

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



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## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, March 20, 1998

**The President's Radio Address**

*March 14, 1998*

Good morning. This is a time of great promise for America, and it should be a time of great achievement as we work to strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

There are only 68 work days remaining in the congressional session. Yet, we still have a lot of work to do: maintaining fiscal discipline by setting aside any budget surplus until we save Social Security first, protecting our children with comprehensive tobacco legislation, strengthening families with the Patient's Bill of Rights and child care legislation, honoring our parents by letting more people buy into Medicare, improving education with higher standards and smaller classes and more funds to build and repair schools, preserving our environment with a new clean water initiative and incentives to have new technologies meet the challenge of global warming.

This is a full agenda for the future of our Nation. But we must act now—not over the next 68 days but right now, in the next several days—to advance our security around the world and rebuild communities hit by natural disasters here at home.

I have asked Congress for an emergency bill to fund these pressing security and natural disaster needs. Here's what's at stake. The measure will pay for the deployment of America's Armed Forces in and around the Persian Gulf. Our Armed Forces must stand watch to make sure Saddam Hussein allows inspectors to detect and destroy his capacity for nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. As long as Saddam Hussein continues to pose a threat, we must remain vigilant.

The measure would also pay our long-standing debt to the United Nations at a time when that organization continues to play a critical role in forcing Iraq to yield and in supporting peace and progress throughout the world. I don't think any American be-

lieves that America shouldn't pay its dues to the U.N.

The emergency measure will also support the brave men and women of our Armed Forces as they continue to help democracy and peace take root in Bosnia. It will promote our national economic security as well, supporting the International Monetary Fund as it reduces the harm to America's economy from the financial turmoil in Asia.

Perhaps most important of all, we need emergency action to help millions of families whose lives have been turned upside down by the natural disasters in the winter of 1998. Communities in California, New England, Florida, and Guam have seen flooding, ice, mud slides, and the savage force of El Niño. I visited with many of these families; I've seen how hard they're struggling. Our national community must help them. This emergency measure will rebuild roads, repair military bases, prevent future flooding, help family farmers, and help families in distress.

Now, these emergency measures are vital to the national interest. They have broad bipartisan support. But unfortunately, some in Congress are preparing to slip unrelated, controversial provisions into the bill—proposals guaranteed to produce gridlock and delay. One provision is a controversial issue related to family planning. Another would even block the Federal Communications Commission from offering candidates free TV air time which would cut the cost of campaigns and reduce special interest influence. Now, it's bad enough that Congress won't pass campaign financial reform; now some in Congress want to stamp it out anywhere it sees it.

These unrelated issues, whatever side you have on them, absolutely have no place on emergency legislation. Congress shouldn't hold emergency aid for families hostage to controversial provisions. Congress shouldn't demand ransom to maintain America's world

leadership and meet America's responsibility to our own national security.

Last year, when Congress tried to attach partisan measures to similar disaster legislation, I said, no. Congress would be unwise to head down that same road again. Instead, let's work together to enact a straightforward emergency measure. No unacceptable provisions, no political gimmicks. Let's work together to meet the long-term needs of our families, our economy, our Nation. If we will once again put aside partisanship, reject narrow agendas, and focus on the national interest, the remaining 68 days of this congressional session can be a time of real achievement for our people and our future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:38 p.m. on March 13 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 14.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on  
the Enlargement of the North  
Atlantic Treaty Organization**

*March 14, 1998*

*Dear Mr. Leader:*

The Senate will soon act on the proposed accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. I want to thank you for the energetic and bipartisan leadership that you, Democratic Leader Daschle and many others have demonstrated on this historic initiative. The enlargement of NATO directly will benefit America's security, and I urge all members of the Senate to support its ratification.

The addition of these countries to NATO is an essential part of our effort to consolidate the stability and security that resulted from the end of the Cold War. The Alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. NATO's core mission will remain the collective defense of the territory of its members, and neither the addition of new members nor NATO's other adaptations to Europe's new security environment will change that.

The accession of these three countries also will help make Europe more stable; already the prospect of membership has encouraged states throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation. In addition, adding these states to NATO—combined with other efforts to reach out to all of the region's new democracies—will help to erase the Cold War dividing line and contribute to our strategic goal of building an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe.

The addition of these states to NATO, which will yield tremendous benefits to our own security, is also affordable. After extensive review of this proposal by NATO, our Administration, and the Congress, we now have strong basis to believe that the costs to the U.S. will be about \$400 million for the United States over the next ten years, and that the total costs will be equitably shared with our current and new allies.

There are other steps we will need to take together in order to help ensure the security of the transatlantic area. We are moving ahead with efforts to increase cooperation with the Russian Federation and to build on the openings for constructive dialogue created by the NATO–Russia Founding Act. I am committed to continue efforts with Russia and other countries to reduce our nuclear stockpiles, combat the dangers of proliferation, and stabilize arms levels across Europe. We must continue working together to create the opportunity for a lasting peace in Bosnia and the Balkans. We will continue working with the European Union, which also is adding members, and which makes its own important contribution to Europe's stability.

NATO is the cornerstone of our transatlantic security efforts, however, and the Alliance is proving its value—through the Partnership for Peace program and many other efforts—in projecting stability throughout Europe. For that same reason, we must leave the door open to the addition of other qualified new members in the future. The “open door” commitment made by all the allies has played a vital role in ensuring that the process of enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just these first three new members.

At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of the Alliance's enlargement at our next summit. At this point, however, neither NATO nor my Administration has made any decisions or commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about admission of these first three countries, and I pledge the same pattern of consultation before any decisions on these matters in the future. In any case, any future addition of members will require the advice and consent of the Senate.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Senate to reject any effort to mandate a pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and unwise, for it would reduce our own country's flexibility and leverage, fracture NATO's open door consensus, and draw a new and potentially destabilizing dividing line in Europe.

I am gratified by the outstanding cooperation between our two branches of government, and between both parties, that has been a part of the ratification effort. I commend you for the creation of the Senate's NATO Observer Group, which has worked closely with the Administration in development of this policy, and I commend Senators Helms and Biden and the Foreign Relations Committee, as well as other committees, for their thorough examination of the complex questions involved in NATO's enlargement.

That kind of bipartisan cooperation was indispensable to our successful efforts throughout the Cold War to sustain a strong Alliance, to defend our security, and to pursue the goal of freedom and democracy across Europe. In the same spirit, I hope the Senate will draw together on the question of NATO's enlargement. By doing so, the Senate can help signal America's continuing engagement in Europe, our commitment to a strong NATO Alliance, and our determination to build a foundation for transatlantic security into the next century.

Sincerely,

**Bill Clinton**

NOTE: This letter was sent to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott. A similar letter with minor differences was sent to Senate Minority Leader

Thomas A. Daschle. The letters were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 16 but were not issued as White House press releases.

### **Opening Remarks at a Roundtable Discussion on Education and an Exchange With Reporters in Silver Spring, Maryland**

*March 16, 1998*

**The President.** First of all, let me welcome you all here. Let me thank you for coming. Many have made an extraordinary effort to come from a long way away, and I thank you so much for that.

I want to make some brief opening remarks and ask Secretary Riley and Mr. Schmidt make some remarks, and then we'll just begin the roundtable. And I want to hear from everyone before we go.

Earlier this month, our country received a wakeup call. Our high school seniors ranked near the bottom in math and science achievement when compared with their peers around the world, according to the TIMSS test results. This must be a call to action for all of us. That's why I've asked some of America's top educators, advocates, political and business leaders here today, to mobilize our schools to raise standards, demand accountability, and specifically, to strengthen math and science education and performance all across America.

A little over 40 years ago—a lot of us are old enough to remember when America got another wakeup call—when the Soviets had just launched *Sputnik* and beat us into space. Then President Eisenhower said, if we were going to conquer the heavens, we had to strengthen math and science education here on Earth. Because we answered the call, in the years since, we have landed on the Moon, roved the surface of Mars, launched countless satellites that have revolutionized the way we live, work, and play here on Earth, and we're preparing to put the international space station into work.

The young people Eisenhower inspired are now fueling America's new economy. They work at NASA, at NIH, in high-tech labs in Silicon Valley, in Wall Street boardrooms, in classrooms all across our Nation.

Now we have to strengthen math and science education for a new generation of Americans in the 21st century. We know that for our time we need a revolution in high standards, accountability, and rising expectations. We know the revolution works. A report released just today by the University of Minnesota has found that charter schools are meeting and sometimes exceeding their promises to raise academic achievement. Now we have to spread these lessons throughout the educational system.

In our balanced budget, I proposed a comprehensive strategy to help make our schools the best in the world: to have high national standards of academic achievement, national tests in fourth grade reading and eighth grade math, strengthening math instruction in middle school, providing smaller classes in the early grades so that teachers can give students the attention they deserve, working to hire more well-prepared and nationally certified teachers, modernizing our schools for the 21st century, supporting more charter schools, encouraging public school choice, ending social promotion, demanding greater accountability from students and teachers, principals and parents.

And we have to bring more mentors into our middle schools to inspire our students to prepare for college early. I am pleased that this strategy is already moving forward in many, many States; that our Nation's Governors and State legislators of both parties are choosing to make a solid commitment to boost education, to advocate high standards, and to take advantage of this era of budget surpluses and good times to make our schools better so that we'll have even better times in the future. We'll work hard with Congress to make sure this plan becomes a reality. I urge the Senate to take the first step by passing the proposals to modernize schools this week.

In this era of fiscal discipline, we have to recognize that Government alone cannot do the job. We also have to mobilize all other Americans in a concerted effort, especially let me say, on the topic we're here today—math and science education. States have to make sure that every math and science teacher is qualified to do the job. We have to insist

that they've majored in their subjects in college.

Today nearly one of every five science teachers, more than a quarter of all math teachers, more than half of all physics teachers has neither majored in, nor minored in the subjects they teach. The typical elementary and middle school teacher has taken just three undergraduate math courses. We can, and we must, do better.

So I call on the States to require new math and science teachers to pass high-level competency tests in their subjects before getting licensed. The requirements must be vigorously enforced. School districts simply mustn't continue to hire people who don't meet the standards. Students must challenge themselves and take the most advanced math and science courses they can. Again, this is a big problem. Among college-bound seniors, half have not taken physics or trigonometry; three-quarters have not taken calculus. Around the world, middle students are learning algebra and geometry. Here at home, just a quarter of all students take algebra before high school. Our children must not glide through school without gaining these important skills. Business has to help us get the message out, too, so that they will hear that young people who study and do well will do better in the future.

Today I want to say that later this year I intend to convene a group of business leaders specifically to discuss ways that they can contribute to raising student performance across our country. Universities can also help by strengthening their programs in math and science teaching so that more students will consider teaching as a career, and so that our newest teachers will be better prepared than ever for the classrooms of the 21st century.

Finally, we need help from our parents, who should encourage and insist on teachers and students who do their best. I think it is profoundly important that parents keep up not only with the progress of their children in the courses they're taking but also in whether they're taking the right courses.

If we all do our part, I'm convinced this is a challenge that we can clearly meet.

Secretary Riley.

*[At this point, Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley and William Schmidt, national*

research coordinator, *Third International Math and Science Study (TIMSS)*, made brief remarks.]

**Kathleen Willey**

**Q.** Mr. President, Kathleen Willey says that you made unwanted sexual advances toward her, and that directly contradicts your testimony. You can't both be telling the truth, can you?

**The President.** Well, I don't know what she said, because I didn't see the interview last night. But I can tell you this: Ever since this story came out months ago—and as you know, the story has been in three different incarnations—I have said that nothing improper happened. I told the truth then. I told the truth in the deposition.

I am mystified and disappointed by this turn of events. But it's been out there for several months, as well as conflicting stories from people who have discussed it with her. You'll have to find the answer to that riddle somewhere else. But I can just tell you that I have done everything I could do to clarify the situation. I have a very clear memory of the meeting, and I told the truth.

**Q.** Mr. President, do you stand by your full deposition—[*inaudible*—in the Paula Jones case? And should that serve as your explanation to the American people of what went on—[*inaudible*]?

**The President.** I certainly stand by the deposition.

**Q.** Will you make a further explanation to the American people, as you suggested you would when this story first broke?

**The President.** Well, I did suggest that, but that was before the deposition was illegally released, and it basically states my position. Whether and what else will be said I think is something that we'll have to deal with in the future, depending on how circumstances unfold.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. in the Media Center at Springbrook High School. In his remarks, he referred to Kathleen E. Willey, former White House volunteer who has given testimony in both the Paula Jones lawsuit and Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation. Mrs. Willey was interviewed on the CBS News "60 Minutes" program on March 15.

**Remarks at Springbrook High School in Silver Spring**

**March 16, 1998**

Thank you very much. Mr. Durso, thank you for welcoming me here to Springbrook. Secretary Riley, thank you for bringing me along. I want to introduce the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; the Secretary of Energy, Federico Peña. [*Applause*] I thank Governor Glendening and Senator Sarbanes and Congressman Wynn and the Maryland State superintendent, Nancy Grasmick; your president of the school board, Nancy King, and all the other people from Maryland who have made us feel so welcome.

The Governor of West Virginia, Governor Underwood; and the Mayor of Los Angeles, Mayor Riordan; and other people who were on our panel are over there. I'd like for all the people who came from all over America to be with us to stand up—Rudy Crew, the superintendent of New York; many other leaders there—[*applause*]. Thank you all very much, Bob Moses and the others.

Those people came from all over America today to your school to discuss one very important thing for your future: How can we improve the learning of American students in math and science on the edge of a new century and a new millennium, where so much of the public welfare and so much of people's individual lives will be determined by whether they understand and can use and apply math and science? And I think you ought to give them a hand for doing that. [*Applause*]

Now, you may know all this, but I want to give you a few facts to try to demonstrate to you why whether you know anything about math and science, no matter what you do with your life, is likely to make a big difference. For example, in 1993, when I became President, and all of you were in an earlier grade—[*laughter*—in 1993, now, just 5 years ago, there were only 50—50 sites on the Web, on the World Wide Web—50, total. Today millions of Americans and millions of organizations have Web pages, up from 50 in 1993. The White House has one. Your school newspaper has one. My cat has one! [*Laughter*] One and a half million new pages are created every day; 65,000 every hour.

Today every one of you is just a click of a mouse away from some of the finest libraries in the world. And someday before long, you'll be able to reach every book, every symphony, every painting ever created, through the Web.

