

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

- Democratic Business Council dinner—112
- Microenterprise Awards, presentation ceremony—119
- Radio address—95
- Virginia, military leaders at the Pentagon in Arlington—118

Communications to Congress

- International family planning, letter—125
- “Support for a Democratic Transition in Cuba”
 - Letter transmitting report—112
 - Preface—111
- Terrorists who threaten the Middle East peace process, letter reporting—117
- Thailand-U.S. taxation convention, message transmitting—112

Communications to Federal Agencies

- Improving the safety of the Nation’s food supply, memorandum—96

Executive Orders

- Extension of Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses—123

Interviews With the News Media

- Exchange with reporters at the Pentagon, Arlington, VA—118
- News conference, January 28 (No. 134)—99

Proclamations

- National African American History Month—122
- To Modify Application of Duty-Free Treatment of Certain Articles Under the Generalized System of Preferences, and for Other Purposes—97

Statements by the President

- Death of Frank Tejeda—124
- International family planning—124

Supplementary Materials

- Acts approved by the President—127
- Checklist of White House press releases—126
- Digest of other White House announcements—125
- Nominations submitted to the Senate—126

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, January 31, 1997

The President's Radio Address

January 25, 1997

Good morning. Today I'm pleased to announce a major new step toward protecting the health and safety of all Americans, especially our children.

Almost a week ago, in my Inaugural Address, I told the American people that we must lead our country into the 21st century with the American dream alive for all our children, with the American promise of a more perfect Union a reality for all our people, with the light of our freedom illuminating all the world.

I believe we will make this vision real by doing what we've always done in moments of great change—holding fast to our enduring values. Central among these is the belief that we work tirelessly to make our families stronger and our children safer. Nothing is more important to meeting this goal than seeing to it that Americans live in a world with clean air, safe food, pure water. Hard-working American parents deserve the peace of mind that comes from knowing that the meal they set before their children is safe.

That's why I was so concerned by what happened in Washington State and in two other Western States this fall. Apple juice contaminated with a deadly strain of *E. coli* bacteria reached supermarket shelves. More than a dozen children, some as young as 2, were hospitalized, and one child died.

I'm sure just about every parent in America remembers what *E. coli* can do. Four years ago this month, tragedy struck hundreds of families in the Western United States when they took their children to fast-food restaurants that served them hamburgers tainted by the *E. coli* bacteria. Five hundred people became ill, some of them severely, and four children lost their lives.

Our administration has made it a top priority to protect the health and safety of all Americans. I signed into law legislation to

keep harmful pesticides off our fruits and vegetables and legislation that keeps our drinking water safe and pure. We put in place strong new protections to ensure that seafood is safe. And last summer we announced steps to modernize our meat and poultry food and safety system for the first time in 90 years. These new safety rules will begin to take effect next week. From now on, all meat and poultry plants will be required to test for *E. coli*.

We have built a solid foundation for the health of America's families. But clearly we must do more. No parent should have to think twice about the juice that they pour their children at breakfast or a hamburger ordered during dinner out. That's why today I'm announcing new steps to use cutting-edge technology to keep our food safe and to protect our children from deadly bacteria. We must continue to modernize the food safety system put in place at the dawn of the 20th century so that it can meet the demands of the 21st century.

First, we will put in place a nationwide early warning system for food-borne illness. Right now the Centers for Disease Control, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Agriculture Department sponsor five centers across the country whose mission is to post a lookout for food-borne diseases like *E. coli* bacteria and salmonella. Working with State and local governments, these sentinel sites in California, Oregon, Minnesota, Georgia, and Connecticut, actively track outbreaks of illnesses caused by contaminated food. Today I'm announcing we'll increase the number of these sites from five to eight and link them to other State health agencies. This expanded early warning system will enable us to catch outbreaks sooner and give us the data we need to help us prevent outbreaks from happening in the first place.

Second, we will see to it that the early warning system uses state-of-the-art technology to keep our food safe. We'll increase

the number of expert disease detectives to investigate and control food-borne disease outbreaks. We will give these experts the technology to use sophisticated new DNA finger-printing methods to trace dangerous bacteria to their source. We will create a permanent DNA fingerprint library so we can immediately recognize an illness if it reappears. And we will use advance communication networks to speed outbreak information to hospitals and public health agencies all around America.

Third, I'm directing Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Carol Browner, to work with communities, farmers, businesses, consumer protection groups, and all levels of Government to come up with additional measures to improve food safety. I want them to pay special attention to research and public education efforts. I want them to focus on what sort of partnerships the Government can form with the private sector to meet our goals. And I want them to report back to me with their findings within 90 days.

Finally, let me add that these new public health investments are paid for, line by line, dime by dime, in the balanced budget I will officially send to Congress next month. With this new early warning system to track food-borne illness, we are saying loud and clear that we will use the world's best science to make the world's most bountiful food supply safer than ever before for our families and for our children. Together we will see to it that our people and our Nation are prepared for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:30 p.m. on January 24 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 1:26 p.m. on January 25.

Memorandum on Improving the Safety of the Nation's Food Supply

January 25, 1997

Memorandum for the Secretary of Agriculture, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency

Subject: Improving the Safety of the Nation's Food Supply

Americans rightly expect to have the world's safest food supply. Although our food is unmatched in quantity and quality, we can do better in our efforts to eliminate disease caused by microorganisms and other contaminants. Americans still suffer thousands of food-related deaths and millions of food-related illnesses.

The 21st century will present new and greater challenges in this area. Novel pathogens are emerging. Long-understood pathogens are growing resistant to treatment. Americans eat more foods prepared outside the home, and we consume record levels of imported food—some of which moves across the globe overnight. These changing circumstances require greatly strengthened systems of coordination, surveillance, prevention, research, and education.

My Administration has already taken a number of steps to improve food safety. We modernized the meat, poultry, and seafood safety systems. I signed into law new legislation to keep harmful pesticides off our fruits and vegetables—and legislation that keeps our drinking water safe and pure. Today, I announced a new national early warning system for food-borne illness. The system will allow us to respond more quickly to disease outbreaks and to better prevent them in the future.

But we need to do more. Government, consumers, and industry must work together to further reduce food-borne disease and to ensure our food supply is the safest in the world.

I hereby direct that you work with consumers, producers, industry, States, univer-

sities, and the public to identify additional ways to improve the safety of our food supply through government and private sector action, including public-private partnerships. Your recommendations should identify steps to further improve surveillance, inspections, research, risk assessment, education, and coordination among local, State, and Federal health authorities. You should report back to me within 90 days with your recommendations.

William J. Clinton

Proclamation 6969—To Modify Application of Duty-Free Treatment of Certain Articles Under the Generalized System of Preferences, and for Other Purposes

January 27, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

1. Pursuant to section 503(c)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended by Public Law 104-88; 110 Stat. 1755, 1922 (“the 1974 Act”), the President may withdraw, suspend, or limit the application of the duty-free treatment accorded under section 501 of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2461) with respect to any article. With due regard for the factors set forth in sections 501 and 502(c) of the 1974 Act (19 U.S.C. 2461 and 2462(c)), I have determined that it is appropriate to modify the application of duty-free treatment under title V of the 1974 Act for certain articles, including certain goods previously eligible for such treatment that the Customs Service has reclassified.

2. Presidential Proclamation 6961 of November 28, 1996, provided import relief with respect to certain broom corn brooms. For certain subheadings of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTS) established to carry out this relief, provisions were omitted that would have continued staged reductions of special rates of duty for the goods concerned, previously proclaimed pursuant to section 201(a) of the North American Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 3331(a)). Further, other

HTS provisions established by that proclamation contain conflicting dates that complicate their administration. To rectify these omissions and to permit proper administration of the import relief, I have decided that it is necessary and appropriate to continue previously proclaimed duty treatment for the affected goods and to make technical corrections in certain HTS provisions.

3. Section 213 of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act, as amended (CBERA) (19 U.S.C. 2703), and section 204 of the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA) (19 U.S.C. 3203) authorize the President to provide duty-free entry for all eligible articles, and duty reductions for certain other articles, that are the product of any country that has been designated as a beneficiary country under those Acts. To clarify the preferential tariff treatment provided to particular dutiable goods that are the product of beneficiary countries under the CBERA or the ATPA and that are eligible to enter under HTS heading 9802.00.80, which provides for certain goods assembled abroad using components of U.S. origin, I have decided it is appropriate to provide special rates of duty for purposes of the CBERA and of the ATPA in heading 9802.00.80 to apply to such goods.

4. Presidential Proclamation 6948 of October 29, 1996, modified tariff provisions concerning special import quotas for upland cotton. That proclamation also modified certain provisions of the HTS and of prior Presidential proclamations to correct technical errors and to clarify the intent of previously proclaimed modifications. In proclaiming the modifications to the provisions on upland cotton, a conforming change to U.S. note 6 to subchapter III of chapter 99 of the HTS was omitted. Further, the instructions in section A(5)(c) of Annex II to such proclamation concerning modifications to subchapter IV of chapter 99 to the HTS contained an error. To rectify the omission and to correct the error in instructions, I have decided it is necessary and appropriate to modify U.S. note 6 to subchapter III of chapter 99 of the HTS and to amend the instructions in section A(5)(c) of Annex II to Proclamation 6948.

5. Presidential Proclamation 6763 of December 23, 1994, implemented with respect to the United States the trade agreements

resulting from the Uruguay Round of multi-lateral trade negotiations, including Schedule XX—United States of America, annexed to the Marrakesh Protocol to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994. A conforming change in a subheading in subchapter V of chapter 99 of the HTS was omitted from Proclamation 6763. Further, particular HTS additional U.S. notes implementing tariff-rate quotas (TRQs) for specified agricultural products do not clearly reflect the intended quota periods and the quantities permitted entry during such quota periods and have caused administrative difficulties. In order to make the necessary conforming change and to correct the legal notes controlling such TRQs, I have decided it is necessary and appropriate to modify a subheading in subchapter V of chapter 99 and the legal notes pertaining to such TRQs.

6. Presidential Proclamation 6857 of December 11, 1995, implemented with respect to the United States certain modifications to the HTS, in conformity with the obligations of the United States under the International Convention on the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System. The Annex to that proclamation omitted provisions that would have continued previously proclaimed staged reductions of certain rates of duty for the goods concerned, pursuant to section 111(a) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (URAA) (19 U.S.C. 3521(a)). To rectify these omissions, I have decided that it is necessary and appropriate to provide for the continuation of previously proclaimed duty treatment for the affected goods.

7. (a) Section 115 of the URAA (19 U.S.C. 3524) requires the President to (1) obtain advice regarding certain proposed actions; (2) submit a report to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Finance of the Senate; and (3) consult with those Committees on the proposed action during a subsequent 60-day period to meet the consultation and layover requirements of that section.

(b) Section 604 of the 1974 Act, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2483), authorizes the President to embody in the HTS the substance of the relevant provisions of that Act, and of other acts affecting import treatment, and actions thereunder, including the removal, modifica-

tion, continuance, or imposition of any rate of duty or other import restriction.

8. I have decided that it is appropriate to authorize the United States Trade Representative (USTR) to perform the functions specified in section 115 of the URAA and certain functions under section 604 of the 1974 Act.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, acting under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including but not limited to section 503 of the 1974 Act, section 213 of the CBERA, section 204 of the ATPA, section 604 of the 1974 Act, and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, do proclaim that:

(1) In order to reflect in the HTS various technical and conforming changes, to correct provisions of Proclamations 6948 and 6961, and to modify the special duty rates subcolumn for heading 9802.00.80, the HTS and Proclamations 6948 and 6961 are each modified as set forth in Annexes I and II to this proclamation.

