

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, February 28, 1997

The President's Radio Address

February 22, 1997

Good morning. Today I want to talk with you about our economy, what we can do to keep it growing, offering opportunities to all Americans who work for them.

When I took office 4 years ago, my most important job was to renew our economy. We put in place an economic plan that cut the deficit even as we increased investments in our people and expanded exports to record levels. We cut the deficit by 63 percent, from \$290 billion a year in 1992 to \$107 billion last year. Proportionally, it is now the smallest of any major economy. This has created the conditions for American businesses and workers to thrive, and they have.

Over the last several weeks, we've received the full data on our country's economic progress for the last 4 years. The economy created 11½ million new jobs for the first time ever in a single term. That includes a million construction jobs and millions of other good paying jobs. Entrepreneurs have started a record number of new businesses, hundreds of thousands of them owned by women and minorities. We've had the largest increase in homeownership ever, a big drop in the poverty rate, and a big increase in family income. And just this week, we learned that the combined rate of unemployment and inflation over the last 4 years is the lowest for a Presidential term since the 1960's.

Now we must continue our progress. We cut the deficit by two-thirds; it's time to finish the job. We must balance the budget to keep interest rates down and investment up and jobs coming in. But we must do it the right way. Today our economy is growing steady and strong. If we want to keep it growing, producing jobs and opportunity for our people as we enter a new century, then we simply must finish the job of balancing the budget, and we must do it this year. That is the only way to keep interest rates low, to keep

confidence high, to give businesses the ability to innovate for tomorrow. We must pass a balanced budget plan this year or face the consequences in years to come.

This month I submitted my plan to balance the budget by 2002. Our plan makes the hard decisions necessary to lock in the savings achieved and to ensure that the budget remains in balance in the future. It saves \$350 billion over the next 5 years, enough not only to balance the budget but also to cut taxes. It makes tough and specific cuts in spending, and ensures that those cuts will be carried out by imposing strict limits on the amounts Congress can spend each year. It ends hundreds of wasteful Government programs and projects, eliminates \$34 billion in corporate subsidies businesses don't need, and makes reforms in entitlement programs so they'll cost less in the future, extending the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for a decade while preserving quality health care for elderly Americans.

Even as the plan balances the budget, it also maintains the balance of our values. To prepare our people for the 21st century, I have challenged our Nation to build the world's best educational system. My plan increases investment in education and training to \$51 billion in 1998, a 20 percent increase. It provides tax cuts to help families pay for college, increases Pell grant scholarships for deserving students, advances the America Reads initiative to help every 8-year-old read on his or her own, and advances our goal of connecting every single classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000. It invests in our people in other ways as well, giving them tax cuts to help them raise their children or buy a home, extending health care coverage to 5 million more children, protecting the environment.

That is the right way to balance the budget. And balancing the budget only requires Congress' vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. We

must balance the budget, but a balanced budget amendment could cause more harm than good. It would prevent us from responding to foreign challenges abroad or economic trouble at home, if to do so resulted in even a minor budget deficit. And because it would write a specific economic policy into our Constitution, it could force the Secretary of the Treasury to cut Social Security, or drive the budget into courts of law when a deficit occurred when Congress was not working on the budget. In a court of law, judges could be forced to halt Social Security checks or to raise taxes just to meet the demands of the constitutional amendment.

These are results no one wants to see happen, but a balanced budget amendment could surely produce them. Instead, we should simply act this year and act together, for Democrats and Republicans have an historic opportunity to reach across party lines to enact the first balanced budget in a generation. Soon we will begin discussions with bipartisan leaders in Congress to craft a final plan. By coming to an agreement this year, we can take a giant step to prepare our country for the 21st century and give our children the future they deserve.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:17 p.m. on February 21 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 22.

Statement on the Death of Albert Shanker

February 22, 1997

Hillary and I were deeply saddened today to learn of the passing of Albert Shanker. Al spent his life in pursuit of one of the noblest of causes, the improvement of our public schools. Since 1964, he led educational organizations, first as the president of the United Federation of Teachers in New York and for 22 years as the president of the American Federation of Teachers. He challenged the country's teachers and schools to provide our children with the very best education possible and made a crusade out of the need for educational standards. He believed, as I do, that children should not go through

school without learning the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Eadie, and his family tonight.

Remarks to the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

February 24, 1997

Thank you very much. Good morning. Welcome to the White House. Dr. Ponder, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Shaw. Where's Bill Gray? Is he here? You're hiding your light under a bushel back there. [Laughter] I wanted to say again to all of you how grateful I am to Bill Gray for the historic role that he assumed in restoring democracy to Haiti. We've got another year behind us now, Bill, and we're still going. Thank you. Dr. Payne and Dr. Hackley, Mr. Secretary. I'd also like to thank Catherine LeBlanc for her work on the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Welcome to the White House. I'm especially glad you could join us during Black History Month as we pay tribute to the contributions of African-Americans to American life. None of those has been more important than our Nation's historically black colleges and universities. When the doors of college were closed to all but white students and black people's aspirations were scorned, historically black colleges and universities gave young African-Americans the high quality education they deserved, the pride they needed to rise above cruelty and bigotry, as the graduates and teachers of HBCU's haven't just taken care of themselves, they fought for freedom and equal opportunity for all other Americans as well.

This has been important throughout our history, and in the future it will be more important than ever before, because education will be more important than ever before. To prepare our people for the new century, every young American must have the world's best education.

You know better than anyone how much a difference an education can make. To name just a few of the young Americans who were educated at HBCU's, you'd have to look at

Justice Marshall, Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, Reverend Jesse Jackson, NAACP President Kweisi Mfume, Nobel Prize winner Toni Morrison, and of course Dr. King. Eighty-five percent of our Nation's black physicians, 80 percent of our African-American Federal judges, 75 percent of our black Ph.D.'s, 50 percent of our black business executives and elected officials all were educated at HBCU's.

Historically black colleges and universities have served with distinction, of course, in terms of their contributions to our administration: our former Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary; former Surgeon General, Dr. Joycelyn Elders; the Director of Presidential Personnel, Bob Nash; and, of course, as the Vice President said, Alexis Herman, who is here with us today and who did a superb job for us as Director of Public Liaison and, with your help, will be a great Secretary of Labor, and I want your help. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Over the last 4 years, we have put in place a comprehensive college opportunity strategy to make college available to every American citizen. I directed the Department of Education and the White House initiative on historical colleges to work to increase funding to HBCU's. We've made student loans less expensive and much easier to obtain under the direct student loan program. AmeriCorps, our national service program, has given tens of thousands of young people the chance to earn college tuition while serving in their communities. We have created already in the last budget 200,000 more work-study positions to help students work their way through college, and in the new budget there is another 100,000, which will mean we will go from 700,000 to one million work-study slots in only 4 years.

We know that financial aid is critically important. But some of your colleges, as many as 90 percent of the students receive financial aid. Last year, we increased the Pell grant program by 20 percent, taking the maximum grant up to \$2,700 from about, wherever it was, \$2,460. That was the biggest increase in 20 years.

This year's budget is bigger still. It increases Pell grants by another 25 percent, the largest increase again in well over 20

years, and increases the maximum Pell grant award to \$3,000 per year. It expands the program to include older students who are starting college late or returning to school. It raises the maximum family income level to include hundreds of thousands of families who did not qualify for Pell grants before. In total, these changes will help almost 350,000 more families send a family member to college. The balanced budget also includes a \$10,000 tax deduction to help families pay for college and a \$1,500 HOPE scholarship tax credit, which is enough to pay for the tuition at the typical community college in America for 2 years.

This college opportunity agenda will open the doors of college wider than ever before. Now we need to work to make sure that the Congress, without regard to party, will enact these changes into law.

Before I answer questions now, I'd like to ask for your help with one more thing. We all know that literacy is the basic tool of learning. But 40 percent of our children cannot read independently by the time they're 8 years old. We can and must do better. My budget includes more than \$2 billion to help us with the literacy challenge, but that is not enough.

I launched our America Reads initiative to mobilize an army of reading tutors all across America. And I asked college and university presidents to help me achieve that. I sent a senior member of the White House staff, Carol Rasco, to the Department of Education to work with Secretary Riley to make sure the America Reads initiative does that. We have dedicated several thousand AmeriCorps volunteers to becoming trained so they can, in turn, train reading tutors to work with schools, with parents, and with children to help make sure our children can read.

But now we need a lot of volunteers—as many as a million—and a lot of them will have to come from students. I am pleased to say that over 80 college presidents have already committed thousands of their work-study students to participate as reading tutors. I hope you will join them and commit a percentage of your own work-study students to help our children learn to read, because without literacy, the job manuals and

the history books are both closed and so are the doors of college. We need your help to open them wider.

I'm looking forward to working with you in the months and the years ahead, but especially this year to make sure that we pass this education agenda in Congress, number one, and number two, that we enlist the idealism, the ability, and the energy of our young college students in helping us to teach our children to read.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Henry Ponder, president, Harrison Wilson, chair, board of directors, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education; Talbert O. Shaw, president, Shaw University; William H. Gray III, president, United Negro College Fund; Joyce Payne, director, Office for the Advancement of Public Black Colleges; and Vic Hackley, chair, President's Advisory Board on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Remarks to the American Council on Education

February 24, 1997

Thank you very much. Mr. Secretary, that was a good speech—[laughter]—and fully illustrated Clinton's third law of politics, which is, whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high position. [Laughter] Their objectivity is stunning. [Laughter]

I thank Secretary Riley and all the people at the Department of Education for the work that they do. Stan Ikenberry, I'm glad to be here today with all of you. President Knapp, thank you for your moving remarks about the HOPE scholarship. You all laughed when Barry said he was making a great sacrifice by going to the Aspen Institute, but in Georgia, that's what they think. [Laughter]

President-elect Myers, and to my friend Barry Munitz—you know, we're all in a lather up here in Washington these days about campaign contributions. Everybody hates them, but nobody wants to go to public funding. So we seem destined to some period of hand-wringing. And since we're in a spirit of full disclosure, I have to tell you that in

addition to my coming here today, I received a gratuity, which I intend to disclose before the whole world. I complimented Barry on his watch, and he gave it to me. [Laughter] And cravenly, as we politicians are, I took it without blinking. [Laughter] He swears it cost \$18. [Laughter]

But I'll tell you why I bragged on it—and all of you more or less of my age group can identify with this—look how big the numbers are. I can—[laughter]—it's the first watch I've ever seen that I don't need glasses for. The more expensive they are, the smaller the numbers get. [Laughter] So, thank you, Barry.

I would like to begin today, if I might, with a very personal and serious word. This is the first opportunity I have had, really, to say something publicly about the death of Al Shanker yesterday, one of the greatest educators of the 20th century in this country. He was my friend for many years. I considered him my colleague. He believed that all children could learn with high expectations and high standards, high-quality teaching and high accountability. He literally lived a life that was nothing less than a crusade, with intense passion and power. And I know that all of you will join me in wishing his wife and his family and the members of the American Federation of Teachers the best, and giving them our sadness and our thanks for a remarkable American who did his job very, very well.

I also want to come here to thank you. Secretary Riley said, in his inimitable way, that this is a big day for us—and this is a big day for us—starting with the community colleges and their trustees and then going to this organization which represents, I thought at last count, almost 1,700 2- and 4-year colleges and universities. Your views matter, your voice is heard, and your endorsement of our college opportunity agenda, including the HOPE scholarships, the tax deduction for tuition, and the large increase in Pell grants, will help to bring that opportunity into reality and to fulfill my dream of opening the doors of college to every single American who wants to go. Thank you very, very much. I'm grateful to you.

This is a remarkable time in the history of our democracy. At the end of the cold

war we find ourselves as the world's remaining superpower, with a special responsibility to try to shape the future in a way that will advance the cause of peace and prosperity. We find our own economy strong and growing, producing more jobs in the last 4 years than in any comparable term in our history, with record numbers of new businesses being formed each and every year.

We know that this is a time of enormous change, but the impulse to satisfaction, I'm sure, is great. Normally, when democracies have times this good, one of two things happens, sometimes both at the same time: people get very self-satisfied and begin to relax and therefore miss the underlying currents of what is really going on for the future, or they become too easily preoccupied with small matters and begin to divide among themselves over things that bring them down instead of lift them up. We must give in to neither impulse.

Because the growth of the global economy and the absolute explosion in scientific and technical information associated with the information age give us an opportunity but not a guarantee, an opportunity for undreamed of new jobs and careers, for greater knowledge and understanding, not just for greater material wealth but for enhancements in the quality of lives for families and communities, it is literally true that in the era toward which we are moving more people than ever before in all of human history will have a chance to live out their dreams. But it is also true that the chance cannot be realized unless we give them the power to make the most of their own lives. So this is no time to rest.

Four years ago, we knew we couldn't rest, and we set about laying the foundation for progress by changing the economic policy of the country to focus on investing in our people, getting our fiscal house in order, emphasizing science and technology, and opening the doors of trade with the rest of the world. We changed our social policy, centering it clearly on family and community and focusing on action instead of rhetoric. The result is that we've had marked drops in crime, the biggest drop in welfare rolls in the history of the country, the family and medical leave law, action to stop teenagers from being ex-

posed illegally to the sales and marketing of cigarettes, and a number of other initiatives.

Our foreign policy has begun to articulate the world that we want to make, working in an interdependent way with allies and friends of like mind throughout the world not only to advance the cause of peace and freedom and prosperity but to stand up against the new threats to our security.

Along the way, we have fought—and I hope largely resolved—the battle that has dominated America for nearly 20 years now over what the proper role of our Nation's Government should be. You hardly hear anyone saying anymore that Government is the enemy.

It was interesting—in the last couple of days Hillary and I went to see—or brought in the movie—we have a theater at the White House—it's the best perk of the job, I think—[laughter]—but we had about all the seriousness we could stand, and we watched that movie "Dante's Peak," about the volcano exploding. And I couldn't help thinking, you know, the hero works for the U.S. Geological Service, and his life is saved in the end by a contraption developed not here at home for uses on the ground but by NASA for use in space. And I thought, the Government is not the enemy. The role of the Government is to create the conditions and to give people the tools to build strong lives and families and communities and a strong nation, and to give people the chance to live out their dreams.

Now that that foundation has been laid, and now that I believe we have also moved away from the very dangerous rhetoric of the last several years that seeks to divide us against one another based on our racial or ethnic or religious or other differences, toward an understanding that it is actually a great godsend for us to be the world's most multiethnic, multiracial, multireligious democracy, we now can actually seize the opportunities that are before us. But the first and most important thing we have to do is to recognize that, beginning at the beginning, our education system will not provide us the opportunity to do that unless we change it.

For the beginning years we have to raise standards. For our colleges and universities, which are plainly the finest in the world, we

simply have to make sure that the access is there for everyone who should go to have a chance to go.

The main point I want to make is that we actually are in a position now to mold our future untroubled by war abroad or disruption at home in a way that is very, very rare in human history. We have no idea how long this moment of tranquility will last. We have no idea how long we will be fully free to wake up and say, "what am I going to do today," without being impinged upon by some external force that will shape us.

