

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, November 9, 1998
Volume 34—Number 45
Pages 2197–2274

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Editor's Note: The President was in Highfill, AR, on November 6, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* is published pursuant to the authority contained in the Federal Register Act (49 Stat. 500, as amended; 44 U.S.C. Ch. 15), under

regulations prescribed by the Administrative Committee of the Federal Register, approved by the President (37 FR 23607; 1 CFR Part 10).

Distribution is made only by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* will be furnished by mail to domestic subscribers for \$80.00 per year (\$137.00 for mailing first class) and to foreign subscribers for \$93.75 per year, payable to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. The charge for a single copy is \$3.00 (\$3.75 for foreign mailing).

There are no restrictions on the republication of material appearing in the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*.

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Week Ending Friday, November 6, 1998

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the National Security
Strategy Report**

October 29, 1998

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

As required by section 603 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, I am transmitting a report on the National Security Strategy of the United States.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks to the Clergy
in Jamaica, New York**

October 30, 1998

Thank you so much. Please be seated. Dr. Walker, Dr. Forbes, Reverend McCall—[laughter]—he was doing pretty good, wasn't he? Bishop Quick, Reverend Sharpton; my good friend Congressman Schumer and his wife, Iris, and their daughter, Jessica. I think Congressman Towns is here. President Fernando Ferrer, the Bronx Borough president; Virginia Fields, I think may be here, the Manhattan Borough president; Judith Hope, our State chair. I'd like to thank the St. Paul Community Baptist Church Choir for singing Red Foley's old hymn for me. Thank you very much. It was quite wonderful.

When I was a little boy, I used to listen to Mahalia Jackson sing that song. And when I was a young man and living in England, I went to the Royal Albert Hall in London to hear Mahalia Jackson sing not long before she died. It was 29 years ago, and it was an amazing thing. She was singing, "Precious

Lord." At the end of her concert, there were all these young people like me there. But most of them weren't like me, most of them were British; they didn't grow up listening to all this, you know. And these kids stormed the stage at the end, almost like she was a rock star. They were five and six deep, screaming for her to keep singing.

And you reminded me of all that just a moment ago, and I thank you for that. Weren't they wonderful? [Applause] They were great. Thank you.

Let me say to all of you, I thank Carl McCall for his leadership and for what he said. I have tried to be a friend to all Americans, without regard to race or income or religion or standing in life. I am grateful that in an economy in which we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years that the African-American poverty rate is the lowest we have ever measured. I am grateful that the tax credit that Congressman Schumer helped me pass in 1993, the earned-income tax credit, cutting the taxes of lower income working people, when put with the minimum wage, has lifted over one million African-Americans out of poverty through their own efforts of work.

I am grateful to have had the chance to double the number of small business loans to African-Americans and dramatically increase support for historically black colleges, to have had the largest number of African-Americans serving in the Cabinet in my two administrations by far than any President and 54—54—Federal judges.

I say all that to make this point—maybe not as well as Dr. Forbes did. I don't seek any credit for that. It was an honor for me to do. It was something I wanted to do. It was a desire born of the life I have lived and the people I have known and the things I have seen that I like and the things I have seen that I deplored and the potential of people too long untapped that I was determined to do what I could to lift up.

But it all happened because of the American system of democracy. Yesterday, all over America all kinds of people were watching John Glenn go up in space at 77 years old. Kind of made us all think we had something to look forward to—[laughter]—77 years old. But you may not have thought of this if you were sitting in front of your television watching that: How did he get up in space? Oh yes, a rocket took him, all right. He got up in space because the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States, over time, but especially in these last 6 years, when we had such budget problems, supported a mission for the United States in space and believed that mission ought to have benefits for us here on Earth, whether it's learning about the environmental challenges we face or making advances in health care and prevention of health problems. In other words, at bottom, it was a citizen's decision.

So if you voted for a Member of Congress who supported the changes we made in the space program but didn't want to shut it down, wanted to keep it going, then you had your hand on John Glenn when he went up in space yesterday.

Now that's what I want you to think about. A week ago today, I was in the White House with the Prime Minister of Israel and the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority announcing the next move forward in the Middle East peace process. And I'm very grateful for the nice things people said about the role that I played, but it was my job. It's what you hired me to do. And I wanted to do it because of what I know about what is going on, my heartbreak over the loss and my hope over the potential of the region which is the home to all three of the world's great monotheistic religions. But what I want you to know is that if you liked that last Friday and it made you feel good about your country, pushing for peace, if you supported me, then you were part of that peace process.

And today we announced we had another good quarter of economic growth. And I outlined what I was going to try to do to help these countries in trouble around the world because they buy our things. We live in a world anymore where it is not just our neighbors that have to do well, down the block,

if we want to do well. Our neighbors around the world need to do well.

If we want to bring opportunity back into the neighborhoods of New York City where it hasn't happened yet, we have to have some place that would be matched up with us as partners. So if they do well in the Caribbean, if they do well in Latin America, if we have closer relations with Africa, it actually will help us also to build up our own people, a lesson that those who study the Bible will not be surprised turned out to be true. But if you liked all that, if you supported me and my economic policies, you had a hand in it. It was your prosperity.

I think of all the things Carl McCall has done as comptroller that no comptroller ever did before, all the people he tried to help—loans to 300 New York businesses, thousands of new jobs, millions available to women- and minority-owned businesses. Nobody ever did that before. In a real sense, it wasn't just him doing that. You did that. He's your hired hand just like I am. We have nothing that the people of New York and the United States don't give us under the constitutions under which we labor.

Mr. Schumer wants to be a Senator. New York has had some great Senators. Robert Wagner—so many years ago the whole framework of our labor laws protecting the dignity of working people in the workplace—Herbert Layman; Jacob Javits, a great Republican Senator; Senator Moynihan; Robert Kennedy. New York should have a Senator who can be very much in the mix of what needs to be done today and tomorrow, all the specific things, but also can help to lead the State and the Nation with a vision. He's that kind of person. I know him well, and I want you to help him.

And if you think about this election, it's about choices—clear choices. And if you vote and if the people you know and love vote, and the things you want to have happen, happen, then it's not just those of us whom you elect doing it. It's you doing it. It's being Americans in the best sense and being rewarded in the highest sense.

You know, we got some things done, some important things done, at the end of this last congressional session, but it's hard for 8 days

of progress to overcome 8 months of partisanship. And if you look ahead, we've got the largest number of children in our schools we've ever had, for finally we've got more kids in school than when I was there in the baby boom generation, taking a big burden off our generation I might add.

But as a result—and more and more of these children are immigrant children. They come from families whose first language is not English. And more and more they find themselves in these great big classrooms where the teachers can't give them the individual attention they need. And we know now that the most important factor in having enduring learning gains for children, particularly if they're poor children, is to be in a small class in the early grades with a good teacher who can individually help them get off to a good start.

So we said, we want 100,000 teachers in the early grades to take class size down to an average of 18 in the early grades. And then we've got all these wonderful old school buildings in New York with a lot of rooms and floors that aren't usable and that can't be hooked up to computers and things. And then we've got, in Florida and California, all these kids showing up and no buildings for them to be in. They're out in trailers out in the backyard somewhere, sometimes meeting in broom closets, literally. So we said we want to build or remodel 5,000 schools, because if you're going to hire the teachers and you've got the kids there anyway, they need someplace to meet. And this Congress said, "No. No. No. We don't believe in that."

But we believe in that. If we had a little more balance, just a few more Democrats, we could get 5,000 more schools for America. That's what this issue is.

One hundred sixty million Americans are in managed care, and we may well have more in the future. A lot of seniors want to be in managed care programs for Medicare because then they get a prescription drug benefit. It's a big issue.

I have never been opposed to the managed care concept because when I became President, the inflation rate in health care costs was 3 times as high as the inflation rate in the economy, and it was bankrupting businesses and individual senior citizens, and it

threatened to consume the country. So we had to have a better management of the money we were putting into health care.

But no management system should be allowed to swallow up the purpose of the endeavor. And today you've got people—heart-breaking people—who were denied the care they should have gotten because insurance company bureaucrats or accountants said, "No, you can't have it." You have people who get hurt in an accident, and instead of going to the nearest hospital emergency room, they're carted halfway across town through a bunch of red lights and waiting because that's the one covered in their plan.

You have people in a plan, and their employer changes plans when it expires, but the worker may be pregnant or the worker's spouse may be undergoing chemotherapy—to be told to change doctors in the middle of one of those streams. You ever had anybody in your family on chemotherapy? I have. You know, it's a scary thing. And families try to pull together, and they want to make light of it. We made a lot of jokes in my family when my mother was on chemotherapy. Was she going to lose her hair or not? If she did, would the wig look better than her hair? You know, you try to make them laugh. But the truth is, you're scared to death. And you wonder if the person you love is going to get so sick they won't be able to eat anymore.

And then in the middle of that, if somebody had told us, "I'm sorry. We changed carriers. Now you have to change doctors," I don't know what I would have done. But it happens. And I could give you a lot of other examples.

So we had this Patients' Bill of Rights. We said, look, we had 43 of these HMO's saying, "Mr. President, you're right." We had a national commission of all kinds of people recommending this Patients' Bill of Rights. And we tried to pass it into law because it's not fair for some HMO's to do it and others not, and then the people that aren't behaving well to get rewarded by getting more customers who are healthy with lower prices.

So we said, okay, everybody ought to—we're going to have a simple bill of rights for every patient. First of all, if your doctor tells you you ought to see a specialist, you

can see one. Secondly, if you get hurt, you ought to go to the nearest emergency room. Thirdly, if you're having treatment that's serious, you ought to be able to finish it, even if your employer changes health care providers. Fourthly, your medical records ought to be kept private and not invaded. Finally, in essence, health care decisions ultimately should be made by health care professionals and patients, not by accountants. That's what we say.

Now—[*applause*—you like that? If we had just a little more balance in the Congress, a few more Democrats, we wouldn't get beat on that Patients' Bill of Rights. If we had a few more people like Chuck Schumer in the House and in the Senate, we could give the American people a Patients' Bill of Rights.

And the same thing is true on Social Security. You've heard all this debate about saving Social Security. Well, if you're on Social Security, relax, you're okay. What we're talking about is the baby boomers are moving to retirement. When they all retire, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The Trust Fund will be out of money in 2032, and we'll be into the Trust Fund in about 20 years. And if we make a few little changes now, modest changes, we can change and save this system in ways that we can all live with, and Social Security will be there.

That's why I say, look, we waited 29 years to balance the books. I've worked for 6 years on it. And before the ink is even dry, the black ink, the leaders in the other party, they want to give it back in a tax cut before we save Social Security. Now it may be popular, but it's not right. It's not right. It is not right. We owe it to the next generation to make sure the baby boom generation can retire in dignity, without having to put a whopping tax increase on their children and undermine their children's ability to raise their grandchildren.

You know, I grew up with a bunch of people who were mostly middle class folks at home. A lot of them didn't go to college, out there working for a living. They could use any kind of tax cut they could get. They liked the ones we've provided already for child care and for education. And they'd like some

more. But I don't know anybody my age that is not plagued with the notion that because we're such a large generation, our retirement will put unconscionable burdens on our children and our grandchildren.

Now, that's what this whole save Social Security thing is about. The pastors here who look after the flock and think about the generation, who work all the time at getting all of us, your sheep, to think about the long-run and not just what's in front of our nose. This is an issue that you can feel deeply. And this election is not an ordinary election because this is a generational thing. We have a few more people like Congressman Schumer in the Senate and the House—give a little more balance to this thing—we can save Social Security for the 21st century.

So again I say to you, people like Carl McCall and Chuck Schumer, Ed Towns, our whole ticket, none of them get there by accident. And when they get there and do good things, we're not doing it alone. Every good thing I ever did, you had a hand in if you helped me be President. The mistakes were my fault. The good stuff you had a hand in. Don't you forget about it. And that is true of Carl McCall. That is true of Chuck Schumer. That is true of every public official.

Somebody asked me the other day, how did you ever get those folks to agree at the Wye Plantation after 8 days. I said I was determined to be the last one standing. [*Laughter*] We were up for 39 hours. I didn't do that in college. [*Laughter*] I'm too old to do it now. [*Laughter*] I kept thinking of all those Scripture verses, you know, "Let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season, we shall reap if we do not lose heart."

I kept thinking, well, "They who wait upon the Lord will mount up with wings—[*laughter*]—run and not grow weary; walk and faint not." I almost got to the end of that verse before we got peace the other day. [*Laughter*]

Now, on Tuesday, the people that we need to be there, a lot of them will be tired. A lot of them will be hassled. A lot of them don't make much money. A lot of them have enough trouble just figuring out how to get the kids to child care or school and get back and forth from work and get the kids home

and ever have everybody in one piece by dinner time. And America is one of the countries—still—votes on a work day. It's a real hassle for them.

A lot of them depend on mass transit to get back and forth to work, and the voting place is not on the same bus line or the same subway route. It's a hassle. Just remember, everybody that doesn't show can't gripe Wednesday morning. And everybody that does show is then a part of every good thing that flows from their decision if they're in the majority.

I want you to think about how you want to feel Wednesday morning. And I want you to think about it. If you felt good during the Middle East peace process, if you felt good when John Glenn went up into space, if you felt good when I was able to tell you we were going to get 100,000 new teachers, if you felt good when I talked about those 54 Federal judges, if you believe in your heart that you have been a part of my Presidency—and I tell you you have; I wouldn't be here without you—then I ask you this one thing: Realize that this, too, is an important election, that it is not an ordinary time; it is, therefore, not an ordinary election; that what happens, all these people who will win races on Tuesday, will be a direct result, not only of how you vote but even more importantly, whether you vote.

You will come in contact with thousands of people between now and then. And when the Scripture said that, we are all admonished to render unto Caesar those things which are Caesar's, well I'm not Caesar, and we're not a dictatorship or an empire, but you know what the Bible means. It's more today. When that Scripture was written all that meant was, pay your taxes. Nobody had a vote. Nobody had a vote.

Today you've got the vote. You can actually be in the driver's seat. There is no Caesar without you—[laughter]—unless you sit it out. Our adversaries, they think a whole bunch of you will stay home. They know it's going to be a hassle. They know it will be an effort.

But you just remember every good thing that you've felt good about in the last 6 years. And you think about how you want to feel Wednesday morning. We need to reelect

Carl McCall and all America needs to know about Carl McCall, not just New York. All America needs to know about Carl.

We need to send Chuck Schumer to the Senate because all America, and not just New York, needs that. We need to get that balance back in our Congress so we can do some of these things that we can't get done now. But it all depends on you. It all depends on you.

I am more grateful than you will ever know for the friendship and the support of the people of New York, to me, to my wife, to my Vice President, to our administration; for the friendship and support of the African-American community, and especially the clergy. But the thing about this kind of work is, you never get to stop. You never get to stop.

In the last week we've had a lot to celebrate. You had your hand on John Glenn's shoulder. You had your prayers answered about the continued process of peace. You can think about your children's future with 100,000 more teachers. But there are huge fights out there left to fight—huge. And we need you.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. in Ballrooms B and C at the Ramada Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to human rights activist Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, Canaan Baptist Church of Christ; James Forbes, pastor, Riverside Church; Carl McCall, New York State comptroller and U.S. Senate candidate; Bishop Norman Quick, pastor, Childs Memorial Temple, Church of God in Christ; civil rights activist Rev. Al Sharpton; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Technology Administration Act of 1998

October 30, 1998

Today I am signing into law H.R. 1274, the "Technology Administration Act of 1998." The Act strengthens the technology programs of the Department of Commerce to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The Act will enable the Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to better serve the

Nation's more than 380,000 smaller manufacturers by eliminating the 6-year sunset provision for Federal co-funding of NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership centers.

The Act also authorizes NIST to establish a program to help elementary and secondary school teachers to convey to their students important lessons in measurements, manufacturing, technology transfer, and other areas in which NIST researchers possess world-class expertise.

I am especially pleased to sign this legislation because it includes an initiative that I have sought for the past 2 years: expansion of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award to include education and health care organizations. The Foundation for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award deserves special credit for its work to endow this expansion, as does NIST, which manages the program in close cooperation with the private sector. Now the Federal Government can do its share to foster performance excellence in schools, health care, and business.

The Act also officially establishes within the Department of Commerce an Office of Space Commercialization and the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Technology. These programs address two important components of our overall competitiveness strategy: our wise use of commercial space capabilities, consistent with public safety and national security requirements, and enhancement of technological opportunities for the States.

This Act furthers my Administration's commitment to ensure that technology remains the engine of economic growth. We have more work to do. My Administration will work with the 106th Congress on legislation to reauthorize the Commerce Department's Technology Administration and other NIST programs.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 1274, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105-309. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing Wildlife and Wetlands Legislation

October 30, 1998

Today I am signing into law H.R. 2807, an omnibus measure that includes many provisions I supported to enhance fish and wildlife protection.

The Act reauthorizes the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act through FY 2002 and prohibits the sale, importation, and exportation of products labeled or advertised as derived from rhinoceroses or tigers. This will substantially eliminate the demand for products made from these endangered species. The Act also reauthorizes, through FY 2003, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the Partnerships for Wildlife Act, two of the most popular, cost-effective, and productive environmental conservation programs.

I note that section 304 of the Act amends the criteria for appointing individuals to the North American Wetlands Conservation Council. Specifically, this provision purportedly designates an officeholder of a named private organization as a Council member. This raises two issues. First, the Council is involved in the implementation of Federal wetlands conservation programs and, therefore, its members are considered officers of the United States. Pursuant to the Appointments Clause of the Constitution, the Congress may not appoint Federal officers. Consequently, I will instruct the Secretary of the Interior merely to consider the designated individual along with other appropriate candidates for appointment to the Council.

Second, if the Secretary ultimately selects the individual designated by the Act, that individual will be subject to executive branch standards of conduct and criminal conflict-of-interest statutes. The individual's ability to act fully as a Council member therefore may be somewhat curtailed by his or her affiliation with a private organization.

On balance, the Act provides a considerable benefit to the conservation of fish and wildlife, and I am pleased to sign it into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 2807, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105-312. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998

October 30, 1998

Today I signed into law H.R. 4151, the "Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998." This legislation will make identity theft a Federal crime, with penalties generally of up to 3 years imprisonment and a maximum fine of \$250,000.

Specifically, the legislation would penalize the theft of personal information with the intent to commit an unlawful act, such as obtaining fraudulent loans or credit cards, drug trafficking, or other illegal purposes. It would also direct the Federal Trade Commission to help victims deal with the consequences of this crime.

Tens of thousands of Americans have been victims of identity theft. Impostors often run up huge debts, file for bankruptcy, and commit serious crimes. It can take years for victims of identity theft to restore their credit ratings and their reputations. This legislation will enable the United States Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies to combat this type of crime, which can financially devastate its victims.

I want to thank the Vice President for his leadership on this and other privacy issues. As we enter the Information Age, it is critical that our newest technologies support our oldest values.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4151, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105-318. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998

October 30, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 4309, the "Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998." This Act authorizes continued and expanded U.S. contributions to treatment centers, both in the United States and around the world, for persons who suffer from the mental and physical anguish of having been tortured.

The United States has contributed to these centers for many years—directly to domestic centers through the Department of Health and Human Services and to overseas centers through the Agency for International Development, and indirectly, through Department of State contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for the Victims of Torture. Contributions of this nature are a concrete and practical step that the U.S. Government takes to mitigate the effects of this serious, and far too pervasive, human rights violation.

I want to stress, however, that assisting torture victims does not end the curse of torture. The United States will continue its efforts to shine a spotlight on this horrible practice wherever it occurs, and we will do all we can to bring it to an end.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the successful passage of this legislation. I also salute those nongovernmental organizations active in the cause of human rights, who encouraged congressional passage of this Act and who work tirelessly to keep alive the spirit of human rights, in our hearts and in our domestic and foreign policy.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 30, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4309, approved October 30, was assigned Public Law No. 105-320. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Statement on the Council on
Environmental Quality Chair
Transition**

October 30, 1998

Today, with regret, I accept the resignation of Kathleen McGinty as Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality.

As my principal environmental policy adviser for nearly 6 years, Katie has led this administration's efforts to protect and restore our environment. From the forests of the Pacific Northwest to Florida's Everglades and the red-rock canyons of Utah, she has helped preserve America's natural legacy for all time. And from our air to our water to our climate, she has worked tirelessly to ensure our children and grandchildren an environment both healthy and safe.

In all these endeavors, Katie has been guided by the firm belief that the environment truly is a common ground. She has strived to promote collaboration over conflict and to demonstrate that a healthy economy and a healthy environment not only are compatible but are inextricably linked. Indeed, today we enjoy the strongest economy and cleanest environment in a generation. I am deeply grateful for Katie's vision, dedication, and hard work.

I am pleased to announce that beginning November 7, upon Katie's departure, George T. Frampton, Jr., will become acting Chair of CEQ. I will formally announce my intent to nominate Mr. Frampton as Chair, and will submit nomination papers to the Senate, at the appropriate time.

Mr. Frampton comes to his position at CEQ with a wealth of experience in environmental matters. He served as Assistant Secretary of Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks from 1993 to 1997, and prior to that was president of the Wilderness Society. In addition, he has served as a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun, Deputy Director of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's inquiry into the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, and a visiting lecturer in constitutional law at Duke University Law School.

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

The President's Radio Address

October 31, 1998

Good morning. I'm speaking to you today from the Glen Forest Elementary School in Falls Church, Virginia, where I'm joined by students, parents, and teachers to talk about a problem they understand all too well: the urgent need in America for school construction. In fact, I'm speaking to you from one of nine trailer classrooms that sit outside the schoolhouse on what used to be a playground, because there's simply not enough room inside for all the students. And the 10th trailer goes up in a matter of days.

Falls Church is not the only place with this problem. Rundown schools and rising enrollments have made these trailers an increasingly common sight all over our country. Too many children are going to school every day in trailers like this one. In other schools, class is held in gymnasiums and cafeterias. I've even heard some stories of classes being held in closets. Crumbling walls and ceilings have forced still other schools to bus their students to neighboring facilities.

With a record number of school buildings in disrepair, especially in our larger cities, and school enrollments all over America at record highs and rising by the millions, the need to renew our Nation's public schools has never been more pressing. I've said many times that in this increasingly global world where what you earn depends upon what you learn, improving education must be our Nation's top priority for all our children.

For nearly 6 years now, I've done everything I could to meet that challenge. I'm especially proud of the victories for America's children our administration fought for and won in the balanced budget Congress passed just last week. We fought for and won new investments, from child literacy to college mentoring, from after-school programs to summer school programs, to opening the doors of college even wider by helping more people with financial aid. All these things will help all our children reach their highest potential no matter where they start out in life and where they go to school.

Perhaps even more important, we fought for and won an unprecedented commitment to put 100,000 new well-trained teachers in

our Nation's classrooms, to reduce class size, decrease discipline problems, and increase student learning. But you don't have to be a math whiz to know that more teachers and smaller classes means we also need more classrooms. Unfortunately, the Republican leadership in Congress failed the simple test to pass my school construction initiative to help communities build, repair, and modernize 5,000 schools around our country.

I'm disappointed that Congress also blocked our efforts to raise academic standards and strengthen accountability in our schools. At a time when our children's education matters more than ever to our children's future and to our Nation's strength in the 21st century, there are still even some Republicans in Congress who would shut down the Department of Education.

Now, in just a few days Americans will go to the polls to elect the next Congress. And there's a lot at stake. Our children don't need another 2 years of partisanship; they need 2 years of progress, of putting people over politics. And we need a Congress that doesn't retreat from our commitment to hire 100,000 teachers; a Congress that makes a commitment to modern schools so those teachers can teach in classrooms, not in trailers; a Congress that puts aside partisanship and puts our children's future first.

The American people have the power to elect that kind of Congress. Our children are counting on us to do it. So this Tuesday let me urge all of you, without regard to your party, please, go out and vote for a Congress that will strengthen education and strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from Glen Forest Elementary School, Falls Church, VA.

Remarks to the Community at Glen Forest Elementary School in Falls Church, Virginia

October 31, 1998

Thank you. Good morning. First, I would like to thank Susan Fitz, Fran Jackson; teachers, Lori Kuzniewski—I was in her class; Ms. Kristen Mullen's class; Alan Leis; Paula John-

son, your superintendent; John Butterfield, from the education association; Jim and Molly Cameron, from the PTA—all the people who made me feel so welcome at this school today.

This is the best of our country's future. I look around this crowd today, and I see people whose roots are all over the world, whose languages are very different, whose cultures are different, whose religions are different, who have come together on this school ground in a common endeavor of learning with a promise that our country opens to all people who are willing to work hard and be good citizens and do their part. It is thrilling for me to be here and look at you. I have a much better view than you do today.

And I loved being with the children in the classroom. The best part of this morning so far, for me, has been answering the children's questions. They ask very good questions; some of them I didn't want to answer even, they were so good. [*Laughter*] And it gave me a great deal of hope for the future.

You just heard my weekly radio address, so you know that I am very concerned about the overcrowding in our Nation's classrooms. We have, almost suddenly, the largest group of schoolchildren in our Nation's history. I was part of the last large group, the baby boom generation; all of us are now between the ages of 34 and 52. This group in school today is the first group that is larger.

We have two huge problems: One is represented here, all the house trailers; the other is represented by the dilemma in our largest cities, where we have huge numbers of students and wonderful old school buildings that were unoccupied for many years. They deteriorated. Many of them now can't even be hooked up to the Internet. And we must, as a nation, face this challenge.

In the last Congress, we were able to get a big downpayment on my plan for 100,000 more teachers in the early grades to take the average size of the classes down to 18 across America in the first 3 grades. But we have to have the school buildings, as well. And I did present a plan to the Congress, that I will present again early next year, that would enable us to build or modernize 5,000 schools. If you want the smaller classes, the

teachers have to have some place to meet with the students.

And I ask all of you, based on your personal experience here and without regard to any political differences you may otherwise have, to please, please help me convince the Congress that it is the right thing for America's children to have the smaller classes, to have more teachers, and to have modern schools. Every single child in America deserves them, and the United States ought to be in the forefront of helping achieve that. And I thank you for that.

Let me also say to all of you, I learned when I came here today, because I received a little card from one of the students, that next week is the week you have student elections at the school here. Now, all the students are going to vote. And what I'd like to say is, I hope that all the parents will be just as good citizens as the students are. Because Tuesday is election day in America, as well.

For nearly 6 years I have worked hard to bring our country together across all the lines that divide us, so that America would work the way this school works, so that we could all feel the way I think all of you feel today, coming from your different walks of life to this common ground. America ought to be a place of common ground, where we move forward together.

I am grateful for the fact that after 6 years we have nearly 17 million new jobs and the lowest unemployment in 28 years; the highest homeownership in history, over two-thirds of Americans in their own homes for the first time ever; the smallest percentage of our people on public assistance, welfare, in 29 years; lowest crime rate in 25 years. I am proud of that. I am also determined that we take this moment of prosperity, which has given us the first balanced budget since 1969 and a surplus, to meet the long-term challenges of America.

We talked about education today. There are other long-term challenges. Those of you who come from the rest of the world and have come here as immigrants, who have relatives in other countries, know that there is a lot of financial turmoil in the rest of the world. I have done my best to try to help stabilize the global economy because America depends upon the success of other people

in other countries and their being able to have good jobs and raise their children and do better.