I know that Bill Nye talked to you about science in ways that were probably infinitely more entertaining than anything I could say, but I'd like to say a couple of serious things to you. Our scientists are on the verge of making dramatic breakthroughs in the treatment of cancer, spinal cord injury, other serious diseases. We have just had a rover on Mars. We're about to put an international space station in the sky the size of three football fields for, in effect, permanent human residence in space.

In the 1980's, it took 9 years for scientists to identify the gene that causes cystic fibrosis. Last year, because of improvements in genetic research, it took 9 days to identify the gene that causes Parkinson's Disease. We're on our way to developing gene chips that will help us prevent illnesses in people even before they happen. A lot of you young people here today, by the time you have your first child and you bring your baby home from the hospital, you will actually be able to have a genetic map which will tell you what your child's genetic strengths are, and weaknesses, what the likely problems your child could have are, what kind of diet your child should follow, what kind of regime you should follow to guarantee your child has the healthiest possible future.

Now, I guess what I'm trying to say is something you doubtless already know, but science and technology and mathematics are profoundly important to the way we live. But they will be even more important to the way you live, you work, you relate to other people, you relate to people all the way around the world.

Now, I know here that preparing for that kind of future is a priority. You have more computers, more students taking computer science than any other school in the county. Congratulations. I hope more students around the country will follow your lead. I hope more of you will go on to college. And if you haven't thought of it, I hope you will decide to do it.

I have worked very hard to make sure that when we start this new century, the first 2 years of college will be as universal as a high school education has been in the latter half of the 20th century. Why? Because we know from all of our census data that young people who have at least 2 years of college education are likely to get a good job with a growing income. Young people who don't are likely not to get a good job with a growing income. And we know that more and more people have to be able not just to know facts but to understand how to use them, how to solve problems, how to think creatively.

That's why we've provided now a HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit, a reduction to help pay for tuition for the first 2 years of college, and tax credits for the junior year and senior year and graduate school as well. This is important. We've also simplified the student loan program, made interest tax deductible on student loans—if your families or you can save money in an IRA and withdraw it to pay for a college education without having to pay any tax on it. We've increased the number of Pell grants and the number of work-study slots, and provided for more positions in AmeriCorps for people to earn money to go to college by doing community service. All of this is designed not only to help you individually but to make your country stronger, because we will need higher levels of education among all our young people in the new century.

Every one of you—and I wanted to be able to look at every young person in America dead in the eye and say, I don't care what your family's income is, I don't care what your racial or ethnic background is, I don't care how many struggles you've had to overcome, you will be able to afford to go to college because we have created a system which makes it possible for you.

Now, here's the problem that we face today. Here's why all of these people came here. Not everybody in America has access to the same level of science and math and technology opportunities you do. And not everybody in America—and I'll bet you not even everybody in this school who should be taking these courses—is taking them. And that has given us a huge national headache.

Earlier this month, we learned that in the Third International Math and Science test, which compares performance of American students with students around the world, that our seniors ranked near the bottom, ahead of only 2 other countries out of 21, in math and science performance. Now, by contrast, we ranked right at the top in math and science performance at the fourth grade—right at the top. We ranked second in math and tied for second in science. By the eighth grade, we drop to about the middle of the pack. By the 12th grade, we're ahead of only two other countries.

This country is still the science and mathematics and technology and research capital of the world. But how long can we go on doing that when we need this knowledge to be more widely shared, and we know that only a few people have it? That is the challenge. So I say to you, it's not just important for you to know more math and science personally; it's important for your country and your future that people like you all over this country know more as well.

So what are we going to do about it? Listen to this: half of all college-bound seniors in America—forget about the people not going to college—half of all the people that are going to college have not taken physics or trigonometry. Three-quarters have not taken calculus. Students around the world have to take these courses to get out of high school, in country after country after country. So I say to you, whether you have to or not, you should take trig; you should take calculus; and you should take physics. No matter what you do for the rest of your life, it will help you and you should take them.

Now, let me also say that we have some things to do. We have to make sure that all of our teachers have the chance to be properly trained. Let's face it—you know, there are almost 400,000 openings right now in America in computer science. The average entry-level salary is \$48,000 a year. That ought to get you interested in taking them in college. [Laughter] The average teacher's salary in America—for all teachers, including those that have been teaching 30 years—the average salary is well below \$48,000 a year, what a 22-year-old or a 23-year-old person

can earn coming out of college with this kind of background.

So I want to say something else to you. You've got a good teacher, and you know your teacher is doing this. I've just told you that your teacher could leave, walk out tomorrow, and go make \$50,000 doing something else. You ought to thank your teachers for being here and educating you and supporting you.

And I'll tell you what we're going to try to do. We are going to do our best to make sure that schools and school districts and States have the resources to train teachers properly. We're going to challenge all the States to require that the teachers who are teaching courses have real adequate academic preparation in the courses they're teaching. I'm going to urge more and more States and school districts to require you to take more math and science, just to get out of high school in the first place.

But before all that happens—well, you're seniors, it's too late—I don't mean we're going to impose something on you. I don't mean you have to stay. But you think about this. You think about this: if you have a little brother or a little sister in the ninth grade or the eighth grade or the seventh grade or the sixth grade, wouldn't you like to know that when your brother or sister gets out of high school if they want to go to college, they can? And wouldn't you like to know that everybody who gets out of high school 6 years from now will be able to compete with everybody else in the world when they get out of high school 6 years from now? Isn't this something we owe each other, to make every succeeding year better and better and better?

So I say this, even though—if you're a senior and you think, "Oh, my goodness, I'm so glad that Bill Clinton didn't come to my school and give this speech 5 years ago—[laughter]—because they might have changed the rules and made me take all these courses"—even if you think that you should want your brothers and sisters coming up behind you to take all these courses, because it will be better for our country and for your future if we do it.

I've been told that the motto of this school is, "We expect; we believe; we achieve."

Well, when I look at you, and I think of where we're going in math and science, I expect America to lead the way. I believe in you to be on the forefront of that. It's up to you to achieve.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Michael A. Durso, principal, Springbrook High School; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; Nancy S. Grasmick, Maryland State superintendent of schools; Nancy J. King, president, Montgomery County Board of Education; Gov. Cecil H. Underwood of West Virginia; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Rudy Crew, chancellor, New York City public schools; Robert Moses, director, the Algebra Project; and William S. (Bill) Nye, host of the PBS children's television program "The Science Guy."

### **Statement on Proposed Tobacco Legislation**

*March 16, 1998*

I congratulate the public health and tobacco producer communities for working together to promote bipartisan, comprehensive tobacco legislation that dramatically reduces youth smoking and protects American farmers and their communities. I am firmly committed to protecting farmers and their communities and have made this commitment one of the five key elements that I will insist upon before signing tobacco legislation. I hope you will continue your efforts to expand your coalition and to enact comprehensive tobacco legislation this year that protects our Nation's children.

### **Statement on the Death of Dr. Benjamin Spock**

*March 16, 1998*

Hillary and I were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Dr. Benjamin Spock. For half a century, Dr. Spock guided parents across the country and around the world in their most important job—raising their children. As a pediatrician, writer, and teacher, Dr. Spock offered sage advice and gentle support to generations of families, and he taught all of us the importance of respecting

children. He was a tireless advocate, devoting himself to the cause of improving the lives of children. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

### **Message to the Congress Transmitting the District of Columbia Court's Fiscal Year 1999 Budget Request**

*March 16, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the District of Columbia Code, as amended, I am transmitting the District of Columbia Court's FY 1999 budget request.

The District of Columbia Courts has submitted a FY 1999 budget request for \$133 million for its operating expenditures and authorization for multiyear capital funding totalling \$58 million for courthouse renovation and improvements. My FY 1999 Budget includes recommended funding levels of \$121 million for operations and \$21 million for capital improvements for the District Courts. My transmittal of the District Court's budget request does not represent an endorsement of its contents.

I look forward to working with the Congress throughout the FY 1999 appropriation process.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 16, 1998.

### **Message to the Congress on Iran**

*March 16, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I hereby report to the Congress on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, and matters relating to the measures in that order and in Executive Order 12959 of May 6, 1995, and in Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) (IEEPA), section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c),

and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c). This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 and does not deal with those relating to the emergency declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the hostage crisis.

1. On March 15, 1995, I issued Executive Order 12957 (60 *Fed. Reg.* 14615, March 17, 1995) to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to IEEPA, and to prohibit the financing, management, or supervision by United States persons of the development of Iranian petroleum resources. This action was in response to actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. A copy of the Order was provided to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate by letter dated March 15, 1995.

Following the imposition of these restrictions with regard to the development of Iranian petroleum resources, Iran continued to engage in activities that represent a threat to the peace and security of all nations, including Iran's continuing support for international terrorism, its support for acts that undermine the Middle East peace process, and its intensified efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction. On May 6, 1995, I issued Executive Order 12959 (60 *Fed. Reg.* 24757, May 9, 1995) to further respond to the Iranian threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. The terms of that order and an earlier order imposing an import ban on Iranian-origin goods and services (Executive Order 12613 of October 29, 1987) were consolidated and clarified in Executive Order 13059 of August 19, 1997.

At the time of signing Executive Order 12959, I directed the Secretary of the Treasury to authorize through specific licensing certain transactions, including transactions by United States persons related to the Iran-United States Claims Tribunal in The Hague, established pursuant to the Algiers Accords, and related to other international obligations

and U.S. Government functions, and transactions related to the export of agricultural commodities pursuant to preexisting contracts consistent with section 5712(c) of title 7, United States Code. I also directed the Secretary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to consider authorizing United States persons through specific licensing to participate in market-based swaps of crude oil from the Caspian Sea area for Iranian crude oil in support of energy projects in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan.

Executive Order 12959 revoked sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 12613 of October 29, 1987, and sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995, to the extent they are inconsistent with it. A copy of Executive Order 12959 was transmitted to the Congressional leadership by letter dated May 6, 1995.

2. On August 19, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13059 in order to clarify the steps taken in Executive Order 12957 and Executive Order 12959, to confirm that the embargo on Iran prohibits all trade and investment activities by United States persons, wherever located, and to consolidate in one order the various prohibitions previously imposed to deal with the national emergency declared on March 15, 1995. A copy of the Order was transmitted to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate by letter dated August 19, 1997.

The Order prohibits (1) the importation into the United States of any goods or services of Iranian origin or owned or controlled by the Government of Iran except information or informational material; (2) the exportation, reexportation, sale, or supply from the United States or by a United States person, wherever located, of goods, technology, or services to Iran or the Government of Iran, including knowing transfers to a third country for direct or indirect supply, transshipment, or reexportation to Iran or the Government of Iran, or specifically for use in the production, commingling with, or incorporation into goods, technology, or services to be supplied, transshipped, or reexported exclusively or predominantly to Iran or the Government of Iran; (3) knowing reexportation from a third country to Iran or

the Government of Iran of certain controlled U.S.-origin goods, technology, or services by a person other than a United States person; (4) the purchase, sale, transport, swap, brokerage, approval, financing, facilitation, guarantee, or other transactions or dealings by United States persons, wherever located, related to goods, technology, or services for exportation, reexportation, sale or supply, directly or indirectly, to Iran or the Government of Iran, or to goods or services of Iranian origin or owned or controlled by the Government of Iran; (5) new investment by United States persons in Iran or in property or entities owned or controlled by the Government of Iran; (6) approval, financing, facilitation, or guarantee by a United States person of any transaction by a foreign person that a United States person would be prohibited from performing under the terms of the Order; and (7) any transaction that evades, avoids, or attempts to violate a prohibition under the Order.

Executive Order 13059 became effective at 12:01 a.m., eastern daylight time on August 20, 1997. Because the Order consolidated and clarified the provisions of prior orders, Executive Order 12613 and paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), and (f) of section 1 of Executive Order 12959 were revoked by Executive Order 13059. The revocation of corresponding provisions in the prior Executive orders did not affect the applicability of those provisions, or of regulations, licenses or other administrative actions taken pursuant to those provisions, with respect to any transaction or violation occurring before the effective date of Executive Order 13059. Specific licenses issued pursuant to prior Executive orders continue in effect, unless revoked or amended by the Secretary of the Treasury. General licenses, regulations, orders, and directives issued pursuant to prior orders continue in effect, except to the extent inconsistent with Executive Order 13059 or otherwise revoked or modified by the Secretary of the Treasury.

The declaration of national emergency made by Executive Order 12957, and renewed each year since, remains in effect and is not affected by the Order.

3. On March 4, 1998, I renewed for another year the national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to IEEPA. This re-

newal extended the authority for the current comprehensive trade embargo against Iran in effect since May 1995. Under these sanctions, virtually all trade with Iran is prohibited except for trade in information and informational materials and certain other limited exceptions.

4. There have been no amendments to the Iranian Transactions Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 560 (the "ITR"), since my report of September 17, 1997.

5. During the current 6-month period, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) made numerous decisions with respect to applications for licenses to engage in transactions under the ITR, and issued seven licenses. The majority of denials were in response to requests to authorize commercial exports to Iran—particularly of machinery and equipment for various industries—and the importation of Iranian-origin goods. The licenses issued authorized certain financial transactions, transactions relating to air safety policy, and to disposal of U.S.-owned goods located in Iran. Pursuant to sections 3 and 4 of Executive Order 12959 and consistent with the Iran-Iraq Arms Non-Proliferation Act of 1992 and other statutory restrictions concerning certain goods and technology, including those involved in air-safety cases, the Department of the Treasury continues to consult with the Departments of State and Commerce on these matters.

The U.S. financial community continues to scrutinize transactions associated with Iran and to consult with OFAC about their appropriate handling. Many of these inquiries have resulted in investigations into the activities of U.S. parties and, where appropriate, the initiation of enforcement action.

6. The U.S. Customs Service has continued to effect numerous seizures of Iranian-origin merchandise, primarily carpets, for violation of the import prohibitions of the ITR. Various enforcement actions carried over from previous reporting periods are continuing and new reports of violations are being aggressively pursued. Since my last report, OFAC has collected six civil monetary penalties totaling nearly \$84,000 for violations of IEEPA and the ITR.

7. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from September 15, 1997, through March 14, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Iran are reported to be approximately \$1.3 million, most of which represent wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Under Secretary for Enforcement, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), and the Department of Commerce (the Bureau of Export Administration and the General Counsel's Office).