I was interested when the Secretary talked about Abraham Lincoln and the land grant. I used to teach at a land grant school, so I like that. But it's interesting that President Lincoln signed that land grant bill during the Civil War. And Lincoln once said during the Civil War—he gave a statement today that I would be ridiculed nationwide if I said—he said, "My policy is to have no policy. I am controlled by events." Well, of course, he did have a policy. He had the most important one of all: "I'm going to hold this Union together if we all have to die to do it, including me." That was his policy. But he also told an important truth. When the wheel runs off and things fall apart, you are to some extent controlled by events.

Today, in a rare moment, America is not especially controlled by events, but we cannot be unmindful of the larger historical trends which will shape our future. And it is the moral obligation of every person in a position of responsibility in the United States to take this opportunity not to lay down on the job and not to fall into mindless debates but to lift our sights and our visions to take advantage of this rare moment and make the most of it. And we could do no better than to give our people the finest set of educational opportunities in the world and to make sure very single one of them has those opportunities.

I was encouraged by the report I got out back, very brief, about the words that Senator Lott said earlier here today. During the cold war we had a bipartisan foreign policy, because—literally because the future of the country was at stake. Everybody agreed: We'd like to fight with you, and we'd like

to kick you out if you're not in our party, but politics should stop at the water's edge.

Today, in the information age, politics should stop at the schoolhouse door, because our security depends upon our ability to give all our people the finest education in the world. My shorthand expression for what we're trying to do, and you will all recognize there are many other things at stake, is that we have to create an America in which every 8-year-old can read, every 12-year-old can log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old can go on to college, and every adult can keep on learning for a lifetime. My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals: \$51 billion next year. But far more than money is required.

Three weeks ago at the State of the Union, I issued a call to action for American education based on 10 principles necessary to prepare our people for the 21st century:

First, we have to set world-class standards for our schools and develop a system of accountability, beginning for the first time with national standards-based reading tests in the fourth grade and math tests in the eighth grade.

Second, we have to make sure we have the best teachers in the world.

Third, we must make sure that every child can read on his or her own by the third grade. I see my friend the president of the Miami-Dade Community College out here, the largest community college in our country and one of the most diverse student bodies. Forty percent of the 8-year-olds in this country cannot read a book on their own, 40 percent. And we have to do better than that if we want all of our children to be in 2- and 4-year colleges when their time comes.

Fourth, we have to make sure parents are more deeply involved in a constructive way in their child's learning from birth. The First Lady and I are going to host a conference on early childhood learning and brain development in the spring here.

Fifth, we have to give parents more power to choose the right public schools for their children and encourage school reforms like charter schools that set and meet high standards.

Sixth, we should encourage the teaching of character education in our schools—and

Secretary Riley has done a marvelous job of that—and promote order and discipline at the same time by supporting local school initiatives, like school uniforms or truancy enforcements or curfews and demanding zero tolerance for guns and drugs. I have seen in the most difficult neighborhoods in this country that children do not have to put up with violent, disruptive, and destructive school environments. There are schools that are succeeding against all the odds. And if some can, all can. And until they all do none of us should be satisfied.

Seventh, we should support school construction at the national level. I believe, for the very first time—because we have record numbers of school populations now—for the first time we've got a group bigger than the baby boomers coming through, and the schools are growing at record rates while their facilities are deteriorating at record rates.

Eighth, we should make sure that learning is available for a lifetime by transforming what can only be described as a tangle of Federal training programs into a simple skill grant that goes directly to workers. People who need and are eligible for Federal training help, nearly all of them, live within driving distance of a community-based educational institution that can give them what they need. And we do not need a lot of Federal programs to get between them and those institutions. I have been trying for 4 years to pass this program. I hope you will help me get this done in this session of Congress, to create a new "GI bill" for America's workers that simply gives people a skills grant and lets them take it to the institution of education nearest them most able to meet their needs.

Ninth, we are determined to connect every classroom and library in this country to the Internet by the year 2000, and we're making good progress on that.

But finally, and the thing that you have endorsed today, is our effort to meet the last goal, to throw open the doors of college to all people who are willing to work for the opportunity.

As the Secretary said, we have always expanded education. He began with Abraham Lincoln, and we might have begun with

Thomas Jefferson, who advocated even as he advocated buying Louisiana—for which I'm very grateful; otherwise I wouldn't be President—[laughter]—and America becoming a continental nation, that we should educate all of our children. Thomas Jefferson even advocated the education of every single child, boy or girl, of slave families in America. And we know from the beginning that it was the education of our leaders that gave them the vision to chart the course which has brought us to this day.

I do believe, based on the sheer economic realities and the need for greater understanding of our interdependence in the world in which we're living, that we have to make the first 2 years of college as universal as a high school education is today. Fifteen years ago, the typical worker with a college degree earned 38 percent more than a high school graduate; today, it is 69 percent. Two years of college alone means a 20 percent increase in learning and a quarter of a million dollars more in earnings over a lifetime.

Now, over the past 4 years we have put in place an unprecedented college opportunity strategy: Student loans provided directly to people who need them and that enable people to repay those loans as a percentage of their income; AmeriCorps, which has already helped 70,000 young people earn their way through college by serving their communities and their country; two hundred thousand more students in work-study as a result of last year's budget; and a very large increase in Pell grants last year, taking the maximum grant to \$2,700 and expanding the number of people eligible.

The plan I have put before the Congress in my balanced budget would expand work-study again so that one million students will be able to work their way through college by the year 2000. We want 100,000 of these new work-study students to join our America Reads efforts to help make sure all our 8-year-olds can read independently by the year 2000.

I know that more than 80 college presidents have already committed thousands of their work-study students to work as reading tutors. I thank those of you who are here leading this effort, many of you on the front row here, and I'd like to ask all the rest of

you to join us. Go back home, look at how many people you've got in work-study, see how many you could allocate to this effort.

We're going to have about 35,000 AmeriCorps students trained especially to train tutors. We're going to challenge the parents and the schools to open up to make sure we can get these volunteers in there to teach these kids to read. We cannot expect the schools to operate efficiently if children have to leave the third grade not even being able to read. They will never learn what they need to know. And college students will relate well to these young kids and have a chance to literally revolutionize future learning in America.

A lot of these children are not just poor kids, they simply—many of them come out of cultures where their first language is not English, and they did not learn to read properly. We should not let them go past the third grade without knowing we have all done everything we humanly can to make sure that they can read independently. So I thank those of you from the bottom of my heart who have volunteered already, and I ask the rest of you to join in that crusade. We need you and it will make all the difference.

Finally, let me say we have got to do more in other areas. For 3 years in a row now we've expanded Pell grants for deserving students. But our budget this year, our balanced budget contains the largest increase in Pell grant scholarships in 20 years. We are adding \$1.7 billion in grants, a 25 percent increase, which will make 348,000 more students eligible, many of them older students, and will increase the maximum grant to \$3,000. And for 4 million low and middle income students the budget will cut student loan fees in half.

But if we're truly going to set a new standard, a 14-year standard, we've got to do more. That's why I have proposed America's HOPE scholarship based on the Georgia pioneering program: 2 years of a tax credit of \$1,500 for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college. We know it will work because of the testimonial you have already heard from President Knapp.

Second, I propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school to help families send children or parents to college, or to graduate or medical

school, or any other education after high school.

Third, I propose an expanded IRA, expanded in terms of eligibility, in terms of who can save, and in terms of purpose, so that families can save tax-free to pay for education. Together these proposals mean that a family could save money for college tuition and never pay a penny of taxes on it. For example, families could put up to \$2,000 of income into the IRA each year without paying taxes, then withdraw up to \$10,000 a year for tuition and deduct that from income so that there will not be any taxes when they're paid out.

Cutting taxes to help people pay directly for college has never been done before on a national level. But we have cut taxes for years to help people buy a home or invest in a business because that's the way we thought we could encourage people to invest in their future and build the American dream. And it has worked.

In the last 4 years we have seen homeownership rise to a 15-year high, and if the rate of increase continues, by the year 2000 more than two-thirds of Americans will live in their own home, an all-time record. In the last 4 years we have seen in each successive year a record number of new businesses formed in America. Today we ought to have that same kind of encouragement to invest in education, an even more important investment for the future. And I think that it is highly appropriate to adopt this device to achieve that goal.

Let me assure you, the Treasury Department is committed to working with the Department of Education and all of you to make this tax plan work. The IRS will not interfere with the affairs of educational institutions. We are committed to making this simple and straightforward for the academic community and especially for the students of every age. The plan will give families the power to choose the right education for themselves and the flexibility to decide the best way in which to pay for that education.

Now, just think about what this could mean. A young person who can't afford tuition or whose family can't afford it can now go down to a local community college right away and sign up if they meet the standards,

because the HOPE scholarship will pay for it. Someone with a new family who is worried about college costs down the road can multiply his or her savings power by putting tuition money in an IRA tax-free every year while the children are growing up. Then, when they're 40 and worried they might need more education to move ahead but can't spare time off from work, not only can they withdraw from the IRA for the kids but the parents can go part time, or at night. But all can go to college without tax consequences.

My plan is simple: \$1,500 a year tax cut for individuals to pay for college for 2 years; a \$10,000 a year tax deduction for families for any year of tuition after high school; an expanded IRA to help families save tax-free for education, plus the more and larger Pell grant scholarships for deserving students, 300,000 more work-study positions, AmeriCorps, the direct loan program.

This plan will throw open the doors of college and give every American the great chance to make the most of the world that we are moving into. College is opportunity for tomorrow. And creating that opportunity is our responsibility today.

I thank you again for your support of this plan. As we work in the weeks and months ahead to craft a bipartisan balanced budget, your endorsement today will be an historic element in making sure that this will be part of the ultimate budget plan. We need a balanced budget, but it has to reflect our values, and it has to pave the way to a better future.

Today we have committed to expanding educational opportunities by enacting the HOPE scholarship tax cut, the college tax deduction, the Pell grant increases, the work-study increases. I thank you for standing with us. You are standing for opportunity for generations to come in a way that will change America forever for the better.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:14 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Stanley O. Ikenberry, president, Michelle Tolela Myers, incoming chair, and Barry Munitz, outgoing chair, American Council on Education;

and Charles Knapp, incoming president, Aspen Institute, Washington, DC.

Statement on the First Anniversary of the Downing of United States Aircraft by Cuba

February 24, 1997

One year ago, four innocent civilians were killed when their aircraft were brutally shot down by the Cuban regime. Without warning, Cuban MiG's fired air-to-air missiles at two small unarmed planes in international airspace. Three U.S. citizens and one permanent resident were the victims: Carlos Costa, Armando Alejandro, Mario de la Peña, and Pablo Morales.

Today we join the families in honoring the memory of these men as we carry forward our efforts to seek justice for their deaths. An investigation by the International Civil Aviation Organization last June confirmed that the shutdown was unlawful and without any justification. The U.N. Security Council last February and again in June strongly deplored Cuba's illegal use of violence against the aircraft. The Castro regime, however, has consistently rejected the judgment of the international community. As we did one year ago, we call on Cuba to take full responsibility for its actions and provide assurances that an outrage like this will never happen again.

The shutdown and the Cuban Government's continuing repression of human rights activists and independent journalists underscore the need to continue working for a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba. The United States continues to lead the international effort to achieve that goal, and over the past year, more of our friends and allies than ever before have joined with us to help bring democracy to Cuba.

On this anniversary, with the memory of the four victims in our prayers, the United States reaffirms its commitment to help bring democracy, respect for human rights, and prosperity to the people of Cuba, who have too long been denied these essentials of a decent life.

Statement on the Death of Martin Slate

February 24, 1997

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Marty Slate. Marty has been a dear friend since our years at Yale Law School and was the quintessential public servant.

From his days as a Freedom Rider in Mississippi to his years as a senior civil servant at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Internal Revenue Service, Marty spent his entire life working to make sure our laws were fair and applied justly.

Four years ago, I was delighted when Marty answered my call to return to public service. As Executive Director of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, he brought a new standard of excellence to that agency. He improved the PBGC's level of customer service and its financial management, winning an Innovation in American Government Award from the John F. Kennedy School and several Vice Presidential Hammer Awards for Excellence in Government. Marty fought successfully for important new legislation that brought renewed financial stability to the Corporation, expanded pension coverage, and ensured that millions of Americans' pensions were more secure.

Hillary and I will miss him greatly. Our thoughts and prayers are with Cookie and his family on this sad day.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization

February 24, 1997

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to section 1048 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997, I transmit herewith a report on the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

For over 50 years, successive Presidents and Congresses have maintained a firm, bipartisan consensus that the security of Europe is vital to the national security of the United States. It remains so. NATO, even

as it evolves and adapts to a changing world, remains the core of the transatlantic alliance that has served American interests for two generations.

Inclusion of new members into NATO's ranks is an indispensable element of a broader American strategy to create an undivided, democratic Europe for the 21st century. By extending the underpinnings of security beyond the arbitrary line of the Cold War, NATO can strengthen democratic and free market reforms for all of Europe, just as it has done for Western Europe in the decades since 1949. By admitting new states to the alliance, NATO will limit and help eliminate a potentially destabilizing vacuum in Europe, widening the circle of like-minded nations sharing common values and willing to shoulder common responsibilities and burdens. Already, the prospect of NATO enlargement has strengthened stability and democracy, and promoted regional cooperation among the states of Central and Eastern Europe.

The enlargement of NATO is not directed against any state; NATO does not see any nation as its enemy. By extending security and stability throughout Europe, NATO enlargement will serve the interests of all of Europe's democracies—whether they are current members, new members, or non-members. The United States looks forward to the building of a strong, dynamic relationship and unprecedented partnership between NATO and Russia.

NATO enlargement is moving ahead. NATO has agreed to hold a Summit on July 8–9 in Madrid at which one or more nations will be invited to begin negotiations on accession to the Washington Treaty; I have called for NATO to welcome new members by 1999, and NATO has accepted this goal. Continued close and bipartisan cooperation between the Congress and the executive branch are, and will remain, the keys to achieving this objective. Addition of new members to the North Atlantic alliance must be submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent, and both houses of the Congress will have to approve the resources necessary to make enlargement a reality.

I thank the Congress for the constructive role it has played in recent years to advance the enlargement of NATO. I look forward

to working with the Congress to achieve our common objective of a wider circle of security, prosperity, and common values embracing an integrated Europe and the United States.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; Strom Thurmond, chairman, Senate Committee on Armed Services; and Floyd Spence, chairman, House Committee on National Security.

Letter to National Bioethics Advisory Commission Chair Harold Shapiro on Cloning Technology Issues

February 24, 1997

Dear Dr. Shapiro:

As you know, it was reported today that researchers have developed techniques to clone sheep. This represents a remarkable scientific discovery, but one that raises important questions. While this technological advance could offer potential benefits in such areas as medical research and agriculture, it also raises serious ethical questions, particularly with respect to the possible use of this technology to clone human embryos.

Therefore, I request that the National Bioethics Advisory Commission undertake a thorough review of the legal and ethical issues associated with the use of this technology, and report back to me within ninety days with recommendations on possible federal actions to prevent its abuse.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

Remarks to the Democratic Business Council

February 24, 1997

Thank you very much, Tom and Carol. Chairman Grossman and Alan Solomont and Paul DeNino, thank you for taking on this important work.

Let me begin by thanking all of you for being here tonight and for your support, for

the things that you said earlier, and your high hopes for our country. And let me remind you that we are involved in an extraordinary endeavor with a great opportunity. In the last 4 years we changed the economic policy of this country, and we now are committed to investing in our people, expanding our trade, and balancing our budget. And the consequences have been truly extraordinary.