I have done my best to see America stand on the forefront of world peace. A week ago yesterday we announced the latest agreement between the Palestinians and the Israelis, and we hope it will be fully and faithfully implemented. And we will continue the work toward peace in the Middle East.

We have to look ahead to what happens when this huge generation of baby boomers retires, which is why I have said we should not spend this surplus on anything until we have reformed the Social Security system and reformed the Medicare system, to make sure that it can be preserved for the people who need it, especially when all the baby boomers retire.

We have to continue to work on the fact that many of our people, literally over half of our people, are in HMO's or other managed care plans. And this can be a good thing, because we have to save all the money we can. But it is wrong if a person is in a health care plan and the doctor says, "You need to see a specialist," and the plan says, no. It is wrong if someone is in a car accident and they have to pass three hospitals that are closer on the way to an emergency room that happens to be covered by the plan. It is wrong if someone is pregnant and during the pregnancy, or someone is sick with cancer and has had chemotherapy and during that treatment an employer changes health care providers and the person has to change doctors.

All of that is wrong. That's why we want a Patients' Bill of Rights basically to say: Okay, let's manage the system, but let's put the health care of our people first and let medical decisions be made by medical professionals, not accountants. I think that is very important. All these issues are out there, issues that will affect the long-term stability and strength of the United States and our ability to do what should be done in the world.

So let me say that I've been very concerned periodically over the last 6 years, and I was especially concerned last year that in Washington, DC, in National Government,

there are not only different parties with different philosophies and different views—that is a good thing; we should have different parties, different philosophies, different views, different opinions—but there is a great deal of difference in constructive debate and extreme partisanship which keeps things from being done.

In the last year, for 8 months we had extreme partisanship, which kept things from being done. And what we need to do is to put the progress of all of our people over the partisanship; we need to put people over politics; we need to celebrate our differences, but work together. That is what I am hoping will come out of this coming election. I hope that a Congress will be elected on Tuesday that will put the education of our children first and build or modernize these 5,000 schools.

I hope the election will produce a Congress that will not spend that surplus until we fix Social Security first, to stabilize our country, to stabilize our economy and to avoid a situation where when we retire we will have to either lower our standard of living or lower the standard of living of our children because we refused to take this moment to fix the Social Security system. I hope the next Congress will provide the American people with a Patients' Bill of Rights. I hope the next Congress will provide the American people with a bill to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, the number one public health problem in America today. It is wrong that 3,000 children start smoking every day; 1,000 will die sooner because of this.

I hope the next Congress will reach across partisan lines and raise the minimum wage for 12 million Americans. The unemployment rate is low; the inflation rate is low. You cannot support a family on \$5.15 an hour. We can afford to do it, and we should do it, and we ought to do it as Americans, across partisan lines.

I hope the next Congress will produce a genuine and bipartisan system of campaign finance reform, so that honest debate, instead of big money, controls elections.

All of these things are within your hands. So I say to all the adults who are here: Look at these children; look at how fortunate we

are that they can come together and learn from each other and have the right kind of disagreements and go have an election next week in which they campaign and make their case and everybody votes. We should set a good example. This country is still around after 220 years, having undergone unbelievable changes in the makeup of our citizenry because more than half the time, more than half the people have been right on the big issues.

This is no ordinary time. The world is changing very fast. It is, therefore, no ordinary election. The future of these children, the future of our country in the 21st century, is riding on it. So I implore all of you, if the education of our children is important to you, if the stability of our country and the stability and cause of peace in the world is important to you, please set a good example, show up on Tuesday, vote, make your voice heard, and go home and talk to your children about what you did and how it is at the core of everything that makes our country worth living and fighting for.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. on the athletic field. In his remarks, he referred to Susan Fitz, principal, and teachers Fran Jackson, Lori Kuzniewski, and Kristen Mullen, Glen Forest Elementary School; Alan Leis, deputy superintendent of schools, and Paula Johnson, area superintendent, Fairfax County, VA; John Butterfield, president, Fairfax Education Association; and Jim and Molly Cameron, co-presidents, Parent Teacher Association.

Statement on Signing the Utah Schools and Land Exchange Act of 1998

October 31, 1998

Today I am very pleased to sign into law H.R. 3830, the "Utah Schools and Land Exchange Act of 1998."

This legislation is an occasion for celebration for the people of Utah and, indeed, all Americans who care about environmental protection and public land management.

This exchange of land, mineral rights, commercial properties, and natural treasures between the United States and the State of

Utah is the largest such land exchange in the history of the lower 48 States. The exchange will help capitalize a long-neglected State school trust by putting it on solid footing and allowing it to pay rewards to the children of Utah for generations to come. The United States will obtain valuable land, thus allowing it to consolidate resources within the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the Goshute and Navajo Indian Reservations, and national parks and forests in Utah.

This Act brings to an end 6 decades of controversy surrounding State lands within Utah's national parks, forests, monuments, and reservations, and ushers in a new era of cooperation and progressive land management. We have shown that good faith, hard work, bipartisanship, and a commitment to protect both the environment and the taxpayer can result in a tremendous victory for all. I especially wish to thank Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and Kathleen McGinty, outgoing Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, for their contribution to this major achievement.

The Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, a magnificent natural wonder and scientific treasure trove, was born 2 years ago. On that day, I made a promise to work to ensure that Utah's schoolchildren, the beneficiaries of the State trust holdings within the Monument, would in fact benefit from, and not be harmed by, the establishment of this national showcase.

I am proud to say we have kept our promise. We have delivered more, and in a shorter time, than perhaps anyone believed possible. In these 2 years, we have worked closely with citizens and elected officials alike to make America's newest National Monument a success of which we all can be proud.

This bipartisan legislation shows that we can work together for the common good, for our environment, for education, and for our shared legacy as stewards of the Nation's natural public land treasures.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 31, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 3830, approved October 31, was assigned Public Law No. 105-335.

Statement on Signing the William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998

October 31, 1998

Today I am signing into law H.R. 3874, the "William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998." This legislation extends the authorization of appropriations for a number of child nutrition programs, including the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children—more commonly known as WIC—and the Summer Food Service and Farmers Market Nutrition Programs. In addition, it makes various amendments to these programs to expand children's access to food assistance and improve the programs' operation, management, integrity, and safety. I am pleased that this Act includes many provisions that my Administration proposed.

The Act will help to improve the nutritional and health status of America's most needy children. In particular, H.R. 3874 permits schools and other nonprofit institutions providing after-school care to older, "at-risk" youth to receive meal supplements at no charge. In addition, it continues to allow children in the Even Start Family Literacy Program to be eligible for free school meals.

The Act makes a number of changes to improve the administration, efficiency, and integrity of the child nutrition programs while protecting health and safety standards. It removes barriers to the participation of private, nonprofit organizations in the Summer Food Service Program, especially in rural areas, and streamlines many National School Lunch Program procedures. In addition, it revises program licensing requirements to allow more child care providers to provide Federally funded snacks to needy children. Furthermore, it ensures health and safety inspections of school food service operations where they are currently not required.

The Act is tough on fraud and abuse. It allows the Department of Agriculture to permanently disqualify from the WIC program vendors convicted of trafficking food instruments—such as WIC vouchers or electronic benefit transfer cards—or selling firearms, ammunition, explosives, or controlled substances in exchange for them. In addition,

it requires WIC applicants to appear in person to apply for benefits and document their income as a condition of receiving benefits.

It is well known that a strong relationship exists between children's nutritional status and their ability to learn, and I remain vitally concerned that all school children have what they need to succeed in school. In joining together to support H.R. 3874, my Administration and the Congress have forged a bipartisan opportunity to improve the nutrition, health, and well-being of our Nation's children. I am pleased to sign this legislation into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 31, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 3874, approved October 31, was assigned Public Law No. 105-336.

**Statement on Signing the Haskell
Indian Nations University and
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic
Institute Administrative Systems
Act of 1998**

October 31, 1998

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4259, the "Haskell Indian Nations University and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute Administrative Systems Act of 1998." Haskell Indian Nations University (Haskell) and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI) are the only Federally owned and operated schools in the United States dedicated to higher education for American Indians. Together they have provided thousands of American Indians valuable educational opportunities. This Act will broaden and increase those opportunities by assisting both institutions in their ongoing efforts to attract and retain highly qualified administrators, faculty, and staff.

The Act authorizes Haskell and SIPI each to conduct a 5-year demonstration project to test the feasibility and desirability of alternative personnel management systems designed to meet the special staffing circumstances in a college and university setting. Currently, Haskell and SIPI operate

under the same civil service personnel system as most other Federal agencies. The demonstration projects authorized by H.R. 4259 will provide these schools flexibility to test personnel reforms in areas such as recruitment, hiring, compensation, training, discipline, promotion, and benefits. At the same time, the Act maintains continued adherence to applicable laws and regulations on matters such as equal employment opportunity, Indian preference, and veterans' preference. My expectation is that, at the conclusion of these demonstration projects, these schools will have tested alternative personnel systems that maintain important employee benefits and protections while promoting the flexibility necessary in a college and university setting.

In signing H.R. 4259, I recognize that the legislation raises several concerns. It allows Haskell and SIPI to conduct demonstration projects involving leave and other employee benefits, such as retirement, health benefits, and life insurance—something no other Federal agency has been permitted to do. We must be mindful that altering employees' benefits for even a brief portion of their careers can have a serious long-term effect. Should such modifications be applied to a large number of Federal employees through other demonstration projects they could have a damaging effect on the Federal retirement and insurance trust funds, which depend on spreading risk of loss over the largest possible group of individuals. These concerns are compounded by the fact that H.R. 4259 does not provide for the level of oversight by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that is typically required for personnel-related demonstration projects.

Because of these concerns, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior and the presidents of Haskell and SIPI to involve the OPM fully in the development and evaluation of the schools' demonstration projects. This involvement is only appropriate given the OPM's important role in managing and safeguarding Federal employee benefits programs and overseeing demonstration

projects. Further, I strongly urge the Congress to await the outcome of the OPM's ongoing comprehensive review of the Government-wide benefits package for Federal employees before authorizing other demonstration projects outside the OPM's current statutory authority.

With these caveats, I trust that H.R. 4259 will prove helpful to Haskell and SIPI in attracting and retaining highly qualified employees, thereby enabling them to continue to fulfill their important mission of providing quality higher education opportunities to American Indians.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 31, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4259, approved October 31, was assigned Public Law No. 105-337.

Statement on Signing the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998

October 31, 1998

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4655, the "Iraq Liberation Act of 1998." This Act makes clear that it is the sense of the Congress that the United States should support those elements of the Iraqi opposition that advocate a very different future for Iraq than the bitter reality of internal repression and external aggression that the current regime in Baghdad now offers.

Let me be clear on what the U.S. objectives are:

The United States wants Iraq to rejoin the family of nations as a freedom-loving and law-abiding member. This is in our interest and that of our allies within the region.

The United States favors an Iraq that offers its people freedom at home. I categorically reject arguments that this is unattainable due to Iraq's history or its ethnic or sectarian make-up. Iraqis deserve and desire freedom like everyone else.

The United States looks forward to a democratically supported regime that would permit us to enter into a dialogue leading to the reintegration of Iraq into normal international life.

My Administration has pursued, and will continue to pursue, these objectives through active application of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. The evidence is overwhelming that such changes will not happen under the current Iraq leadership.

In the meantime, while the United States continues to look to the Security Council's efforts to keep the current regime's behavior in check, we look forward to new leadership in Iraq that has the support of the Iraqi people. The United States is providing support to opposition groups from all sectors of the Iraqi community that could lead to a popularly supported government.

On October 21, 1998, I signed into law the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999, which made \$8 million available for assistance to the Iraqi democratic opposition. This assistance is intended to help the democratic opposition unify, work together more effectively, and articulate the aspirations of the Iraqi people for a pluralistic, participatory political system that will include all of Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious groups. As required by the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for FY 1998 (Public Law 105-174), the Department of State submitted a report to the Congress on plans to establish a program to support the democratic opposition. My Administration, as required by that statute, has also begun to implement a program to compile information regarding allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes by Iraq's current leaders as a step towards bringing to justice those directly responsible for such acts.

The Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 provides additional, discretionary authorities under which my Administration can act to further the objectives I outlined above. There are, of course, other important elements of U.S. policy. These include the maintenance of U.N. Security Council support efforts to eliminate Iraq's prohibited weapons and missile programs and economic sanctions that continue to deny the regime the means to reconstitute those threats to international peace and security. United States support for the Iraqi opposition will be carried out consistent with those policy objectives as well.

Similarly, U.S. support must be attuned to what the opposition can effectively make use of as it develops over time. With those observations, I sign H.R. 4655 into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 31, 1998.

NOTE: H.R. 4655, approved October 31, was assigned Public Law No. 105-338. H.R. 4328, the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999, was assigned Public Law No. 105-277.

Statement on Signing the Women's Health Research and Prevention Amendments of 1998

October 31, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1722, the "Women's Health Research and Prevention Amendments of 1998," which will significantly advance women's health by strengthening national efforts to improve research and screening on diseases with particular impact on women, including osteoporosis, breast and ovarian cancer, and cardiovascular diseases.

This bill will authorize several women's health and research screening activities at the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control for the next 5 years. It will expand coordinated Federal research into heart disease, strokes, and other cardiovascular diseases among women. In addition, life-saving screening for breast and cervical cancer will continue to be made available to thousands of low-income women.

I commend the sponsors of this bipartisan legislation, including Senator Bill Frist and cosponsors Senators Barbara Boxer, Barbara Mikulski, and Patty Murray, for their contributions that will help protect women from these deadly diseases and advance our scientific knowledge.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 31, 1998.

NOTE: S. 1722, approved October 31, was assigned Public Law No. 105-340.

Statement on Signing the Women's Progress Commemoration Act

October 31, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2285, the "Women's Progress Commemoration Act." This legislation establishes a 15-member Commission, appointed by the President and the Congress to help commemorate, celebrate, and preserve women's history in America.

It is appropriate that we establish this Commission on the 150th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, the first national congregation on the conditions and rights of women in the United States. It was there, at a time when women were denied many of the rights of citizenship, that 100 brave women and men proclaimed in their "Declaration of Sentiments" that "all men and women are created equal."

At Seneca Falls and throughout our history, women have braved enormous challenges and helped to build our Nation—from women patriots hiding General Washington's soldiers from the British, to Sojourner Truth and others leading slaves out of bondage, to suffragists risking imprisonment to secure for women the most basic rights of democracy. The Women's Progress Commemoration Commission will seek out the historical sites of such great moments in our Nation's history, and recommend the best way to preserve them for generations to come. The President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, that I created by executive order in June of this year looks forward to working with the Commission created by S. 2285.

As we approach a new century and a new millennium, it is more important than ever that we honor these monuments to our enduring ideals. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I sign this legislation.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 31, 1998.

NOTE: S. 2285, approved October 31, was assigned Public Law No. 105-341. Executive Order 13090—President's Commission on the Celebration of Women in American History, signed June

29, was published in the *Federal Register* on July 2.

Joint Statement of the President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Israel

October 31, 1998

On October 31, 1998, President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu concluded a Memorandum of Agreement on the potential threat to Israel posed by the proliferation of ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction in the region. This subject has been of great concern to both governments for some time, and the Memorandum of Agreement establishes a new mechanism for enhancing their cooperation in dealing with this potential threat. Pursuant to the Memorandum of Agreement, a joint strategic planning committee will be established to formulate recommendations on upgrading the framework of U.S.-Israeli strategic and military relationships, as well as technological cooperation.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Interview With Shlomo Raz and Jacob Eilon of Israeli Television Channel 2

October 31, 1998

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

Q. President Clinton, first of all, thank you very much for sitting down with us.

The President. Delighted to do it. Thank you.

Q. You know, it's exactly 3 years since the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. And Mrs. Rabin said she was rather disappointed that you failed to mention her husband during the East Room ceremony last Friday. How do you respond to that?

The President. Well, you know, the agreement is actually supposed to enter into force on the third anniversary of his passing, of his killing. And I think that if, in fact, it does do so, it is a fitting thing, because none of us would be here if it hadn't been for him. He really started all this in a profound way.

I know that the Madrid conference started before his election, but it was his conviction and his strength and security that he conveyed to the people of Israel, I think, that made this whole peace process possible. And I never do anything in the process that I don't think about him.

Danger to Prime Minister Netanyahu

Q. Mr. President, from the tragic assassination to the current situation, Prime Minister Netanyahu might put himself at the same risk as Mr. Rabin. So perhaps it is unjustified to put pressure on him to follow the Oslo accord or the Oslo track.

The President. Well, I don't think there's any question that the Prime Minister has put himself at some physical risk in pursuing the peace process. But I believe that it's important that the people of Israel know that, at least in my opinion, it's a good agreement, that it strengthens Israel's security needs, that the agreements made with the Palestinians are fully consistent with Oslo. And the Prime Minister worked very, very hard to advance Israel's security interests.

Just for example, there was the whole issue of what should be done with the people whom Israel believes have committed acts of violence and terrorism against Israelis. And I am convinced that the Palestinians will now act against these people in a way that is consistent with the agreement and that will meet the Prime Minister's and Israel's needs. So that's an example of a whole array of security advances that were embedded in this agreement. And I think all Israelis who support the peace process should support the agreement because I think it furthers the cause of peace.

Palestinian National Council

Q. Mr. President, is it really the PNC, the Palestinian National Council, that is going to convene to revise the Palestinian covenant with your presence? Is it really the PNC?

The President. Well, it's the PNC plus a number of other groups. And some of these groups are embedded within the PNC; that is, they're dual membership for some of the people—in the Government, in the executive council, in the other councils involved. And some are outside the PNC.

But among other things at that meeting, we will seek a clear renunciation of the offending parts of the charter and a general endorsement of the agreement, this whole agreement, so that the process can be seen to be going forward with the support of those who represent grassroots Palestinian opinion.

The Prime Minister wanted me to support this provision, this effort, and he fought very, very hard for this, as did a number of members of his Cabinet who were there, because they thought that there needed to be a debate in a Palestinian forum, even if it was controversial and heated, which would give to the Palestinian people some evidence not only of a commitment to follow an agreement but of a changing of the heart, an opening of the heart of the Palestinians toward the Israelis.

And I thought that argument had a lot of appeal, even though it was not without its hazards for Mr. Arafat.

Q. Because—

The President. Because it's been 18 months since anything big has happened, and because there's a lot of—he has his problems, too, among them the fact that the standard of living for most Palestinians is lower today than it was when the peace process began, because the enemies of peace keep interrupting the flow of normal life.

So I agreed that if it was that important to Israel and Chairman Arafat were willing to try to accommodate that condition by the Israelis, that I would go to Gaza and address this group and ask them to support the peace and to renounce forever the idea of animosity toward and opposition to the existence of the state of Israel and instead embrace the path not only of peace but of cooperation.

President's Upcoming Visit to Gaza

Q. I want to ask you about your visit to Gaza. Don't you think, Mr. President, that this trip may be seen as a first step in recognizing an independent Palestinian state?

The President. Well, if so it would be, I think, wrong, because I have tried strictly to adhere to the position of the United States that we would not take a position on any final status issue.

One of the reasons that I worked so hard at Wye to try to bring the parties together

is I thought it imperative to take this next big step along the peace process so that we could launch the final status talks and get them underway in good faith so that neither side would seek to prejudge a final status issue. That is not what I'm doing in going there. The Prime Minister wanted me to go there and wanted us all to make this pitch.

I asked them if they would make some joint appearances, and if they would both make the same speech to Palestinian and to Israeli audiences. And they said they would do that. I would like to see that happen. I think that would help. It would help the Palestinians to see Yasser Arafat saying the same thing to the Israelis he says to the Palestinians. It would help the Israelis, I think, also. And it would be a good thing for the Prime Minister to be able to give the same speech. Whatever they decide to say, just say the same thing to both communities so that no one thinks that there's any evasion or shading or anything.

I think, just little things like this to open up a little awareness of the other's position and build a little confidence, I think would be quite good.

Jonathan Pollard

Q. Mr. President, why won't you release Jonathan Pollard?

The President. Well, I agreed to review his case and to take the initiative to review it. I have not released him in the past because since I've been President in the two previous normal reviews—that is, the ones that were initiated by his request for clemency—the recommendation of all my law enforcement and security agencies was unanimously opposed to it.

But the Prime Minister felt so strongly about it, and I might say, every Israeli Prime Minister I have dealt with on every occasion has asked me about Pollard. Yitzhak Rabin did, Shimon Peres did, and Prime Minister Netanyahu has.

Q. But you argued pretty—you had pretty harsh exchanges with Netanyahu, reportedly, about that?

The President. No. I thought then, I believe now, and I think the public opinion in Israel bears this out, that it was in Israel's

interest to do this agreement on its own merits because it would advance the cause of Israeli security and keep the peace process going.

I think there's been a lot of reporting about this with which I don't necessarily agree. That's no criticism, I just want to tell you my perception. Bibi Netanyahu argued strongly for Pollard's release. He made the arguments that anyone who knows a lot about the case and thinks he should be released would make. But I took no offense at that. He was representing what he believes to be the interest of the State of Israel. And he did it in—you know, he doesn't make arguments halfway. You observe the Prime Minister, he's an aggressive person; he fights hard for what he believes. I took no offense at it at all.

And I would ask you all to remember when evaluating reports that tempers were frayed or strong language was used; now, remember, the three of us, Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu and I, we were there for over 8 days. Most nights I was there, I went home at 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning. The last time we were there on this last day, I was up for 39 hours and so were they.

Now, I'm amazed that we didn't have more disruptive conduct and more harsh words, given how exhausted and frayed we were. But it shows you how hard the parties were trying, on the one hand, to make peace, but on the other hand, to protect their security interests. Particularly, I think, that was Mr. Netanyahu's concern. He was desperately trying to find a way to make peace or to advance the peace process that would enable him to go home and sell it to his Cabinet and his constituency. And this Pollard issue was very important to him. But I took no offense at that.

Q. But still, Mr. President, there were many reports that you were very upset with Mr. Netanyahu and were quoted saying that his behavior was despicable.

The President. That report is not true. That's just inaccurate. And this is the first opportunity I've had to say that. There was a moment in the negotiations when the two guys split apart, and there was an issue raised that I thought was wrong. And I said so in very graphic terms. But I never used the

word "despicable" to describe the Prime Minister. I did not do that.

There was a moment where I thought—there were various moments in these negotiations when I thought—at least from my perspective, trying to be an honest broker—they were both wrong. You would expect this over 8 days.

But at that moment, the issue at stake had nothing to do with Pollard. It was an issue, a dispute between the Palestinians and the Israelis. It had nothing to do with Pollard. And it is true that there was a moment in which there was a heated exchange in which I said something rather graphic, but I did not adversely characterize the Prime Minister in the way that's reported.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

Q. I'd like to talk about the late Yitzhak Rabin. I think you know, Mr. President, that when you said the phrase, *shalom chaver*, "goodbye friend," I think you touched many many Israelis in a very, very special way. And we've been curious, how did you come up with this? I even noticed you have a pin that says, *shalom chaver* on your desk right here in the Oval Office.

The President. Yes. I have many Jewish-Americans working for me here, and they all knew how close I felt to Prime Minister Rabin. And they all knew how heartbroken I was when he was shot. And we were—everybody was sort of coming up with ideas. And Shimon Peres later told me that he had not seen those two words used together before because *chaver*, it's sort of a special word; it goes beyond normal friendship.

And one of my—I wish I could say that I knew enough Hebrew that I came up with it, but one of my staff members suggested that I say it. And they explained it to me, what it meant, and it seemed to be perfect for what I was trying to say. I must say, for me, that was more than a political loss. I felt very close to the Prime Minister, to Mrs. Rabin. I got to know their children, grandchildren. And I think always when I'm pushing the peace process forward that I'm doing it not just for myself, but maybe also a little for him.

And I must say, in these last negotiations I was very pleased to see that Prime Minister

Netanyahu, I saw in his eyes, I could almost see in his eyes the moment when he really made the decision that, well, maybe the Palestinians were going to make sufficiently specific security commitments that would be on a sufficiently clear timetable that he could sell not just to the Israeli public at large but to a decisive portion of his own constituency, which is a very different thing, as all of you know better than I do.

And he could see that, that he could personally believe that it would advance Israel's security. And I saw that look in his eyes. I felt from that point on that eventually we would get an agreement. And that's the look that you want to see in a leader's eyes in a situation like that, because I still believe that the right formula is peace and security, and that you really can't have one without the other. But I also believe—I told Mr. Arafat once during these negotiations that we had to get to the point where Israel and the Palestinian Authority had the same enemies. And that they felt that if they couldn't get to be friends, at least they could be comrades. And that if we could fulfill a role there in the way this agreement was written, to build confidence between them on a daily basis, then that would be a good thing for us to do.

Q. Do you think, Mr. President, that things might have been different today if it wasn't for the assassination?

The President. Yes, of course they might have been. But it's hard to know and pointless to speculate. The main thing I think that is important for me, at least from my perspective as an American President and a friend of Israel, it's important for me that the people of Israel know that I watched these peace talks at Wye unfold. And that I believe that the Prime Minister and the members of his Cabinet who were there, and his staff, were trying their best to advance the cause of Israel's security. I believe that they would never have agreed to this, no matter how much I asked them to do so, if they were not absolutely convinced that it was a real advance for security.

And that, therefore, if we can launch the final status talks, we can redeem the sacrifice of Rabin and all the other people who have

died and given and given and given to secure Israel's place and future.

NOTE: The interview began at 8:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and former civilian U.S. Navy intelligence analyst Jonathan Pollard, convicted of treason and espionage in 1987. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at the New Psalmist Baptist Church in Baltimore, Maryland

November 1, 1998

Thank you, "Reverend" Cummings. [Laughter] It's difficult enough to follow one sermon, much less two. [Laughter]

Let me say to Reverend Thomas, I never wanted your message to end. It was wonderful, thank you. I, too, join in wishing Mrs. Thomas a happy birthday. I thank all the wonderful staff and parishioners here at New Psalmist. I have to say that my staff especially appreciated the assistance from Dr. David Blow. I thank Congressman Cummings for his welcome here.

I tell you, I was here about 10 minutes, and I realized how Elijah got to Congress. [Laughter] And I thank all of his staff, Vernon Simmons and others. I thank Mayor Schmoke for all the help that your people gave us. Thank you, sir. I thank your two wonderful Senators, Senator Sarbanes and Senator Mikulski. Senator Mikulski is running for reelection, but she's going to win by acclamation so nobody remembers that she's on the ballot, but I think I should tell you that she is, and she would like it very much if you remembered that, as well.

I thank Governor Glendening and Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend for all they have done for Maryland, and I commend them to you. Congressman Cardin, thank you for being here. To Secretary of State John Willis, it's his birthday, too, today, by the way. I would like to thank Senator Blount, County Executive Ruppertsberger, City Council President Bell, City Comptroller Joan Pratt. And I would like to say a special word of appreciation to

a former Congressman and NAACP president and my wonderful, wonderful friend Kwesi Mfume. Thank you for being here today. Thank you.

Now, it's been more than 40 years since Rosa Parks gave up her seat on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, to change America forever. Dr. King said it is better to walk in dignity than to ride in shame. And ever since then, America has been on a long walk toward dignity. Some people who are not African-Americans don't know it yet, but we've all been on that walk, not just black Americans, all Americans, for none live in dignity when any are oppressed.