8. The situation reviewed above continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to Iran contained in Executive Order 12957 and the comprehensive economic sanctions imposed by Executive Order 12959 underscore the United States Government's opposition to the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, particularly its support of international terrorism and its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. The Iranian Transactions Regulations issued pursuant to Executive Orders 12957, 12959, and 13059 continue to advance important objectives in promoting the nonproliferation and anti-terrorism policies of the United States. I shall exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 16, 1998.

## **Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Dinner**

*March 16, 1998*

Thank you, please be seated. Thank you Tom, Steve, Len, Terry. Ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for being here tonight, for your support for the Democratic Party, and especially for the Business Council.

The two things that I really like, that have kind of flowered in the last 5 years since I've been here for our party, are this Democratic Business Council and the Women's Leadership Forum. And Hillary is in Georgia tonight at a WLF meeting. We really believe in what they have done to broaden the base of the Democratic Party—not just the financial base but also the political base of the party—bringing people in and giving them a voice and giving them a chance to be heard and bringing in new areas of expertise that have made a real difference to us. And so I thank you for that.

I was sitting here tonight wondering what I ought to say. One of you gave me this little cup of coffee with my name on it—a little cup. If this is the case, we won't have any small coffees at the White House. *[Laughter]* I thought that was pretty funny. *[Laughter]* Another one of you in the line said that your 96-year-old grandmother said to tell the President that he and that young man are doing a good job. I said, "Who's the young man?" And she said, "Al Gore." *[Laughter]* That really hurt. *[Laughter]*

Today I did two things that embody what I hope the next 3 years will be about. Namely, taking advantage of these good times: first balanced budget in a generation and the lowest unemployment, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, highest homeownership in history, lowest inflation in 30 years—these good times, taking advantage of them and preparing for the long-term prosperity and success of the American people, and trying to advance the cause of peace and freedom and prosperity throughout the world.

I started the day by going out to a high school in suburban Maryland and meeting with two dozen other people, including the

superintendent of schools in New York City, the mayor of Los Angeles, the Governors of West Virginia and Maryland, and any number of other experts who came together to sit and talk with me—educational experts—about a big part of one of our country's most profound challenges, and that is the low level of performance of our high school seniors on international math and science tests.

One example of the general problem, which is as follows: Everybody in this country and everybody in the world with an informed opinion would tell you that the United States is fortunate enough to have the best system of higher education in the world. No one with an informed opinion would assert that we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And yet we have a lot of wonderful people out there giving their careers to teaching. And we have example after example after example of schools that are succeeding against all the odds.

Now, this school that I visited in Maryland today had white and African-American and Hispanic and Indian and Pakistani students and Arab-American students. It was an amazing—a lot of Asian-American students—it was an amazing myriad of our country just up the road in Maryland. And they have quite high levels of performance in math and science. So I went there to talk about it. And two of the people on the panel were the teacher, a Japanese-American physics teacher; and a student, a Hispanic, a young woman who was a student there. And we talked about what we could do to improve math and science education. And I talked about our plans to hook up every classroom and library in every school in America to the Internet by the year 2000. When we started in '94 only 34 percent of the schools were hooked up; today 75 percent of the schools are hooked up. That's not every classroom in every school, but at least we've got some hookups to the Internet in 75 percent of the schools in America now. So we're moving.

We talked about the plan to certify 100,000 master teachers, to make absolutely sure that they are academically well qualified to the highest degree, and then to get those people paid more, so we can put one master teacher in every school building in America

to try to change the culture of learning and the standards of learning. We talked about the need to give teachers who are in the work force the ability to go back and train, get higher levels of training.

This is the only country in the world where you have large numbers of people teaching math and science courses that they did not major in or minor in in college, simply because of the shortage that exists. And if we don't do something, it's likely to get worse. There are over 350,000 vacancies in information technology today in America, with an average starting salary of \$48,000 a year. The average salary of all teachers, including the most senior, in America, in the wealthiest school district—the average salary is not close to \$48,000 a year. So this is a formidable challenge.

But the good news is, I had two dozen really smart Americans from all walks of life there in this wonderful American school. And we were working on it and we believe we can do something about it. We know we have to have more courses offered; we know we have to train the teachers better; we know we have to find more funds for these shortage areas. But I also told the students, with whom I spoke later—and I actually didn't get booed when I said it—that I thought they should be required to take chemistry and physics and calculus and trigonometry, and that they would all need it—and that we had opened the doors to college to everyone with the balanced budget plan, with the HOPE scholarships, and all the other incentives, they needed to have to do this.

And once I assured the seniors that didn't mean they had to stay another year in high school—[laughter]—I got a pretty high level of support for this proposition. I think part of it is sibling malice: they liked the idea that their younger brothers and sisters might have a bigger burden than they did. [Laughter] But seriously, it was a very good thing. And I thought, this is what we ought to be doing. While we have the national self-confidence and the emotional room, we ought to be thinking about these big problems down the road, and we ought to be moving on them.

And tonight before I came over here, I began—true to my dear ancestors, I began what will be about a 30-hour marathon effort

to close as many gaps as I can in the Irish peace process, because all the major players in the Irish peace process are coming to America for St. Patrick's Day, which will be tomorrow. And it's very good—my Cassidy relatives in Ireland sent my daughter an Irish cross, my wife an Irish pin, sent me green cufflinks to wear tomorrow and two green ties. I have to chide them; the two green ties were made in Italy, but they're beautiful nonetheless. [Laughter]

And I thought to myself, this is what we ought to be doing. Because the United States is fortunate that at the end of the cold war, we don't feel our security immediately threatened, we need to be able to stand up for the long term. We need to imagine what Europe can be like if the Irish are at peace, what Europe can be like if the Bosnian peace process works, what Europe can be like if the difficulties in Kosovo are not allowed to engulf the Balkans in a new controversy. And we have the capacity to affect this.

Hillary and I are leaving on Sunday to go to Africa. It will be the first time an American President, a serving American President, has ever made a tour of sub-Saharan Africa. President Carter and President Reagan made brief stops in one country. No American President has been to these five countries where I'm going, in the way I'm going. The House of Representatives, in a bipartisan fashion passed the Africa Trade Initiative a few days ago, and I hope the Senate will pass it soon. A big part of our future will be caught up in what happens in Africa. If Africa succeeds in developing stable market-oriented democracies, then it's a big market opportunity for the United States. If Africa should become convulsed again in a whole round of political turmoil, civil war, economic degradation, there will be consequences that we will feel here.

So I thought to myself as we were preparing for that today, this is what we ought to be doing. I met last week, late last week, with the Medicare Commission. We are now meeting for a year. We've got a Commission that I've appointed, along with congressional leaders, to try to look at the long-run health and viability of the Medicare program. Tomorrow Senator Moynihan and I and others are going to announce his support for our

Medicare legislation to let people between the ages of 55 and 65 who don't have health insurance buy into Medicare if they can do it without burdening the Trust Fund. These are the kinds of things we ought to be doing.

I say this just to tell you that there is a direct connection between your support through this Business Council of our party and what we are doing that will change the lives of the future of the American people. That's what you have to understand.

Lois Capps just won this great race in California—unbelievable victory. Now, in Washington, people tend to see every victory or defeat in great national terms. I basically spent enough time out there in the country to know that that's almost always wrong. It's against my self-interest to say it, probably, but it's wrong. She won because she's a magnificent person, because her late husband was a wonderful man, because she ran a great grassroots campaign. But the important thing is that the issues she ran on and won on are the issues that were embodied in the State of the Union or the issues that are embodied in the message of our party and the future we're trying to build for America. Don't squander the surplus until you save Social Security first, pass the Patient's Bill of Rights, focus on education, focus on the environment, focus on the long-run challenges of the country. That's what we are doing here. That's what you are a part of. That's what we want you to be a part of.

So when you go home tonight, you ought to ask yourself—and make sure you can give an answer—why did I go to that dinner tonight? Why did I write that check? You should know that because of your support, your country is stronger; we're moving in the right direction; and we're thinking about tomorrow.

Thank you very much. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:05 p.m. in the ballroom at the Sheraton Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council; Steve Grossman, national chair, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and Democratic Party fundraiser Terence McAuliffe.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

March 16, 1998

Thank you very much, Len and Steve. Ladies and gentlemen, a lot of you go to a lot of these dinners. I was sitting here thinking, what could I say to you tonight that you have not heard already? Then I thought, well, maybe I should say to you tonight what you have heard already.

You may have heard me tell this story, but one of my favorite insights into communications came not at a political speech but at a rock concert several years ago, where Tina Turner was singing when she made her great comeback. She finished this new album, "Private Dancer," and she was going around the country doing these concerts. And she sang all the new songs; all the young people in the audience loved the songs. At the end she started to sing "Proud Mary," which was her first hit, and all the old guys like me loved that. And so she started to sing it a couple of times, and the crowd was cheering so loud she backed away. And finally she said, "You know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I sing it." [Laughter] So maybe I should just say the same old thing.

Let me say today—I'd like to talk to you about what I did today, in two different ways, because I think it stands for what I believe we ought to be doing as a country. I started today by getting in a car and driving out to suburban Maryland to a high school to meet with two dozen people, including experts in national testing, other education experts, experts in science and math education, the mayor of Los Angeles, the mayor of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the Governors of West Virginia and Maryland, the superintendent of schools in New York City, and the State superintendent in Kentucky, a number of others, to talk about math and science education and why Americans scored so low in the international math and science test for high school seniors when we were near the top of the scores of the international math and science test for fourth graders. What happens between the 4th grade and the 12th grade?

Then tonight, before I started my rounds, I was meeting—having the first of a whole

marathon set of meetings I'll be having over the next 30 hours or so with participants in the Irish peace process, trying to get it back on track and hopefully bring it to a successful conclusion this year. Two apparently disparate things, but they both represent—especially since the high school where we met in Maryland had students who were basically white students, students who were African-Americans, students who were Hispanic students, who were Asian, who were south Asian, Arab-Americans—I mean, it's an amazing student body—both things represent to me what we ought to be doing now, which is looking to the long-term interests of the country, preparing for the 21st century, thinking about the big issues.

And that's what I tried to talk about in the State of the Union Address. It's all very well to say—and, believe me, I am profoundly grateful that we have the lowest unemployment and crime rates in 24 years, 15 million new jobs, and all-time high homeownership, lowest inflation rate in 30 years, and the lowest welfare rolls in 20 years. I am profoundly grateful for that. And for all of you that helped me do any of that and helped the American people achieve that in your private capacities or as citizens, I'm grateful for that. But we need to take this time, which is highly dynamic, and imagine what we want this country to look like in 20 years and do what it takes to get us there.

And so I just mention those 2 examples because they're 2 of 10 I could mention. That's why I want us to reform Medicare and Social Security for the 21st century and the baby boom generation before we go about spending this budget surplus that is just now beginning to materialize. It's why I want us to take a serious look at our educational and environmental challenges and prepare for the 21st century.

You think about it. Everybody in this country knows we've got the best college system in the world, the best system of higher education in the world. No one in America believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world. And yet, we have wonderful people involved in it, teaching in it, being principals in it, trying to make it go every day.

There are systematic problems here that have nothing to do with the overwhelming difficulty of the task, because we have not put our minds to it: setting national standards and having some national measure of whether our kids are meeting those standards, whether they're in south Alabama or north-east Maine; making sure that when teachers teach math and science they have actually had the requisite academic background. This is the only advanced country in the world where people teach—regularly teach math and science to our children without not only a major or even a minor in the subject in school—because of the teacher shortage in these areas—requiring our students to take more courses if they want to go to college or even to have a high school diploma. It's breathtaking when you see what happens as more and more students go all the way through high school without taking algebra or trigonometry or calculus or physics or chemistry.

You know, we say this is an age of science and technology. We've done everything we could to hook up all the schools to computers—hook up computers to all the schools and classrooms. But unless we have trained teachers and students taking those courses, we are going to continue to fare poorly compared to other countries.

What is the practical matter? We have such a powerful economy; maybe if only half of our kids get it, we'll be able to keep the economy going, but the society will not be as strong as it should be if half of our young people drop out because they never got on the escalator when they were in the seventh grade, the eighth grade, the ninth grade. So anyway, it's a big issue.

The Irish peace process—I could talk about the Middle East or Ireland or anyplace else. I'm grateful for the fact that the United States could play the role it's played in Ireland, the role it's played in Bosnia, the work that the Secretary of State is doing now with our allies to try to keep Kosovo from causing a new turmoil in the Balkans, the fact that I will become the first President ever to take a real trip to sub-Saharan Africa ever in the history of the country, starting at the end of this week. Why? Because I'm thinking about what it's going to be like for us 20 or 30

or 40 years from now, as well as in the immediate future. I want to get a settlement and legislation passed in this tobacco case to end this whole chapter of our history in a way that will enable us to save a thousand lives a day and protect the health of our children in the future.

These are the things that we try to do. So when you go home tonight, before you go to bed, I want you to think about why did I come to this dinner? Why did I do that? Why did I show up there? Why didn't I stay home and watch pro basketball or whatever? And I hope that the reasons will be part of your vision for America in the 21st century.

I'm grateful for what we've achieved, but what we've achieved simply imposes on us an even greater obligation to use the success of the country, the confidence of the country, the elbow room that this kind of new prosperity gives us, to really look at the long-term challenges our people face and to meet them.

We've got 3 years to do it, and I am convinced that 3 years from now this country will be in even better shape than it is today thanks to the support of people like you.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:12 p.m. in the South Drawing Room at the Decatur House. In his remarks, he referred to Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, and Steve Grossman, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Mayor Lee R. Clancey of Cedar Rapids, IA; Rudy Crew, chancellor, New York City public schools; and Wilmer Cody, Kentucky commissioner of education.

### **Remarks at a Saint Patrick's Day Ceremony With Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland**

*March 17, 1998*

**President Clinton.** Good morning. Please be seated everyone. This is a wonderful day for all of us here at the White House. It's a great pleasure to welcome the Taoiseach here. Bertie Ahern has given great leadership to the people of Ireland and to the peace process. This is his first St. Patrick's Day here since assuming office, and we're very grateful for his presence. We welcome him.

And I want to turn the platform over to you. Thank you.