In the last 4 years, for the first time ever in one Presidential administration, we had 11½ million more jobs and record numbers of new businesses in every single year. The so-called misery index is the combined rates of unemployment and inflation. It's the lowest it has been in America since the 1960's. And every one of you who supported our efforts, who fought for our policies, who stood up for what we are trying to do played a role in that, and you should be proud of that.

We changed the direction of social policy in this country, putting family and community at the center of our concerns and substituting action for rhetoric. And that's one of the reasons, thanks for the crime bill, that we've had years of declining crime now and people actually can believe that their streets can be made safe for their children; one of the reasons we've had the largest decline in welfare rolls in the history of the United States.

We now have—I was telling the folks at the table tonight, from 1972 to 1989, it was an average of 4.8 percent of the American people on public assistance. When I took office there were almost 5½ percent of the people on welfare. Today, it's 4.6, lower than the average since 1972 and going down.

And the only thing I would ask you is, any one of you—my friend Stan Chesley has already hired two people off the welfare rolls. We have to set an example. We can't just exhort people. We now have to hire one million people from welfare to work in the next 4 years to meet the targets of the welfare reform law. Meeting the target of the welfare reform law means requiring people who can work to work but not cutting anybody off public assistance who is honestly committed to supporting her children and cannot find a job. So we changed the law. Now we have to do our part.

And I want to invite all of you to be part of what is a great and, I might add, a bipartisan effort to hire one million more people off the welfare rolls. And I ask for your support to pass the legislation in Congress to give special tax credits of up to 50 percent of a salary, capping out at \$10,000 a year, for anyone who hires anyone from welfare into the work force. We can do this.

And I know we can do it; I've added up all the numbers of all the employers of all sizes, of all kinds in America. This is a snap if we will just make a commitment as a country to do it. We owe it to the children in those families who deserve a chance to see their parents and themselves move into the middle class and have a shot at what we're all trying to build for our children in the new century.

Let me say that today we had some very, very good news on the education front. You know from the State of the Union that I believe this should be the primary focus of our new endeavors in the next 4 years. And today meeting in Washington, the National Convention of Community Colleges and all their trustees, and the American Council on Education, which includes 1,700 leaders of 2- and 4-year colleges and universities in America, both endorsed the education plan I put before the American people and the Congress in the State of the Union Address. So this is a good day.

And we are going to be able to create a country in the next 4 years where every 8-year-old can read independently, where every 12-year-old and every classroom and library in America is hooked up to the Internet, where every 18-year-old has a chance to go on to college, and where our adults can continue to learn for a lifetime. These things are good things, and we are moving in the right direction.

I can also tell you that I am confident that we will continue to reach out in a positive way to the rest of the world. The Secretary of State has had a great first trip on her first trip as Secretary of State around the world. I've been very proud of her, and I hope you have. And we have to continue to do that.

Let me just make one last point here. In the last 4 years if you were to ask me, "What did you do that was most significant," well,

those of us who count votes might say, "Well, you passed that economic plan in '93 by one vote, and it brought the country back and that's what happened in '96." Those of us who worry about the safety of our streets might say, "If it hadn't been for the crime bill passing and the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, well, we wouldn't have the crime rate coming down." Others might say the family and medical leave law and the other things we did surrounding family. Others might say the fact that we defeated the other party's attempt to drastically change the course of America by beating back the '95 budget, and we killed, I think, once and for all the dominant rhetoric of the last 20 years, which is that Government is the enemy.

Government is not the enemy. Neither is Government the solution. But we now know that every modern society that seeks to fulfill the potential of its people needs, through its Government, leadership in creating conditions and giving people the tools to make the most of their own lives.

I told somebody today that Hillary and I over the weekend needed a little break from all this seriousness, and we watched "Dante's Peak" at the White House movie theater—best perk about being President, the theater. [Laughter] And it's a movie about volcanoes, and I think it's a rather interesting movie because I'm interested in volcanoes. But I thought it was interesting that it was this movie, and the hero of the movie was an employee of the U.S. Geological Service. And the hero was nearly killed by the volcano, and in the end his life is saved by a technical contraption developed not for volcanoes but for space by NASA.

Government is not the enemy. [Laughter] They would have had no movie but for the Government. [Laughter] And I think we've earned the right to say that, that this Government is now smaller by 285,000 people than the day I took the oath of office the first time—285,000, the smallest since President Kennedy was in office; hundreds of programs gone, thousands of pages of regulation gone. The reinventing Government effort led by the Vice President still gathering steam, not about to just sit around and do no more.

But we have got to say these are things we have to do as a country, as partners. But apart from all that, I think maybe the thing that I would highlight is that in the last 4 years I hope we have created the conditions for seeing this country fulfill all of its potential because we have rejected the politics of division, whether it was based on race or religion or anything else.

I think I made the right decision in saying we should mend affirmative action and not end it. I think I made the right decision in saying that I did not think that we should turn our backs on legal immigrants in this country; this is a nation of immigrants. I think we did the right thing to support the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and protect the religious liberties even of people whose politics are very different from mine and who believe they have a religious duty to try to remove me from office in the last election. [Laughter]

That's what made this country great. The first amendment guaranteed freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, and freedom of religious faith. I think we did the right thing to try to combat in a very aggressive way these church burnings. And I might say, the recent bombing of the gay nightclub in Atlanta reminds us that this work is not over. That was wrong, and we have to stand against those things. We have got to go forward together. We don't have anybody to waste.

And we surely have figured out finally that it is a great advantage to the United States to be the largest, most multiethnic, multireligious, diverse democracy in the world. We're still learning how to deal with it. But we still have to reach out to the rest of the world. We have to compete and win. And we have to educate our people to live and to be a humanizing, democratizing, freedom- and peace-promoting influence in the rest of the world. We can't do any of that unless we do it as one America. And I think that is a lasting legacy which you can all be proud of. And we have more work to do on that, and we will be doing more work.

Let me finally say that I appreciate your being here for our party because this is not something a President can do alone. I'm glad to see Secretary of Transportation Rodney

Slater here tonight, who's going to acquit himself so well in that job, and my friend and sort of family member, Senator Barbara Boxer, here, who needs your help to get re-elected in 2 years, and I hope you'll help her. She deserves it.

And we're trying to do this together, and we're trying to do it together with the Republicans in Congress insofar as we and they—to be fair to them, because we have honest differences—insofar as we and they can in good conscience do that. The atmosphere is different here. And we have to keep it positive, constructive, building, trying to get something done to make this country great.

And the last thing I want to leave you with is this. I said this in the State of the Union, but I want all of you to think about it because it applies to our personal lives and our business lives as well as the life of this Nation. It is rare when things are going well on almost all fronts. You have to go back a good while to find a time when the economy was as strong as it is, when it was working for small businesses as well as big businesses, when the welfare rolls were going down, the poverty rate was dropping, the inequality among classes of working people was dropping, when all these things are happening at the same time, and when we're not threatened from without. And the tendency when things are going that well is either to relax and just sort of lay back and let things happen and have a good time, or to, frankly, find small things to fight about and fall out about and to be divided about. It sounds counterintuitive, but it's true. If you think about it in your own life, you see that. And we must not do either one of those things.

This is a unique moment in the history of a country. When Abraham Lincoln was President, in the middle of the Civil War, someone asked him what his policy was, and he gave an answer that if I were to give it I would be nationally ridiculed. He said, "My policy is to have no policy. I am controlled by events." Think how you would feel if I said that. [Laughter]

Now, the truth is, he did have a policy. His policy was "I'm going to hold the Union together if I have to—if everybody in the country has to die, including me." That was his policy, and he adhered to it. But it was

also true that on a day-to-day basis he could have no policy, he was controlled by events. We are not controlled by events. We get to shape events. It is rare when this happens to a country.

And we cannot blow this opportunity, either by being complacent or by falling out over small things. This is a time to be big and visionary and active and aggressive and a time to do it together. That is what I want you to be invested in. That is what I want you to feel that you are participating in.

And whenever we announce a new initiative you agree with, or results of something you support, I want you to understand that it is all part of a bigger effort to create a country in which, really for the first time in our history, every person actually does have a chance to live out his or her dreams, a country which really can help to shape a world where there is more peace, more freedom, more prosperity, and in which we are organized in a different way to meet the different challenges to our security and to our values around the world.

This is a very good time, but it imposes a special responsibility on us because nobody is beating us on the back with a lash, making us do the right thing. Our existence is not hanging by a thread so that we pray for the largeness of spirit that people seek when they know that. We just have to do it because we understand that this is a unique opportunity, and we are not going to pass it by.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council; Carol Pensky, treasurer, Steve Grossman, national chair, Alan D. Solomont, national finance chair, and Paul DeNino, finance director, Democratic National Committee; and attorney Stanley Chesley.

Proclamation 6973—American Red Cross Month, 1997

February 24, 1997

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Founded over a century ago by Clara Barton, the American Red Cross has evolved from a branch of the International Red Cross into a uniquely American institution, serving our Nation in peace and in war, and through countless natural disasters. Since the Spanish-American War, when the first volunteers brought emergency first-aid and news from home to wounded soldiers, generations of Americans have followed in this grand tradition of service.

Today, in communities across our Nation, a million and a half volunteers stand ready to help their neighbors at a moment's notice. Last year, Red Cross paid and volunteer staff assisted disaster victims across the country by opening more than 3,200 shelters and giving comfort to 172,000 people. The Red Cross also reached 16 million Americans through health and safety courses, including HIV and AIDS education and community outreach programs; collected more than 6 million units of lifesaving blood to keep our national blood supply ready, strong, and safe; and provided immediate counseling and support to the bereaved families of the victims of TWA Flight 800 and ValuJet Flight 592.

Overseas, American Red Cross workers provided emergency communications for our troops in Bosnia; worked with foreign Red Cross societies to rebuild the lives of civilian refugees in places such as the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; and provided personnel, financial aid, and gifts of goods and services to the victims of international disasters and armed conflicts in every corner of the globe.

Since 1881, the size, scope, and complexity of major disasters have placed an ever-greater demand on the resources of the Red Cross. Yet, the generosity of our citizens has enabled the American Red Cross to continue

to fulfill its humanitarian mission, providing assistance to those in need and easing suffering around the world. We must continue this tradition, and, in the spirit of service, support this voluntary agency because it truly belongs to all Americans. Each of us can help keep the American Red Cross strong through our donations of time, money, and blood.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 1997 as American Red Cross Month. I urge all the people of the United States to support the humanitarian work of their local Red Cross chapters by volunteering and participating in Red Cross blood drives.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of February, 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 26, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 25, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on February 27.

Remarks Announcing the 1997 National Drug Control Strategy and an Exchange With Reporters

February 25, 1997

The President. Thank you very much. First of all, thank you, Nathan, for your introduction and your commitment, and I thank all the young people who are here from the Boys and Girls Club, from the D.A.R.E. programs. I want to thank the members of the President's Drug Policy Council who are standing here behind me and those out in the audience who have been introduced by the Vice President and by General McCaffrey. And I thank the Members of Congress for being here and their support, and all the rest of you who are involved in this battle.

Let me say a special word of appreciation to General McCaffrey. He has literally been tireless in developing a national strategy to reduce illegal drug use and, more importantly, to implement it in a way that makes a difference in the lives of all Americans. I knew that he was well-suited for the job. I had had a lot of exposure to General McCaffrey before I asked him to do this job. But even so, I have been surprised by the increased intensity of his tenacity and focus, and for that I am grateful. I think it gives us a chance to turn this situation among our young people around, with all of your help.

Let me say at the outset, one of the things that I have tried to do, and one of the reasons I like this drug policy so much, is that it is focused on children and therefore it is a part of what I think ought to be our overall mission, which is to give our children a safe, wholesome, constructive upbringing that begins with a drug-free life, appropriate health care, safe streets, and a decent education.

I want to thank the Attorney General—today, the Justice Department has announced something else that I think is important. I'd just like to begin, because I think we need to look at this in terms of the safety of our children. Today the Justice Department announced that in the first 28 months since the Brady bill went into effect—another law directed to the safety of our children—more than 186,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers were blocked from buying guns over the counter, more than 186,000, from March of 1994 to the end of June of 1996. And more than 70 percent were rejected because the applicant was an indicted or convicted felon. Now, it seems to me that, for all those who are still out there campaigning against the Brady bill, those of us who support it can now rest our case. It's the right thing to do for America. It's making us safer. It's giving these children a chance to grow up drug-free. And I ask all of you in law enforcement to redouble your efforts to support it and to do what we can to defend it.

Our five-part drug strategy is another part of making America safer for our children. In 10 years, a young person, a young man or woman Nathan's age, will be in his or her early twenties, a time when a person should be well on the road to becoming a contribut-

ing member of society, an adult with responsible duties. Those 10 years, they're a pivotal 10 years. We're learning all the time about how formative the young years are in a person's life when intelligence is formed, but we also need to concentrate on the formative years when not only intelligence but good judgment is formed and decisions are made about whether people will be good citizens, good workers, good parents, and among other things, drug-free.

What happens to people in those 10 years should be an integral part of every drug strategy. This is an urgent issue. You know, there is hardly a day that passes when we don't read in the newspaper about yet another child becoming a victim of violence. Every American should be angry that a 9-year-old cannot make her way safely to her grandmother's door in a Chicago housing project—angry that she was brutally attacked and left for dead. That child will suffer with great physical and emotional pain for the rest of her life. A portion of her childhood was taken from her. And whenever an attack like that happens, a portion of our humanity is taken from all of us.

Last week in Chicago, Hillary asked that anyone who has information about that attack, contact the local law enforcement officials. I want to extend that call today and ask that all of us do more to keep watch over our children. We have to become angry whenever any child—one single child—becomes prey for drugs or violence or abuse, and we should use our anger to take action.

Last week I unveiled our youth violence strategy to keep gangs, guns, and drugs off our street and called for new protections for our children, including safety locks on guns and extending the Brady bill to violent youthful offenders. But fundamentally this course will only change if all of us can teach our children right from wrong and if all of us can help them to steer away to a more productive, positive life.

That is what we have to focus on in this drug strategy. We know what works. We know what works. There are people here who have been working in this vineyard for years and years and years. We know that bipartisan cooperation works. We know persistence and community action works. All were factors in

reducing illegal drug use by half in the last 15 years. But we also know that during this time, drug use by adolescents, almost unbelievably, went up. And I might add, until last year so was the crime rate by young people going up while the overall crime rate was dropping. And the two things were clearly related.

This is not a problem confined only to the poor or to those in inner cities. It cuts across from rich to middle class to poor, from urban to suburban to rural. In each of these places there are children who are getting in trouble when they ought to be choosing a better life. Among eighth graders, in the last few years, drug use is up 150 percent. An eighth grader, typically, is 13 or 14 years old. That's why prevention is important at that age and indeed even considerably younger. If we teach our children well, more of them will live well away from harm's way.