It is a journey this church knows well. Just think about it: 100 years ago, starting with 5 members, to come to this congregation of 6,000 men, women, and children in this magnificent house of worship. This is the day the Lord has made, and we can rejoice in it. You have all this high technology, and you are very modern, but you have not forgotten your mission. Not only hear—to hear the word of God, but to do it with a food bank, with scholarships for college, with health care, with a Boys' Club, with the Girl Scouts, all the things this church is involved in. You have helped each other walk in dignity. You have fulfilled the admonition of the Scripture to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. And on Tuesday you will once again have the chance to be doers.

Now, the message today was from Matthew. So I just kind of rumbled through Matthew at the beginning of the service, not so as to distract my concentration from the message—[laughter]—and there are a few things from Matthew I'd like for us to remember. In Matthew, Jesus says "to render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." Now, back then that didn't mean too much because Caesar was an emperor and all the people had to do to render unto Caesar was to pay their taxes and obey the law. But thank the Lord there is no Caesar in this country. And the good news is, there is no Caesar. The bad news is, the people who have to render have more to do, because you pick the people who make the decisions. You pick the people—or not—depending on what you do.

Elijah was so kind, he said those nice things to me. I'm proud of the fact that the

American dream is closer to more Americans than it was 6 years ago, that more Americans can go to college, that we have the lowest poverty rate ever recorded among African-Americans, that we have the smallest welfare rolls in 29 years, and the lowest unemployment in 28 years. I'm proud of all that.

But let me tell you something. If you helped me get there, then you did that. You did that. You heard the pastor say today when he preaches the Word of God, it is God's gift, not his. You heard that, when he said that, didn't you? That's the way democracy works, except you're in the driver's seat. You're Caesar, not me, you, if you are a doer.

Remember when John Glenn went up in space a couple of days ago, didn't we all feel good? It gave all of us who aren't young anymore something to look forward to. [Laughter] I was so proud—proud because I know him to be a wonderful, good man; proud because of what he gave our country 36 years ago; but also proud because that was an act of democracy. That space program is paid for by you, voted for by your Congress, supported by your President. But in the end, therefore, if you supported me and those who supported that program, then you had your hand on John Glenn's shoulder when he went up in space. That's what this means. You had your hand on him.

In the last several days as I have traveled around America, so many people have come up to me and said, "Thank you for working for peace in the Middle East. Thank you for staying up for a week"—literally, 39 hours at the end—"Thank you for doing that." And I say to them, "It is my job and my honor. But because you put me there, if you felt good about that, you should feel good about yourself because you helped to make the peace in the Middle East."

Now that's how this works. That's how this works, this march to dignity, a dignity that Rosa Parks talked about, the dignity that Martin Luther King died for, the dignity that Nelson Mandela spent 10,000 days in jail for. We had the President of Colombia here this week, a country ravaged by civil war, ravaged by drug traffickers—a man who, himself, was kidnapped, who just by the grace of God was not killed—with a wonderful wife who has had people in her whole family killed. I have

worked with people in Colombia for 6 years now. Hundreds of law abiding people have been killed simply for trying to uphold the law. And we too often take this vote for granted and say, "Oh, it doesn't matter what we do."

If you think the things that Congressman Cummings said matter, don't pat me on the back, pat yourselves on the back. That's how this system works. If you think that the things that Senator Sarbanes votes for, that Senator Mikulski votes for, Congressman Cardin votes for; if you think it's a good thing that Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend made Maryland the first State in the country to say young children in school ought to serve their communities, it's a part of their education; it'll make them better citizens. If you think it's a good thing that Maryland, under Governor Glendening's leadership, has pioneered education reforms and environmental advances. If you like all that, you did that. You did that. You should feel that it is yours; it is part of your walk to dignity.

And that is what this is about. Tuesday there is no Caesar. Your vote counts as much as mine, counts as much as Speaker Gingrich. [Laughter] It does. It counts as much as anybody. It counts as much as people who can contribute vast fortunes to campaigns. Tuesday everything gets evened up again if you show up.

Now, what I want to say to you is that this is not an ordinary time or an ordinary election. There is a lot at stake. This year, because the Members of Congress here present stood with me, we were able to stop a raid on the surplus before we saved Social Security, and we were able to get the funding for a big downpayment on our goal of 100,000 more teachers. And we did it, in the end, against the opposition of the members of the other party. But there is a lot more to be done.

We want to pass that Patients' Bill of Rights so medical decisions are made by doctors, not accountants. We want to pass that school construction proposal so all these teachers will have classrooms, not trailers, to teach our little children in. We want to raise the minimum wage because unemployment and inflation are low, but you still can't raise

a family on \$5.15 an hour. We want to pass a juvenile justice bill, yes, that punishes people who have to be but remembers that the only real answer is to keep more of our children out of trouble in the first place and save our children, give them a chance to have a brighter future.

We want not just to save this surplus and save our economy; we want to reform the Social Security system so that it doesn't go broke when the baby boomers retire and our children will be able to continue to raise our grandchildren without having to take us on their backs. That's what we want to do.

Now, think of what was denied. We are fighting hard for the dignity of a living wage in the face of partisanship that refused us last time; for a Patients' Bill of Rights in the face of partisanship that listened to the health insurance companies the last time; for the dignity of sending our children to learn with good teachers and small classes in decent, modernized schools all hooked up to computers and the Internet in the face of those who opposed us the last time; and we are fighting for the dignity of a secure retirement in old age way into the future in the face of those who would squander this hard-won surplus on election-year promises.

Now, in this election we've had a tough time. Our friends in the other party have raised over \$100 million more than we have. Now, you can do that if you take the positions they took: killing the Patients' Bill of Rights, killing campaign finance reform, refusing to raise the minimum wage, be willing to endanger the rights of mothers and their children and child support in changing the bankruptcy laws, refusing to pass legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, which still kills more people every year than any other public health problem.

Now, why would this happen? Why would people who live in a democracy vote against modern schools when most people are for them? Because they think most people won't vote. Why would they kill a tobacco reform bill most people support? Because they think most people won't vote. Why would they kill a raise in the minimum wage that most Americans of all incomes support? Because they think most Americans won't vote.

Now, just in case, of course, we got news yesterday that there's actually an effort to keep African-Americans and other minority voters from voting in voter intimidation in Maryland and in six or seven other States. But you know what? On Tuesday you're in control of the arithmetic again, and you can vote.

I say that not in an angry spirit. You know all over America today there are people in other churches who have a different view, who believe that their principles require them to vote only for people at the extreme right wing of the Republican Party. But if you go back through all America, what is this about? You know, I used to think because I was a young boy growing up in the South and I came from people that didn't have a lot of money, it used to break my heart when I would see my people, poor working people, be among the most hostile toward our black brothers and sisters. And finally I figured out that they did that instead of joining hands with them to lift everybody together because they thought they needed somebody to look down on.

And if you look around the whole world today from the Middle East to Ireland, where my people come from, to the tribal warfare in Africa, to the problems in Bosnia and Kosovo, you see all of this turmoil and human misery caused by people who believe that politics is about gaining power over somebody you can look down on. It's about dividing the country between us and them.

Now, that's why Elijah said the Pledge of Allegiance to you. That's why he said the Pledge of Allegiance. One Nation, indivisible. But make no mistake about it, in the 1950's, when I was a kid growing up, communism was a big problem and stayed so until the end of the cold war. So the dividers in our country would just try to paint their opponents as a little too pink, a little too close to the Communists. Then we had race as an issue. Now, immigrants. Always some way to divide up the electorate so that there is us and them.

Now, why don't we have that view? Partly because you know what it's like to be treated like them. Partly because you read the whole Scripture. The Corinthians says, "Now we see through a glass darkly." What does that

mean? We just don't know everything. We don't have a right to look down on people and sort them out because we don't have the whole truth. The whole promise of the Scripture is that we will someday have it. Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face. Now we know in part, but then we will know even as we are known. "And now abideth faith, hope and love—charity. And the greatest of these is love." Why is love the greatest of these? Because we're all in this boat together. That's why.

Yes, you know, there's some divisions out there. But Matthew cautions us not to strain to the gnat and swallow a camel. And Matthew reminds us that a city and a house divided against itself cannot stand. What does the Bible say? What does the Bible tell us? One thing the bible tells us hundreds of times—hundreds and hundreds of times about politics—the only thing it tells us hundreds and hundreds of times is to care for the poor, the weak, the needy. In Matthew, Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you even as you have done this unto the least of these my brethren, you have also done it unto me."

And then down the way a little bit, down the way a few verses it says, "And I say to you even as you have not done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have not done it unto me."

So I say to you, we believe that our politics should be guided by what our Lord said was the first and most important commandment, and the second is like unto it. First we must try to love the Lord, our God, with all our heart. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

So I say, Tuesday is about whether we'll have a Patients' Bill of Rights, whether we'll have good schools for all our children, whether we will raise the minimum wage, whether we will save Social Security for the 21st century. But in a larger sense, it's about that march to dignity. It's about whether your hand is going to be on the shoulder of every person doing every good thing that will be done. It's about whether the people who believe they should divide America can leave you out because you stay home. It's about whether you believe that you have to be a doer.

I appreciate your applause. And I am more grateful by far for just having the chance to share this worship service with you, to be reminded of the truths that I need to hear, too, just like you. You remember that in this country there are only two places—only two, only two—where we have fulfilled both the admonition of the Scriptures and the promise of the Founders that all of us are created equal—only two. One is when you come into your house of worship on Sunday, and the other is when you show up at the ballot box.

So I ask you, there are thousands here. You will see tens of thousands more between now and Tuesday. Be a doer. Tell them they should show up, too. Take them by the hand and bring them. Tell them about Rosa Parks. Ask them not to forget what Dr. King died for. Ask them not to forget what the issues in this election are. But ultimately, it really is all about what Congressman Cummings said. I have done everything I could to bring this country together, to reconcile the American people to one another so we could go forward together.

But in the end, that must be done by all of us together. And Tuesday, it's your turn. Take it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:58 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Walter Scott Thomas, pastor, his wife, Patricia, and David L. Blow, assistant pastor, New Psalmist Baptist Church; Vernon Simms, district administrator for Representative Elijah E. Cummings; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore; Gov. Parris N. Glendening of Maryland; State Senator Clarence Blount; Baltimore County Executive C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger; Baltimore City Council President Lawrence Bell; Baltimore City Comptroller Joan M. Pratt; Rosa Parks, civil rights activist; President Nelson Mandela of South Africa; and President Andres Pastrana of Colombia.

Interview With April Ryan of the American Urban Radio Networks in Baltimore

November 1, 1998

African-American Vote

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, thank you so much for joining us today. The focus: the African-American vote, getting African-American-

cans to the polls on November 3d. For so many weeks some members of the—some White House officials have been saying that you're trying to get everyone—that there is, indeed, a definite effort to get the African vote; that's why you're at New Psalmist today, to talk to black congregations and blacks throughout the country.

Is the African-American vote a make-it-or-break-it vote for this election?

The President. I think in many districts it will be, and perhaps in some of these close Senate seats. And I think it's important just to take a minute to explain why.

Traditionally, in the United States in Presidential elections, the vote turnout is much bigger, and then it falls off in midterms. When times are good, as they are now, very often the fall off is even greater. And disproportionately, working people, lower income working people, or poor people, are likely to be among those who fall off. Single mothers that have to worry about, on Tuesday, getting their children to school or to child care, and then getting them home; going to work and getting back; people that live in cities, who have to take mass transit to work, and maybe the polling place is not on the bus line or the subway line coming home, they've got to go to a lot more trouble.

So we know that the American people as a whole agree with our program that's at stake in this election. They agree with our position on saving Social Security, on building modern schools, on passing the Patients' Bill of Rights, on raising the minimum wage. They agree with our position by 15 or 20 points when contrasted with a positive message from the Republicans. So the only way we won't do very well in this election is if our turnout is lower than theirs. So this is a big issue.

Ms. Ryan. Well, many people said when you first ran for the office that African-Americans brought you into office. Do you think that this African-American vote, if you reinvigorate it through this election, can help many Democrats in years to come, as well as this election?

The President. Oh, of course. And I think it can be something that we can sustain, that is, the idea that every election is important, that not just the Presidential elections but

every election is important and helps to shape the future.

I think people understand after this 8 months of partisan standoff we had in Congress this last year, when really nothing happened until the very end, and they had to go through the congressional Democrats and me to get a budget. So they had to agree with us on some budget items for education and other things. I think the American people understand that these congressional elections are profoundly important. The Governors race and other races are profoundly important.

And as I said today in the church, election day is a day that everybody counts the same. It's a real tragic thing, I think, when people pass the opportunity to be just as powerful as everyone else.

Republican Campaign Ads

Ms. Ryan. Well, as you said, these votes are important. You have people like Newt Gingrich who said—well, the Washington Post said that Newt Gingrich orchestrated attempts to make you look bad through Republican campaign ads. Do you think those ads are confusing to people? And do you also feel, like the Vice President, shocked that he did this?

The President. Well, I'm not—no, I don't feel shocked that he did it. It appeared to me that the message of the ad was, you know, you should be mad at the President, therefore you should punish someone else who had nothing to do with the mistake the President made. And in the end, you should punish yourself; you should deny yourself the Patients' Bill of Rights, deny your children a better education, deny people a rise in the minimum wage, deny the Democrats the votes they need to make sure we don't squander this surplus until we save Social Security.

I don't think it's a very persuasive message once you tell people what the message is and give them a chance to think about it. And I hope it won't be successful. I don't think it will be.

Voter Turnout

Ms. Ryan. Well, President Clinton, I watched you in church today. You walked the walk, and you talked the talk. You quoted

from Matthew. A lot of people called you "Reverend Clinton". [Laughter] But what happens if you cannot generate the kind of support for the blacks to go to the polls like you want? What kind of answers will you have when the finger-pointing starts?

The President. Well, we've done everything we could to get the votes out, and I think we're going to do very well. If you look at the history of these midterm elections, particularly in the 6th year of a Presidency, almost everyone concedes, even the Republicans do, that we're going to outperform the historical average. And of course, it's unbelievable, since they have literally raised, through the Senate and House committees and the Republican National Committee, \$110 million more than our people have.

So we're out here to work, and I don't worry about finger-pointing. I just do the best I can and work like crazy until the election is over and hope—you know, we've got a lot of good people out there who have done, I think, astonishing things, being outspent two-, three-to-one in the last week, maybe four-to-one or more, still hanging in there in these races. And I just want to make sure we light a fire under our voters and that they know what's at stake. And I think we're going to do pretty well on Tuesday.

African-American Support

Ms. Ryan. Did you see the response from the congregation when you came in? Did you see the people just jump up and shout and just—I mean, the faces were just brimming over with joy that you would come here to this church.

The President. I was very moved.

Ms. Ryan. Do you understand that African-Americans just love William Jefferson Clinton? And you know, it's gotten to the point where there are even some authors that are writing about you. Have you read the piece by Toni Morrison in The New Yorker magazine saying that President Clinton is a black man?

The President. No, but I take it as a compliment.

Ms. Ryan. Oh, do you?

The President. I mean just generally. I haven't read the piece, maybe there is some

unflattering things Toni has to say in the piece. [Laughter]

Ms. Ryan. But do you understand that the African-American community just embraces you?

The President. Yes, I do. I do. And it has been a source of enormous—pride is the wrong word—but I have been very grateful for it.

A man came up to my wife the other day, a couple months ago, and said, to Hillary, he said, “You know”—an African-American man said, “the people who attack the President all the time say they don’t understand why the African-American community supports him so strongly and why we like him so much.” And he said, “It’s not a very complicated thing. We support him, and we support you”—talking to Hillary—“because you like us, and we know it, and we can tell.”

I don’t know, I think it’s more than just the policies I’ve supported and the African-Americans I’ve appointed to the Cabinet and to the Judiciary. I think people do understand that down deep inside I believe that we ought to be one America and that we ought not to be fundamentally about race. I think that comes across. That’s the only explanation I can give you, and I’m very grateful for it.

Reverend Thomas’ Sermon

Ms. Ryan. So getting back to the church service today, the sermon from Reverend Thomas was on spiritual warfare. What did you get out of that?

The President. Well, first of all, I thought it was a very interesting sermon, theologically. He, obviously, has thought about this a lot; he’s thought about what the nature of evil is. And he argued that evil is not embodied in any person or persons; evil infects everybody or threatens to. It’s a force of life that is always there.

And then he argued that the church, the meaning of the church was to give redemption and give people who have flaws, who have been through difficulties, a chance to literally be reborn and to serve. And he had that great image of the open doors, the doors of death were only supposed to open one way. But if you believe in God and if you believe in the Christian faith, you believe that

you can force the doors back open the other way, into internal life, not just in death. I thought it was a very powerful sermon. It was both practical but extremely philosophical.

Ms. Ryan. Did it touch you?

The President. Oh, yes. I thought it was a magnificent message.

First Family

Ms. Ryan. President Clinton, you’ve been really great with me in granting me several interviews. And I want to ask you this, and you can say whatever you want to say. But the American public cares about you, one way or the other, and your personal life has been spread across the newspapers and in television. And your supporters and your detractors both want to know, how are you and the First Lady doing?

The President. Well, the thing that I want the country to know is that I’m doing my best, my dead-level best to heal my family as well as my relationship with the American people—my wife and my daughter. And I love them very much, and I’m working on it. And I think that what the American people, I hope, will agree is that beyond that, it ought to be private; the good times and the tough times, they ought to be private. I think most Americans want to know that I’m trying to do the right thing, and I can tell you, I am. But I think to talk about it would further degrade the privacy that I think has already been plundered too much in too many ways for too many people in America.

Ms. Ryan. Well, I just want to say this on that point, and that’s the end of that, but a lot of—you’re public; you are the leader of the free world, and Mrs. Clinton is the First Lady. And you recognize when you walk to the plane, when you have Buddy running around you or, you know, just together, people are looking at body language. You know, you are the President, and you’ve had something happen that many marriages have had happen. And people want to know, and they watch your body language. How does it make you feel that you’re literally under a microscope just for that right there?

The President. Well, on that, believe it or not—let me just say this. All the pain and

humiliation and the anger and every other thing for me is behind me now, and I don't think much about that. What I think about is, how can I take care of my family? How can I take care of my country? I have always found that I should simply trust the American people. I don't agree with every decision they've made in every election. I wish they hadn't elected the Republican majority in 1994. But I've always found that if you give the American people enough time, they get it right. And we're still around here after 220 years because at every important time the American people have gotten it right. So they are free to think about whatever they wish to think, to say whatever they wish to say, to do whatever they wish to do. That's what makes this a great country. And I will continue to work on my family and on my country.

But I will say this to all the American people, without regard to what they think about that or any other issue, as I said to this church today: Tuesday is the only day of the year where every citizen counts the same. Everybody listen to me, everybody within the sound of our voice, yours and mine, on Tuesday they count just as much as I do; they count just as much as Mr. Gingrich does; they count just as much as any editor of any newspaper or any owner of any television network. They count just as much. And the only thing I would do is to implore them to remember that in the end, this country belongs to all the people. And the progress we make depends upon what they do and, in the case of the voters, whether they do. My main goal for the next 48 hours is to get everybody there.

Iraq

Ms. Ryan. Okay, last question. There are some movements, or nonmovements, in Iraq now. What's the next step through the administration for Saddam Hussein?

The President. Well, we're examining that now. As a matter of fact, this afternoon my national security team is meeting. I've already had a couple of briefings about it. I think it's important to go back to the basics. First of all, let's look at the basics.

At the end of the Gulf war, as part of the conditions of peace, Saddam Hussein agreed

to suspend his biological, chemical, and nuclear programs, to be subject to inspections to see that that was done and to see that all the materials were destroyed. We were actually making, I thought, quite a bit of progress in that inspection after the last little crisis we had. And we were moving toward a resolution of some of the issues when he first suspended the inspections and now, apparently, has decided to terminate his participation in the U.N. inspection system.

It's a clear violation of the commitments that he made, a clear violation of the U.N. Security Council resolutions. I, personally, am very pleased that the U.N. Security Council, including some people that I think have been a little tolerant with him in the past, strongly condemned what he did. From my point of view, we should keep all our options open, examine the nature of the action and where we are, and then do what's best for the integrity of the United Nations and the interests, the security interests, of the people of the United States.

I think that's all I should say about it now. I want to let my people meet, let them give me some advice, and see where we go from here.

Voter Turnout

Ms. Ryan. Mr. President, thank you so much. Do you have anything else you'd like to add?

The President. I just hope everybody who is listening to this will go and vote on Tuesday. It's no ordinary time and no ordinary election—big stakes. And when it's over, if you vote, even if you don't get your choice, you'll feel a lot better than if you pass.

Voter Intimidation

Ms. Ryan. Thank you so much.

Mr. President, we have a caveat to our interview. In the sermon—well, not the sermon, but when you spoke to the congregation, you talked about voter intimidation.

The President. Yes.

Ms. Ryan. Now, where is this coming from, and what's going on?

The President. Well, for the last several elections there have been examples in various States of Republicans either actually or

threatening to try to intimidate or try to invalidate the votes of African-Americans in precincts that are overwhelmingly African-American, mostly in places where they think it might change the outcome of an election.

And we got some reports yesterday that some unusual steps were going to be taken, which I think you could only conclude would constitute voter intimidation here in Maryland, where we are, and perhaps in Michigan and Kentucky and Georgia and North Carolina and one or two other places. We have always fought it. We asked the Republicans to renounce it yesterday, the idea of having extra police officers just look at people when they go vote, or photographing them or doing videotapes when they go vote or otherwise trying to scare people off from voting is totally abhorrent.

We don't try to keep anybody from voting for the Republicans. We think they have a perfect right to show up and do it. This is not American, this whole voter intimidation business. And if it's going on as has been reported, it ought to be stopped. I would challenge the Republican Party to stand up and stop it. They ought to be like me. I haven't discouraged any Republicans from voting on Tuesday. All I'm trying to do is get the Democrats to go vote. It would suit me if every registered voter in America would show up. And that ought to be their attitude, too.

Ms. Ryan. But you know what the Republicans are going to say. They're going to say you're coming up with this; you're making this whole thing up.

The President. Well, these reports were quite specific. So they can easily show that they're all wrong, factually. And if they are, then I will say, "Good, we've got both parties now in favor of everybody voting." Listen, nothing would please me more than to say, this is something that the Republicans have renounced, and we're going to both be together from now on forever for everybody voting. I would love to say that. I don't take any pleasure in saying what I'm saying here.

NOTE: The interview began at 3:25 p.m. in the Pastor's Parlor at the New Psalmist Baptist Church. In his remarks, the President referred to Rev. Walter Scott Thomas, pastor, New Psalmist Baptist Church; author Toni Morrison; and

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Telephone Interview With Tom Joyner, Sybil Wilkes, and Myra J. of the Tom Joyner Morning Show
November 2, 1998

Mr. Joyner. We go to Washington, DC, and on the line right now is the President of the United States, President Bill Clinton. Good morning, sir.

The President. Good morning, Tom.

Mr. Joyner. How are you this morning?

The President. I'm great. It's a beautiful day here, a little fall coolness in the air, but it's a beautiful day.

Ms. Wilkes. It's a great day before getting out the vote.

Myra J. Yes.

The President. It is. I hope tomorrow will be as good as today is—with the weather.

African-American Vote

Mr. Joyner. Now, we've been talking all along about how important it is for African-Americans to get out and vote. I want to go back, first of all, and let's talk about the times when black Americans didn't have the right to vote. Because I know that you came up in an era where—you can remember the Little Rock Nine; you can remember Medgar Evers; you can remember the four little girls in Birmingham, where a lot of us only know about these events from recent movies.

The President. Absolutely.

Mr. Joyner. But you remember those times.

The President. I lived through all that. I lived through the churches being bombed and people being driven away from the polls. And then I lived through the poll tax era where people would buy the poll taxes by the roll, and black people had to agree to vote the way they wanted and they—if they could get a certificate for the poll tax. I remember all that—

Mr. Joyner. —from Arkansas. And you probably heard a lot of hatred growing up in Arkansas, too.

The President. I did. Of course, I did. To me, the passage of the Civil Rights Act,

the voting rights law, the open housing law, all those things, they were the pivotal events of my childhood as far as my citizenship goes—I mean, just the whole civil rights movement. Now I see that we do—at least on election day, we are all equal. As I said yesterday in Baltimore, tomorrow, whatever anybody thinks about all the challenges and problems we still have in America, every single person tomorrow is just as important as the President or the Speaker of the House or Mr. Gates at Microsoft or anybody else. Everybody shows up, and everybody's vote counts, unless you don't show up.

You know what kinds of debates we've had here in Washington over the last couple of years; you know what the big issues are. And the real challenge here is that if this were a Presidential year, then African-American voters, Hispanic voters, working people generally—single mothers who have to work for a living and figure out how to get their kids to child care or to school and work through how to get to the polling place—all these folks would be voting. And it's clear, if that were the case, that we would win the congressional races handily, and we could change the direction of this country. We could end this last 8 months of partisanship we went through and really start building on the successes of the last 6 years.

So what I've got to try to do is persuade enough people just to go out and vote, because this election is not an ordinary congressional election. This Congress will shape how the American people live in important ways for many years to come.

Mr. Joyner. The African-American vote is real important.

The President. Very important. It's important because in these midterm elections normally African-Americans do not vote in the same percentages as they do in Presidential elections. And normally the fall off is bigger than it is for hardcore Republican voters, who tend to be older, a little better off, have a little more free time, and more likely to vote. And of course, the so-called Christian Coalition, the very conservative right wing of the Republican Party, they always vote.

So if we want our voices heard and we want to continue the progress of the last 6

years, I need some support in Congress. We had a little more balance in Congress—if we had a few more Democrats in Congress, we could pass the Patients' Bill of Rights to make sure that health care decisions are made by doctors and not insurance company accountants. We could pass Senator Carol Moseley-Braun's school construction initiative to make sure that we have not only 100,000 teachers, but they're teaching our kids in modern schools and not classrooms that are all broken down buildings. We could pass an increase in the minimum wage. And we could stop this raid on the surplus until we save Social Security.

Those are huge issues. And that's really what this election is all about.

2000 Census

Ms. Wilkes. Mr. President, you were saying about African-Americans—and certainly there are a couple of things that are before the U.S. Government in the Congress, specifically, when you're looking at the U.S. census coming up and the importance of that, as well as representation in Congress, which the census obviously affecting that—

The President. Absolutely. Let me say to everyone here listening to us, the census is not just important because it's a way of telling us how many Americans there are and how we break down, what communities and States do we live in, what are our ages, what are our incomes, what are our racial backgrounds. The census also is used to draw the congressional maps and to determine the amount of assistance that comes in education aid and other things to various States and localities.

Now, all I have tried to do in this census is to guarantee that we have an accurate count. In the last census, we know we missed several million Americans, disproportionately Americans of color and Americans who live in urban areas. We know they were not counted. So all we've said is, let's take the most reliable way of doing that. The Republicans are adamantly opposed to the National Academy of Sciences' recommendations. They're opposed to the recommendations even of President Bush's own census taker. And the reason is, I think they don't want

all Americans counted because if that happens we'll have a different distribution of the congressional district maps, and it will make a big difference for the long-term future of our country.

