

of neutrality and fairness—that agencies shall treat employees with the same respect and consideration, regardless of their religious beliefs. Whether by allowing religious speech, preventing religious coercion or harassment, or making accommodations to religious practice, the Federal Government must act to ensure that the Federal workplace is generous to followers of all religions, as well as to followers of none. The Guidelines will advance this goal. Although they doubtless will leave unresolved many difficult questions arising from specific factual contexts and circumstances, they will clarify the obligations and appropriate commitments of the Federal Government, acting as an employer, to protect and enhance religious freedoms.

William J. Clinton

Statement on Child Safety Locks for Handguns

August 14, 1997

This week, Smith and Wesson, the world's largest manufacturer of handguns, announced that it is forging a partnership with the Master Lock Co. to provide a child safety lock with every handgun sold for commercial use. I applaud both of these companies for their efforts to promote gun safety.

I particularly want to commend Smith and Wesson for taking an important and responsible step for children's safety. Child safety locks are the right thing to do. In 1994, 185 children were killed by accidental gunshot wounds. That is why my anti-gang and youth violence legislation would require that all federally licensed gun dealers provide such safety devices with every handgun sold. And that is why on March 3d I ordered all Federal agencies to provide child safety locks with the thousands of handguns they issue to Federal law enforcement officers.

Child safety locks have garnered the wide support of law enforcement, the medical community, many local governments, and now a part of the firearms manufacturing industry. This fall the full Senate considers the anti-juvenile crime legislation. I hope they will include the child safety lock as part of the legislation.

Remarks at the National Archives and Records Administration Announcing the White House Millennium Program

August 15, 1997

Thank you very much. Governor Carlin, thank you for hosting us here in this wonderful place, in the shadow of our most important historical documents. I thank the British and Australian Ambassadors for joining us, along with representatives of the embassies of Brazil, France, Iceland, and Germany. I'm glad we have so many people from our Cabinet here today, Secretaries Shalala, Riley, Slater; General McCaffrey; Dr. Varmus from the NIH; Joe Duffey, Director of the USIA; Senator Harris Wofford, the head of our national service efforts; Dr. John Brademas; Robert Stanton; and others who are here.

We have a number of citizens who've come from—some from quite a distance—the mayor of Beverly Hills, California, MeraLee Goldman is here. Mr. Pete Homer, the vice president of the National Indian Business Association; Mr. Leland Swenson, the president of the National Farmers Union, is here. And I want to make particular note of the Director of our initiative on race, Judy Winston, because that's going to be a very important part of what will happen as we prepare for the millennium.

As the First Lady said, this gives us a remarkable opportunity to honor the past and to imagine the future, and to connect the two in our own minds and for our fellow Americans. The 20th century has been called the American century. Through wars and depression and industrial revolution and now an information revolution, our American spirit of discovery, innovation, and faith in the future have carried us forward and inspired billions of people around the world.

Now we have come to a milestone, nearing the end of an exhilarating decade that has seen the fall of communism and the rise of democracy around the world; the mapping of the mysteries of the human body and the exploration of the terrain of Mars; the creation of new American ideas and art. Now we have begun the most important exploration of all, I believe: rediscovering and reaffirming our common identity as a people

in a very new and different time, and coming together as one America.

Still early in our journey, we find ourselves at the turn of our first millennium as a nation. For centuries, people have wondered what this millennium would bring. Would it signal an Apocalypse or herald a new world, mark a time of decline or a time of renewal. Whatever the prophecies and forecasts—and there will be more and more and more coming out over the next couple of years—whatever the hopes and fears, the millennium is no longer a distant possibility. It has arrived. We are present at the future, a moment we must now define for ourselves and for our children.

As the year 2000 draws near, we must ask ourselves, what will it take to meet that challenge, to define that future, to prepare ourselves for a new century and a new millennium? What of our values and heritage will we carry with us? And what gifts shall we give to the future?

All over the world, nations and communities are preparing to observe the millennium with a wide variety of efforts. The United Kingdom will build bridges, museums, new parks, and a new university. Germany will hold Expo 2000, the first world's fair to mark a millennium. Today I am pleased to accept Chancellor Kohl's invitation for the United States to participate in Expo 2000, joining 143 other organizations and nations. Australia will host the 2000 Summer Olympics. Iceland will celebrate the 1000th anniversary of Leif Erikson's voyage to the New World.

