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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Statement on the International Financial Services Agreement

December 12, 1997

Since I took office, I have been committed to tearing down barriers to American goods and services exports. Today's agreement by over 70 countries to liberalize trade in financial services will ensure market access in sectors where we lead the world: banking, securities, and insurance. In the wake of recent financial instability, it is particularly encouraging that so many countries have chosen to move forward rather than backwards. I want to congratulate Secretary Rubin, Ambassador Barshefsky, Deputy Secretary Summers, Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Lang, and Assistant Secretary Geithner for their hard work in bringing these negotiations to a successful conclusion.

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

The President's Radio Address

December 13, 1997

Good morning. This morning I'd like to give you a progress report on our fight against waste, fraud, and abuse in the Medicare system.

Medicare is more than just a program; it reflects our values. It's one way we honor our parents and our grandparents and protect our families across the generations. This past summer we took historic action to strengthen Medicare by improving benefits, more mammograms, cancer screenings, major improvements in diabetes care, expanding choices for recipients in health plans, and extending the life of the Trust Fund to at least the year 2010. I have also named four distinguished experts to a bipartisan commission that will find ways to ensure that Medicare will be able to serve baby boomers and our children as faithfully as it has served our parents.

But to protect Medicare and the fundamental values it represents, we also must vigorously fight the waste, fraud, and abuse that is clearly in the system, activities that diminish our ability to provide high-quality, affordable care for some of our most vulnerable citizens. Medicare fraud costs billions of dollars every year, amounting to an unfair fraud tax on all Americans and undermining our ability to care for those most in need. Taxpayers deserve to expect that every cent of hard-earned money is spent on quality medical care for deserving patients.

I am proud of what we've already accomplished to crack down on abuse in Medicare. Since 1993 we have assigned more Federal prosecutors and FBI agents to fight health care fraud, and as a result, convictions have gone up 240 percent. We've saved $20 billion in health care claims. Two years ago the Department of Health and Human Services launched Operation Restore Trust. Already it has identified $23 in fines and settlements for every dollar invested in the program. Our historic balanced budget agreement last summer gives us an array of new weapons to help keep scam artists and fly-by-night health care providers out of Medicare in the first place. And earlier this fall I announced new actions to root out fraud and abuse in the mushrooming home health industry, from a moratorium on new home health agencies entering the system to a doubling of audits to a new certification renewal process.

But we must do more. Sometimes the waste and abuses aren't even illegal; they're just embedded in the practices of the system. Last week the Department of Health and Human Services confirmed that our Medicare program has been systematically overpaying doctors and clinics for prescription drugs, overpayments that cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. Such waste is simply unacceptable.

Now, these overpayments occur because Medicare reimburses doctors according to the published average wholesale price, the so-called sticker price, for drugs. Few doctors, however, actually pay the full sticker price. In fact, some pay just one-tenth of the published price. That's why I'm sending to Congress again the same legislation I sent last year, legislation that will ensure that doctors are reimbursed no more and no less than the price they themselves pay for the medicines they give Medicare patients. While a more modest version of this bill passed last summer, the savings to taxpayers is not nearly enough. My bill will save $700 million over the next 5 years, and I urge Congress to pass it.

There must be no room for waste, fraud, and abuse in Medicare. Only by putting a permanent stop to it can we honor our parents, protect our taxpayers, and build a world-class health care system for the 21st century.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the Arkansas Democratic National Committee Dinner

December 13, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Maurice, not only for chairing this dinner but for never saying no for 6 years or more now, in good times and bad. Thank you, Alan Solomont, for your leadership and those wonderful, thoughtful, and highly perceptive remarks. [*Laughter*]

I think these other folks are about to get us, don't you? I think he's finally figured it out.

I'd like to thank all the non-Arkansans who are here tonight, particularly those who have positions in our party—Tom and Jill Hendrickson from North Carolina. And I'd like to thank Jack and Phyllis Rosen for being here. Jack's been involved with our financial efforts for a long time at the DNC, and this is his very last event. He wanted to go out with a home touch. So thank you especially, Jack, for doing that.

I probably shouldn't do this, but I'm going to try to acknowledge the Arkansans in the administration who are here. If I omit you and you quit, I will never speak to you again. [*Laughter*] I am doing my best. [*Laughter*] Normally, Presidents don't have to remember this stuff. [*Laughter*] But I think it's important.

I just want you to get a feel for how many people are here: Mack and Donna McLarty, of course; Bruce Lindsey; Nancy Hernreich; Marsha Scott; Bob Nash and Janis Kearney; Stephanie Streett, Mary Streett; Catherine Grundin; Patsy Thomasson; Ann and Grady McCoy. Ben Johnson told me he was from Arkansas tonight, that he was born in Marion and his wife, Jacqueline, said she was born in Joiner—[*laughter*]—and I'd say that qualifies. [*Laughter*] Steve and Jennifer Ronnel; Darren and Vivian Peters. And in the administration, of course, Secretary Slater and Cassandra; James Lee and Lea Ellen Witt; Hershel Gober and Mary Lou Keener; Harold and Arlee Gist; Wilbur Peer; Gloria Cabe has done great work for us; and in the DNC, Carroll and Joyce Willis; Lottie Shackleford; Mary Anne Salmon.

I'm so glad they're here. There are others I wish were here tonight. I wish Maurice Smith and Betsy Wright and Bill Clark and David Matthews and Linda Dixon and a host of other people could be here. But I want to thank you, all of you—those of you in the administration, those of you who have been in the administration, and most of all, those of you without whom there never would have been an administration. I thank you very much.

I don't want to embarrass him, but about 2 hours before I came over here tonight I was finishing up some paper work in my office. And Nancy always collects interesting letters that come from people from home and puts them in a little folder for me, and I get them at least once a week. And at the top of the folder was a letter that Richard Mason just wrote to the Wall Street Journal. And it said, ''I got about as much chance of getting this letter printed as Dan Quayle does of getting elected President.'' [*Laughter*]

But he went on to say he was a businessman; he had read the Journal faithfully for years. He said, ''For 5 years I've watched you bad-mouth my President and my State and

say things that weren't true. And if your advice on business is as bad as your understanding of politics, I'll be in deep trouble if I keep reading this newspaper.'' [*Laughter*] ''Please cancel my subscription.'' [*Laughter*]

I did what I always do. You know, I was saying, ''But, Richard, you know, you can't blame the editorial page. They have good articles, all that kind of stuff.'' I was making my good Government argument. He said, ''Look, the economy is better. The world is at peace. The crime rate is down. The country is in great shape. Sooner or later some of those people that are trying to tear your guts out and lying about our State are going to have to fess up and admit it. Get over it, the country is in better shape. This is working.''

Since under our new policy all these are covered by the press, they may have to run your letter now, Richard. [*Laughter*] We'll see.

Let me say to all of you, when I was getting ready to come over here tonight—and I'm sorry Hillary is not here, but she is, to put it mildly, under the weather, and she said to send you her love—but when I was getting ready to come over here, I was reliving many of the things that have happened since October 3d of 1991 when I declared for President.

I remember how people sneeringly referred to me as the Governor of a small southern State. I remember how people talked about how we had failed to do all these things. I remember when I was pronounced dead before arrival in New Hampshire. And the Arkansas Travelers, who had been traveling all around the country anyway—and then all of a sudden, 150 people just dropped everything they were doing at home and came to New Hampshire and went around knocking on people's doors, total strangers, introducing themselves, saying, ''This is my Governor; you cannot do this. Don't let them stampede you into this. Don't one more time let the kind of negative, hateful, personality-destroying politics that has kept our country back—don't do it one more time.'' One hundred fifty people up there in colder weather, some of them, than they had ever been in their lives—[*laughter*]—knocking on doors in New Hampshire.

I remember when that great ad appeared in the Manchester Union Leader, with hundreds of Arkansans' names and their phone numbers, saying, ''Instead of believing what they're saying about him, if you want to know about this guy, call me.'' I will never forget that.

I remember how surprised—the people that ran against me in '92 are, by and large, good friends of mine now, and I remember how surprised they were that we kept doing well in odd places. And it took them a long time to figure out that 25 percent of the voters in Chicago were from Arkansas. [*Laughter*] That there was something to be said for being poor throughout the thirties, forties, fifties, and sixties. [*Laughter*] I keep waiting any day now for all of them to be subpoenaed by Mr. Starr. [*Laughter*] You know, a 50-year-old conspiracy to take over the White House—[*laughter*]—which started with our running people out of Arkansas back in the thirties and forties in a dark and devious way.

I came upon a little town outside Flint, Michigan, one day, full of auto workers. And literally 90 percent of them had roots in Arkansas, and I thought to myself today, those people are going to be called to testify any minute now. [*Laughter*] There's a presumption there's something wrong with them; it was some dark plot.

I was in the Bronx—did you see the pictures, where I went back to the Bronx to the place where President Reagan said it looked like London during the Blitz, and now it looks like a neighborhood any American would be proud to live in—to celebrate what this community organization had done. They're called the Mid-Bronx Desperadoes, because they were so desperate to turn their community around years and years ago. Half the housing this particular group has built has been built since I have been President because of our approach, which is to basically support community groups and people that are working together and let them define their own future.

So I get out; I shake hands with Ralph Porter—he's the current president of the Mid-Bronx Desperadoes—and we are walking down the street in the Bronx. He looked at me and he said, ''You know, my wife

worked with your mother at Washita Hospital for 15 years—[*laughter*]—and I graduated from Langston High School in Hot Springs.'' [*Laughter*] I said, ''No, they'll never believe this.'' [*Laughter*] I hope Ralph doesn't get a subpoena. [*Laughter*]

And he went on to tell me that his mother was living in the Bronx and was ill, and he'd been living in—he grew up in Hot Springs and his wife worked in the hospital with Mother; and that he went to see about his mother, and he's decided the Bronx is in terrible shape and that God wanted him to be in the Bronx and help turn it around. And I'm telling you, it will take your breath away if you could walk down some of these streets, not just nice houses but safe streets, clean streets, going to remodeled schools that are working, where communities that were given up for dead are working.

And sometimes I think what our adversaries, that are almost pathologically obsessed with personal destruction, don't get is that that's what politics is about. That's what you taught me. That's why we're all here after 5 years and that's why the country is in better shape. Politics is about real people and their hopes and their dreams. So, to me, all this stuff—you all always say, ''Gosh, I don't know how you put up with it.'' How do you put up with mosquitoes in summertime in Arkansas? [*Laughter*] You just swat them and go on, it's a part of living. That's what you do. If rice farmers thought farming rice was about mosquitoes, we'd all starve. [*Laughter*] It's about planting rice and bringing it in when harvest comes. Politics is about people and their dreams and building a better future. And that's what you taught me.

All the stories—I saw a great little special on one of the television networks the other night, that the State of Tennessee is now sponsoring a story-telling contest every year. And there was a very, very large African-American woman telling stories, and all these east Tennessee hill people were sitting around the circle listening to her, and their eyes were big as dollars, and they were all—and they were taking turns telling stories, and then they'd pick a winner. And I thought to myself, it would do this town a lot of good if we had a story-telling contest every year—[*laughter*]—to remind people about what life is all about.

So they were telling their stories. You want to know why we survived up here? Because I still remember the stories. I got to telling some of the young people that work for me the other day in the White House stories about my first two or three campaigns in Arkansas; they were laughing so hard they had tears in their eyes. [*Laughter*] When David Pryor and I started, you had to know that kind of stuff. I mean, you were expected to know people and you cared about their parents and their children and their brothers and their sisters. You knew that misfortune happened. It wasn't a denigrating thing to say you felt someone's pain; that just meant you were a real live human being with blood flowing in your veins and you had some imagination about what life was all about.

And I just want you to know that that's what we've tried to do here. If I hadn't been Governor of Arkansas in the time I was—and keep in mind, until the year I ran for President, every single month I was Governor but one, the unemployment rate in our State was higher than the national average—every single month. And I stood on those factory lines when people came off the line for the very last time before they shut down in the recession of the eighties. I knew farmers that had gone broke. I understood what things happened to people when older people couldn't buy medicine and younger people couldn't afford to send their children to the dentist.

I understood those things because you taught me them, and I knew what politics was about. And I ran for a very clear reason: I thought our country was divided and drifting, that we were not succeeding, that we were clearly the greatest country in human history, and that we were too dominated, completely paralyzed, and in the grip of the mosquitoes instead of the planting. That's what I thought then. And so we decided that we would endure the mosquitoes so that we could plant and reap. And I think it's been worth the effort.

When you go home tonight I want you to think about this: You were standing and freezing your feet off in New Hampshire in '92, or you've had to do some other kind of

service above and beyond the call since then—you gave us the chance to serve, and your country has the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. That's the statistic. The story is, there's 14 million people out there with jobs who didn't have them before, and every one of them has got a story. There's 3.8 million people who were on welfare when I became President, who are now living in homes, with paychecks, and they've got a different story. There are over 13 million people who got to claim the benefits of the family and medical leave law when a baby was born or a parent was sick.

There are 8½ million people whose pensions were gone that were rescued in one of Senator Pryor's last legislative acts, great legislative acts, when we reformed the pension system, and we saved 40 million other people's pensions from having to worry about it—8 million people who saved their retirement. That's a story. There's 250,000 people with criminal records or mental health histories who couldn't buy handguns because we passed the Brady bill, and we don't know how many people are alive because of that, and they're out telling stories tonight of their lives because we did that.

We set aside more land—I'd forgotten this until I read Richard's letter—we set aside more land in national trusts in one form or another than any administration in the history of America, except the two Roosevelts'. And there will be millions and millions of people just before the end of this decade that will be someplace or another having an experience with nature and God and their families because of that, that they would not have had. And that will become part of their story.

The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. The food is safer. There are fewer little children living next to toxic waste dumps. And every one of them will have a different story now.

We're about to pass another Christmas in Bosnia, where we no longer have the bloodiest conflict since the end of World War II. We've made another year in Haiti. We're on the verge of seeing a profound and permanent peace, I hope, in Ireland this coming year. We've made real steps in making the world less likely to be subject to chemical warfare last year—this year, when we ratified the Chemical Weapons Treaty.

This race initiative—a lot of people say it's just talk; I'd rather see people talking than fighting—it's not just talk; it's a lot more than that. But there's something to be said for that. The more complicated and different this country gets, and the more contentious and conflict-oriented the larger means of communications get, the more important it is for people who are different to sit down and talk to one another and understand their stories and understand that we have things that bind us together that are even more important than the very interesting things about us which are different, one from another. And that's what this whole race initiative is all about.

We've got a lot of challenges in the world. The challenge in Iraq, the general challenge of weapons of mass destruction, the chemical and biological weapons. They could bother our kids a lot, and we're going to work hard to see that they don't. We've got financial upheavals in Asia now. And since Thanksgiving, Secretary Rubin and I have been talking at all kinds of odd hours because of the time difference in Asia and here. I was on the phone last night at 11 to Asia. But we're managing the best we can.

And there are lots of other things we have to deal with: the challenge of the entitlement, the challenge of educational excellence in our public schools, the challenge of extending health care further.

But you just look at this balanced budget. All the other politicians, I heard them all talk about balancing the budget up here for years; it just got worse. The deficit has been cut by 92 percent before we passed the Balanced Budget Act. Now we've got a balanced budget bill that gives a tax credit or a scholarship to virtually every person who needs to go to college in America. We can literally say we've opened the doors of college to everyone. The balanced budget has the biggest increase in aid to go to college since the GI bill passed in 1945. That will make a lot of different stories. It has the biggest increase in health care for children since Medicaid was enacted in 1965. Five million more kids in working families with modest incomes will be able to get health insurance. Who knows how many of

them will live to be adults because of it. Who knows how many of them will be healthier intellectually and physically and emotionally because of it. They'll all have a slightly different story, and it will be better. That's what I want you to think about.

The reason it's important for you to be here is that part of the counterbattle, the mosquito biting, this year was a calculated, determined effort to use the hearing process and the legal process to force all the Democrats—and especially people associated with the party—to hire a lawyer every 15 seconds in the hope that we'd never have another penny to spend on campaigns. Somebody pointed out I'd been to so many fundraisers in the last year that I'd gotten tired a time or two, and I plead guilty to that. It's okay to get tired; you just can't give in.

So when you go home and people ask you why you did this, say because they tried to end the two-party system in America by forcing the Democrats to spend all their money hiring lawyers, and you think the two-party system is a pretty good idea, especially since one party, the one you belong to, was right about the deficit, was right about the economy, was right about crime, was right about welfare, was right about so many things, and that's why this country is in better shape today, and you think that's a pretty good indication about which party ought to be able to lead us into the new century. That's why you're here, and that's why I'm very proud of you.

Let me just say, lastly, I want you to go back home and tell the people who aren't here what I said tonight. And remind them, because they're a long way away, never to get confused between the mosquitoes and the planting, because as soon as you do you won't be able to bring in the crop. We have brought in the crop, and you made it possible, and I'm very, very proud of you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:16 p.m. at the Decatur House. In his remarks, he referred to Maurice Mitchell, Arkansas Democratic fundraiser; Alan D. Solomont, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council, and his wife, Jill; Jack Rosen, chairman, national finance council, Democratic National Committee, and his wife, Phyllis, member, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities; Kenneth Starr, Whitewater independent counsel; Ralph Porter, executive director, Mid-Bronx Desperadoes; and former Senator David H. Pryor of Arkansas.

Remarks at "Christmas in Washington"

December 14, 1997

Ladies and gentlemen, first let me begin by thanking Bob and Suzanne and all their whole network family for what has been a wonderful show. Thank you, Glenn Close; thank you, Aaliyah; thank you, Shirley Caesar; Deana Carter; Hanson; Thomas Hampson; the Eastern Choir; and of course, our Naval Academy Glee Club; the Army Herald Trumpets; our musicians and choir over there; and thank you to George and Michael Stevens for the wonderful job they do every year, and especially this year.

Hillary and I look forward to celebrating "Christmas in Washington" every year. It gets us in the holiday spirit. If we're not in now, we don't have a chance. [*Laughter*] It also gives us another chance to thank the Children's National Medical Center for the outstanding work that all of them do on behalf of our Nation's children.

More than any other holiday, Christmas is for our children. We revel in their excitement. We rejoice in their growth. We renew our pledge to help them make the most of their God-given gifts. It all began with the miracle of a child, born in a manger, who grew to teach a lesson of peace that has guided us for 2,000 years now. It continues to light our journey toward a new century and a new millennium. Every child is a miracle, and it is for their futures that we must all dedicate ourselves to work for that universal, timeless vision of peace in every nation, in every community, and, most important, in every heart.