Now, this will happen in the year I leave office, 2000, my last year as President. But I just believe I owe it to the future as we grow ever more diverse. And this is not just an issue for African-Americans; this is an issue for Asian-Americans; this is an issue for Hispanic-Americans; this is an issue for new immigrants from even some of the Central European countries, countries of the former Soviet Union. All these people, if they're here, deserve to be counted. If they're citizens, they deserve to be counted and taken into account when we draw the congressional district maps. If they're legal immigrants, they should be counted so that we can give the appropriate distribution of Federal education and health care assistance and other things.

President's Motivation and Goals

Mr. Joyner. You know, Mr. President, I hear you talking about things like that and the fact that you'll be out of office soon, and I just read in the paper the other day about the millions of dollars that you have allocated for African-Americans and other minorities to fight AIDS. And I think that's a tribute to you and your dedication, and it makes me want to ask you what makes you keep pressing forward like this, knowing that you're going to be out of office soon? What makes you keep trying to do these kinds of things?

The President. Well, what would be the point of being President if you didn't use the power of the Presidency to try to solve the problems of the country, to meet the challenges of the country, to seize the opportunities of the country? When I ran for this job, I had a very clear idea of what I wanted to do. I didn't know, obviously, every decision that would be presented to me or every challenge or crisis that would come up. But I knew that I wanted to turn the country—I wanted to change our economic policy. I wanted to change our education and our welfare policies. I wanted to give more young people the chance to serve their country in national service. But all of it together was

designed to create a country that was ready for a new century and a new economy and a new world.

And one of the critical things about getting ready is whether every person in this country believes that we're moving toward one America. You mentioned that AIDS initiative. We got \$156 million to try to do special things to reduce the dramatic increase in HIV and AIDS in the African-American community, in the Hispanic community, in other communities of color. That's where the growth is now. How can we be one America if a ravaging disease like this is being brought under control in part of our population but not in another?

So I think this is very important to me. I have—I can rest when I'm not President anymore. I need to work like crazy till the last minute of the last hour of the last day to try to make sure I have done everything I possibly could with this precious 8 years of time the American people gave me.

Mr. Joyner. So what do you want historians to write about you when it's all over?

The President. I want them to say that I helped to take America into a new era, that I really prepared America for a global economy, a global society, for increasing diversity at home, for responsibilities in a world where there was no cold war, but we had a lot of challenges from terrorism, from racial and ethnic and religious wars. I want them to say that I did create an America of dramatically increased opportunity for all people, an America where we were coming together more in a spirit of unity, an America that was a leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity in the world. That's what I want them to say.

President's Advisory Board on Race

Ms. Wilkes. You know, Mr. President, when you were talking about the Little Rock Nine and how you lived through that, and also people have said that as you have promised—and you have carried through on that promise—to give us a reflection in your Cabinet and those around you of America, and one of the leading things that you brought to mind is the race relations panel. And I was just wondering what the status is on that.

The President. Well, we are preparing right now a final book on that. I got the report from Dr. John Hope Franklin and the other members of my panel on race, and we're going to do a book on it and get it out to the country. And then we're going to continue the work. We're going to take the recommendations of the panel and work with them on the next legislative program I present to the Congress, in the administrative policies of our Government, and in continuing to find things that are working at the local level and promoting them throughout the country.

I think this is very important. They did a terrific job. We've got literally hundreds of thousands of Americans involved all across America, and we're going to continue to work. I've got the report now, and we're going to be about the business of implementing it. I think it's very important.

Ms. Wilkes. And that's the importance of having the Congress that you can work with, that will get that out.

The President. That's right. That's right. And let me say this. The real problem now is that the Congress is basically dominated by not only the Republicans, but the right wing of the party is in the driver's seat. And if we get a big turnout here and we change the Congress, the composition of the Congress, you wouldn't have to change it all that much to get enough balance in there for us to be able to take some affirmative action.

If we had a few more Democrats we could do things positively instead of do what we had to do last year, which was to—this year—we fought a rear guard action for 9 months, and then at the very end they came in and had to deal with us on the budget. And because we all stuck together, we got 100,000 teachers; we did save the surplus for Social Security; we were able to get programs for children after school—hundreds of thousands—that was a good thing. But there is so much more we should do. And if the American people believe it's important to have modern schools and more teachers and to have the Patients' Bill of Rights, to have an increase in the minimum wage, to save Social Security, if they think these things are important and they want us to keep coming

together, not be driven apart, then it's important to show up tomorrow.

African-American Vote

Myra J. Do you think the Republicans are counting on African-Americans not to come out tomorrow?

The President. Well, I think they are hoping that there will be a lower turnout among people who will vote for the Democrats, yes. They are hoping that there will be. And they are hoping there will be a higher turnout among people that they have tried to inflame, as they always do, in the various ways that they do it.

Republican Campaign Ads

Ms. Wilkes. And in the Republican ads, certainly, they have been flooding the airways.

The President. It's unbelievable. I think it's important that the people listening to us know that they raised over \$100 million more than the Democrats did in their Senate and House committees and their national political committees—over \$100 million. And they, over and above that, they have a lot of these so-called third party expenditures where—just in the last 10 days they dropped another \$750,000 against a congressional candidate in Michigan, a few hundred thousand dollars they dropped into a television ad campaign attacking one of our Democrats in rural Ohio. I've never seen this kind of money.

But we have the message; we have the issues. The country is in good shape, and we can do better. And the public agrees with us on our program, so it's basically their money and our issues and the question of who votes. And that's why this interview is so important to me.

Mr. Joyner. Radio stations, I told you I would be running long. I'm running right through the break with the President of the United States. Please hold with us.

Ms. Wilkes. Bigger name.

1998 Elections

Mr. Joyner. Yes, bigger name. [Laughter]

Mr. President, we've talked about what happens if African-Americans turn out to vote tomorrow. What if we don't turn out?

The President. Then they'll win a lot more seats than they otherwise would.

Mr. Joyner. So we're going to be to blame if it doesn't work out?

The President. Well, I wouldn't say that. I mean, who knows—President Kennedy once said, "Victory has a thousand fathers, and defeat is an orphan." I don't think it's worth thinking about that, but I think it's worth thinking about the difference between what—you know, Carol Moseley-Braun in Illinois has been behind this whole race. She has been badly outspent. She has run against someone with millions and millions of dollars who attacked her and basically refused to appear and tried to disguise his philosophical positions, which were far to the right of the voters of Illinois. She's made a huge comeback in the last week. It's amazing. One survey even had her leading by two points after being down by as much as 16. But it won't amount to anything unless the voters in Illinois who would vote for her show up.

Senator Hollings is in a tough fight in South Carolina. We have a chance to win a Senate seat in North Carolina; Chuck Schumer in New York, Barbara Boxer in California, these are huge, huge races, and there are many more. I just mention them. In Las Vegas, Nevada, where there's a substantial African-American population, we've got a congressional seat and a very important Senate seat in play.

So the extent of the turnout all across America—and there are 30 or 35 congressional seats that could go one way or the other, and how they go will determine the shape of this next Congress and what their priorities will be.

Ms. Wilkes. And into the year 2000 and beyond.

The President. Yes.

Mr. Joyner. And you, personally, have a lot riding on this Congress, with all of the troubles that you're having.

The President. You know, I've just got 2 more years to be President, and I would like it—I'll be happy to fight, just like I did this last year, if that's the Congress I have to deal with, and at the end of the year we'll get something done, just like we did this year.

But it would be so much better—here we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28

years, the first budget surplus in 29 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the highest homeownership in history. The policies we've followed have been good for America, and it would be so much better now if we could just go to work and get rid of some of this bitter partisanship. The level of intense, angry partisanship that the Republicans have injected into Washington is really not good for America.

I want to work with all people here who have good ideas, to go forward. It is possible to do. But it's not possible to do as long as they think they can win with huge amounts of money and divisive attacks and negative campaigns. So if we can change the balance here a little bit, then we can get everybody to work together to move the country forward for the next 2 years. And yes, that's what I'd like to spend my time on. I think we ought to be working on people's problems out there in America and not just fighting with each other inside the beltway.

Ms. Wilkes. Mr. President, you talked about how good things are in the country and some people have said that they're too good and people have become too complacent to get out there and vote for any difference.

The President. Well, I have two things to say about that. First of all, they are good, but they can be a lot better. Yes, we have the lowest African-American poverty rate ever recorded. But is it low enough? Of course not. They can be a lot better. And I have offered to Congress initiatives to dramatically improve the schools, to dramatically improve the economic prospects of inner-city neighborhoods. I'd like to have a chance to pass them.

Think of the need we have for this Patients' Bill of Rights. Think of how many people are out there in HMO's that are having health care decisions made by accountants, not doctors. Think of the need we have with the biggest school population in history to build 5,000 modern schools that can be hooked up to the Internet and smaller classes for 100,000 teachers to teach in. Think of the need we have for a minimum wage increase. You know, even with low unemployment, you can't raise a family on \$5.15 an hour. And think of the need we have to reform Social Security in the right way and to

preserve the Medicare program and to meet these other challenges. So my first answer is that we have a lot to do.

The second thing I would say is that if everybody stays home and we have people in here who will be irresponsible and squander the surplus and risk our economic program and its stability as they did for the last 8 months here, if they tried to do that, then things could get worse in a hurry. So I believe that it would be a great mistake for anybody to stay home because times are good and to assume, "Well, the President is dealing with all these guys all right, and things are fine, and I don't really have to show up." That's a big risk that's not worth taking. We have too much to do.

Mr. Joyner. Well, that seems to be the mood.

The President. I don't know. I think a lot of people know this is a big election. I think they know what their priorities are, and you mentioned them. And I think they know what our priorities are. And I think they know that the Democrats are focused on the people out there in the country and not on some sort of a partisan power game here in Washington. That's what I want to get out there to the people, and if they understand that, I think they'll go. I certainly hope they will.

The American people, given enough time, virtually always make the right decision. But we need people to go, because otherwise this huge, vast amount of money that's been spent in this campaign is going to beat a lot of very, very worthy people who would be very good in the Congress and the Senate.

Mr. Joyner. All right. Thank you, sir, for coming on the air and talking to us.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Joyner. And we look for results tomorrow and a better day on Wednesday.

Ms. Wilkes. Are you going home to Little Rock to vote?

The President. No, I'm not. I voted absentee already. I've already cast my ballot.

Mr. Joyner. All right, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you. Goodbye.

NOTE: The interview began at 9:05 a.m. in Room 415 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, the President referred to Bill Gates, president, Microsoft; and Dr. John Hope Frank-

lin, Chairman, President's Advisory Board on Race. Myra J. is the on-air name used by Myra Hughes.

Interview With Hispanic Journalists

November 2, 1998

Q. We will begin with a statement by President Bill Clinton.

The President. *Buenos dias.* Good morning, everyone. And thank you for giving me this opportunity to address so many Hispanic-Americans and Latino media markets all across the United States, Puerto Rico, and in 18 other Latin American countries.

I'm glad to have the opportunity to discuss important issues with esteemed journalists from four major Latino radio networks: Radio Bilingue, MetroSource Network, CNN Radio Noticias, and Radio Unica.

Tomorrow is election day in America. It is no ordinary election. It is, instead, an election that will determine whether we as a nation focus on progress or partisanship for the next 2 years. It will determine which direction we take into the new millennium. It will be determined by who comes out to vote.

Our country is doing well now. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to serve these last 6 years and grateful that we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the smallest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years, the first surplus in 29 years. I'm grateful that poverty rates are dropping among all Americans and minority Americans. I'm very grateful that we have record numbers of new Hispanic-owned businesses, for example. But I think we all understand that a great deal of work still needs to be done in education, in health care, in child care.

We Democrats, we're running on an agenda of a Patients' Bill of Rights for all our Americans in health management organizations so they can have their health care decisions made by doctors, not accountants. We're running on an increase in the minimum wage. We're running on an aggressive program to improve our schools, with 100,000 more teachers and 5,000 new and rebuilt schools that are modern and good. We're running on a reform of the Social Security system so we can save it for the new

century, and so much more. We also have run forthrightly on an open immigration policy and one America. And we have fought the Republicans on all these issues.

I hope very much that we'll have a good turnout on Tuesday. I'm looking forward to this interview. But I will say again, these races are very, very close. There are almost three dozen close House races that could go one way or the other. There are seven close Senate races that could go one way or the other. And we need a strong turnout.

Now, before I turn it over to the journalists to ask questions, I'd also like to say just one other word. Our prayers here at the White House go out to the citizens of Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala, who have suffered so much as a result of Hurricane Mitch and are trying to put their lives back together. The United States is determined to help. We have provided over \$2 million in funding for food, medicine, water, and other supplies. Two airlifts already have arrived with sheeting for shelter and food. Another airlift will take off today.

In addition, foreign disaster assistance teams have been deployed to all the affected countries to coordinate our aid relief efforts, and we'll be looking at what else we can do. This is a terrible tragedy for the people of Central America, and we will do what we can to help them to recover.

Now I'd be happy to take your questions.

Q. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Good morning.

1998 Elections

Q. At least 30 million Hispanics in the United States are anxious to know if their hopes will be supported by the Government. When there is an election, we are accustomed to hear all kinds of promises, and the election passes, and we are already accustomed to all kinds of frustrations. Will there be any difference this time, Mr. President?

The President. Well, first of all, let me say that you have some evidence here. If you look at my record as compared with the record of the Republican Congress, you know what the issues are. We passed this year in our budget—because we refused to go home without it—a Hispanic education action plan to put more money into schools

with high Latino populations, to reduce the dropout rate. There's a big difference in the dropout rate of Hispanic children in America as compared with all other groups. It was a huge victory for us.

We have continually fought for improved citizenship and naturalization activities to reduce the naturalization backlog. The Republicans have fought to delay naturalization and to complicate it. We have fought hard for a more accurate census, because millions of Latinos were not counted in 1990. The Republicans have fought for a system that will ensure that millions of Latinos will not be counted in 2000.

We have appointed a record number of Hispanic-Americans to positions in the Cabinet, in judgeships, in other places throughout the administration. We have fought to establish the North American Development Bank to help to deal with the economic and environmental challenges along our border with Mexico. We have fought to put more money into education to open the doors of college wider than ever before, to put police on our streets, where we have the lowest crime rate now in 25 years, to help our children deal with the challenges of crime and drugs, and to give them strong programs after school so that they can stay off the street and in school and learning.

So if you look at what we've done, if you just take this Hispanic education action plan, we have an increase of nearly \$500 million targeted to help our Latino children stay in school, learn their lessons, and then go on to college. We have over \$170 million committed to reducing the naturalization backlog.

So these are not just idle campaign promises. In the closing days of this last session of Congress, on October the 21st we confirmed a Hispanic-American to be United States Attorney for the District of Arizona, to be the Deputy Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, to be the Commissioner on Children and Youth in Families in the Department of Health and Human Services, to be on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, many other jobs, including a couple of ambassadorships.

So I'm not just talking something for the election here. There is a huge, huge difference in the positions of the Democratic and Republican Parties in the Congress on issues that are vital to Hispanics in America.

Q. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Good morning.

Republican Campaign Ads

Q. First of all, I was born in Honduras. I want to thank you very much for your words of encouragement to my Central American brothers. This is the worst tragedy in this century, and we're looking forward, all of you, to your support and your leadership in helping our countries build back. Thank you so much.

Now, sir, tomorrow, November 3d, is the sixth anniversary of your first election as President of the United States. According to the latest polls, there are some very closely contested elections tomorrow, as you said, especially in key States such as California, New York, Illinois, Florida, and Maryland—States which have large Hispanic populations.

The Hispanics backed you strongly in the Presidential elections of '92 and '96, and also in the midterm elections of '94. The Republicans have been running ads attacking you on the Monica Lewinsky issue. Do you feel these attacks on your personal conduct will cut down the attendance of Hispanic voters tomorrow or diminish their normal strong support for you and your party?

The President. I think it depends overwhelmingly on how people react to them. But just consider what the argument of those ads is. The argument of those ads is that voters, Hispanic voters and others, should punish completely innocent Democrats. In other words, they're saying punish someone else for this.

And ultimately, the argument is, they're telling the voters they should punish themselves. They should say: Vote for us, even though everything we're doing is not good for you, and don't vote for them, even though they will vote for modernized schools and 100,000 teachers; they—the Democrats—they will vote for a Patients' Bill of Rights; they will vote to raise the minimum wage; they will vote to save Social Security; they

will vote for a fair, complete, and accurate census.

Now, the argument of the Republican ads is you should forget about all that, all those things that are about you and play our partisan political game here in Washington. And that's basically been what the Republicans are saying. I don't think the American people will buy that.

But what Hispanic voters need to understand is that the stakes are high here: the Senate seats in California and New York, any number of House seats in California; there are House seats up in Colorado, in New Mexico, a Senate seat and House seat up in Nevada, and the enormously important Senate race in Illinois, where Senator Carol Moseley-Braun has made a remarkable comeback in the last week, the elections in Florida, the elections in Maryland. And I could go on and on.

There are about three dozen House of Representatives seats at issue here. Many, many of them have substantial Hispanic populations. There are seven or eight Senate seats at stake here, and several of them have substantial Hispanic populations—and then, of course, all these Governorships.

So I would say, this election ought to be about the American people and their children and their future and whether or not we have done a good job for them and whether or not our ideas are best for the future. They would like it, the Republicans, to use their \$100 million financial advantage in contributions to get everyone to forget that they have killed the Patients' Bill of Rights, killed the minimum wage increase, that they have killed legislation to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, that they killed the campaign finance reform, that they killed the school modernization initiative, and get people to buy into their Washington power games.

I think the American people know that my administration has been about people, not politics, about progress, not partisanship. And I think this election is very much worth voting in. But a decision not to vote is also a decision about what will go on here in Washington, DC, just as a decision to vote is.

California Proposition 10

Q. Good morning, Mr. President. It's quite an honor for me to take part in this conversation this morning. My question is as follows. The California children and families initiatives, which is known as Proposition 10, is to create programs for pregnant women and very young children, will be funded by cigarette smokers by paying a 50-cent tax per pack of cigarettes. Many in Los Angeles view this as another way to "attack" minorities as a proportion of people who smoke tend to be greater among minority groups.

In your view, what are the long-term benefits of passing this proposition, and how would you convince the Latino community that this measure will actually be working in their favor?

The President. Well, I think there are two things I would say about that. The only argument against raising the cigarette tax ever is that it disproportionately affects low-income people, because if all kinds of lower income people, working people, smoke, it will take a higher percentage of their income to pay a 50-cent-a-pack tax.

But consider the benefits. First of all, it will reduce smoking among young people, which will prevent more people starting. And we know now 3,000 young people a day start to smoke, even though it's illegal for them to do so, and 1,000 will have their lives shortened as a result of it.

Secondly, because the people are voting directly on this initiative in California, they are deciding, as they vote, how that money must be spent. So it would be illegal to divert the money to any other purpose. Therefore, you know that the health care of the people of California—and disproportionately the Hispanic population of California needs more money invested in health and education activities—you know that's where the money will go because that's what the initiative says. And under our law, if the people vote for it, they have a guarantee of how it will be spent. So you don't have to worry about what the legislature does, what the Governor does, what anybody does. You get to decide, okay, if I'm going to pay this, this is how I want it spent. And your vote will do that.

So those are the two arguments I think in favor of that initiative. I know that both my wife and I have worked with the people who put that initiative on the ballot and we trust them. We think that they're good people, and they certainly are trying to do something that will improve the health care and the future of the Hispanic children of California.

Immigration

Q. Mr. President, in this campaign, we haven't listened to any immigration agenda talks too much. Politicians don't talk too much about immigration. Is there any reason for that, or is there something going on that we don't know?

The President. Well, I'm very happy to talk about it. As you know, I have worked very hard to reverse anti-immigrant provisions of the law. We now have reversed almost all the anti-immigrant provisions of the welfare reform law, just as I said I would do. We have beat back anti-immigrant legislation in other areas here. And I am working very, very hard to reduce the backlog that we have in the naturalization and immigration process, which I think is very, very important. So from my point of view, the whole issue of how to deal with immigration is very important.

I have also tried to get changes in our law or changes in Justice Department policy to let immigrants stay here who came here under difficult circumstances many years ago and would otherwise have to now turn around and go back. So I want to see America continuing to have an open and fair and welcoming process for legal immigrants, and I believe that that's an important issue.

I also think that's an important issue that all the voters should consider in this election, because it would be hard to find an issue on which the parties have differed more than the Democrats and the Republicans on the issue of immigration for the last 4 years. And I would hope that everyone who cares about this issue would think that that issue alone is a justification to go out and support our Democratic candidates.

1998 Elections

Q. Thank you, Mr. President. Some closing thoughts about the importance of tomorrow's election?

The President. Well, again, let me just say that tomorrow the American people will decide on the Congress that will take us into the 21st century. They will decide whether it's a Congress that wants to represent all the American people and work for one America or a Congress that will continue to try to divide the American people in ways that undermine our ability to unite and to go forward. They will decide on whether they want a Congress that supports a Patients' Bill of Rights, that supports 100,000 teachers and smaller classes and modern schools or a Congress that opposes those things; a Congress that supports an increase in the minimum wage or one that opposes it; a Congress that supports protecting our surplus until we have saved Social Security for all the seniors in this country in the 21st century or one that is still committed to squandering the surplus and endangering our economic strength in the long run so that we can't do what we should do on Social Security.

Now, these are big decisions. For Hispanic-Americans, you also have clear choices in terms of our commitment to a decent, fair, equitable, and accelerated process of immigration and naturalization, and their policy, which is to slow it down, make it more difficult, and do things which, in my view, are unfair to immigrants coming to this country.

So there are clear choices here, and I say again, a choice not to vote is just like a vote for someone you don't agree with. This is a very, very important election, and I would just urge all of you to talk about it today and to go and vote tomorrow. Your vote is your voice.

NOTE: The interview began at 9:40 a.m. in Room 415 of the Old Executive Office Building. Journalists participating in the interview were: Eduardo Carrasco, MetroSource Network; Jacobo Goldstein, CNN Radio Noticias; and William Restrepo, Radio Unica. A Radio Bilingue journalist did not participate but had an interview on the evening of November 2.

Interview With Tavis Smiley of Black Entertainment Television

November 2, 1998

Mr. Smiley. Mr. President, it's nice to see you. Thanks again for sitting down, talking to us.

The President. Glad to be here.

1998 Elections

Mr. Smiley. Glad to have you. I have had the pleasure, as you know, to sit down with you one-on-one a few times in the past, and so I know that asking you to make a prediction is like wasting my time. So I'm not going to ask you to predict anything about tomorrow's elections, but let me ask you, on a scale of 1 to 10, if I can, 10 being confident, 1 being apprehensive, how do you feel about tomorrow on this election eve?

The President. I feel both confident and apprehensive. And I'll tell you why. If you look at it, first of all, in the House of Representatives, there are probably 36 elections that could go either way. And in my opinion, it will depend overwhelmingly on the turnout. Then there are in the Senate seven, perhaps eight, elections that could go either way, depending on the turnout. Then in the Governorships, there are a huge number of Governorships—there are 36 up, but there are probably 10 of them still very much in play. So I think that it is really impossible to know.

It's clear to me that our message has resonated with the American people, though we have been at an enormous, enormous financial disadvantage, the largest in my lifetime. The Republican committees—the Senate committee, the House committee, and the national committee raised over \$100 million more than their Democratic counterparts in these last 2 years. And there's been a breathtaking amount of money spent against some of our congressional candidates. So I just don't know. I feel good about it, but it depends upon who votes.

Mr. Smiley. You mentioned just a moment ago that this may be the election where the imbalance has been greatest with regard to fundraising in your lifetime, Republican and Democrat, that you've been involved in. Speaking of your lifetime, let me ask you whether or not it would be fair for me or

anyone else to suggest that this election is not just important to the country, it is not just important to African-Americans, but it is, in fact, quite important to William Jefferson Clinton. Would I be wrong in my assessment that this may be the most important election day of your entire political career?

The President. No, I don't agree with that. It's not the most—

Mr. Smiley. Not that much riding on it?

The President. No, no, it's not the most important election in my career. But it's very important to me because it will determine how much I can do for the American people in the next 2 years. We did very well here in this budget this year. We got a downpayment on our 100,000 teachers. We got programs for hundreds of thousands of kids after school. We fended off a Republican attempt to raid the surplus before we fixed Social Security.

But there was so much we did not do. And there is so much we still have to do that if we got a few more Democrats here, we could pass this Patients' Bill of Rights; we could have modernized schools and 100,000 more teachers; we could raise the minimum wage; we could secure Social Security; we could reform Medicare in the right way; we could do something for child care; we could do more for the areas of our country which still haven't felt the economic recovery.

And so the last 2 years of my Presidency I think would be far more focused on progress as opposed to this Washington partisan politics. So I would like it very much. It's terribly important to me. But the most important elections were the election and re-election in '92 and '96.

Mr. Smiley. Let me follow up on that, and again I ask this respectfully, and I'll move on. I promise. The reason I asked that question in the first place is because you and I both know what you personally have at stake, what personally is riding on this election tomorrow. And you mentioned that the two most important elections were the one when you were elected in '92 and, of course, re-elected in '96. And I would expect you to say that. But the reason why I asked whether or not you felt there was more riding on tomorrow is precisely because this election, depending on the outcome, could be the begin-

ning of the undoing, the unraveling of what those two elections were all about.

The President. Well, that depends upon who votes and what the message is. And I hope that the American people will turn out, and I hope that the electorate tomorrow will reflect what we know the electorate as a whole feels. The American people as a whole want us to put this partisanship behind us, want us to get back to their business. They think altogether too much time is spent in Washington on the considerations of the politics of Washington and altogether too little time spent on the real problems and the real opportunities of people out there in the country. So I agree with that, and I think that they can do a lot tomorrow to reduce partisanship and to increase progress if they all show up.

It's really a function of whether the people who show up tomorrow are fairly reflective of what all the research and all our instincts, mine and everybody else's, tell us where the American people as a whole are.

First Family

Mr. Smiley. We'll move on and ask a couple of questions that I admit at the outset I'm somewhat apprehensive in asking, but I ask them because they're things that you have spoken about in the past, and I want to give you a chance to expound and extrapolate, if you will. You've talked in the past a great deal about atonement, leading up to this election day tomorrow. It seems to me that you've talked about atonement in two regards: one, atoning as President, and secondly, atoning as a husband and a father. With regard as atoning as President, you promised to work harder to be a better President.

I don't know that anyone, Republican or Democrat—even your critics agree that you've been on a roll of late: the budget deal with Congress; the historic peace agreement between Israel and Palestine; I note last Friday the G-7 nations agreed on your proposal to put money into markets that are jittery at the moment. You're on a roll, domestically and internationally, with regard to that atonement issue and your being President.

What you've not talked about much lately—and I want to give you a chance to respond if you so choose—is how the atonement process is coming along with regard to your being a husband and a father. What's your assessment of how that atonement process is coming along?

The President. I haven't talked about it deliberately because I think that it ought to be a private matter between me and my family. All I can tell you is I'm working at it very hard, and I think it's terribly important. It's more important than anything else in the world to me—more important than anything else in the world. But I think the less I say about it, the better.

I think one of the things that I hope will come out of the reassessment of this whole business is a conviction again, which I believe the American people already have, that even people in public life deserve some measure of private space within which to have their family lives and to deal with their—both the joys and the trials of their personal lives. So I don't think I should say more about it except that I'm working at it.

