international standards in the area of emigration. In fact, Albania has imposed no emigration restrictions, including exit visa requirements, on its population since 1991.

On December 5, 1997, I determined and reported to the Congress that Albania was in full compliance with the freedom of emigration criteria of sections 402 and 409 of the Trade Act of 1974. That action allowed for the continuation of most-favored-nation (MFN) status for Albania and certain other activities without the requirement of an annual waiver. This semiannual report is submitted as required by law pursuant to the determination of December 5, 1997.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 22.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters

January 22, 1998

Middle East Peace Process

The President. Let me say before we begin that I am very pleased to welcome Chairman Arafat back to the United States as our partner in the peace process. As I did with Prime Minister Netanyahu, I want to emphasize what a critical time this is in the process and the importance of both parties meeting their obligations.

I also would like to take just a second to underline the principles of the peace process: mutual obligations and the concept of land for peace, so that Israelis can live in security, recognized by all their neighbors, and the Palestinians can realize their aspirations to live as a free people. If we can focus on these principles, I'm convinced we can make some progress. I'm going to give Chairman Arafat a little report on my meeting with Mr. Netanyahu, and then we're going to go to work.

Q. Mr. President, when do you think the Israelis will finally meet their U.N. obligations, or treaty obligations, to give back conquered land?

The President. Well, we're going to discuss that. We're working on it. We believe the Oslo process sets out a schedule for redeployment, and that's obviously one of the major issues to be discussed.

Q. But they're not going to meet it, are they?

The President. Well, give us a chance. We're working on it.

[*At this point, a reporter asked Chairman Arafat a question in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. President, what's the next step now, and is there a timeframe where you want things to move?

The President. Well, after this meeting, then what we'll do is to see whether we have moved the parties closer together. And if we have, then we'll try to figure out how to close the loop and get an understanding on what the next steps are. And if we can do that—we want to do it, obviously, fairly quickly; we don't want to just keep dragging this out. I think we have a sense of urgency here.

[*At this point, a reporter asked Chairman Arafat a question in Arabic, and a translation was not provided.*]

Q. Mr. Arafat, do you believe progress was made with Prime Minister Netanyahu, and do you believe progress will be made this week? And would you agree to a few-stage withdrawal?

Chairman Arafat. As long as there is pressure and efforts by President Clinton, I'm fully confident that the peace process will be protected and will be succeeded. And we should not forget that the President also has sent Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, and Mr. Ross to the region many times to push the peace process forward.

Q. So you believe Mr. Netanyahu will stand by his commitments?

Chairman Arafat. We hope so, he would do so.

Independent Counsel's Investigation

Q. Forgive us for raising this while you're dealing with important issues in the Middle East, but could you clarify for us, sir, exactly what your relationship was with Ms. Lewinsky, and whether the two of you talked by phone, including any messages you may have left?

The President. Let me say, first of all, I want to reiterate what I said yesterday. The allegations are false, and I would never ask anybody to do anything other than tell the truth. Let's get to the big issues there, about the nature of the relationship and whether I suggested anybody not tell the truth. That is false.

Now, there are a lot of other questions that are, I think, very legitimate. You have a right to ask them; you and the American people have a right to get answers. We are working very hard to comply and get all the requests for information up here, and we will give you as many answers as we can, as soon as we can, at the appropriate time, consistent with our obligation to also cooperate with the investigations.

And that's not a dodge, that's really why I've—I've talked with our people. I want to do that. I'd like for you to have more rather than less, sooner rather than later. So we'll work through it as quickly as we can and get all those questions out there to you.

Pope's Visit to Cuba

Q. Mr. President, about the Pope and Cuba, what are your impressions of the remarkable scenes of the Pope in Cuba, and what about his call for an end to the embargo?

The President. Well, first of all, I'm glad he went to Cuba. I think it's a wonderful thing and I'm glad that Mr. Castro invited him to come. I'm glad the Cuban Government let the Christian people in Cuba celebrate Christmas last Christmas, acknowledge it in an explicit and open way. And I hope that this trip will lead to some reassessment on the part of the Cuban Government that would enable us to move closer together in many ways.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ambassador Dennis B. Ross, Special Middle East Coordinator. Chairman Arafat spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Videotaped Remarks on the 25th Anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe* v. *Wade* Decision

January 22, 1998

On January 22d, we marked the 25th anniversary of *Roe* v. *Wade*, the landmark Supreme Court decision that affirmed every woman's right to choose whether and when to have a child, and in doing so, affirmed two of our Nation's most deeply-held values, personal privacy and family responsibility.

Over the past 25 years, *Roe* v. *Wade* has had a major positive impact on the health and well-being of American women and their families. Safe, legal abortion has all but eliminated the dangerous, clandestine conditions that claimed too many women's lives when the procedure was illegal.

I'm committed to keeping abortion safe, legal, and accessible—and to making it more rare. Over the last 5 years, we've led the way on policies to prevent unintended pregnancy by making comprehensive family planning and sex education programs more widely available. We've increased support for Title X family planning services every year in our budget. And I'll do so again this year.

I fought to continue funding for international family planning, bringing much needed health care to women all around the world. Here at home, by working together with health care professionals, community groups, schools, and family planning agencies, we've made real progress in reducing teen pregnancy. And I was proud to sign legislation to protect the rights *Roe* established by protecting women's clinics from violence. We have enforced that law to its full extent.

I will continue to do everything I can to make sure that every child in America is a wanted child, raised in a loving, strong family. Ultimately, that idea is what the anniversary of *Roe* v. *Wade* celebrates.