Hillary and I and Chelsea wish you all a joyous holiday and a very happy new year. Thank you. God bless you. May the magic of Christmas be always with you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:40 p.m. at the National Building Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Robert C. Wright, president, NBC, and his wife, Suzanne; actress Glenn Close; entertainers Shirley Caesar, Aaliyah, Deana Carter, Hanson, and Thomas Hampson; and George Stevens, Jr., executive producer, and Michael Stevens, producer, "Christmas in Washington." "Christmas in Washington" was videotaped for broadcast at 10 p.m. on December 19.

Proclamation 7060—Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Persons Who Are Senior Officials of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola ("UNITA") and Adult Members of Their Immediate Families

December 12, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In light of the failure of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola ("UNITA") to comply with its obligations under the "Accordos de Paz," the Lusaka Protocol, and other components of the peace process in Angola, and in furtherance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1127 of August 28, 1997, 1130 of September 29, 1997, and 1135 of October 29, 1997, I have determined that it is in the foreign policy interests of the United States to restrict the entry into the United States of aliens described in section 1 of this proclamation.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, by the power vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 212(f) and 215 of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, as amended (8 U.S.C. 1182(f) and 1185), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, hereby find that the entry into the United States of aliens described in section 1 of this proclamation as immigrants or nonimmigrants would, except as provided for in section 2 of this proclamation, be detrimental to the interests of the United States. I do therefore proclaim that:

Section 1. The entry into the United States as immigrants and nonimmigrants of senior officials of UNITA and adult members of their immediate families, is hereby suspended.

Sec. 2. Section 1 shall not apply with respect to any person otherwise covered by section 1 where the entry of such person would not be contrary to the interests of the United States.

Sec. 3. Persons covered by section 1 and 2 shall be identified by the Secretary of State.

Sec. 4. In identifying persons covered by section 2, the Secretary shall consider whether a person otherwise covered by section 1 is an official necessary for the full functioning of the Government of Unity and National Reconciliation, the National Assembly, or the Joint Commission, within the meaning of paragraph 4(a) of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1127 of August 28, 1997.

Sec. 5. This proclamation is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as the Secretary of State determines that it is no longer necessary and should be terminated.

Sec. 6. The Secretary of State is hereby authorized to implement this proclamation pursuant to such procedures as the Secretary of State may establish.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of December, 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-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:56 a.m., December 15, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 15, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 16.

Executive Order 13069—Prohibiting Certain Transactions With Respect to UNITA

December 12, 1997

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 *et seq.*) (IEEPA), the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), section 5 of the United Nations Participation Act of 1945, as amended (22 U.S.C. 287c) (UNPA), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, in view of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1127 of August 28, 1997, and 1130 of September 29, 1997, and in order to take additional steps with respect to the actions and policies of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12865, **I, William J. Clinton**, President of the United States of America, hereby order:

Section 1. Except to the extent provided in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses issued pursuant to this order, and notwithstanding the existence of any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by any international agreement or any contract entered into or any license or permit granted prior to the effective date of this order, all UNITA offices located in the United States shall be immediately and completely closed.

Sec. 2. Except to the extent provided in regulations, orders, directives, or licenses issued pursuant to this order, and notwithstanding the existence of any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by any international agreement or any contract entered into or any license or permit granted prior to the effective date of this order, the following are prohibited:

(a) the sale, supply, or making available in any form, by United States persons or from the United States or using U.S.-registered vessels or aircraft, of any aircraft or aircraft components, regardless of origin:

(i) to UNITA; or

(ii) to the territory of Angola other than through a point of entry specified pursuant to section 4 of this order;

(b) the insurance, engineering, or servicing by United States persons or from the United States of any aircraft owned or controlled by UNITA;

(c) the granting of permission to any aircraft to take off from, land in, or overfly the United States if the aircraft, as part of the same flight or as a continuation of that flight, is destined to land in or has taken off from a place in the territory of Angola other than one specified pursuant to section 4 of this order;

(d) the provision or making available by United States persons or from the United States of engineering and maintenance servicing, the certification of airworthiness, the payment of new claims against existing insurance contracts, or the provision, renewal, or making available of direct insurance with respect to:

(i) any aircraft registered in Angola other than those specified pursuant to section 4 of this order; or

(ii) any aircraft that entered the territory of Angola other than through a point of entry specified pursuant to section 4 of this order;

(e) any transaction by any United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, or has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate, any of the prohibitions set forth in this order.

Sec. 3. For the purposes of this order:

(a) the term ''person'' means an individual or entity;

(b) the term ''entity'' means a partnership, association, trust, joint venture, corporation, or other organization;

(c) the term ''United States person'' means any United States citizen, permanent resident alien, entity organized under the law of the United States (including foreign branches), or any person in the United States;

(d) the term ''UNITA'' includes:

(i) the Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA), known in English as the ''National Union for the Total Independence of Angola;''

(ii) the Forcas Armadas para a Liberacao de Angola (FALA), known in English as the ''Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola;'' and

(iii) any person acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of any of the foregoing, including the Center for Democracy in Angola (CEDA).

Sec. 4. The Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State and, as appropriate, other agencies, is hereby authorized to take such actions, including the specification of places, points of entry, and aircraft registered in Angola for purposes of section 2(a), (c), and (d) of this order, the authorization in appropriate cases of medical emergency flights or flights of aircraft carrying food, medicine, or supplies for essential humanitarian needs, and the promulgation of rules and regulations, and to employ all powers granted to the President by IEEPA and UNPA as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this order. The Secretary of the Treasury may redelegate any of these functions to other officers and agencies of the United States Government. All agencies of the United States Government are hereby directed to take all appropriate measures within their authority to carry out the provisions of this order, including suspension or termination of licenses or other authorizations in effect as of the effective date of this order.

Sec. 5. Nothing contained in this order shall create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

Sec. 6. (a) This order is effective at 12:01 a.m. eastern standard time on December 15, 1997.

(b) This order shall be transmitted to the Congress and published in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
December 12, 1997.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:57 a.m., December 15, 1997]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 15, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 16.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on UNITA

December 12, 1997

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

Pursuant to section 204(b) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(b), I hereby report to the Congress that I have exercised my statutory authority to take additional steps with respect to the actions and policies of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12865.

The circumstances that led to the declaration on September 26, 1993, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions and policies of UNITA pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. United Nations Security Council Resolution 864 (1993) imposed prohibitions against the sale of weapons, military materiel, and petroleum products to UNITA. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1127 of August 28, 1997, and 1130 of September 29, 1997, determined that all Member States shall impose additional sanctions against UNITA due to the serious difficulties in the Angolan peace process resulting from delays by UNITA in the implementation of its essential obligations as established by the Lusaka Peace Protocol of November 20, 1994.

Accordingly, and pursuant to the requirements of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1127, I have issued an Executive order which: (1) orders the closure of all UNITA offices in the United States, and (2) prohibits: (a) the sale or supply in any form, by United States persons or from the United States or using U.S. registered aircraft, of any aircraft or aircraft components to UNITA, or to any location within Angola other than those specified by the Secretary of the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary of State; (b) the insurance, engineering or servicing by United States persons or from the United States of any aircraft owned or controlled by UNITA; (c) the granting of permission to any aircraft to take off from, land in, or overfly the United States if it is destined to land in or has taken off from any location in Angola not specified by the Secretary of

the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary of State; and (d) the provision by United States persons or from the United States of engineering and maintenance servicing, the certification of airworthiness, the payment of new claims against existing insurance contracts, or the provision or renewal of insurance to any aircraft registered in Angola not specified by the Secretary of the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary of State or to any aircraft that entered Angola through any location not specified by the Secretary of the Treasury in consultation with the Secretary of State.

In furtherance of the goals of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1127 and of the foreign policy interests of the United States, the authorization of exemptions for flights responding to medical emergencies or for essential humanitarian and peace process mediation needs is implicit in this order.

Under the terms of this order, UNITA includes: (1) the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola; (2) the Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FALA); and (3) any person acting or purporting to act for or on behalf of the foregoing, including the Center for Democracy in Angola (CEDA).

The United Nations Security Council acted to impose these additional sanctions in response to the actions and policies of UNITA in failing to comply with its obligations under the Lusaka Peace Protocol and thereby jeopardizing the return of peace to Angola. The United Nations Security Council resolutions demand UNITA's compliance with those obligations, including demilitarization of all its forces, transformation of its radio station into a nonpartisan broadcasting facility, and full cooperation in the process of normalization of government authority throughout Angola.

The above measures will immediately demonstrate to UNITA the seriousness of our concern over its delays to the peace process. It is particularly important for the United States and the international community to demonstrate to UNITA the necessity of completing the peace process in Angola. The flight restrictions will further limit UNITA's capacity to import weapons and military materiel in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 864 (1993).

When UNITA fully complies with its obligations and completes its transition from armed movement to unarmed political party, the United States will support measures lifting these sanctions.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 15.

Exchange With Reporters Following Discussions With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland

December 15, 1997

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, do you feel that your meetings are helping with the peace process, and do you feel that it will be staying on track for its timeframe, the way it's figured now for a May referendum?

The President. Well, I'm very impressed by what's been done and very encouraged. And I can tell you just two things: One is, I intend to stay personally involved in this in however ways I can be helpful. I will do anything I can. But the second thing is, it's time to get down to details now. There's a very ambitious timetable. It can be met. I think the people would like it to be met, the Irish people. And so the political leaders will have to get down to the details, and the devil is always in the details. There are difficult, difficult decisions that have to be made, but that's what people who occupy positions of leadership are hired to do, and the time to do it is now. And I will do everything I can to help. And the Taoiseach and I have had a great meeting today, and I'm encouraged by the reports that he's given.

Q. Is there anything specific, Mr. President, that the Taoiseach asked you to do?

The President. Just that he asked me to stay involved, and he said that anything I could do to encourage all the parties to be part of an evenhanded process—and I believe George Mitchell is doing his best to be

evenhanded—was important. And then, of course, early next year we'll be getting into the details, and then I expect we'll be talking in a more regular way. By the time he comes back here for St. Patrick's Day we'll all be up to our ears in it, I would imagine.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, going to Bosnia, are you signaling an intention to keep U.S. forces there beyond deadline?

The President. Well, you know I'm going to have several opportunities to talk to you over the next few days, and I'll have a statement about that soon. I'm proud of what our people have done there; I'm proud of what the Irish have done there, all the people who are involved. And a great deal of progress has been made, a great deal more work needs to be done.

The main thing I'm doing is going to Bosnia to thank the American military personnel for being there and for spending their Christmas there and for the sacrifices they've made to bring peace to Bosnia, and to tell them why it's important. That's the main reason I'm going.

Iran

Q. Do you see new flexibility from Iran in statements made in the past few days?

The President. Well, I was quite encouraged by Mr. Khatami's statement. And it was welcome, and I will say again I would like nothing better than to have a dialog with Iran, as long as we can have an honest discussion of all the relevant issues. We remain concerned about the sponsorship of terrorism, about the violent attacks on the peace process, about the development—their acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. And we will continue to be concerned about those things. But I was quite encouraged by the President's statement, and I think that the American people should be.

Northern Ireland Peace Process

Q. Taoiseach, could I ask your impressions of your meeting with the President? How did it go?

Prime Minister Ahern. Well, first of all, I'm delighted to be here, and I'm very grateful that the President has afforded part of his horrendous schedule some time for us to be here. We had an excellent discussion, where we were able to go back over what has happened over the last number of months, and I had an opportunity to brief the President on all of the moves since the peace process and the real talks started on the 24th of September, right up to what's happening in Belfast and the castle buildings today.

The most important thing for us is that the President has continued to be so involved and so committed, so personally involved. The President has at all times helped, during the summer when things were scrappy and he afforded me a number of phone calls, which I greatly appreciated, and of course, some of his most key people are actively involved in trying to bring us all to a balanced, comprehensive settlement.

And this morning we had an opportunity of going through what are the factors of the talks, the three strands, and how we can see ourselves working into the springtime to try to get to a comprehensive settlement. And that he liked the meeting that I had with Tony Blair the other day; the President is in full agreement and is urging me that we must now get into the detail and that we have to try to put together the comprehensive settlement that the people will be allowed to vote on and that is balanced and for all sides. And that's precisely what we'll do. And as the President has said, by St. Patrick's Day, hopefully I can report back some progress in that area.

President's New Dog

Q. Mr. President, what news on the puppy? [*Laughter*]

The President. He's here, and we had a great weekend. More later. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:45 a.m. at the Northwest Portico at the White House. In their remarks, the President and the Prime Minister referred to George J. Mitchell, Special Assistant to the President for Northern Ireland; President Mohammad Khatami of Iran; and Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom.

Remarks Announcing the Appointment of Bill Lann Lee as Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and an Exchange With Reporters

December 15, 1997

The President. I want to thank the Attorney General for her support. And again, I want to join the Vice President and the Attorney General in thanking Isabelle Katz Pinzler for the great job she has done as Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. I wish her well as she returns to private life, to her husband, her son and daughter in New York City.

Today it is with a great deal of pride that I name Bill Lann Lee to the post of Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights and Counselor to the Attorney General for Civil Rights Enforcement. From this day forward, he will be America's top civil rights enforcer, serving at the helm of the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

It is fitting that this announcement comes on the 206th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, our charter of freedom and equality. Our present civil rights laws have helped all of us move closer to those timeless values. They protect every person from discrimination, especially discrimination against women, minorities, Americans with disabilities, and victims of hate crimes. They ensure that all Americans have equal opportunities to work, to learn, to live, to raise their children in communities where they can thrive and grow.

I can think of no one whose life story and impeccable credentials make him more suited to enforcing these laws than Bill Lann Lee. Because of his long struggle in this nominating process, his life story has become rather well known to millions of Americans. They know now that he has lived the American dream and that he embodies American values.

The son of poor Chinese immigrants, who, like millions of other Americans, came to this country seeking better futures, and despite feeling the sting and frustration of discrimination throughout their lives, they were people who never lost faith in America. They settled in Harlem, built a small business washing clothes, taught their two sons the value of hard work and the limitless possibilities of a good education. Bill Lee won a scholarship to Yale and went on to earn a law degree from Columbia. His brother became a Baptist minister. I leave it to you to decide which one got the better end of the deal. [*Laughter*]

Above all, the Lees instilled in their sons a deep and abiding love for country and our values. It is this love for America, the faith in the American ideal, that inspired Mr. Lee to pursue a career in civil rights law. Over a lifetime he has worked tirelessly to end the discrimination that keeps us from reaching our greatest potential as a people.

As a lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the organization founded by the great Thurgood Marshall, Mr. Lee has sought to bring people together, to reconcile opposing views, to forge consensus, and to find the common ground we all must stand on. His commitment to fairness and the dignity of all Americans won the respect and admiration of clients and opposing lawyers alike.

We need more Americans like Bill Lee in the highest offices of Government. In the last session of Congress, he was denied the vote he deserves on his confirmation because some Senators disagree with his views on affirmative action. But his views on affirmative action are my views on affirmative action: No quotas, no discrimination, no position or benefit for any unqualified person; but mend, don't end affirmative action, so that all Americans can have a fair chance at living the American dream.

My constitutional right and responsibility as President is to put in office men and women who will further our policies consistent with our obligations under the Constitution. Some people want to wait for me to appoint someone to this position whom I disagree with. But America cannot afford to wait that long. And it would be a long wait indeed. [*Laughter*] The enforcement of our civil rights laws demands strong leadership now.

In the coming months, I will resubmit Mr. Lee's nomination to the Senate. I will be pressing very hard for a straight up or down vote, and I am confident that once the Senate and the American people are given a fair

chance to judge Mr. Lee's performance, he will be confirmed.

While he will have the full authority and support to carry out the duties of the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, I still look forward to striking the word "acting" from his title. He is a remarkable American, and I am confident that he will enforce our civil rights laws with the same professionalism, honesty, and integrity he has exhibited throughout his life and career. He is truly the best person for this job.

Mr. Lee.

[*At this point, Mr. Lee made brief remarks.*]

Nature of the Appointment

Q. Mr. President, why did you pick acting instead of recess?

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Senator Specter has appealed to you——

Q. Why did you choose to——

The President. I have two objectives. One is to get Mr. Lee into the leadership of the Civil Rights Division as soon as possible. The other is to maximize the chances that he can be confirmed in the coming year in the Senate. I believe this path is the best way to maximize the chance of achieving both objectives.

Q. Mr. President, do you think that you minimized the problem of retaliation that the Republicans threatened by choosing this path?

The President. Well, I don't know about that. I think that retaliation is not only inappropriate and unwarranted, it would be wrong. As far as the pace of confirmation of judges, I don't think it's been adequate to date anyway. The Senate has a constitutional responsibility to consider these judges in a timely fashion, and I want them to do much better, not worse.

But you know, no President can proceed in office and do the duty that the Constitution imposes if you spend your time worrying about retaliation. I think this is an honorable decision which gives the Senate a chance to consider Mr. Lee again, something which I believe would not have happened if I had done it in another way. That's what I want to do. And I want to work with the Senate in a positive way, but I can't be worried about retaliation. I have to do what I think is right.

Q. The Senate also appealed to you on constitutional grounds as well, saying that you shouldn't do this under Articles I or II. How do you respond to that? And if Mr. Lee wants to step up, why did you want to step into such a political firestorm that was caused by your nomination?

The President. Well, first of all, I have been very judicious in the use of recess appointments. If you look at my record as compared with every President—I've gone back all the way to President Ford, and he was just here a little less than 2½ years. But I have been very disciplined in the use of these appointments. President Reagan and President Bush made far more recess appointments than I have.

I have done my best to work with the United States Senate in an entirely constitutional way. But we had to get somebody into the Civil Rights Division. And I'm not sure anybody could have been confirmed if the test is that I have to appoint someone who disagrees with me on affirmative action, which seemed to be what some of the Senators are saying. And I just couldn't imagine getting anybody more qualified than Bill Lee. So I decided we needed to go on and do what I thought was right for the country.

Q. But, sir, why should this not be seen as an act of defiance against the advise and consent process in the Senate?

The President. Well, first of all, the Senate did not decline—they did not reject his appointment. The Senate never even got a chance to vote on his appointment. And if the Senate had rejected his appointment, I would not—even though I would have bitterly disagreed with it, I certainly would not have named him to this position. I believe that the Senate, if given a chance to vote on him, will embrace his appointment. And I believe after he's been there a few months, he'll have even more votes. So that's what I hope will happen and what I believe we have a chance to have happen now.

Q. Isn't it like having one hand tied behind his back to start this job politically as an acting——

The President. No. Absolutely not. He has the full authority of the office. And you have seen here, he has the full confidence

of the Attorney General and the President. That's all he needs.