**Prime Minister Ahern.** Thank you very much, President and Vice President. It's a great honor for me to be here, my first opportunity as Taoiseach of the Irish people, to be at the White House on St. Patrick's Day. I'm delighted to participate in this wonderful ceremony and to present to you some shamrocks from the land of your forebears.

The presentation of shamrocks to the President of United States is a very apt symbol of very close and friendly relations between our two countries. St. Patrick used the shamrock as a religious symbol of unity and diversity, similar to the motto of the United States, *e pluribus unum*. And it remains a potent, unifying symbol, which is embraced by both traditions on the island of Ireland.

The United States and Ireland are countries which enjoy long-established bonds stemming from our intertwined history. And as you generously acknowledged, Mr. President, Irish Americans historically and still today have enriched Americans' way of life with the values of their heritage: love of family, faith, and hard work, a devotion to community, and compassion for those in need. They are things that we still live dear to. And for its part, the United States has been a constant resource of inspiration and support as Ireland has navigated its sometimes difficult history.

And that solidarity is as vital today as it was during the Great Famine, which we've celebrated in the last few years, of 1845 to 1848, when the United States gave a new home and a new future to hundreds of thousands of Irish men and women. And the ties between our two countries, Mr. President, are now, of course, copper-fastened by an extremely vibrant economic relationship. And the flows of trade, investment, and tourism between Ireland and the United States have reached unprecedented levels. U.S. investment has made a crucial contribution to Ireland's current prosperity. And equally, as a very profitable location for investment, Ireland has contributed to cooperate and to assist corporate wealth of many great U.S. companies.

Mr. President, I'm very conscious that the principle of unity and diversity has been one

of the major domestic themes of your Presidency. The leadership that you have provided on this theme has been inspiring, not only within the United States but also internationally, where it has an immediate renaissance in places such as Bosnia and Middle East and, of course, in Northern Ireland.

And in Northern Ireland, your inspiring vision of peace, based on the acceptance of diversity, has been matched by your constant support for a process which has experienced its shares of ups and downs. And you've been true to your promise made here a number of years ago, that you would be a friend of Ireland, not just on St. Patrick's Day but every day. And your act of support for the process has not only been constant but also impeccably fair and balanced. And for that, I want to thank you.

The encouragement, the access which you and your administration have provided to all of the participants and that your administration has provided for all of us has inspired us all in good days and sustained us on bad ones. And perhaps the greatest resource that you have given us is Senator George Mitchell, who in his chairmanship of the talks so aptly represents the qualities of good will, of wisdom, impartiality, and tenacity, which the United States has brought to the Irish peace process.

We're now entering, President, as we've spoken this morning, a decisive period in the talks. The core issues have been well and truly aired over the past months. As George has said recently, we are now in the end game; success will require courage, a willingness to compromise and, perhaps above all, a generous vision which transcended partnership, focuses on the common interest of all who are in the talks and all who share it.

Our task will be greatly assisted by the continued support and encouragement which we know that we can count on from you, Mr. President, and from Mrs. Clinton, from your administration, and from our friends on both sides of the aisle of Congress.

Mr. President, I want to thank you for everything you've done. I want to thank you for all that you've contributed to the cause of peace in Northern Ireland. And in presenting you with the unifying symbol of

shamrock, I wish you and your family a very happy St. Patrick's Day.

[At this point, Prime Minister Ahern made brief remarks in Gaelic and presented the President with a bowl of shamrocks.]

**President Clinton.** Thank you very much, Taoiseach, and thank you for the bowl of shamrocks. We will proudly display it as a lasting symbol of our shared values and common heritage.

I think I should say in the interest of full disclosure, that my Cassidy relatives in Ireland sent me these cufflinks and this tie to wear on this day, so that I would be properly attired for your visit. [Laughter]

Since last St. Patrick's Day, Ireland has chosen not only a new Prime Minister but also a new President—Mary McAleese of Belfast, the first Northerner to hold that office. We also share Ireland's pride in the fact that President McAleese's predecessor, our good friend, Mary Robinson, now serves as United Nations Human Rights Commissioner.

I also want to acknowledge the announcement by a great friend of Ireland and great Ambassador, Jean Kennedy Smith, that she intends to leave Dublin this summer. We thank you for your dedicated principled service to our country.

Mr. Prime Minister, our cultures have enriched one another time and again as impassioned voices called back and forth across the Atlantic. Just as generations of American writers have been inspired by Yeats, Joyce, and Beckett, the great Irish musician, Van Morrison, sings of growing up in Belfast, reading Jack Kerouac while a distant radio signal played Louis Armstrong, Sidney Bechet, and Hank Williams.

Last year an Irish American, a retired high school teacher named Frank McCourt, won our Pulitzer Prize for his remarkable "Angela's Ashes," a memoir of growing up poor in Limerick and New York City in the 1930's and '40's. This writing pulls no punches, a fact admirers and critics in both of our countries have been quick to note. But his Limerick and his Ireland have changed. We are delighted that Ireland has enjoyed the best run of economic growth in the developed world during this decade, just as Amer-

ica continues to profit from the labors of your sons and daughters.

This is a holiday, a day for laughter and celebration. But let me say something about which we are all very serious. Northern Ireland now has an unparalleled opportunity for a just and lasting peace. The Taoiseach and his government and Tony Blair and the British Government have gone the extra mile to create an atmosphere in which negotiations can succeed. George Mitchell has been a very distinguished chairman of the peace talks, and we thank you for your comments, Taoiseach.

During these St. Patrick's Day events, I will speak with the party leaders who have come here to Washington. I will tell all of them on all sides the same thing. I will say it as clearly and emphatically as I possibly can: This is the chance of a lifetime for peace in Ireland. You must get it done. You must do it for yourselves and your children. It is too late for those who have already been killed by the sectarian violence of the last three decades. But you can do it, and you must, now.

To get an agreement, there must be compromise. No party can achieve all its objectives. The party leaders must lead, and leading means looking forward. And it means being strong enough to make principled compromise. Concessions that today might seem hard to accept will seem so much less important in the light of an accord that brings hope and peace and an end to violence. No one will be the loser if agreement is reached. Everyone will benefit from a chance to build a peaceful future. The parties must look at the larger picture, to the ultimate goal: a Northern Ireland for all, free of cowardly acts of violence, free of the division and despair that have robbed too many children of their futures for too long.

Mr. Prime Minister, today you ask me to stay personally involved in the peace process. I will do everything I can. The United States will continue to stand firmly against extremists on both sides who want to use violence to thwart a peaceful, just solution that the vast majority of the people in Ireland, whom I was privileged to see in late 1995, clearly still want.

As they negotiate, the parties, too, must continue to demonstrate by words and deeds that they reject violence. They must do everything possible to prevent further bloodshed.

Here on the edge of the 21st century, there is a growing global community of people committed to peace, to democracy, to social justice, to putting the divisions of the past of religion and race, of ethnicity and tribe, behind them. From Guatemala to Mozambique, even now to Bosnia, the unceasing desire of people for a peaceful, decent life is overcoming the forces of hate and bigotry and violence. Ireland, its leaders, and its peacekeeping forces have helped to contribute to the progress of this peace all around the world. There has not been a day in the last four decades when an Irish peacekeeper has not been somewhere on duty as a sentinel for peace in a distant part of the world.

Now all the people on the island of Ireland can be sentinels for peace, if only their leaders will make the principled agreements necessary to give them that chance.

Again, let me say, the days I spent in Ireland in 1995 are perhaps the most memorable days of my life. As we rejoice today in the spirit of St. Patrick, the heritage of Irish and Irish-American people, let us remember what the spirit of St. Patrick was, and how he became the first and only person ever to bring Christianity to a distant, alien place without the sword. And let us bring a future to Ireland worthy of that great achievement of St. Patrick.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former Senator George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multi-party talks in Northern Ireland.

### **Remarks on Proposed Legislation To Expand Medicare**

*March 17, 1998*

Thank you very much. Thank you. Senator Kennedy is even more exuberant than normal today, but you have to forgive him and me and Senator Moynihan and isolated oth-

ers—this is St. Patrick's Day, and we're feeling pretty good, the Irish are. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Congressman Stark, for your long leadership and your willingness to push this legislation. Thank you, Senator Moynihan, for making it utterly clear, so that no one can dispute it, that this legislation presents no threat to the integrity of the Medicare program or the security of the Trust Fund. Thank you, Sherrod Brown, for your initiative and your leadership. As always, thank you, Senator Kennedy.

And I'd like to say a word of thanks to one person who has not spoken here today, our Senate Democratic leader, Tom Daschle, who has worked so hard to help one particular group of Americans here: Americans who retired early, in part because they were promised health care benefits which were then denied to them. This will take care of them, and we can keep the promise that others made to them. And I think we have to do it. And thank you, Tom Daschle, for fighting for them.

I'd also like to thank Leader Gephardt and Congressman Dingell and all the Members of the House caucus who are here—thank you very, very much. And I can't help noting that this may be the first public appearance in Washington for the newest Member of this caucus, Representative Lois Capps, from California.

Let me begin with a point I have made over and over to the American people since the State of the Union Address. This is a remarkable time for our country. I look out at all these young people who are working here, and I think how glad I am they are coming of age at a time when America is working, when we are making progress, economically; we're making progress on our social problems; we're making progress in our quest for peace and security in the world.

But everybody knows that the world is changing very rapidly. And so the question is, what should we be doing in the midst of good times? I believe the last thing we should be doing is sitting on our lead, if I could use a sports analogy. Good times give us the confidence, the resources, and the space not only to dream about the future we want in the 21st century but to take action to deal with it. It is wrong to sit idly by when we can

be taking steps to prepare for that future. That's why I don't want us to spend a surplus that is only now beginning to materialize until we have saved Social Security for the 21st century. That's why I want us to work together to make sure we deal with the long-term challenges of Medicare.

But it's also why I think we should not let a single day go by when Americans have problems that we can remedy in ways that will not weaken our present success but instead will reinforce it. That's why I hope we get a comprehensive bill through to deal with the tobacco problem, because there are a thousand kids a day whose lives are at stake. And that's why I believe we should be dealing with this issue now.

President Johnson said when Medicare was first enacted that it proved the vitality of our democracy can shape the oldest of our values to the needs and obligations of changing times. That's what these leaders are doing here today.

You heard Senator Moynihan say most people don't wait till they're 65 to retire. But the fastest growing group of people are people over 65. There are huge numbers of people in this age group. There are people 62 and over who have lost their health insurance, but can't buy into Medicare. There are people under 65 who are married to somebody who's 65 or older who had the health insurance, and that person retired, got into Medicare, but the spouse lost the health insurance. There are people who are 55 and over who have been downsized, or who actually retired, early retirement, because their employer actually promised them they would have health insurance, and then the promise was not kept.

I want to say that this is not an entirely disinterested thing. In 2001, I will be 55 and unemployed, through no fault of my own. [Laughter] And this bill has a lot of appeal to me. [Laughter] I say that to make you laugh. I get a lot of letters from people that I've known a long time who are my age, who are middle class people, people I grew up with, whose spouses are beginning to have the health problems that go along with just working your way through life—people who don't have a great health insurance coverage, like I've been privileged to have. And they

are terrified that they will spend the years between 55 and 65 with maybe the most challenging health problems in their entire lives cropping up, with no insurance.

Now, I believe that this is an issue on which Democrats and Republicans should be able to unite. We ask the Republicans to come and help us on this. Let's don't play election year games on this. We don't want to, either. We want to do it in a bipartisan fashion and get it behind us. There are hundreds of thousands of people out there in America who need this initiative.

People say, "Well, why don't you wait until the Medicare Commission comes in and issues its report?" My answer is Senator Moynihan's answer—because we have the Congressional Budget Office estimates. They told us that this will add nothing to the burden of the Medicare Trust Fund; it will cost less than we had originally thought, and we can insure more people.

But remember the human dimension. Remember Ruth Kain, who spoke when we announced this program in January. When her husband turned 65, her employer dropped their insurance benefits. He got Medicare; she didn't. But she had a heart condition, and they couldn't afford health insurance. So, she didn't get health insurance. She went to the hospital one time, and the bill was \$13,000. Some people have said of our proposal, "Well, this bill costs a lot of money for retired people"—\$300 a month or something. One trip to the hospital for anything will more than likely be more than twice as much in one pop as a whole year's annual premiums—the most minor trip to the hospital. The Kains and families like them, the families that Congressman Brown mentioned, they ought to have another choice.

Today I am releasing a report that shows State by State how many Americans need these protections—State by State. And we will see, State by State, the human lives we're talking about and the number of people that will be put at risk if we wait another year to do this.

Tomorrow the Kaiser Foundation will unveil a study that shows that the individual insurance market often denies coverage or charges excessive premiums to older, sicker Americans, the very people this policy would

help to protect. Senator Moynihan said—I want to reiterate, because I have heard Senator Kennedy mention the criticisms of this program—I want to say this a second time—the Congressional Budget Office—not the administration’s budget office, the Congressional Budget Office—reports this plan will cost individuals even less and benefit even more people than we first estimated. It will give somewhere between three and four hundred thousand Americans new options for health care coverage at a vulnerable time in their lives.

Let me say one other thing. The bipartisan Kennedy-Kassebaum legislation we adopted last year—or in 1996—was also designed to help Americans keep their health care when they changed jobs or when someone in their family got sick—a bill like this one, designed to give people peace of mind. But we now see on news reports today—another good reason why it’s better for us to do this in this way—because just today we see that some insurers are finding ways around that law, giving insurance agents incentives to delay or deny coverage to vulnerable Americans. These practices have to be stopped. I am directing Secretary Shalala and the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a thorough review of the options for strengthening the protections of the Kennedy-Kassebaum law.

And tomorrow the Department will send a notice to every insurer in every State in our country affirming what we already know, that impeding anyone’s access to health care in violation of this law is illegal. It’s not just wrong; it’s illegal. The law is vital to the health and stability of America’s workers and their families. We intend to enforce it vigorously.

But let me say, you see the problems we have with that kind of approach. With this kind of approach, anybody who can afford the premium or whose children or relatives will help them to afford this premium, won’t have to worry about whether they have health care coverage. We won’t have to worry about some regulation or waiting for a report to come in to tell us whether this or that or the other person is complying. We will know that we’re helping hundreds of thousands of people who have worked hard all

their lives and played by the rules and been good citizens to have the decent, secure time in a vulnerable period of their lives. We can extend this opportunity in a responsible way.