(2) In order to modify the application of duty-free treatment under title V of the 1974 Act for certain articles, the HTS is modified as set forth in Annex III to this proclamation.

(3) The modifications to the HTS made by Annexes I, II, and III to this proclamation shall be effective with respect to goods entered, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after the dates set forth in such Annexes and during the time periods specified therein.

(4) The USTR is authorized to perform the functions vested in the President under section 115 of the URAA. In addition, the USTR is authorized to exercise the authority provided to the President under section 604 of the 1974 Act to embody rectifications, technical or conforming changes, or similar modifications in the HTS.

(5) Any provisions of previous proclamations and Executive orders that are inconsistent with the actions taken in this proclamation are superseded to the extent of such inconsistency.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence

of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., January 28, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation and the attached annexes were published in the *Federal Register* on January 29.]'

The President's News Conference

January 28, 1997

The President. Good afternoon. Please be seated. Before I take your questions, I would like to make a brief statement about the balanced budget that I will send to Congress next week.

This budget shows that we can meet two of our most crucial national priorities at the same time. It proves we can protect our children from a future burdened by reckless debt even as we give them the educational opportunities they need to make the most of the 21st century.

The budget finally moves us beyond the false choices that have held us back for too long and shows that we can cut our debt and invest in our children. The budget will help to renew our public schools. It will expand Head Start, help rebuild crumbling classrooms. It will double funding for public charter schools, giving parents more choice in how they educate their children. It will increase funding for Goals 2000 by 26 percent. And it will help our students to reach high standards and master the basics of reading, writing, math, and science.

It will also enable us to connect our schools and our libraries to the information superhighway. The budget more than doubles our investment in technology to hook our children up to computers and the Internet, and it increases by a third our investment in partnerships with teachers and industries to develop quality educational programming and technology. In short, the budget will connect our children to the best educational technology in the world.

It will also open the doors of college education wider than ever before. I'd like to take a minute now simply to outline our unprece-

dent commitment to higher education. With this budget, national support for college education in the year 2002 will be more than double what it was on the day I first took office, going from \$24 billion to \$58 billion per year. The budget will fully pay for a \$1,500 a year tuition tax credit, a HOPE scholarship for the first 2 years of college, to make the typical community college affordable for every American and to achieve our goal of making 2 years of college education as universal as a high school diploma is today.

It will also allow a working family to deduct up to \$10,000 a year for taxes for the cost of any college tuition or job training. And with our special IRA for education, most parents will be able to save for college tuition without ever paying a penny in taxes.

In addition, my balanced budget takes further steps to widen the circle of educational opportunity. It provides a 25 percent increase in funding for Pell grants, the largest increase in the maximum scholarship in 20 years, so that over 4 million students will get up to \$3,000 a year. We'll make 130,000 more students eligible for these scholarships, and we will open the scholarships to 218,000 older, low income Americans who want to go to college.

Second, under the balanced budget we will present—we will continue to reform our student loan programs to make college loans easier for students to get and easier to pay back. We will cut interest rates on loans to students while they're in school. We will cut loan fees for 4 million low and middle income students in half. Fees on 2½ million more will be cut by 25 percent. Taken together, these two steps will save American families \$2.6 billion over 5 years.

Third, we will increase funding again for work-study positions for students. That will take us over about a 3-year period from 700,000 work-study positions to 1 million work-study positions per year. And it will help us to meet our goal of getting 100,000 of those work-study students to participate as tutors in our initiative to make sure that all of our 8-year-olds can read independently.

To encourage community service, we will also provide tax incentives to encourage loan forgiveness for students who, after college,

choose professions that give something back, people who use their education to work as teachers, in homeless shelters, as doctors in remote rural areas.

Altogether, these proposals will move us much closer to our clear national goal: an America where every 8-year-old can read, where every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, where every 18-year-old can go to college, where all Americans will have the knowledge they need to meet the challenges of the 21st century. I am very proud of this budget.

Finally, let me say a word about campaign finance reform. We all know we need to find a new way to finance our campaigns and to bring the aggregate spending levels under control. Anyone who is involved in politics must accept responsibility for this problem and take responsibility to repair it. That is true for me and true for others as well.

Last week, I met with Senators John McCain and Russ Feingold, and Representatives Chris Shays and Marty Meehan. They have introduced tough, balanced, credible bipartisan campaign finance reform legislation. I pledged my support to them. I pledge it again today. I pledge to do all I can to help them pass this legislation. Any legislation we pass should be bipartisan, should limit spending, and should leave the playing field level between parties and between incumbents and challengers.

This is our best chance in a generation to give the American people campaigns that are worthy of the world's oldest continuous democracy. I call on the members of both parties to work with us to get the job done.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. Mr. President, my question ties into that. What should the American people think of a Presidential campaign in which a day at the White House is sold for \$250,000 a couple and the Republican Party sells a season ticket of access to Capitol Hill for \$250,000?

The President. Well, first, let me say I dispute a little bit the characterization there. I can't speak for the Republicans; they'll have to speak for themselves. But the people who

were there on the day in question were not charged a fee. Some of them were our contributors—had contributed in the past—they had raised money for me in the past. Some of them had not. And so I don't think it's quite an accurate characterization.

But I will say this: If you look at the money that was raised and spent not only by the parties and their respective campaign committees in the Senate and House but also by all these independent—apparently independent third-party committees and you look at the exponential cost of the campaigns related to communications, surely, we can use this opportunity to make something positive come out of this.

I mean, I think that all of us—as I said, again—every one of us who has participated in this system, even if we did it because we thought we had to do it to survive or to just keep up, has to take some responsibility for its excess, and I take mine. But we have got to do something about it. And the only way we can do anything about it is to pass the legislation, the McCain-Feingold bill or some acceptable variation thereof.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Q. Mr. President, with all the focus on the Democrat fundraising right now, why are you attending a million-dollar fundraiser tonight? What kind of an image do you think this leaves? And why do these donors make these big-money contributions? What do they get in return?

The President. Well, first of all, under all conceivable campaign finance reform scenarios, it will still be necessary for the parties to raise some money. And neither party has the capacity to raise all their money from direct mail campaigns and contributions of \$100 or less. The business council, the group that is having this fundraiser tonight, is one that would be quite consistent with the McCain-Feingold bill, were it to pass. And I, frankly, am very appreciative of the fact that these folks have been willing to come and help us and that we have increased the ranks of particularly younger, more entrepreneurial people in the Democratic Party supporting us. So I think it's an important thing to do. I don't think there's anything wrong with raising money for the political process. The problem is, it is the volume of

money, the amount of money, the time it takes to raise, the inevitable questions that are raised.

Now, I can tell you what they get from me. I don't know—you have to ask them what they expect. What they get from me, I think, is a respectful hearing if they have some concern about issues. I think it's a good thing when contributors care about the country and have some particular area of expertise they want to contribute. But nobody buys a guaranteed result, nor should they ever. They should get a respectful hearing, and the President should do what's right for the country.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, CNN].

Taxes

Q. Mr. President, in your new budget that you'll submit next week to Congress there will be tax cut proposals, including some of the education tax cut proposals you outlined today. But there also, presumably, will be some tax increases in the form of what you would describe as corporate welfare, getting rid of some of the tax breaks that big business have now. Some Republicans are already suggesting that netwise, your budget proposal will have a net increase in taxes as opposed to a net decrease. Is that a fair assessment of your budget?

The President. No. I believe that's incorrect. And let me say, I also believe—and again, I'm speaking from memory now; I have not discussed this with Mr. Raines in the last several weeks. But I believe that—number one, I believe it's incorrect, that we do have a net tax cut. Number two—

Q. Tax increase.

The President. No, we have a net tax cut. Number two, I believe that virtually all of the corporate loophole closings that we have in this budget are ones that we had discussed with and reached at least general agreement on with the congressional leadership back during the budget negotiations when we were having them last year. I believe that to be the case. And if it's not, I'll stand corrected, but that's accurate.

Yes, Gene [Gene Gibbon, Reuters].

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, Boris Yeltsin has been out of work for more than 6 months now because of his health problems. How has that affected your ability to do business with the Russian Government? And a related question: How will Yeltsin's health problems affect the timing and location of the next U.S.-Soviet summit, which had been set for March?

The President. Well, first, let me make the most important statement I think I can make to your question, which is, I have no private information that is inconsistent with the public statements of the Russian Government on President Yeltsin's health. I have no reason to believe, based on any information I have, that his condition is any different from what the Russian Government has said it is. First thing.

Secondly, I had been very impressed by the extent to which President Yeltsin made appropriate delegations to Mr. Chernomyrdin during the period of his convalescence leading up to the surgery and then in this period after the surgery when he developed his illness. And the Vice President and Mr. Chernomyrdin are going to meet pretty soon, and their ongoing relationship—we have a huge, full agenda. And we have been given no impression by the Russians that we aren't still going to have the Yeltsin-Clinton meeting in the March timeframe.

I think it's very important, you know, we have to work through the NATO-Russia relationship in connection with expansion and other issues. We have a lot of other security issues. We have to deal with the START II issues and where we go after START II. We have a lot of economic issues that are still to be resolved. And so, I think we'll go right on, and I expect to have that meeting in March. And I expect it to be an important one, and I hope a successful one.

Mr. Donovan [John Donovan, ABC News].

Bipartisanship

Q. Mr. President, in your Inaugural Address 8 days ago, you outlined some quite lofty goals, for example, the education proposals you were speaking about today. But in the days since, many questions in the press

and in Congress have focused on issues like campaign fundraising. My question is whether you are worried that the well is being poisoned even now for the realization of these goals before you can even get out of the gate, particularly on the issue of bipartisanship?

The President. No. But all I can do is speak for myself. I have tried to conduct the Presidency and to guard my words in a way that would make it clear that I intend to follow through on my commitment to try to establish a working partnership and a dynamic center, not a stable, stale one but a dynamic one, with people in both parties. I think we will have to continue to work on that.

As these—you know, just a few days ago, there were—when someone asked me if I thought that in the House the issue over the Speaker would poison the well, and I didn't, and I don't. I don't think it has. I just think that when matters come up that have to be dealt with, they need to be dealt with and disposed of. But the American people expect us to focus on how we can lift their lives and improve our conditions and move our people together and deal with the things that are before us. And I think if we do that and do it in a good-faith way, we'll be able to go forward.

Now, I'm very encouraged—let me just say this—the most encouraging thing has been, to me, the way that my budget proposals have been received. Even in criticism they have not been rejected outright. You know, 4 years ago when I came here, nobody in Congress took a President's budget seriously. They said, "Oh, his budget scenario is always rosy. The numbers are always cooked." And we now have 4 years in a row when I have presented conservative budget figures, when we've brought the deficit down by over 60 percent, and when, now, both sides are keeping their powder dry enough to create the possibility we can reach a balanced budget agreement. So, on balance, I'm still quite hopeful.

Peter [Peter Maer, NBC Mutual Radio].

Khobar Towers Bombing

Q. Mr. President, both your Attorney General and the FBI Director recently expressed concerns about the level of cooperation from

Saudi Arabia into the investigation into the bombing that killed 19 American soldiers last year. What's your assessment of their level of cooperation, and do you have confidence in the security of the U.S. men who are still on duty there?

