Thank you, Fermin Cuza, for being here and standing up for him. I thank my good friend Luis Gutierrez from Chicago for bringing his family here today. We were laughing—when I was running for President in early 1992, he was out there running with me. We were standing by the entrance to the El in Chicago early one morning, shaking hands, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [Laughter] And 8 years later, it's worked out pretty well.

I want to thank Tom Umberg for the distinguished work he did in the Clinton-Gore administration, and I thank you for being here. And Councilman Pacheco, thank you. And Mike Feuer, who's gone, I have to mention him because he's one of the guys that voted to have the city make a contribution to our convention so we could be here today. [Laughter] And I want to thank him.

Let me say, I was profoundly honored to present Cruz Reynoso with the Medal of Freedom, and I thank you for coming here,