Our drug strategy must be more than a year-to-year approach, but a guide to action for the next decade for those critical 10 years of these young people's lives, to reduce drug use and its consequences and to keep our young people out of the kind of harm that the invasion of drugs into their bodies will cause. We should first begin by giving our children the straight facts. We know that the more children are aware of the dangers of drugs and believe the facts, the more likely they are to avoid them. We propose to add up to \$175 million to seed a far-reaching media campaign to get out the facts and shape the attitudes of these young people. We'll be seeking matching funds from the private sector for a total of \$350 million because this must be a shared responsibility. If a child does watch television—and what child doesn't—he or she should not be able to escape these messages.

And again, let me say I want to thank General McCaffrey for bringing this idea to me and pointing out how much we had permitted public advertising aimed at young people about the dangers of drugs to decline over the last few years. That is one of the seminal contributions that he has made to my understanding of this issue and I appreciate it and I ask the Congress to help us to get this job done.

Second, we must reduce drug-related crime and violence. Drug-trafficking supports gangs and sets off gang warfare. A million Americans are arrested every year for violating the drug laws. Let me say that again: A million Americans are arrested every year for violating drug laws. Three-quarters of the growth in the number of Federal prison inmates is due to drug offenses. We will enforce the law vigorously, but we have to do more than make more jail space.

I saw yesterday that two of our largest States, Florida and California, now have prison budgets bigger than their higher education budgets, that prison construction is growing all over America much faster than constructions in our colleges and universities, even though enrollment is going up and older people are trying to go back to college. We have to do more to prevent these things from occurring in the first place, more to take the guns out of hands of criminals and juveniles, more to use the criminal justice system to reduce drug demand and break the cycle of drugs and violence. Drug courts and mandatory drug testing and treatment are effective. I'm pleased to announce that the Justice Department is providing \$16 million in grants to more than 125 communities across our Nation for planning, implementing, or improving drug courts. I have seen them work; I know they will make a difference.

Third, we have to work to eliminate the social consequences of illegal drug use. A third of all AIDS and HIV cases are drug-related—a third. More than 3.6 million Americans, as the General said, are addicted to drugs. Drugs kill 14,000 of our fellow citizens every year. Often, people who use illegal drugs are people who go to class or hold jobs or have families. They drain our productivity. We can begin to reduce these circumstances if we can further decrease the number of casual drug users and if we can help chronic users to overcome their dependency. It is important that we try to do both.

Fourth, we have to do more to shield our frontiers against drug-trafficking. We all know that this is a very difficult task. Hundreds of millions of people enter our Nation every year. Hundreds of millions of tons of cargo are shipped here every year. Just one millionth of all that cargo is illegal drugs. One

millionth of all that cargo is illegal drugs. But that is still far too much and an awful lot of cargo. Our job is to stop it without hurting the legal commerce and movement that makes us the trade leader of the world. Along our border to the south with Mexico, crime and violence linked to drugs must be brought under control. Our 1998 budget will bring considerable reinforcement to that border.

Fifth, we have to reduce drug cultivation, production, and trafficking abroad and at home. We've made a start by supporting alternatives to drug crops. In Peru, coca cultivation dropped by 18 percent. In the next decade, we want to completely eliminate the cultivation of coca for illicit consumption. If we help with alternative crops, that is a viable, viable policy in many cases.

We've also had some successes against trafficking. The Coast Guard's Operation Frontier Shield in the eastern Caribbean between October 1st and December 1st of last year seized 14,000 pounds of illicit drugs, compared to 5,400 pounds for the entire previous year. It seized seven smuggling vessels and achieved an 80 percent interdiction rate, versus 20 percent in the previous year. We can do better with interdiction, and we're learning to do it.

Throughout the Caribbean and in South America, we've captured more than 100 tons of cocaine a year. With the cooperation of other nations and with regional organizations, we're committed to building on our record of success. And when Secretary Albright returns from her trip this afternoon, we'll be looking at certification on counternarcotics operations. We are committed to cooperating with our friends in Latin America. That's one of the reasons why I asked Mack McLarty to be my special envoy to the Americas. We want to cooperate with them, but we want them to cooperate with us as well. We want to reduce our demand for drugs, but we are determined to reduce the supply as well.

Finally, let me say we have to do more to work together here at home. On May 21st, I will host the first White House mayors conference on drug control, to bring together not only mayors but police officers and prosecutors, too, to make sure that in every community we are doing the very best job we can. I want parents, teachers, law enforce-

ment, and other community leaders to help us. I want our young people to help us, most of all. We did not create this problem overnight, and it will not be solved overnight, but over that critical decade of these young people's lives who are here, we can lift a whole generation away from the grip of a terrible menace.

Thanks to the efforts of many people, we now have a rational, coherent, and long-term strategy. Its ultimate success will depend upon the support it receives from every American. And ultimately, it will depend upon the willingness of our young people to listen, to learn, to be strong, and to find support. The rest of us have to be that support. There is no more urgent priority. Thank you very much.

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Q. Mr. President, in a short time, we in the media will have access to documents which reportedly contain your feelings that overnight stays at the White House could be used as a motivation to get——

The President. This is not a national priority.

Q. ——could be used as a motivation for getting people to contribute more to the Democratic National Committee.

The President. That's not what they contain.

Q. Well, I'm—we have not seen these documents yet.

The President. Well, I'll tell you what. I'll be glad to answer the questions, but you should see it first. What the document says—there's a document in there that points out that in early 1995, a lot of the people that helped me get elected President in '92 thought that they had gotten estranged, in effect, from me, that we had not kept in touch with them. And Terry McAuliffe sent me a memo suggesting things we ought to do to reestablish contact, which I thought was a good memo. And I told him to proceed. And I told Nancy Hernreich, in addition to that, that I wanted to ask some of my friends who had helped me when I got elected President that I hadn't been in touch with to come to the White House and spend the night with me. That is a reference to that.

And later, by the way, today, sometime, we're going to release the people—the number of people who stayed at the White House in the last 4 years, and you will see that the people that worked for me and helped to raise funds for me were a small percentage of the total number of people who stayed at the White House. But they were my friends, and I was proud to have them here. And I do not believe people who lawfully raise money for people running for office are bad people. I think they're good people. They make the system work that we have now. I'm proud that they helped me, and I was proud to have them here. I did not have any strangers here. The Lincoln Bedroom was never sold. That was one more false story we have had to endure. And the facts will show what the truth is.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:37 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Boys and Girls Club member Nathan Habel, who introduced the President; Terence McAuliffe, finance chair, Clinton/Gore '96; and Nancy Hernreich, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of Oval Office Operations.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the 1997 National Drug Control Strategy

February 25, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit the *1997 National Drug Control Strategy* to the Congress. This strategy renews our bipartisan commitment to reducing drug abuse and its destructive consequences. It reflects the combined and coordinated Federal effort that is directed by National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey and includes every department and over 50 agencies. It enlists all State and local leaders from across the country who must share in the responsibility to protect our children and all citizens from the scourge of illegal drugs.

In the *1996 National Drug Control Strategy*, we set forth the basis of a coherent, rational, long-term national effort to reduce illicit drug use and its consequences. Building

upon that framework, the *1997 National Drug Control Strategy* adopts a 10-year national drug-control strategy that includes quantifiable measures of effectiveness. The use of a long-term strategy, with annual reports to the Congress and consistent outreach to the American people on our progress, will allow us to execute a dynamic, comprehensive plan for the Nation and will help us to achieve our goals.

We know from the past decade of Federal drug control efforts that progress in achieving our goals will not occur overnight. But our success in reducing casual drug use over the last decade demonstrates that drug abuse is not an incurable social ill. Thanks to the bipartisan efforts of the Congress and the past three administrations, combined with broad-based efforts of citizens and communities throughout the United States, we have made tremendous progress since the 1970's in reducing drug use.

Nonetheless, we are deeply concerned about the rising trend of drug use by young Americans. While overall use of drugs in the United States has fallen dramatically—by half in 15 years—adolescent drug abuse continues to rise. That is why the number one goal of our strategy is to motivate America's youth to reject illegal drugs and substance abuse.

Our strategy contains programs that will help youth to recognize the terrible risks associated with the use of illegal substances. The cornerstone of this effort will be our national media campaign that will target our youth with a consistent anti-drug message. But government cannot do this job alone. We challenge the national media and entertainment industry to join us—by renouncing the glamorization of drug abuse and realistically portraying its consequences.

All Americans must accept responsibility to teach young people that drugs are wrong, drugs are illegal, and drugs are deadly. We must renew our commitment to the drug prevention strategies that deter first-time drug use and halt the progression from alcohol and tobacco use to illicit drugs.

While we continue to teach our children the dangers of drugs, we must also increase the safety of our citizens by substantially reducing drug-related crime and violence. At

the beginning of my Administration, we set out to change this country's approach to crime by putting more police officers on our streets, taking guns out of the hands of criminals and juveniles, and breaking the back of violent street gangs. We are making a difference. For the fifth year in a row serious crime in this country has declined. This is the longest period of decline in over 25 years. But our work is far from done and we must continue to move in the right direction.

More than half of all individuals brought into the Nation's criminal justice systems have substance abuse problems. Unless we also break the cycle of drugs and violence, criminal addicts will end up back on the street, committing more crimes, and back in the criminal justice system, still hooked on drugs. The criminal justice system should reduce drug demand—not prolong or tolerate it. Our strategy implements testing and sanctions through coerced abstinence as a way to reduce the level of drug use in the population of offenders under criminal justice supervision, and thereby reduce the level of other criminal behavior.

Our strategy supports the expansion of drug-free workplaces, which have proven so successful and we will continue to seek more effective, efficient, and accessible drug treatment to ensure that we are responsive to emerging drug-abuse trends.

We must continue to shield America's air, land, and sea frontiers from the drug threat. By devoting more resources to protecting the Southwest border than ever before, we are increasing drug seizures, stopping drug smugglers, and disrupting major drug trafficking operations. We must continue our interdiction efforts, which have greatly disrupted the trafficking patterns of cocaine smugglers and have blocked the free flow of cocaine through the western Caribbean into Florida and the Southeast.

Our comprehensive effort to reduce the drug flow cannot be limited to seizing drugs as they enter the United States. We must persist in our efforts to break foreign and domestic sources of supply. We know that by working with source and transit nations, we can greatly reduce foreign supply. International criminal narcotics organizations are a threat to our national security. But if we

target these networks, we can dismantle them—as we did the Cali Cartel.

We will continue to oppose all calls for the legalization of illicit drugs. Our vigilance is needed now more than ever. We will continue to ensure that all Americans have access to safe and effective medicine. However, the current drug legalization movement sends the wrong message to our children. It undermines the concerted efforts of parents, educators, businesses, elected leaders, community groups, and others to achieve a healthy, drug-free society.

I am confident that the national challenge of drug abuse can be met by extending our strategic vision into the future, educating citizens, treating addiction, and seizing the initiative in dealing with criminals who traffic not only in illegal drugs but in human misery and lost lives.

Every year drug abuse kills 14,000 Americans and costs taxpayers nearly \$70 billion. Drug abuse fuels spouse and child abuse, property and violent crime, the incarceration of young men and women, the spread of AIDS, workplace and motor vehicle accidents, and absenteeism in the work force.

For our children's sake and the sake of this Nation, this menace must be confronted through a rational, coherent, cooperative, and long-range strategy. I ask the Congress to join me in a partnership to carry out this national strategy to reduce illegal drug use and its devastating impact on America.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 25, 1997.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the United Kingdom-
United States Supplementary Social
Security Agreement**

February 25, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95-216, 42 U.S.C. 433(e)(1)), I transmit herewith the Supplementary Agreement Amending the Agreement Between the Government of the United States of America and the Gov-

ernment of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on Social Security (the Supplementary Agreement), which consists of two separate instruments: a principal agreement and an administrative arrangement. The Supplementary Agreement, signed at London on June 6, 1996, is intended to modify certain provisions of the original United States-United Kingdom Social Security Agreement signed at London February 13, 1984.

The United States-United Kingdom Social Security Agreement is similar in objective to the social security agreements with Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination between the U.S. and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation, and to help prevent the loss of benefit protection that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries.

The Supplementary Agreement, which would amend the 1984 Agreement to update and clarify several of its provisions, is necessitated by changes that have occurred in U.S. and English law in recent years. Among other things, the Supplementary Agreement removes certain restrictions in the original agreement concerning payment of UK disability benefits to residents of the United States. The Supplementary Agreement will also make a number of minor revisions in the Agreement to take account of other changes in U.S. and English law that have occurred in recent years.

The United States-United Kingdom Social Security Agreement, as amended, would continue to contain all provisions mandated by section 233 and other provisions that I deem appropriate to carry out the provisions of section 233, pursuant to section 233(c)(4) of the Act.

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report prepared by the Social Security Administration explaining the key points of the Supplementary Agreement, along with a paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of the effect of the amendments on the principal agreement and the related ad-

ministrative arrangement. Annexed to this report is the report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Act on the effect of the Agreement, as amended, on income and expenditures of the U.S. Social Security program and the number of individuals affected by the amended Agreement. The Department of State and the Social Security Administration have recommended the Supplementary Agreement and related documents to me.

I commend the United States-United Kingdom Supplementary Social Security Agreement and related documents.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 25, 1997.

Memorandum on Federal Policies Targeted to Children in Their Earliest Years

February 24, 1997

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Federal Policies Targeted to Children in Their Earliest Years

Over the past few years, scientific research has demonstrated that the earliest years of life—before children reach school-age—are critical to cognitive, emotional, and physical development. We know that emotional nourishment, intellectual stimulation, parental and community support, good nutrition, proper health care, quality child care, and safe housing during the first years of life form the foundation for a child's ability to learn, thrive in school, work productively, and contribute fully to society.

Across the Federal Government, we are making great strides to enhance development during the earliest years of life by investing in research, educating parents and caregivers, and supporting programs that provide early intervention to disadvantaged families. I am committed to accelerating our efforts to target the earliest years of life. We all have a stake in ensuring that every child is given the opportunity to fulfill his or her God-given potential.

Today, I am directing the heads of executive departments and agencies to report to me within 30 days with:

1. a comprehensive list and assessment of existing projects and programs funded by your agency that target the earliest years of life—including any existing qualitative or quantitative evidence of success, as well as current funding levels and number of clients served—and a description of any proposed improvements to such projects and programs.
2. a comprehensive list and assessment of any planned projects and programs of your agency that target the earliest years of life, including projected funding levels and number of clients to be served; and
3. specific proposals for additional projects and programs this year that could be undertaken to improve the earliest years of life that do not require new spending or that fall within the proposals in the FY 1998 Budget, or that could be developed for consideration in the FY 1999 Budget, within the limits of my Balanced Budget Plan.

I am also directing the establishment of a senior level interagency working group to share, examine, and develop these assessments and proposals.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 26.

Remarks Welcoming President Eduardo Frei of Chile

February 26, 1997

President Frei, Mrs. Frei, members of the Chilean delegation, distinguished guests. On behalf of the American people, I am delighted to welcome President Frei back to the United States and to return the warm hospitality the people of Chile showed to the First Lady when she visited there 2 years ago.

Today the countries of our hemisphere stand together facing a new era. Never have the Americas been more free or more pros-

perous. Never have we had a better opportunity to create a community of nations united by shared values and common purpose. Now, by acting together to deepen our democracy, to spur economic growth, to strengthen our partnership, the United States and Chile can bring concrete benefits to our own people, to all the Americas, and to the world and fulfill the promise of our times.