The President. Let me answer the second question first. We have worked very hard, as you know, since the Khobar incident, to enhance the security of our Armed Forces personnel in Saudi Arabia. In that endeavor, we have received the cooperation of the Saudi Government. We have relocated a large number of people. We have done a lot of work. We've invested a lot of money; so have they. And we believe that there is no such thing as a risk-free world, but we believe that our Armed Forces are more secure today. And we feel good about that.

On the investigation, clearly, for our point of view, in our Government, the FBI is in charge of that. They have sought the answers to some more questions. The Saudi Government has assured us from the very highest levels that they would get answers for those questions, and so I expect that to happen. And that's all I can tell you at this time. The process is ongoing. The investigation is ongoing. The relationship is ongoing.

As you can imagine, this creates—an investigation of this kind raises all kinds of complex questions about cooperation against sovereignty, about what other interests of that nation might be in play. But I'm confident that in the end they will do what I have been assured personally by the highest levels of the Saudi Government they should do.

Q. So you're satisfied with the level to this date?

The President. Well, it's still in process. We have to see if it comes out all right. But we still have—there are further requests for information that are ongoing. We'll see how it comes out.

Yes, Mr. Neikirk [Bill Neikirk, Chicago Tribune].

Hong Kong

Q. Mr. President, the Chinese have been making a lot of noises about clamping down on civil liberties in Hong Kong. How concerned are you about this, and will this upset our relationship in any way?

The President. Well, it wouldn't help anything. I'm concerned about it, and I think the—we don't know yet what's going to happen. But the Chinese have basically said that it would be a part of China, but its system would be left intact. And I think there may be some ambivalence about what it means to leave their system intact. And I think maybe some would assume that you could impose political uniformity on Hong Kong and leave its economic vibrancy intact. It really is, in some ways, almost a perfect open market, you know. And I don't know if that's true or not. It's a complex society.

I think anyone who has ever been to Hong Kong more than once—and I've been there on several occasions in my life—probably leaves with the feeling I have, that you could go there a thousand times and you might not ever understand it all. It's a complicated society. And I'm not so sure that it can exist with all of its potential to help China modernize its own economy and open opportunities for its own people if the civil liberties of the people are crushed.

So I think it would be wrong on its own merits, but I think it might wind up being less useful to China. So I would hope very much that they would look for ways to maximize the continuation not only of the economic system but of the personal freedoms that the people of Hong Kong have enjoyed in making it such an economic engine.

Yes.

Webster Hubbell and the Lippo Group

Q. Mr. President, the Lippo Group hired your friend, Webb Hubbell, after he resigned in a scandal from the Justice Department and just a few months before he went to jail for embezzlement. So far, no one has been able to determine what kind of work he was doing or why he was paid a sum reportedly in excess of \$200,000. Does anything about this arrangement strike you as unusual or suspicious? And given that there have been public suggestions this money was offered to encourage his silence before the Whitewater investigator, have you taken any steps yourself to assure yourself that this is not the case?

The President. First of all, I didn't know about it. To the best of my recollection, I didn't know anything about his having that

job until I read about it in the press. And I can't imagine who could have ever arranged to do something improper like that and no one around here to know about it. It was just not—we did not know anything about it, and I can tell you categorically that that did not happen. I knew nothing about it, none of us did, before it happened. And I didn't personally know anything about it until I read about it in the press.

So I don't think—I think when somebody makes a charge like that, there ought to be some burden on them to come forward with some evidence to substantiate their charge instead of saying, "We'll make a charge; see if you can disprove it." That's not the way things work, and that's a pretty irresponsible charge to make without knowing—having some evidence of it. And I'm just telling you it's not so.

Yes, Rita [Rita Braver, CBS News].

Campaign Finance and White House Access

Q. Back on this issue of fundraising. You've talked about it maybe in general terms, but specifically last week the White House put out a list of coffees. It showed that one coffee that included the Comptroller of the Currency, the Secretary of the Treasury. There were people who—bankers who had contributed something like \$325,000. You attended that coffee. There was another coffee with another regulator of the Consumer Products Safety Commission. Something like \$500,000 was contributed by people who were at that coffee. And I wondered if, in retrospect, you had any feelings about, number one, regulators being at political coffees and also your own participation. Obviously, you're not going to be doing this again for your own reelection, but is this something that you have decided you will continue doing, and what have you come to in your own mind on this issue?

The President. I have a different opinion about my participation and the regulators' participation. First, let me tell you about—I can only comment on the first instance you mentioned, the bankers meeting. I think it is an appropriate thing and can be a good thing for the President and for the Secretary of Treasury to meet with a group of bankers

and listen to them and listen to their concerns and, if they have certain issues, to explore those issues.

I can tell you categorically that no decision ever came out of any of those coffees where I or anyone else said, "This person is a contributor of ours; do what they asked us to do." But I think those meetings are good. I think the President should keep in touch with people. I think he should listen to people. I never learn very much when I'm talking, and I normally learn something when I'm listening. So I think that they're good.

In retrospect, since the DNC sponsored it, I do not think the Comptroller of the Currency should have been there. I agree with Mr. Ludwig, and he should have been told who was sponsoring it, and it would have been better had he not come. I agree with that. But I think there is a distinction to be made between the President meeting with people, listening to them, and then, at least if they raise some serious issues, having them looked into. But I never made a decision for anybody because they were contributors of mine. I don't—but I do think it's important to listen to people.

But you're right—or he was right, it would have been better if he had not been there. Regulators should not come to meetings that are sponsored—have any kind of political sponsorship, I don't think.

Q. So you intend to keep going with these coffees, sir? Do you intend to keep going with these coffees?

The President. I don't know. But I can tell you—well, I intend to keep going with coffees. I don't know whether they'll be sponsored by the DNC or whether we'll just bring them in through our own regular offices. But I also had lots and lots and lots of coffees over the last 4 years that had nothing to do with the DNC, where a lot of people came, were not contributors or even active supporters of mine, but they were from different walks of life around the country. And I found them very helpful, where I would just sit down and talk for 4 or 5 minutes and then listen for an hour or so and maybe ask questions based on whatever people had to say to me.

I think it's an effective way for the President to hear firsthand how the operations of

the Government or developments in the country are affecting people. So I think that the coffees themselves are a very good device. But I do believe, particularly if sponsored by a political party, it's not appropriate for the regulator to be there.

Social Security and the Budget

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. A number of Democrats in Congress oppose a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution unless the Government promises to stop spending surplus Social Security funds, borrowing and spending them. Would you—though you oppose an amendment, you will propose a balanced budget; will you stop using surplus Social Security funds?

The President. Well, the using—the funds that are collected on Social Security are going to be invested in some way. When you say "using," what they do, they cover the deficit by basically being sold for Government securities. Social Security is not, therefore, in effect separated from the Government. But those securities will come back with interest to the Government later on. And by then, what will have to happen is, when we start running short of money 20 years or so from now, the Government will have to have been on a balanced budget for some years by then, so that when the bonds are repaid, they can be used to pay Social Security.

We couldn't right now, neither the Republicans nor I and the Congress, could produce a balanced budget tomorrow that could pass, if you said the Social Security funds cannot be counted, if you will, as part of the budget.

But let me say, you raise an interesting question, however, which is why I don't favor this amendment. I've given the Congress a plan to balance the budget. I've made it clear that we will work with them to meet the Congressional Budget Office budgetary projections. And we're going to do this. And now they know that I have credibility because we've worked on it for 4 years and we've done almost two-thirds of the work.

When you amend the Constitution, you do it forever. No one can foresee the circumstances that will come a generation from now or 50 years from now or even 10 years from now. And the way I read the amend-

ment, it would almost certainly require after a budget is passed, if the economic estimates turn out to be wrong, the executive branch, the President, the Treasury Department, to impound Social Security checks or to turn it over to courts to decide what to be done. And it would put us in a position, in my view, of doing things that are counterproductive.

The Congress—[inaudible]—is about to vote on this; the House is—against a background of 4 years of stable growth and 4 years of declining deficits. But we don't know what external factors in the world might be brought to bear on our country in the next 10 or 15 years that might have terribly counterproductive impulses, if we were cutting aid to children and raising taxes in the teeth of a big recession or we were impounding Social Security checks or something of that kind. I just think that the Congress has an obligation to think of what could happen here in the future and ask themselves whether they really want to straitjacket the United States.

What we ought to do is follow prudent policies, balance the budget, and go forward. But we shouldn't compromise what might happen 10, 15 years from now with an amendment to the Constitution. I think it's bad economic policy and bad policy. And I think we're going to wind up with some decisions in the courts and some decisions on Social Security and aid to kids and other things that future generations won't be very grateful to us for, just because it seemed so popular now because we haven't balanced the budget since 1969.

Q. If I may, Mr. President, could I just follow up, Mr. President? Could I just follow up on one thing? There are a number of reform plans around that would give people part of their taxes back to put into private accounts. If it was only part of their taxes and some sort of safety net was preserved, would you favor some private accounts out of Social Security tax money?

The President. Well, first of all, I would favor nothing that would compromise the integrity of the system. Secondly, even the Social Security Advisory Commission couldn't agree on that, so I can't make a decision on that, to support something like that, without knowing more about it.

There are two different options that were recommended—or three different ones—and I just—I think that what we need to do, as I've said before, we need to make some changes in Social Security to lengthen its life a little bit. We don't want to start getting in trouble in 2019; it ought to have a longer lifespan than that. And we ought to do it through a bipartisan process that is either like the one that was done in 1983 or that at least consults all the people who will be affected by it. And I think that if we start now, we can make modest changes that won't be too burdensome to anybody, that will secure Social Security for another 50 years. And I think that's what we ought to be doing.

District of Columbia

Q. Mr. President, I wonder if we could just shift the focus briefly to something you've become much more interested in lately, the troubled Capital City here. The District of Columbia Congresswoman has re-introduced her wide-ranging tax cut plan today, which offers relief on the Federal level for everybody, and the working poor would indeed be eliminated, as you know. She is also saying today that she wants your help on this and she thinks that her tax plan should be included in your new DC recovery plan, that the one cannot work without the other and that time is fast slipping out for the Capital City, that action needs to be taken soon or we're going to go down the tubes.

The President. Well, let me say, I believe that we should have a three-point plan. One is the thing that Congresswoman Norton and I agree on, that we should have the Federal Government assume those things that are now burdening the District of Columbia that in every other place in the country those costs are borne by State governments, not local governments. You can't expect any city to function and be successful if they have to pay the State's cost as well as the city's cost, raise taxes when people can go right across the Potomac River or right up the road into Maryland and have the same cost borne in a different way. So I think that responsibility shift is important.

Secondly, I think the Federal Government needs a more disciplined effort to see what else we can do within the resources we now

have to help DC in law enforcement, in education, in transportation, right across—and housing and homelessness.

Thirdly, I think there needs to be an economic incentive in the form of tax relief. Now, I haven't seen what Congresswoman Norton introduced today. The last time this came up, the folks at Treasury and OMB thought that the proposal was more costly than we could afford. But I intend to make one, and I think it will be a significant incentive for people to invest in DC and to help to grow the economy here. I think that's a very important component. So I agree with her on the general point. I just have to see the specifics before I can make a commitment.