Whitewater

Mr. Smiley. I respect that.

As you know, there was not a single reference—not a single reference—to Whitewater, as your White House staff and the entire Clinton administration reminds us every day—not a single reference to Whitewater in the Starr report. On the eve of this election day, though, it occurs to me that you still, though, have not been, despite that reality, you still have not been officially exonerated with regard to the Whitewater matter. I'm wondering whether or not that frustrates you in any way, whether you're bothered by the fact that there wasn't anything in the report, but you still have not been officially exonerated.

The President. Well, I think the American people should draw some comfort from the fact that after 4 years and \$40 million, reviewing all my checks, contributions, and the pressure—the extraordinary pressure a lot of people were put under to say things damaging, that nothing has come out. That's because neither my wife or I did anything wrong. And eventually that will become clear

to the American people. I hope it will become clear sooner rather than later, but I know that. I knew that in the beginning. I knew it from the start. And so I'm at peace about that, and I'll just have to let what others do be a matter for them to decide.

Rightwing Conspiracy

Mr. Smiley. “A vast rightwing conspiracy”—I'm sure you've heard those words somewhere before—“a vast rightwing conspiracy,” of course, uttered by your wife on the “Today” show a few months ago. Since she uttered those words, three things have happened: Number one, as I just suggested, the Starr report has come out with embarrassing, lurid, salacious details, and no mention of Whitewater; we have since had a straight party-line partisan vote in the House to move forward with this impeachment inquiry; thirdly, the Washington Post tells us last week that the Speaker of the House, Mr. Gingrich himself, was behind these personal attack ads against you.

I'm wondering, in light of that, and a number of other things I'm sure you could list, but those are three things that come to my mind—I'm wondering whether now we can reassess the First Lady's comments and ask whether or not Hillary Rodham Clinton was right when she suggested that there is, in fact, a vast rightwing conspiracy.

The President. Well, I think the facts speak for themselves, and as more facts come out, they will speak for themselves. The only thing I would say is there's a sort of a permanent political class in Washington that tends to thrive on such matters because they're not affected by what I came here to do.

In other words, most of these people, it doesn't matter to them whether there's a Patients' Bill of Rights or not, to make sure doctors, instead of accountants, make health care decisions. It certainly doesn't matter to them whether there's a minimum wage increase. It doesn't matter to them whether we have 100,000 more teachers and modernized schools. It doesn't matter to them whether we save Social Security for the 21st century.

So there is a group in America where the acquisition of political power is more important than the purpose for which it's used. To me, I never came here to be part of that

permanent political class. I didn't come—I'm not a Washington person, in that sense. I don't expect to be when I'm not President anymore. My whole goal was to use these precious years the American people have given me to deal with the challenges facing our country. I've done my best to do it, to move our country forward and to bring our country together.

And I have to say, I think I haven't really succeeded in reconciling the political parties in Washington. There is still too much partisanship here. But to me, that's what's going on here. This is a question of whether you've got politics or people as your top goal.

Politics of Hate

Mr. Smiley. That phrase, a vast rightwing conspiracy, would seem to suggest on some level that there is a visceral hatred, if you will, of Bill and Hillary Clinton in this city by some folk. You buy that? Let me ask you, first of all, if you buy that, Mr. President. And number two, if you buy that, let me just ask you in a very point-blank and direct way—and I'm not so sure I've ever heard you asked this question before, so maybe I'm a revolutionary here, I don't know, maybe I'm not—why do they hate you so much?

The President. Again, I think that people whose whole life is whether or not they are in or out of power, rather than what they do with power when they get it, don't like it when they're out. And a lot of these people really never thought there would be another Democratic President in our lifetimes. They really didn't think so. And all the things they said about Democrats—that we couldn't run the economy, that we couldn't balance the budget, that we couldn't deal responsibly with welfare, that we couldn't be tough and smart on crime, that we couldn't be strong on foreign policy—all those things that they told the American people about Democrats generally over decades turned out not to be true. And we now have 6 years of evidence that it's not true.

So there are some, again, whose life is solely—they evaluate themselves solely on whether they're in or out, who are very angry about that. And I'm sorry for them. I'm not even angry at them anymore. I'm just sorry, because I believe that there are people in

the Republican Party who are good people, who have honest differences of opinion with me, that I can work with, and we could have these debates and work through to have a good, positive result.

I think—but the ones that are consumed with personal animosity toward me or toward Hillary, I think, are just angry because they thought they and their crowd would always be able to drive up to the West Wing to work every day. To me, I just never thought of it that way. To me, every hour I serve here is an honor and a gift. But I never thought of myself as someone whose whole life was evaluated based on whether you were in or out. I think it's what you do when you're in that counts.

Politics of Race

Mr. Smiley. Speaking of what you do while you're in that counts, there are a significant number of African-Americans who feel that part of the reason why this hatred exists, part of the reason why this animosity exists, part of the reason why this friction exists between you and them is because you have been not just friendly to black folk and people of color—a lot of folk are friendly to black folk, and they speak and pat you on the back and stop by your fundraiser and your dinner—it's not just that you're friendly to black folk, it's that you appear downright comfortable with black folk and other people of color, and women, for that matter.

I'm wondering whether or not, with regard to the issues, you think that the reason why this hatred exists is because you have been so comfortable, so open, so accepting of diversity. Toni Morrison, as I'm sure you know, recently in the *New Yorker* magazine wrote that you are the first—Bill Clinton is the first black President. There are lot of black folk who feel that way about you. I'm wondering whether or not you think—

The President. [Laughter] I love that.

Mr. Smiley. —might that be part of the reason why people don't like you, because you're just so friendly and so open to this concept of diversity?

The President. Well, it might be. I don't know. I honestly don't know the answer to that. I can tell you that I have watched over time, since I was a little boy, and we had

all the racial troubles in the South when I was a kid—from that day to the present moment, where I'm trying to stop a disaster in Kosovo from occurring, and then we've dealt with Northern Ireland and the Middle East and tribal warfare in Africa and all these things—there are many different kinds of people in the world, but there are certainly two different kinds. There are those which draw their strength and identity from what they aren't and who they aren't, and they feel more secure when they know they're in a more dominant position over others. And then there are people who believe that they're more secure and stronger when they're unified with others, when they're connecting with people, when they're reaching across the lines that divide, and they don't feel threatened by the success of people who are totally different from them. And I was raised by my mother and by my grandparents to be in that latter group. And I don't claim any credit for it. That's just the way I am.

And this racial issue, to me, it goes way back before I was ever in politics. It's been a passion of a lifetime. I think my life is more interesting, more fun, more fulfilled because I have been able to reach out and have friends of different races and different backgrounds. And I just thank God that I was put in a position of political influence for a period of time where I could help more people to come into that mainstream of American life. I think this country is better off, and I think people individually are better off when they are connecting with people who are different from them. To me, that's one of the things that makes life interesting.

So it may be that that's a source of anger and animosity toward me. But if it is, I've gotten a lot more from this than I've paid for it. I can't imagine any more important job for the President right now than trying to unify this country across racial lines.

African-Americans and the Democratic Party

Mr. Smiley. As you know, the black community does not think or act monolithically. And while you have enjoyed a great deal of support—overwhelming, in fact—in the African-American community, there are some black folk who think that you have not been

liberal enough. You are not the most liberal President, let's face it, that we've ever had. There are some folk who think that the black community still is taken for granted by the Democratic Party, that we are blindly loyal to the Democratic Party, that the Democratic Party wants black votes, but they don't put the resources they ought to put to secure those black votes, and then the weekend before election day everybody comes running to the black community begging for support.

What do you say to folk who think—black folk, particularly—who think that they're being taken advantage of, being taken for granted by the Democratic Party, and that too many of us, quite frankly, are blindly loyal, as black folk, to the Democratic Party?

The President. I would say a couple of things. First of all, I don't think the evidence supports that in my case. I mean, in these 6 years, whether you measure it by Cabinet members, by 54 Federal judges, by any other standard, I have tried to make black Americans an integral part of our national life and my administration.

Secondly, if you look at the record here—there are those who say I'm not liberal enough. Let's talk about that in two different ways. What is the standard? This economic policy I have pursued and the special efforts that we've made through empowerment zones and community development banks and other initiatives—housing initiatives in the inner city—has given us the highest homeownership in history, the highest African-American small business ownership in history, the lowest African-American poverty ever recorded, more access to college than ever before. So I think that if you just look at that, I think the evidence is clear.

Now, there are those who say that I was wrong to sign the welfare bill that I signed. But I vetoed the welfare bills that would have taken food and medical guarantees away from poor children and families. The bill I signed simply says that every State has to make an effort to get able-bodied people in the workplace, and if able-bodied people can go into the workplace, they shouldn't be able to draw public assistance after a certain period of time. I think I was right about that.

The crime bill I signed puts 100,000 more police on the street, but it also gives young

people programs and ways to stay off the street. Now—so I believe that. Then there are some African-Americans who say that I'm not conservative enough because they favor—and they say they favor the Republicans on business grounds. It would be hard to argue that. We've done more to promote economic activity in the inner city and for African-Americans than anybody ever has.

So I actually would like it, believe it or not, someday if we could restore some balance in the party's appeal to the races. But as long as the Republicans follow the policies they're following, and if Democrats will follow the policies I've followed, I think that African-Americans are simply making the right decision based on what's right for their families and children.

I think most white Americans ought to be voting for us. Look at the economy. Look at the crime rate. Look at the welfare rolls. Look at the position of our country in the world. The truth is I think you could make a compelling case that a lot of the non-African-Americans who vote for the Republicans are doing the irrational thing. They're voting against their self-interest and what's best for our country and what's good and strong for our country.

If you listen to what I say—the speech I gave in that Baltimore church yesterday, I could have made that speech in a white church. I could have made that speech to a white civic club. I believe that what I'm trying to do is to unify America, not divide it.

Mr. Smiley. I know that you are tight on time, and I appreciate your sitting down with me, and I'm getting some time cues here, so if I can squeeze out a couple of quick questions.

The President. Sure.

Apology for Slavery

Mr. Smiley. Far be it for me to rush the President off. I'd talk to you for another hour and a half. Let me squeeze out a couple more if I can.

When we last sat down—speaking of black folk—when we last sat down one-on-one, just a few months ago, you granted me an exclusive interview in Capetown, South Africa, as you recall. I thank you again for that. One

of the questions I was pressing you on that particular day, as you were about to make a trip to Goree Island—I pressed you that day on whether or not when you got to Goree Island you were going to offer an apology for slavery. You made some rather provocative statements, but you didn't quite, in the minds of many, offer that apology for slavery. Your race commission, subsequently, has punted, if I could use that phrase, the question of the slavery apology. I'm wondering whether or not, since no one seems to want to apologize for slavery, whether or not in your mind that means that this country, America, is unapologetic about slavery.

The President. No, no. First of all, I think Dr. John Hope Franklin, who is the Chairman of my race commission, has enormous credibility with all African-Americans.

Mr. Smiley. Indeed he does—indeed.

The President. And I think what he decided was that he did not want—that, in effect, the country had been apologizing for it for over 100 years in the sense that it was abolished after the Civil War by, first, the Emancipation Proclamation of President Lincoln, and then by the passage of the constitutional amendment, the 13th amendment, and then that we had been on this long struggle, that it was self-evident that what we had done was wrong, and that we had been struggling to overcome it, and that all of us—at least virtually all thinking Americans and feeling Americans—were deeply sorry for what had happened and that we were still struggling to overcome it.

But I think that Dr. Franklin and the race commission concluded that it might be a diversion from our present task, which is to look at the problems we have today and to figure out how to overcome them, and to recognize, too, that the race issue in America is today and going forward even more complicated because it's not just about black and white Americans; it's about Hispanic-Americans; it's about Asian-Americans; it's about people from South Asia, people from the Middle East.

I gave a speech Saturday—a little talk—on my school modernization initiative over in Virginia at an elementary school, where there were children in just this elementary school from 23 different countries. And they

said they were very sorry that they could not have simultaneous translation of my remarks in Spanish and Arabic.

So what I think the race commission wanted to do was to say, "Hey, the overwhelming majority of white Americans regret the whole episode of slavery, have been trying in various ways with fits and starts to overcome it for 100 years, have to continue to try to overcome it, but we should focus now on where we are and where we're going."

1998 Elections

Mr. Smiley. Last question. I asked you earlier how important you thought this election day was for you. I've tried in the few moments that I've had to ask you how important you think it is for black America, specifically. Let me close by asking you how important you think this election is for the entire country tomorrow.

The President. Well, that's the most important issue. And I think it's really a question of what the country wants us to do here. Do they want more of the last 8 months of partisanship, or would they like more progress? Do they want us to have more Washington politics as usual, or would they like the people of America to be the center of our focus?

When I say—we've got a mission here. We want to continue to prepare America for the new century. We want to finish the agenda that was unfinished in this last year. We want the Patients' Bill of Rights. We want modernized schools. We want an increase in the minimum wage. We want to save Social Security. We want to do more for child care for working people. We want to do more to spread economic opportunity where it hasn't been spread and to keep this economy going. We have a mission, an agenda. It's not about politics; it's about people.

And I can just tell you that this election will be determined by two groups of people: those who vote and those who don't. And if I were sitting out there in America, I'd say, I believe I'll be among those who vote.

Mr. Smiley. Mr. President, as always, a pleasure to sit down and talk to you, and I thank you for taking the time doing it and address us today.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Smiley. Thank you, sir.

The President. Good to see you.

NOTE: The interview began at 11:13 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 2 but was embargoed for release until 11:30 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to Dr. John Hope Franklin, Chairman, President's Advisory Board on Race. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on the Patients' Bill of Rights

November 2, 1998

Thank you so very much, Mrs. Jennings, for coming here with your son amidst your evident pain to share your experience with us. Thank you, Dr. Weinmann, for sharing your experiences with us. If you would do that every day until we pass a bill, you can drink my water every day. [*Laughter*] I loved it. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, Dr. Beverly Malone. Thank you, Secretary Herman, for the work you and Secretary Shalala did. Thank you, Deputy Secretary Gober; Director of OPM Janice Lachance. I'd also like to thank Linda Chavez-Thompson, the executive vice president of the AFL-CIO; Gerry McEntee, the president of AFSME; Bill Lucy, the secretary-treasurer of AFSME; John Sepulveda, the Deputy Director of OPM; and Rudy de Leon, the Under Secretary of Defense, for being here. And a special word of appreciation on this day before the election to Congressman Eliot Engel, one of the great supporters of the Patients' Bill of Rights from New York City. Thank you, sir, for being here.

Iraq

Let me before I begin a few words about the situation in Iraq, which has been dominating the news, and I haven't had a chance to talk to the American people through the press in the last couple of days.

Saddam Hussein's latest refusal to cooperate with the international weapons inspectors is completely unacceptable. Once again, though, it will backfire. Far from dividing the

international community and achieving concessions, his obstructionism was immediately and unanimously condemned by the United Nations Security Council. It has only served to deepen the international community's resolve.

Just a short while ago, I met with my national security team to review the situation and discuss our next steps. Iraq must let the inspectors finish the job they started 7 years ago, a job Iraq promised to let them do repeatedly.

What is that job? Making sure Iraq accounts for and destroys all its chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capability and the missiles to deliver such weapons. For Iraq, the only path to lifting sanctions is through complete cooperation with the weapons inspectors, without restrictions, runarounds, or road blocks.

In the coming days, we will be consulting closely with our allies and our friends in the region. Until the inspectors are back on the job, no options are off the table.

Patients' Bill of Rights

Now let's talk about the Patients' Bill of Rights and what it means to the citizens of our country. A day from now, tomorrow, starting early in the morning, Americans from all walks of life will have a chance to exercise their right to vote. When citizens go to the polls tomorrow—and I hope very large numbers of them will—they will bring to bear their deepest hopes and concerns about their own families, their children, and our Nation. The choices Americans make tomorrow will have a profound effect on the future of our country.

This is not an ordinary time, and therefore, it is not an ordinary election. We can have progress on health and a Patients' Bill of Rights, or more partisanship; progress in education and students in smaller, more modern classrooms rather than trailers, or more partisanship; progress towards saving Social Security for the 21st century, or more partisanship.

Perhaps there is no choice more stark than the one presented by the stories we have heard today, for we believe that a Patients' Bill of Rights offers protections every American deserves. We believe such a bill must

be strong and enforceable and safeguard the security of patients and their families.

We need a bill of rights that says medical decisions should be made by informed doctors, not accountants; that specialists should be available whenever a doctor recommends them; that an emergency room coverage should be available wherever and whenever it is needed; that medical records should remain private; that no one can be forced to change doctors in the middle of treatment because an employer changes plans; that when people are harmed they have a right to hold the HMO accountable.

We have worked hard to extend these rights to as many people as we could through the use of executive authority. In February, I asked all Federal agencies that administer health care—that's Medicare, Medicaid, the Federal Employee Plan, the Department of Defense, and the Veterans Administration—to do everything they could to provide these protections. Today the Vice President sent me a report on their progress. It is considerable. Through executive action we're doing everything we can to extend the protections of the bill of rights to Americans who get their health care through federally funded plans. As the report shows, we have done so while avoiding any excessive cost or burden on these plans. Still, the executive action alone cannot protect the millions and millions of Americans—160 million total—in managed care plans.

Now, these plans can save money. They can actually improve the delivery of care if the management is done properly. When I became President, I'd like to remind all of you—it was a long time ago now, 6 years; it's hard to remember sometimes—inflation in health care was increasing at about 3 times the national rate of inflation. It was becoming unsustainable for employers, for employees, for families. And so some management changes were in order.

But one of the things that we have learned—and I thought the doctor stated it very well—is that whenever any kind of management change or market-oriented change is instituted, if you're not careful, the technique itself, the management itself, or the bottom line, the money-saving itself completely swallows up the original purpose of

the enterprise. The purpose of managed care is to deliver quality health care to everyone who needs it, in the most efficient way, at the lowest available cost, consistent with quality health care. The purpose of managed care is not to cut the costs as much as you can as long as it still looks like you're giving health care, whether you are or not.

And that is the dilemma that I appointed this Commission on Consumer Rights in Health Care to consider, that Secretary Herman and Secretary Shalala cochaired. We had business people on it. We had medical people on it. We had Republicans and Democrats on it.

And let me say to you that—I want to say this as strongly as I can—the stories you heard from this doctor today, the heart-breaking story you heard from Mrs. Jennings today, they are not isolated stories. They are not, unfortunately, exceptional stories. There are stories like this all over the country. And I, frankly, have heard too many of them. I've heard too many doctors tearing their hair out. I've seen too many nurses literally crying, talking to me about the people they've been required to turn down care to. We have seen too many families that have lost a loved one either because of denial or delay, which as you heard in the case of Mrs. Jennings, can be the same thing.

And I would also like to point out that there were 43 managed care organizations who supported our Patients' Bill of Rights, 43 companies who were up front enough to come forward and say, "Look, we either are doing this," or "we want to do it, but we don't think we should be put out of business for doing the right thing, and people who are doing the wrong thing should be rewarded."

So, what are we to do? Unfortunately, insurance company accountants or bogus procedures are not the only thing delaying the Patients' Bill of Rights now. The Republican leadership in Congress delayed it all year long. For a full year we worked with lawmakers of both parties in good faith to try to craft a bill that would genuinely protect patient's rights. And to be fair, I want to make full disclosure on this eve of the election, we had a handful, a bare handful, but

we did have a handful of Republicans who were willing to support it.

But in the House, they offered a bill, which I'll talk more about it in a minute, which didn't provide any of the protections, really, that the commission recommended and didn't cover 100 million people with what little it did provide. In the Senate, they brought the bill up, and the members in the other party that were in hotly contested races were, in effect, permitted to vote for the bill with us, and they still had enough votes to kill it. It was so cynical. And it's hard to be cynical once you hear the kind of stories we've heard today.

It was, to be sure, a profitable decision. The people who wanted the bill killed have spent vast sums of money attacking people like Congressman Engel. Now, he doesn't have a strong opponent and couldn't be defeated in his district, so he could be here with us today. But Congressman Frank Pallone from New Jersey, simply because he had the audacity to support this bill and say there should be no more Mrs. Jennings, a man representing a single congressional district found himself the target of ads run on New York television during the World Series. You know how expensive those are? [*Laughter*] The World Series—we're beaming it to you, New Jersey. We'll show these Congressmen, if they have the audacity to stand up and say we should be held accountable in the court of law like anybody else, that we ought to put the quality of health care first; we'll show them. Now, that's what this is about.

Now, let's look at the facts. Let's look at the facts. Look at this chart. I've shown this chart before, but this is a day before the election. I want the people of this country to see this chart. I don't want any smokescreen. I've seen some of these ads that members of the other party ran about how they're really for this Patients' Bill of Rights, and it made me think that ours wasn't strong enough. And I looked at the ad, and then I went back and looked at their bill. So I think we need to look at their bill one more time.

We say that medical decisions should be made by doctors, not accountants. Ours guarantees that; theirs doesn't. We say that there

should be a guarantee of direct access to specialists if your primary doctor recommends it. Ours guarantees that; theirs doesn't. We say there should be real emergency room protections. Let me stop and say what that means. That means if you get hit by a car, and you're in an emergency, you ought to go to the nearest emergency room, not one halfway across town if you're in a big city because it happens to be covered. That may not seem like a big deal to you, but just imagine, have you ever been in New York City traffic or Los Angeles traffic? This is a big deal. This is a huge deal. This is not some idle talk here. This is not political rhetoric. This is a huge thing. Anybody that's ever been with a loved one in the back of an ambulance struggling to get to a hospital knows this is a huge deal.

We say you ought to keep your doctor through critical treatments. That's a guarantee of ours. What does that mean? It means if you're pregnant and your employer changes providers while you're pregnant, you can't be forced to get another obstetrician. Those of you who have had children, remember, how traumatic would that have been—7th month of your pregnancy, say, "I'm sorry. Here's Dr. Smith. Get to know him." Even worse, chemotherapy. Almost all of us have had somebody in our family now have chemotherapy treatment. Just think how traumatic it is. You sit there; you worry about the person that you love going through chemotherapy; you watch their hair fall out; you see the loss of appetite; you try to make jokes about it, and be told in the middle of the treatment you have to change doctors. It's a big issue. This is not just a word on a chart here. This is a big human issue.

Protecting patients from secret financial incentives—you heard the doctor, what he said. Certainly, there should be no money going to doctors in HMO's for making cost-cutting decisions. Protecting medical privacy laws, holding health plans accountable for harming patients, and covering all health plans—their bill, what little it did cover, didn't cover 100 million Americans.

Now, that's what is at issue here. This is a very practical bill. It is very important. And I will say, it should not be a partisan issue. Believe you me, this is not a partisan issue

in any community in America, except Washington, DC. I have no idea what political party Mrs. Jennings belongs to. I don't know if the doctor has ever voted for a Democrat in his life. *[Laughter]* I don't know. I know nothing about that. This is not a political issue. When you haul into an emergency room, nobody asks you—and you fill out all those forms, there is not "Republican," "independent," "Democrat" on it. You don't check that. This has nothing to do, ordinarily, with partisan politics.

And I will say again, I believe we ought to save money. I worked for 6 years here to get this budget balanced, to get it in surplus. We eliminated hundreds of programs. But we didn't stop trying to invest in education and research or Head Start. I believe they ought to save all the money they can on the health care system. But you should not have a system where you get in trouble for taking care of people and where, in the first line of contact, you will never get in trouble for saying no.

That's the last point I want to make about this. And the doctor implied this; I want to make it explicit. Put yourself, every one of you, in a position—suppose you weren't a doctor. Suppose you were somebody with a BA in accounting, and you got a degree, and you're 25 or 28 years old; you get a degree working for these health maintenance organizations, and you review these claims in the first position. What do you know? First of all, you'd like to keep your job. It's a nice place. You've got health benefits. *[Laughter]* You get 2 weeks—no, listen, think about that. You get 2 weeks vacation. And you've never looked at Mrs. Jennings. You don't know her husband. You don't have to go home at night with their faces burned in your brain. What do you know?

You know you will never get in trouble for saying no. That's the incentive. You won't lose your job if you say no every time. Why? Because eventually they'll kick it up to somebody who will eventually get it right, and if they're a doctor, they'll eventually get it right. The problem is, you just heard today one gripping example of what "eventually" can mean in the life of the Jennings family.

That is why we need the road map. That's why we need the law. We shouldn't depend

upon the roll of the dice about whether every person who reviews every one of these cases in every one of these plans all across America is willing to risk his or her job in the first instance, every time, to try to resolve doubt. And some of them don't even have enough knowledge to know what to do, trying to second-guess the doctors. This is a big deal, practically.

I've heard all these arguments about how, well, you don't want too many lawsuits, and all that. Now, I'm sympathetic to that; everybody is. But look, under the law today, one of our wits said on our side the other day, the only people in Washington who can't get sued anymore are foreign diplomats and HMO's. [Laughter] Now, nobody wants an unnecessary lawsuit. But people have to be held accountable in these cases so that we can change the incentives.

So I ask you all to think about this. And I ask the American people to think about it. Again, it should not be a partisan issue. It has been made a partisan issue not by us but by those who would not join us. There was a bipartisan makeup on this commission that came up with this recommendation. And I promise you, in every hospital in America today there is a bipartisan makeup in the hospital beds as you walk up and down the halls and in every nursing station.

This should be an American issue. Look folks, we've got to fix this. And this election, in no small measure, will be a referendum on whether we will put people over politics, the public interest over special interest, the health of our people over a very short-sighted definition of the bottom line.

Again I say, I hope the American people will go to the polls tomorrow in large numbers, and I hope they will vote in a way that sends a signal loud and clear that America needs a real Patients' Bill of Rights. I hope the Americans who see this will remember Frances Jennings, will remember Dr. Weinmann, will remember Beverly Malone, will remember the people who give care and the people who need it, and remember what this is all about.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Frances Jennings, who introduced

the President and whose husband died as a result of a delayed health care decision; Dr. Robert Weinmann, Mr. Jennings' physician; Dr. Beverly Malone, president, American Nurses Association; Gerald W. McEntee, president, and William Lucy, international secretary-treasurer, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFL-CIO); and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Statement on the Death of General James L. Day

November 2, 1998

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of General James L. Day, USMC (Ret). Last January, I awarded General Day our Nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor, for extraordinary heroism during the battle of Okinawa in 1945.

General Day's service did not end at Okinawa. He distinguished himself for courage and leadership in a career of service that spanned more than four decades. From World War II to Korea and Vietnam, he served his country with patriotism, dedication, and unsurpassed bravery. General Day's lifetime of achievements embodied the words, *Semper Fidelis*.

We will miss this true hero, whose selfless conduct as a Marine and citizen set a shining example for all Americans. We are grateful for all he did to preserve the freedom that is our most sacred gift. Our thoughts and prayers go to his wife, Sally, his son, Jim, and the entire Day family.

Telephone Interview With Samuel Orozco of Radio Bilingue

November 2, 1998

1998 Elections

Mr. Orozco. Is there any message you would like to send to our listeners in Radio Bilingue, Mr. President?

The President. Yes, Samuel, thank you very much. The first and most important message is to implore every person within the sound of my voice to vote on Tuesday, November 3d. November 3d is no ordinary election day, for on November 3d we will decide whether, as a nation, we focus on

progress or partisanship for the next 2 years. We will decide the direction our country will take in the new century. And it will be determined, this election, not only by who votes but by who does not vote.