Chile's return to democracy, a heroic and courageous struggle, has helped to fuel freedom's march all across our hemisphere. Its economic reforms have set the standard for success throughout our region with impressive growth, unmatched financial stability, and high rates of job creation and the reduction of poverty.

During the last 3 years, Mr. President, your determination to expand opportunity at home and forge new links abroad has displayed the power of open societies and open markets to lift the lives of our people. The friendship we celebrate today has its roots in the fight for freedom that gave birth to both our countries. Almost two centuries ago, in 1811, that shared heritage was reflected in Chile's decision to hold its first national congress on July 4th, the anniversary of our own independence.

Now our ties are bearing fruit in a growing partnership that advances our ideals and our interests. Just as we joined hands to help peace take hold in El Salvador, we are working side by side to keep peace on the border between Peru and Ecuador and to help them reach a lasting settlement. Together we are striving to follow the roadmap set by our hemisphere's 34 democracies in the Miami Summit of the Americas in 1994. We are working to make trade in the Americas more free and fair, the key to jobs and growth and opportunity for all our people in the next century. And by advancing human rights, fighting drugs, and protecting the air and the water we share, we are proving that democracies deliver.

And now our sights are set on the second summit, which Chile will host in March of 1998. We must consolidate the historic advance of the Americas from dictatorship, war, and command economies to democracy, cooperation, and open markets.

Mr. President, almost 30 years ago your father, President Eduardo Frei Montalva, said, "Great perspectives will open before us if we are united." Today the United States and Chile are united, and we can see great new horizons of hope all across our hemisphere.

We must take advantage of this historic opportunity to advance into the future together, making the success of our efforts to promote peace and freedom and prosperity in the Americas a model for all the world.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:16 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House where President Frei was accorded a formal welcome with full military honors. In his remarks, he referred to President Frei's wife, Marta.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Frei and an Exchange With Reporters

February 26, 1997

President Clinton. Let me say very briefly that President Frei and I are going to have a press conference after this meeting of ours, and we'll answer your questions then. But I want to welcome him to the United States and once again to point out the truly astonishing record that Chile has established in the last several years in growing a powerful democracy and having remarkable economic growth and reducing poverty. And we are especially glad that Chile has agreed to host the next Summit of the Americas meetings in Santiago in 1994, following up on the one that we had, of course, in Miami—in 1998, they'll be in 1998—the one we had in Miami in 1994.

And Mr. President, we're glad to have you here and we thank you very much for everything you've done. And we look forward to a unique partnership.

President Frei. I would like to specially thank the invitation and especially now at this point when the relations between Chile and the United States are so especially outstanding and promising.

Thank you for this being an invitation, the first one in your second term. And I'm sure we'll have the opportunity to discuss major issues on restrengthening our democracy,

growth—sustained economic growth, alleviation of poverty, and the advantages we have experienced as being an open economy.

We begin this visit with tremendous confidence, optimism, and as true partners. And we will be expecting you in March of next year at the second Summit of the Americas.

President Clinton. I'll be there.

National Economy

Q. Mr. President, during the ceremony, Chairman Greenspan was on the Hill expressing some deep concerns about the direction of the market. Do you share that concern?

President Clinton. I'll answer questions at the press conference. Thank you.

Q. Are you going to call Senator Torricelli? Are you going to call Senator Torricelli about—

Vice President Gore. *Gracias. Vamos.*

Q. —amendment?

President Clinton. That's a good question. [Laughter]

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

President Clinton. Let me begin by saying again how deeply honored I am that President Frei is here and that he has favored the United States with our first state visit of my second term as President. We believe we have established a genuine partnership with Chile that will only deepen in the years ahead.

The American people are terribly impressed by the remarkable transformation of Chile in the last several years, the growth of the deep democracy, the powerful economic advances, the reduction in poverty, the assumption of leadership by Chile in the region and in the world. And I'm looking forward to building on that partnership. And again let me say I'm very pleased that President Frei is here at my first state visit in my second term.

President Frei. I would like to thank you once again, Mr. President, for this invitation to this state visit, the first one of your second term. We've come here with great optimism at a time where the relations between the United States and Chile are at its utmost.

We are partners not only in this hemisphere, but globally we have been working as partners. We want to keep on working together in furtherance of democracy and to defeat poverty in the end. Chile has a rich experience in foreign trade, and we plan to share that as well.

Thank you for the warm welcome and for your kind words about my father, Mr. President. Thank you, and we will continue to consolidate together democracy. And we expect you in March of next year when you come to the Summit of the Americas.

Q. President Clinton, will you—

Vice President Gore. We're going to wait for the press conference.

President Clinton. We'll do questions, and they'll be equally divided at the press conference.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:28 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's News Conference With President Frei

February 26, 1997

President Clinton. Good afternoon. Please be seated. First, let me say it's been a great pleasure to welcome President Frei to the White House. We meet in an historic moment for our hemisphere, when the foundation of democracy and free markets is firmly in place. Now we must lead in building on that foundation to forge a future of peace and prosperity.

Chile is the window through which we see the Americas of tomorrow, a multiparty democracy, a firm commitment to human rights, proven economic reform. President Frei is working hard to make sure that all Chileans benefit from Chile's economic growth, lifting people from poverty and raising their aspirations. Chile is also an active global citizen, promoting peace from El Salvador to Iraq, sending civilian police to Bosnia, ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention.

At the crossroads of trade among the world's most dynamic economies, Chile can be a cornerstone of the vibrant free trade

area we are working to build in our hemisphere. Together, the United States and Chile are showing the promise of partnership in the Americas. Today President Frei and I reaffirmed our commitment to build on that partnership at the Summit of the Americas that Chile will host in March of 1998.

At the summit in Miami in 1994, we charted a roadmap for collective action. Now we must set further milestones for progress that will benefit our people, deepening democracy, advancing trade, expanding opportunity, fighting drugs, and protecting the environment. I look forward to attending the Santiago summit and to working closely with President Frei to build on Miami's success.

We also discussed the importance of open trade, both in boosting prosperity and in bolstering freedom and democracy. I repeated to the President what I told the Congress: I believe we must have fast-track authority to conclude new trade agreements that open markets to America's products and that advance our values. The United States simply cannot afford to sit on the sidelines while others share in the fruits of Latin America's remarkable growth.

Chile's strong record of reform, good government, and sound fiscal policies make it an excellent candidate for the first use of such authority. Our administration remains committed to concluding a comprehensive free trade agreement with Chile. In that regard, I'm pleased to announce that I've asked the Secretary of Agriculture, Dan Glickman, to travel to Chile to inaugurate a new consultative process to promote our agricultural trade. Our countries have also agreed to launch negotiations on an open skies agreement.

And finally, I want to mention something near to my heart, our Fulbright exchange program, the oldest in Latin America. Today Chile's decision to share this program's cost will help our people to build even stronger ties as we enter the 21st century.

Over the next several months, as I visit Latin America and the Caribbean, I'll continue to advance the important agenda we focused on today, consolidating the historic journey of the Americas toward democracy, open markets, mutual respect and cooperation. We are weaving a fabric of an integrated

hemisphere, a community where people live, work, and learn together as friends on behalf of peace and progress.

Before I ask President Frei to speak, I'd like to say just a few words, if I might, to the American people and the American press about our continued determination and our ongoing efforts to get to the bottom of the question of Gulf war illnesses. This week, as a result of the ongoing review we instituted several months ago, new documents have come to light further suggesting that our troops could have been exposed to chemical agents during the Gulf war. As soon as we get any new information, we share it with our veterans and the American people, and we will act appropriately on any information we uncover.

I want to caution everyone that it is important not to prejudge the actions of the developments that occurred in the previous administration. We simply have to get to the bottom of it. Today I've written to Dr. Joyce Lashof, the Chair of our action committee on Gulf war illnesses, and asked the PAC to focus on the documents that have come to life this week. It is essential that we get all the help we can from the PAC in understanding the full significance of the documents and any other new information that might come to light. We cannot stop until we get all the answers about Gulf war illnesses.

And now I'd like to ask President Frei to make an opening statement. And we'll take your questions.

Mr. President.

President Frei. Thank you, Mr. President. I would like in the first place to reiterate our thanks for this invitation. Chile is a country that in the recent years has consolidated its democracy. It has had sustained growth in the last 14 years, with average development and growth rates of 7 percent a year. And that has strengthened and consolidated our economy.

We have given a front battle against poverty, bringing down to half the level of poverty we had during the eighties. And at the same time, we've done it within the framework of a tremendous opening to foreign trade—international trade. Chile has today economic complementation agreements with

more than 30 countries. We are members of Mercosur starting October of last year. We are members of APEC, as the only South American country. And we are negotiating an agreement with the European Union.

For all these reasons, at this working meeting we have discussed all the items—hemispheric ideas, the Summit of the Americas to be held in March of '98 in Chile, what are the main items and subjects and what we will focus on during the year: consolidation of democracy, free trade, struggle against poverty, and also very preeminent subjects that we have agreed to include in that Summit of the Americas, and that is education, science, technology, and training as the essential and foremost tool to leave under development.

We have talked also about our participation in the United Nations and in all those issues of world peace. We have representatives of our armed forces in Iraq, and we will take part with members of our police forces in Bosnia. And we are very active seeking in Latin America the peaceful settlement of disputes. And this has been proven by our participation in several conflicts we've had in Latin America and very recently in those difficulties between Peru and Ecuador, whereby we have actively participated to consolidate peace in the region.

Also, we have reviewed our bilateral relation. In the last years of my government, the increase of bilateral trade between Chile and the U.S. has had an explosive increase; it has increased more than 50 percent in the last 2 or 3 years. Only in 1996 we've had investments of American firms equivalent to all of the American investment we had in Chile in the previous 15 years. And so with an exchange of more than \$6.2 billion—of course, there are sensitive issues, especially in agricultural sectors. And we have expressed our way of thinking and our ideas as to trade, the points of interest to Chile, to the United States. And as the President has stated, our Secretaries of Agriculture will meet so as to jointly look for a solution to these problems that we believe always can emerge in such a vast, broad, and diversified trade relation as the one we have.

Also, we have spoken of politics. We are interested in the 1998 summit to speak of

politics as we did in the Iberia-American summit of Santiago. Usually we used to discuss environment, free trade, and education. This time we raised the subject of democratic governance, good government, how to make our democracies effective in Latin America, how to solve the very specific and concrete problems of the people.

And that item, that subject, we want to include it in the summit of next year. We know that democracy has to be built every single day with great effort and sacrifice, and that is why this conversation has been very open, candid. We are a small country. We are no power neither as to population nor are we an economic power. But with certain dignity we do have the capability of raising before the United States a very wealthy bilateral relation of great development and to work together in the hemisphere and in global policies.

I believe that Chile, and this I say here solemnly, Chile is no example, nor model. What we've done is to build an experience based on our history. And of course, drawing upon the lessons and work of many, many generations, we have been able to consolidate this development model, this development process. And we have a historic opportunity. Never before has the country been in a position to view upon the future in a different manner.

If we act in this way, I think that in the next years we can leave underdevelopment behind. That is what we want in Chile. That is what we want to build. And we feel partners with the United States in this major endeavor, that as a Latin American country I will be able to leave behind poverty, margination, and build a better future for our children. That is our task, the major project.

And I feel today that, upon arrival to the United States, being received by the President and highest authorities, and when speaking to more before the Joint Session of Congress—first time a Chilean President will have this honor—it's not an honor for the President, it's an honor to the country, for what we've been, for what we are, and what we are building.

Thank you, Mr. President.

1996 Campaign Financing

Q. Sir, the documents yesterday show you raised a great deal of money from people you entertained at the White House. Did you pay for their food and such? And can you really say the White House was not used as a fund-raising tool?

President Clinton. Absolutely. Look at the list of the people. We put it out there. A vast majority, I think almost seven-eighths of them, were people that I had relationships with that were independent of my campaign for President in '92. But some people did come and stay with me who helped me, and I think that's entirely appropriate. I don't think people who support you and help you through tough times and who believe in what you're doing should be disqualified from being the President's guests at the White House. But any Presidential guest at the White House, whether they're family members or dignitaries or whatever, their costs are not borne by the taxpayers.

Mr. President, would you like to call on someone?

Free Trade and Fast-Track Authority

Q. A question for President Clinton. In Chile, your political will with regard to Chile's accession to NAFTA is well-known. However, at this point, with all the time that's gone by, we're asking for more concrete steps. Among those steps you are about to take, are you going to ask for fast-track authority from Congress?

President Clinton. Yes. I am going to ask for fast-track authority from Congress. In my State of the Union Address I said that I would. And I want to reiterate today that I believe the first use of that authority should be to conclude a comprehensive trade agreement with Chile. And I would hope that the Congress would support that endeavor.

I believe the President's speech to the Congress tomorrow will be very helpful in that regard. And I'm delighted that he came here. I'm delighted that this is my first state visit since I was reelected President. And I wish it had been done before, but it was simply not possible to pass through Congress. I do believe we'll get the fast-track authority, and I believe we'll conclude an agreement. But we have a lot of work to do. And as I

said, the fact that the President is going to speak to Congress tomorrow to a Joint Session is a historic thing not only for Chile, but it's very important for the United States and for the future of this whole region.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

1996 Campaign Financing

Q. Mr. President, in the documents that were released yesterday, two high-ranking White House officials, Harold Ickes and Evelyn Lieberman, refer to DNC coffees at the White House as "fundraisers." That of course would be illegal. How do you explain their choice of words, and do you think that any of the fundraising activities came close to skirting the line, going across the line into illegality?

President Clinton. No. We got strict advice about—legal advice about what the rules were, and everyone involved knew what the rules were. Did we hope that the people that came there would support me, particularly after we got into a political season, when we were doing this? Of course, we did. But there was no solicitation during the events. And the guidelines, which I believe were made available to you also yesterday in the documents, made it clear that there was to be no price tag on the events. Did the people hope that the folks that came to the events would subsequently support me? Yes, they did. And I think that was clear to everyone involved at the time. But there was no solicitation at the White House, and the guidelines made clear that there was to be no price tag on the events.

Q. But the language in those memos?

President Clinton. I think my own view is—and I haven't talked to the people, but that's how much they hoped would come out of their endeavors after the coffees were over. And I think, if you will ask them, you'll find that sometimes they did, and sometimes they didn't.

Chile and NAFTA

Q. President Clinton, Chile is a country with a small economy and a small population. Why do you think it deserves to be part of NAFTA?

President Clinton. I think that Chile deserves to be part of NAFTA because it is

the most successful democratic free market economy in Latin America, with high rates of growth, a deeply entrenched democracy, having overcome very well-documented, extreme difficulties in building that democracy over the last few decades. And really I think Chile is looked to as a leader in our hemisphere on political and economic matters. And I can't imagine how we could have a set of free trade agreements with our neighbors in Latin America that Chile was not a part of.

And what I'm hoping is that others in our hemisphere who have now embraced democracy will see what Chile has done economically, not simply in having high rates of growth but also in reducing poverty, spreading the benefits of economic growth to more people.

The commitments that the President has articulated in education, for example, that the First Lady saw so clearly when she was down there 2 years ago—I'm hoping that that will spread across our hemisphere and that when we come to Santiago next year there will be a deep feeling among all the other nations there represented that we should press on to create a free trade area of the Americas and that it should help more countries to bring the benefits to their people that the Chilean people are beginning to realize.