Yes, Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

Q. I wonder if I could just follow up?

China and Human Rights

Q. Your annual human rights report is about to come out this week. It's reported that it will say there are no active dissidents in China. They're either all exiled, or they're in jail. Does this mean that your policy of constructive engagement has failed to get the kind of results you wanted to get on China's human rights behavior?

The President. It means that we have not made the progress in human rights that I think—that I had hoped to make, yes. But it does not mean that if we had followed a policy of isolating ourselves from China, when no one else in the world was prepared to do that, that we would have gotten better results. And I think—I still believe, over the long run, being engaged with China, working with them where we can agree—which helps us on a whole range of security issues that directly bear on the welfare of the American people, like the problems on the Korean Peninsula—and continuing to be honest and forthright and insistent where we disagree has the greatest likelihood of having a positive impact on China.

Keep in mind, the time horizon here for how we judge them has to be broadened a little bit. They tend to look at things in a long-time horizon. They're going through some significant changes themselves within their country, economic and political

changes. And I believe that the impulses of the society and the nature of the economic change will work together, along with the availability of information from the outside world, to increase the sphere of liberty over time. I don't think there is any way that anyone who disagrees with that in China can hold back that, just as eventually the Berlin Wall fell. I just think it's inevitable. And I regret that we haven't had more progress there more quickly, but I still believe that the policy we're following is the correct one.

Jim [Jim Miklaszewski, NBC News].

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. Mr. President, some lawmakers on Capitol Hill still think it would be a good idea to appoint an independent counsel to investigate some of the campaign fundraising that occurred last year. And at the same time—what's your latest thinking on that? And at the same time, if I may, you often decry what you call a cynicism that you believe is pervasive in Washington, but given the amounts of money that were raised last year, the way they were raised, and some of the explanations for the way they were raised, isn't the public entitled to a little bit of healthy skepticism, if not cynicism, about the entire process?

The President. Well, to answer your first question, I'm going to take Bob Dole's advice because that's a decision for the Attorney General to make. And to answer your second question, yes, healthy skepticism is warranted. But keep in mind, I would say to the skeptics, the vast majority—indeed, a huge percentage, way, way over 90 percent—I don't know what it would be—the vast majority of the money that was raised by both the Democrats and the Republicans was raised in a perfectly lawful fashion, completely consistent with the requirements of the law. The vast majority of the people who gave money to both the Democrats and the Republicans were people who believed passionately in the course that those two parties were pursuing and the candidates and what they were trying to do and to their House committees and their Senate committees.

The problem is that the margins create great problems because of the sheer volume of money that is being raised today. As I said

before, it's too much money, takes too much time to raise, raises too many questions. And the cynicism is well—and the skepticism is well-founded. If it becomes cynicism then it removes the incentive on the part of the Congress to pass campaign finance reform because cynics will say it won't make any difference anyway.

If you look at the present campaign laws, I think you can make a compelling case. I have not heard this point made, but I believe it to be true. I believe when these reforms arose out of the Watergate thing back in the mid-seventies, I think they worked pretty well for several years. I believe they elevated the reputation of politics, and I think the reforms worked pretty well. What happened is, no system in a world changing like ours can be maintained indefinitely, because the economy changes and particularly—look at how your work has changed. When you travel with me, you carry these little computers around, and you run these pictures up on computers, and you send them from the plane somewhere else. I mean, just think of all the things that have changed. This system has not been fixed in over 20 years. During that 20 years, there has been an explosion in ways of communicating with people and an exponential increase in the cost of communicating. And a system which I would argue to you really worked pretty well, after it was passed in '74 and going forward, has been overtaken by events.

So, cynical, no; healthy skepticism, you bet. We should always be skeptical. But we need to change the system. It's got to be; it's just outdated.

Ellen [Ellen Ratner, Talk Radio News Service].

Welfare Reform

Q. Mr. President, what specific mechanisms do you plan on working with the private sector in terms of creating more welfare jobs for people who are on welfare?

The President. Primarily two. One, I will offer a special tax incentive—there was a story about it today, I think, in the New York Times—a special tax incentive that'll be a 50 percent credit for up to \$10,000 a year in pay for people who are clearly, provably hired from welfare and put into new jobs.

Secondly, we have given the States—and there was a story, I think, in the Post today talking about how a lot of the States are trying to push this down to the community level. That's good. That's not bad; that's good, as long as they give the communities the means they need.

The second thing is that every community should know that the employers in that community, if they hire people from welfare to work, can get what used to be the welfare check for at least a year to use as an employment and training subsidy. Why? The welfare rolls have gone down 2.1 million in the last 4 years; it's the biggest drop in history. I think a fair reading of it would say about half of this decline came from an improved economy and about half of it came from intensified efforts to move people from welfare to work. Now, I don't have any scientific division, but anyway, there's some division there.

The rest of the people that are on welfare now, by and large, are people who will be more difficult to move from welfare to work and have stay there. So I think we're going to have to give some incentives. But if it works and if every community in the country would set up an employment council and turn this into a family and an employment program like Kansas City has and all employers have those two incentives, I think we'll be able to meet the requirements of this welfare reform bill in a way that will be good for the people on welfare and good for their kids.

Kathy [Kathy Lewis, Dallas Morning News].

Legal Immigrants and the Budget

Q. Mr. President, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee over the weekend laid down some markers for what he thinks would create chances for your budget to be alive on arrival on the Hill. On welfare, one of the things he mentioned was increased spending for legal immigrants, and he said he hoped you wouldn't insist on it. How do you deal with that in your budget, and will you continue to insist on it?

The President. Well, let me say, I like Mr. Archer very much and we've had a good relationship and I appreciate what he said about me meeting him halfway on Medicare.

But there have been reports in the last couple of days about Republican Governors with high immigrant populations coming back to their Republican congressional leaders and saying, "Please reconsider this."

My budget will contain funds and propose changes consistent with the promises I made when I signed the welfare reform bill and when I campaigned to the American people on this issue. I believe that the bill is counterproductive in the way it treats legal immigrants who through no fault of their own wind up in desperate circumstances and in other ways that I think are not good for families and children.

So I will propose some changes. And I hope that when we get all through here—again, I hope this will be treated just like the budget issue—I would ask our friends on the Republican side and the Democrats who care as passionately about this as I do to keep our powder dry. Let us make our case on the merits. Let them hear from the Republican Governors of places like Texas and New York that have these huge immigrant populations of good people that are making great contributions to this country, that are working like crazy and making this a better place, and listen to the practical impact of the law that's now there on the immigrant population. And I'm not sure we can't get some changes. I'm very hopeful that we can, and I'm going to give it my very best effort.

Q. Mr. President—

The President. Wait a minute, I'll take a couple of more. Just a minute.

Deborah [Deborah Mathis, Gannett News Service]. No, no, Sarah's [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News Service] next. Let Deborah talk.

Go ahead.

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. To follow up on Jim Miklaszewski's question, the people are not just skeptical or cynical about politics or about campaign finance. They are more specifically cynical and skeptical and suspicious of this White House, of this administration, partly because of the way information has trickled out, the way memories have been stubborn and sometimes revised at the last moment—at an op-

portune moment, it would seem. And I'm wondering what's new about the White House now and the way you handle delicate information, and what you want to tell the people about it?

The President. First of all, I want to tell the people, when you get asked hundreds of questions, it's not possible to remember the answer to every one. I think some of these people make honest mistakes. I read things in your reports all the time that aren't quite factually accurate, but I don't think you deliberately did it. It's impossible to do—we're living in a society that is deluged in information. So I think that what we've all got to be candid enough to say is, no one is blameless here; it costs so much money to pay for these campaigns, that mistakes were made here by people who either did it deliberately or inadvertently. Now, it's up to others to decide whether those mistakes were made deliberately or inadvertently. It's up to me to do what I can to clean up the system.

Now, what should they believe about us? Well, first of all, I got the Democratic Party to make some unilateral changes in its fund-raising policies and asked our friends in the Republican Party to do the same and offered to completely get rid of the so-called soft money, the larger contributions, if they would. Secondly, we're out here working hard as a party, as a White House, and me, personally, as President, to pass the McCain-Feingold bill which would put an end to these problems and modernize this system. So I think that's quite important.

Now, I do not believe you will ever get the politics out of politics. That is—and that's not bad. I think people who fight for candidates and who help them and who help parties will be people that the people who represent them want to hear from and want to maintain access to. I don't think there is anything wrong with that. That's the way the system works. And I don't think anyone should imply that your first obligation once you get elected is to stop talking to the people that helped you get there.

But I think that we've got to improve the system. And I understand why the cynicism is there. But again, I will say I'd ask you to look—way, way over 90 percent of all the people who gave money and way over 90 per-

cent of all the people who gave, of all the money that was raised, is clearly consistent with the law in both parties, as far as I know. I mean, I can't really speak for the Republicans, but I'd be astonished if that were not so. I would be astonished if it were not so.

So there is no pattern and practice here of trying to push our system over the brink into corruption. What happens is, there is a race to get as much money as you can to keep from being buried by the other people and to make sure you can get your own message out and, at the edges, errors are made. And when they're made, they need to be confessed, and we need to assume responsibility for them. And that's what I'm trying to do up here today. But I can't say, Deborah, in response to your question, that I know that any of these people who gave insufficient answers to you did it in a deliberate or deceptive way, because a lot of times people just ask questions, and they don't have all the answers. And they're trying to cooperate, and don't do such a good job.

Sarah, go ahead.

Health Care

Q. Sir, the National Coalition on Health Care has issued a wonderful report. It's the largest consumer organization on the subject. They say that 58 million people, 60 percent of those people were against the present health care system as being totally inadequate, and they don't have faith in it. Now, we heard last year a lot of stuff about how people were satisfied with the most wonderful health care system in the world. Well, apparently, that's baloney, according to this report. And there's a lot of talk being done about preserving Medicare, but Medicare won't do it. It won't go all the way to take care of the people of this country. And this report shows that they simply cannot meet the big bills of hospitals and doctors. Aren't you going to try again this year with Hillary to devise a good national health care program for this country?

The President. Well, I read that report, and I found it very interesting. But I think what that report was saying—and again, I don't want to read between the lines, all I did was read a news column on it—but I can tell you what I got out of it, and then

let me respond to your question. What I got out of it was people said, "Well, I may feel good about my doctor or my local hospital, but I'm worried about the security of this system. I'm worried about whether, if managed care controls everything, whether I'll lose any control over important decisions affecting my life. I'm worried about whether if I lose insurance here, whether I can take it there."

And what I think we have to do is to recognize that our society—and I think we've played a role in it here, but I think the whole system deserves credit for it—we've done a much better job in holding down inflation in medical care and bringing it closer to the general rate of inflation. There's some indication it's going up again, but I hope we can keep it down. And we have done a better job of some other things, like ending the 48-hour delivery rule and all that. But we have not—or the 24-hour delivery. But we have not done enough to increase access to affordable care for people who don't have coverage to deal with the problem that there are still a lot of children in working families that are poor who aren't covered and to deal with the fact that there are people who are unemployed who, even though we just made it legal for them to carry their insurance with them when the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill passed last year, they can't afford to do that.

So in my budget, we will have, in effect, an unemployment health insurance plan to help people, families who have insurance keep it when they're employed. And I intend over the next 4 years to work very hard to try to find other ways, as I said, in a step-by-step way to allow people affordable access to this system. It will never be completely stable for anyone until everyone at least has affordable access to it.