Q. But, Mr. President, you still have those that are opposing him. And what if the same thing were to happen that happened this year? What's the next step?

The President. He'll be the Acting Attorney General for Civil Rights, and he'll be enforcing the civil rights laws.

Q. Why do you think politics were at play in this issue, sir? You and your top aides are saying that politics were responsible for the opposition. Why could it not—why do you not accept it as just an honest disagreement on issues?

The President. Because I was elected President, and I didn't make any secret of my position on affirmative action. I might say also, this administration has done a lot to change the affirmative action laws to eliminate some of the abuses that I thought existed. But we can never be in a position of saying that a President shouldn't have someone in office who agrees with him. Now, that doesn't mean every—if a President makes an appointment that's way outside the mainstream of established legal thought or somebody who has a lack of experience or someone who has otherwise demonstrated an unfitness for office, then the Senate may reject that person, who parenthetically may be agreeing with the President.

But none of those elements were here—none, not a single one. And that's why I thought this was the right thing to do, and I still feel that way. I feel more strongly than I did the day I nominated him.

Q. What is the name of your dog? [*Laughter*]

Q. When will you submit the nomination again?

The President. What did you say?

Q. When will you submit the nomination again?

The President. Oh, I don't know. Early next year, in a timely fashion.

Q. Your appointment to Mexico as a Mexican Ambassador was also blocked. Did you decide with this that enough is enough, and that you were going to take a stand on this? Why was there a difference in the decision to put Lee in there without confirming him?

The President. Because I think under these circumstances we actually have a chance to get him confirmed. The Ambassador position to Mexico was entirely different. And normally you don't appoint a recess—you don't make a recess appointment, for example, of an Ambassador unless there is some understanding that that person will actually be confirmed when the time comes for the confirmation. The facts were different.

Q. Is there any difference between the way an Acting Assistant Attorney General does his job and a fully nominated and confirmed Assistant Attorney General can do his job? Is there any difference between the two?

The President. I do not believe there is any difference at all as long as the Acting Attorney General—the Acting Assistant Attorney General has the confidence and support of the Attorney General and the confidence and support of the President. And that is the message today. I think he's in great shape, and I can't wait for him to go to work.

President's New Dog

Q. What's the answer to the big question in this country? What's the name of your dog? [*Laughter*]

The President. First of all, let me thank—I want to thank everybody, all these kids that came in all over the country. I've never gotten so many suggestions in my life. And some of them were quite hilarious, Advise and Consent. A child yesterday said I should name the dog Top Secret, so I could run around the White House saying, "Top Secret, Top Secret." [*Laughter*]

Q. What do you call him now?

The President. Anyway, I got all these names, and we had a little family conference last night. We got down to two names, and we selected one. And I think I'll announce it tomorrow at the press conference. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. William F. Weld of Massachusetts, withdrawn nominee for Ambassador to Mexico.

Executive Order 13070—The Intelligence Oversight Board, Amendment to Executive Order 12863

December 15, 1997

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to emphasize the role of the Intelligence Oversight Board in providing executive branch oversight, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 12863 is amended as follows:

Section 1. The text in section 2.1 is deleted and the following text is inserted in lieu thereof: ''The Intelligence Oversight Board (IOB) is hereby established as a standing committee of the PFIAB. The IOB shall consist of no more than four members designated by the President from among the membership of the PFIAB. The Chairman of the PFIAB may also serve as the Chairman or a member of the IOB if so designated by the President. The IOB shall utilize such full-time staff and consultants as authorized by the Chairman of the IOB with the concurrence of the Chairman of the PFIAB.''

Sec. 2. The first sentence in section 2.3 is deleted and the following sentence is inserted in lieu thereof: ''The IOB shall report to the President.''

William J. Clinton

The White House,
December 15, 1997.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:29 a.m., December 17, 1997]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 16, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on December 18.

Remarks on Presenting the National Medals of Science and Technology

December 16, 1997

The President. Thank you very much. Dr. Gibbons, Secretary Daley. I'm also delighted that Neal Lane, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and Dr. Harold Varmus, the Director of the NIH, are here with us, as well as the chairman of the House Science Committee; Congressman Sensenbrenner, thank you very much for being here.

Today we honor 14 remarkable men and women for extraordinary individual accomplishments, from discovering new ways to chart the universe to exploring the internal universe of human nature. We honor them, however, also for their collective achievement. By giving these awards we honor the American passion for discovery that has driven our Nation forward from field to factory to the far reaches of cyberspace. This spirit of discovery will lead us into a new century and a new millennium.

This is a moment of great challenge for our Nation, a time where we must rise to master the forces of change and progress as we move forward to the 21st century. Later this week I will announce or discuss the new economy, one of the most powerful forces of change. This morning I want to talk about the force of scientific and technological innovation. It is helping to fuel and shape that new economy, but its impact goes well beyond it.

For 5 years in a row, I have increased our investments in science and technology while bringing down the deficit, often in the face of opposition. These investments have surely paid off in higher paying jobs, better health care, stronger national security, and improved quality of life for all Americans. They are essential to our efforts to address global climate change, a process begun last week in Kyoto with the strong leadership of the Vice President. They are critical to America's ability to maintain our leadership in cutting-edge industries that will power the global economy of the new century.

Half our economic growth in the last half-century has come from technological innovation and the science that supports it. The information, communications, and electronics industries already employ millions of Americans in jobs that can pay up to 73 percent above the national average. Firms that use advanced technologies are more productive and profitable than those which do not.

But technological innovation also depends upon Government support in research and

development. Let me give you just two examples. Five years ago, the Internet was unknown to most Americans. Today, thanks to farsighted investments, tens of millions of Americans surf the Web on a daily basis, and our investments in the next generation Internet will give our universities and national labs a powerful research and communication tool. Five years ago, the mystery of the human genetic system was only partly known. Today, Government-funded scientists have discovered genes linked to breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and our human genome project is revolutionizing how we understand, treat, and prevent some of our most devastating diseases.

These ground-breaking innovations could not have happened without dedication, downright genius, and Government investment. Today I'm pleased to announce $96 million in new research and investments to continue that progress.

First, the Defense Department will invest $14 million to help our universities, in partnership with private industry, to develop a new supercomputer on a chip, among other new projects. These chips will be no larger than my fingernail, but their computing power will be 25,000 times greater than this entire mainframe computer. Let me try to illustrate; this is the size of the chip. It equals 25,000 of those. Pretty good work. [*Laughter*] This technology, once developed, will make possible everything from faster, cheaper home computers to advanced weapons systems to cleaner, more efficient car engines and many, many others.

Second, the Commerce Department's advanced technology program will sponsor a series of private-sector competitions for $82 million in new grants to foster innovations like cleaner energy sources that reduce greenhouse gases, low-cost methods of producing lifesaving drugs, and radio-transmitting ID cards that can help to locate lost children, to name just a few. These investments will help to usher in a new era of discovery we can only dream of today.

Benjamin Franklin once said he was sorry to have been born so soon because he would not, and I quote, "have the happiness of knowing what will be known 100 years hence." It's hard to imagine what he would think if he were here, 200 years later. I'm sure he'd be filled with awe and pride that the American tradition of innovation he helped to establish is still driving our Nation forward.

And who knows what will be known in only 25 years, whom we will be honoring: the researchers who find cures for cancer, perhaps scientists who discover life on other planets, the engineers who devise new energy sources to preserve our environment and sustain our economy for generations to come. The discoveries of tomorrow will be made possible by the scientists of today and by our continued commitment to their passionate quest.

Now I am honored to present the men and women with the National Medals of Science and Technology. Please read the citations.

[*At this point, Lt. Comdr. Wes Huey, USN, Navy aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals and congratulated the recipients.*]

The President. Give them all a hand here. [*Applause*]

[*A group photograph was then taken.*]

The President. Thank you all very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building.

Exchange With Reporters on the South Lawn

December 16, 1997

President's New Dog

Q. So what's his name?

The President. Isn't he pretty?

Q. But what's his name?

The President. Press conference, press conference.

Q. His name is "Press Conference"?

The President. That's a good idea. That's probably what I should have called him. Do you want to go see them?

Q. Mr. President, where does he sleep? Where does your puppy sleep?

The President. Upstairs.

Q. Upstairs. And does he have his own little doggy bed?

The President. He has a little house in the kitchen. He's sleeping in the kitchen right now.

Q. He sleeps in a little doghouse?

The President. Yes, he sleeps in a little doghouse.

Q. Is he really trained?

The President. You may get a chance to see here in a minute. [*Laughter*] Yes, he is. He's done quite well so far.

Q. And what can he do?

The President. Sit. That's good.

Q. And what's he eating, Mr. President?

The President. Just a little dog biscuit. Now, he's pretty well-trained. And I get up in the morning and take him for a walk early, at 7 a.m., and then I give him breakfast. Then we go for another walk. [*Laughter*] And then he has lunch and goes for another walk.

Q. Who takes him at lunchtime?

The President. Well, so far, I have.

Q. He likes the press, Mr. President.

The President. Yes, he does. So do I.

Q. He doesn't bother your allergies?

The President. No, I've never been allergic to dogs. And I have a minor allergy to cats. That's why most of the time when I play with Socks, I've tried to play with him outside.

Q. Has he met Socks?

The President. Yes, twice—three times. I'm trying to work this out.

Q. What happened?

The President. It's going to take awhile. It's kind of like peace in Ireland or the Middle East. [*Laughter*]

Q. What happened when they met?

The President. Socks was a little scared of him, I think. Yesterday—you could have had a great picture yesterday. She jumped—he jumped way up on my shoulders. Socks climbed right up and got up on my shoulders so that they would have an appropriate distance. But we're giving them items that the two of them have, to try to get used to the scent. And I'll get it worked out.

Q. Where will he hang out most of the day?

Q. What's his name?

The President. He can hang out nearly anywhere. We've got a little flexible cage back in the Dining Room now in the White House. He comes over to the Oval Office with me in the morning, and he does fine.

Q. Without telling us the name, can you tell us if it came from a citizen?

The President. No, in the end it didn't—[*inaudible*]—reviewing them. And then we went—don't eat that; you just had lunch—and we got down to about seven or eight, and then we got down to three and finally made a decision.

Come on, kiddo, come on. Let's go.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 1:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to the President's departure for the State Department. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference

December 16, 1997

The President. Good afternoon. It is only fitting that we gather today in the Dean Acheson Auditorium, for as Acheson was in his time, we truly are "Present at the Creation"—the creation of an era after the cold war that might be unrecognizable to the wise men of Acheson's time; a new era of promise and peril, being defined by men and women determined that the 21st century be known as a new American Century.

I briefly want to review the progress we've made in the last year and our mission to prepare America for that new century. Even as we reap the hard-earned profits of the strongest economy in a generation, our Nation refused to be complacent. We confronted big issues in 1997. We passed a plan to balance the budget. We made college affordable and community college virtually free to every American. We cut taxes for middle class families with children. We saved Medicare for another decade. We extended health insurance to 5 million children in lower income working families. We cut crime, reduced welfare, strengthened our schools. We made the world safer by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention, and at Kyoto, with the Vice President's leadership, we took an important step toward protecting the environment even as we promote global economy growth. We renewed the consensus for honest engagement with China. We stood

strong against a rogue regime in Iraq. We made real progress toward lasting peace in Bosnia. Next week I will personally thank our troops there and talk to the Bosnian people about their responsibilities for the future.

Of course, even as we reflect on how far we've come in our mandate to carry out enduring American values into a new century, we realize we have far to go. Nineteen ninety-eight will be a year of vigorous action on vital issues that will shape the century to come. From education to the environment, from health care to child care, from expanding trade to improving skills, from fighting new security threats to promoting peace, we have much to do both here at home and abroad.

Earlier today, with the simple stroke of a pen, we helped to make European history. Secretary Albright and her NATO counterparts signed protocols of accession for Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, formalizing our intent to welcome these nations as NATO's newest members and a grand effort to defend our shared values and advance our common destiny. This is a milestone in the enterprise I launched 4 years ago to adapt our alliance to the challenges of a new era and to open NATO to Europe's new democracies. The entry of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into the alliance will make America safer, NATO stronger, and Europe more stable and united.

The decision to add new members to NATO must be ratified by all 16 allies. I'm gratified that Congress has already taken an active, positive role in a bipartisan manner through the Senate NATO Observer Group that joined us at the Madrid Summit and the extensive hearings and resolutions this fall. I will promptly seek the Senate's advice and consent on NATO expansion when Congress returns in January.

The United States has led the way in transforming our alliance. Now we should be among the first to vote yes for NATO's historic engagement. We are well on the way to the goal I set last year of welcoming the first new members to NATO by NATO's 50th anniversary. Today I am pleased to announce that the NATO alliance has accepted my invitation to come to Washington for that special summit in the spring of 1999. Together, we will strengthen NATO for the next 50 years, and I hope we will be welcoming its newest members.

Now, before I take your questions, in this room where President Kennedy held so many memorable press conferences, let me remind you that he once praised these exercises, with tongue only somewhat in cheek, saying, and I quote, "It is highly beneficial to have 20 million Americans regularly observe the incisive, the intelligent, and the courteous qualities displayed by their Washington correspondents." [*Laughter*] Precedent has its place.

Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press].

Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, 3 weeks ago in Vancouver you said that the economic chaos in Asia was just a glitch in the road, but the currency turmoil continues and South Korea says that it needs a faster IMF bailout. What—how serious is this crisis for Americans, and will you go along with the additional funds that the IMF says it needs?

The President. Well, first of all, the American economy is strong and the new numbers on low inflation, coupled with the very high rate of business investments, show that we have a significant capacity to continue to grow from within. Now, having said that, as I have repeatedly pointed out to our people, a significant part of our growth comes from our ability to sell to others around the world, including in Asia. And so it is very much in our interest to do what we can to support the Asian economies as they work to weather this crisis.

I remain convinced that the best way to do that is to follow the plan that we outlined at Manila. One, we need strong economic policies on the part of these countries. When you have a problem at home you have to address it at home. That's what we did in 1993 in addressing our deficit. Two, the IMF has—and the other international institutions should play the leading role, and there is a framework within which they can do that, and we know they can do it successfully when you look at what happened with Mexico. Third, we should be there, along with Japan and other countries, in a supporting capacity

when necessary. That is the policy that will work.

I am very encouraged—you mentioned South Korea—I am very encouraged by the steps that they are taking to try to implement the IMF plan to take actions at home that are important, and I think it is terribly important that President Kim met with the three candidates for President in South Korea, because they have an election coming up very soon, you know, and they all agreed to support this plan to rebuild the South Korean confidence of the markets and to work through this problem.

Now, do I think we may need to do more? I think we may need to do more within the framework that has been established, but that needs to be a judgment made on a case-by-case basis. The important thing is that the United States must be in a position to do more to fulfill its responsibilities. And that means, among other things, that it's very important when Congress comes back here that we take up again the bill to provide for paying the dues that we owe to the United Nations and for giving us the ability to participate in the so-called new authority to borrow provision of the IMF. That bill should be taken up and judged on its own merits, and I would urge Congress to do it right away.

But the most important thing is that we have a system in place; that system has to be followed: Strong domestic policies by these countries, the IMF framework with the other multinational institutions, then the U.S. and Japan and others there in a back-up role when necessary.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Former Presidential Advisers

Q. Mr. President, this may fall into the category of "with friends like that," but two of your former aides, advisers, have written you off, already, at the start of your second term. George Stephanopoulos says you're a lame duck. Dick Morris says you've gone to sleep. What is your rebuttal, and what's the dog's name? [*Laughter*]

The President. Maybe that should be my rebuttal. [*Laughter*] You know, President Truman said if you want a friend in Washington you need to get a dog. [*Laughter*]

Let me back up and let me just say, I don't know—first of all, I'm not sure that Mr. Stephanopoulos is being properly quoted there. But if you look at what happened in 1995, I think it is very difficult to make that case. I mean, if you compare year-by-year in each year of this administration, we have had significant accomplishments. But I think the—1997, we had the balanced budget; we had the biggest increase in aid to children's health since 1965, the biggest increase in aid to higher education to help Americans go to college since the GI bill passed. We voted to expand NATO; we passed the Chemical Weapons Convention; we had a historic agreement in Kyoto; and along the way, we passed sweeping reform of America's adoption laws. We passed sweeping reforms of the Federal Food and Drug Administration to put more medical devices and lifesaving drugs out there in a hurry, and a score of other things, plus the beginning of the first serious conversations Americans have ever had about their racial differences not in a crisis. I think it was a banner year for America. We have the lowest unemployment and crime rates in 24 years. Now we know we've got the lowest combined rates of unemployment and inflation in 30 years.

We had a good year because we're all working hard. And all I can tell you is, in '98 it will be a more vigorous year. And perhaps you'll have questions about that, but we intend to have a very, very active time. So I can't comment on what others say. I just say that all you have to do is look at the evidence, look at the record, look at our plans for the future, and I think that it's almost worthy of a dismissal.

Buddy

Now, back to the dog. [*Laughter*] Let me begin by thanking all the children and others, including members of the press corps at the Christmas parties last night, for their voluminous suggestions of a dog's name. We got great groups of suggestions, people who suggested categories related to the coloring of the dog, people who suggested names related to my interest in music, naming all kinds of jazz musicians that I would love to have named our dog after. Then there was a whole set of Arkansas-related suggestions,

Barkansas, Arkanpaws. [*Laughter*] Then there were suggestions that related to all of our family names, somehow putting them together, or saying since the Secret Service knows me as POTUS and Hillary as FLOTUS, that we should call the dog DOTUS. [*Laughter*] Then there were the parallels to our cat, Socks, saying we should call it Boots or Shoes or something else like that.

In the end, our family got together; we came down to about seven names, many of them personally inspired, and then to three. I finally decided to name the dog after my beloved uncle who died earlier this year. I'm going to call the dog Buddy, because of the importance of my uncle to my life but also because my uncle raised and trained dogs for over 50 years. And when I was a child growing up, we talked about it a lot. And because the dog was—as was in the press this morning—the dog was trained for a couple of months with another name, it is also, I can tell you, the name he responded best to of all the ones that we sort of tried out on him. [*Laughter*]

And I think while it's important that I train the dog, it's been a good two-way street. But mostly it's a personal thing. And it's ironic that Hillary had thought about it; I thought about it; and then one of my uncle's daughters called me last night. And I didn't take the call last night because it was too late when I got done, so when I called her this morning, she said, ''You know, our family thinks you ought to consider naming it after Dad,'' and I said, ''That's what we've decided to do.'' So I made a few of my family members happy.