I have worked very, very hard to focus on matters of importance not only to Hispanics but to all Americans. When I came into office, we had a troubled economy, a big budget deficit, high crime, and deep partisanship. And over the last 6 years, the economy has improved; the crime rate is at a 25-year low; we had the first surplus in 29 years, the lowest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years. But we're still fighting these partisan battles.

I want very much to have the opportunity to do what America needs. I have a plan for 100,000 teachers and smaller classes and modern schools, a plan for a Patients' Bill of Rights that guarantees the right of people in HMO's to see a specialist when they need one and to have the other medical protections they need, a plan to raise the minimum wage, a plan to save Social Security for the next century. We have to do these things and so much more.

And I think everyone within the sound of my voice understands that I and the Democrats have been fighting for this, that the Republicans have opposed us on these matters. So what I want to do is to make everyone understand that all the good things that we have done in the last couple of years, we have done in the face of intense opposition.

We got a big Hispanic education action plan passed at the end of this last Congress, because I wouldn't agree to a budget unless we put it in there—over \$500 million to reduce the dropout rate and increase the college-going rate among Hispanics. We got a big initiative to reduce the naturalization backlog to make more citizens more quickly. We're moving forward in a whole range of areas.

But there is so much we will be able to do with a few more Democrats in Congress. And the kind of intense support that can come tomorrow from the Hispanic community can make a difference in California, in Illinois in the Senate race, in House races all across the United States, in New York in the very important race for the Senate there,

many other places. So I believe that this election may well be riding on whether Hispanic-Americans vote.

Bilingual Education

Mr. Orozco. One issue very dear to Latino communities in our country, Mr. President, is bilingual education. Proposition 227, approved here in California, seeks to eliminate bilingual education. You have said that being able to speak more than one language is a gift that we all need. What role do you envision for the Spanish language in the U.S. in the next century, and how determined are you to stand by bilingual education?

The President. Well, as you know, I opposed Proposition 227 because I thought it was artificial. I do think all children, schoolchildren, whose native language is Spanish should become fluent in English and should be able to read, speak, and learn in English. But I believe that during that process, it's important to have effective bilingual programs.

I also believe that more and more children whose first language is not Spanish should learn to speak Spanish. I believe that more and more of our school districts, and perhaps even our States, should adopt a requirement that students, in order to get out of high school, should have 4 years of language and should demonstrate some proficiency in it. In a global economy, that would help us a lot. So I would like to see the bilingual education matter taken out of politics and put back into education.

The truth is that a lot of our children would not have to spend so long in bilingual programs if we had more well-trained bilingual education teachers who could teach the children the subjects they're learning and help them to learn English more quickly. And I think we ought to focus on the problem instead of turning it into a political football.

Immigration

Mr. Orozco. A final question, Mr. President. You have said that immigration is not only good for America, it is America. You have also enthusiastically supported the North American Free Trade Agreement, an agreement which is supposed to erase borders and bring friends together. However,

the Mexico-U.S. border is becoming a costly, dangerous, and fortified wall. What are you doing to create a friendlier border with Mexico?

The President. Well, we're trying to work with the Mexican Government more on economic and environmental projects and on building up the economy on both sides of the border so there will be less danger of drug trafficking and more possibilities for commerce that benefit both sides. The Mexican Government has begun to work with us more closely to deal with narcotrafficking, because it's a big problem in Mexico as well as the U.S.

But we can't just have a negative approach. We also have to finance more economic projects and more environmental projects along the border and make sure the border operates more smoothly. And that's what I have worked hard to do.

I think that if we can keep this global financial crisis from reaching Mexico and the rest of Latin America, that we will see over the next 5 years a marked improvement in our relationships with Mexico, a marked improvement in the Mexican economy, a smaller problem with illegal immigration, and more joint action on drug trafficking. And that is my goal.

1998 Elections

Mr. Orozco. Mr. President, tomorrow is election day. Many Latinos will vote for the first time, and they make good voters. But many hesitate because they don't believe in *políticos*. They don't believe in the promises of the politicians. What message would you have as a final message for Latino voters?

The President. Well, first of all, I think you can look at the promises I have made to the American people, including Latinos, over the last 6 years, and you can look at how many jobs have been created, how much welfare has gone down, how much unemployment has gone down, how much crime has gone down. You can look at my record on immigration. You can look at my record on appointing Hispanics to key positions in my administration. You can look at my record in fighting AIDS in the Hispanic community and my record in trying to fight for this education initiative to improve the educational

prospects of young Latinos. And you can look at my record in fighting for a fair census that counts all Americans. So I'm not just a politician making promises. I have a record. I have done what I said I would do, and it has been good for the Latino community in America.

And if you look ahead, basically if you want smaller classes, more teachers, and modern schools, and you want the National Government to help, then you only have one choice, because the Democrats and I are for it; the Republicans are opposed to our initiative.

If you want a raise in the minimum wage, we're for it, and they're opposed to it. If you want to protect patients that are in managed care plans and give them the right they need to see specialists and to keep treatment going, we're for it, and they're opposed to it. If you want to see the surplus we have protected to save Social Security for the elderly, long term, and to protect the integrity of Medicare, then you should support us. If you want more done on child care to support working families with young children, we have an initiative; they're opposed to it.

So I would say, based on our record and the clear differences between parties, it is very much worth going out to vote. And if you don't vote, the consequences of not voting are that in the next 2 years the Congress will spend their time and money the same they have in the last year, which is basically fighting inside-Washington political games, trying to gain political advantage through investigations and other things, instead of doing the people's business.

So I would say there's a clear case for voting and a clear case for voting for the Democrats for Congress and Senate tomorrow. And I hope that everyone within the sound of my voice will do so.

Willie Velazquez spent his life at the Southwest Voter Education Project saying "*Su voto es su voz.*" And it's really true, and more true now than ever before.

Mr. Orozco. Mr. President, on behalf of Radio Bilingue, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you very much, Samuel. Goodbye.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 7 p.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Residence at the White House. A tape was not

available for verification of the content of this interview.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 5, 1998]

Executive Order 13105—Open Enrollment Season for Participants in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System

November 2, 1998

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 827 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4067) and section 292 of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964 (50 U.S.C. 2141), and in order to conform further the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability System, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. In conjunction with section 860 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4071i), the Secretary of State shall issue regulations providing for an open enrollment period from November 1, 1998, to April 30, 1999, during which employee participants in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System may elect to become subject to the Foreign Service Pension System.

Sec. 2 In conjunction with section 307(a) of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964 (50 U.S.C. 2157(a)), the Director shall provide for an open enrollment period from November 1, 1998, to April 30, 1999, during which employee participants in the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System may elect to become subject to the Federal Employees' Retirement System, comparable to the election for civil service employees provided for by the Federal Employees' Retirement System Open Enrollment Act of 1997, Public Law 105-61.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 2, 1998.

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 3, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on November 6.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Economic Team and an Exchange With Reporters

November 3, 1998

Hurricane Mitch

The President. I'd like to begin by making a few comments about the tragedy that has been unfolding in Central America. Hurricane Mitch has already claimed thousands of lives in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Many thousands more are in urgent need of food and shelter. Across the region, communities have been devastated, bridges washed out, agriculture disrupted, schools and hospitals destroyed.

These nations are our neighbors. They all have people who are a part of our country now. They are both close to our shores and close to our hearts. We must do whatever we can to help, and we will.

Already, we have provided almost \$3.5 million to airlift food, plastic sheeting, water containers, and blankets into the region. We've provided military aircraft and helicopters to get supplies to isolated areas, and deployed a disaster assistance response team to each affected country. We will be consulting with our friends in Central America and our people on the ground to see what more we can do in the days ahead.

International Economy

Now I am about to begin a meeting with my economic team to discuss a range of global economic issues. Over the long run, if our economy is to continue to grow, the economies of our trading partners must also continue to grow. Yet a full quarter of the world's population now lives in countries with declining or negative economic growth. This presents to us the biggest financial challenge in half a century.

Over the last year, we have pursued a comprehensive strategy to fight the financial crisis and to protect American jobs at home as well. Just last week, in an unprecedented step, leaders of the world's major economies agreed to create a precautionary line of credit to help countries with sound economic policies ward off crisis in the first place.

Japan recently committed substantial resources to repair its own banking system, an essential precondition to restoring growth there. The U.S., Japan, Canada, and several European nations have cut interest rates to spur global growth. And America, at last, made its contribution to the International Monetary Fund. Next week I will go to Asia, where we will continue to work with our Asian partners to spur growth, expand trade, and strengthen the social safety net, especially in the troubled countries.

In the face of worldwide economic turmoil, the American economy remains the strongest in a generation. We are grateful for that. But to keep it going we must stay with the strategy that created the conditions of growth in the first place, that helped us to build this enduring economic expansion, and we must address the challenges of the global economy to make sure it continues to endure.

1998 Elections

Q. Mr. President, since this is election day, what are your predictions for your own party?

The President. I don't know. As I said before, there are an unusual number of exceedingly close races. I can never remember a time when we had probably eight Senate seats within a few points one way or the other, and it appears to me almost three dozen House seats within a few points one way or the other.

So in large measure, it will depend upon who makes the effort to vote today. I voted. I presume everybody here has already voted or is about to. And my only message today is that every American who has not yet made the decision to go and vote, should do so.

We are going to elect a Congress that will deal with the challenges of Social Security and where it can be reformed and how, for the 21st century; that will deal with the Medicare challenge; that will deal with the

challenge of providing an excellent educational opportunity for all of our people. I hope we will elect a Congress that will finally pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, that will raise the minimum wage, that will deal with a lot of our other big-time challenges, including campaign finance reform.

Q. How about your own survival? Is this a referendum on you?

The President. I think this election is a referendum on all the hopes of the American people for the future, and their assessment of the present condition, and how we get from here to a better tomorrow. I think that's what it will be. That's what all elections are, and none of us know what is going to happen. That's the honest truth. None of the pollsters know; nobody does.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin

Q. Mr. President, at this time of economic turmoil, what indication has Secretary Rubin given you regarding how long he intends to remain on the job? [*Laughter*]

The President. You ought to ask him.

We haven't discussed it in quite a while. He knows that I want him to stay as long as he's comfortable sitting in that chair, and I think all of us know there are a lot of things going on in the world today, and the United States has a special responsibility. I'm very pleased at the work we've been able to do under Secretary Rubin's leadership to stabilize the financial conditions, especially in the last couple of months, the consensus we seem to be developing among the world's leading economies and many of the developing economies about some long-term reforms in the financial system that will enable us to continue to have growth without the kind of boom/bust cycle that has caused so much heartache in so many of the Asian economies and in Russia, and the work we've done to try to keep it from spreading to Latin America.

And he has played a critical role in all that, as well as in our own prosperity, the last several years. And I hope he'll stay as long as he feels that he can.

Hurricane Mitch

Q. Mr. President, the Central American countries that are affected are all democracies. They're all emerging markets. And it's not only a job of reconstruction, which is going to be very expensive; it's getting them back on their feet. You have shown a lot of interest in Latin America. Would you be willing to lead a movement of European countries or pan-Asian countries that would also help, because there is going to be a tremendous amount of reconstruction needed?

The President. We're going to be discussing that. I think there will be a lot of interest in the World Bank and elsewhere in trying to help put these countries back on their feet economically. But right now I think it's important that we focus on trying to help them with the present.

I mean, it's inconceivable to most Americans that a natural disaster would lead to the deaths of thousands and thousands of people. Keep in mind, all these countries are much smaller than we are. Imagine how we would feel in America if 7,000 people died in a natural disaster. And the combined population of these countries is so much smaller than ours. Virtually every family will be affected in some way or another.

And so I would say, first of all, let's help them deal with the present crisis and deal with it as rapidly and as well as possible. And then of course we will be looking at what we can do to help them rebuild and return to normal life.

President's Sixth Anniversary

Q. This is your sixth anniversary. Has it been 6 years—

The President. It is my sixth anniversary, isn't it? They have been 6 very good years, very good years for our country. And as I tell everybody around here, even the bad days are good. It's an honor to serve, and my gratitude today is immense to the American people for giving me two chances to do this and for the good things that have happened in our country over the last 6 years.

I think we can look back over 6 years and think, if you had known 6 years ago that our country would be in the position it is today, I think we would have all been almost incredulous, but we would have been full of energy

and hope. I think it shows that if you just get a good team together and everybody works like crazy, and the American people do what they do, which is to get up every day and do their jobs, that good things can happen.

I'm just—I'm very grateful for these 6 years, and I'm grateful for the progress our country has made.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:30 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on Signing the Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act of 1998

November 3, 1998

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1260, the "Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act of 1998," (Uniform Standards Act).

This country is blessed with strong and vibrant markets, and they function best when corporations can raise capital by providing investors with their best, good-faith future projections. This legislation will help stabilize the enforcement scheme of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 (the Reform Act) by ensuring that parties obtain the benefits of the protections that Federal law provides. The Uniform Standards Act reinforces our national capital markets by promoting uniform national standards for information generated for and used in national capital markets. If firms know that they can rely on the Reform Act's "safe harbor" for forward-looking information, they will provide the public with valuable information about their prospects, thus benefiting investors by enabling them to make wiser decisions.

The Reform Act substantially revised both substantive and procedural law governing private actions under Federal securities laws. It was designed to end litigation abuses and ensure that investors receive the best possible information by reducing the litigation risk to companies that make forward-looking statements. In addition to the safe harbor for forward-looking statements, the Reform Act

created, among other things, a stay of discovery pending a defendant's motion to dismiss; limited the exposure of certain defendants by establishing proportionate liability, rather than joint and several liability, for parties not found to have "knowingly" committed violations; and required courts to assess whether all parties complied with Rule 11 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, prohibiting frivolous legal filings.

Although I supported the Reform Act's goals, I vetoed the Act because I was concerned that it would erect procedural barriers and keep wrongly injured persons from having their day in court. In particular, I objected to certain statements in the 1995 Conference Report's Statement of Managers that created ambiguity with respect to whether the bill was adopting the pleading standard in private securities fraud cases of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit—the highest pleading standard of any Federal circuit court and a standard that I support. When the bill returned to the House and Senate floors after my veto, the bill's supporters made clear that they did in fact intend to codify the Second Circuit standard. After this important assurance, the bill passed over my veto.

Since passage of the Reform Act, there has been considerable concern that the goals of the Reform Act have not been realized. In particular, there was testimony that firms are not using the Federal safe harbor for forward-looking statements because they fear State court litigation over the same representations that are protected under Federal law. In addition, concerns have been raised that State actions are being used to achieve an "end run" around the Reform Act's stay of discovery.

In signing the Uniform Standards Act, I do so with the understanding, as reflected in the Statement of Managers for this legislation and numerous judicial decisions under the Reform Act adopting the pleading standard of the Second Circuit, that investors with legitimate complaints meeting the Second Circuit pleading standard will have access to our Nation's courts. This point was critical to my veto of the Reform Act in 1995; it was reaffirmed before ultimate passage of the 1995 Act over my veto; and its assurance was

a prerequisite to my signing this legislation today, as indicated in the April 28, 1998, letter from my staff to Chairman D'Amato, Senator Gramm, and Senator Dodd. Since the uniform standards provided by this legislation state that class actions generally can be brought only in Federal court, where they will be governed by Federal law, clarity on the Federal law to be applied is particularly important. The Statement of Managers confirms that the Second Circuit pleading standard will be the uniform standard for pleading securities fraud. Thus, the uniform national standards contained in this bill will permit investors to continue to recover losses fairly attributable to reckless misconduct. I am aware of and agree with the expert views on this issue of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which, along with my staff, worked hard in shaping this legislation.

With these assurances in the Statement of Managers that reckless conduct will continue to be actionable and that complaints meeting the Second Circuit pleading standard will permit investors access to our Nation's courts, I believe that the uniform national standards created by this bill will generate meaningful information for investors and further reduce frivolous litigation without jeopardizing the critically important right of defrauded investors to obtain relief.

I do, however, object to one provision in this bill. Section 203 provides separate authority for job classification and pay of SEC economists. This provision was added to the bill at the last minute without any time for review or comment. There is no justification to treat SEC economists differently from other Federal employees. With that one exception, I am pleased to sign the Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act of 1998 into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 3, 1998.

NOTE: S. 1260, approved November 3, was assigned Public Law No. 105-353.

Statement on the Sweatshops Agreement

November 3, 1998

Today's agreement on fighting sweatshop practices is an historic step toward reducing sweatshop labor around the world and will give American consumers confidence that the clothes they buy are made under decent and humane working conditions. I applaud the apparel industry, labor unions, non-governmental organizations, and consumer groups who answered the challenge I laid out 2 years ago to find cooperative ways to reduce sweatshop labor.

This agreement is only the beginning. We know that sweatshop labor will not vanish overnight. While this agreement is an historic step, we must measure our progress by how we change and improve the lives and livelihoods of apparel workers here in the United States and around the world. That is why I urge more companies to join this effort and follow these strict rules of conduct.

I want to thank all the parties who worked so hard to bring this agreement to a close, and especially Senator Tom Harkin, who first brought this issue to my attention a long time ago.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Economic Team and an Exchange With Reporters

November 4, 1998

Legislative Agenda

The President. Good afternoon. Now that the election is over, it is time to put politics aside and once again focus clearly on the people's business. In yesterday's election, I think the message the American people sent was loud and clear: We want progress over partisanship and unity over division; we should address our country's great challenges; above all, now we must address the challenge to save Social Security for the 21st century.

We have work to do in other areas as well. We should move forward to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. We should strengthen our schools by finishing the job of hiring 100,000 teachers and then passing the school modernization initiative, to give us 5,000 remod-

eled or new schools. We should increase the minimum wage. We should pass campaign finance reform. We must maintain our fiscal discipline to strengthen our own economy and maintain our efforts to stabilize the global economy.

But above all, now we have to seize this opportunity to save Social Security. And we're about to have another meeting here, one of many, in anticipation of the White House conference. I have spoken tonight and today with Senator Lott and Speaker Gingrich, with Senator Daschle and Mr. Gephardt, to ask them to join with me in this effort. On December 8th and 9th we will hold the first-ever White House Conference on Social Security, bringing together people from Congress and the administration, from the public and experts of all persuasions. We will only be able to do this if we reach across party lines, reach across generational lines, indeed, reach across philosophical lines to forge a true national consensus.

I believe we can do it. I believe we must do it. Yesterday's election makes it clear that the American people expect us to do it.

1998 Elections

Q. To what do you attribute, Mr. President, the Democratic gains? I mean, was there one factor that you think was really the motivation?

The President. Well, let me say I'm very proud of what our party did yesterday in the face of the tide of history and an enormous financial disadvantage. I think it's clear what happened. I think that they stayed together; they had a message that was about the American people, their needs, their opportunities, and their future. I think that they won because they had a clear message that was about America, about saving Social Security, and improving education, and passing the Patients' Bill of Rights, and raising the minimum wage and those other things. I think that's why they won. And they were able to get an enormous outpouring of support in all quarters of the country. And I'm very proud of what they did. But I think they did it by putting progress over partisanship.

1998 Elections Results and the Impeachment Inquiry

Q. Mr. President, do you think the election results will have an impact, or should have an impact on the impeachment inquiry?

The President. That's in the hands of Congress and the American people. I've said that before; I'll say it again. I have nothing else to say about that.

Q. Mr. President, the Republicans have made no secret of the fact they intend to look at these elections and draw a lesson in terms of how they conduct an impeachment inquiry. What lesson would you hope they draw from these elections on that point?

The President. That's a decision for them to make. I'm not involved in that, and I'm not going to comment on it. I think that the lesson all people should draw is that the people who were rewarded were rewarded because they wanted to do something for the American people. They wanted to do something to pull this country together and to move this country forward.

If you look at all the results, they're clear and unambiguous. The American people want their business, their concerns, their children, their families, their future addressed here. That's what the message of the election was. And because the Democrats were able to do that in a unified fashion, even while being badly outspent and while running against a tide of history that goes back to, really to 1822, they were able to have an astonishing result. And I'm grateful for that.

But I think that people of both parties who care about these issues and want to pull the country together should now put the election behind us, put Social Security reform and education and health care reform before us, and go forward. That's what I want to do.

1998 Elections and President's Policies

Q. [Inaudible]—the outcome is a vindication of your policies?

The President. I think it is a vindication of the policies and of the general policy of putting partisanship behind progress and of putting people before politics and of trying to find ways to bring people together instead of to divide them. It was clearly a vindication of the message that the Democrats put out there on education, health care, Social Secu-

rity and the minimum wage, campaign finance reform, the environment, a number of other things.

A lot of people worked very hard in this election—the Vice President did; the First Lady did; a lot of people did—but I think the American people basically said to all of us—all of us—“We sent you there to work for us, and we want you to find a way to do it, to address the challenges we face and to bring this country together and move this country forward.” I think that was the loud, clear, completely unambiguous message of the election.

Governor-Elect Jesse Ventura of Minnesota

Q. [Inaudible]—the election of Ventura in Minnesota—

The President. I don't know. I think that you're going to have a lot of politicians spending time in gyms now. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Statement on the Russia-United States Agreement To Provide Food Aid to Russia

November 4, 1998

I am pleased to announce that a U.S. team will begin today to finalize an agreement with the Government of Russia on a program to provide at least 3.1 million metric tons of food. This program will help sustain Russians through a serious food shortage this winter as well as their country's continuing economic distress. In addition, this agreement will bolster American farmers and ranchers who have been hit hard by an agricultural crisis here. We will be prepared to consider additional assistance if necessary.

The program is being developed under the auspices of the binational commission chaired by Vice President Gore and Prime Minister Primakov. Our negotiating team will work with their Russian counterparts to ensure that our assistance is distributed properly and exempted from taxes and customs duties. These are key elements to a successful program.

Memorandum on a Guidebook for Victims of Domestic Violence

November 4, 1998

Memorandum for the Director of the Office of Personnel Management

Subject: Guidebook for Victims of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is one of the most serious public health issues and criminal justice issues facing our Nation. About 30 percent of female murder victims are killed by intimates each year. Women aged 16–24 experience the highest rates of intimate violence. In 1996, women experienced an estimated 840,000 incidents of rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault at the hands of intimates. While this number has declined from 1.1 million incidents in 1993, we must strive to eliminate domestic violence both for its effects on victims as well as on their children. Domestic violence does not discriminate—it affects individuals of every age, race, gender, class, and religion.

My Administration is committed to fighting the scourge of domestic violence. As part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, I fought for and signed into law the historic Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which provides a comprehensive approach to domestic violence, both through prosecuting offenders and providing assistance to victims. Through VAWA, my Administration has provided almost half a billion dollars through STOP (Services, Training, Officers, and Prosecutors) grants to the states for law enforcement prosecution, and victim services to prevent and respond to violence against women. The extension of the Brady Law prohibits anyone convicted of a domestic violence offense from owning a firearm. The Interstate Stalking Punishment and Prevention Act of 1996 makes it a Federal crime to cross State lines intending to injure or harass another person.

In 1995, I established the Violence Against Women Office at the Department of Justice, elevating the fight against domestic violence to the national level for the first time. Since 1996, the 24-hour National Domestic Violence Hotline (1-800-799-SAFE) has provided immediate crisis intervention, counsel-

ing, and referrals to those in need, responding to as many as 10,000 calls each month.

Domestic violence affects all aspects of our society—the family, the community, and the workplace. As the Nation’s largest employer, the Federal Government has tried to set an example for private employers to protect and provide assistance to workers who are victims of domestic violence. In 1995, I signed an executive memorandum requiring all Federal departments to begin employee awareness efforts on domestic violence. Last year, the Vice President announced that the Office of Personnel Management had developed a guidebook for dealing with workplace violence that outlines a wide array of strategies for preventing violence at work and for helping supervisors, security, and employee assistance staff to recognize the signs of violence, including domestic violence.

Building upon these efforts, it is important to provide a resource guide to the thousands of Federal employees across the country, whether they are a victim of domestic violence or a family member, neighbor, friend, or co-worker of someone who is being abused. I accordingly direct you to prepare within 120 days a guidebook that will (1) assist Federal employees who are victims of domestic violence by providing up-to-date information about available resources and outline strategies to ensure safety; and (2) help those who know a Federal employee who is being abused to prevent and respond to the situation. This guidebook should list private as well as public resources such as counseling, law enforcement, workplace leave policies, and substance abuse programs. In developing this guidebook, you should consult with all interested parties, including the private sector and other Federal agencies and offices—particularly, the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services.

This guidebook, in conjunction with my Administration’s continuing efforts to combat domestic violence, will help to promote the safety of all Federal workers and their families.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: The memorandum of October 2, 1995, on the Federal Employee Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign was published in the *Federal Register* on October 10, 1995.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters

November 5, 1998

Legislative Agenda

The President. Good morning. The Vice President and I have just finished a good meeting with Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt. We all agree that the message from the American people in the last election is clear—that they want us to pursue progress over partisanship and to find unity over division.

And we talked about how best to start that process. We believe the best way to start is by taking up the Patients' Bill of Rights, the legislation that would guarantee quality health care to Americans without regard to whether they are in managed care plans or not and would assure that medical decisions are made by doctors, not by accountants.

In the last session of Congress, that bill lost by only five votes in the House, and we now have five more Democrats coming to the House. It came very close to passing in the United States Senate. It need not be a partisan issue. Indeed, a cosponsor of the Patients' Bill of Rights in the House is Congressman Greg Ganske from Iowa, a Republican physician who has spoken very eloquently about the need for this legislation.

So what we want to do is to reach out to like-minded people in the other party to try to heed the admonition of the American people and the direction that we certainly agree we ought to take and get to work together. We're looking forward to it, and this is where we think we should begin.

Election Results and the Impeachment Inquiry

Q. Congressman Gephardt, what do you think this does to the impeachment hearings? Does it wipe them out, diminish them, slow them down, or what?

Congressman Gephardt. First, I want to agree with the President on the Patients' Bill

of Rights. I feel very strongly that we can get this done. If you have a sick family member, you want it done now, so we're going to work very hard to see if we can get it done in the early part of this next year.

I don't know what is happening on Mr. Hyde's statement—if they are moving in our direction—we wanted them to some weeks ago, and they're going to get this over with in a fair and expeditious way. That's good.

Independent Counsel's Referral

Q. Mr. President, do you anticipate that your lawyers will vigorously attack the Starr report in the committee? And is there any testimony in that report, sir, that you dispute?

The President. I have nothing to say about that. I want these hearings to be constitutional, fair, and expeditious. At the appropriate time in the appropriate way, we will say whatever we intend to say. But I have nothing to say about it.

I think the important thing is that we've got to go back to doing the people's business. The American people sent us a message that would break the eardrums of anyone who was listening. They want their business tended to. They are tired of seeing Washington focused on politics and personalities. They want the people and their issues and their future taken care of, and that's what we're here to do.

The Vice President. If I could say a brief word. Before you all came in here, we had a long meeting. This subject never even came up. We heard what the American people said, and what they said was turn to the people's business. And that's what this whole meeting has been about.

Q. Mr. President, are you still in jeopardy, sir? Do you believe you're still in jeopardy?

The President. That's out of my hands. That's up to the American people and the Congress. All I know is I've got a day here, and I want to make the most of it.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned at all about the apparent lack of support among the Persian Gulf allies for a tougher action against Iraq at this point?