Yes, one foreign person over here.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President—Mr. President, both Israel and Syria seem willing and ready to come to the negotiating table, and they both want American diplomacy as an honest broker. Prime Minister Netanyahu will come to Washington next month. How will you act together to energize this track and reach comprehensive peace in the Middle East,

which is clearly a top priority of your administration?

The President. Well, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Chairman Arafat, King Hussein, and President Mubarak are all coming here in the next couple of months. And I must say again how much I appreciate the agreement reached on Hebron and the other understandings reached between Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat and the fact that so far things seem to be being implemented in an appropriate way and going all right.

There will never be a comprehensive peace in the Middle East until we resolve this matter with Syria—between Syria and Israel. And that requires the willingness of the parties. What our experience has been, mine, the Secretary of State, Secretary Christopher, and now Secretary Albright, Mr. Ross, and our whole team—has been that when both parties want to make peace, no matter how far apart they seem, we've found a way to get there. If they're not sure it's time to make peace, no matter how close it seems to an outsider, we don't seem to be able to bridge the gap. So you can be sure that that will be a major focus of our discussion, whether we can find a way to work together.

Yes.

Medicare

Q. Mr. President, your Medicare reform plan was criticized for relying too heavily on savings squeezed from health care providers. Why shouldn't Americans who can afford to pay higher Medicare premiums pay them?

The President. Let me respond to the criticism. First of all, in my health care reform proposal I supported higher income—increases in Medicare premiums on higher income Americans, but it was part of a comprehensive health care reform. What I was attempting to do, after meeting at some length with Secretary Shalala who worked through these issues with me, the specifics of the Medicare reform, was to demonstrate that we could balance the budget, meet the Republicans halfway, and put 10 years on the life of the Trust Fund without a premium increase. If we're going to have a longer term Medicare reform—I have never said that I

would rule that out, but I didn't want to rule it in. I presented a budget that was consistent with my priorities. And I'm prepared to meet with Senator Lott and discuss that and other issues. But I presented a budget that I thought was the best budget to achieve our objectives.

You've been trying to stand up all this time. Go ahead.

Campaign Fundraising Investigation

Q. Thank you, sir. When you are finished here, Mr. President, Senator Thompson is expected to go to the Senate floor to discuss his committee's investigation into these fundraising issues. I'm wondering if you would like to say something to him regarding White House cooperation and the possibility of looking into Republican fundraising as well.

The President. I have instructed everybody here to fully cooperate with him. My new Counsel, Mr. Ruff, is going to meet with Senator Thompson and the appropriate people, and we will be fully cooperative. I think that's very important.

And on the question of the Republicans, I just want him to be fair. I think that it's very important to be fair and even-handed, because I'm confident that any investigations will reveal what I said, that the vast majority of people who give do so well within the law and with the best of motives. They really believe in what they're doing on both sides. And what we need to do is find out whether there are any systematic flaws here that need to be addressed and address them. But in the end, I'm telling you, no matter what this hearing uncovers, in the end, if you want to get rid of—if you want to turn cynicism back into skepticism, you have to pass McCain-Feingold or some other acceptance campaign finance reform.

Mr. Cannon [Carl Cannon, Baltimore Sun]. I'll take one more question.

Capital Gains Taxes

Q. Mr. President, in Chicago the day you gave your acceptance speech at the convention, you unveiled a plan in which homeowners would not have to pay virtually any capital gains taxes. We haven't heard much about it since then. And my question is, is that going to be in your budget, that pro-

posal, and will you go a little further if the Republicans want to do a little more on capital gains?

The President. The answer is, yes, my homeowners exemption, capital gains exemption is in the budget. Everything I talked about at Chicago is in the budget. And the capital gains issue has never been a particularly high priority with me because I've never seen it demonstrated as a big engine of economic growth overall and because I thought the previous—as you know, this is nothing new, the proposal that the Republicans made in their budget I thought was entirely excessive and would really almost squander money by having it be retroactive.

But what I've—I have tried to practice what I preach here. I want to keep our powder dry; I want them to keep their powder dry. I will present a budget. I know what my priorities are. I know what theirs are on the taxes. And then what we need to do is to meet each other in good faith. This and all other issues can best be resolved by an early attempt to work through to a balanced budget agreement.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 134th news conference began at 2:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; King Hussein I of Jordan; and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

**Preface to the Report Entitled
“Support for a Democratic
Transition in Cuba”**

January 28, 1997

The promotion of democracy abroad is one of the primary foreign policy objectives of my Administration. These efforts reflect our ideals and reinforce our interests—preserving America's security and enhancing our prosperity. Democracies are less likely to go to war with one another or to abuse the rights of their peoples. They make for better trading partners. And each one is a potential ally in the struggle against the forces of hatred and intolerance, whether rogue nations, those who foment ethnic and religious ha-

tred, or terrorists who traffic in weapons of mass destruction.

Today, freedom's reach is broader than ever. For the first time in history, two thirds of all nations have governments elected by their own people. As newly democratic nations have left the dark years of authoritarian government behind, millions of their citizens around the world have begun to experience the political and economic freedoms that they were so long and so wrongfully denied.

Creating open societies and democratic institutions and building free markets are major tasks that call for courage and commitment. To face these challenges, many democratizing and newly democratic governments have turned to developed democratic nations and international institutions for assistance and support. The United States has been at the forefront of these efforts, lending help in numerous areas in which we have long experience—for example, building democratic institutions and the institutions of a market economy, and protecting human rights through an effective and impartial justice system.

Cubans, like the other peoples of this hemisphere, of Eastern Europe, and of the former Soviet Union, desire to be free. The United States is committed to help the Cuban people in a transition to democracy. We will continue working with others in the international community who share our desire to welcome Cuba into the ranks of prosperous democratic nations, where it will proudly join the other thirty-four countries in this hemisphere.

This document outlines the assistance that a democratizing Cuba is likely to seek during its transition, and the ways in which the United States and the international community will try to help. It draws from the experiences of other countries that have embarked upon similar transitions and highlights some of the lessons learned from those processes. It is my sincere hope that it will contribute to a better understanding of the international community's potential role in a transition to democracy and underscore the strong commitment of the American people to support the Cuban people when they embark upon that process of change.

William J. Clinton

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

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the Report Entitled
“Support for a Democratic
Transition in Cuba”**

January 28, 1997

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 202(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-114), I hereby transmit to you a report concerning assistance to a free and independent Cuba, entitled “Support for a Democratic Transition in Cuba.”

The report includes an addendum of indicative roles for various agencies of the United States Government. This is for internal United States Government use and is not intended for publication. The remainder of the report will be translated into Spanish to be communicated to the Cuban people pursuant to section 202(f) of the Act.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Thailand-United States Taxation
Convention**

January 28, 1997

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Bangkok, November 26, 1996. An enclosed exchange of notes, transmitted for the information of the Senate, provides clarifi-

fication with respect to the application of the Convention in specified cases. Also transmitted is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention, which is similar to other tax treaties between the United States and developing nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for the exchange of information to prevent fiscal evasion and sets forth standard rules to limit the benefits of the Convention to persons that are not engaged in treaty shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 28, 1997.

**Remarks at a Democratic Business
Council Dinner**

January 28, 1997

Thank you very much. Well, thank you, Carol. Thank you, Steve. Roy, I won't ever make you stay in that bed again. [Laughter] I was simply trying to get even for all the nights he's bent my ear. [Laughter]

I want to thank all the officers of the Democratic Party who are here, all the distinguished elected officials, and all the members of our administration who are here. And I want to thank you.

Some of you may have noticed that I had a press conference today where there was one or two questions about campaign finance. [Laughter] And they said, “Well, does it set a good example that you're going to this fundraiser tonight?” And I said, “Yes, I think it does, because there is no system which has been offered which is completely publicly funded from start to finish and funds the political parties. So we have to depend upon people to help us.”

And this group, as Alan Solomont said earlier, has been responsible for dramatically increasing the number of business people and entrepreneurs all across America that have been a part of our party, broadening our

base, giving us a chance to go forward. I thank you, Tom, for being willing to take over the leadership of it. I think it's a good thing if people like Tom or Steve, who had a very successful career in business and worked at the grassroots level, want to come in and be part of the Democratic Party.

I also think it's terribly important that the President see as many people as possible, from as many walks of life as possible, from as many places in this country as possible, who actually know something about what's going on in the country and how people are living and what the challenges are.

And as I said today, I never had anyone in 4 years who asked me to make a decision as President based on being a financial contributor, and I have never made such a decision. But I think we should listen to each other. I mean, you all have to listen to me all the time, and every now and then for me to take a little time to listen to you I think is pretty good because even Presidents need to learn. And almost no one learns when they're talking, and almost no one fails to learn when they're listening.

So I think this is a good thing, and I welcome you here, and I hope you're glad to be here. And let me also say that—[*applause*]. Thank you. Having said that, I do want to compliment the new leadership of the party and the old leadership of the party for taking some unilateral initiatives to push the campaign finance reform system along by coming out against things that are legal that we're not going to do anymore because we want to try to push the system along, saying that if you can't vote, you shouldn't contribute, that companies that are primarily foreign-owned should not contribute, and that we would limit our large contributions. I think that's a good thing.

But I also would urge you to help us pass a campaign finance reform bill that is fair, that is bipartisan, that does not give undue advantage to either party, and that gives challengers as well as incumbents a fair chance at the ears, the minds, and the hearts of the voters. I think that's a very important thing to do.

We were talking around the table here at dinner—my impression is—and I ran for Congress in 1974 and got beat by the way,

but I did all right—but that was the first election under the old campaign finance reform, which was then the new campaign finance reform law. And my impression is that it did work to give people a greater degree of confidence that there were reasonable rules, regulations, and balance in the funding system.

What's happened now is the explosion of technology and the escalation of cost and the multiplication of the way people communicate with one another and the proliferation of various groups who are doing it, and two Supreme Court decisions have basically swamped the old system.

Now, there are very few of you who run enterprises who, even if you've been in business 20 years, could possibly be using the same communication system with the same budget in the same way that you were 20 years ago. So it is unreasonable to expect that our Nation could have the right balance drawn between having a system that is largely privately financed but has adequate rules of disclosure, rules of conduct, and limitations, with a system that was written over 20 years ago, during which time we've had the biggest explosion in differences in the way people communicate and relate to each other politically than in any 20-year period certainly in the 20th century. So I hope you will help us get that done.

The other point I'd like to make to you tonight is that you ought to be proud of what you have done. You know that the, the sort of superficial results: In '96 we had our first successful reelection for a President in 60 years. And someone, just to make sure I understood that, sent me the January 4, 1937 copy of Life Magazine, which I had framed and hung up in the White House so I don't forget that.

We elected a Democrat, the first Asian-American Governor in the United States, something I'm very proud of. That's another thing I want to say. We welcome first-generation immigrant Americans into the Democratic Party—[*applause*—we want them here. And it has been my personal experience—one of the richest aspects of being President and running for President twice has been getting to know in a personal way very large numbers of people who are first-generation Americans, who still come to our

shores seeking opportunity and making opportunity. And virtually without exception, they give this country many times over what they ever ask from it. And I think that is a very good thing.

We had the first woman Governor ever in the State of New Hampshire. And we carried New Hampshire for the second time, and that's only happened three times in the history of the State that a Democrat's won there twice. And I'm very grateful to them. We had 100 new Democratic legislators. We picked up some seats in the House.