So the symbolic significance of Chile is far beyond the size of the economy, although I wouldn't minimize the size of the economy and its potential for growth.

Claire [Claire Shipman, CNN]?

1996 Campaign Financing

Q. Mr. President, given all the public attention at this point on the fundraising issue, and the calls now from Capitol Hill from Democrats and Republicans for an independent counsel, don't you think it might make sense at this point to have an independent counsel to take some of the pressure off?

President Clinton. Well, I think what I always think about that. There is a statute, and that is a decision for the Attorney General to make. It should not be a political decision. It's a legal decision; the Attorney General has to make it.

Q. Would you be opposed to an independent counsel?

President Clinton. I'm not going to comment. I never have. It is a decision that should be made strictly on the law, based—by the Attorney General, not based on any politics. But the evidence that we made clear yesterday—I think is—I've answered the questions about that, and I don't think there is a legal issue there.

Trade and Domestic Politics in Chile

Q. President Frei, have you been told by President Clinton the strategy he will use in the months ahead to propose fast track on Congress? And also, a domestic question—have you decided—are you close to a decision to who will be president of the Christian Democrats in Chile?

President Clinton. I'm glad you asked him a domestic question. Thank you. [Laughter]

President Frei. What we think as to free trade is to show exactly what our experience has been, more than taking part as to—or referring to the decisions that the U.S. Government or Congress have to make. We are interested; of course, we are. Why? Because as I said before, we have economic complementation agreements with more than 30 countries. Our foreign trade is highly diversified in Asia, Europe, and America. Our trade with Latin America is very similar to the one we have with the United States. That is why we have aggressively sought these agreements, allowing a small nation to consolidate those markets. Today if we had foreign trade—I mean, imports, exports, and related services—they account for practically 55 percent of our GDP. And so today—at least 6 or 7 out of 10 jobs in Chile depend on international trade.

And that is why we believe that this has been beneficial for the country. And also, Chilean firms have gone abroad and invested more than \$15 billion in the southern cone of America—unprecedented fact—practically 20 percent of our GDP. And this has meant the creation of an area not only of free trade but of integration. We are working in physical integration, energy integration, and we are contributing to improve our quality of life in the continent and particularly in our country.

That is why we've grown in recent years at rates—permanent rates about 6 or 7 percent, I would say. The last 14 years, we have a savings and investment rate that reaches unprecedented figures. Last year we had a saving investment rate of 28 percent, 28.5 of our GDP. And domestic savings, there the state contributes with 5 percent to domestic savings. And for 5 years we've had fiscal surplus.

Our accounts are in order, and thus we are firmly convinced that free trade not only is a pillar and foundation for Chile's development but an essential condition to consolidate our political, social, and economic project. And that is why, of course, we are interested, and we are certainly interested in the agreement with the United States. We signed with Canada in November an agreement following the guidelines of NAFTA, and that includes labor and environmental clauses that we are also ready and willing to accept.

So this is our vision of the country, how is our country going to be in the 21st century, and we are working toward that. And that is why we expect and the U.S. Government and Congress to define this, which is a road for Chile, of course, but it is also a road to be followed by the Americas.

And as to the Christian Democrat Party in Chile, the President of the Republic is President of all Chileans and does not take part in active politics. There in Chile, I am head of state and head of government, and the decisions of the parties are independent decisions. And the Christian Democratic Party, of which I've been a member for more than 35 years, elects its authorities democratically, universal suffrage process which is underway, and at the end of March they will hold that election. All the members will vote, and they will democratically elect their authorities.

Consumer Price Index

Q. Mr. President, are you ready to endorse Senator Lott's call for a commission of economists to once and for all settle this issue of whether the CPI overstates inflation?

The President. Let me say, first of all, I support a cost of living increase that is appropriate. I think it's important that it be accu-

rate. There have been questions raised and opinions offered about that. And I think it's important that we agree to a procedure that will have credibility not only among both parties and their leaders in Congress but even more importantly out there among the American people.

This is not a question for the budget; this is a question about the long-term viability of our systems and whether the CPI is an accurate reflection of how much the cost of living of Americans goes up every year.

I appreciate Senator Lott's suggestion and I have—it is one of the things that I have considered, and I think we'll have some sort of an announcement on that in the not too distant future. But I think it's important for me to make sure that whatever we do has not only the confidence of Senator Lott, Senator Daschle, Speaker Gingrich, and Leader Gephardt and the members of their caucuses but also of the people out there in the country that will be living with whatever decision is made on this.

So I think he made a good, constructive suggestion. I think we ought to take that under advisement. And we need to see what other options there are out there, and then we need to go forward, and I expect to do that.

Free Trade and Fast-Track Authority

Q. President Clinton, since the Miami summit, not much progress has been done with regard to the free trade areas of the Americas. Do you think that the various regional processes in Latin America have been making much more headway, and do you think that the next summit is going to concentrate more on that than the FTAA?

President Clinton. Well, I think the answer to your question is it depends in large measure on what we do here. Since the United States did not renew fast-track authority, there was not much more we could do. But a lot of progress has been made within South America, for example. Chile reached an agreement with the Mercosur countries, and a lot of other things have been going on there. And then we've been working on some specific issues with a lot of nations in our hemisphere.

But I believe that our ability to get a free trade area of the Americas—Chile also, I think, made separate agreements with both Canada and Mexico. So our ability to get a free trade area of the Americas and to build what I think is potentially the most powerful economic unit in the early part of the next century, now rests with the willingness of Congress to approve the fast-track authority and our ability to get back on track and try to be a constructive, cooperative part of this process. And I intend to do whatever I can to achieve that.

And as I said, I'm delighted that the President is going to address Congress tomorrow. There's an enormous amount of admiration for Chile in the United States Congress, across party lines, for all kinds of reasons. And I think his words will be heard, and I think they will be exceedingly helpful.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 136th news conference began at 1:16 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. President Frei spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, he referred to a PAC, an acronym for Presidential advisory committee. In this case the President's Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses.

Statement on Senate Action on the Balanced Budget Amendment

February 26, 1997

I have made clear my concerns about the balanced budget amendment, and I am pleased that Senator Torricelli has made the difficult decision to oppose that measure.

Now it's time to get down to the hard work of balancing the budget. I look forward to working with both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to enact a plan that balances the budget in 5 years while protecting education and other critical investments in America's future.

Memorandum on Gulf War Documents

February 26, 1997

Memorandum for the Chairperson of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses

Subject: Gulf War Documents

I've made it very clear from the early days of my Administration that the welfare of Gulf War veterans is a national priority. My strong and continuing commitment, reflected in the establishment and recent extension of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses, is to leave no stone unturned on behalf of those who served in the Persian Gulf theater. This commitment entails ensuring both that sick Gulf War veterans receive the medical care they require and that all relevant information that may help us understand the risks they faced is brought to light.

As you are aware, the Central Intelligence Agency, working in cooperation with the Department of Defense, has recently declassified several documents relating to the ongoing investigation of possible chemical warfare agent exposure of U.S. forces during demolition operations at Khamisiyah after the Gulf War. These documents indicate that: (1) U.S. Army units were warned of the possibility that there were chemical munitions at the Khamisiyah ammunition depot prior to seizing that objective during the ground war in February 1991; and (2) in November 1991, the Central Intelligence Agency prepared a classified message documenting the possibility that U.S. forces conducting demolition operations at the Khamisiyah facility were exposed to chemical warfare agents.

While the many issues related to Gulf War illnesses are complex and entail consideration of massive quantities of information, there must be no question of this Nation's commitment to protecting its soldiers on the battlefield and then ensuring that they receive the care they require upon returning home. This is a joint bipartisan responsibility that my Ad-

ministration and the Congress take very seriously.

Accordingly, in conducting your oversight of the ongoing investigation being undertaken by the Department of Defense, with the assistance of other executive departments and agencies, into possible chemical or biological agent exposures during the Gulf War, I am directing your attention to the recently declassified documents. You have a vital role in assisting me, the Congress, and the American public in understanding their full significance.

These documents have been provided to the Inspectors General of the United States Army and the Central Intelligence Agency, both of whom are conducting investigations relating to Khamisayah. There are two important questions raised by these recently declassified documents that must be resolved by these investigations: (1) When did we have sufficient evidence to conclude that chemical munitions were present at Khamisayah and that U.S. forces conducting demolition activities may have been exposed to chemical warfare agents; and (2) Once we had that information, what actions were taken by whom to investigate this alarming possibility and were those actions sufficient.

Your oversight efforts should take full account of the evidence disclosed by these ongoing investigations, as well as the information being developed by the Office of the Special Assistant for Gulf War Illnesses at the Department of Defense. Your preliminary assessment relating to the adequacy of the investigations concerning these issues should be provided as soon as possible within the next 60 days, and no later than April 30, 1997, the date specified in Executive Order 13034 for your interim status report.

Thank you for your continuing efforts and those of your fellow members and supporting staff. Your Committee's dedicated efforts are truly indispensable to ensuring that no stone is left unturned on behalf of Gulf War veterans.

William J. Clinton

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Weapons of Mass Destruction

February 26, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104-201), title XIV, section 1411 requires the President to transmit a report to the Congress that assesses the capabilities of the Federal Government to prevent and respond to terrorist incidents involving weapons of mass destruction and to support State and local prevention and response efforts. In accordance with this provision, I transmit the attached report on the subject issue.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 26, 1997.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring President Frei

February 26, 1997

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. President, Mrs. Frei, members of the Chilean delegation, distinguished guests, welcome to the White House. Mr. President, I enjoyed our meeting today, especially your perspective as a trained engineer committed to building bridges. *[Laughter]* You have more experience and credibility at that than I have, but I am glad to be your partner in building those bridges.

The United States respects the extraordinary accomplishments of the Chilean people, the brave struggle to reclaim democracy which has cast the light of liberty over your land and over the entire hemisphere. The United States respects the extraordinary economic achievements of Chile, which have shined the light of hope over your land and the entire hemisphere.

Beyond democracy, you have advanced equality before the law and good government. Beyond economic growth, you have advanced fuller participation in Chile's prosperity, reducing poverty and increasing edu-

cation so that all may have their chance. Under your leadership, Chile is a crossroads for global commerce, a force of freedom and peace, a valued partner of the United States in building a better world for the 21st century.

Three decades ago, Mr. President, during the time of the Alliance for Progress launched by President Kennedy, your father made plans for a state visit to our country. That visit never came to pass. And in the years that followed, the bright hopes that our nations had for cooperation in our hemisphere went unrealized. Now we stand at a moment of unprecedented promise for the Americas. Just as you donned your father's ceremonial sash when you took office, you have completed the journey to the United States that he once set out to make.

Now we must make our bold journey into tomorrow together. Mr. President, I gave a book of poems by your great Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, to my wife for our 20th wedding anniversary. In his "Ode to the Sea," Neruda wrote these words that speak to us tonight across the years: "We'll put the affairs of mankind in order, big things first, then all the rest. We will make you see an Earth, we will make you perform miracles, because inside us, inside our struggle is our daily bread, our fish, and our miracle."

Mr. President, you have put big things first: democracy, justice, freedom, the future. In so doing, you have given the Chilean people the chance to reach deep within themselves to perform miracles.

Tonight it's my great honor to ask all those here present to join me in toasting you, Mrs. Frei, people of Chile, and the bright promise of our partnership.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:57 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Remarks to the Business Council *February 27, 1997*

Thank you, and good morning. Thank you, Larry. Thank you, Mr. Vice President. I want to thank the other officers and all of you who are here today for inviting me to come by. There are a lot of members of my administration here. I know Secretary Rubin spoke ear-

lier, and Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles is here; Gene Sperling, the Director of the National Economic Council; and Maria Echaveste, who is my new Assistant for Public Liaison and Alexis Herman's successor—some of you may not know her. Maria, where are you? Stand up there. I wanted you to know because she'll be relating to you. I want to thank you for the support that so many of you have given to Alexis Herman in the job that she held and in the job that I'm confident she will hold as the Secretary of Labor.

Over the last 4 years, I have worked with many of you in this group to grapple with a lot of great issues facing our Nation from reducing the deficit to expanding trade, to investing in new opportunities for a new century. The Vice President talked about the record that our people together have amassed in the last 4 years, and it is an impressive one and one we can all be proud of.

I understand you had a panel earlier this morning speculating on what has now become the conversation that we all have, which is, can it be possible that we have repealed the business cycle? Or if it hasn't been repealed, has at least it been shaved a little? And I think there is some argument for that if you look at the better inventory control, the changing nature of the economy, the more service jobs, the nature of global competition and technology, and the greater sophistication at the Fed. I mean, there are a lot of reasons for it, but I think there are some indications that we have had some real ability to manage this. But I think the most important thing to remember is that the underlying fundamentals has been good because of the productivity of the American people and our willingness to compete. And I think that if we want this to continue, which is the real question, we have to continue to do the things that will make it likely that success will prevail for another 4 years and into the next century.

It is relatively rare for a country to have both peace and prosperity and the opportunity to shape its own destiny at a time when there are so many fundamental changes in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. You go back to the history of the country; that is a rel-

atively rare opportunity. And when it comes along, it's easy to miss because when things are going generally quite well, people are either complacent or they tend to—one of the unfortunate aspects of human nature—they tend to either be complacent or to be all heated up over small things, not big things, to fall out over petty divisions, not larger ones.

And so I think it is quite important that the business leadership of our Nation keep our country focused on the big questions: What will it take to ensure the long-term prosperity of America? What will it take to assure that America continues to be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and security in the new world of the 21st century? What will it take to guarantee a whole new generation of Americans, not a certainty but at least a fair opportunity, to be a part of this enormous, new, exciting age? What kinds of things do we have to do?

It seems to me clear that we have to finish the job of balancing the budget, to keep the interest rates down and the investment up, and to keep the economy growing. And it seems clear that we have to do a lot more than we have done to dramatically improve education at every level.

I'd like to talk about those two things and then mention one or two others today. I realize that whenever I talk about the skill levels of the work force of this group, I am preaching to the saved, but I think it is worth pointing out that between 1992 and 2000, 89 percent of the new jobs created in this economy will require post-high school levels of literacy and math skills. And virtually 100 percent of those jobs will pay what is now an above average wage. But only half the people entering the work force are even nominally prepared for these jobs. Our education system is still turning out millions of young people who simply are not equipped for the new world of work.

We know that we lag behind the rest of the world in math and science and that this poses a severe and growing competitive disadvantage for our country. We know that our young people have to do a better job of learning basic things and of developing the capacity to learn for a lifetime. That's why in the State of the Union Address I challenged our

Nation to establish national standards in every school, in every community, in every classroom in the country, and to be willing to measure whether every child has met those standards in learning, beginning at the beginning with a test of every fourth grader in reading and a test of every eighth grader in math by 1999.

Now, this may seem strange; for all of us who have had children come up through schools, we know that there are a lot of standardized tests out there. But what many people don't understand is that there are not tests to national standards. That's very different from a standardized test. If you have the right—if you have standards that every child should know in a subject and every child is tested, then that's a test everybody could pass. There's no curve grading. You either know what you're supposed to know or you don't. And how you rank in an average is utterly irrelevant unless you know what you are supposed to know.