Medicare is one of the crowning achievements of this century for the American people. With this legislation, and with the other challenges that we intend to face and overcome, we can make sure, as we become an older and older and older country—which is, I always say, a high-class problem—that Medicare will be one of the crowning achievements of the 21st century as well.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:35 a.m. in Room 1100 at the Longworth Office Building on Capitol Hill.

### Remarks at a Saint Patrick’s Day Reception

March 17, 1998

**The President.** Thank you very much. Every time Al Gore has a crowd like this, he always says, “Thank you for the standing ovation.” [Laughter] Taoiseach, Miss Larkin, to all of our guests, all the ambassadors here, all the Members of Congress, distinguished guests from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, and all across the United States.

There are so many Americans here who love Ireland and long for peace, I hesitate to mention any, but I must mention two: First, I would like to thank our distinguished Ambassador, who has just announced her resignation a few months hence, Jean Kennedy Smith. Thank you, ma’am, for everything you have done. And I have to thank one other person who is in his present position because on one late, very sad night in 1994, my legendary powers of persuasion fell flat, and I was unable to persuade George Mitchell to run for reelection. He is still trying to determine whether, as a consequence, I bestowed upon him a blessing or a curse. [Laughter] It’s why I always tell him it is, after all, in his hands. Thank you, Senator Mitchell, for what you are doing. We appreciate that.

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy proposed a new approach to the cold war when he said, “Let both sides explore

what problems unite us instead of belaboring those which divide us.” He eloquently insisted civility is not a sign of weakness. If that was true for two great, distant, often alien superpowers like the United States and the Soviet Union, surely it is true for neighbors in Ireland.

Tonight we have here in this room representatives, leaders of all the parties to the peace talks. It is a great night. I was thinking in sort of my impish way that I almost wish I could give them a perfectly harmless—perfectly harmless—3-day cold, which would require them all to be quarantined in the Green Room. [Laughter] It’s not a very big room, the Green Room—[laughter]—and we have a lot of parties to the talks. So in just 3 days of getting over a cold together, I think all these problems would be solved.

Well, the peace talks won’t be that easy, but all of you, you have to seize this historic moment. Just think, in just a few weeks, you could lift this enormous burden from the shoulders of all the children of Ireland.

It has been said that St. Patrick’s Day is the day when the entire world wishes it were Irish. Well, when lasting peace finally comes, the entire world will rejoice. When I heard the wonderful songs up here, and Frank’s wonderful reading, and all the eloquence of Irish passion and pain and joy came flooding out of the performers, young and old, I was reminded of that great line from Yeats, “In dreams begin responsibility.” All the Irish are dreamers. In the next few weeks, if Irish responsibility measures up to Irish dreams, this next year’s celebration here will be the greatest in the history of this great house.

God bless you.

[At this point, the First Lady introduced Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland, the Taoiseach, who then made brief remarks.]

**The President.** We’re about to leave. I feel duty bound, because there are so many people from Massachusetts here today—[laughter]—to tell you that in Massachusetts this is a dual holiday. This is also the day when over 200 years ago the British left Massachusetts, so it’s called Evacuation Day. [Laughter]

Now, that means that you must evacuate the White House. [Laughter] I have to say

that so State Secretary Mowlam doesn’t think I made an anti-British slur here. [Laughter] But you needn’t leave until 11:59 p.m.—[laughter]—because it will still be Evacuation Day. [Laughter]

Enjoy. We love having you here. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Celia Larkin, who accompanied Prime Minister Ahern; George J. Mitchell, independent chairman of the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland; Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt; and Marjorie Mowlam, United Kingdom Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

### Remarks at the Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Training Center in Las Vegas, Nevada

March 18, 1998

**The President.** Thank you. It’s a good thing we’ve got a 22d amendment, or I would run again. Thanks for saying that. Let me begin by saying that when Maggie Carlton was talking, I leaned over to John Sweeney and I said, “John, I’d give anything if we could just get her speech on television tonight. That’s the America we’re trying to build for everybody.”

I know that your husband and your daughters were proud of you, but I think every working man and woman out here was proud of you for what you said and what you represented. Your family is living proof that if we reward people for their work, if we enable people to succeed at work and at home raising their children, if we give them the chance to be good citizens, then America is going to do very well indeed.

I want to thank the others up here on this platform with me. I want to thank John Sweeney for his brilliant, energetic leadership of the labor movement. He has been terrific. I want to thank Doug McCarron for his leadership of the carpenters and his ever-present willingness to let me know exactly what he thinks I should be doing on every issue. [Laughter] I want to thank Bob Georgine for many things, but I want to congratulate him most recently on helping to bring about the major labor agreement in

Nevada between building and construction trade workers, Bechtel, and the Department of Energy, and so many other triumphs on behalf of the working people he represents. Thank you.

I am especially indebted to Linda Chavez-Thompson, the executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, for her membership on the President's National Advisory Panel on Race, in our attempt to build an America in the 21st century where we all get along and work together across all the racial and ethnic lines that divide us. Thank you.

Let me also say I am profoundly grateful to my former colleague and longtime friend, Governor Bob Miller; and to Mayor Jan Jones who was such a great friend of my mother's, as well as a friend of mine, for their personal kindness to me, and their leadership here in this great city and State. You are very well served, and I know you know that. Thank you.

I brought a lot of folks with me today from the administration, but three in particular work with the labor movement. I thank the Deputy Secretary of Labor, Kitty Higgins, and Maria Echaveste and Karen Tramontano coming from the White House. They've worked with a lot of you, and they do a lot of work for you, whether you know it or not, every day. And I'm very proud of them.

Now, you know, I took a tour of what goes on here before I came out, and I told some of the folks on the tour—I thanked Bill Howard and Paul Sonner, who was the instructor in the classroom I visited, and all the people who are in the Joint Apprenticeship Training Center today who helped to enlighten me about what you're doing. But I told some folks that 30 years ago I actually spent a summer building houses, and I decided I didn't want to work that hard, which is how come I got into politics. *[Laughter]* It didn't strike me as being any easier now than it was 30 years ago. *[Laughter]*

But there are a lot of interesting things going on in this program. I hope, for example, that just my presence here and the fact that so many members of the media came with us will lead people to know that more and more construction is now being done with reprocessed steel instead of wood in homes and hotels and other things. And that

has enormous environmental and energy implications for the future, if we can make that work, and that you are being trained to do that work.

I do feel that I learned enough today to go home and build a two-bedroom house for Socks and for Buddy, and that's what I intend to do. *[Laughter]* Unfortunately, when I do it, I won't earn the union wage, but I will have your knowledge.

Let me say to all of you that, first, I just want to thank you for giving me a chance to be here. You know, every now and then you just have to get out here in the country; it helps the President to remember why he ran, what he's trying to do, and for whom he is really working. And I have seen all of that here today.

You here have shown me a model of two-by-fours and teamwork; a model for the Nation of cooperation between business and labor; cooperation of crafts across generations, adapting old-fashioned values to today's workplace. There are just 653 days left in the 20th century; there are just 653 days left in this whole millennium. This century will be remembered as a time when millions of working men and women fought for and won basic freedoms too long denied them: the right to safe workplaces; the freedom to organize; the ability to put an end to abusive child labor; the right to have health insurance and retirement and earn a decent wage for labor. Working families across our country gained their voice in the 20th century, and in so doing, they built the greatest middle class in human history.

Now, what will happen in the new century? Well, what will it be like; how will it be different? The first thing we know is that things will change more and faster for all of you in the new century than it did in the old one. The sheer volume of knowledge is changing—is doubling, doubling, every 5 years. When I became President there were 50 web sites on the Internet—50—5. 0. Now, 65,000 are being added every hour. So your life is going to go by at a faster pace.

The second thing you know is that it will be more global. We will be in a global economy, but we will also be in an increasingly global society. If you doubt that, just look

around the room here. If we had had this meeting 10 years ago——

[*At this point, a member of the audience interrupted the President.*]

**Audience member.** Shut up!

**The President.** Couldn't have said it better myself. You ought to run for office. [*Laughter*]

Now look around—if we had had this meeting 10 years ago, think how differently this crowd would have looked. So the world is changing. The way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to each other. What will happen in this new century? What will happen if technology dominates more? We won't run out of work; we'll have different kind of work. The unemployment rate today is very low, but there are almost 400,000 vacancies in America in computer-related jobs. So we know that things will change more and we'll have to educate and train more. And even old jobs will be done in new ways.

But we also know that, if we do it right, we've got a chance finally to include all working people in the American middle class. We've got a chance to bring dignity to the lives of all people. We've got a chance to give every child the chance to live up to his or her God-given abilities. In short, we've got a chance to bring the American dream home to everybody who will work for it. And we ought to seize that chance.

That's the American dream that the employees of Frontier Hotel spent 6 years, 4 months, and 10 days fighting to achieve. And this is important. But maybe even more important, it's the American dream that I learned again today up in that classroom I just visited. It's the American dream that I learned again today that union members want for all working families.

I see it in Washington. John Sweeney has a relatively small percentage of the membership of the AFL-CIO that will get a direct benefit when we raise the minimum wage again. But he works for it just as hard as if 100 percent of his members were going to be benefited by it, because he knows it's the right thing to do.

And today when I was in that classroom upstairs, you know what the students were learning in the classroom? They were learn-

ing about how much of their base pay is in fringe benefits, what's retirement, what's health care, what's continuing education, what does all this money go for? And they asked me questions about Social Security and how we were going to make sure that private pensions were secure. And I talked to them about what we've been doing on that the last 5 years. And they asked about health care and how working families got along that didn't have any health insurance, and why we didn't have health insurance for every single working family. And I said, "If it had been up to me and the AFL-CIO, every working family would have health insurance today, and we ought to see it."

I only wish my wife could have been upstairs to hear that conversation about health care. And they asked me about how people got along who didn't make as much per hour as they earned in fringe benefits alone. One young man said, "There are people building houses in other places who don't make as much per hour as we get in fringe benefits. How do they get along?"

And so we talked about how we try to help them with the family and medical leave, how we tried to help them with different changes in the health insurance laws, and how we tried to help them with changes in retirement systems. But I asked that group of young people when I left, I said, "I just hope you'll never forget this, because we've got to make sure every family can succeed at home and at work, and as long as people like you care about people who aren't making as much per hour as you get in fringe benefits, we'll keep making it better for them." And I hope all of you will always feel that way.

Now, let me just say very quickly, I want to talk to you about what's going on in Washington that will affect your future and ask you for your help. These are good times for the country. We're going to have the first balanced budget in 30 years. And 15 million new jobs in 5 years, the lowest unemployment in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest inflation in 30 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the United States of America. That's the time we're living in.

But what I want to say to you is, you don't have to be a carpenter to know that you don't fix the roof when it's raining. You fix the roof when the sun is shining. The sun is shining on America. But as long as there are people who don't have jobs, as long as there are people who can't make a decent living, as long as we don't have a system which guarantees lifetime, high quality, educational opportunities like I saw there today to all working families, the roof of America's house is not as strong as it ought to be.

So what I came here today to tell you today is, this is a great time, but let me say again, it is changing fast. And we have to think about the challenges that all of you are going to face 5 years from now, 10 years from now—what will your children face 15 and 20 years from now? And we have to do those things today, while we have the confidence and the strength and the prosperity to do them, that will secure the future of our children tomorrow in a new century.

One of the main reasons I wanted to be here today is that I think all of you know instinctively that the most important thing we can do in a world where the volume of knowledge is doubling every 5 years is to give every person a world-class education and every adult access to education and training for a lifetime.

Now, we've made a lot of progress in the last 5 years. When we started on—the Vice President and I started to try to hook up all the classrooms and libraries in the country to the Internet by 2000—we started in '94, only 34 percent of our schools were hooked up. Today, 75 percent are. We're doing better. We've got 900 colleges out there with young people earning work-study funds by going into our grade schools and teaching our kids to read, to make sure everybody can read independently by the end of the third grade. That's important.

And perhaps most important to all of you with children, we can literally say now—this is what we've done in the last year: We passed a \$1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; tax credits for junior year, senior year, graduate school; adults going back for further job training; an IRA you can put money into, withdraw from for your kid's education with no tax penalty; tax deductions

for interest on student loans; 300,000 more work-study positions. People can go through our national service program, AmeriCorps, and earn money to go to college. We can literally say now because of the changes we've made in loans, in scholarships and tax breaks, we have opened the doors of college in America to everybody who's willing to work for a college education. That will revolutionize their future.

But let's be candid with one another. Everybody with an informed opinion knows that America has the best system of colleges and universities in the world. There are literally 300, maybe 400—maybe more—places you can go and get a world-class undergraduate education in this country. But no one thinks we have the best elementary and secondary education in the world. Now, we have a lot of great teachers; we have a lot of great schools; our students are just as smart as anybody anywhere. But nobody thinks it's the best in the world. One of the reasons is we have a very diverse student body; we have local control of the schools; we have three different sources of funding from the State, Federal, and local government; and we don't have any national standards of what people should know or measurements of it.

So I think we need more grassroots reform, but we ought to have national standards and voluntary national exams. We ought to spend more money to give smaller classes. We ought to make sure that in these places where they're overflowing with students and the school buildings are old and breaking down or the kids are out in house trailers, they're in decent classrooms.

And I have offered a plan this year to hire 100,000 more teachers to take class size in the first three grades down to an average of 18 students per class; to make child care of higher quality and more affordable; to help schools stay open after instruction hours are over, because most kids get in trouble after school closes down and before their parents get home from work; to rehabilitate or build 5,000 new schools in the country; and also to provide greater health and retirement security to people who have put a lifetime of work in.

Now, these are very important things. We have a balanced budget now; we can afford

to do these things. But there are some troubling signals coming out of Washington that the Republican budget may not embody this commitment to education and our future. The budget they're talking about does meet my goal of achieving a balance and not spending any of the surplus until we fix Social Security. But it shortchanges our Nation's future. We're not fixing the roof for the 21st century, because from Head Start for young children to Pell grants, from job training for older workers, our commitment to education is under fire.

I need your help. This ought not to be a partisan political issue. I can remember a time when, on education, both parties were foursquare for investing in the future of our country if we had the money. I'm telling you, we've got the money; it's time to invest in the future of our country and education.

And if the Republican budget says no to new teachers and smaller classes, no to modernizing our schools, no to investing in higher standards for our children, the American people should say no to that budget. Give us a budget that will prepare our children for the 21st century.