The President. Well, actually, my information is that Secretary Cohen had a good trip, and we believe we'll have the support that we need for whatever decisions we ultimately make.

Q. Including military action?

The President. We believe we'll have the support we need, and all options are on the table.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:47 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Presenting the Arts and Humanities Awards

November 5, 1998

The President. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the wonderful welcome. I just realized that at the moment of greatest unity for my political party in many years, my wife has told the president of the AFL-CIO that I crossed a picket line. [*Laughter*] But it's true. [*Laughter*]

Let me join Hillary in thanking the representatives of the NEA, the NEH, the Museum and Library Services for all they have done. I thank Senator Baucus, Senator Durbin, Congressman and Mrs. Engel, Congresswoman Morella for being here and for their support for the arts and humanities.

There are many, many other supporters in both parties of the arts and humanities in the Congress who wanted to be here today, but in light of Tuesday's election results in Minnesota, they're in the gym working out. [*Laughter*]

I'd like to thank our USIA Director, Joe Duffy, for being here, and a special thanks to our wonderful Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, and his wife, Tunky. Thank you for being here. Secretary Riley's going to persuade them to try to work out their minds as well as their bodies. [*Laughter*]

Paul Klee once said, "Art does not reproduce the visible, rather it makes it visible." Today, we honor an extraordinary group of Americans whose daring vision and indelible contributions to arts and humanities have opened all our eyes to the richness, diversity, and miracles of the human experience.

We are blessed to live in an era of breathtaking change and unlimited possibility: an economy that is the strongest in a generation; hopeful reductions in many of our social problems; around the world, a surging tide of democracy in lands where creativity and freedom once were viciously suppressed; an emerging global community united increasingly by the technological revolution, commercial ties, and greater interaction.

But we know that change also, always, brings new challenges and, perhaps, even as important, can obstruct old, unresolved difficulties. Now more than ever, therefore, we need our artists and patrons, our historians and educators to help us make sense of the world in which we live, to remind us about what really matters in life, to embody the values we Americans hold most dear: freedom of expression, and tolerance and respect for diversity.

For more than 200 years, through dance and songs, in paint or on paper, Americans have expressed their individuality and their common humanity. This tradition of our shared culture is one we must nurture and take with us into the new millennium.

Today we proudly honor 19 men and women, a theater troupe, and one organization, all of whom have laid the foundation for a new century of greater American creativity.

First, the National Medal of the Arts. More than 50 years ago, a New York City mother, looking for a way to keep her 7-year-old son off the streets, decided to send him with his sister to her ballet class. From there, Jacques D'Amboise leapt to the pinnacle of the dance, thrilling audiences as principal dancers for the New York City Ballet, landing roles in Hollywood musicals, creating timeless ballets of his own. With his National Dance Institute, he has given thousands of children, like those we saw today, the same opportunity he had, to strive for excellence and expression through dance.

Those who know him know he would walk a thousand miles for his kids. And this spring he will be doing just that, hiking the length of the Appalachian Trail to raise money for his institute.

Ladies and gentlemen, Jacques D'Amboise.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. D'Amboise.*]

The President. From "Blueberry Hill" to Capitol Hill, and countless concert halls and honky-tonks in between, Fats Domino has brought musical joy to millions, including me. I was this morning trying to remember all the lyrics to all the songs that I could. I will spare you a recitation. [*Laughter*]

Antoine Domino grew up in New Orleans speaking French, English, and boogie-woogie. His talent was as big as his frame and his nickname. In a career spanning half a century, his rich voice and distinctive piano style helped to define rock and roll, the music that more than any other creative force in America has brought the races together. When I heard he couldn't make the ceremony I thought, "Ain't That a Shame." [*Laughter*] But I'm thrilled that his daughter, Antoinette Domino Smith, is here to accept the medal on behalf of her remarkable father, Fats Domino.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Domino Smith.*]

The President. When the movie "Urban Cowboy" came out, Ramblin' Jack Elliot must have laughed, because even though he sings like he was raised on the range, he was actually born, as he puts it, "on a 45,000-acre ranch in the middle of Flatbush." [*Laughter*] He left home at 15 to join the rodeo, where he learned to sing cowboy songs. But it was hearing his first Woody Guthrie record that transformed him into the man Sam Shepard called a "wandering, true American minstrel."

Since then, he's traveled the world with his guitar and recorded more than 40 albums, winning a Grammy and fans from Bob Dylan to Mick Jagger. In giving new life to our most valuable musical traditions, Ramblin' Jack has, himself, become an American treasure. Ladies and gentlemen, Ramblin' Jack Elliot.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Elliot.*]

The President. From the industrial skyscrapers of Louis Sullivan to the prairie houses of Frank Lloyd Wright, to the elegant

geometry of I.M. Pei, Americans have defined the field of architecture in the 20th century. No architect better expresses the American spirit of our time than Frank Gehry. From concert halls to shopping malls, he has given the world buildings that are fearless and flamboyant, that trample the boundaries of convention. There are few architects whose works so stir the imagination that people will cross oceans just to see it built. But his Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, has attracted architecture pilgrims for years.

When people ask what America aspired to on the eve of the 21st century, they will look to the work of this remarkable man, Frank Gehry.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Gehry.*]

The President. President Franklin Roosevelt once said that the conditions for art and democracy are one. Citizen activist and arts patron Barbara Handman has dedicated her entire life to ensure that those conditions are met. Her sustained support for the arts, fighting to keep some of New York's historic theaters from going dark, serving on the city's theater advisory board, and many other activities have enriched our Nation's cultural life. Her passionate advocacy of the first amendment has enlarged our vital freedoms.

When we celebrate the arts today we also celebrate the commitment of Americans like Bobbie, whose activism and generosity are essential, and just as essential as our artists, to the flourishing of our arts and the preservation of our ideals.

Ladies and gentlemen, Barbara Handman.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Handman.*]

The President. The revered and visionary painter, Agnes Martin, once told a reporter that "everyone sees beauty, and art is a way to respond." Throughout a lifetime, she has responded to the beauty of her world with luminous graphite lines, fields of white or bands of subtle color on canvas. For more than 40 years, her quiet, spare paintings have conveyed happiness and innocence to viewers and have earned the Saskatchewan native and naturalized American a place among

America's foremost abstract artists. Her work is featured in the permanent collections of our finest galleries.

Today, even into her mideighties, she continues to paint every morning, finding inspiration in the solitude of her studio in Taos, New Mexico. Ladies and gentlemen, the remarkable Agnes Martin.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Martin.*]

The President. Sixty years ago, Gregory Peck abandoned pre-med studies for the sound stages of Hollywood. While he never practiced the healing art, his performances have helped to heal some of our countries deepest wounds. For many, he will always be Atticus Finch, the Alabama lawyer whose brave stand for justice and against racism in "To Kill a Mockingbird" stirred the conscience of a nation. He won an Oscar for that role and would star in 55 films: "Gentlemen's Agreement," "Roman Holiday," "The Guns of Navarone." He has been a tireless advocate for the arts, serving on the National Council on the Arts, as president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Today, he tours America in a one-man show, sharing memories with fans who still consider him the handsomest man on Earth. It's a great honor for me to present this award as a genuine fan of Gregory Peck.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Peck.*]

The President. We've seen it so many times in movies and in real life, a star falls ill only to be replaced by a promising ingenue who then catapults to stardom. Fifty years ago that stage was the Met; the opera was "Don Giovanni"; and the ingenue was a 19-year-old soprano from the Bronx, Roberta Peters. She went on to achieve international acclaim, giving voice to the great heroines of opera: Lucia, Gilda, the Queen of the Night. She is, you might say, for all of us coarser types, the Cal Ripken of opera—[laughter]—having performed as many as 30 times a season, achieved the longest tenure of any soprano in the Met's history, and appeared on the "Ed Sullivan Show" a record 65 times. She has sung for every President from President Eisenhower to President

Bush. Now it is time for this President to honor her.

It is an honor to present our next winner with the Medal of Arts. Ladies and gentlemen, Roberta Peters.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Peters.*]

The President. What Dublin was to Joyce or Yoknapatawpha County was to Faulkner, Newark is to Philip Roth. [Laughter] Who would have thought this melting pot of immigrant aspirations, of Jews, Italians, Irish, African-Americans, would have yielded a voice as distinct and powerfully American as Philip Roth? He and his many literary alter egos, from Nathan Zuckerman to, quote, Philip Roth, unquote, have been among us now for four decades. He brought to the world's attention a generation of writers from what he calls "the other Europe," whose instinct for freedom matches his own. His last four books, "Patrimony," "Operation Shylock," "Sabbath's Theater," "American Pastoral," have each won a major literary award. Improbable as it may seem, this brash kid of Newark has become a grand old man of American letters.

Ladies and gentlemen, Philip Roth.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Roth.*]

The President. You know what he said when I gave him the award? He said, "I'm not so old as you think." [Laughter] And Hillary said, "It's just a literary expression." [Laughter]

To indulge his passion for art, something he needs, I might say, as an expatriate southerner who can never quite leave the romance of his roots, the chairman and CEO of Sara Lee, John Bryan, now just has to show up for work, for covering the walls of the Sara Lee's downtown Chicago headquarters is a vast collection of impressionist paintings by Monet, Matisse, Pissaro.

But a few months ago, Sara Lee announced that it would donate the entire collection to museums around the country. This generosity is not unusual. Under John's leadership, Sara Lee has supported the arts all across America; the Lyric Opera in Chicago, the Dixon Gallery and Gardens in Memphis

are just two. From the cakes they bake to the paintings they share, Sara Lee does, indeed, nourish the world.

Thank you, John Bryan. Please accept this medal on behalf of Sara Lee and a grateful nation.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Bryan.]

The President. The 1974 birth of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre in a church basement has been described as "a moment when the cosmos got lucky." Through a miraculous mix of talent and vision, Steppenwolf has reconciled the contradictions of modern theater. It stages edgy, experimental productions that still manage to attract mainstream audiences. It is an ensemble company that shuns the star system, and yet it has launched its fair share of stars: John Malkovich, Gary Sinise, Joan Allen. That those stars regularly skip movie roles to act in Steppenwolf plays speaks volumes about the magic of this theater.

To the many Tony Awards Steppenwolf has won, it is now my privilege to add the National Medal of Arts. Dr. Martha Lavey, the artistic director, is here to accept the medal, along with an historic gathering of 32 members of her troupe. And if they're out there, I'd like to ask them to stand as she comes up, please.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Dr. Lavey.]

The President. It's every performer's dream. In 1953 Gwen Verdon exited the stage after a brief solo in the Broadway musical "Can-Can," only to hear the crowd go wild, shouting, "We want Verdon." Quite literally, she stole the show. After that first Tony Award-winning performance, she just kept dancing. Her collaboration with the great choreographer, Bob Fosse, defined the art of jazz dance. She gave brilliant performances in shows from "Damn Yankees" to "Sweet Charity" to "Chicago," winning three more Tonys and fans all over the world. In movies ranging from "The Cotton Club" to the recent, critically acclaimed film, "Marvin's Room," this famous redhead is showing us all that she is still alive and kicking.

Ladies and gentlemen, Ms. Gwen Verdon.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Verdon.]

The President. Now, the National Humanities Medals.

Ever since President Eisenhower asked the then 28-year-old Stephen Ambrose to edit his papers, he has animated history with stories of great leaders and average citizens whose common denominator is their uncommon heroism. With a storyteller's ear for narrative and a scholar's eye for detail, he puts us in the shoes of our most courageous Americans, from 19-year-old citizen soldiers storming the beaches of Normandy to Lewis and Clark as they opened the American West. His work has inspired Americans to make pilgrimages to long forgotten historic sites brought to life by his prose.

Ladies and gentlemen, Stephen Ambrose.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Ambrose.]

The President. The son of a pianist and music store owner, E.L. Doctorow is perhaps the finest chronicler of the changing rhythms of American life. From "Ragtime" to "Billy Bathgate," to "The Waterworks," he has captured the cacophony of American life and turned it into melodies that resonate in readers' minds long after they turn the final page. His narratives are such compelling physic histories of a young nation, struggling with the divergent impulses of human nature, that they have earned him both critical acclaim and popular appeal. He's a true literary lion, a caring professor, a gentle soul. I am grateful that I have had the chance to learn a lot about my country from his work.

Ladies and gentlemen, E.L. Doctorow.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Doctorow.]

The President. Ten years ago Harvard's Diana Eck began to notice that her students weren't just choosing her class on Indian religions to learn about a foreign culture. They were enrolling to learn more about their own heritage. She was inspired to explore how America, founded by people in search of religious freedom, has changed and been

changed by the religions of our recent immigrants.

She has found the religions of the world in America's own backyard: mosques in Massachusetts, Hindu temples in Houston; and even a century-old Buddhist temple in her native Montana. And through a new CD ROM, "On Common Ground: World Religions in America," she is helping us to appreciate not only the richness of our diversity, but the strength of our shared values.

Ladies and gentlemen, Diana Eck.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Eck.]

The President. For 10 years an adult literacy teacher struggled to motivate her students. Then, when she became a mother, she realized that a parent will do for her child what she will not do for herself. "If you want to teach a person to read," Nancy Gaj thought, "teach her to read to her children." She brought this insight to her work with female inmates in a North Carolina prison, with dramatic results. The mothers not only learned to read, their children did better in schools and their families grew stronger. Through her literacy program, MOTHEREAD, Gaj has unleashed the power of family reading in schools and homes all across America. Today America honors a true revolutionary of literacy, Nancy Gaj, with the National Humanities Medal.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Ms. Gaj.]

The President. Near the beginning of this century, W.E.B. Du Bois predicted a "black tomorrow" of African-American achievement. Thanks in large measure to Henry Louis Gates, that tomorrow has turned into today. For 20 years he has revitalized African-American studies. In his writing and teaching, through his leadership of the Dream Team of African-American scholars he brought together at Harvard, Gates has shed brilliant light on authors and traditions kept in the shadows for too long. From "signifying monkeys" to small-town West Virginia, from ancient Africa to the new New York, Skip Gates has described the American experience with force, with dignity and, most of all, with color.

Ladies and gentlemen, Henry Louis Gates, Jr.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Gates.]

The President. In high school in Beirut, Vartan Gregorian was so brilliant his teachers called him "Professor." At the Carnegie Corporation of New York, now they call him "President." But at Brown University, where he just concluded 9 successful years at the helm, he's remembered simply and fondly as Vartan, the most approachable and engaging man on campus. Public education has been his faith and greatest enthusiasm. As an Armenian child in Iran, as a student in Lebanon and the United States, then as president of the New York Public Library, where he restored grandeur and purpose to one of America's great institutions.

President, philanthropist, friend, Vartan Gregorian is, as one magazine put it, "a phenomenon." And we're proud to honor him today.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Gregorian.]

The President. Growing up in La Jolla, California, Ramon Eduardo Ruiz spent nights listening to his immigrant father's tales of the heroes and history of Mexico. After serving as a pilot in World War II, he took his passion for Mexico's past to the halls of academia, becoming one of America's premier and pioneering scholars of Latin American history.

He has dedicated his life to exploring what he calls "the saga of the Mexican people, a story of sporadic triumphs played out on a stage of tragic drama." His history of Mexico, "Triumphs and Tragedy," is taught in colleges and universities all across our country, shaping a new generation's understanding of the heritage and homeland of millions of our fellow Americans.

Ladies and gentlemen, Ramon Eduardo Ruiz.

[The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Ruiz.]

The President. For more than 50 years, Arthur Schlesinger has been at the vital center of our public life. He has not only chronicled the American history, he has helped to define it, as the fighting intellectual of the Americans for Democratic Action, adviser to Adlai Stevenson, special assistant to President Kennedy. A renowned historian, like his father, Schlesinger has steered Americans on a straight and sensible course through the changing tides of history, from the age of Jackson to the multicultural Nation in which we live today.

As he has written of the leaders he served, Professor Schlesinger, throughout his life, has taken “the Promethean responsibility to affirm human freedom against the supposed inevitabilities of history.” What a remarkable life he has lived; what wonderful books he has written.

Ladies and gentlemen, Arthur Schlesinger.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Schlesinger.*]

The President. I want to choose my words rather carefully now before honoring one of America’s leading students of Presidential rhetoric. [*Laughter*] “Lincoln,” Garry Wills has written, “knew the power of words to win a war, to change history, to shape a nation.” Garry Wills, too, understands the power of words. And his own books and essays have given eloquent voice to our past and to our present.

In the Pulitzer Prize-winning “Lincoln at Gettysburg,” he offered new perspectives on the most important speech in American history—the way it redefined our Constitution in the minds of our people and rededicated our Nation to our revolutionary ideals. Whatever his subject, politics or popular culture, the classics or even boxing, his insight is unsurpassed. I find that difficult to acknowledge from time to time. [*Laughter*] Like his students at Northwestern, Hillary and I, and indeed, all America are grateful for his brilliant and iconoclastic scholarship.

Ladies and gentlemen, Garry Wills.

[*The President and the First Lady presented the medal and congratulated Mr. Wills.*]

The President. The late Dizzy Gillespie once said of his fellow jazz trumpeter, Louis Armstrong, who had blazed musical and professional trails before him, “No him, no me.”

Today, a grateful nation says to the 21 medalists in this room, “No you, no we.” Thank you for opening doors of hope. Thank you for opening doors of artistic and intellectual possibility. Thank you for opening them for all Americans and lighting the way to our common future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Patricia Engel, wife of Representative Eliot L. Engel; Ann Riley, wife of Secretary of Education, Richard W. Riley; and actor/playwrite, Sam Shepard. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Statement Announcing a Presidential Mission to Central America To Assist in the Aftermath of Hurricane Mitch

November 5, 1998

The United States has close and longstanding ties with the people and governments of Central America, and many Americans have close family and cultural ties to these countries. In light of the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch, I have asked Tipper Gore to lead a Presidential mission to Honduras and Nicaragua. Mrs. Gore will travel to the region November 10–11, 1998, to demonstrate our commitment to assist the people of Central America as they recover from this catastrophe.

Mrs. Gore will deliver supplies and participate in disaster relief efforts. She will be joined by U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Brian Atwood and Members of Congress on the mission. I believe that this trip will expand awareness throughout the U.S. and the world of the devastation faced by the people of Central America in order to encourage a global relief effort.

Statement on Iraq's Noncompliance With United Nations Resolutions

November 5, 1998

Iraq's latest attempt to block the vital work of the international weapons inspectors is totally unacceptable. That is not just my belief or America's belief; it is the demand of the international community. A short while ago, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution condemning Iraq's intransigence and insisting it immediately resume full cooperation with the weapons inspectors—no ifs, no ands, no buts about it.

It is long past time for Iraq to meet its obligations to the world. After the Gulf war, the international community demanded and Iraq agreed to declare and destroy all of its chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons capability and the missiles to deliver them, and to meet other U.N. Security Council resolutions. We imposed these conditions to ensure that Iraq would no longer threaten the region or the world. We kept sanctions in place—exempting food, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies—to make sure that Iraq made good on its commitments.

Now, the better part of a decade later, Iraq continues to shirk its clear obligations. Iraq has no one to blame but itself—and the people of Iraq have no one to blame but Saddam Hussein—for the position Iraq finds itself in today. Iraq could have ended its isolation long ago by simply complying with the will of the world. The burden is on Iraq to get back in compliance and meet its obligations—immediately.

Remarks at the Arts and Humanities Awards Dinner

November 5, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. The good news is this is the only speech you have to listen to tonight. And I want to, first of all, welcome all of you back to the White House. To all of our honorees and their families and friends who are here today, let me say, for Hillary and me this is a day we look forward to every year, but today was an especially wonderful day. And as each of our hon-

orees came through the line tonight, they all commented on how they felt that they were in quite good company today, being honored, and I agree with that.

As I see so often when it comes to maintaining stability in the global economy or working for peace in Bosnia or Kosovo or Northern Ireland or the Middle East, perhaps more than any other time in our over 220-year history, the entire world now looks to the United States to exert responsible leadership in technological innovation, preventing war, promoting peace, promoting prosperity and freedom and democracy.

I think it is worth asking ourselves tonight, when the historians and novelists, the poets and painters, look back on America in the last years of the 20th century, on the verge of a new millennium, what will they say of that kind of work and that kind of leadership. For clearly the world does look to us for cultural leadership. The influence of our books, our movies, our music, our plays have never stopped at our borders. But now, thanks to technology, they reach more rapidly into even the remotest corners of the world. For example, in Bhutan, a Himalayan country so isolated just 5,000 people actually visit it every year, you can still find some of this year's most popular Hollywood blockbusters, for better or worse. *[Laughter]*

Hillary's book, "It Takes a Village," has been translated into a myriad of languages, not just French or Spanish or German but Bulgarian, even Kazakh. More than ever before, the world is listening to what America has to say. As our leading artists and intellectuals, you will have to answer. It is a tremendous opportunity and an enormous responsibility.

So tonight I challenge you to rise to this task and to relish it and, through your art, your music, your ideas, to make this time not simply a Golden Age for the United States, but a time of greater understanding, enlightenment, and, yes, enjoyment for the entire world.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on
Iraq's Compliance With United
Nations Security Council Resolutions**
November 5, 1998

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

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This report covers the period from September 3 to the present.

Introduction

On October 31, Iraq announced that it was ceasing all cooperation with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) including monitoring activity. This announcement represents a serious escalation of Iraq's August 5 decision to suspend cooperation with UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). On October 31, the UNSC issued a statement condemning Iraq's decision as a "flagrant violation of relevant Council resolutions and of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Secretary General and the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq" last February. Iraq's action followed its receipt of a letter from the UK (as President of the Security Council) indicating a willingness to conduct a comprehensive review, but only after Iraq returned to full compliance. Since the October 31 statement, UNSCOM has been able to conduct only very limited monitoring activity.

Earlier, on September 9, the UNSC unanimously adopted Resolution 1194, which condemns Iraq's August 5 decision as a "totally unacceptable contravention of its obligations," demands that Iraq rescind its decision and resume cooperation, and suspends bi-monthly sanctions reviews until UNSCOM and IAEA report that they are satisfied that Iraq has done so.

The resolution also notes the Council's willingness to hold a comprehensive review of "Iraq's compliance with its obligations under all relevant resolutions once Iraq has rescinded its . . . decision [to suspend cooperation] and demonstrated that it is pre-

pared to fulfill all its obligations, including, in particular on disarmament issues, by resuming full cooperation with the Special Commission and the IAEA . . ."

On September 23, the P-5 Foreign Ministers issued a statement reiterating that Iraq's actions are "totally unacceptable," and confirmed that "Iraq must respond immediately to Security Council Resolution 1194 and resume full cooperation." The statement also noted that the prerequisite for a comprehensive review was Iraq's "unconditional resumption" of cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA.

Tariq Aziz spent several days at the United Nations in New York at the end of September discussing the comprehensive review with Security Council members and the Secretary General. The Secretary General's Special Representative Prakash Shah is engaged in discussions in Baghdad on the subject. Despite Iraq's lobbying efforts, the Secretary General and all Council members remain united in judging Iraq's actions unacceptable; all 15 Council members supported the Council President's letter to the Secretary General that said Iraq must rescind its August 5 decision and resume cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA. We continue to work with the Council to convince Iraq to reverse course, but we have not ruled out any option should the Council fail to reverse Iraq's decision.

We continue to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the "oil-for-food" program. On May 27, 1998, Iraq presented a distribution plan for the implementation of Resolution 1153, which had been adopted on February 20. Under phase three of the "oil-for-food" program, which ran from December 3, 1997, through June 2, 1998, \$1.2 billion worth of humanitarian goods were approved for export to Iraq. Under the current phase, phase four, which began in June, the U.N. Sanctions Committee has approved the purchase of over \$1.2 billion worth of humanitarian goods. United States companies can participate in the "oil-for-food" program, and over \$185 million worth of direct contracts for U.S. firms have been approved since the program began.

Recent developments in northern Iraq demonstrate once again the power of persistent diplomacy. On September 17, leaders of the two main Iraqi Kurdish parties, Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, met together for the first time in over 4 years to sign a forward-looking joint statement committing their parties to reconciliation. Their talks, held at the Department of State under U.S. auspices, followed 6 months of intensive discussions and close consultation with the Kurdish parties and with our Turkish and British allies. The statesmanlike achievement of the Iraqi Kurdish leaders signals a hopeful new chapter for all the people of northern Iraq.

On October 31, I signed into law the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998. Work also continues on the existing opposition program to help opposition groups unify politically, and the new Radio Free Iraq service began broadcasting in late October. These new programs will help us encourage the Iraqi people to build a pluralistic, peaceful Iraq that observes the international rule of law and respects basic human rights. Such an Iraq would have little trouble regaining its rightful place in the region and in the international community.

U.S. and Coalition Force Levels in the Gulf Region

Saddam's record of aggressive behavior forces us to retain a highly capable force presence in the region in order to deter Iraq and deal with any threat it might pose to its neighbors. The United States and allied forces now in the theater are prepared to deal with all contingencies. We have the capability to respond rapidly to possible Iraqi aggression. We will continue to maintain a robust force posture and have established a rapid reinforcement capability to supplement our forces in the Gulf when needed. Our cruise missile force is twice the pre-October 1997 level and can be augmented significantly within days. Our contingency plans allow us the capability for swift, powerful strikes if that becomes necessary.

Our forces in the region include land and carrier-based aircraft, surface warships, a Marine expeditionary unit, a Patriot missile battalion, a mechanized battalion task force,

and a mix of special operations forces deployed in support of U.S. Central Command operations. To enhance force protection throughout the region, additional military security personnel are also deployed.

Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch

The United States and coalition partners continue to enforce the no-fly zones over Iraq under Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch. There were no observed no-fly zone violations during the period covered by this report. We have made clear to Iraq and to all other relevant parties that the United States and coalition partners will continue to enforce both no-fly zones.

The Maritime Interception Force

The Maritime Interception Force (MIF), operating in accordance with Resolution 665 and other relevant resolutions, vigorously enforces U.N. sanctions in the Gulf. The U.S. Navy is the single largest component of this multinational force, but it is frequently augmented by ships, aircraft, and other support from Australia, Canada, Belgium, Kuwait, The Netherlands, New Zealand, the UAE, and the United Kingdom. Member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council also support the MIF by providing logistical support and shipriders and by accepting vessels diverted for violating U.N. sanctions against Iraq.

The MIF continues to intercept vessels involved in illegal smuggling into and out of Iraq. In late August, the MIF conducted stepped-up operations in the far northern Gulf in the shallow waters near the major Iraqi waterways. These operations severely disrupted smuggling operations in the region. A new round of stepped up activity took place in mid-October. Since the beginning of the year, over 40 vessels have been detained for violations of the embargo and sent to ports in the Gulf for enforcement actions. Kuwait and the UAE, two countries adjacent to the smuggling routes, have also stepped up their own enforcement efforts and have intercepted and detained vessels involved in sanctions violations. Although refined petroleum products leaving Iraq comprise most of

the prohibited traffic, the MIF has also intercepted a growing number of ships in smuggling prohibited goods into Iraq in violation of U.N. sanctions resolutions and the "oil-for-food" program. Ships involved in smuggling frequently utilize the territorial seas of Iran to avoid MIF patrols. In September, Iran closed the Shatt Al Arab waterway to smugglers and we observed the lowest level of illegal gasoil smuggling in 2 years. Iran apparently reopened the waterway in October. Detailed reports of these smuggling activities have been provided to the U.N. Sanctions Committee in New York.