The White House Millennium Program will guide and direct America's celebration of the millennium by showcasing the achievements that define us as a nation, our culture, our scholarship, our scientific exploration. I appreciate the interest that the First Lady has shown in this endeavor, and I'm pleased she will play a leading role in our ongoing efforts. I also appreciate the work that she and her staff have done already to bring us to this point today. And I want to thank Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, formerly Director of the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities, for agreeing to direct the White House Millennium Program Office. Thank you, Ellen.

Today I want to talk about what we are already doing to prepare ourselves for the 21st century and to make this new millennium our own. First and most important, we are making education our children's first priority. They will, after all, live out most of their lives in this new millennium and the new century. This month I signed historic legislation that balanced the budget but also includes the largest investment in education in a generation from early childhood to college and beyond. In the coming months, I will continue to fight to finally establish high and measurable national standards of academic excellence.

By the year 2000, we have set a goal of connecting every single classroom and library in the entire United States to the Internet. I thank the Congress for funding that endeavor and the private sector for helping us, so far, to stay slightly ahead of schedule. We must redouble our efforts to make sure that every one of our fellow citizens has the tools to succeed in the new century.

Second, we have to continue the path that has restored optimism and expansiveness to our economy but now to ensure that all Americans have a chance to benefit from it.

Third, we have to ensure that our unique and vibrant cultural life flourishes in the new century and that our rich history is treasured and preserved. I am pleased that the National Endowment for the Humanities will sponsor a nationally televised series of "Millennium Minutes" that spotlight 1,000 years of important people, events, and achievements. The National Endowment for the Arts leadership project for the millennium will tell America's stories through the arts and initiate projects, such as new boys choirs modeled after the acclaimed Boys Choir of Harlem. The NEA will also send teams of photographers across the country to capture their vision of America at the turn of a new century. And the President's Committee on Arts and the Humanities will launch its worthy ancestors program, bringing together commercial, creative, and nonprofit sectors to save significant cultural materials from folk, popular, and classical traditions.

Fourth, we must take steps to make sure that the documents of our democracy are safe for the ages, for the millions of Ameri-

cans and new immigrants and foreign visitors who view them every year. Believe it or not, the documents—the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence—are seriously threatened by the wear of time and the elements, unless we act in the next 3 years to save them. That is why I am very pleased that the National Archives, under Governor Carlin's leadership, has a 3-year plan to ensure that they will also survive into the next millennium.

The highest project for the millennium at the Smithsonian is to save our Star-Spangled Banner by 2001—the very flag that flew over Fort McHenry and inspired Francis Scott Key to write the poem that became our national anthem.

Fifth, we must continue to push the limits of science and technology, and to continue to explore the universe. The July 4th landing of the *Sojourner Mars Probe* transfixed the world. It is inspiring a new generation, and I hope very much that it has convinced a majority of Americans to continue to support our exploration of space. NASA will launch new robotic missions to Mars in 1998, 2001, and 2003.

The National Science Foundation will be 50 years old in the year 2000. To celebrate its anniversary and encourage young people to pursue careers in science, the Foundation will launch its National Science Foundation 2000 program, a national campaign on the importance of science, engineering, and mathematics.

Now, as the millennium turns, as we have all seen from countless press reports, so do the dates on our computers. Experts are concerned that many of our information systems will not differentiate between dates in the 20th and the 21st century. I want to assure the American people that the Federal Government, in cooperation with State and local government and the private sector, is taking steps to prevent any interruption in Government services that rely on the proper functioning of Federal computer systems. We can't have the American people looking to a new century and a new millennium with their computers, the very symbol of modernity and the modern age, holding them back, and we're determined to see that it doesn't happen.

Sixth, we must make sure that the land God has given us is preserved for generations to come. At the beginning of the 20th century, Theodore Roosevelt said, "We are not building this country of ours for a day. It is to last through the ages." As we enter the new century, we have a moral obligation to continue that charge. We've already acted to protect some of our most treasured places, from Lake Tahoe to the Grant Staircase-Escalante National Monument to the Florida Everglades. And we are working to address the very real problem of climate change for the next century.