There are a lot of other things that I'd like to ask you to help me with, and I won't bore you with all of them, but just let me mention a few. We've got people in this country between the ages of 55 and 65 who worked hard all their lives and have lost their health insurance, and they're not old enough to get Medicare. And generally, they're in three categories. They are people who are married to folks who are old enough to be on Medicare, and so when their spouse got on Medicare the family lost their health insurance and the younger spouse has no health care and can't afford to buy any.

They are people who lost their jobs, and they're over 55, and they can't afford just a single person's health insurance. They're people who took voluntary early retirement who are over 55, who were promised by their employers they would have health insurance and then the promise was broken. I think we ought to let those people and their families—help them to buy into Medicare at cost. It will not hurt you; it will not hurt Medicare; it will help hundreds of thousands of people.

Two years ago, we raised the minimum wage, and it was a good thing. And 2 years ago we raised the minimum wage, people said, "Oh, this is terrible. It will bring on inflation, and it will slow down job growth." And in the 2 years since we raised the minimum wage, inflation has gone down, and job growth has gone up. It's good for America to pay people at a decent wage.

The minimum wage in real dollar terms is still lower than it was 20 years ago—it's still lower than it was 20 years ago. With our economy as strong as it is, with job growth as good as it is, we can afford to increase the minimum wage by a dollar over the next 2 years, and I think it's the right thing to do.

I also want you to know that we have to continue in Washington to fight for the right to organize and to function in a union that will permit you to have a life you enjoy. We know that workers in unions typically have not only higher pay, but have access to higher skills, better continuing education, which is good for the rest of the country. You make the rest of us stronger as you learn more new things and do more new things and continue to push us in the future. There is a bill now in Congress that would let businesses fire or refuse to hire union organizers. If it passes, I'll veto it. But you ought to help me do this in the first place. [*Applause*]

But let me say—I thank you for that cheer. But what you really want is to never even have to think about cheering for something like that again. Because what really works—what really works is when we all work together. You can help management make a bigger profit. You can help the owners of every enterprise earn more money. You can make the private sector stronger and help create more jobs if we will cooperate in a spirit that says we have to reaffirm the dignity of the people who work for us day-in and day-out. They ought to be able to raise their children in dignity. They ought to be able to educate their children. They ought to be able to know that when their kids get sick they can go to the doctor. They ought to be able to know that when they come of age, they can go on to college. We ought to live in the kind of country that says we are going

to make the future better for our children, and we are going to honor our parents.

On my wall in my private office on the second floor of the White House I have a letter written before I was born to my aunt in Texas by the man who was then the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Sam Rayburn—legendary Speaker of the House of Representatives from Texas. And he wrote my aunt a letter when my father was killed in a car wreck. My aunt gave me that letter last year, 50 years later. But I see that letter all the time, and it reminds me not only of my family ties but of Sam Rayburn and the kind of leadership he gave to our country. Sam Rayburn said something about politics that all of you especially should always remember. He said, “Any old mule can kick a barn down. It takes a carpenter to build one.” And what I’m trying to do is to hold down the barn kickers—[laughter]—and lift up the builders. I want you to be with me.

Thank you. Bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:35 p.m. in the training center shop area. In his remarks, he referred to Maggie Carlton, member, Culinary Workers Union Local 226, who introduced the President; John J. Sweeney, president, AFL-CIO; Douglas J. McCarron, general president, United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America; Robert Georgine, president, Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Linda Chavez-Thompson, executive vice president, AFL-CIO; Gov. Bob Miller of Nevada; Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas; and Bill Howard, apprenticeship coordinator, and Paul Sonner, instructor, Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Training Center.

### **Remarks on the Safe Schools Initiative**

*March 19, 1998*

Thank you very much, Superintendent Berg; Madam Attorney General; Senator Robb, thank you so much for your efforts. Congressman Castle, thank you. Mayor Donley, welcome, and I want to say a special word of welcome to all of the students. I’m glad you’re here today, and I thank you for the example you’re setting for students throughout our country.

I also want to commend the students who were the winners of the State math and science award earlier this month. This school is proving that by taking the right kind of action, working with law enforcement, enforcing zero tolerance for guns and drugs, involving parents, establishing discipline and order as primary goals, we can keep our schools safe and give our children the chance to reach their highest potential.

Now, in less than 650 days, all of us will enter a new century and a new millennium. At a time when we’re doing everything we can to prepare our children for the opportunities of that new century, at a time when we know that the body of knowledge that human beings have is doubling every 5 years, and therefore, education will be more important than ever before, we cannot let violence, guns, drugs stand between our children and the education they need.

For more than 5 years, we’ve worked now to make our schools places of learning, not fear. We have worked to strengthen and expand the safe and drug-free schools program, to enforce zero tolerance for guns in schools, to encourage communities to crack down on truancies, to support those who wish to adopt school uniform policies. Wearing uniforms instead of gang colors in many places is helping to keep our children safe.

It was just a little over 2 years ago that I went to Long Beach, California, the first large school district to adopt a school uniform policy. Since then, Secretary Riley and the Department of Education have worked to help those schools that wanted to do that. Yesterday the New York City School Board announced that it would adopt a school uniform policy in all its elementary schools. I applaud them for taking this important step, and I predict it will have very beneficial consequences.

Our budget makes an unprecedented commitment as we are moving into balance for the first time in 30 years to invest for our future, by raising standards and improving education for all our children and to make our schools safer. We know schools with the biggest discipline problems also have the highest rates of violence. Very often, there are simply too many students and too few classrooms with not enough teachers. Our

budget, as Senator Robb said, will help to reduce class sizes to an average of 18 students per class in the first, second, and third grades, with 100,000 more teachers and funds to build or rehabilitate 5,000 schools.

Perhaps even more important in the short run on the violence issue—and I was glad to hear Mr. Berg talk about this—it will quadruple Federal support for after-school programs to keep children in school, in wholesome, positive environments. We know that most children who get in trouble do so between the time school lets out and their folks get home from work. So I applaud you for what you're doing, and I hope now if this budget passes there will be many, many more schools, until every school in America will offer this kind of community support to our young people and their families.

The fundamental issue here is that we do not need to and we must not ever have to make a choice between safety and high standards, between crime-free schools and modern classrooms. We must do both. I regret that the present budget, reported out by the majority in Congress, does not embody that kind of commitment to education and our future, does not embody the recommendations I made in the State of the Union Address.

Today I ask the Republican leadership to join with the leaders of the other party, to get with the Democrats, and to work with the White House so that we can once again, as we have in the past, pass a bipartisan budget that puts education beyond politics and says yes to safer schools, yes to new teachers and smaller classes, yes to modernizing our schools, yes to investing in high standards. We need to have a budget that says yes to our children's future.

The Nationwide Report on School Safety that is being released today by the Attorney General and the Secretary of Education shows clearly that the majority of our schools are safe, free of violent crime. That is good news. It also shows, however, that too many of our children face a far more frightening reality every time they walk through the schoolhouse door. In 1996 alone there were more than 10,000 physical attacks or fights with weapons in schools; 7,000 robberies; 4,000 rapes and sexual assaults. The threat

of such violence hangs over children's heads and closes their minds to learning. When children have to worry more about guns and drugs than math and science, when teachers are more concerned with maintaining discipline than achieving excellence, when parents would rather keep their children at home than risk their safety at school, then we know we must do more. And if there is even one school in America where that is the case, we must all be committed to change it. We already know the difference community policing makes.

Since we began to help our local communities to put 100,000 more community police officers on our streets, crime has dropped to record lows all over our country. Indeed, in the Nation overall, crime is at a 24-year low. I thank Senator Robb for his sponsorship for the \$17½ million in the balanced budget bill which is now being awarded today in grants to communities, parents, and law enforcement groups to put these community policing strategies to work in our schools, to stop violence before it starts.

The more we know about school violence, the more we can do to ensure our children's safety. Last December I asked the Attorney General and Secretary Riley to develop an annual report on school safety. Today I'm pleased to accept their framework for these reports. From now on, at the beginning of every school year, parents and principals, lawmakers and law enforcement will have a valuable tool that tracks school violence, gives examples of school programs that are working, and suggests actions parents can take to make their children's lives safer at school.

We know one of the best ways to reduce violence is to involve the young people themselves. In the last several years, AmeriCorps volunteers particularly have helped hundreds of students to resolve their conflicts peacefully. This adds to AmeriCorps' remarkable record of helping improve our schools and communities through volunteer service.

Parenthetically, I want to say that today we had an announcement up on the Hill, with the First Lady participating, that we are sending legislation to Congress to extend our

national service program into the 21st century; I hope Congress will support AmeriCorps as it has in the past.

Let me say, finally, as Mr. Berg said so eloquently, we know that all of our schools need parents to play the primary role in their children's safety, both in the school and in the home, and when necessary, in the neighborhood. Today I ask all our parents who are concerned about this to become involved in your communities and your children's schools, to join a community policing partnership. Senator Robb got the budget; we're releasing the funds; we can talk about what works; but in the end, real live American citizens are going to have to show up in every school in this country to make this work.

You know, if you look at these young people here today, if you think about the remarkable achievements of this fine school we honor, if you imagine the interesting, fascinating lives they can have, and you remember that, as they have good lives, it will make all the rest of our lives better, it is clear that we all have a responsibility to ensure that their educations will be safe. We can do this, and America's future in the 21st century depends upon it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. in the Grand Foyer at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Herbert Berg, superintendent, Alexandria City schools, Alexandria, VA; Mayor Kerry Donley of Alexandria, VA; and students from T.C. Williams High School.

### **Videotaped Address to the People of Africa**

*March 19, 1998*

To all our friends in Africa, let me say how very much I'm looking forward to my upcoming trip. I'll travel to Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal. It will be a real privilege for me to be the first American President to visit those countries.

This journey will be my opportunity, and yours, to help to introduce the people of the United States to a new Africa, an Africa whose political and economic accomplishments grow more impressive each month. I want to see for myself what America can

learn from Africa and how we can work with you as partners to build a better future for all our children.

As I visit your countries and meet your leaders and citizens, I'll have in mind four central goals for us to work toward together. First, we want to support Africa's democracies, those with long and proud histories and those that are newly emerging. Together we can create a global community of nations that respect and promote human rights, tolerance, and broad participation in public life.

Second, we want to increase trade and investment with Africa. When it comes to economic development, America and Africa can help each other, opening markets, building businesses, creating jobs on both continents. A prosperous future awaits us if we strengthen the economic ties between our countries and give all our people the education and training they need to succeed in this new global economy.

But democracy and prosperity are threatened where there is violence, so our third goal is to look for ways to work in partnership with the nations of Africa to prevent armed conflict. Ethnic and political violence continues to plague parts of Africa. Together we can, and we must, find solutions.

Fourth, the United States wants to play a role in preserving Africa's majestic natural beauty and wildlife and ensuring sustainable development of Africa's natural resources. The nations of the world must continue to cooperate and avoid environmental destruction and to leave a rich heritage to our children.

There are many other areas where we can progress as partners: improving nutrition and health care, eradicating diseases like AIDS and malaria, empowering women, fighting crime and drugs, expanding civic and cultural ties across the ocean. With the 21st century fast approaching, Africa, the cradle of human civilization, is forging a vibrant future for itself with new leaders, new opportunities, and new hope. The core values that are driving Africa's renaissance—democracy, diversity, free enterprise—those are the value that the United States shares.

My wife, Hillary, my daughter, Chelsea, the entire United States delegation, and I

look forward to being with you and sharing our experience with the American people.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at approximately 2:30 p.m. on March 5 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast on the U.S. Information Agency WORLDNET, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 19. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this address.

### **Statement on the Agreement on Taxes on the Internet**

*March 19, 1998*

In my recent speech on the future of the Internet, I called for a short-term moratorium on new and discriminatory taxes that would slow down the growth of the Internet and a search for long-term solutions to the tax issues raised by electronic commerce. We cannot allow 30,000 State and local tax jurisdictions to stifle the Internet, but neither can we allow the erosion of the revenue that State and local governments need to fight crime and invest in education.

I believe that the agreement reached by groups representing State and local elected officials is an important and constructive step toward a long-term solution. I particularly want to thank Governors Leavitt and Romer for their bipartisan leadership on this important issue. I look forward to working with all parties with a stake in this issue to enact legislation this year.

NOTE: In the statement, the President referred to Gov. Michael O. Leavitt of Utah and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado.

### **Statement on Proposed Legislation To Raise the Minimum Wage**

*March 19, 1998*

Two years ago, we raised the minimum wage to reward work and help millions of Americans raise their families with dignity. With our expanded earned-income tax credit and the higher minimum wage, we said to hard-pressed working families: If you work full-time, you should not have to raise your children in poverty. Without another minimum wage increase, too many of these fami-

lies will fall through the cracks and back below the poverty line. That is wrong.

That is why I am pleased that Senator Daschle, Senator Kennedy, Representative Gephardt, and Representative Bonior are introducing legislation that includes another sound and prudent minimum wage increase. With our economy the healthiest in a generation and job growth strong, we can afford to increase the minimum wage by a dollar by the turn of the century. I strongly support raising the minimum wage. This legislation will help ensure that we pay people a decent wage and that parents who work hard and play by the rules can lift their children and themselves out of poverty. It's right for America and right for America's workers.

### **Message to the Congress Transmitting the Proposed "National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998"**

*March 19, 1998*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

I am pleased to transmit for your immediate consideration and enactment the "National and Community Service Amendments Act of 1998." This legislative proposal extends and amends national service law, including the National and Community Service Act of 1990 and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973. It builds upon the long, bipartisan tradition of service in our country, which was renewed in 1993 when I signed the National and Community Service Trust Act creating the Corporation for National Service.

Service to one's community is an integral part of what it means to be an American. The Presidents' Summit for America's Future held in Philadelphia last April reinforced the role of programs supported by the Corporation for National Service as key vehicles to provide young people with the resources to maximize their potential and give back to their communities. Citizen service is also at the heart of our efforts to prepare America for the 21st century, as we work to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives and to help those in need.