But I want to thank everybody who participated in the exercise.

Larry [Larry McQuillan, Reuters].

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, to go back to NATO and your celebration of this expansion, Bosnia kind of underscores the obligations that membership brings. The foreign ministers today have said they basically reached a consensus that there will be a need to keep troops there beyond the June pullout date. Can you tell us just what conditions you've set in order to allow U.S. participation in this?

The President. Well, first of all—you know this, of course, but I think it's worth repeating—we have been involved for the last several weeks in a whole series of intense meetings about the situation in Bosnia, where we are, what progress has been made. Let me point out that after 4 years of the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II, we've had 23 months of peace. It's easy to focus on the problems, but there has been peace, there has been a restoration of significant economic activity. A lot of the facilities, the waste systems, the sewer systems, the schools have been rebuilt. Housing units have been rebuilt. We've had elections and the beginning of a resurgence of democratic processes.

So with all the continuing difficulties there has been, in my view, a significant amount of progress in the last 23 months, of which the American people can be justly proud, and indeed all of our allies in NATO and beyond NATO and Russia and the other countries that are participating, can be proud of that.

We are discussing now actively both within the administration, with our allies in NATO, and our other allies and with Congress what should be done after the June date for the expiration of SFOR. And as you know, I'm going to Bosnia on the night of the 21st to be there on the 22d with our troops and to meet with people in Bosnia. And I will have an announcement about what I expect should be done thereafter before I go. And I'll be able to shed a little more light on that for you.

Yes, go ahead.

Campaign Finance Reform

Q. After all the things we've learned in the months of hearings about campaign fundraising and campaign contributions, I wonder if you can tell us whether you still consider two people, John Huang and Charlie Trie, to be your close friends, sir.

The President. Well I think what we've learned—first of all, what we've learned is that we need campaign finance reform. If anybody intentionally violated the law, then

they should be held accountable. We've already had some examples of that—not involving my campaign, but we've had some examples of that already in the last year or so, people who apparently intentionally violated the campaign finance laws. And no one should be exempt from that. We have laws.

But what we've also learned is, as I have been saying now for 6 years, the laws we have are inadequate. And I am hopeful that the vote we have scheduled for the spring, the fact that we finally have a commitment to have a vote on some kind of campaign finance reform in the spring, will give us the kind of campaign finance reform that the American people need and deserve. And I can tell you, I believe most of the public officials would welcome it.

It is difficult because of the advantages that the Republican majority has in Congress in raising money from all sources. I understand the challenge that's on them to get them to vote for this, but we do have all the Democrats in the Senate, 100 percent of them now, lined up in favor of the McCain-Feingold bill, and I am strongly committed to it. That is ultimately the answer to this.

The fundamental problem is not those that might have deliberately violated the law; the fundamental problem is that the system no longer operates on the 1974–75 system of rules. We need to do more to deal with it. Now, I would like to see more done, whether Congress acts or not. I would like to see the FCC explore its authority and try to do something to offer free or reduced air time for candidates for Federal office, especially if they in turn agree to accept voluntary spending limits. I would very much like to see the FEC try to tighten up its rules on soft money; they opened the floodgates in the beginning. There may be some things that can be done there. But in the end we have to have a decent campaign finance reform system if we want the kind of results that I think most Americans want.

Yes, go ahead.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—Mr. Huang and Mr.——

The President. I answered that question.

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq

Q. Mr. President, how long are you willing to tolerate Saddam Hussein's continued defiance of the United States and of the United Nations?

The President. Well, Saddam Hussein has been in defiance of the United Nations since the end of the Gulf war. That's why we have a system of sanctions on him. And I am willing to maintain the sanctions as long as he does not comply with the resolutions.

If you're asking me are there other options that I might consider taking under certain circumstances, I wouldn't rule out anything; I never have and I won't. But I think it's important that you remember, since the end of the Gulf war, the world community has known that he was interested in not only rebuilding his conventional military authority but that he was interested in weapons of mass destruction. And a set of sanctions was imposed on him. There are those that would like to lift the sanctions. I am not among them. I am not in favor of lifting sanctions until he complies. Furthermore, if there is further obstruction from the mission—the United Nations' mission in doing its job, we have to consider other options. But keep in mind, he has not come out, as some people have suggested, ahead on this last confrontation, because now the world community is much less likely to vote to lift any sanctions on him that will enable him to rebuild his military apparatus and continue to oppress his people and threaten his neighbors and others in the world.

So that's my position on that. I feel that we have to be very firm. It is clear to me that he has still not come to terms with his obligations to the international community to open all sites to inspections. We need to wait until Mr. Butler gets back, make a full report, and see where we are and where we go. But this is something that we are following on a—I and my administration are following on a daily basis and very closely. And the United States must remain steadfast in this. But we now have more people who are more sympathetic with being firm than we did before he provoked, needlessly, the last incident.

John [John Donvan, ABC News].

President's Initiative on Race

Q. Mr. President, reports from the front lines of your race initiative suggest that the initiative is in chaos, it is confused. The

Akron town meeting was little more than Presidential ''Oprah.'' Some people involved are beginning to——

The President. That may be your editorial comment. That's not my reports. I've received scores of letters, including letters from ordinary people who said that they loved it, and they thought it was important. So if that's your opinion, state your opinion. But——

Q. It's an opinion, sir, that I'm hearing from others who are beginning to question whether simply talking——

The President. Who are they? Name one. Just one. Give me a name. All this ''others'' stuff—you know, it's confusing to the American people when they hear all these anonymous sources flying around.

Q. I don't want them to get fired by you, sir, so—[*laughter*]—but they are people who are involved in the process who are beginning to question whether simply talking is enough. Some of them are saying there needs to be more policy, but just talking about an issue doesn't take it very far.

The President. First of all, there has been policy. Keep in mind, we're trying to do four things here. We're trying to identify policies that we need to implement, and do them—from as basic a thing as finally getting the Congress to adequately fund the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, to the scholarship proposal I made to help to pay people's expenses to college if they'll agree to teach in underserved areas that are predominately minority areas in the country, to Secretary Cuomo's recent initiatives on discrimination in public housing. And I have said there will be more. So the suggestion that there have been no policies is an inaccurate one. There have been policies, and there will be more—first.

Second, many people have told me they think perhaps the most important thing we can do is to get out the practices that are working in communities that are working. That's one of the reasons we went to Akron. And we have had many, many people access—hundreds and hundreds of people access the Web site that we set up for promising practices in the communities that work.

Third, we're trying to enlist new leaders. I sent a letter to 25,000 student leaders the other day asking them to take specific personal responsibility for doing something. We're getting about 100 letters a day back in response from them, saying what they're going to do.

Fourthly, I believe talking is better than fighting. And I believe when people don't talk and communicate and understand, their fears, their ignorance, and their problems are more likely to fester. I think that's one of the reasons that what you do is often just as important in our society as what decisionmakers do, because people have to have information, they have to have understanding.

Keep in mind, this is the first time—as I said in my opening statement, this is the first time ever that our country has tried to deal with its racial divergence in the absence of a crisis. We don't have a civil war. We don't have the aftermath of civil war. We don't have big fights over Jim Crow. We don't have riots in the streets. We have a country that is emerging as an evermore divergent, diverse democracy.

In the next couple of days, the racial advisory board is going out to Fairfax County, Virginia, with people of different views, including Secretary Bill Bennett, former Secretary of Education, to sit down in Fairfax County, see what they're doing in their schools, how they're dealing with this, and whether there are any lessons there that we can learn for the rest of the country.

So I believe we are on track. I believe that the kinds of criticisms that this board has received were inevitable once we decided to undertake this endeavor in the absence of a crisis, or in the absence of building support for some single bill, like an open housing bill, a voting rights act, an omnibus civil rights act. But I think it is working, and I think it is taking shape, and I believe it's got clear direction, and I think you will see better results as we go forward.

So that's the only reason I ask you the specifics. I think it's very hard for me to shadow box with people if I don't know specifically what they're saying. You can always make these sort of general statements. But I'm very upbeat about this commission. I felt great about the Akron townhall meeting.

And one of the things that I think we ought to do more of, however, following up on the

Akron meeting, is to get people who have different views about real issues that are before the country and to try to see them talk together. I'm going to have a meeting with people who have been labeled and perhaps self-styled conservatives on a lot of the issues surrounding the civil rights debates in America today in the next few days. I'm very much looking forward to that. But what we really need to do is to get people talking across the lines that divide them. And I hope we can do more of that. But I believe that there is an intrinsic value to this kind of discussion.

Susan [Susan Page, USA Today].

Taxes

Q. Mr. President, speaking of what will happen in 1998, some lawmakers are talking about giving Americans a tax cut next year, but there is a separate issue of fundamental tax reform—that is, changing the Tax Code to a flat tax or national sales tax or a greatly simplified progressive tax. Do you believe that the time has come to seriously consider fundamental tax reform?

The President. You mentioned two things, so let me try to respond to both of them. First of all, on the whole tax cut front, there has been some talk about that by some lawmakers who say that now we have a surplus and, therefore, we should spend it in part, at least, with a tax cut. And by that they mean one of two things. They mean we have a projected surplus at the end of this budget period, or they mean that the deficit is lower now than it was projected to be last August when I signed the balanced budget bill.

But it's important that the American people understand we don't have a surplus yet. We have a deficit; it's over 90 percent smaller than it was when I took office. I was at $290 billion, and now it's at $23 billion. That is not a surplus. This economy is the strongest it's been in a generation because of the discipline that we've been able to bring to the task of bringing the deficit down and getting our house in order. We should not lightly abandon that discipline. The most important thing the American people need is a strong economy with good jobs and now rising incomes for all income groups. We've worked very hard to reverse 20 years on that, and we need to stay at that task.

Now, the second question, should the Tax Code be simplified and should the system work better for ordinary Americans? On an elemental level, of course, it should. Let me remind you that we have a bill which passed the House with overwhelming support—I think there were only three or four votes against it—that is now in the Senate, that will further unshackle, if you will, the American people from any potential abuses by the IRS and make the system more accessible and fair for them. So I would urge the Senate to pass that bill.

Now, let's go to some of the more ambitious schemes. I would not rule out a further substantial action to simplify the Tax Code. But I will evaluate any proposal, including any one that our people might be working on, by the following criteria: First of all, is it fiscally responsible? Secondly, is it fair to all Americans; that is, we don't want to shift the burden to middle class taxpayers to lower income taxes on upper income people. We did that for 12 years, and it didn't work out very well. And we have reversed that, and we don't want to start that all over again. Thirdly, will it be good for the economy? And fourthly, will it actually lead to a simpler tax system?

Now, within those parameters, any proposals that meet those criteria I think I am duty bound to consider supporting, and I would consider supporting them.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel

Q. Mr. President, a few weeks ago the Prime Minister of Israel, Binyamin Netanyahu, was in the United States, and you and he were in Los Angeles at exactly the same time; in fact, your planes were both on the tarmac at LAX as you were getting ready to leave. But you refused to meet with him. He later said in an interview that you, in effect, were not only snubbing him, but you were humiliating or embarrassing the State of Israel, the people of Israel. I wonder if you'd care to respond to that, and why didn't you meet with Prime Minister Netanyahu? This is the first time in my memory that an Israeli Prime Minister was in the

United States and did not get a meeting with the President of the United States.

The President. Well, first of all, let's put the record straight here. Mr. Netanyahu has been in office only a year and a half, and we have had five meetings. I don't believe I have ever met with any other world leader five times within an 18-month period. So there can be no serious suggestion that the United States is not interested in the peace process or respectful of the people and Government of Israel. We have had five meetings.

Secondly, I expect that we will have a meeting early next year, a sixth meeting, to discuss where we are and where we're going. Secretary Albright was slated to meet with and did meet with Mr. Netanyahu to talk about what the next steps were. I think it is important when the President meets on the peace process that it be a real meeting and that there be some understanding of where we are and where we're going and what we're doing together. And I have always taken that position.

So there was no—you never heard, I don't believe, me say anything about some sort of calculated decision to snub the people of Israel or the Government of Israel. I simply wouldn't do that.

Yes.

Women in the Armed Forces

Q. Mr. President, would you support the resegregation of the sexes in the military? And wouldn't that send a message to women that they cannot benefit from equal opportunity in the Armed Forces?

The President. Well, I think you must be referring to the report issued by Senator Kassebaum and her—Senator Kassebaum Baker and her committee today. I have not had a chance to review the report. I did read the press reports on it this morning. I'm not sure exactly what their recommendations are. I can say this. It's a group of eminent Americans; I think they looked at a difficult question. I'm not sure they recommended a total resegregation of the military.

What I would be very reluctant to do is to embrace anything that denied women the opportunity to serve in positions for which they are qualified and to progress up the ladder of promotion in the way that so many have worked so hard to permit them to do in the last few years.

Now, within those parameters, if there is something that they feel strongly ought to be done in the training regime or in the housing regime because of the problems that we have seen in the military in the last couple of years, I think we ought to entertain it. And I think within those limits that this ought to be largely a decision left to our military commanders upon serious review of the report. But I don't think—I doubt that the committee wants to do anything to deny women the opportunity to serve or to gain appropriate promotions, and so I'm not accusing them of that. I'm just saying that we would be in my framework within which to evaluate this.

Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio], and then Peter [Peter Maer, NBC Mutual Radio]. Go ahead.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, a question about Iran. You said this week you were looking forward to an honest dialog with Iran. Can you tell us how and when that dialog might begin? And also, given that the United States has not been able to enlist a single other country to help us in our effort to isolate Iran economically, to join in the embargo, do you still think that policy is effective, or are you willing to rethink it?

The President. Let me answer the questions in order, but in reverse order. On our embargo, I think it is the right thing to do. And it will have varying degrees of effectiveness depending upon how much other people are willing to work with us, but I think that the voters in Iran, when they made the selection of the current President, seemed to be sending a signal that they wanted a more open society. And I was quite encouraged by his remarks. So that I'm not sure you can say that our policy has been in error. I certainly think it is right, whether it is supported or not.

Now, going to your first question. We are, all of us, discussing about how to proceed now. No decision has been made. But I have always said from the beginning that I thought it was tragic that the United States was separated from the people of Iran. It's a country

with a great history that at various times has been quite close to the United States. We have had the privilege of educating a number of people from Iran over several decades; indeed, some people in the present government were able to get some of their education in the United States. And Americans have been greatly enriched by Iranian—by Persian culture, from the beginning of our country.

We have three issues that we think have to be discussed in the context of any comprehensive discussion. The first relates to Iranian support of terrorist activities, with which we strongly disagree. The second relates to Iranian opposition to the peace process in the Middle East, with which we disagree. And the third relates to policies involving the development of weapons of mass destruction. I think we have to be able to discuss those things in order to have an honest dialog, just like we have an honest dialog with China now. We don't have to agree on everything, but people have to be able to have an honest discussion, even when they disagree.

And in terms of terrorism, I think the United States must maintain an uncompromising stand there. We would not expect any Islamic state, in effect, to say it had no opinions on issues involving what it would take to have a just and lasting peace settlement in the Middle East. We would never ask any country to give up its opinions on that. But we would ask every country to give up the support, the training, the arming, the financing of terrorism.

If you look at the world that we're living in and the one toward which we are going, if you look at the torments that many Americans underwent in the 1980's because of terrorist activities, our uncompromising position on that I think is clearly the right one, and we shouldn't abandon that, and we must not, and we won't. But do I hope that there will be some conditions under which this dialog can resume? I certainly do.

Peter.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, I'd like to go back to the earlier question on Bosnia. You're obviously laying the groundwork for an extended stay for U.S. troops there. What kind of a mandate do you envision for that mission? And what type of military and financial responsibility do you hope that the European allies will agree to in this follow-on effort?

The President. Well, of course, that is all part of our discussions now both with our allies and with the Members of Congress, and I don't want to truncate the discussions. What I want to do is to see that the peace process continues. I think one of the things that all of our military people agree on is that we must do more to beef up the civilian police there; and that there must be a distinction between what we expect our military leaders to do and what we expect the civilian police to do; and that the mission must be, if there is to be a mission after the SFOR mission expires, it also must have clear, objective components with some way of knowing whether the mission has been achieved or not.

In other words, I still don't believe that there should be anybody interested in some kind of a permanent stationing of global military presence all over Bosnia. But I do think that these are all elements that have to be discussed. And, as I said, I hope to be able to tell you more about this before I leave on my trip in a few days.

April [April Ryan, American Urban Radio Networks].

Affirmative Action

Q. Mr. President, as the national dialog on race gains momentum, the one-year anniversary seems too near, and how are you going to pull apart the issue of race reconciliation and affirmative action that seems to be cross-tied? And will you extend the race initiative beyond this year, to the end of your term?

The President. Well, in some sense, this whole initiative has been a part of my administration from the beginning, because it permeates so much else of what we try to do and what we're trying to do.

With regard to affirmative action, I think that's an ongoing process. My reading of the Supreme Court's decision not to hear the Court of Appeals ruling that the California vote abolishing affirmative action was, in fact, not unconstitutional, that it was permissible for the voters to vote in the way that they

did under the Constitution—my reading of the Supreme Court's decision there is that they were saying that we're going to allow this matter to be resolved in the political process—that is, that affirmative acts of discrimination are illegal; what should be done to root out the vestiges of discrimination or to create a society in which people have more or less the same chance to succeed without regard to their racial background must be resolved in the political arena. As you know, there was a different decision made by the voters of Houston recently, in a vote on affirmative action.

So what I would like to see done is to move beyond the I'm-for-it and you're-against-it stage to a more sophisticated and, ultimately, more meaningful debate to the American people, which is, if you don't like the way California used to admit people to its colleges and universities, what would you do to make sure that you didn't exclude whole groups who happened to be predominantly of racial minorities, but also happen to be predominantly poor, predominantly from difficult neighborhoods, predominantly born into families without the kinds of advantages as many other children have. What are we going to do? And that debate is, I would suggest to you, in its infancy. But there are a lot of people who are trying to contribute to that debate.

I noticed there was an interesting set of op-ed pieces in one of our papers recently, one by Chris Edley, who used to work for us, essentially defending affirmative action, but pointing out some of the problems within it; and another one by Glenn Loury, who's normally viewed as a conservative intellectual, who said that he thought in some cases there was still some room for it, but there were a lot of other things which ought to be done which might make an even bigger difference.

Let me give you a problem; this is one that I think about all the time. Most people believe that our affirmative action program in the United States Army has worked quite well. It's clearly not a quota, and clearly no one is given a position for which they are not qualified. But there is an intensive effort to qualify people so that in each promotion pool, the pool of applicants for the next rank roughly reflects the racial composition of the people in the next lowest rank.