Next we must do everything we can to revive the spirit of citizen service in the new century. Every American ought to have the chance to serve. And I am very pleased that AmeriCorps, our national service program, has set a goal of doubling the number of full-time AmeriCorps volunteers by 2000. I'm also pleased that the Peace Corps will build on its legacy of service by setting a goal of tripling the size of its global learning partnership, World Wise Schools, by the new millennium. This program connects Peace Corps volunteers with teachers and students right here in America to promote international and intercultural understanding.

And finally, we must continue to come together as one America. As Walt Whitman once said, "We are a nation of nations." It is our diversity, alive in our democracy, that is the source of our creativity, our inventiveness, our ability to communicate all around the world. That is why last June I called upon all of our fellow Americans to begin a great national conversation on race and reconciliation to help to carry us into a new millennium.

Now, these are just a few of the ways we are planning to celebrate the new millennium and make it our own. Ultimately, every American must decide what gifts he or she will give to the future, but each has a responsibility for our common destiny. So let me urge every citizen, every family, every community to think of ways to celebrate and commemorate the millennium, from rebuilding and rejuvenating your local schools to restoring historic monuments to recording oral histories of family members.

Already, cities all across America are planning celebrations of their own. Over the next 3 years, the First Lady and I will work with Governors, mayors, community leaders, to make the millennium a truly national celebration of gifts to the future. I invite you to share your ideas with us by visiting our new White House Millennium Program website at www.whitehouse.gov. I decided that I have a future giving out 800 numbers and websites. [Laughter] We only can hope to equal the number of hits that Governor Carlin has already said the Archives have.

This is a serious thing. We want the best ideas we can to commemorate, to energize, and to drive the largest possible number of Americans to work together to make contributions to the future. And technology can help us do it. We want people of all ages and all walks of life to give us their ideas through the website. Over the next 3 years the site will give us a chance also to tell the American people about what we're planning.

We will award the best local projects with the honorary title, Millennium Communities. And we'll post those stories on our websites for other communities to read about and learn from. Other nations are keenly interested in what we're doing to mark the millennium and today, therefore, the Voice of America is broadcasting this event around the world. The Voice of America is also launching its own project, a series of special broadcasts about how we are celebrating the millennium.

We mark our own lives by milestones and anniversaries. We mark the timeline of our Nation with commemorations: the bicentennial of our independence, the 50th anniversary of D-Day, the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II in the Pacific, next month the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court's historic order to integrate Little Rock Central High School.

Each of our major turning points was an affirmation of our values, and as we recall them, we renew those values and gain new energy from them. With the millennium, we must now decide how to think about our commitment to the future. Thomas Paine said a long time ago, "We have it in our power to begin the world over again." We have always believed that in this country, and

we must now take it upon ourselves to take stock as we approach this new millennium to commit ourselves to begin the world over again for our children, our children's children, for people who will live in a new century. It is to the people of that new century that we must all offer our very best gifts. It is for them that we will celebrate the millennium.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:43 a.m. in the Rotunda. In his remarks, he referred to John Carlin, Archivist of the United States; Sir John Cerr, British Ambassador to the United States; Andrew Peacock, Australian Ambassador to the United States; Dr. John Brademas, president, New York University; and Robert Stanton, Director, National Park Service.

Statement on Signing the International Dolphin Conservation Program Act

August 15, 1997

I am pleased today to sign into law H.R. 408, the "International Dolphin Conservation Program Act". This Act is the product of a bipartisan effort by the Congress, my Administration, and a number of major environmental groups and U.S. fishermen. The Act will ensure that one of the best international programs to conserve marine resources will be strengthened and continued.

The protection of dolphins in the eastern tropical Pacific Ocean, where these marine mammals swim together with schools of yellowfin tuna, has long been a high priority for the United States. Strengthening the International Dolphin Conservation Program through this legislation is a major victory for strong international efforts to protect dolphins caught during tuna fishing in this region.

The Act recognizes that ongoing international efforts have been a tremendous success—dolphin mortalities have been reduced by more than 98 percent from previous levels. Foreign nations, whose fishing fleets have contributed to this success, will no longer face U.S. embargoes on their tuna