My Administration's most important contribution to citizen service is AmeriCorps, the national service program that already has given more than 100,000 young Americans the opportunity to serve their country. By tying opportunity to responsibility, we have given them the chance to serve and, in return, earn money for post-secondary education. In community after community, AmeriCorps members have proven that service can help us meet our most pressing social needs. For example, in Simpson County, Kentucky, AmeriCorps members helped second graders jump three grade levels in reading. In Boys and Girls Clubs, AmeriCorps members are mentors for at-risk young people. Habitat For Humanity relies upon AmeriCorps members to recruit more volunteers and build more houses. In communities beset by floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes, AmeriCorps members have helped to rebuild lives and restore hope. AmeriCorps members are helping to mobilize thousands of college students from more than 800 college campuses in our America Reads program. In all of these efforts, AmeriCorps brings together people of every background to work toward common goals.

Independent evaluators have reviewed AmeriCorps, National Senior Service Corps programs, and Learn and Service America programs and have concluded that national service yields a positive return on investment. The proposed legislation that I am transmitting builds on our experiences with national service to date and improves national service programs in four ways: (1) by codifying agreements with the Congress and others to reduce costs and streamline national service; (2) strengthening partnerships with traditional volunteer organizations; (3) increasing States' flexibility to administer national service programs; and (4) expanding opportunities for Americans to serve.

Since the enactment of the National and Community Service Trust Act in 1993, and particularly since 1995, my Administration has worked with constructive critics of national service to address their concerns and improve the overall program. This proposed legislation continues that process by reducing the Corporation's average budgeted cost per AmeriCorps member, repealing authority for

redundant or obsolete national service programs, and making other improvements in the efficiency of national service programs.

National service has never been a substitute for the contributions made by the millions of Americans who volunteer their time to worthy causes every year. Rather, as leaders of volunteer organizations have often expressed, national service has proven that the presence of full-time, trained service participants enhances tremendously the effectiveness of volunteers. This proposed legislation will strengthen the partnership between the national service programs and traditional volunteer organizations; codify the National Service Scholarship program honoring exemplary service by high school students; and expand the AmeriCorps Challenge Scholarships, through which national service participants can access education awards. It also will authorize appropriations for the Points of Light Foundation through the year 2002.

The National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993 explicitly conceived of national service as a Federal-State partnership. The Act vested significant authority in bipartisan State Commissions appointed by the Governors. I promised that we would accelerate the process of devolution as the newly created State Commissions expanded their capacities. This proposed legislation fulfills that promise in a variety of ways, including providing authority for the Corporation for National Service to enter into Service Collaboration Agreements with Governors to provide a means for coordinating the planning and administration of national service programs in a State.

This proposed legislation will also provide additional service opportunities. By reducing the cost per AmeriCorps member, it will enable more people to serve; it will broaden the age and income guidelines for National Senior Service Corps participants, expanding the pool of older Americans who can perform results-oriented service in their communities; and it will simplify the administration of Learn and Serve America, so States and communities will more easily be able to provide opportunities for students to learn through service in their schools and neighborhoods.

This past January, I had the opportunity to honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther

King, Jr., by engaging in service on the holiday commemorating his birth. I joined 65 AmeriCorps members and more than 300 community volunteers in repairing and repainting Cardozo High School in the Shaw neighborhood of Washington, D.C. Thirty-one years ago, Dr. King came to that very neighborhood and urged the people there to engage in citizen service to rebuild their lives, their community, and their future. That is what those national service participants, and the thousands more who were participating in similar projects across the country, were doing—honoring the legacy of Dr. King and answering the high calling of citizenship in this country.

Each of the more than 500,000 participants in the programs of the National Senior Service Corps and the 750,000 participants in programs supported by Learn and Serve America, and every AmeriCorps member answers that high calling of citizenship when they make and fulfill a commitment to service in their communities. This proposed legislation builds on the successes of these programs and improves them for the future.

I urge the Congress to give this proposed legislation prompt and favorable consideration.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 19, 1998.

**Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial  
Campaign Committee Dinner**  
*March 19, 1998*

Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to begin by thanking all of you, not only for your warm welcome in this magnificent Women's Museum, which I always love to visit and which is a real treasure of our National Capital, but for being here to support the Senators who are here and those whom we hope to add to their ranks.

I thank Senator Torricelli not only for his friendship and his kind words but for his fighting spirit. He has the heart of a lion. And when others feel weak, he feels stronger, and we are stronger because of what Bob Torricelli has done. And I thank him.

I thank Senator Kerrey, my longtime friend. We used to be Governors together, and we used to lament the condition of our country in the eighties, and the escalating deficits and what we saw as the irresponsibility of decisionmaking here. Bob Kerrey did cast the deciding vote on that budget bill, and I thank him for that. But in a real sense, so did all the other Democrats, because we didn't have a single Republican vote. And Al Gore even had to vote. And as he says, "Whenever I vote, we win." [Laughter]

But imagine how different the last 6 years would have been—5 years and 3 months—if we hadn't done that. And I want to thank Senator Kerrey for being willing to do this job for 2 years. It's not easy. It's easy to give the speeches. You know, he just asked me to show up every now and then at these events and smile and take a few pictures, see people I enjoy visiting with anyway, and give a talk. But he's had to go across the country and do all the work and see all of you and ask you to help. And it's often a thankless task. And when he took it, it was certainly a thankless task because we were down and our numbers were depleted. But he took it on, and I predict a stunning and historically unpredicted result in November of 1998. And you will have a lot to do with it, Senator Kerrey. We thank you very much.

Finally, I want to say that it would be impossible for me to do my job if it weren't for Tom Daschle. He is a magnificent leader of our Democrats in the Senate. Yes, let's stand up for him. [Applause]

I want to talk very briefly about what I believe to be at stake. First, just a little picture on the past. It is wonderful to stand up and say that these are good times for America, that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years and the lowest crime rate in 24 years and the smallest welfare population in 27 years and the lowest inflation in 30 years and the highest homeownership in history. That's wonderful to say. But we forget how hard it was to do.

Before the Balanced Budget Act ever saved a dollar, the deficit had been reduced by 92 percent because of the votes solely of Democratic Members of Congress in 1993. The crime rate is down in part because we moved beyond the hot rhetoric of tough talk

to put 100,000 more community police officers on the street, to give our children something positive to do in their leisure hours, and to take assault weapons off the street. And many of our people gave up their jobs on those two votes.

And so I say to you, I am proud to be a member of my party, and I'm proud of every Senator and every Congressman who cast those votes. And the people who lost their jobs because they did it can at least go to sleep tonight knowing that this is a better, stronger, safer country because they were in the Democratic caucus, and they did what was right when the chips were down. And I'm grateful to them.

After a year of real, harsh partisan fighting back and forth in which the majority party in the Congress today shut the Government down, and we didn't shut down—and so the "Contract With America" was abandoned, and we moved on to bipartisan cooperation.

We passed a balanced budget bill. That bill did a lot to keep our recovery going, and I thank every Republican who supported it. But that bill had the biggest increase in child health care since 1965. It will add 5 million people—children—to the ranks of those with health insurance. It had the largest increase in aid to education since 1965. It opened the doors of college to all Americans by giving a \$1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college; further tax credits; education IRA's; 300,000 work-study positions; finally, tax deductibility for the interest on student loans. Those education provisions and those health care provisions—you know who put them in the Balanced Budget Act: the Democrats in the United States Senate and in the United States House of Representatives. And I thank them for it.

And more importantly, I ask you to look to the future. We have a lot of challenging decisions. Senator Kerrey said we've got an ambitious agenda; we do. We now have virtual consensus in Washington that before we spend a surplus that hasn't even materialized, we should save Social Security for the 21st century and not allow the baby boomers to bankrupt their children or to live in abject poverty because we failed to do it. It was because of the unanimous support of the Democrats in the Senate and in the House

for that position that it is now the position of the entire United States Government. And that's another thing that the future will be able to thank Tom Daschle and all the other members of this caucus who are here tonight for, and I thank them for it.

We also have to save Medicare. We're going to have an election this year, and we're going to have a report at the end of the year to deal with Medicare changes and Social Security changes. Who do you trust to make those changes for the 21st century? Think about that when you think about how much support you're going to give Senator Patty Murray, for example. I think it's clear what the answer is: the Democratic Party.

We're in the middle—we have some money now, finally, at long last. And I have asked the Congress to put the money primarily into education and into research for the 21st century, to medical research and scientific research; but in education, to go down to a class size all across America that averages 18 kids a class in the first 3 grades, to rehabilitate 5,000 schools, and hire 100,000 more teachers.

In the Senate, the majority party voted to cut \$400 million this year out of education. We don't agree with that. We think that the American people should be heard on that. And we believe they will agree with Tom Daschle and the members of the Democratic caucus and the people who will be running in the Senate elections this November. That's important. We need to stand up for that.

I could give you the same argument on the environment. You know as well as I do that the environment will be a more important issue 10 years from now than it is today. You know it will be. Who is more likely to stand up for responsible action that will permit us to preserve our environment, indeed to enhance it, as we continue to grow the economy?

You just go through these issues. Child care: Most American parents are in the work force, and I promise you that hundreds of thousands, even millions of them, go to work every day worried sick that their children do not have access to quality, affordable child care. We have a proposal to address that, to increase the child care tax credit for middle class families, to increase the support we give

to lower income working families. That support, today at least, is not supported; that program is not supported by the majority party in the Senate.

I believe the American people agree with us, and every single Senate election will be a referendum on whether we really believe it when we say that parenting is our most important job, and everybody ought to be able to succeed at home and at work at the same time.

Let me close with a story. Beyond all the policies, there really is a question of whether we are committed to putting the interests of all our people first. Yesterday I went out to Las Vegas to meet with the executive committee of the AFL-CIO. But before I did that, I went to this wonderful training program that the carpenters union runs out there for people who are basically entry-level carpenters, trying to give them higher levels of skill. And in addition to the on-site, on-the-job training, they also have classroom time in which they try to make sure that all the working people understand what their health insurance is and how it works, what their retirement plan is and how it works, and how it all fits in and how they can manage their own finances better.

So I met with all these people; most of them I'd say were between 28 and 35 years old, very young by my standards. And the first question was, in this class—this young man said, "Well, I see I've got a good retirement, but have you people in the Government done what you should to protect it?" And I was able to proudly say that in 1994, when we were still in the majority, we passed a plan to reform the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation; we saved 8½ million pensions that were underwater; we stabilized 40 million more. And yes, we had done everything we responsibly could to protect the integrity of the pension systems of the country.

Then the next young man said—and this is what made me so proud of all these young people and proud to be a member of my party—the next young guy said, "Look up there at all of our fringe benefits, because we belong to the union and because we're working here in a State and a city with low unemployment and a lot of prosperity." He said, "Do you realize there are people who

do what we do for a living who don't make as much per hour as we get in fringe benefits?" He said, "Mr. President, how are those people living? I think they ought to have health care, too. How are they going to save for their retirement? How are they going to educate their children?"

And all of a sudden, all these other people, all these young people started saying, "Yes, we think in Washington you ought to be looking out for those people. You ought to be doing everything you can to make sure that anybody that's working as hard as we are, whether they are in a union, whether they make the kind of money we make, or not, at least have the basic things they need to succeed in raising their children and educating them, and having a chance to own a home and succeed and live the American dream." And I thought to myself, this country is in pretty good hands. These people were there, grateful for their prosperity, but thinking about others.

This country has always done best at every time of change and challenge when we've tried to do three things. I say this over and over again, but I want you to think about this: When you go home tonight, ask yourself why you came here, and "Bob Torricelli made me" or "Bob Kerrey made me" is not an acceptable answer. [*Laughter*] Now, you ought to try this; try this on for size: Go home tonight and before you go to bed—I'm dead serious—I'm dead serious—go home tonight and ask yourself, why did I go to that dinner tonight? And get out a piece of paper and a pen and write down an answer. Imagine you went home and one of your children asked you, "Why did you go there," and you had to give an answer.

This country has met every challenge of the last 220 years because at every time of challenge and change we've done three things: We have widened the circle of opportunity; we have deepened the meaning of freedom and extended it to more people; and we have strengthened the bonds of our Union.

We are moving into an age where the volume of knowledge is doubling every 5 years, a global society where we're drawing closer to people around the world and where all of our neighbors are more than ever likely

to be from all around the world. We have to learn to live in ways that we never imagined, with people we couldn't have possibly understood just a few years ago. But what we have to do is what we've always had to do, widen the circle of opportunity, deepen the meaning of freedom, strengthen the bonds of our Union.

And when you go home tonight, you think about that. And you ask yourself, which party is more likely to do that. I rest my case.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:48 p.m. at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. In his remarks, he referred to Senator J. Robert Kerrey, chair, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

### **Remarks on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization**

*March 20, 1998*

Thank you. Thank you very much, Secretary Albright, General Shelton, General Sandler, Mr. Berger, Senator Roth, to the members and representatives of the Joint Chiefs, members of the diplomatic corps, and other interested citizens, many of whom have held high positions in the national security apparatus of this country and the military of our country. We're grateful for everyone's presence here today.

I especially want to thank the Members of the Senate who are here. I thank Senator Roth, the chairman of the NATO observer group, Senator Moynihan, Senator Smith, Senator Levin, Senator Lugar, Senator Robb, and Senator Thurmond. Your leadership and that of Senators Lott, Daschle, Helms, and Biden and others in this Chamber has truly, as the Secretary of State said, made this debate a model of bipartisan dialog and action.

The Senate has held more than a dozen hearings on this matter. We have worked very closely with the Senate NATO observer group. And I must say, I was immensely gratified when the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 16 to 2 in support of enlargement.

Now, in the coming days the full Senate will act on this matter of critical importance to our national security. The admission of Po-

land, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to NATO will be a very important milestone in building the kind of world we want for the 21st century.

As has been said, I first proposed NATO enlargement 4 years ago, when General Joulwan was our commander in Brussels. Many times since, I've had the opportunity to speak on this issue. Now a final decision is at hand, and now it is important that all the American people focus on this matter closely. For this is one of those rare moments when we have within our grasp the opportunity to actually shape the future, to make the new century safer and more secure and less unstable than the one we are leaving.

We can truly be present at a new creation. When President Truman signed the North Atlantic Treaty 49 years ago next month, he expressed the goal of its founders in typically simple and straightforward language: to preserve their present peaceful situation and to protect it in the future. The dream of the generation that founded NATO was of a Europe whole and free. But the Europe of their time was lamentably divided by the Iron Curtain. Our generation can realize their dream. It is our opportunity and responsibility to do so, to create a new Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace for the very first time in all history.