Now, if you try to draw a parallel from that to where we are in our colleges and universities, what is the breakdown? The breakdown, it would almost be as if—people are in kindergarten through 12th grade over here in this system, and then they go to college or graduate school over in this system, over here. It's almost as if the Army were divided so that one group of people was responsible for training everybody from private through captain and everybody else, and a whole different group were responsible for training and picking everybody from major through four-star general.

Is there something we can learn from the way the military does that? Should the universities be more involved, for example, in a more systematic way in identifying candidates who may not have the academic background that will give them a high score on a SAT test, but whose probability of success in college is very, very high indeed early on, in doing more for them so that they can get there? Is this the sort of affirmative action that would be widely supported by the American people?

I really believe that these debates really turn more on how the—in these initiatives—turn more on how the initiative is described as opposed to what the problem is and whether we can reach agreement on how to solve it. So we may not get this done by next June. And if that's not done, that's something that has to continue. We have to continue to work on that until we reach a reasoned resolution of it.

Yes, go ahead, and then Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News Service] next. Go ahead.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, you said earlier, getting back to the Middle East peace process, you said that if you met with the Prime Minister it should be with an understanding of the direction that the peace process is going—forgive me if those aren't your exact words, but did you mean to suggest that there is no understanding of the direction that the peace process is taking?

The President. No, I didn't mean that at all. But what I mean is I think the next time we meet we are likely to have a productive meeting because we'll have a lot to talk about because a lot of work has been done. Secretary Albright has been out there to the region; she's been meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu in Europe. The Netanyahu Cabinet has taken a decision on redeployment, which they're attempting to flesh out and define at this moment. And, as you know, there's a lot of controversy within the Government in Israel about what next steps ought to be taken in the peace process.

The only point I made is I think the next time we meet we'll have quite a meaty agenda; we'll have something to talk about and something to do. I'm not suggesting that there is some standard that the Government or the Prime Minister has to meet in order to have a meeting, but I think that it will be a useful meeting and it's an appropriate thing to do.

Sarah, go ahead.

Vice President Gore

Q. This is about Vice President Albert Gore. He apparently is your heir apparent, and he's been very loyal to you. But he seems to be the target of a nationally well-organized campaign on the part of Democrats and Republicans to knock him out and fix it so that he will be so scandalized that he can't even run for President after you're gone. Now, what do you think about the way these people are acting, especially the Democrats? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I think anybody that wants to run for President has a perfect right to do so. And if anybody wants to run and believes they have a unique contribution to make and has the passion and the pain threshold to do it, I'd be the last one to tell them not to.

What I would say among all the Democrats is that there's plenty of time for Presidential politics—I would say that to the Republicans as well—and that the most important thing now is that we show the people we can make progress on the problems of the country and on the promise of the country.

As for the Vice President himself, he needs no defense from me. I have simply said, and I will say again, what everyone knows: He's had the most full partnership with the President of any Vice President in history, and he has performed superbly. Whether it was on the environment, or on energy initiatives, or on helping us downsize the Government by 300,000 and increase the Government's output, or on the foreign policy issues like Russia and South Africa, he has done a superb job. And I'm proud of that, and I appreciate it. And I think that we've accomplished more for the American people because of it.

Yes, Elizabeth [Elizabeth Shogren, Los Angeles Times], go ahead.

Campaign Fundraising

Q. Mr. President, many analysts suggest that the Attorney General finding legitimizes making telephone calls for soft money from the White House. Given that, and given the troubles that the Democratic Party faces, the financial troubles, do you have any plans to make more such telephone calls and, if not, why not?

The President. I believe that I spoke to this earlier, but let me try to restate it. I think the most effective thing for me to do when raising money is to meet with people in small groups and tell them what I think should be done, and I prefer that to just making phone calls. I also think it gives people who contribute to the Democratic Party the sense that they are part of an administration and part of a process that stands for some ideas—so you're not just calling people for money, you're also listening to what they think should be done. And I think that's more fruitful and more productive.

But I do expect to continue to try to help our party, our candidates for Senate, our candidates for the House, and our candidates for Governor to raise funds in the 1998 elections. I hope before I leave office, however, that my successor of whatever party, and all others, will be living under a different campaign finance reform system which will be better for the American people and much better for the people in public life.

Go ahead.

FBI Director Louis J. Freeh

Q. Mr. President, the Attorney General has rendered her judgment, and the FBI Director has dissented from that judgment as to the appointment of a special counsel. On several occasions your spokesman has declined to express full confidence in the FBI Director. Have you lost confidence in Director Freeh? Is it because of his dissent, and is that fair, sir?

The President. First of all, his decision to dissent in that case has no effect on whatever opinion I have of him. I think he should be—I think that—the Attorney General runs the Justice Department the way I try to run the White House, which is, I want to hear what people's opinions are.

But on this confidence business, I think there has been too much back-and-forth on that, and I don't want to get into it. What I have confidence in is that if we all work on trying to make the American people safer and continue to try to drive the crime rate down and solve crime problems, the American people will feel that they're getting out of all of us what they paid for and what they expect from us. And that's what I think we should be doing. I don't think we should—I don't think it's a very fruitful thing to try to keep spinning that around.

Yes, George [George Condon, Copley News Service].

Democratic Party

Q. Mr. President, just to follow up a little bit on what you said about the Democratic Party—since you became President, the Democrats have lost both Houses of Congress, more than a dozen Governorships, and has gone broke. Now you have Congressman Gephardt saying he wants to steer the party into a more liberal direction. First off, do you feel at all personally responsible for the state of the party today? And secondly, is there anything you plan to do to take the challenge of Congressman Gephardt to keep the party on a more centrist course after you leave office?

The President. Well, I don't know what I'm going to do when I leave office, and I don't think I should spend much time thinking about it. I think I should spend my time thinking about what I can do in the next 3 years and 2 months to leave America in the best possible shape for a new century, so I'm not going to think about it very much.

Secondly, I think the Democratic Party's financial problems are due almost entirely to the legal bills it incurred with a lot of very vigorous help from the Republican congressional committee. So it is obviously part of the strategy, and it's worked to some extent. And I've worked very hard this year to try to keep it from bankrupting the party.

Now, we did well in the elections of '92, the congressional elections, and we did pretty well in the elections of '96. The Governorships I think tend not to be so identified with national party trends as the Senate and House. I feel badly about what happened in '94. I think only partly it was due to the fact—several things—there were three big factors, I think.

One is, the Republicans successfully argued that we had a tax increase in the '93 budget for ordinary Americans, and that simply wasn't so. The income tax went up on 1½ percent of the people. Secondly, they scared a lot of people in districts that—where you had a lot of rural gun owners into believing we were taking their guns away when we weren't, with the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. And thirdly, they were able to, with the help of a massive campaign by private industry, to convince people we wanted the Government to take over the health care system, which we didn't.

I would just remind you to look at history there. The last time that happened was when Harry Truman went from 80 percent approval on the day after he dropped the bomb ending World War II, in effect, down to about 38 percent approval because he tried to provide health insurance coverage to all Americans, with the same consequence in the midterm election. So I feel—I'm sorry that happened, and I hope that we'll have more skills and more ability coming up in this midterm elections. If we have a clear position, I think we'll be fine.

Now, in terms of the debate with Congressman Gephardt, let me just say, I think that it's easy to overstate that—which is not to say that I trivialize it—but let's look at the issue here. First of all, we were together when we passed that economic plan in 1993

without a single vote from anybody in the other party, and it reduced the deficit by 90 percent before the balanced budget bill passed. So we were together, and I think we were both right. We were together on the crime bill, and we were together on trying to do something about the health care needs of all Americans.

And I think the left-right issue is a little bit misstated. We have a difference of opinion on trade, but I think it's important to articulate what the difference is. I believe strongly that selling more products around the world is a precondition to maintaining our standard of living and growing jobs, for the simple reason, as I have said repeatedly, we have 4 percent of the world's population and 20 percent of the world's wealth; and the developing countries will grow 3 times as rapidly as the developed countries in the next 10 years. Therefore, if you want to keep your income, you've got to sell more to the other 96 percent, especially those that are growing fast.

However, I agree with him, and it was our administration and our campaign in '92 that explicitly made a national priority of trying to do, in addition to expanding trade, in the process of expanding trade, at least not to diminish environmental standards, to raise them where possible, and to try to lift the labor standards of people around the world.

Our difference about fast track was a difference about how much that could be mandated in the process of giving the President the authority to negotiate trade. And I would argue that that is no different than a lot of the differences that exist within the Republican Party today over issues that are potentially far more explosive.

The second thing I'd like to say is, I consider the real obligation here, over and above that, in the trade area is to do what is necessary to make more winners, which is to trade more but to develop a public response from our Government where we can do more and do it more quickly to help the people that are displaced from the global economy or from technology or from anything else.

We have doubled funds invested for displaced workers since I've been President, while we were reducing the deficit. We have doubled funds. But we need to do more, and I am now in the process of working with the Secretary of Labor and others to set up a model which will enable us to help communities that are hurt by trade dislocation or plant closings for other reasons to basically operate the way we did with communities that lost military bases because they had a big hit.

So I don't believe any advanced country can say with a straight face and a clear conscience that it has done everything possible to help those that are losing in the modern economy, that are rendered more insecure in the modern economy because of the industries they work in or because they have low levels of skills. And until we have a comprehensive lifetime system of education and training and an investment strategy that works in those communities, we have to keep working on it.

So to that extent, if that's the debate we're having in the Democratic Party about how to get that done, that is a good thing to do, because our party cares about the people who lose, as well as trying to make more winners. That's always been our burden, our obligation, our responsibility. It's a part of our conscience about who we are. And I think that's a healthy debate. But it's not a debate that's going to split this party in 1998, because basically both factions, if you will, of our party, agree that we should do both; we should trade more, and we should do more to help people around the world with environmental and labor problems, and to help people here at home that are being left behind. All I want to do is keep it in a policy-oriented, positive context, and I'm going to do what I can to get that done.

Yes, in the back. Go ahead.

District of Columbia

Q. Mr. President, about a year ago you first voiced your vision and your thoughts about the District of Columbia and where we ought to be going. And since then, frankly, you've been very active. You worked with the Congress to get a legislative plan passed that calls for financial recovery and restructuring. And yet the city leaders are criticizing you. They say you haven't done enough. They apparently expected something at your church service, even though ahead of time

you said, in effect, not to expect that much. My question to you is, how do you respond to this kind of criticism, and what kind of thoughts might you have on the future, from taxes, commuter taxes—anything like that that you might be thinking about in response?

The President. Well, first, if you go back to Mr. Donvan's question or any others, it's almost a citizen responsibility to criticize the President. Why be an American if you can't criticize the President? [*Laughter*]

Secondly, the District of Columbia, I think, has a lot of accumulated frustration. The people who live here, who have put their roots down here love this city deeply. They see folks like me come and go, have our roots elsewhere. But there really is, with all the problems in the District of Columbia, there is a passionate love for it among the people who have lived here. And I want to see that love redeemed, and I want this city to be something—a place that every single American can be truly proud of. But I can't do everything that everybody in the city wants me to do as soon as they want me to do it.

Furthermore, there are some things that will have to be done by people here themselves. Folks here want more home rule. There were people in our meeting, our leaders' meeting, who want more home rule. They would like to see an elected official represented on the control board, for example. But with more freedom comes more responsibility. And actions must be taken to restore the confidence of the people of the District of Columbia in the school systems—not just in some schools, not just in teachers, in the school system. Action must be taken to restore the confidence of the people of the District of Columbia in law enforcement generally, not just in some precincts or some police officers but in law enforcement generally.

We know now from schools I could show you in the District of Columbia that urban schools with poor children in difficult neighborhoods can perform at high levels. Every school has to be able to perform that way. We know now that in urban environments with very difficult circumstances, children can be made safe and crime can be made low, and that ought to be done here in the District of Columbia.

I will do everything I can to help. There is more that the Federal Government can do. But we have to do it in partnership. So I would say to the people who are frustrated with me, keep on pushing. Push me, push the Congress, push the Federal Government. There is more to do. But in the end, a city is formed and made by the people who live in it and shape its life day-in and day-out. I want to be a good partner. I don't mind the fact that some people with greater ambitions are still disappointed even though we've done very sweeping things, but there still has to be a lot more done here as well.

Go ahead.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, if I could follow up on the question about Iran. You mentioned, in your answer to Mara, concerns about terrorism, and one of the specific concerns with respect to Iran and terrorism is that they might be involved with Khobar Towers. Is your hope for improved dialog—is there any prospect for that if it's shown that Iran was involved with that bombing? And also, could you give us your understanding of the status of that investigation? Many family members, understandably, are frustrated by the progress or the seeming lack of public progress so far.

The President. I think it better to answer the second question without answering the first because I don't think it's worth having a hypothetical question—if I give an answer to that hypothetical question, it will imply that I think I know what the answer is, and I don't.

I share the frustration of the families. Here is a case where I believe that Mr. Freeh and the FBI have worked hard to try to get an answer. We have tried to work in cooperation with the Saudis, as we had to since the crime occurred—the murder occurred in their country. And we are not in a position at this time—all I can tell you is the investigation is ongoing, and we are not in a position at this time to answer definitively your question, which is who was behind this, who did it all, who contemplated it, who funded it, who

trained, who facilitated it. I wish I could answer that question. When we know the answer to that question, then there will be a range of things that are appropriate to do when we know the answer. And for the family members, it grieves me that we don't. But we don't know the answer yet.

Yes, there in the back.

India, Pakistan, and China

Q. Mr. President—[*inaudible*]—1997—[*inaudible*]—a year—[*inaudible*]—you're doing a great job. And also you have done a great service to America by appointing Mr. Lee to the Civil Rights Division post. The last time at the White House press conference you renewed your call that you are going to India and Pakistan. But since—[*inaudible*]—things have changed in those two countries: The Pakistan President was forced to resign, and the Prime Minister of India was also forced to resign. Now, despite all these political changes in India and Pakistan, are you still renewing your call—going to the region?

The President. Absolutely. First of all, let me say the United States has an enormous national interest in having greater positive involvement with all of South Asia—with India, with Pakistan, with Bangladesh, the other countries in the region. India already has the world's biggest middle class. Pakistan has had historic alliances with the United States. There are difficulties in each country which make it difficult for us to resolve everything and to have every kind of relationship we'd like to have.

But I still intend to go there next year. I have not set a time for when I will go, and I think I have to be sensitive, among other things, to the Indian election schedule. But both countries are now celebrating their 50th anniversary of independence, and I think that it's quite appropriate for the President of the United States to be there.

Q. To follow up—I'm sorry—also India is the world's largest democracy and U.S. is the world's richest democracy, and also China is the world's largest Communist country. And this triangle you are also visiting India and also to China. So where do you fit all these largest democracies and Communist countries?

The President. Well, you know, in the cold war, our relationship with India was sometimes complicated because the tensions between India and China led to relations between India and the Soviet Union, which made difficult relations between India and the United States. The last thing I want to do is to replay that in a different context with regard to China and India. What I'm trying to do is to develop constructive relationships with both of them and hope that they will have constructive relationships with each other, so the world will move together toward more peace, more prosperity, and ultimately, in countries which don't have it, more personal freedom.

Bill [Bill Neikirk, Chicago Tribune].

Press Secretary Mike McCurry. Penultimate question. [*Laughter*]

The President. We're having a good time.

Press Secretary McCurry. All right. [*Laughter*]

Affirmative Action

Q. Mr. President, the polls show that people support affirmative action, but not when it's known as racial preference. How do you get around this clash of language? And what do you think about the term "racial preference"? Is it a proper one?

The President. I think people support affirmative action when you describe it, and then if you call it "racial preference" they don't support it because the words itself seem to inevitably mean that someone will get something because of his or her race for which he or she is not really qualified.

Now, the problem, if you back off from that is, that we Americans believe in three things: We believe that the best qualified people ought to get what they're best qualified for; we believe everybody ought to have a chance; and we believe people that have had a hard time ought to have a hand up. If you took a survey, I believe over 80 percent of the people would say that. We believe that merit should prevail over pull, if you will, or privilege. We believe that everyone should have a chance. And we believe that people who have had a hard time ought to have a hand up. The problem is, when you try to translate those three principles, if you have a label that can be affixed to your efforts that

is consistent with those principles, people say, yes, do it. If the label seems to be contradictory to those, they say, no, don't do it. And what really matters is, what are you doing, and is it working?

There are a lot of problems. For example, in college admissions—let's just take college admissions. It's something I think I know quite a bit about. I wasn't thinking about Chelsea at the time. [*Laughter*] I mean, I used to teach in a college; I used to deal with admissions policies. I've thought about this a lot. The whole premise on which affirmative action is being attacked is that there really is a totally objective, realistic way you can predict success in college and right to go to college and capacity to learn in college based on your high school grades and your SAT scores.

And yet, we know—if you forget about race altogether, that grading systems in some high schools are very different from those in others, and that the work done in the courses in some schools at the same period of time are different from those in others. Furthermore, we know that performance on the SAT scores is not a perfect predictor of capacity to learn and capacity to perform in college because there are some people who just won't do as well because of the experiences they've had, but they're capable, given the chance, of making a huge leap in college. And you can see that in the sterling careers and performance that has been established by many people who got admitted to either college or professional schools through affirmative action programs.

That is why I say I honestly believe that it's going to be difficult to finally resolve all this at the ballot box if voters are coming in and it's a question of which label wins. I thought it was interesting in Houston that the pro-affirmative action position won, I think in no small measure because it was a city where people knew each other; they probably had a greater familiarity with how the programs worked; and they understood what their elected leaders were saying perhaps better than—the bigger the electorate is and the further away more voters are from the actual decisions that are being made, the more vulnerable they may be to the way—the general characterizations.

And that's what—one of the things I think that we should be charged with in this racial dialog is maybe something that will blend talk and action which is, how can we overcome this, how can we get beyond the labeling to how the real world works. See, I honestly believe—let's—I honestly believe that if every kid in this country had the right kind of preparation and a hand up where needed, enough in advance, and the right sort of supports, and you had a realistic set of criteria for letting people into college, that there would not be much racial disparity in who got into which institutions.

I honestly believe, furthermore, in the economic area it's even more complex. You know, when people get into business and when they get bank loans and when they get training to do certain things, it has so much to do with the whole fabric of contacts people have and what they know and what experiences they've had—which is why I've supported a lot of these economic affirmative action programs.