And it is appalling that we have hidden behind a good idea, local control of our schools, to advance a very bad proposition that algebra is somehow different in Alaska than it is in south Florida, that geography is different in the northern part of Maine than it is in San Diego. This is not true. And no other country which seeks to do well in the modern economy would permit its children to keep coming up through an educational system that could not tell you whether our children know what they are supposed to know.

This is especially important now that so many of our young people come from other countries. Just across the river here in Fairfax County, there is one of the four school districts in America where the school children's native tongues number more than 100. And if—there are 40 percent of our kids in the third grade today who cannot read a book on their own. And we will never change this until we, first of all, say what the standards are and then, second, find a way to measure everyone.

Now, today, we've made some progress in this in the last 10 or 12 years. And some of you have helped me to work on it when I was a Governor. Today, through the National Assessment of Education Progress, for exam-

ple, we can measure how States are doing or how school districts are doing, but still no parent can learn if a son or a daughter is actually meeting tough national standards. Our goal should be not to drive these children down but to lift them up.

Today the Department of Education is releasing the annual assessment of math performance through the National Assessment of Education Progress. It is based on a sample in the States that participate, and most States do participate now. Across the country and in almost every State, our math performance has improved in the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades. Secretary Riley will release the full results today. The scores are getting better, but they also show you why every child should be tested based on these standards, for about 30 to 35 percent of the children tested still have not mastered basic math skills, those which must be known in order to continue to learn for a lifetime.

So what I'd like to do is to just remind you of how you couldn't function if you couldn't measure and how things that you take for granted in the day-to-day operations of your business have literally been avoided in education under the guise of preserving local control. This has nothing to do with local control. Dick Riley, since he's been the Secretary of Education, has done more in 4 years, I believe, than any of his predecessors to try to relax unnecessary Federal rules and regulations that hamstring how local school districts spend Federal money. This is not what this is about. This is about whether you really believe if a child reads "The Little Engine That Could," it's the same in New Orleans as it is in Minneapolis. No election to a school board or no State legislative action can change the fundamental elements on a chemistry table. And yet, we have never been willing to subject ourselves to this sort of rigorous examination in an appropriate way.

We should begin at the beginning with fourth grade reading test and the eighth grade math test and then build it up. I think it is highly unlikely that we can do this unless we have strong support from the business community. I know that the Business Roundtable last month endorsed the concept of tests. I am grateful for that. I am profoundly grateful for it. But what I want you to under-

stand is, we're going to go and make sure that they're developed. These tests—the standards-based tests that are out there now, which are basically the Third International Math and Science Survey and the National Assessment of Education Progress, are very good. We just have to find a way to either take them or a variant of them and then fix it so all the—so a State could get them and give them to school districts and all the students could take them and they could be properly scored.

But what I need you to know is that we still need your support. Right now there's a lot of enthusiasm for this. The Vice President and First Lady and I, we're going to go make a lot of State legislative trips. We're going to try to advocate this around the country. But we still do not have the power to require States to do this. This must be a voluntary thing. But the business community can create the conditions in which every State will have to embrace this challenge and no one can run away.

And again I say, we have to create the mentality that failing is not bad. What is bad is hiding the truth. What is bad is not taking the available tools to find out what the truth is. Because we know that way over 90 percent of the kids in this country can learn what they need to know, but you have to start with where you are. And we know that if we have high expectations and then we measure them, we will eventually see people rise to them.

So I thank you for the endorsement, but you've got to stay with us, and you've got to help us. And when we need business leadership to help convince this State or that State or the other State to do this, we've got to have you there, because it won't work unless all 50 States do it and everybody recognizes that this has nothing to do with local control and everything to do with international competitiveness and giving our children—every single one of them—a chance to live the life that they ought to have the chance to live. And we need you very much.

Let me also say, with regard to the balanced budget—we don't have to have a long conversation about this today, but it now seems clear that the balanced budget amendment will not pass. I think that is a good

thing, for the reasons that I have said elsewhere. But I think it must also be clear to the American people that we must make sure that a balanced budget does pass, passes this year, and passes as soon as we can reasonably pass it. We have to now go beyond the constitutional debate to get to the specifics. I am convinced that if we pass a balanced budget plan this year, it will moderate interest rates, spur more investment, and keep growth going. I believe that.

All the indicators we see that have been shown to me by Frank Raines and the Office of Management and Budget, supported by Secretary Rubin, indicate that if we can pass a balanced budget this year, dealing with the fundamentals that we're talking about—trying to better manage the Medicare program, the Medicaid program, looking at the long-term health of all the other programs—that we could keep it more or less in balance for two decades, based on what we now know. Obviously, there will be differences from year to year, depending on the performance of the economy. But you can look at the fundamentals and the demographics of things over two decades and pretty well know where you are. So it is very important that we do this.

Now, I believe that we've shown, this administration, that we care about this and that we're willing to work with the Congress. Before I took office the administration's budget projections had usually been an illusion to avoid the difficult decisions that administrations didn't want to make so that Congress would have to make them. Of course very often Congress didn't make them, either, and each side took what the other wanted. So if one wanted tax cuts and the other wanted spending programs and, oh, by the way, they wanted to control spending, the tax cuts and the spending programs took preference over the controlling of the spending, and we wound up with a \$290 billion a year deficit and a quadruple Federal debt in 12 years. Last year the deficit was \$107 billion, proportionately the smallest of any major economy in the world, 63 percent lower than it had been in 1992.

So this is working. We have been working together first with the Democratic Congress, then with the Republican Congress, always

driving it down. What has made it possible are conservative, realistic budget projections that every year have been more conservative for the deficit than what actually occurred. In other words, the deficit was even lower than we projected it to be in every year with our economic assessments.

And sometimes when you read in the press, there's a difference between the Congressional Budget Office and the Office of Management and Budget and it looks big in one year, the truth is that we have narrowed these differences dramatically now. They're not breathtaking differences, and it's enabled us to get together and work together to have budgets that make sense.

The other thing I think is important is, you hear a lot of criticism saying, "Well, whenever they have one of these plans, all the savings are in the out years." That's not quite true. But if you look at the way Medicare or Medicaid works, particularly in the Medicare program, if you look at the way some of these other programs work, the savings, by definition, compound themselves in a way that will always make the savings look bigger in the out years. The trick is to pass a plan that legally locks in tomorrow's savings today and that places strict limits on the amounts of money Congress can spend each year. If you do that, then the framework will be created which will permit us to get to balance in 2002. And it will have great credibility in the market.

I know that's true because of things we've tried to do with entitlements, including placing a cap, a per capita cap on Medicaid, and extending the life of the Medicare Trust Fund for a decade by having very rigorous spending controls that will facilitate the movement to managed care, have elicited so much criticism. And I know that, therefore, they're likely to work. I mean, it's just—it's not easy to do this. You all face these kind of decisions all the time.

But I do want to say, you will see a lot of our differences aired publicly—the executive, the Congress, the parties within the Congress. But this budget is well within reach. This is well within reach. And it's well within reach in a way that also would permit us to create a bipartisan process to deal with

the long-term challenges of the entitlements in Medicare and Social Security as well.

So you should feel positive about that. But my advice would be here and my appeal to you is to tell every one of us, every time you get a chance to say it, that you cannot celebrate Thanksgiving this year without a balanced budget. Get the job done this year. We need it done this year. If you don't, it will have a destructive impact on the markets. If you do, it will have a positive one.

But you should know, when you hear all the debates, it is in the nature of the things for the differences to be amplified. The fact is that we are well within range of being able to get this done if we'll all just hunker down and kind of turn down the rhetoric and treat each other with good faith. We can get this job done in a way that I think is very good for the economy.

Let me just mention two other things I'd like to ask for your help on. The first is to help in getting a budget out and in supporting a policy in both parties that fulfills our responsibilities in the world today as the world's indispensable nation.

We had a bipartisan foreign policy during most of the cold war because we knew our neck was on the line and politics stopped at the water's edge. Now it is more difficult to build a bipartisan foreign policy because the elements of it are more diverse. For example, economic policy and trade has a lot more to do with it than previously, or at least we're aware that it does—I think it was always a big part of our foreign policy—and because no one perceives that our neck is on the line. But the truth is that the whole world is looking to see whether America will fulfill its responsibilities to lead in an increasingly interdependent world, not only economically interdependent but environmentally interdependent and politically interdependent.

Increasingly, the security threats we face are those that cross borders, like terrorism and narcotrafficking. And this is a very complex time. We are in the process of building new structures, new understandings, new ways of working together. And it is important that America lead. That begins with trade.

We had great victories in 1993 with NAFTA and with the GATT, and in the last 4 years we've had 200 separate trade agree-

ments. We had a great victory the other day for the cause of global trade and for the American economy. When Ambassador Barshefsky concluded the telecommunications agreement, it was a great thing. But we have been now 2 years without fast-track authority for the President.

Latin America is looking at us. President Frei in Chile—they just had—three Asian heads of government paid visits to Chile in the last 3 or 4 months. And the whole world in Latin America is looking to see what we're going to do. The same thing in Asia. So we really need to pass the fast-track authority. We need to do it this year, and we need to do it as soon as possible. And I hope that all of you will help us do this.

I think most Members of Congress understand—let me just give you two examples—how China defines its greatness over the next 20 years will shape the next 50 years of life in America and the world. I think most Members of Congress understand that how we work through this business of trying to create a united, democratic Europe and a relationship between NATO and Russia, that that will have a lot to do with the way we live in the next 50 years.

But we must understand that our neighbors to the south of us are still our greatest opportunity for the future. All but one of them are democracies. They are committed to free market economics. Other people around the world are looking to them, and we cannot pass up the chance to build closer trade ties with them. This will benefit America and will help us to deal, as I said, not just with economic matters but with political matters, with environmental matters, with a whole host of other issues. So I implore you to do what you can to help us get this done this year.

Beyond that, we have to pass a balanced budget plan that still has a diplomatic budget for the United States. We have continued to lower our spending on diplomacy dramatically, in a way that I think has been very counterproductive for our interests. Our request is simply to give us one penny of every Federal dollar to promote peace, to fight problems like drug trafficking and terrorism, nuclear proliferation, and to meet our obligations to the international community through

the World Bank, the IMF, the other international financial institutions.

My budget does reverse a downward spiral in foreign affairs spending that's been going on a long time. But you know, our Embassies around the world are working around the clock. We've had to close a lot of our consulates. We've had to weaken the efforts that we were making to help American firms win contracts and protect intellectual property rights and fight unfair business practices. We live in an interdependent world. We cannot afford to say that we just simply will see the United States Government quit the field. And I feel very strongly about this. I know that many of you do. But I ask you to help us do that. It's not a big deal in the budget, but it's a part that always, always gets cut, and it's not in our interest to cut it.

The last thing I would like to do is to ask you, as I have before, to help us finish the job of welfare reform. Over the last 4 years, with 11½ million new jobs in the economy, about 2¼ million people moved off welfare. That's the largest reduction in the welfare rolls in history. There are now 4.6 percent of the population, about 10 million people, on public assistance. That is below the historic average since 1972. From 1972 to 1990, the historic average was 4.8 percent of the population on public assistance. In 1994, we got up to 5.4 percent. So in a booming economy, we got down to 4.6 percent, and of that, 2.25 million people who have moved off welfare, approximately a million of them moved into jobs. Depending on whose study you read, the average welfare family has between 2.3 and 2.8 people. There are very few families where there's a single mother with a zillion kids. It's mostly one child or two children in the families.

Now, in the new law, the new law says that the States can let people who are able-bodied stay on welfare for 5 years and no longer; that they're not supposed to stay on welfare more than 2 years at a pop without being in the work force; that the States can establish sort of a contingency fund of about 20 percent to take care of people who are not physically or mentally able to work or who live in areas of very high unemployment.

It is obvious to me that if you look at all the studies—and the Council of Economic

Advisers gave me a report on this, by the way, estimating that of the 2¼ million people that moved off the welfare rolls, about half of them moved off because of the good economy, about 30 percent of them moved off because 43 States were making extra efforts to move people from welfare to work, and about 20 percent of them moved off for—we don't know why—maybe because there was a 50 percent increase in child support payments, collections. And that will always lift some people off welfare. Maybe there are other reasons.

But the point I'm trying to make is that to meet the requirements of this new law, which is graduated in the standards that it applies to these time tables I just mentioned, we have to move another million people into the work force from the welfare rolls in the next 4 years. And there is a law that requires it, so we have to do it whether or not the private economy produces 11½ million jobs.

Now, five companies, including members of this organization, Monsanto, Sprint—who else?—Federal Express, United Airlines, and Burger King, I think, agreed to head up a national coalition to get other companies to hire people from welfare to work. If you look at what's been done in Kansas City, you see that every State has the option to offer companies the welfare check as a cash subsidy for people who will pay well above the minimum wage as an employment and training subsidy. We're trying to get more small businesses into this. We are also trying to pass through Congress a 50 percent tax credit for salaries of up to \$10,000 a year, tied much more tightly than any of these jobs tax credits have in the past to just people who move from public assistance—that is, from welfare to work, or single men who can't get welfare who move from food stamps to work.

There are a lot of things which can be done which lower the marginal cost to companies of hiring new people. But in the end this must be assumed as a mission by business people. You know, we've all complained for years that the welfare system leaves people on it that are permanently dependent, and they get used to receiving a check and don't go to work. Well, the truth is, that was never true for half the people. For half the people, the welfare system worked just fine. They got

in a tough spot; they needed a little help; they got the help; and they got off welfare; and they went on with their lives. But it is true that about half the people were more or less permanently dependent on it. Those are the ones that will be harder to place. So we've got to get another million people, and they're going to be harder to place. And we have got to have your help.

So that's the last thing I will say. I want you to help us balance the budget. I want you to support the education standards movement, not just in the Congress but asking the States that you operate in to embrace these tests, not letting anybody run away. I want you to help us continue to lead the world with fast-track and a decent diplomatic budget. And I want every one of you to ask yourselves personally, what can we do in our company to end the cycle of welfare dependency? If we do this we will have done a thing of historic significance for the American people, because it will end the culture of poverty. There will always be people who are out of work, but no one will be looked at as a permanent dependent of the State if they're able-bodied, if you do your part and we do ours.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:32 a.m. in the ballroom at the Park Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Larry Bossidy, the Business Council chairman.

Statement on the Domestic Reduction in Deaths From AIDS

February 27, 1997

I was greatly encouraged by today's report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the historic reduction in the number of Americans dying of AIDS, further evidence that this terrible epidemic is beginning to yield to our sustained national public health investment in AIDS research, prevention, and care.

In these last 4 years, we have steadily increased our national commitment to fighting HIV and AIDS. We have increased funding for the programs by more than 50 percent, developed the first-ever national AIDS strategy, accelerated approval of successful new

AIDS drugs by the Food and Drug Administration, strengthened and focused the Office of AIDS Research at the National Institutes of Health, and created a White House Office of National AIDS Policy.

We have made good progress, but it is also clear that the AIDS epidemic is not over. We must continue to press ahead if we are to meet our ultimate goal—the end to this epidemic, a cure for those who are living with HIV, and a vaccine to protect everyone from this virus.