So we're—those things were good. But what I want you to do is just take a minute tonight to look behind that, to understand what I believe 20, 30 years from now when people look back on this time, what they will about it. For almost 30 years, the other party has dominated Presidential politics, and the salient issues dividing the voters, I would argue, have been the power of appeals to people's differences based on race and religion and extreme political views as opposed to appeal to community.

In the last 16 years, the argument of what we Democrats called, "trickle-down economics" and what the other fellows called, "supply-side economics"—that is that if you cut taxes enough, you would generate so much revenue the budget would be balanced, and if it wasn't, it didn't really matter, and we quadrupled our debt in 12 years following that theory—and the argument that the Government is the problem—and so if we just chalked Washington full of people who hated their Government, things would be wonderful out in the country.

If you go all the way back to '68 and watch the Presidential elections unfold, any analysis would say that those things were very powerful components of that. What has happened in just the last 4 years? Number one, we haven't abolished the divisive feelings Americans have about each other, but we've come a long way toward subordinating them to the idea that we are one community, and we're better off if we relate to each other across the lines that divide us, and it's a big part of our meal ticket to the 21st century. That is a huge, significant step forward.

And even in places where people didn't agree with me about specific issues—for ex-

ample, when I stood up for the proposition that affirmative action should be reformed but not abolished at this point in time—in California the voters disagreed in the vote on the initiative, but they voted for the Clinton/Gore ticket for reelection. Why? Because I think people know deep down inside, we've got to go forward together. That's a big thing. It's a significant change.

Number two, the theory of trickle-down economics was tested and abolished in 1993 with our budget, our much maligned budget passed only by members of our party. Four years later, we know who was right and who was wrong. We have had—[*applause*—the deficit went down by almost two-thirds. Inequality decreased among working families for the first time in 20 years. We increased our investment in education and technology. And the economy produced 11 million jobs plus for the first time in a 4-year term in history. So we replaced trickle-down economics with invest-and-grow economics—in trade and reach out to the rest of the world. It's working. That is a significant thing.

And the third thing we did, I talked about in the Inaugural. We said Government is not the problem. That's wrong. But Government is not the solution. We have to be the solution. Democratic Government is simply the gift our Founders gave us to meet our challenges and to pursue our dreams that must be met and pursued in common. And the primary function of Government today is to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, to build strong careers, strong families, and strong communities and then to keep us the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and democracy.

And we have done that. And you should be very proud of that. That is what you helped to create. There are other things. Social problems used to be rhetorical instruments of political campaigns which no one really expected to change very much. So whether you were tough on crime or not was largely a function of who could talk tougher in campaigns.

We went out and wrote a crime bill based on what the police officers, the community patrol people, the community leaders in this country said would work to bring the crime

rate down and to contribute to what people were doing in some communities already in America to bring the crime rate down. And we know that community policing, we know that tougher punishment for repeat offenders, and we know that giving young kids something to say yes to as well as something to say no to all work. And we've had now 4 years of declining crime. That is a very significant thing. Nobody has to believe that crime is inevitable anymore.

We had—long before this welfare bill passed, we were out there giving States and communities permission to try new things that would move people from welfare to work, and 2.1 million people now have moved in only 4 years from welfare to work, the biggest decline in American history.

And let me just say—I want to say some more about that in a minute, but my decision to sign the welfare reform bill was based in large measure on my unshakable conviction that we can go the rest of the way and that we have to build a community-based system where able-bodied people are not segregated, the unemployed, from those on welfare. We need a family- and work-oriented, community-based system of full employment for people who are capable of working.

And of course, when the economy is down, there will be more people out of work. And when the economy is working, there will be more people in work. But you have to play a role in that, and I'll say something about that in a minute.

This was a huge deal. Nobody believes that the welfare rolls have to grow forever now—2.1 million fewer people on welfare. So social problems are something more than the rhetoric of campaigns now, they're about how people live.

We've also put what I think of as the right kind of family values back at the center of our policymaking. What is it we can do to help families cope with the challenges of family and work and family and culture. That's what the Family and Medical Leave Act was all about. That's what the V-chip and the television rating systems were all about. That's what all that was about. How are people going to juggle all these balls and still do the most important thing in life, which is to do a good job raising their children?

It's the number one job any person ever has. How can we do that?

Well, we're moving in the right direction on that. All these changes have been made in just the last 4 years. It's a good basis from which we have to go forward. And I'm going to give the State of the Union Address in a few days, and I will focus on what I hope we can do together, working with the Republicans to balance the budget, to put education front and center on our national agenda so we have national standards and we open the doors of college to all, to build on this families first agenda, and to keep the crime rate coming down and to expand health care coverage and to reform the systems of Social Security and Medicare so they're there for the next generation and they don't bankrupt the budget and to continue to reach out to the rest of the world.

And this is the last thing I'd like to say. Because I believe we should talk, and I should also listen as well as talk, I always tell people who contribute to our efforts that you have even more opportunities and responsibilities to make your voice heard. And I would like to just say two things. There are many things I will ask for your help on, but I want to serve notice there are two things that I will ask for your help on.

Number one relates to what Mr. Grossman used to do before he came to the party. I said if Steve Grossman could run AIPAC and keeps those folks together, he ought to be able to unify the Democrats. And all the members of AIPAC thought that was funny.

But one of the things that we have to recognize is, there is no such thing in the 21st century as being strong at home and, therefore, saying, you don't care what happens abroad. We cannot be strong at home unless we are also strong abroad. And that is about more than the defense budget. That means they're going—that means, among other things, now that they're reforming the United Nations, we have new leadership, we got to pay the money we owe them. We can't any longer be the biggest debtor at the U.N. We got to show up and pay our way. We can't expect to lead the world if we won't even do the minimum required of a responsible country.

And number two, we have to invest some measure of our money. We spend less of our budget than any great country in the world on foreign affairs, but we have to spend enough to enable our country to lead the way for peace and freedom. And I hope you will help us convince the Congress of that and our fellow citizens.

Second, and closer to home, I know that this welfare reform bill can be made to work. I think we have to change some of the provisions relating to immigrants and some other things, but the substance of the bill simply says, if you're able-bodied, within 2 years you have to move from welfare to work. And if you do, as Governor Romer said, we'll give you more child care; we'll support you in other ways; we'll keep the health care guarantee for your kids; we'll help you with transportation. But you have to do it.

Now, you might say that is inherently impossible because last year in a boom economy there were six applicants for every entry-level job opening in Chicago and nine for every entry-level job opening in St. Louis. So how can you do that? The answer is, I can't, but you can. And now every State in the country has the power today to take the welfare check and give it to an employer as a wage and training supplement for a year or more and, if it's a small business employer, to keep covering the children with health care. Every one.

I've asked the Congress to adopt a special tax credit that would give every employer who hires someone certified from welfare up to \$10,000 a year in salary a 50 percent tax credit. Those two things together are more than enough incentive for people to marginally add to the work force if they've got a healthy business and they want to do something for their country.

And you think about it. If small business, medium-sized and large, and for-profit and private institutions like churches and community groups, if we said—businesses saying, "For every 25 employees I've got, if I have these incentives at the grassroots level, I'll hire somebody off welfare," this problem would go away tomorrow. Oh, yeah, there would be people who would have a hard time

making it, and they'd fall on and off the rolls, and we'd have to work with education and training and preparing people. But the problem, as a big problem, would go away. And we would have what I have always wanted, which is a community-based system that treats all people who are out of work with dignity—dignity by giving them the support they need for their children and dignity by giving them the expectation that if they're able-bodied they will work when they can. [Applause]—a good thing to do.

But I just would say to you, we have to set an example here. And we are going to have to go out and find the people to do this. And all of you are going to have to help me do this. And I'll have an organized way of doing that which I will explain to you over the next several days and give you a better chance to participate in it. But that's what being a Democrat means. We can be pro-business and have a social conscience. We can be for very high standards in school and still be compassionate for people that need a hand up.

We need to do things that prove that you don't have to make false choices—you can grow the economy, protect the environment, you can balance the budget and invest in education, you can be strong at home and be strong abroad. And we can build a unifying vision that will bring this country together and move it forward.

That's what I want you to be a part of. I want you to be excited. I want you to be happy. I want you to be proud to be a part of what we're trying to do. And I want you to be a part of what we're trying to do. You are very welcome.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:12 p.m. at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Carol Pensky, treasurer, Steve Grossman, national chair, Gov. Roy Romer, general chair, Alan Solomont, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Reporting on Terrorists Who
Threaten the Middle East Peace
Process**

January 28, 1997

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

I hereby report to the Congress on the developments concerning the national emergency with respect to terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that was declared in Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995. This report is submitted pursuant to section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c). Since the crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten the Middle East peace process has not been resolved, on January 21, 1997, I renewed this national emergency in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)).

1. On January 23, 1995, I signed Executive Order 12947, "Prohibiting Transactions with Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process" (the "Order") (60 *Fed. Reg.* 5079, January 25, 1995). The order blocks all property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of 12 terrorist organizations that threaten the Middle East peace process as identified in an Annex to the order. The order also blocks the property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction of persons designated by the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Attorney General, who are found (1) to have committed, or to pose a significant risk of committing, acts of violence that have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process, or (2) to assist in, sponsor, or provide financial, material, or technological support for, or services in support of, such acts of violence. In addition, the order blocks all property and interests in property subject to U.S. jurisdiction in which there is any interest of persons determined by the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, to be owned or controlled by, or

to act for or on behalf of, any other person designated pursuant to the order (collectively "Specially Designated Terrorists" or "SDTs").

The order further prohibits any transaction or dealing by a United States person or within the United States in property or interests in property of SDTs, including the making or receiving of any contribution of funds, goods, or services to or for the benefit of such persons. This prohibition includes donations that are intended to relieve human suffering. Designations of persons blocked pursuant to the order are effective upon the date of determination by the Secretary of State or his delegate, or the Director of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) acting under authority delegated by the Secretary of the Treasury. Public notice of blocking is effective upon the date of filing with the *Federal Register* or upon prior actual notice.

2. On January 25, 1995, the Department of the Treasury issued a notice listing persons blocked pursuant to Executive Order 12947 who have been designated by the President as terrorist organizations threatening the Middle East peace process or who have been found to be owned or controlled by, or to be acting for or on behalf of, these terrorist organizations (60 *Fed. Reg.* 5084, January 25, 1995). The notice identified 31 entities that act for or on behalf of the 12 Middle East terrorist organizations listed in the Annex to Executive Order 12947, as well as 18 individuals who are leaders or representatives of these groups. In addition the notice provides 9 name variations or pseudonyms used by the 18 individuals identified. The list identifies blocked persons who have been found to have committed, or to pose a risk of committing, acts of violence that have the purpose of disrupting the Middle East peace process or to have assisted in, sponsored, or provided financial, material, or technological support for, or service in support of, such acts of violence, or are owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of other blocked persons. The Department of the Treasury issued three additional notices adding the names of three individuals, as well as their pseudonyms, to the List of SDTs (60 *Fed. Reg.* 41152, August 11, 1995; 60 *Fed. Reg.* 44932, August 29, 1995; and 60 *Fed. Reg.* 58435,

November 27, 1995). The OFAC, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Attorney General, is continuing to expand the list of Specially Designated Terrorists, including both organizations and individuals, as additional information is developed.

3. On February 2, 1996, the OFAC issued the Terrorism Sanctions Regulations (the "TSRs") (61 *Fed. Reg.* 3805, February 2, 1996). The TSRs implement the President's declaration of a national emergency and imposition of sanctions against certain persons whose acts of violence have the purpose or effect of disrupting the Middle East peace process.

4. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from July 23, 1996, through January 22, 1997, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of the national emergency with respect to organizations that disrupt the Middle East peace process are estimated at approximately \$285,000.

5. Executive Order 12947 provides this Administration with a new tool for combating fundraising in this country on behalf of organizations that use terror to undermine the Middle East peace process. The order makes it harder for such groups to finance these criminal activities by cutting off their access to sources of support in the United States and to U.S. financial facilities. It is also intended to reach charitable contributions to designated organizations and individuals to preclude diversion of such donations to terrorist activities.

In addition, comprehensive counterterrorism legislation was enacted on April 24, 1996, that would strengthen our ability to prevent terrorist acts, identify those who carry them out, and bring them to justice. The combination of Executive Order 12947 and the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 demonstrate the United States determination to confront and combat those who would seek to destroy the Middle East peace process, and our commitment to the global fight against terrorism.

I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to apply economic sanctions against extremists seeking to destroy the hopes of peaceful coexistence between Arabs

and Israelis as long as these measures are appropriate, and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 29.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Military Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters in Arlington, Virginia January 29, 1997

The President. Let me say, first of all, I'm delighted to have a chance to be back at the Pentagon to meet with our commanders-in-chief. This is the first meeting for Secretary Cohen and our new national security team. We're all looking forward to it.

America is very proud of our men and women in uniform, and they have maintained an extraordinary tempo of operations for the last several years, being deployed in many different places for long periods of time. And the leadership and planning that has gone into these operations are a tribute to the people around this table and to others in our Armed Forces. And I'm looking forward to discussing what we're going to do in the next year and having this meeting.

War Crimes in Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, do you think that U.S. troops could play a role in trying to arrest some of the accused war criminals that are out and about in Bosnia at the moment?

The President. I think that the agreement that was struck at Dayton and signed in the Paris Peace Treaty says what our military believes is responsible, that if we're going to go there and do the UNPROFOR mission, it would be impossible to do that and spend your time taking affirmative action over—as a police force, in effect, international police force—but that if they come in contact with people who are wanted and where there is, in effect, a warrant out for them, they ought to apprehend them. But I think it would be

very difficult for them to do the mission, particularly with a smaller number of people and, in effect, spend full-time doing that.

It's always—I think at Dayton—everyone knew from Dayton on that this was one of the most difficult things, that they couldn't walk away from this evidence of war crimes, and that there needed to be some way of proceeding but that there was no way that you could effectively do the job of UNPROFOR, which was the most important thing to try to stabilize the country and the borders and, in effect, make that the primary mission.

Maybe I ought to let General Joulwan answer that question, but I think that's the right answer.

General George A. Joulwan. Yes, Mr. President. *[Laughter]*

Q. Do you oppose the international group that's been proposed?

The President. Well, what I want to look—I have asked—at the University of Connecticut, when I spoke at the—Senator Dodd not very long ago—I said I thought we ought to consider whether there should be a permanent international war crimes tribunal, which of course would require some sort of way of carrying out its mandate. But that—if we do that, we need to look at it not just in terms of Bosnia but over the long run.

We need to recognize that we can't expect people who are sent into a very volatile situation and ask us to stabilize borders, to ensure the security of cross-border crossings and all the other things that UNPROFOR has had to do, you can't expect those same people to do this other work unless they literally come in contact with those who should be arrested and returned. So there would have to be a completely different way of dealing with it if we're going to have a permanent war crimes tribunal, which I think has a lot of merit.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:25 a.m. in the Army Conference Room at the Pentagon. In his remarks, the President referred to Gen. George A. Joulwan, USA, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Presenting the Microenterprise Awards

January 30, 1997

Thank you. Welcome to the White House. I would like to begin with a word of thanks to, first, Secretary Rubin, who became Treasury Secretary and, before that, head of the National Economic Council, with a passion rare for someone in his previous line of work—*[laughter]*—rare, to bring the benefits of enterprise to people who had been too long denied them, and an absolute conviction, too rare all across our country, that just because people were poor and in distress did not mean they could not do better, did not mean that we could not spread the benefits of enterprise to the cities and to the isolated rural areas where they had been too long absent.

I'd also like to thank the First Lady for beginning this obsession, almost, that we have with microenterprise with me. I guess—I asked her before I came up here, and we were laughing—you know, one of the great burdens of growing older is that you can't remember when something happened even if you remember exactly what happened. *[Laughter]* And I said, "Now, when was it that I came home and told you, 'I hope I live long enough to see Mohammed Unis win a Nobel Prize?'"—*[laughter]*—because it was my first exposure, through our friends in Chicago who brought me in touch with him, to the whole idea that microenterprise might be exploded across a nation. And she said, "I think it was '85, but it might have been '86." So to be literally accurate, more than 10 years ago—*[laughter]*—we started the long road which we could not have predicted would bring us all to this day.

These awards for excellence in microenterprise development simply recognize that our country has been and will be built on the enterprise of our people, on their ideas, their energies, their willingness to take risks, their willingness to pursue their dreams. That is the story of all the new businesses in this country. And with the right opportunity, those kinds of dreams can become real for countless numbers of people to support their families and strengthen their com-

munities and build our country into the kind of nation we want in a new century.

Indeed, it is now a commonplace observation that often the greatest contributions, economic contributions, in our communities come from the smallest businesses in the aggregate. They literally can transform communities, offering a path to success for Americans who would otherwise not have had it.

If we can spread the opportunity for microenterprise for making that first beginning across this country, we can offer a new path to success for Americans who today are left out of the economic mainstream. In rural America it may be a person who once worked on a family farm. In urban areas it may be a parent who can't juggle an office or a plant job with a family or who's been left out of the workforce for childrearing or who is struggling to move from welfare to work. It might be older Americans who are retired from their previous jobs. It might be people with disabilities who aren't mobile but who have a skill, an idea, a capacity to contribute. It might be laidoff workers looking for a second chance.

There are huge numbers of people in our country, as all of you know, who are literally brimming with initiative and desire who are willing to be responsible and work hard. Microenterprise helps to put such people on their feet and gives people with courage and genius a chance to reach for the stars. To do that, they must have opportunity. There are people often who need these opportunities who are completely unable to get proper business training or loans or even a hearing from a lender under the established systems. But when the opportunity is not there for them, make no mistake about it, their loss is also our loss. For every person whose potential goes unfulfilled, there is a problem or the absence of an opportunity that affects the entire Nation.

And when they have an opportunity, we move closer together in our common goals for our society, for after all, all of us want every American to be able to be responsible and to work and to find fulfillment. We want to raise the incomes of people who can be fully participating in our society. We want to promote the growth of business. We want to ensure that everybody has a stake in the

success of our communities, because we know there are no unsuccessful communities where everybody has a stake in its success.

As the First Lady has said with a lot of her compelling examples today, we have seen the value of microenterprise demonstrated in much poorer countries, bringing new dignity and better lives for women and children, especially. But we know it has also worked in America. One of the things that we worked to do in our home State was to create a community development bank and a good-faith fund microenterprise program.

Since I became President, we have tried to go national with this micro idea in a very macro way. And again, I say it would not have been possible if it hadn't been for the support of Secretary Rubin and his considerable persuasive powers in convincing other people who had never thought about it that this was in fact a good idea. We want microenterprise to take root everywhere. We recognize, however, that our efforts alone are not enough. We have to have a partnership between the public and private sectors if we're going to have adequate support of microenterprise development all across the United States.

I also want to emphasize that microenterprise must be part of a larger strategy to help every American make the most of his or her own life. There are many pieces to the strategy, and we must all play a role to have the whole strategy succeed. We also reformed the Community Reinvestment Act, to revive communities in distress and ensure that private sector capital flows to all—all—credit-worthy borrowers without prejudice. That is unleashing billions of dollars in private investment in those communities, and I am committed to maintaining that effort.

In 1992, I called for a nationwide network of community development banks, while asking the Nation's banks and thrifts to make sound investments to expand opportunity, enterprise, and homeownership in distressed communities. Last year, Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund made its first round of awards to 32 CDFI's around the Nation. This is an initiative with enormous potential to help people who have been left out come in and be lifted up by their own endeavors.

Before recognizing the awardees, I want to make two further announcements today in support of these common efforts. First, we are committed to increase the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund by a billion dollars over the next 5 years. That is almost triple its current funding. [Applause] Thank you. And all of you know that properly run, these funds can create more jobs with \$100,000 than some traditional efforts can with a million. So I ask for your support and your continued demonstration that this is a good investment for all Americans.

Second, I want to announce a bold new effort to help Americans in hard-hit communities go to work. We have finalized a new \$10-million welfare-to-work partnership between Chase Manhattan Bank, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. This three-way partnership will fund two private sector welfare-to-work projects designed to raise employment rates by as much as 20 to 30 percent in high poverty urban neighborhoods. More than 15 sites will be funded in both projects; three of them, Brooklyn, Central Harlem, in New York City and Sandtown-Winchester in Baltimore, have already been selected for one project. Los Angeles, Cleveland, San Antonio, Seattle, and Louisville are among the finalists for the other.

I'd like to ask Peter Goldmark, the President of the Rockefeller Foundation; William Harrison, the Vice President of the Chase Manhattan Corporation and Chase Bank; and Michael Stegman, Assistant Secretary at HUD, to stand so we can all thank you for your work in putting together this very amazing and very hopeful project. Gentleman, would you please stand? [Applause]

Microenterprise, by giving people the tools they need to help themselves, will reinforce efforts like this. And that's what our award recipients do every day. Today we recognize them for their successful efforts. They are the engineers and the pioneers of potential. We need more of them in America. I'd like to ask each of them to stand as I announce their endeavors and their award.

First, the Women's Self-Employment Project is a leader in advocating for low in-

come women in Chicago and assisting them to pursue self-employment to lift themselves from poverty and welfare dependency. It trains the women in entrepreneurship, marketing, and in getting loans. It has served more than 3,000 women in the past 10 years. Most of the clients have household incomes of \$15,000. And listen to this, their business survival rate is 79 percent. Accepting for the Women's Self-Employment Project the award for Excellence in Program Delivery: Poverty Alleviation, is Connie Evans. Thank you, Connie.

Accion U.S. Network has made an impact in New York, Chicago, San Diego, Albuquerque, San Antonio, and El Paso. Its name—"action" in Spanish—translates into opportunity for people it serves through specialized, streamlined loans. Most of its several thousand borrowers are Hispanic or low income entrepreneurs of homebased businesses. It also lends to others who lack access to credit. One of its best success stories is that the Safaraaz Saalim who went from being homeless to running a successful one-man salad restaurant in downtown San Diego. I'll go there next time I'm there. [Laughter] Accion has shown itself to be a model of disciplined management.