My whole idea is that we have to reach a point in this country where there is a critical mass of people in all neighborhoods from all backgrounds that have had enough business contacts, business experience, and have enough credibility with financial institutions, for example, to be able to do business and compete on equal terms. And I don't think we're there yet.

So I'm hoping—I haven't given you a clear answer because it's not a clear problem. If we get down to slogans, you have no better than a 50–50 chance of seeing any kind of affirmative effort prevail. If you get down to brass tacks, I think people in both parties, of good faith, what they want is a society where everybody who needs it gets a hand up, everybody has got a fair chance, but where unfair criteria don't deprive the deserving at the expense—to the benefit of the undeserving. We can get there if we'll move beyond the slogans to keep refining these programs and maybe even extending our efforts to help more people in their earlier years and to help more people in these disadvantaged communities. That's what our whole empowerment concept is all about.

Yes.

Anthrax Vaccinations

Q. As you know, the Pentagon is going to vaccinate every member of the armed services against anthrax. A two-part question on that. One, as Commander in Chief, will you be vaccinated? [*Laughter*] And second, Secretary Cohen made a quite vivid demonstration not long ago on TV that a primary threat of anthrax would be a terrorist attack against a civilian population. Should civilians be vaccinated against anthrax?

The President. I do not think that's called for at this time. I couldn't recommend that. But I will say this. I gave a directive to the Pentagon on force protection because I felt that it was more likely that over the next 20 to 30 years we might be in settings with our forces in other countries where they might be exposed to chemical or biological weapons. This instruction grows out of that directive I gave to the Pentagon. I think it is appropriate, and I will support it. Also, keep in mind, the anthrax vaccine is fairly well-known and widely administered to people who deal with animals which might have been infected with anthrax. So we don't believe this presents any significant risk to our men and women in uniform.

Now, having said that, at this time I know of no expert opinion that would say that those of us that are essentially in the civilian population in the United States should be vaccinated. I don't think the evidence is there that would support that kind of recommendation.

Taxes

Q. Mr. President, you mentioned somewhat skeptically that Republicans in Congress are talking again about new tax cuts on top of those that you and they agreed to this year. But you get the first word on next year's agenda in your State of the Union and in the budget. What tax cuts might you call for? And, in particular, what do you think of the Republicans' idea of doing away with the marriage penalty?

The President. Well, I do get the first word in the State of the Union, and I hope you will all watch it, because there will be a lot in there—a lot of things in there. I can't say at this time that I will have anything to say about tax cuts in the State of the Union. Keep in mind, we have worked so hard to make this country work again, and we need to be looking to the future and our long-term challenges now. And we cannot break the connection of progress between making the country work again and looking to the future by basically losing our discipline and our concentration and giving in to the easy answers. So we don't have a surplus yet, and I don't know that anyone's talking about paying for tax cuts with some other sort of program cut or some other sort of tax increase. So I have reached no decision about that, and I'm not entirely sure that I will.

Now, on principle, I don't like the marriage penalty—on principle. I don't think any American could. I think that—you know, whether it's the Family and Medical Leave Act or the $500 children's tax credit or the adoption tax credit, I have been firmly committed to supporting policies which would both strengthen families and strengthen work and help people reconcile the balance between the two. And the so-called marriage penalty is, I think, not defensible under those circumstances.

On the other hand, it's like every other tax cut. There are a lot of tax cuts that might be desirable, but how would you pay for them? How would you not increase the deficit; how would you keep the budget moving toward balance? Even married couples paying an otherwise unfair rate of tax because they're married are better off, first and foremost, with a strong economy. And most of those married couples will now be able to take advantage of the children's tax credit, the education tax cuts, and the other changes which have been made in America to have a better life. So that's the first and sort of bottom line for me.

Susan [Susan Feeney, Dallas Morning News].

Affirmative Action

Q. You touched on college admissions. And very early this year you said you were quite concerned that some American universities, public universities in Texas and California in particular, were going to become resegregated, and you vowed to come up with some sort of plan to counter that. Have

you come up with a plan, and could you share it with us?

The President. Well, what I said was that I wanted to look at what the alternatives were. Texas has now adopted an alternative which I think will work apparently quite well for them for undergraduate schools, which is simply to say that the top 10 percent of every high school graduating class in Texas is eligible for admission to any public institution of higher education in Texas. But I think if you look at it, while I think it is an acceptable alternative, the critics will argue it's simply affirmative action in another form. But it's a way of saying, look, high schools are different, but the ability of children is not unevenly distributed, so we're going to give them a chance. That may be one answer.

The other thing we're looking at is trying to support more college efforts in actually identifying young people in schools with the promise of going to college, who have a difficult situation, and trying to work with them over a period of a few years to make sure that when they come to take the college exams that they are fully prepared to do so and much more likely to succeed. You know, the military academy has a kind of a prep school like this, that enables people to apply for positions in our service academies with a greater prospect of success. So these are some of the things that I think we might do.

Let me say, are there any foreign journalists here? Since we're here, let me take a few questions from the international press corps, since we're in the State Department.

U.S. Ambassador to Mexico

Q. Thank you, Mr. President, Maria Equsquiza, Eco Televisa. On several occasions, sir, you mentioned that Mexico is the second most important partner and commercial partner to the United States. But it's been more than 5 months and there's not a U.S. Ambassador in Mexico. Are you considering any particular names right now, and by when you're going to announce with your nominee?

The President. I expect to have a name quite soon, but I don't want to say the people I'm considering. I'll have a nominee and then I'll name it, and I think it will be quite soon.

Yes.

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. Mr. President, this is the first time for the last 6 years, I guess, that we don't know when you're going to go to Russia for the next meeting with President Yeltsin. Otherwise, we could say it was pretty easy before that. Is that the START II impasse in Duma, or something else?

The President. Well, we have agreed, President Yeltsin and I, that we are going to meet again and that we will meet again in Russia. We think it would be better for me to go to Russia after the Duma ratifies START II, because then we can work on START III. I think that's very important. And that's the sort of timetable we agreed to embrace.

I'm glad to see that the President, apparently, is getting over his little illness, and I expect to see him back to work soon. And I hope and believe the Duma will ratify START II, and when they do I'd like to go there and talk about START III, because for Russia it's very important in order that they not be in an unfair either security or economic position, that there not be much gap between the time START II is ratified and we agree on the broad terms of START III. And that's my personal commitment to the President, so I expect to be there shortly after START II is ratified.

Yes.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, on Bosnia, you mentioned that being there you're going to talk about responsibility. Sir, would you care to share with us how will you characterize responsibilities of Belgrade, Zagreb, and Sarajevo in Bosnia among Bosnians and Serbs and Croats, and responsibilities of your own and international community?

The President. Well, I think that all of us should support the Dayton accords, the Dayton process. We should do nothing to undermine it and do whatever we can to support it. Now, when the Croats, for example, supported the turning over of some Bosnian Croats who were indicted for war crimes recently, I though that was a very positive thing.

Now, they'll all have difficult moments when it comes to relocation of people and

to areas where they'll be the minority, and there are a lot of difficulties ahead. But Belgrade, Sarajevo, and, of course, Zagreb, all of them have the responsibility to support Dayton. They said they'd support it; they signed off on it; and that's what they ought to do. It's a good framework, and it will work if we all support it.

Yes, sir.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I'll take them both, go ahead.

Presidential Election in Guyana

Q. Mr. President, a feisty 77-year-old Chicagoan, American woman is said to be the first elected President in South America. From one American to another, do you have any words of wisdom to offer her? And just in case you're wondering where it is, it's in Georgetown, Guyana.

The President. Excuse me, I'm sorry, what——

Q. Georgetown, Guyana.

The President. Oh, yes, I know. I couldn't hear what you said before. I think anybody with enough energy to get elected President at that age probably knows what to do. [*Laughter*] And I'm very impressed. But I'll try to be a good ally, and I hope we can work together.

China and Taiwan

Q. Sir, General Xiong Guangkai, the very high-level—China's military officer who warned that U.S. better care about the safety of Los Angeles other than the safety of Taiwan, was in town last week and conducted so-called first defense consultative talks with U.S.—I think the Under Secretary of Defense. By conducting such a meeting, does your Government care more about Los Angeles now, or do you care both? I mean, regarding the security of Taiwan, I guess, in your press conference with President Jiang Zemin you urged that both sides of Taiwan Strait to resume their talk as soon as possible. Now it's been about 5 weeks already, and during the interlude you also met with President Jiang Zemin once. Do you think they're moving toward that direction under your advice, or not? If not, do you have any other suggestion?

The President. Well, I know you didn't mean it that way, but the American President, of course, has to be concerned about the security of Los Angeles. They've endured earthquakes and fires and now El Niño—[*laughter*]—and they just keep going on. They're remarkable. So we're worried about them, and we'll be there for them.

But I think the important thing that you understand is that nothing, nothing has changed in our position on the security of Taiwan. The whole framework of America's relations with China, embodied in three communiques, is that while we recognize one China, China makes a commitment to a peaceful resolution of the issues between itself and Taiwan. And we have always said that we would view a departure from that with the gravest possible concern. So you shouldn't be worried about that.

In terms of whether too much time has elapsed before the resumption of talks, I can't comment on that because I don't believe I know enough to make a judgment. But I would urge them to get together to keep working on it as soon as possible. Both places, they're just doing too well now, economically and otherwise, to risk their prosperity and their progress on a fight that need not occur and should not happen.

Q. Yes, Andrea. [Andrea Mitchell, NBC News]

Press Secretary McCurry. Mr. President, let's go home. [*Laughter*]

The President. My answers are too short today.

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq

Q. Mr. President, as you pointed out, it seems like maybe about a half-hour or 45 minutes ago—[*laughter*]—every time Saddam Hussein seems to be close to winning, perhaps getting the U.N. sanctions eased, he does something that might be considered less than rational. As the Commander in Chief who has to weigh options that will inevitably affect the lives of young Americans, how do you assess your opponent? How do you assess Saddam Hussein? Is he less than rational and, not to put too fine a point on it, are you persuaded that he's not simply crazy?

The President. Well, if he is, he's clever crazy on occasion, and then sometimes he

does something that seems maddeningly stupid. Though, in this case, I think he made a calculated decision that was wrong. That is, I don't think this was—I think there was a calculated decision here that other countries wanted to do business with him, that he owed money to other countries from before the Gulf war that he couldn't pay and never would be able to pay unless he could do more business, that the war is fading into memory—you know, it's not imminent now—and that the burden of maintaining the sanctions had wearied many of those with responsibility for doing so, and that there might be a way to split the alliance here. I also think he knew that the suffering of the Iraqi people is something which has touched the hearts of the whole world, and he thought it was a card he could play. So for all those reasons I think that he thought this decision—finally, I think that he felt, probably, that the United States would never vote to lift the sanctions on him no matter what he did. There are some people who believe that. Now, I think he was dead wrong on virtually every point, but I don't know that it was a decision of a crazy person. I just think he badly miscalculated.

I will say again, we supported—the United States initiated the oil for food and medicine resolution. I am glad—I would support broadening it. I still don't think the caloric intake of the average Iraqi is sufficient. I'm worried about those kids. I'm worried about the people who are hurt over there. But the biggest problem they've got is him. He delayed the implementation of the oil for food embargo for a year and a half to try to play on global sympathy for the suffering of his own people. So that's not an issue for me.

Furthermore, I have done everything I could not to have the American people overly personalize our relationship with him. To me it is a question of his actions. But I do believe that he has shown, whether you think it's madness or not, that he was willing to rain Scud missiles on Israel and use chemical warfare on the Iranians and on the Kurds. So whatever his motives are, I think it best serves the United States—our interests, our values, and our role in the world—to judge him by his actions and to insist that we proceed, in return for substantive progress, on concrete actions. I think that is the practically right thing to do and the morally right thing to do.

Yes, sir, in the back.

Greece and Turkey

Q. You take pride, understandably, in the expansion of NATO. But one member of NATO, Greece, is constantly being threatened by another member, Turkey. Is that an example for the other three countries coming in?

The President. You mean the problems between Greece and Turkey?

Q. Yes. And what's your role as the leader of the superpower in the world to help two members solve their problems? The European leaders this weekend called upon Turkey to accept the countenance of the International Court of Justice. You're meeting Turkish Prime Minister Yilmaz on Friday. Are you going to talk about that?

The President. Yes, we are going to talk about that. The problems between Greece and Turkey, and the decisions taken by the EU with regard to Turkey, it seems to me to point to two objectives that the American people should care very much about as we move toward a new century.

First of all, I think it is very important that we do everything reasonable to anchor Turkey to the West. They are a secular Islamic government that has been a dependable ally in NATO. They have also supported a lot of our operations in and around Iraq since the Gulf war, and they have been a good ally of ours. I think that is terribly important. If you look at the size of the country, if you look at its geostrategic significance, where it is, what it can block, and what it could open the doors to, it is terribly important.

Secondly, I think it is terribly important for us to do everything we can to resolve the differences between Turkey and Greece. They are deeply held, historic, and I'm convinced, at bottom, ultimately irrational. I mean, that to allow the potential that Greece and Turkey both have for future economic growth and cooperation, for political cooperation, for security cooperation, to be broken on the rocks of their differences over Cyprus and other territorial differences in the Aegean is, in my view, a grave error.

And so I will be talking to Prime Minister Yilmaz about this. I want a resolution of the Cyprus issue very badly. You have evidence of that in asking—when I asked Mr. Holbrooke to head our efforts to try to resolve it. And our long friendship, our long alliance with Greece, the role that many Greek-Americans have in our national life would, if nothing else, impose on us a heavy responsibility for trying to work out the problems on Cyprus.

But the truth is, this is a case where not only does the United States need to be on good terms with Greece and Turkey,[1] they need to be on good terms with each other. If they could sort of take off their blinders about each other and look at what they're really up against for the next 30 or 40 years in their neighborhood in terms of opportunities and threats, this world would be in considerably better shape moving into a new century.

Q. Mr. President——

Agenda for the Future

The President. Look, it's 3:30. I've gone on for an hour and a half. Let me say, first, some of you had trouble getting in last night. I'm really sorry about that. It shows I haven't solved all the administrative problems of the Government.

Secondly, I wish you a happy holiday. We've got a lot to be happy about, a lot to be thankful for.

Thirdly, if in a sentence—I'll leave you with one sentence. A lot of people are curious about the next 3 years. When I came here I was trying to just prove America could work again. I just wanted the country to work again. I wanted to get the economy going; I wanted to deal with social problems like crime and welfare; and I wanted to pull the country together. I want to see us spend the next 3 years fleshing out that agenda.

But now is the time that we should be looking at the long-term problems of the country, the long-term challenges. That's why this environmental issue of climate change is so important. Every environmental challenge we have met in the last 30 years—we proved we could grow the economy and preserve the environment; we've got to deal with it here. That's why the education issues and setting up excellence and lifetime learning is so important, because we will not be able to protect all Americans from the global changes that are taking place unless we do that. That's why it's important to deal with the entitlements challenge, because we have to honor the good that has been done by Social Security and Medicare for retirees, and let more people do more for their own retirement, as well, and do it in a way that doesn't bankrupt their children when we baby boomers retire.

And those are just three of the issues that we have to face that are long-term challenges. So I think you'll see in this next 3 years we'll still be trying to make America work; we'll still be trying to deal with these issues. But we'll spend a lot more time on those long-term challenges and on the long-term challenges of having a security framework in the world that enables us to both pursue our interests and our values. On this occasion, at the end of this year, I think our country is in better shape than it was 5 years ago, and I believe 3 years from now, if we continue to work on that agenda, we'll be in better shape still.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 154th news conference began at 2 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the State Department. In his remarks, he referred to President Kim Yong-sam of South Korea; Australian Ambassador Richard Butler, chairman, United Nations Special Commission; William J. Bennett, codirector, Empower America; Christopher Edley, adviser to the President's Advisory Board on Race; Glenn C. Loury, professor, Boston University; Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz of Turkey; Prime Minister and First Vice President Janet Jagan of Guyana, candidate for her nation's Presidency; and Special Presidential Emissary for Cyprus Richard Holbrooke. He also referred to the NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia (SFOR).

[1] White House correction.

Proclamation 7061—Wright Brothers Day, 1997

December 16, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On December 17, 1903, Orville Wright lay inside the first heavier-than-air powered craft that permitted controlled flight. His brother Wilbur stood nearby, steadying the craft at one wing tip. In a few moments, the brothers would know if their years of hard work and painstaking experimentation would finally bear fruit. With Wilbur running beside the plane to build its momentum, Orville achieved, for a scant 12 seconds over a distance of 120 feet, what humankind had always dreamed of—he flew.

That historic moment marked the first step in a long journey through the skies that would ultimately take Americans beyond Earth's atmosphere and into space. The Mars Pathfinder spacecraft that captured the world's attention and imagination this past summer reflects the same American ingenuity and pioneering spirit that sent the Wrights' fragile craft aloft so briefly over Kitty Hawk almost a century ago. With unwavering perseverance in the face of many failures, steady conviction in the possibility of flight, and a determination to bring their vision to reality, the Wright brothers expanded our horizons and also brought the world closer together.

We are still reaping the benefits of their extraordinary achievement. America's aerospace industry has experienced enormous growth and development since the Wright brothers' first flight. It has strengthened our economy, created new business and recreational opportunities, freed us from many of the limits of time and distance, and made our Nation's aviation system the finest in the world. And thanks in large part to the efforts of the men and women throughout the Federal Government—in the Departments of Transportation and Defense, the National Transportation Safety Board, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration—that system is also the safest in the world.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved December 17, 1963 (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 169), has designated December 17 of each year as "Wright Brothers Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 17, 1997, as Wright Brothers Day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of December, 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-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 17, 1997]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on December 18.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Space Medal of Honor Posthumously to Roger B. Chaffee and Edward H. White II

December 17, 1997

Dr. Gibbons, Mr. Goldin, Congressman Sensenbrenner, to Edward White and the White family, and Martha Chaffee and the Chaffee family, and Mrs. Grissom, other representatives of astronauts' families that are here.

A generation ago, President Kennedy challenged our Nation and asked God's blessing to undertake the most hazardous and dangerous and greatest adventure on which man has ever embarked. His challenge in 1961 to send a man to the moon and bring him safely back to Earth by the end of the decade captured the imagination of millions of people around the world. A group of pioneering Americans recognized the limitless possibilities of this seemingly impossible challenge, and they would risk their lives to make it happen.