Forging a new NATO in the 21st century will help to fulfill the commitment and the struggle that many of you in this room engaged in over the last 50 years. NATO can do for Europe's East what it did for Europe's West: protect new democracies against aggression, prevent a return to local rivalries, create the conditions in which prosperity can flourish.

In January of 1994, on my first trip to Europe for the NATO summit, we did take the lead in proposing a new NATO for a new era. First, by strengthening our alliance to preserve its core mission of self-defense, while preparing it to take on the new challenges to our security and to Europe's stability; second, by reaching out to new partners and taking in new members from among Europe's emerging democracies; and third, by forging a strong and cooperative relationship between NATO and Russia.

Over the past 4 years, persistently and pragmatically, we have put this strategy into place. NATO has shifted to smaller, more flexible forces better prepared to provide for our defense in this new era, but also trained and equipped for other contingencies. Its military power remains so unquestioned that it was the only force capable of stopping the fighting in Bosnia. NATO signed the Founding Act with Moscow, joining Russia and history's most successful alliance in common cause for a peaceful, democratic, undivided Europe. We signed a charter to build cooperation between NATO and Ukraine. We created the Partnership For Peace as a path to full NATO membership for some, and a strong and lasting link to the alliance for others. Today, the Partnership For Peace has exceeded its mission beyond the wildest dreams of those of us who started it. It has more than three dozen members.

Now we're on the threshold of bringing new members into NATO. The alliance's enlargement will make America safer by making NATO stronger, adding new forces and new allies that can share our security burdens. Let me be very clear: NATO's core mission will remain the same—the defense of the territory of its members. The addition of new members will strengthen and enhance that mission. In pursuing enlargement, we have made sure not to alter NATO's core function or its ability to defend America and Europe's security.

Now I urge this Senate to do the same, and in particular, to impose no constraints on NATO's freedom of action, its military decisionmaking, or its ability to respond quickly and effectively to whatever challenges may arise. NATO's existing treaty and the way it makes defense and security decisions have served our Nation's security well for half a century.

In the same way, the addition of these new members will help NATO meet new challenges to our security. In Bosnia, for example, Polish, Czech, and Hungarian soldiers serve alongside our own with skill and professionalism. Remember, this was one of the largest, single operational deployments of American troops in Europe since World War II. It was staged from a base in Tazsar, Hungary. It simply would not have happened as

swiftly, smoothly, or safely without the active help and support of Hungary.

As we look toward the 21st century, we're looking at other new security challenges as well—the spread of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile technology, terrorism and the potential for high-tech attacks on our information systems. NATO must be prepared to meet and defeat this new generation of threats, to act flexibly and decisively under American leadership. With three new members in our ranks, NATO will be better able to meet those goals as well.

Enlargement also will help to make Europe more stable. Already, the very prospect of membership has encouraged nations throughout the region to accelerate reforms, resolve disputes, and improve cooperation.

Now, let me emphasize what I've said many times before and what all NATO allies have committed to: NATO's first new members should not be its last. Keeping the doors open to all of Europe's new democracies will help to ensure that enlargement benefits the security of the entire region, not just the first three new members.

At last summer's summit in Madrid, NATO agreed to examine the process of enlargement at our next summit in 1999. Neither NATO nor my administration has made any decisions or any commitments about when the next invitations for membership should be extended, or to whom. I have consulted broadly with Congress on decisions about the admissions of the first three members. I pledge to do the same before any future decisions are made. And of course, any new members would also require the advice and the consent of the United States Senate.

For these reasons, I urge, in the strongest terms, the Senate to reject any effort to impose an artificial pause on the process of enlargement. Such a mandate is unnecessary and, I believe, unwise. If NATO is to remain strong, America's freedom to lead it must be unfettered and our freedom to cooperate with our other partners in NATO must remain unfettered. A unilateral freeze on enlargement would reduce our own country's flexibility and, perhaps even more important, our leverage, our ability to influence our partners. It would fracture NATO's open-door consensus; it would undermine further

reforms in Europe's democracies; it would draw a new and potentially destabilizing line, at least temporarily, in Europe.

There are other steps we must take to prevent that division from reemerging. We must continue to strengthen the Partnership For Peace with our many friends in Europe. We need to give even more practical expression to the agreements between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine, turning words into deeds. With Russia and other countries, we must continue to reduce our nuclear stockpiles—and we thank you, Senator Lugar, for your leadership on that—to combat the dangers of proliferation, to lower conventional arms ceilings all across Europe. And all of us together must help the Bosnian people to finish the job of bringing a lasting peace to their country. If you think about where we were just a year ago in Bosnia, not to mention 2 years ago, not to mention 1995, no one could have believed we would be here today. It would not have happened had it not been for NATO, the Partnership For Peace allies, the Russians, all of those who have come together and joined hands to end the bloodiest conflict in Europe since the Second World War.

Now we have to finish what America started 4 years ago, welcoming Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic into our alliance. If you look around at who is in the room today, you can see that they are more than willing to be a good partner. They will make NATO stronger; they will make Europe safer; and in so doing, they will make America and our young people more secure. They will make it less likely that the young men and women in uniform who serve under General Shelton and the other generals here, and their successors in the 21st century, will have to fight and die because of problems in Europe.

A new NATO can extend the blessings of freedom and security in a new century. With the help of our allies, the support of the Senate, the strength of our continued commitment, we can bring Europe together—not by force of arms, but by possibilities of peace. That is the promise of this moment. And we must seize it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:46 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Henry H. Shelton, USA, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Maj. Gen. Roger Sandler, USA (Ret.), executive director, Reserve Officers Association.

### **Statement on Signing the Examination Parity and Year 2000 Readiness for Financial Institutions Act**

*March 20, 1998*

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 3116, the "Examination Parity and Year 2000 Readiness for Financial Institutions Act."

This legislation calls upon Federal financial regulatory agencies to conduct seminars and provide guidance for financial institutions on the implications of the Year 2000 problem. It also extends to the Office of Thrift Supervision and the National Credit Union Administration statutory authority, similar to that of other Federal banking agencies, to examine the operations of contractors that perform services for thrifts and credit unions. These services include data processing and the maintenance of computer systems that are used to track everything from day-to-day deposit and loan activity to portfolio management.

Many thrifts and credit unions, particularly smaller ones, rely heavily on the services of outside contractors for the processing of critical business applications. This legislation will assist Federal regulators in better understanding the Year 2000 risks to which thrifts and credit unions may be exposed and will bolster efforts to work with them to ensure that they will be able to continue to provide services to their customers without disruption.

The Year 2000 problem is one of the great challenges of the Information Age in which we live. My Administration is committed to working with the Congress and the private sector to ensure that we minimize Year 2000-related disruptions in the lives of the American people.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 20, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 3116, approved March 20, was assigned Public Law No. 105-164.

## Statement on Cuba

March 20, 1998

Eight weeks ago, His Holiness John Paul II made an historic visit to Cuba. He spoke to and for the Catholic faithful who have for decades endured a system that denied their right to worship freely.

In anticipation and in support of that visit, my administration made a number of exceptions to our policy regarding travel and shipment of humanitarian supplies to Cuba. The response of the Cuban people to that visit has since convinced me that we should continue to look for ways to support Cuba's people without supporting its regime, by providing additional humanitarian relief, increasing human contacts, and helping the Cuban people prepare for a peaceful transition to a free, independent, and prosperous nation.

Prior to the Pope's visit, we authorized direct charter flights for pilgrims to attend Papal services. We also authorized direct humanitarian cargo flights to Cuba in order to reduce the cost of getting these needed supplies to the Cuban people. The deliveries were carefully monitored to ensure that they reached the people for whom they were intended.

These measures were fully consistent with the letter and spirit of the Cuban Democracy Act and the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, which, in addition to sustaining tough economic sanctions, also enable and encourage the administration to conduct a program of support for the Cuban people.

I continue to believe in the validity of our policy built on four main components:

- pressure on the regime for democratic change;
- support for the Cuban people through humanitarian assistance and help in developing civil society;
- promotion of more concerted multilateral effort to promote democracy and human rights; and
- cooperative arrangements to move migration into safe, legal and orderly channels.

I have been following carefully the various proposals put forward by Members of Congress and other interested groups for expanding humanitarian assistance to the people of Cuba, including food. I have asked Secretary Albright to work on a bipartisan basis with the Congress to fashion an approach to the transfer of food to the Cuban people.

To build further on the impact of the Pope's visit, to support the role of the Church and other elements of civil society in Cuba, and to thereby help prepare the Cuban people for a democratic transition, I have also decided to take the following steps:

- Resume licensing direct humanitarian charter flights to Cuba. Direct humanitarian flights under applicable agency regulations will make it easier for Cuban-Americans to visit loved ones on the island, and for humanitarian organizations to provide needed assistance more expeditiously and at lower cost.
- Establish new licensing arrangements to permit Cuban-Americans and Cuban families living here in the United States to send humanitarian remittances to their families in Cuba at the level of \$300 per quarter, as was permitted until 1994. This will enable Cuban-Americans to provide direct support to relatives in Cuba, while moving the current flow of remittances back into legal, orderly channels.
- Streamline and expedite the issuance of licenses for the sale of medicines and medical supplies and equipment to Cuba. Based on experience of the past several years, including during the Papal visit, we believe that the end-use verification called for in the Cuban Democracy Act can be met through simplified arrangements.

The Departments of Treasury, Commerce and State will develop and promulgate new licensing arrangements in these three areas in the coming weeks.

The people of Cuba continue to live under a regime which deprives them of their freedom, and denies them economic opportunity. The overarching goal of American policy must be to promote a peaceful transition to democracy on the island. Such a transition will depend upon the efforts of Cubans

who seek to build a vibrant civil society and to secure respect for basic human rights. The presence of His Holiness John Paul II in Cuba inspired the Cuban people, providing an important psychological boost to the Cuban Catholic Church, to Cuba's nascent civil society, and to the Cuban people. The measures I have announced today are designed to build upon that visit, to support the Cuban people through the hardships and difficulties ahead, to contribute to the growth of a civil society and to help prepare for a peaceful transition to democracy.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting the Saint Kitts/Nevis-United States Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Documentation**

*March 20, 1998*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Treaty Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters, signed at Basseterre on September 18, 1997, and a related exchange of notes signed at Bridgetown on October 29, 1997, and February 4, 1998. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the Report of the Department of State with respect to the Treaty.

The Treaty is one of a series of modern mutual legal assistance treaties being negotiated by the United States in order to counter criminal activities more effectively. The Treaty should be an effective tool to assist in the prosecution of a wide variety of crimes, including drug trafficking offenses. The Treaty is self-executing.

The Treaty provides for a broad range of cooperation in criminal matters. Mutual assistance available under the Treaty includes: taking of testimony or statements of persons; providing documents, records, and articles of evidence; serving documents; locating or identifying persons; transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes; executing requests for searches and seizures; assisting in proceedings related to immobiliza-

tion and forfeiture of assets; restitution; collection of fines; and any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty and related exchange of notes, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
March 20, 1998.

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**Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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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.

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**March 15**

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton returned to Washington, DC, from Camp David, MD.

**March 16**

In the morning, the President traveled to Silver Spring, MD, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

In an evening ceremony in the Oval Office, the President received diplomatic credentials from Ambassadors Petrit Bushati of Albania, Bruno Nongoma Zidouemba of Burkina Faso, Samson K. Chemai of Kenya, Marcelo Perez Monasterios of Bolivia, Michael Arneaud of Trinidad and Tobago, Rachel Gbenyon Diggs of Liberia, Jon Baldvin Hannibalsson of Iceland, Eloy Alfaro de Alba of Panama, Dorodjatun Kuntjoro-Jakti of Indonesia, Nicholas J.O. Liverpool of Dominica, Li Zhaoxing of China, and Claude Sylvestre Anthony Morel of Seychelles.

Later, the President met with Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to appoint Curtis A. Prins to serve as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

**March 17**

In the afternoon, the President attended a St. Patrick's Day luncheon in the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill.

In the evening, the President held separate meetings in the Oval Office with the leadership of four Irish political parties: David Trimble and John Taylor of the Ulster Unionist Party; John Hume and Seamus Mallon of the Social Democratic and Labor Party; Gary McMichael and David Adams of the Ulster Democratic Party; and Lord John Alderdice and Niall Johnston of the Alliance Party.

**March 18**

In the morning, the President traveled to Las Vegas, NV. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ruth Mandel as Vice Chair of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The White House announced that the President invited Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy for an official visit to the United States, May 5–8.

**March 19**

In the afternoon, the President met with King Hussein I of Jordan in the Oval Office.

The President announced his intention to appoint Steven Pennoyer as U.S. Commissioner of the International Pacific Halibut Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint James Pipkin as U.S. Federal Commissioner of the Pacific Salmon Commission.

**March 20**

The President declared a major disaster in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and ordered Federal aid to supplement recovery efforts in the area struck by severe drought beginning January 17.

The White House announced that the President will attend the 23d annual meeting of the heads of state of the world's leading industrialized democracies in Birmingham, United Kingdom, May 15–17, and the semi-annual U.S.-European Union summit on May 18 in London. The President will visit Germany prior to his visit to the United Kingdom.

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**Nominations  
Submitted to the Senate**

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

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**Withdrawn March 16**

Frederica A. Massiah-Jackson, of Pennsylvania, to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, vice Thomas N. O'Neill, Jr., retired, which was sent to the Senate on July 31, 1997.

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**Checklist  
of White House Press Releases**

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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.

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**Released March 16**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the President's meetings with Irish political leaders on the Northern Ireland peace process

**Released March 17**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

**Released March 18**

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore on IRS customer service improvements

Statement by the Press Secretary: Official Visit by Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi

Announcement on release of a Health Care Financing Administration memorandum to State insurance commissioners and insurance issuers on the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

**Released March 19**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program Director Bill Modzeleski, National Commissioner for Education Statistics Pat Forgione, and Justice Department Office of Intergovernmental Affairs Director Nicholas Gess on school safety

Statement by the Press Secretary: European Union Decision on Bio-Engineered Crops

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Special Africa Trip Web Site

Announcement: President Clinton Calls on Congress To Extend National Service

**Released March 20**

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, Agency for International Development Administrator Brian Atwood, and Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater on the President's upcoming visit to Africa

Statement by the Press Secretary: President's Trip to Europe

Announcement: Official Delegation Accompanying the President to Africa

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**Acts Approved  
by the President**

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