That is why I am so pleased that the Department of Health and Human Services is today releasing another \$202 million in funds under the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act to provide high-quality treatment to people living in 49 U.S. cities. Funds for the CARE act have increased 158 percent over the last 4 years and the number of cities receiving this assistance has grown from 26 to 49. While we will continue to care for those who are already sick, we must also sustain our commitment to prevention. The only way that we can assure that a person will not die of AIDS is to make sure they don't become infected with HIV in the first place.

Today's report is very good news, but we must not relax our efforts. In the months and years ahead, we must continue to work together as a nation to further our progress against this deadly epidemic, and while we do so, we must remember that every person who is living with HIV or AIDS is someone's son or daughter, brother or sister, parent or grandparent. They deserve our respect and they need our love.

Proclamation 6974—Irish-American Heritage Month, 1997

February 27, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Throughout the history of the United States, from the founding of our republic to the modern spread of our cultural influence around the globe, American life has been enriched continuously by the contributions of Irish Americans.

Although thousands of immigrants from Ireland had already come to America before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the largest number emigrated from their homeland in the middle of the 19th century, when devastating famine overtook their native Ireland. Many moved into our cities, where their hard work helped American industries, their political skills energized local government, and their culture added richness to urban neighborhoods. Others, freshly arrived from Cork, Kilkenny, or Belfast, kept moving all the way to the American West. Wherever they went, they added their muscle to the building of our railroads, bridges, tunnels, and canals, and they applied their minds to the shaping of American law and letters. And their values were exemplified by a firm confidence in education, a dedication to the work ethic, and a deep belief in God.

America offered these new citizens abundant opportunities and the freedom to exercise their talents in a country that was still less than 100 years old. In return, Ireland added immensely to the American national character. This month, when communities all across the Nation celebrate St. Patrick's Day, we honor the millions of Americans who trace their lineage to Ireland.

Our country has been blessed by the rich legacy of famous Americans whose ancestors emigrated to our shores from Ireland. Georgia O'Keefe, Edgar Allen Poe, and F. Scott Fitzgerald are just a few among the many whose talents have graced the arts. Andrew Mellon and Henry Ford excelled in business and finance. Will Rogers, Spencer Tracy, Bing Crosby, and John Wayne have entertained us. Pierce Butler signed the Constitution, General Douglas MacArthur led the Allied Forces in the Pacific during World War II, and Sandra Day O'Connor became the first woman to sit on our Supreme Court.

But let us not forget the sacrifices, dedication, and profound achievements of the thousands of less well-known Irish Americans who have labored to make the United States a country of which we all can be proud. They were—and continue to be—motivated by their deep commitment and fervent loyalty to family, friends, community, and country.

This month we honor them and thank them for their efforts.

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 March 1997 as Irish-American Heritage Month. I call upon all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of February, 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, 10:54 a.m., February 28, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency Relating to Cuba and of the Emergency Authority Relating to the Regulation of the Anchorage and Movement of Vessels

February 27, 1997

On March 1, 1996, by Proclamation 6867, I declared a national emergency to address the disturbance or threatened disturbance of international relations caused by the February 24, 1996, destruction by the Government of Cuba of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba. In July 1995, the Government of Cuba demonstrated a ready and reckless use of force against U.S. registered vessels that entered into Cuban territorial waters that resulted in damage and injury to persons on board. In July 1996, the Government of Cuba stated its intent to forcefully defend its sovereignty against any U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft that might enter Cuban territorial waters or airspace while involved in a memorial flotilla and peaceful protest. Since these events, the Government of Cuba has not demonstrated that it will re-

frain from the future use of reckless and excessive force against U.S. vessels or aircraft that may engage in memorial activities or peaceful protest north of Cuba. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Cuba and the emergency authority relating to the regulation of the anchorage and movement of vessels set out in Proclamation 6867.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 27, 1997.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:22 a.m., February 27, 1997]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on February 28.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Notice on Cuba

February 27, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to the Government of Cuba's destruction of two unarmed U.S.-registered civilian aircraft in international airspace north of Cuba on February 24, 1996, is to continue in effect beyond March 1, 1997, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 27, 1997.

Remarks on the Initiative To Protect Youth From Tobacco

February 28, 1997

Thank you, Anna Santiago, for the power of your example and for that very fine introduction. I want to thank all the young people who are here, the advocates who are here, the Members of Congress who are here who have championed this battle for so long. Especially, I thank the Vice President, Secretary Shalala for what they have done. And, of course, I want to have a special word of thanks to David Kessler. I think he's had a bigger impact on the lives and health and the future of the American people than any person who ever held the job of FDA Commissioner before him, and I thank him very much.

Because of David Kessler, we have been able to undertake this initiative to protect our young people from tobacco. Because of your actions over the last 6 years, more AIDS and cancer patients are getting better drugs faster, as well; more people are getting better information on their food labels; every American can go to bed knowing that the food on their tables, the medicines in their cabinets are safe. You've left us a great legacy. All Americans should be grateful to you, and we'll do our best to replace you. The Vice President and I would like to be invited to Yale from time to time to give a speech. [Laughter]

Let me say that the reason we're all here today is to ensure that Anna and all the young people behind me, and the young people all across America for whom they stand today, have a chance to live out their dreams. They can only do that if they choose positive and healthy lifestyles and if we give them the support they need to make those choices. That's why the number one goal of the drug strategy we announced earlier this week is to motivate our children to reject illegal drugs.

Most of us have an instinctive urge to protect our young people from danger. We teach them to look both ways before crossing the street. We tell them not to touch a hot stove. We make sure they bundle up before going out in the cold. We should wrap that same protective arm around them when it comes

to resisting smoking and the advertising and marketing of cigarettes.

More Americans die every year from smoking-related diseases than from AIDS, car accidents, murders, suicides, and fires combined. Today it's estimated that 4.5 million of our children and adolescents smoke. Another 1 million use smokeless tobacco. The problem is getting worse. Smoking rates among eighth graders have risen 50 percent in the last 6 years. One out of every three young people who picks up this deadly habit will have their lives shortened from the terrible diseases caused by smoking. As parents, as leaders, as citizens, all of us have a moral obligation to do what we can to protect them. That's why last August the FDA took bold action to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco.

We knew it would be a tough battle, but the health and well-being of our children are worth that. We set a goal of reducing tobacco use by children and adolescents by 50 percent over 7 years. To do that, we initiated the Nation's first ever comprehensive effort to restrict access and limit the appeal of tobacco to children.

Today is the first day that some of these rules take effect, quite appropriately on David Kessler's last day on the Federal payroll. First, we're making the law of the land what is already the law in every State: no sale of tobacco products to anyone under age 18. Second, we're now requiring age verification by photo ID for anyone under the age of 27 for the purchase of tobacco products.

From now on, in every store in America, our children will be told: No ID, no sale. By requiring ID checks for people under 27, store clerks and managers will no longer have to guess the age of those seeking to buy cigarettes.

Studies show that minors succeed in buying cigarettes over the counter nearly 70 percent of the time. That simply must stop. With these new requirements, we'll help to keep cigarettes out of reach of our young people while giving store clerks and managers a tool they need to make sure they're not inadvertently violating the law by selling to minors.

Before we came out here, Secretary Shalala asked Anna if all of her efforts and all of these efforts were having any impact

in reducing the tendency of her peers to smoke. And she said, "Yeah, a lot of them are quitting because it's too much hassle now." [Laughter] That's the idea. [Laughter] That's good.

Over the last 3 weeks, we've conducted massive education campaigns to let retailers know how they can comply with these new rules. We've even prepared this new guide, "A Retailer's Guide to the New Federal Regulations"—appealing advertising, multi-color. [Laughter] This has been made available to 500,000 retailers around the country. I want every retailer and every community across our Nation to join with us in this important effort.

Parents must continue to be the first line of defense, but all the rest of us have to make these rules work, and the retailers can play a major role. I honestly believe the overwhelming majority of them want to do so, and most of them are parents too. They have children too. We have a common interest in doing this job together. And we hope this guide will help them to achieve that goal.

Cigarettes are still legal for adults. If they want to smoke, they can do so. But we have now clearly as a nation drawn a line where our children are concerned. We have done it together. We are committed together. And now we must make it real together.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:47 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Anna Santiago, Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids 1996 Advocate of the Year.

Statement on the Third Anniversary of the "Brady Act"

February 28, 1997

Today marks the third anniversary of the implementation of the Brady act—one of the most effective public safety measures ever.

The facts speak for themselves. Earlier this week, I announced that during its first 28 months, the Brady act prevented more than 186,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying a handgun. Every month the Brady act blocks an average of 6,600 illegal over-the-counter gun sales, with indicted or con-

victed felons constituting more than 70 percent of the rejections.

These statistics should end any remaining doubt that might exist. The Brady act is working.

This important public safety measure is the result of the tireless efforts of two courageous Americans, Jim and Sarah Brady. The Bradys have waged a moral and political battle to save lives and to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals. Their dedication to ending gun violence and making our streets safer is an inspiration to law enforcement and all Americans. Last year, I was deeply honored to bestow upon Jim the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor our Nation can bestow on a citizen.

I look forward to working with the Bradys to pass my antigang and youth violence legislation, which will require child safety locks for all handguns and apply the Brady act to anyone who has committed a violent juvenile offense.

NOTE: Public Law 103-159, "To provide for a waiting period before the purchase of a handgun, and for the establishment of a national instant criminal background check system to be contacted by firearms dealers before the transfer of any firearm," approved November 30, 1993, took effect on February 28, 1994.

Statement on the Death of Peggy Browning

February 28, 1997

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Peggy Browning. Through her devotion to the law and determination in encouraging fair labor practices, Peggy contributed greatly to constructive and harmonious labor relations in this country. Her distinguished career was marked by compassion, good judgment, and, especially in recent months, courage. Her dedicated service will be sorely missed. Our prayers and sympathies are with her family at this time.

Statement on Signing International Population Assistance Program Legislation

February 28, 1997

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.J. Res. 36, which approves a Presidential finding related to international population programs. Approval of this joint resolution permits the release on March 1 of funds previously appropriated for international population assistance programs administered by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). In making these funds available without further delay we are assuring that these programs will continue to serve the many millions of women and men whose health and well-being—and ability to plan their own futures—depend on family planning services supported by USAID. Moreover, we are underscoring the indisputable fact that family planning reduces abortion—as best evidenced by significant declines in abortion rates as family planning services are becoming available in Russia and Central and Eastern Europe.

The passage of this joint resolution at the opening of the 105th Congress is particularly gratifying as it signifies what we can accomplish by working together—Democrats and Republicans. By agreeing to secure the timely release of these funds, we are assuring that the United States will continue to lead the world in providing voluntary family planning assistance. More importantly, we are helping the women of the world to prevent millions of unintended pregnancies, permit the healthy spacing of births, prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, reduce recourse to abortion, and avert deaths from childbirth that often leave infants and their siblings motherless.

It is clear to me—and I am delighted that a strong bipartisan group of legislators in the House and Senate has joined in affirming the view—that family planning is a key element of our comprehensive strategy to improve women's health and station in life, and to increase child survival rates. By their votes, Members of Congress have shown their con-

cern for the well-being of the poorest families around the globe.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 28, 1997.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 36, approved February 28, was assigned Public Law No. 105-3.

Memorandum on Certification for Major Narcotics Producing and Transit Countries

February 28, 1997

Presidential Determination No. 97-18

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Certification for Major Narcotics Producing and Transit Countries

By virtue of the authority vested in me by section 490(b)(1)(A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, ("the Act"), I hereby determine and certify that the following major drug producing and/or major drug transit countries/dependent territories have cooperated fully with the United States, or taken adequate steps on their own, to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives of the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Drugs and Psychotropic Substances:

Aruba, The Bahamas, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Taiwan, Thailand, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by section 490(b)(1)(B) of the Act, I hereby determine that it is in the vital national interests of the United States to certify the following major illicit drug producing and/or transit countries:

Belize, Lebanon, and Pakistan.

Analysis of the relevant U.S. vital national interests, as required under section 490(b)(3) of the Act, is attached. I have determined that the following major illicit drug producing and/or major transit countries do not meet the standards set forth in section 490(b) for certification:

Afghanistan, Burma, Colombia, Iran, Nigeria, and Syria.

In making these determinations, I have considered the factors set forth in section 490 of the Act, based on the information contained in the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report of 1997. Because the performance of each of these countries/dependent territories has differed, I have attached an explanatory statement for each of the countries/dependent territories subject to this determination.

You are hereby authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Memorandum on Delegation of Responsibility for Defense Acquisition Management

February 28, 1997

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Management and Budget

Subject: Delegation of Responsibility for Submitting a Legislative Proposal Pursuant to Section 809(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and laws of the United States of America, including the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997 (Public Law 104-201) ("Act") and section 301 of title 3 of the United States Code, I hereby delegate to you the responsibility for submitting a legislative proposal to the Congress as required under section 809(e) of the Act.

You are authorized and directed to publish this memorandum in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest an-

nounced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

February 24

The President named Richard Socarides as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Public Liaison.

February 25

In the morning, the President met with Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Sultan bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate James B. King to serve a second 4-year term as Director of the Office of Personnel Management.

The White House announced that the President announced the formation of a Capital Budget Commission to report to the President on how best to reflect and encourage public investment while maintaining strict fiscal discipline in the Federal budget. He named Jon S. Corzine and Kathleen Brown as Cochairs. Following consultation with the Cochairs and the congressional leadership, the President will make nine other bipartisan appointments to the Commission.

The White House announced that the President will attend the New York Mets/Los Angeles Dodgers baseball game at Shea Stadium in New York City on April 15 to honor the memory of Jackie Robinson and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the integration of major league baseball.

February 27

At noon, the President had a telephone conversation with President Boris Yeltsin of Russia concerning the upcoming summit meeting in Helsinki, Finland.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Brent Scowcroft to be a member of the Board of Visitors to the U.S. Air Force Academy.

February 28

The President announced his intention to nominate Joel I. Klein as Assistant Attorney General, Antitrust Division, Department of Justice.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ray C. Anderson, Scott Bernstein, Randall Franke, Harry J. Pearce, and M.

Susan Savage to the President's Council on Sustainable Development.

The President declared a major disaster in South Dakota and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by a severe winter storm which occurred November 13–26, 1996.

**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 February 25

Wyche Fowler, Jr.,
of Georgia, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Princeton Nathan Lyman,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Career Minister, to be an Assistant Secretary of State, vice Douglas Joseph Bennet, Jr., 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 February 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released February 25

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry and Deputy Director of Communications Ann Lewis

Transcript of a press briefing by Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey on the 1997 National Drug Control Strategy

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the President's meeting with Prince Sultan of Saudi Arabia

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the availability of documents concerning the 1996 Presidential election

Released February 26

Text of a letter from Acting Secretary of Labor Cynthia Metzler to Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Chairman James Jeffords on the proposed "Family Friendly Workplace Act"

Fact sheet on U.S.-Chile trade relations

Fact sheet on Chile's political-economy and international relations

Released February 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released February 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Fact sheet on 1997 Presidential certification for major narcotics producing and transit countries

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved February 28

H.R. 668 / Public Law 105-2
Airport and Airway Trust Fund Tax Reinstatement Act of 1997

H.J. Res. 36 / Public Law 105-3
Approving the Presidential finding that the limitation on obligations imposed by section 518A(a) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1997, is having a negative impact on the proper functioning of the population planning program

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