Two great Americans we honor today, Lieutenant Commander Roger Chaffee and Lieutenant Colonel Edward White, were among them. More than 30 years ago, these two men, along with their commander, Virgil ''Gus'' Grissom, were selected for the very first Apollo mission. Tragedy struck before they could achieve their goal. On January 27, 1967, fire swept through the Apollo capsule during a training session, killing all three of them. In 1978 President Carter presented Commander Grissom with one of the first Congressional Space Medals of Honor. Today I have the privilege of presenting the same medal to his crewmates, Roger Chaffee and Edward White, courageous men who gave their lives in our Nation's effort to conquer the frontiers of space.

Even before they joined the Apollo program, Chaffee and White had already served our Nation with great distinction. Born in Texas and a member of the United States Air Force, Colonel White was the first American to walk in space. At a White House ceremony soon afterward, President Johnson called him ''one of the Christopher Columbuses of our century.''

Commander Chaffee was a Michigan native and a decorated Navy pilot. Though he was the rookie of the crew, he didn't lack self-confidence. He once said, ''Hell, I'd feel secure taking it up all by myself.''

Today we bestow upon Roger Chaffee and Edward White the highest honor in America's space program, but they were honored in our hearts long ago. Their deaths will remind us always that exploring space is dangerous, life-threatening work, work that demands and deserves the bravest and best among us. Though they never got there, astronauts Chaffee, White, and Grissom's footprints are on the Moon. Their presence is felt on every mission of our space shuttle program. Their spirits live on in every successful launch and every safe return. And I'm certain they will be there when the international space station goes into orbit.

America has become the world's leading spacefaring nation because of the selfless pioneering spirits of the men we honor today. I am proud to present these medals to the families of Roger Chaffee and Edward White. On behalf of a grateful Nation, I thank them for their sacrifice.

Now I'd like to ask the military aide to read the citations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Edward H. White, III, son of Lt. Col. White; Martha Chaffee, widow of Lt. Comdr. Chaffee; and Betty Grissom, widow of Lt. Col. Virgil Grissom.

Remarks on the Peace Process in Bosnia and an Exchange With Reporters

December 18, 1997

The President. Good morning. I want to speak with you today about the progress we have made toward a lasting peace in Bosnia and the challenges that still must be faced in order to finish the job.

For nearly 4 years, Bosnia was the battleground for the bloodiest war in Europe since World War II. The conflict killed or wounded one out of every 10 Bosnians. It drove half the country's people from their homes, left 9 out of 10 of them unemployed. We will never be able to forget the mass graves, the women and young girls victimized by systematic campaigns of rape, skeletal prisoners locked behind barbed-wire fences, endless lines of refugees marching toward a future of despair.

The war in Bosnia was abhorrent to our values. It also threatened our national interests. We've learned the hard way in this century that Europe's stability and America's security are joined. The war threatened to explode into a broader conflict in the Balkans, endangering the vital interests of allies like Greece and Turkey and undermining our efforts to build a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe.

Then, 2 years ago in Dayton, Ohio, American leadership helped to end the war in Bosnia. With our allies in NATO and others, we launched an extraordinary military and political effort to implement the peace agreement. Twenty-four months later, by almost any measure, the lives of Bosnia's people are better, and their hopes for the future are brighter.

Consider what we have achieved together. We ended the fighting and the bloodshed, separating rival armies, demobilizing more than 350,000 troops, destroying almost 6,600 heavy weapons. We helped Bosnians to put in place national democratic institutions, including a Presidency, a Parliament, a Supreme Court, and hold peaceful and free elections for all levels of government, with turnouts exceeding 70 percent. We've begun to restore normal life, repairing roads and schools, electricity and water, heat and sewage, doubling economic output, quadrupling wages. Unemployment in the Bosnian-Croat Federation has been cut from 90 percent to 50 percent.

We're helping the Bosnians to provide for their own security, training ethnically integrated police forces in the Federation, taking the first steps toward a professional democratic police force in the Serb Republic. We've helped to turn the media from an instrument of war into a force for peace, stifling the inflammatory radio and television broadcasts that helped to fuel the conflict. And we've provided a secure environment for 350,000 displaced persons to return to their homes, while bringing 22 war criminals to justice. Just a few hours ago, SFOR captured and transported to The Hague two more war crimes suspects.

The progress is unmistakable, but it is not yet irreversible. Bosnia has been at peace only half as long as it was at war. It remains poised on a tightrope, moving toward a better future but not at the point yet of a self-sustaining peace. To get there, the people of Bosnia still need a safety net and a helping hand that only the international community, including the United States, can provide.

Our assistance must be twofold. First we must intensify our civilian and economic engagement. As a result of the progress we've achieved in recent months, we know where to focus our efforts. Civilian and voluntary agencies working with Bosnian authorities must help to do the following things: first, deepen and spread economic opportunity while rooting out corruption; second, reform, retrain, and re-equip the police; third, restructure of the state-run media to meet international standards of objectivity and access and establish alternative independent media; fourth, help more refugees return home; and fifth, make indicted war criminals answer for their crimes, both as a matter of justice and because they are stumbling blocks to lasting stability.

The second thing we must do is to continue to provide an international military presence that will enable these efforts to proceed in an atmosphere of confidence. Our progress in Bosnia to date would not have been possible without the secure environment created first by IFOR, now by SFOR. They've allowed dozens of civilian agencies and literally hundreds of voluntary agencies to do their job in security, laying the foundation for a self-sustaining peace.

In authorizing American troops to take part in the SFOR mission, I said the mission would end in 18 months, in June of 1998. It was my expectation that by that time we would have rebuilt enough of Bosnia's economic and political life to continue the work without continuing outside military support. But following intensive consultations with my national security and military advisers, with our NATO allies, and with leaders from both parties in Congress, it has become clear that the progress we've seen in Bosnia, in order for it to continue, a follow-on military force led by NATO will be necessary after SFOR ends. America is a leader of NATO, and America should participate in that force.

Therefore, I have instructed our representatives in NATO to inform our allies that, in principle, the United States will take part in a security presence in Bosnia when SFOR withdraws this summer. The agreement in principle will become a commitment only when I have approved the action plan NATO's military authorities will develop and present early next year after careful study of all the options. The details of that plan, including the mission's specific objectives, its size, and its duration, must be agreed to by all NATO allies.

Without prejudging the details, let me make clear the key criteria the plan must meet for me to approve United States participation:

First, the mission must be achievable and tied to concrete benchmarks, not a deadline. We should have clear objectives that when set—when met will create a self-sustaining,

secure environment and allow us to remove our troops.

Second, the force must be able to protect itself. Over 2 years we have steadily decreased the number of our troops in Bosnia from about 27,000 Americans in IFOR in 1996 to 8,500 in SFOR today. I hope the follow-on force will be smaller, but I will insist it be sufficient in number and in equipment to achieve its mission and to protect itself in safety.

Third, the United States must retain command. Time and again, events have proven that American leadership is crucial to decisive collective action.

Fourth, our European allies must assume their share of responsibility. Now Europe and our other partners are already doing a great deal, providing 3 times as many troops as we are, 5 times as much economic assistance, 9 times as many international police, 10 times as many refugees have been received by them. And while Bosnia is a challenge to American interests and values, the longer term and fundamental challenge is to make Bosnia a genuine part of Europe, and we hope the Europeans will do more.

Fifth, the cost must be manageable.

And sixth and finally, the plan must have substantial support from Congress and the American people. I have been pleased by the spirit and the substance of our consultations with leading members of both parties. As we develop the details of the new NATO mission, these consultations must and will continue. I am pleased that Members of both parties in both Houses of Congress have accepted my invitation to go to Bosnia with me when I leave in a couple of days. All of us have a duty to explain the stakes in Bosnia to the American people, and I will do my very best to shoulder my responsibility for that.

Now, some say a lasting peace in Bosnia is impossible and, therefore, we should end our efforts now, in June, and/or allow the country to be partitioned along ethnic lines. I believe they're profoundly wrong. A full and fair reading of Bosnia's history and an honest assessment of the progress of the last 23 months simply refutes the proposition that the Dayton peace agreement cannot work. But if we pull out before the job is done, Bosnia almost certainly will fall back into violence, chaos, and, ultimately, a war every bit as bloody as the one that was stopped.

And partition is not a good alternative. It would sanction the horrors of ethnic cleansing and send the wrong signal to extremists everywhere. At best, partition would require a peacekeeping force to patrol a volatile border for years to come. More likely it would set the stage also for renewed conflict.

A lasting peace is possible, along the lines of the Dayton peace agreement. For decades, Muslim Croats and Serbs lived together, worked together, raised their families together. Thanks to the investments of America and others in Bosnia over the past 2 years, they have begun again to lead more normal lives.

Ultimately, Bosnia's future is in the hands of its own people. But we can help them make it a future of peace. We should finish the job we began for the sake of that future and in the service of our own interests and values.

Go ahead. We'll take—yeah.

Benchmarks for Troop Withdrawal

Q. Mr. President, a number of Americans are understandably going to be concerned about an open-ended U.S. military commitment to Bosnia. Can you at least assure the American people that by the time you leave office, a little more than 3 years from now, those American troops will be out of Bosnia?

The President. In order to answer that, let's go back and see what our experience has been. First of all, the big military mission, IFOR, really was completed within a year. In fact, it was completed in less than a year; that is, the robust, large military presence we needed there—I think we had over 60,000 total allied troops there—to end the war, separate the forces, establish the separation zone between the parties. It was achieved quickly and with remarkable peace and remarkably low loss of life for all of our allied forces who were there.

But then we went to the smaller force to try to support the civilian implementation of the Dayton agreement. Now, what has happened? An enormous amount of progress has been made; we don't believe the peace is self-sustaining. I think the responsible thing

for me to do, since I do not believe we can meet the 18-month deadline, and no one I know now believes that, is to say to the American people what the benchmarks are.

What are the benchmarks? Let's talk about that. Can they be achieved in the near-term? I believe they can. Do I think we should have a permanent presence in Bosnia? No. I don't believe this is like Germany after World War II or in the cold war or Korea after the Korean war. This is not what I'm suggesting here. But what are the benchmarks? First, let me say the final set of benchmarks must be developed by our NATO allies working with us. But let me give you just some of the things that I think we ought to be asking ourselves. Number one, are the joint institutions strong enough to be self-sustaining after the military operation? Number two, have the political parties really given up the so-called state-run media that have been instruments of hate and venom? Number three, is the civilian police large enough, well-trained enough, well-managed enough to do the job it has to do? Number four, do we have confidence that the military is under democratic rule?

Those are just some of the benchmarks. I think, when we go through this, I want a full public discussion of it. But I will say again, I understand your job is try to get a deadline nailed down, but we tried it in this SFOR period, and it turned out we were wrong. I am not suggesting a permanent presence in Bosnia. I am suggesting that it's a more honest thing to do to say what our objectives are and that these objectives should be pursued, and they can be pursued at an affordable cost with fair burden-sharing with the Europeans. If that can be done, we should pursue them.

Go ahead.

Prosecution of War Crimes

Q. Mr. President, the lead prosecutor in the War Crimes Tribunal says that Mladic and Karadzic can rest easy because the French won't try to capture them. What is the United States willing to do to bring these men to justice?

The President. Well, I don't want to comment on what the prosecutor has said about the French. I can tell you this, that we were involved this morning with the Dutch, and it was in their sector, and they took the lead. They asked us for support just like we were involved with the British not very long ago when they made their arrests. And we believe that provision of the Dayton agreement is important, as I said again today, and we think that all of us who are there should be prepared to do what is appropriate to implement it. And I think that, having said that, the less I say from then on in, the better.

We believe the war crimes process is an important part of Dayton. The United States, indeed, is supporting an international permanent war crimes tribunal even as we speak. We've got countries working on trying to establish that.

Yes.

Benchmarks for Troop Withdrawal

Q. Mr. President, sir, one of the benchmarks you listed was the willingness of the political parties there really to work toward progress. Does that not make us hostages of those political figures there, particularly those who don't want progress? They can simply undermine the attempt to reach that benchmark and keep U.S. troops there forever.

The President. Well, let me—I don't think I was clear about that. What I mean is the willingness of the political parties—or whether they're willing or not, our capacity to stop them from, in effect, perverting the state-run media and using them as an instrument of violence and suppression. I don't think it's necessary for us to stay until everybody wants to go have tea together at 4 o'clock in the afternoon in a civil environment. I think it's—I do think that there are—and again let me say, we will make public a final set of benchmarks before we go forward with this, and our allies have to work on this. I'm just telling you what my thoughts are.

But if you look at where we've really had problems—or let's flip the question—why do we think we still need some military presence there after June? I think because we believe there is more venom still in the political system than there otherwise would have been if there had been no perversion of the so-called state-run media by the political parties

that control them. We believe that if the joint institutions were working a little more effectively they would—the people would see the benefits of the joint institutions more than they will by June.

We're grateful that there are 2,000 civilian police working there. And I might say, while the United States has put up 90 percent of the money, as I said, the Europeans have put up 90 percent of the personnel for the training and the preparation of the civilian police. But there should be more.

So I think that's what we have to do. I do not want to hold us hostage to the feelings of the people of Bosnia, although I believe the feelings will change as the facts of life change. But I do think we should stay there until we believe we've got the job done.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Prosecution of War Crimes

Q. Mr. President, how did you get Secretary Cohen on board on this? And you know, the whole public perception—unless you go after the highest profile alleged war criminals, it doesn't have much of an impact. Why the restraint?

The President. Well, first of all, there are—the circumstances under which the SFOR troops will apprehend war criminals have been fairly well-defined. We did not send SFOR there to mount major military campaigns.

Secondly, I don't want to discuss the circumstances in detail under which we might or might not go after anyone. But let me go to the point underlying your question—I think it is—which is, can this peace be made to work unless Mr. Karadzic is arrested? I mean, let's just sort of get to the bottom line here.

I think the answer to that is, under the right circumstances—that is, if he flees the country, if he is deep enough underground, if he can't have any impact on it—we might make the peace work anyway. After all, a great deal of progress has been made. I would point out that more progress has been made in the Bosnian-Croat—the Muslim-Croat Federation part of Bosnia economically than in the Serbian part, in part because reactionary elements there have resisted doing the right thing across the board in many areas.

Q. Are you considering aid for Serbia in that respect?

The President. I'm considering—what I'm going to do is to work with the allies to implement the Dayton accords. And our position is going to be we're going to support the people that are trying to implement the Dayton framework; we're going to oppose those who are opposing it, in all specifics. If you use that benchwork, I think it will get you there.

One last question. Go ahead, Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

Timelines and the Peace Process

Q. Just to wrap up this by asking you the question that a lot of Republican critics of yours are suggesting that your credibility was undermined on Bosnia by imposing these two deadlines which you failed to meet, and knowing that some of your own advisers at the time were saying, ''Don't give these deadlines because they're unrealistic; the job can't be done within a year or within 18 months.'' So how do you answer your critics now, like Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison or Arlen Specter or Newt Gingrich, who say that you have to prove your credibility because you failed to honor these two earlier imposed deadlines?

The President. Well, first of all, let me say, I have a fundamentally different view of the first deadline. I mean, we did—the mission I defined for IFOR was achieved, and it was achieved before a year was out. And I was—it's not worth going through and rewriting history there about who said what at the time.

I did think that in 18 months—I honestly believed in 18 months we could get this done at the time I said it. And it wasn't—I wasn't right, which is why I don't want to make that error again. Now, having acknowledged the error I made, let's look at what we were right about. Let's flip this around before we get too much into who was right about what happened after 18 months.

What has happened? With the leadership of the United States, NATO and its allies, including Russia, working side by side, ended

almost overnight and with virtually no bloodshed the worst war in Europe since World War II. We have seen democratic elections with 70 percent participation take place; hundreds of thousands of people have been able to go home under circumstances that were difficult, to say the least; economic growth has resumed; infrastructure has been rebuilt; the conditions of normal life have come back for tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of people.

So if I take the hit for being wrong about the timetable, I would like some acknowledgement that in the larger issue here, the United States and its allies were right to undertake this mission and that the results of the mission have been very, very good. They have justified the effort. And the cost of the mission in lives and treasure to the United States and to its allies has been much lower than even the most ardent supporters of the mission thought that it would be.

So I think—I don't mind taking a hit for being wrong about the timetable. But after the hit is dished out, I would like the larger truth looked at. That is, did we do the right thing? Was it in our interests? Did it further our values? Are the American people less likely to be drawn into some other conflict in Europe 10, 20, 30 years from now where the costs could be far greater if we make this work? I think they are.

And I'd like to close basically with a conversation I had from my opponent in the last election, Senator Dole. I want to give him—he said something that I thought was very good and pithier than anything I've said about this. We had a talk about it the other day on the phone, and he said, "Look," he said, "you know, I didn't necessarily agree with all the details about how you got to where you were. But," he said, "What's happened in Bosnia? It's like we're in a football game. We're in the fourth quarter, and we're winning, and some people suggest we should walk off the field and forfeit the game. I don't think we should. I think we ought to stay here, finish the game, and collect the win."

And that's a pretty good analogy. And with due credit to the Senator, I appreciate it. I wish I'd have thought of it myself.

Thank you very much.

Merry Christmas.

Buddy

Q. How is Buddy?

The President. Good.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Bosnian Serb leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. The President also referred to the NATO-led Implementation Force in Bosnia (IFOR).

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah, 1997

December 18, 1997

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Hanukkah.

The Festival of Lights is a powerful reminder each year that the age-old struggle for religious freedom is not yet over. From the days of the ancient Maccabees down to our present time, tyrants have sought to deny people the free expression of their faith and the right to live according to their own conscience and convictions. Hanukkah symbolizes the heroic struggle of all who seek to defeat such oppression and the miracles that come to those full of faith and courage. This holiday holds special meaning for us in America, where freedom of religion is one of the cornerstones of our democracy.

The coming year will mark the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, where the story of the first Hanukkah took place so many centuries ago. As families come together in prayer for the eight nights of Hanukkah, to reaffirm their hope in God and their gratitude for His faithfulness to His people, may the candles of the menorah light our way to a true and lasting peace for the people of the Middle East.

Hillary and I extend our warmest wishes to all those celebrating Hanukkah, all those who work for religious freedom, and all those who devote themselves to the cause of peace throughout the world.

Bill Clinton

Remarks on Presenting the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards

December 19, 1997

Thank you very much, Mrs. Baldrige, Robert and Nancy Baldridge, Harry Hertz, the examiners and judges and all those associated with the Baldrige Award Foundation, especially to the winners. We congratulate you all. We're delighted that the Chair of the District of Columbia Control Board, Andrew Brimmer, and Councilwoman Charlene Drew Jarvis are here.

And I want to thank Secretary Daley in spite of the fact that he was making fun of my penchant for animal stories of all kinds. [*Laughter*] I mean, I don't come from Chicago—[*laughter*]—I come from the country. But my wife comes from Chicago.