The Cascadia Revolving Fund operates in rural and urban communities of the Pacific Northwest—no, no, we're going to do them together; I know what I'm doing—[laughter]—providing intensive services to new and young businesses and helping them to stay in business. That's a big accomplishment because Cascadia specializes in high risk businesses. It is focused on helping low income people, women-owned firms and businesses that locate in economically distressed communities. For their work, Accion and Cascadia Revolving Fund are receiving awards for excellence in program delivery, access to credit, and the recipients are Bill Burrus for Accion and Patricia Grossman for the Cascadia Revolving Fund. Let's give them a hand. [Applause]

The North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center established a microenterprise loan program several years ago to combat the problem of lack of capital to start up businesses in rural areas. Its solution—a highly effective model for statewide deliv-

ery of microenterprise services. It makes both individual and group loans and provides business training through local community-based partners. These partners identify potential borrowers and underwrite their loans. This is community action at its best, growing the economy at the grassroots. And we have another winner in this category as well. [Laughter]

From its base in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Working Capital also provides small loans to groups of businessowners who form peer groups. To further help the cause, Working Capital created the microenterprise toolkit, a step-by-step guide to starting a microenterprise program. This innovation will help spawn a whole new wave of entrepreneurs, something all of us can cheer. For their leaps in creativity, the awards for excellence in program innovation go to Billy Ray Hall of the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center and Jeffrey Ashe of Working Capital. Let's give them a hand. [Applause]

The Nebraska Microenterprise Partnership Fund is a model of public-private partnership. It is an intermediary, raising money from public and private sources to build a statewide grassroots network of microfunds. In just a short time, the Partnership Fund has sown the seeds of a strong network of microenterprise, demonstrating that Federal, State, and local government can in fact work with community-based organizations to support the smallest businesses.

The Self-Employment Learning Project of Washington, DC, is the preeminent effort to research and evaluate the development of microenterprise and the people it serves in the United States. It has been instrumental in setting down the foundation for the growth of microenterprise and promoting its potential as a road to economic opportunity. Before the Learning Project was established in 1991, there was little information on microenterprise, and well, here we are today celebrating them and more information. It has been a real engine in our progress, and I hope today that we are helping the Self-Employment Learning Project to get more information out about this around the country. For their fine work, they receive awards for excellence in public or private support of

microenterprise development: Gene Severens of the Nebraska Microenterprise Partnership Fund and Peggy Clark of the Self-Employment Learning Project.

Again, let me thank all of you for being here. Again, I thank Secretary Rubin. I also want to thank Brian Atwood of AID and Phil Lader, the Small Business Administrator, for their intense support of our microenterprise efforts.

And let me say, as all of you know, we have only scratched the surface. And I hope by our being together here today you will go home reenergized. And I hope that because of the publicity this event generates, you will all get hundreds of calls asking you—[laughter]—how more communities and more neighborhoods can become involved in this great endeavor. And I hope that we can depend upon Senator Kennedy and Congressman Davis to have yet another good project to become evangelical about. [Laughter]

Thank you all very much, and good day. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:53 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Proclamation 6970—National African American History Month, 1997

January 30, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For much of the past century, the contributions that African Americans and other minorities have made to our Nation's progress were not fully recognized. African American History Month is an important means by which we help right that wrong. It awakens our collective social conscience to the importance of giving all of our children a complete and accurate record of their country's history. And, perhaps most important, it helps to reinforce America's highest ideals—our respect for diversity, community, and freedom.

During this time of celebration and learning we are inspired by the courage, wisdom,

and vision of men and women such as Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Carter G. Woodson, and Fannie Lou Hamer. These great Americans dedicated their lives to ensuring that the ideals of freedom and equality are guaranteed to all. Their noble efforts—and the efforts of those they inspired—renewed the spirit of our founding creed: “All men are created equal.” As we approach the 21st century, it is more vital than ever that we remain vigilant in protecting the ideals these visionary leaders fought so hard to uphold. We must continue to extend the circle of equality, justice, and opportunity until it embraces every American.

As we pay homage to our past, throughout the month of February and all year long, let us, with enlightened minds and emboldened hearts, continue the legacy of the civil rights movement. Let us present a diverse but united front to those who would reverse the vital progress that has been made. As the world’s beacon of hope and freedom, let us approach the new millennium keeping this vigil.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 1997 as National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs that raise awareness of African American history.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., February 3, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on February 4.

Executive Order 13034—Extension of Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses

January 30, 1997

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Extension. The Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses (the “Committee”), established pursuant to Executive Order 12961 of May 26, 1995, is hereby extended for the purposes set forth herein. All provisions of that order relating to membership and administration shall remain in effect. All Committee appointments, as well as the President’s designation of a Chairperson, shall remain in effect. The limitations set forth in section 2(c)–(e) and section 4(a) of Executive Order 12961 shall also remain in effect. The Committee shall remain subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

Sec. 2. Functions. (a) The Committee shall report to the President through the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(b) The Committee shall have two principal roles:

(1) Oversight of the ongoing investigation being conducted by the Department of Defense with the assistance, as appropriate, of other executive departments and agencies into possible chemical or biological warfare agent exposures during the Gulf War; and

(2) Evaluation of the Federal Government’s plan for and progress towards the implementation of the Committee’s recommendations contained in its Final Report submitted on December 31, 1996.

(c) The Committee shall provide advice and recommendations related to its oversight and evaluation responsibilities.

(d) The Committee may also provide additional advice and recommendations prompted by any new developments related to its original functions as set forth in section 2(b) of Executive Order 12961.

(e) The Committee shall submit by letter a status report by April 30, 1997, and a final supplemental report by October 31, 1997, unless otherwise directed by the President.

Sec. 3. General Provisions. (a) The Committee shall terminate 30 days after submitting its final supplemental report.

(b) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and it is not intended to create any right, benefit or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 30, 1997.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:55 a.m., January 31, 1997]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 3.

Statement on the Death of Frank Tejada

January 31, 1997

Hillary and I were saddened to learn today of the death of Congressman Frank Tejada. Congressman Tejada spent the last years of his life not only fighting for the citizens of San Antonio but also courageously battling cancer. Frank was a friend who dedicated himself to serving his country and community. He will long be remembered for his perseverance in the face of adversity. He endeared himself to all who knew him, always looking out for the best interests of his constituents, members of the military, and the Hispanic and veterans' communities in particular. We will miss him greatly. Our thoughts and prayers are with his children, Marissa, Sonya, and Frank, his mother Lillie, his extended family members, and his many friends at this difficult time.

Statement on Funding for International Family Planning

January 31, 1997

In the next few weeks, Congress will face an important vote about the United States' support for voluntary family planning in developing countries.

The funds to continue our support have already been approved, as part of our Fiscal Year '97 budget. At issue is whether the money will be released on March 1, or whether it will be further delayed by 4 months, until July.

It is my determination that a delay will cause serious, irreversible, and avoidable harm. In the balance are the lives and well-being of many thousands of women and children and American credibility as the leader in family planning programs around the world.

Opponents of this funding have tried to mischaracterize this upcoming vote and the work of United States Agency for International Development in family planning. So, let me be clear: The United States provides family planning support where it is wanted and needed. We are prohibited by law from ever funding abortion—and we abide faithfully by that law. Indeed, the work we have funded in developing countries has been supportive of families, helping them to flourish. It has improved women's health and women's station in life. It has allowed generations of children to grow and be educated in safer and healthier environments. It has been instrumental in helping to prevent the spread of disease, including AIDS. And, make no mistake: It has prevented untold numbers of abortions and maternal deaths. This much is clear: In preventing abortions, maternal and child deaths, family planning has been proven effective.

If we delay support for family planning by even 4 months, denying safe and effective contraception to couples who depend on these programs, we will see a rise in unintended pregnancies and maternal deaths and a tragic recourse to unsafe and unsanitary methods to terminate those pregnancies.

I want to emphasize this vote should have nothing to do with partisan politics. In fact, right now, a bipartisan group of legislators in the House and the Senate are hard at work to pass this bill for the timely release of funds. And for a generation, through administrations led by both parties, the United States has led the world in family planning programs. Studies show that our efforts, as part of an international strategy, have prevented more than 500 million unintended pregnancies.

Rapid population growth undermines economic and social development in poor countries. With our support for family planning, the scarce resources in developing countries—from infrastructure and environment to nutrition and education—can be better used to allow progress for their people.

Maintaining and building on this progress depends on our being consistent in our actions and adhering to our values.

Cooperative international efforts to address rapid population growth serve American foreign policy interests in protecting the Earth's environment, promoting human rights, and improving basic standards of health. It enhances the social, economic, and political status of women. It ensures global economic progress and strong markets for United States exports. It encourages international stability and it reduces pressures that lead to refugee flows and migration.

I appeal to the Members of Congress to examine the consequences of a delay, to weigh those against the benefits of fulfilling an urgent and continuing American commitment, and to vote for the March 1, 1997, unconditional release of these voluntary international family planning funds.

If Congress fails to take this simple action, we risk a cost to humanity that we will bear well into the next century.

Surely, we agree that we must do all we can to prevent unintended pregnancies and abortions. With passage of this bill, we can do that. The decision is now in the hands of the Congress.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Funds for International Family Planning

January 31, 1997

Dear _____:

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 518A(d) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1997 (Public Law 104-208) (the "Act"), I hereby find that the July 1, 1997, limitation on obligations imposed by subsection (a) of section 518A is having a negative impact on the proper functioning of the population planning program. Subject to a joint resolution of approval by the Congress to be adopted no later than February 28, 1997, as specified in section 518A(d) of the Act, funds for these activities may be made available beginning March 1, 1997.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and Robert L. Livingston, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

January 25

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended the Alfalfa Club dinner in the ballroom of the Capital Hilton Hotel.

January 26

In the evening, the President hosted a Super Bowl party in the Family Theater at

the White House. After the game, he placed a telephone call to the Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers.

January 29

The White House announced that the President will meet at the White House with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel on February 13; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority on March 3; President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt on March 10; and King Hussein I of Jordan on March 18.

January 30

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Jacques Chirac of France concerning President Chirac's upcoming visit to Moscow.

The President announced his intention to appoint Paul P. Craig to the Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board.

The President released \$39 million in previously appropriated emergency funds to the Interior Department for restoration of public facilities and lands damaged by natural disasters in 1996.

January 31

The White House announced that the President invited President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain to the United States for an official working visit in the last week of April.

The White House announced that Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal has accepted the President's invitation for an official working visit at the White House on April 3.

The President directed the Department of Health and Human Services to release \$210 million in emergency Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funds for States, tribes, and territories nationwide.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted January 28

Federico Peña, of Colorado, to be Secretary of Energy, vice Hazel Rollins O'Leary, resigned.

Submitted January 30

Ann Jorgenson, of Iowa, to be a member of the Farm Credit Administration Board, Farm Credit Administration, for a term expiring May 21, 2002, vice Gary C. Byrne, resigned.

George W. Black, Jr., of Georgia, to be a member of the National Transportation Safety Board for a term expiring December 31, 2001 (reappointment).

Stanley A. Riveles, of Virginia, for the rank of Ambassador during his tenure of service as U.S. Commissioner to the Standing Consultative Commission.

Richard J. Tarplin, of New York, to be an Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, vice Jerry D. Klepner, resigned.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released January 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released January 28

Fact sheet on the report entitled "Support for a Democratic Transition in Cuba"

Statement by Office of Management and Budget Director Franklin D. Raines on the Congressional Budget Office's new budget forecast

Released January 29

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry and Deputy Press Secretary David Johnson

Released January 30

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry and Deputy Press Secretary Barry Toiv

Transcript of remarks by the First Lady and Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin at the presentation of the Microenterprise Awards

Released January 31

Transcript of a press briefing by Vice President Albert Gore and Alicia Munnell of the Council of Economic Advisers on the national economy

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the upcoming visit of President Jose Maria Aznar of Spain

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the upcoming visit of Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal

**Acts Approved
by the President**

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.

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