I want to thank Earnie Deavenport, too. Several years ago the Eastman Company loaned me an executive when I was Governor of Arkansas, and we established the first statewide total quality management program in the country. It was what gave me the idea to start what eventually became the reinventing Government project headed by the Vice President, which among other things has now given us the smallest Federal Government since John Kennedy was here. And I'll give $5 to anyone in the audience who can honestly say you have missed it. [*Laughter*] I say that because the Federal employees have done a very good job of increasing their output and the quality of their service while downsizing their numbers so that we can take advantage of technology, get the deficit down, get the economy going again. So we have learned from you.

And I've talked with Earnie many times about the importance of trying to apply these lessons to other areas of human endeavor. You mentioned the two most important, I think, are health care and education. I also think there are applications—if you look at the success in many law enforcement departments around the country, there are law enforcement applications here because the thing that—a belief in continuous progress through not only doing the right things, but doing the right things right, gives you is the conviction that you can repeat whatever you're doing right in one place somewhere else. And that is by far the biggest problem Government faces.

So I really am delighted to see you here. But I think, for me, because I have seen this work over and over and over again in the private as well as the public sector, that is what cries out for application to our public institutions, whether it's in education or health care or in law enforcement.

If the city of Boston could go virtually 2½ years without a single child being killed by a handgun, until—unfortunately, they had an incident last week, but they went 2½ years. No city in the United States that big has been able to do that. They did. It must therefore follow that if other people did the same thing in the same way and then you started the kind of contest you have here in the market system so everybody tried to keep continuously improving their process, that we would become a safer country.

In health care, we have all these—you know, managed care, on balance, has been a good thing for America because we've managed some inefficiency out of the system. But now people are genuinely worried about who's making the decisions about their health care and whether quality will continue to be the most important value in the health care system. I think all of us want it to be, even those of you who may have responsibility in your organization for holding down health care costs, the last thing in the world you want is for your employees not to have access to the health care that they need.

And goodness knows, in education—I've said this so many times, the poor people in the press who have to cover me get tired of hearing it, but the most frustrating thing about American education today is that every problem in education has been solved by somebody somewhere, and nobody's figured out how to have everybody else follow suit so that you launch the kind of competitive process that you come here to celebrate today.

So, for all these reasons, I love coming here. And I always feel that by the time I get up to speak, there's no point in my saying anything. [*Laughter*] I told Mrs. Baldrige I kind of hated to walk out here. You all were so enthusiastic, you should have been outside listening to all this energy being emanated

from this room. It's wonderful to be in a place where people don't think it's too corny or too embarrassing to be exuberant about what they do. Can you imagine what would happen in this country if everybody wanted to wave a flag for the place they work every day? [*Laughter*] Can you imagine that? I'm sure somewhere in this room there is some cynic saying, ''This is too hokey. I can't believe they're doing this.'' [*Laughter*]

Where do you spend more time than at work? Why shouldn't you want to wave a flag? Why shouldn't we want to cheer about where we work? We want to cheer about our families, cheer about the places we work, cheer about the clubs we associate with. This country would work a lot better if everybody felt like they could cheer about the place they work. That's why I always try to make these awards, and why I think it was a stroke of genius to establish them although I bet even when they were established the founders could never have imagined what the far-reaching impact would be—that most States would follow suit, that countries would follow suit.

There is this idea now embodied in our four winners today, in 3M Dental Products, in Merrill Lynch Credit, in Solectron and XBS, that you can always get better and that you can organize not only to do the right things but to do the right things right in a way that elevates the people who work for the enterprise, serves the general public better, and obviously supports the bottom line.

It's nice to think that. Otherwise, you would get bored if you didn't go broke. [*Laughter*] So it's sort of better, bored, or broke. [*Laughter*] If you get a multiple-choice question like that, it's not too easy to make an A. [*Laughter*] And yet we don't. None of us do all the time. But we come here to celebrate what we can do at our best.

I'd also like to thank the Department of Commerce, Secretary Daley, the National Institute of Standards and Technology for the support that they give to this endeavor. It has been a great partnership. But most of all, I just want to say, just think about where this idea was 10 years ago and where it is today. Think about how many of the groundbreaking reforms that have been recognized in Baldrige Award winners in the past that are now just standard industry practice.

Think about what it would be like if everybody would so shamelessly try to learn what their competitors are doing and do it at least that well and then figure out how to do it better, if in every area of human endeavor you did that. I think that this is something that is really worth focusing on. What do we celebrate? The stake the employees have in the company, the flexibility, the innovation, the creativity, the spirit of enterprise. It has brought America back.

When I became President, and even when I was running for President, I saw that the 1980's, while they had been very tough on American business, had also produced a remarkable understanding that was widely shared throughout the country about what had to be done to be internationally competitive. And I always saw a big part of my duty here as just to have Government policies that would reinforce what is right and get out of the way of what is right, so that we could create the conditions and give people the tools so that everybody could do what you're doing. And we've tried to do that.

I appreciate what Secretary Daley said about the turtle on the fencepost; that's one of the things I always say in the Cabinet meeting. It took us 3 months, and we didn't have to translate all my aphorisms to people who never had the privilege of living in rural areas. [*Laughter*]

We've tried to do three simple things to help you. One, get the deficit down and balance the budget so that we could keep interest rates down, improve interest rates not only for businesses but for individuals and on home mortgages, and two consequences of that are that we have an all-time high rate of homeownership—it's above two-thirds for the first time in the history of America—and we have record levels of business investment, which is becoming very important now because we're able to sustain a little higher rate of internal growth as you see a little turmoil around the world. I want to say a little more about that in a minute. But it's very important.

When the Congress adopted the balanced budget amendment—I mean act—in 1997, back in August, and I signed it, the deficit

had already dropped by 92 percent below its high in 1992. It went from $292 billion a year down to $23 billion a year. And I want to make a point about that because I'm sure you found this in your company. When you get this award, you can come here and celebrate, and you don't even have to think about how hard and often controversial some of the changes you had to make were to get to this point. Right? Well, when we decided we were going to bring the deficit down, it was like pulling fingernails out around this place. And the bill in 1993 passed by one vote in both Houses. Now all of us think we're geniuses. If it had gone wrong, half the people that live in town could have said, ''I told you they were fools.'' [*Laughter*] But it worked. And now we're going to balance this budget, and we're going to have a healthier economy. And that's very important because it frees you to do what you do best.

The second thing we've tried to do is to change the conditions in which you operate by opening more of the global economy to American companies. We've had over 200 trade agreements in the last 5 years, by far the largest number ever. And the Uruguay round, finished back in 1993, amounts to the largest tax cut on American goods in history. And now we're the number one exporter in the world again. I think it is very important that we continue to press ahead in that.

I believe very strongly that it was a mistake when we were unable to get enough votes in the House of Representatives to renew the President's fast-track trade authority to negotiate comprehensive bills. Why? Not because nobody ever loses in trade in America. There are some—in competition, there are by definition some losers and some winners. But most of the job loss in America comes from technological change and old-fashioned business failure. Some of it does come from change in the trading rules.

What is the answer to that? Well, there are only two answers: You can either say, ''Well, we're just not going to change any more rules and try to pretend that we won't be subject to these global forces,'' or you could say, ''We're going to change the rules, create more jobs, raise more incomes, and do a heck of a lot better job than we've been doing in the past with the people who are dislocated through no fault of their own.'' The second is the right answer, not the first.

We have 4 percent of the world's people and 20 percent of the world's income. And the developing economies are growing at roughly 3 times the rate of the advanced economies like the United States, Japan, and Europe. Now again, you don't have to be a mathematical genius to figure out if you have 4 percent of the people and you've got 20 percent of the income and you would like to stay roughly as well off as you are and maybe if you're very clever get a little better off, you have to sell something to the other 96 percent of the people in the world, especially if their growth rates are faster than yours.

Now, that does not mean that we should forget about the people who are dislocated from trade or from technology or even from old-fashioned business failures—people who have to start again.

That brings me to the third thing that I want to say, which is that in addition to balancing the budget and having sensible economic policies, having an aggressive trade policy, we must have a policy that invests in our people and recognizes that in every company here rewarded, you were rewarded in part because you recognized that by far the most important resources you had were the people who were working for the company. Right? There is no question about that.

With all respect, nobody was up here waving a flag for the Xerox machine back home—[*laughter*]—you know, or the whatever. Whatever the widget is, nobody was doing that. It's a great thing, whatever those machines are. You're waving the flags for yourselves and your colleagues that are here because you know that basically creativity and continuous improvement requires people who can think and then who are free to act along the lines that they think and work out things together.

The very intellectual processes that you are trying to make permanent and imbed in the daily work of your companies require a level of thinking and reasoning skills that mean that we have to be committed in America to universal excellence in education.

Now, not everybody needs a college degree in physics. But everybody needs more

than a high school diploma today, and everybody needs the ability to keep on learning for a lifetime. That's why we have tried to say—implement the national education goals and to oversimplify it by saying every 8-year-old should be able to read, every 12-year-old should be able to log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old should be able to go to college, every adult should be able to keep on learning for a lifetime. And we're trying to set up a system where that will be true for every American, because it will help more companies to do what you have done. And I think that's very important.

In this last balanced budget, I think 30 years from now when people look back on it, they'll say, ''Aside from the fact that we balanced the budget for the first time in a generation, the most important thing about that bill was it opened the doors of college to every American who would work for a college education, with a tax credit called the HOPE scholarship that virtually makes the first 2 years of college virtually tax-free to every American and other tax incentives and more Pell grants.'' That's very important that we are setting the stage for promoting a comprehensive reform of America's schools, kindergarten through 12th grade, based on national standards and accountability for them and real production so that all schools will be organized for performance for all the children.

And I want to compliment Secretary Daley's brother on the remarkable work that has been done in Chicago to try to totally change the culture of education there to make it more like a continuous quality operation, systematically in the way that all of you have achieved. So we're trying to do that. And as I said, we also have to do that for people who lose their jobs or who are drastically underemployed.

What else do we have to? We want to set up—we've doubled funds for dislocated workers in the last 5 years to invest in their training. The systems don't work very well or at least not nearly as well as they can. I'd like to see us consolidate all these Government programs and give the workers a skills grant. Most people who are out of work have got enough sense to figure out what they could learn to get a better job or to get a new job. And I'd like to see anybody that qualifies just get a skills grant that they can take to the nearest educational institution of their own choosing and get the education they need to become a productive member of society and have a great chance to get a good job in an organization like the ones we honor today.

I'd like to see us, when a community is hard hit by a big plant closing, go in there like we did when the military bases closed. What's the difference? People are out of work, and you have great capacity. They deserve a chance to have everybody work together to get them started again.

So we need to do more on that. But that's the right answer, not to run away from the global economy, not to say we're not going to trade. The right answer is to do more, more quickly for the people that are dislocated.

I guess what I'm saying is, we're still trying to get it right here. We're still trying to make our operation one that is continuously improving. But at least we know what the objective is. The objective is to give every American the chance to live up to their God-given capacity and live out their dreams. The objective is to give people the power they need to not only have successful careers but to build strong families and strong communities. The objective is to help people balance the demands of work and family, a problem that I hear in every place I go. The objective is to help our country balance our obligation to grow the economy and preserve the environment, something we have proved, repeatedly, we can do over the last 30 years. The objective is to reach out to the rest of the world and get the benefits of the global economy while meeting its challenges instead of pretending they don't exist. We are, whether we like it or not, all interconnected, one with another, in this country and, increasingly, beyond our borders.

I've spent an enormous amount of time in the last month—enormous—trying to help come to grips with the financial difficulties you're reading about every day in the Asian markets. Why? Because a huge percentage of our exports go to Asia. They are our neighbors now for all practical purposes. And it is in our interest that those countries be able

to be stable, growing, increasingly healthy countries from which we not only buy but to which we sell, countries that together we can build a stable future. Instead of have a part of the world in the 20th century that called Americans there to fight and die in three wars, better to be a part of the world that participates in—[*inaudible*]—three new stages of the global economic revolution in the 21st century. We still have a lot of challenges out there.

Technology is not an unmixed blessing. It bothers me some of the things little kids can see on the Internet at night. It bothers me that people who know how to do it can figure out how to build bombs and have access to dangerous weapons just by having the technological availability of it. There are a lot of things that bother us about it. There are troubling questions of our competitive laws and how they should apply to new technologies that have to be worked out. That's why we all have to be committed to the idea that we can continuously improve. Or in the language that was quoted from David Kearns, that our endeavor is a journey without an end. That's frustrating to some people; they always want to get there. But, you know, the older I get, the more I like the journey. [*Laughter*]

So I thank you. I thank you for making America a better place. I thank you for your enthusiasm and for being a model for other American workplaces. And I ask you, when you go home, to share with your friends and neighbors who may not work with you the idea that this country is like where you work. America is still around after 220 years because we have a Constitution which said, if you want the country to always get better, you have to make it possible for people to always get better. And you have to give them the freedom to fail and mess up. I mean, that's what the Bill of Rights is all about. That's what the Constitution is all about, limiting the powers of Government and mandating, in effect, partnerships. That's what the flexibility of the Constitution is all about, so we could change over time to adapt to new circumstances without giving up our values. That's the kind of country you live in.

And if it's going to be everything it ought to be in the 21st century, it has to do as a nation what you're trying to do every day at work. And you have to ask yourself, do you think America is on a journey without an end; do you think we can always get better. I think the answer, because of your example and that of millions of others, is an unequivocal yes.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige's sister, Letitia Baldrige, brother, Robert Baldridge, and sister-in-law, Nancy; Harry Hertz, national quality program director, National Institute of Standards and Technology; Earnest Deavenport, president, Malcolm Baldrige Award Foundation; Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago, IL; and David T. Kearns, retired chairman and chief executive officer, Xerox Corp.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Chemical Weapons Convention

December 19, 1997

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

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 24, 1997, I hereby certify that:

In connection with Condition (3), Establishment of an Internal Oversight Office, the internal audit office of the Preparatory Commission was expanded into the Office of Internal Oversight of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons upon the establishment of the Organization.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on the Lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979

December 19, 1997

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

As required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C 1641(c)), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

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

December 15

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton hosted a reception for members of the press in the Diplomatic Reception Room.

The President announced his intention to appoint George R. Ariyoshi, Curtis H. Barnette, Robert J. Eaton, George Fisher, D. George Harris, Dean R. Kleckner, J. Bruce Llewellyn, Lewis Platt, and Jeanette Sarkisian Wagner as members of the Advisory Committee for Trade Policy and Negotiations.

December 16

The President announced the recess appointments of Mozelle W. Thompson and Orson Swindle as Commissioners of the Federal Trade Commission.

The President announced the recess appointment of Richard W. Fisher as Deputy U.S. Trade Representative, with the rank of Ambassador.

The President announced the recess appointment of Nancy E. Soderberg as Alternate U.S. Representative for Special Political Affairs at the United Nations, with the rank of Ambassador, and as U.S. Alternate Representative to the sessions of the U.N. General Assembly.

The President announced the recess appointment of Paul M. Igasaki to serve as a Commissioner and Vice Chair on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The President announced the recess appointment of Kevin Emmanuel Marchman as Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

December 17

In the afternoon, the President met with Senator Arlen Specter in the Oval Office, concerning the Senator's upcoming visit to the Middle East.

Later in the afternoon, the President met with a group of family farmers in the Cabinet Room, concerning new USDA efforts to improve civil rights and assist small farmers.

The President announced his intention to appoint Dr. Harold P. Freeman to serve as member and Chair of the President's Cancer Panel.

The President announced the appointment of John M. Deutch, Robert L. Gallucci, Dave McCurdy, and Daniel Poneman to the Commission To Assess the Organization of the Federal Government To Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The President declared a major disaster in Guam and ordered Federal aid to supplement territory and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Typhoon Paka and associated torrential rains, high winds, high surf, and tidal surges on December 16 and continuing.

December 18

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton hosted a holiday celebration for children in the East Room.

The President announced his intention to nominate Cherryl T. Thomas as Chair of the Railroad Retirement Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint James O. DuPree, Ralph Paige, and Leland H. Swenson as members of the Commission on 21st Century Production Agriculture.

December 19

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz of Turkey in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to nominate William J. Ivey to be Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts.

The President announced his intention to appoint Arthur H. White to serve as a member of the Federal Prison Industries Board.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

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 December 13

Transcript of a press briefing by U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, Assistant to the President for International Economic Policy Daniel Tarullo, and Deputy Treasury Secretary Larry Summers on the international financial services agreement

Statement by Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin and U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky on the international financial services agreement

Released December 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Announcement of appointment of Act Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights

Released December 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released December 18

Statement by the Press Secretary: Jackson-Vanik Waiver for Vietnam

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger and Special Representative for Implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords Robert Gelbard on the peace process in Bosnia

Fact sheet: Background on Bosnia and Herzegovina

Released December 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala and Office of National Drug Control Policy Director Barry McCaffrey on the President's upcoming radio address

Statement by the Press Secretary: Ninth Anniversary of Pan Am 103 Bombing

Statement by the Press Secretary: Meeting With Turkish Prime Minister Yilmaz

Acts Approved by the President

Approved December 15

H.R. 1604 / Public Law 105–143
Michigan Indian Land Claims Settlement Act

H.R. 2979 / Public Law 105–144
To authorize acquisition of certain real property for the Library of Congress, and for other purposes

H.J. Res. 95 / Public Law 105–145
Granting the consent of Congress to the Chickasaw Trail Economic Development Compact

Approved December 16

H.R. 1658 / Public Law 105–146
Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act Amendments of 1997

H.R. 2265 / Public Law 105–147
No Electronic Theft (NET) Act

H.R. 2476 / Public Law 105–148
To amend title 49, United States Code, to require the National Transportation Safety Board and individual foreign air carriers to address the needs of families of passengers involved in aircraft accidents involving foreign air carriers

H.R. 3025 / Public Law 105–149
To amend the Federal charter for Group Hospitalization and Medical Services, Inc., and for other purposes

H.R. 3034 / Public Law 105–150
To amend section 13031 of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, relating to customs user fees, to allow the use of such fees to provide for customs inspectional personnel in connection with the arrival of passengers in Florida, and for other purposes

H.J. Res. 96 / Public Law 105–151
Granting the consent and approval of Congress for the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the District of Columbia to amend the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Regulation Compact

Approved December 17

H.R. 2796 / Public Law 105–152
Army Reserve-National Guard Equity Reimbursement Act

H.R. 2977 / Public Law 105–153
Federal Advisory Committee Act Amendments of 1997

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