Chemical Weapons

Iraq continues to deny that it ever weaponized VX nerve agent or produced stabilized VX, despite UNSCOM's publicly stated confidence in the Edgewood Arsenal laboratory finding of stabilized VX components in fragments of Iraqi SCUD missile warheads. Tests by France and Switzerland on other warhead fragments have been conducted to help UNSCOM estimate the total number of warheads loaded with VX. On October 22 and 23, international experts from seven countries met to discuss all analytical results obtained in the course of UNSCOM's verification of Iraq's declarations related to VX activities. Ambassador Butler reported to the U.N. Security Council on October 26 that the international experts "unanimously concluded" that "all analytical data" provided by the United States, Swiss, and French laboratories involved were considered "conclusive and valid." Ambassador Butler continued, "the existence of VX degradation products conflicts with Iraqi declarations that the unilaterally destroyed special warheads had never been filled with CW agents." The experts recommended that UNSCOM ask Iraq to explain the origin and history of the fragments analyzed by all three laboratories and the presence of degradation products of nerve agents, and to explain the presence of a compound known as VX stabilizer and its degradation product.

Iraq still refuses to turn over the UNSCOM the Iraqi Air Force document found by UNSCOM inspectors that details chemical weapons expended during the Iran-Iraq war. We understand that UNSCOM be-

lieves the document indicates that Iraq's official declarations to UNSCOM have greatly overstated the quantities of chemical weapons expended, which means a greater number of chemical weapons are unaccounted for than previously estimated.

Biological Weapons

Iraq has failed to provide a credible explanation for UNSCOM tests that found anthrax in fragments of seven SCUD missile warheads. Iraq has been claiming since 1995 that it put anthrax in only five such warheads, and had previously denied weaponizing anthrax at all. Iraq's explanations to date are far from satisfactory, although it now acknowledges putting both anthrax and botulinum toxin into some number of warheads. Iraq's biological weapons (BW) program, including SCUD missile BW warheads, R-400 BW bombs, drop-tanks to be filled with BW, spray devices for BW, production of BW agents (anthrax, botulinum toxin, aflatoxin, and wheat cover smut), and BW agent growth media, remains the "black hole" described by Ambassador Butler. Iraq has consistently failed to provide a credible account of its efforts to produce and weaponize its BW agents.

In response to a U.S. proposal, the Security Council agreed on October 13 to seek clarification from Iraq of statements made by Iraqi officials on October 7 concerning the existence of additional information on biological weapons still in Iraq's hands, and about Iraq's refusal to turn over the Iraqi Air Force document on chemical weapons expended in the Iran-Iraq War.

Long-Range Missiles

While Iraq continued to allow UNSCOM to witness flight tests of nonprohibited Iraqi missiles with range under 150 km (this cooperation has not been tested since the October 31 decision), there has been no change in (1) Iraq's refusal to further discuss its system for concealment of long-range missiles and their components, (2) Iraq's refusal to provide credible evidence of its disposition of large quantities of the unique fuel required for the long-range SCUD missile, or (3) Iraq's continued test modifications to SA-2 VOLGA surface-to-air missile components,

despite written objections by UNSCOM (reported to the Security Council). These areas contribute to an Iraqi capability to produce a surface-to-surface missile of range greater than its permitted range of 150 km.

While UNSCOM believes it can account for 817 of 819 imported Soviet-made SCUD missiles, Iraq has refused to give UNSCOM a credible accounting of the indigenous program that produced complete SCUD missiles that were both successfully test-flown and delivered to the Iraqi army.

Nuclear Weapons

The nuclear weapons situation remains as it was on August 11, 1998, when IAEA Director General El Baradei wrote to the President of the Security Council that Iraq's August 5 suspension of cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA allows only "limited implementation of its ongoing monitoring" and "makes it impossible . . . to investigate . . . remaining questions and concerns . . ." In its 6-month report to the U.N. Security Council on October 7, the IAEA stated that it had a "technically coherent" view of the Iraqi nuclear program. There are remaining questions, but IAEA believes they can be dealt with within IAEA's ongoing monitoring and verification effort.

But the report also stated that Iraq's current suspension of cooperation with the IAEA limits the IAEA's right to full and free access. The IAEA is currently unable to investigate further aspects of Iraq's clandestine program or to ensure that prohibited activities are not being carried out in Iraq, free from the risk of detection through direct measures.

Dual-Use Imports

Resolution 1051 established a joint UNSCOM/IAEA unit to monitor Iraq's imports of allowed dual-use items. Iraq must notify the unit before it imports specific items that can be used in both weapons of mass destruction and civilian applications. Similarly, U.N. members must provide timely notification of exports to Iraq of such dual-use items. Given Iraq's current decision to suspend cooperation with UNSCOM/IAEA, we remain constantly vigilant for evidence of

smuggling of items usable in weapons of mass destruction.

The U.N.'s "Oil-for-Food" Program

We continue to support the international community's efforts to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people through the "oil-for-food" program. Under the last phase of the "oil-for-food" program, which ran from December 3, 1997, through June 2, 1998, \$1.2 billion worth of humanitarian goods were approved for export to Iraq. United States companies can participate in "oil-for-food," and \$185 million worth of direct contracts for U.S. firms have been approved; millions of dollars more have been earned through subcontracts. Since the first deliveries under the "oil-for-food" program began in March 1997, 7 million tons of food worth over \$2.25 billion and \$336 million worth of medicine and health supplies have been delivered to Iraq.

Iraq is authorized to sell up to \$5.2 billion worth of oil every 180 days, up from \$2 billion in previous phases. Although Resolution 1153 was adopted on February 20, Iraq did not present an acceptable distribution plan for the implementation of Resolution 1153 until May 27, 1998; the plan was accepted by the U.N. Secretary General on May 29. The U.N. Office of the Iraq Programme (OIP) has recently released new estimates of the amount of oil revenues that will be available during this phase of the program. Citing declining world oil prices and the state of Iraq's oil industry, OIP now estimates that income for the 6-month period ending in December will be around \$3.3 billion. Discussions are under way within the Sanctions Committee and OIP as to how best to meet the most immediate needs of the Iraqi people in light of this projected shortfall in income.

Under the current phase (four) of the "oil-for-food" program, 622 contracts for the purchase of humanitarian goods for the Iraqi people have been presented for approval; of these, 485 contracts worth over \$1.2 billion have been approved and 80 are on hold pending clarification of questions about the proposed contracts. With regard to oil sales,

58 contracts with a total value of over \$2 billion have been approved so far during this phase.

UNSC Resolution 1153 maintains a separate "oil-for-food" program for northern Iraq, administered directly by the United Nations in consultation with the local population. This program, which the United States strongly supports, receives 13 to 15 percent of the funds generated under the "oil-for-food" program. The separate northern program was established because of the Baghdad regime's proven disregard for the humanitarian needs of the Kurdish, Assyrian, and Turkomen minorities of northern Iraq and its readiness to apply the most brutal forms of repression against them. In northern Iraq, where Baghdad does not exercise control, the "oil-for-food" program has been able to operate relatively effectively. The Kurdish factions are setting aside their differences to work together so that Resolution 1153 is implemented as efficiently as possible.

The United Nations must carefully monitor implementation of Resolution 1153. As the current phase anticipates, infrastructure repairs in areas such as oil export capacity, generation of electricity, and water purification present increasing challenges to the U.N. monitoring regime.

The Iraqi government continues to insist on the need for rapid lifting of the sanctions regime, despite its clear record of non-compliance with its obligations under relevant UNSC resolutions. Although the Iraqi government maintains that sanctions cause widespread suffering among the Iraqi populace, the Iraqi government is still not prepared to comply with UNSC resolutions and thus create the conditions that would allow sanctions to be lifted. Even if sanctions were lifted and the Government of Iraq had complete control over oil revenues, it is doubtful that conditions would improve for the Iraqi people. The Iraqi government has for a number of years shown that meeting civilian needs is not among its priorities. Humanitarian programs such as "oil-for-food" have steadily improved the life of the average Iraqi (who, for example, now receives a ration basket providing 2,000 kilocalories per day; a significant improvement in nutrition since the program began) while denying Saddam Hus-

sein control over oil revenues. We will continue to work with the U.N. Secretariat, the Security Council, and others in the international community to ensure that the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people are met while denying any political or economic benefits to the Baghdad regime.

Northern Iraq: Kurdish Reconciliation

On September 16 and 17, Massoud Barzani, President of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), and Jalal Talabani, Chairman of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), met for the first time in more than 4 years in talks held at the Department of State. Secretary Albright, welcoming the two leaders, congratulated them on the courageous step they were taking on behalf of their people. She expressed the United States deep concern for the safety, security, and economic well-being of Iraqi Kurds, Shias, Sunnis, and others who have been subject to brutal attacks by the Baghdad regime. She also made it clear that the United States will decide how and when to respond to Baghdad's actions based on the threat they pose to Iraq's neighbors, to regional security, to vital U.S. interests, and to the Iraqi people, including those in the north.

While in Washington, Mr. Barzani and Mr. Talabani signed a joint statement committing themselves to a timeline to improve the regional administration of the three northern provinces in the context of the 1996 Ankara Accords. Over the next 9 months, they will seek to unify their administrations, share revenues, define the status of their major cities, and hold elections. A key component for the success of this program will be continued meetings between the two leaders. To make this possible, both parties have condemned internal fighting, pledged to refrain from violence in settling their differences, and resolved to eliminate terrorism by establishing stronger safeguards for Iraq's borders.

The Washington talks followed 6 months of intensive diplomatic efforts including a visit to northern Iraq by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State David Welch and consultations in Ankara and London by both Kurdish parties. Since the Washington talks, we have continued to work closely on these issues with the Iraqi Kurds and with Turkey

and Great Britain. Both leaders met with U.N. officials in New York and they were together hosted by members of the House of Representatives Committee on International Relations.

The United States firmly supports the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. Supporting the rights and welfare of Iraqi Kurds within Iraq in no way contradicts this position. In their joint statement, the Kurdish leaders clearly enunciated this principle. The United States is committed to ensuring that international aid continues to reach the north, that the human rights of the Kurds and northern Iraq minority groups, such as the Turkomen, Assyrians, Yezedis, and others are respected, and that the no-fly zone enforced by Operation Northern Watch is observed.

The Human Rights Situation in Iraq

The human rights situation throughout Iraq continues to be a cause for grave concern. As I reported September 3, the regime increased its security presence in predominantly Shia southern Iraq after the assassinations of two distinguished Shia clerics—deaths widely attributed to regime agents. Since that time, the Iraqi army has conducted a series of repressive operations against the Shia in Nasiriya and Amara Provinces. In particular, the government continues to work toward the destruction of the Marsh Arabs' way of life and the unique ecology of the southern marshes. These events expose a callous disregard for human life and the free exercise of religion.

Summary, arbitrary, and extrajudicial executions also remain a primary concern. Baghdad still refuses to allow independent inspections of Iraqi prisons despite the conclusion of U.N. Special Rapporteur for Iraq, Max Van der Stoep, that "there is strong evidence that hundreds of prisoners (were) executed in Abu Gharaib and Radwanayah prisons" late last year. The U.N. Human Rights Commission in April issued a strong condemnation of the "all-pervasive repression and oppression" of the Iraqi government. Nevertheless, sources inside Iraq report another wave of executions in June, with about 60 people summarily killed. Preliminary reports indi-

cate that the killings continued into July and August.

In the north, outside the Kurdish-controlled areas, the government continues the forced expulsion of tens of thousands of ethnic Kurds and Turkomen from Kirkuk and other cities. In recent months, 545 more families were reportedly expelled from Kirkuk (al-Tamim province) with 7 new Arab settlements created on land seized from the Kurds. Reports from the Kurdish-controlled areas where the displaced persons are received indicate that they are forced to leave behind almost all of their personal property. Due to a shortage of housing, they are still living in temporary shelters as winter approaches.

The government also continues to stall and obfuscate attempts to account for more than 600 Kuwaitis and third-country nationals who disappeared at the hands of Iraqi authorities during or after the occupation of Kuwait. It shows no sign of complying with Resolution 688, which demands that Iraq cease the repression of its own people.

The Iraqi Opposition

It is the policy of the United States to support the Iraqi opposition by establishing unifying programs in which all of the opposition can participate. We are working to encourage and assist political opposition groups, non-partisan opposition groups, and unaffiliated Iraqis concerned about their nation's future in peacefully espousing democracy, pluralism, human rights, and the rule of law for their country. These committed Iraqis hope to build a consensus on the transition from dictatorship to pluralism, convey to the United Nations their views on Iraqi non-compliance with U.N. resolutions, and compile information to support holding Iraqi officials criminally responsible for violations of international humanitarian law.

On October 31, I signed into law the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998. It provides new discretionary authorities to assist the opposition in their struggle against the regime. This Act makes clear the sense of the Congress that the United States should support efforts to achieve a very different future for Iraq than the bitter, current reality of internal repression and external aggression.

There are, of course, other important elements of U.S. policy. These include the maintenance of U.N. Security Council support efforts to eliminate Iraq's prohibited weapons and missile programs and economic sanctions that continue to deny the regime the means to reconstitute those threats to international peace and security. United States support for the Iraqi opposition will be carried out consistent with those policy objectives as well. Similarly, U.S. support must be attuned to what the opposition can effectively make use of as it develops over time.

The United Nations Compensation Commission

The United Nations Compensation Commission (UNCC), established pursuant to Resolution 687 and 692, continues to resolve claims against Iraq arising from Iraq's unlawful invasion and occupation of Kuwait. The UNCC has issued over 1.3 million awards worth approximately \$7 billion. Thirty percent of the proceeds from the oil sales permitted by Resolutions 986, 1111, 1143, and 1153 have been allocated to the Compensation Fund to pay awards and to finance operations of the UNCC. To the extent that money is available in the Compensation Fund, initial payments to each claimant are authorized for awards in the order in which the UNCC has approved them, in installments of \$2,500. To date, the United States Government has received funds from the UNCC for initial installment payments on approximately 1435 claims of U.S. claimants.

Conclusion

Iraq remains a serious threat to international peace and security. I remain determined to see Iraq comply fully with all of its obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions. The United States looks forward to the day when Iraq rejoins the family of nations as a responsible and law-abiding member.

I appreciate the support of the Congress for our efforts and shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 6.

Remarks on Signing Legislation To Establish the Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site

November 6, 1998

Thank you very much. You know, when Ernie was up here introducing me, I remembered that he was the only senior among the Little Rock Nine. He graduated in the spring in 1958, and when they called him up to receive his diploma, the whole auditorium was quiet, not a single person clapped. But we're all clapping you today, buddy.

I would like to thank all the members of the Little Rock Nine who are here, including Elizabeth Eckford, Carlotta LaNier, Jefferson Thomas, Minnijean Trickey, Terrence Roberts. Melba Pattillo Beals is not here. Gloria Ray Karlmark is not here. Thelma Mothershed Wair is not here. I think we should give all of them another hand. [*Applause*]

I would like to thank Congressman Elijah Cummings, Congressman Gregory Meeks for coming; Mayor Woodrow Stanley of Flint, Michigan; Commissioner Edna Bell, the president of the National Association of Black County Officials, from Wayne County, Michigan. I'd like to thank and welcome the mayor-elect of Washington, DC, Anthony Williams.

I told him I'd be for more Federal aid if he'd teach me how to tie a bow tie. I never learned how to do that.

I would like to thank Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater and the Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt for their presence and leadership. And I would like to say a special word of welcome and profound appreciation for his historic role in Tuesday's historic turnout of voters, to Reverend Jesse Jackson. Welcome, sir, we're delighted to have you here.

I thank the United States Marine Band, as always, for their great performance, on the

occasion of John Philip Sousa's birth anniversary. And let me say a special word of welcome again to the White House to the magnificent young people of the Eastern High School Choir from Washington, DC. Thank you.

Let me say, since we are here to talk about our reconciliation, I hope you will forgive me for taking just a moment—and I know I speak for all Americans who are here—to express my sympathy to the people of Israel, who this morning were once again the target of a vicious terrorist attack. No nation should live under the threat of violence and terror that they live under every day.

When Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat signed the Wye River agreement, they knew they would face this moment. They knew when they went home both of them would be under more danger and the terrorists would target innocent civilians. They knew they would have to muster a lot of courage in their people to stick to the path of peace in the face of repeated acts of provocation.

There are some people, you know, who have a big stake in the continuing misery and hatred in the Middle East, and indeed everywhere else in this whole world, just like some people had a big stake in continuing it in Little Rock over 40 years ago.

I ask for your prayers and support today for the Israelis and the Palestinians who believe in this agreement and who are determined to carry out their responsibilities and who understand that the agreement is the best way to protect the safety of the Israeli people. It was tenaciously negotiated, hard fought, but it is the best way to safety for the Israelis, the best way to achieve the aspirations of the Palestinians, and in the end, the only answer to today's act of criminal terror. I hope you will all feel that in your heart.

Let me say, this is a very, very happy day for the people who were part of the Little Rock Nine experience, for the people of Little Rock, all the Arkansans who are here, African-Americans from throughout our country. There was an earlier reference made by Congressman Bennie Thompson—and I thank him for his outstanding leadership in this endeavor and for his fine remarks today—about the election.

Now, most of the publicity about the election has been the enormous turnout of African-American citizens in a midterm election that resulted in the victories that have been well publicized for non-African-American elected officials. And having been one of those on several occasions, I am immensely grateful. [Laughter] But what has received less publicity that I would like to point out, because this too was a part of the road that the Little Rock Nine began to walk for us, is that on Tuesday in the State of Georgia, an African-American was elected the attorney general of the State, an African-American was elected the labor commissioner of the State.

And in the South on Tuesday, African-American Congressmen were reelected in majority white districts, with large majority—large majority. That is a part of the road we have walked together, a part of what we celebrate today.

There are so many here who played a role in it. One more person I would be remiss if I did not recognize, that Hillary and I love so much and are so grateful to, is the wonderful Dr. Dorothy Height, chairman of the National Commission of Negro Women. Thank you for being here Dorothy. Let's give her a big hand. [Applause] Thank you, and bless you.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is only one bittersweet element in this magnificent moment for Hillary and for me, and that is that we are celebrating the last piece of legislation passed by our good friend Dale Bumpers. We have walked a lot of steps together since I first met Dale Bumpers about 25 years ago when he was Governor. And we've had a lot of laughs at each other's expense. After I became President, just to make sure that I didn't get the big head, he went around Washington introducing me to people as the second-best Governor Arkansas ever had. [Laughter] Today I told him that I hadn't had much time to review my remarks and, therefore, hadn't had the opportunity to delete all the nice things that had been written for me to say about him. [Laughter]

But I do want to tell you that this is a truly astonishing public servant. Hillary and I admire him, admire his wife Betty, admire the things that he's stood for and she's stood

for, and we will miss them. Last month, in a final and, as always, brilliant speech on the Senate floor, Dale mentioned an inspiring teacher who once stopped him when he was reading out loud and said to the whole class, "Doesn't he have a nice voice? Wouldn't it be tragic if he didn't use that talent?"

I think it's fair to say that Dale Bumpers has done his teacher proud because he used that eloquent, impassioned voice to make sure that all the children of his State and our Nation could make use of their God-given talents.

We owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for his nearly five decades of caring, often courageous public service, and I cannot thank him enough.

The bill that Senator Bumpers and Congressman Thompson have presented to me for signature today recognizes the courage of the Little Rock Nine and that of their parents, their leaders, their community leaders, especially our great friend, Daisy Bates, who could not be here today.

Because of all of them, Central High has become a hallowed place, a place every bit as sacred as Gettysburg and Independence Hall. Interestingly enough, back in the 1920's, it was voted the most beautiful school in America. It is still a functioning school, very much so. There are some years when its students comprise 25 percent of our State's entire roster of National Merit Scholars. It's a place where children can still go and study Greek and Latin, something that's rare in all school districts throughout America. It is, I believe, about to become the only open, fully operating school that is a National Historic Site.

As Ernie said, Hillary and I welcomed the Little Rock Nine back to Little Rock on the 30th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock Central High School. Then I was profoundly honored to hold open the door of the school so they could walk through on the 40th anniversary. Today I was able to welcome them all to the White House to the Oval Office and now on the South Lawn.

On the fateful day they slipped into Central High School and were removed by the police, President Eisenhower was on vacation in Newport. When he learned what had happened to them, and that Governor

Faubus had turned over the streets to the mob, he realized that, even as a conservative, the Federal Government had to act. The next day he flew back to the White House. His helicopter landed just a few steps from here. He had just ordered General Maxwell Taylor to put the might of the 101st Airborne Division behind their righteous march through the doors of Central High.

Now, thanks to Senators Bumpers and Congressman Thompson, and many others, as they said, our Nation has found two very fitting ways to honor that march to ensure that the memory of the Little Rock Nine and all they represent remains alive long after those of us with living memories are gone.

As part of the budget I signed 2 weeks ago, I was authorized to confer Congressional Gold Medals, the highest civilian honor the Congress can bestow, on each and every member of the Little Rock Nine. It was only a few months ago that we presented President Nelson Mandela with that same award, and he spoke so movingly of his long struggle to tear down the walls of apartheid. The Little Rock Nine broke through the doors of apartheid.

I can't wait until the artists finish creating your medals, and we can bestow them upon you, an honor you richly deserve. And then of course the main reason we're here today is to make a living monument forever out of the setting of your struggle.

Again, I thank Senator Bumpers and all the others. The bill will allow the National Park Service to work with the community to maintain and protect Central High's magnificent building. It will also allow the Park Service to start acquiring land in the surrounding neighborhood to create new facilities where people can learn about the origins and the aftermath of the 1957 crisis, topics that simply can't be fully explored in the existing visitor center's limited space.

Children will never fully understand what you experienced in 1957. Maybe that's not such a bad thing. But they need to know. And now, for all time to come, children will have an opportunity to walk the stairs you walked, to see the angry faces you braved, to learn of your sacrifice, and about what, as a result of your sacrifice, you, your fellow Arkansans, and your Nation have become.

Perhaps they will even see what it was about the Little Rock confrontation that made racial equality a driving obsession for so many of us who were young at the time and seared by it.

Again, I want to thank you for staying together over these 40-plus years now, for being willing to show up and be counted, and to remind us, for showing us the shining example of your lives so that we could never forget all those who went before you who never had the chance that you gave to all who came after.

Monuments and medals are important reminders of how far we have come, but it is not enough. The doors of our schools are open, but some of them are falling off their rusty hinges. And many of them are failing the students inside.

The economy has never been stronger, but there are still striking disparities in jobs, in investments in neighborhoods, in education and criminal justice. Still too many break down along what W.E.B. DuBois first called the color line. And while the Little Rock Nine have enjoyed great success in business, in the media, in education, they can tell you that in spite of what we celebrated on Tuesday, there is still discrimination and hatred in the hearts of some Americans.

All of that we found in our Presidential initiative on race, and we must never forget that it is our continuing obligation to the Little Rock Nine and all others who brought us to this point to fight this battle.

The last point I want to make to you is that the face of America is changing and changing fast. I went to an elementary school last Saturday to talk about the need to build and modernize our schools. There were children from 24 nations there. The principal said, "Mr. President, we're so glad to have you here, and we've got all the parents here. I only wish that we could have translated your talk into Spanish and Arabic."

America is changing, and it is a good thing, if we remember to live by the ideals on which this country was founded, if we remember the sacrifices of the Little Rock Nine, if we listen to our teachers like Dr. John Hope Franklin. We, in other words, have a whole new chapter in the Nation's march to equality to write.

Remember what Senator Bumpers' teacher said, "Wouldn't it be tragic if he didn't use that talent." That's exactly what the struggle for one America is all about, because that is a question that should be asked of every single child in our country.

When we ask that question with the Little Rock Nine in mind, it helps us to keep our eyes on the prize, the prize of true equality and true freedom, that ever elusive, always worth seeking, more perfect union.

These people that we honor today, in the school we save today for all time, have given us all a great and treasured gift. May God bless them and the United States.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:43 a.m. in the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Ernest Green, one of the Little Rock Nine; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Reporting on the National Emergency With Respect to Sudan

November 6, 1998

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

I hereby report to the Congress on developments concerning the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067 of November 3, 1997, and matters relating to the measures in that order. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c) (IEEPA), and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c). This report discusses only matters concerning the national emergency with respect to Sudan that was declared in Executive Order 13067.

1. On November 3, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13067 (62 *Fed. Reg.* 59989, November 5, 1997—the "Order") to declare a national emergency with respect to Sudan pursuant to IEEPA. A copy of the Order was

provided to the Congress by message dated November 3, 1997.

2. Executive Order 13067 became effective at 12:01 a.m., eastern standard time on November 4, 1997. On July 1, 1998, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) issued the Sudanese Sanctions Regulations (the "SSR" or the "Regulations" (63 *Fed. Reg.* 35809, July 1, 1998)). The Regulations block all property and interests in property of the Government of Sudan, its agencies, instrumentalities, and controlled entities, including the Central Bank of Sudan, that are in the United States, that hereafter come within the United States, or that are or hereafter come within the possession or control of United States persons, including their overseas branches. The SSR also prohibit: (1) the importation into the United States of any goods or services of Sudanese origin except for information or informational materials; (2) the exportation or re-exportation of goods, technology, or services to Sudan or the Government of Sudan except for information or informational materials and donations of humanitarian aid; (3) the facilitation by a United States person of the exportation or reexportation of goods, technology, or services to or from Sudan; (4) the performance by any United States person of any contract, including a financing contract, in support of an industrial, commercial, public utility, or governmental project in Sudan; (5) the grant or extension of credits or loans by any United States person to the Government of Sudan; and (6) transactions relating to the transportation of cargo. A copy of the Regulations is attached to this report.

3. Since the issuance of Executive Order 13067, OFAC has made numerous decisions with respect to applications for authorizations to engage in transactions under the Regulations. As of September 16, 1998, OFAC has issued 62 authorizations to non-governmental organizations engaged in the delivery of humanitarian aid and 141 licenses to others. OFAC has denied many requests for licenses. The majority of denials were in response to requests to authorize commercial exports to Sudan—particularly of machinery and equipment for various industries—and the importation of Sudanese-origin goods. The majority of licenses issued permitted the

unblocking of financial transactions for individual remitters who routed their funds through blocked Sudanese banks. Other licenses authorized the completion of diplomatic transfers, preeffective date trade transactions, intellectual property protection, the performance of certain legal services, and transactions relating to air and sea safety policy.

4. At the time of signing Executive Order 13067, I directed the Secretary of the Treasury to block all property and interests in property of persons determined, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to be owned or controlled by, or to act for or on behalf of, the Government of Sudan. On November 5, 1997, OFAC disseminated details of this program to the financial, securities, and international trade communities by both electronic and conventional media. This information included the names of 62 entities owned or controlled by the Government of Sudan. The list includes 12 financial institutions and 50 other enterprises. As of September 10, 1998, OFAC has blocked nearly \$610,000 during this reporting period.

5. Since my last report, OFAC has collected one civil monetary penalty in the amount of \$5,500 from a U.S. financial institution for its violation of IEEPA and the SRR relating to a funds transfer. Another 12 cases are undergoing penalty action. OFAC, in cooperation with the U.S. Customs Service, is closely monitoring potential violations of the import prohibitions of the Regulations by businesses and individuals. Various reports of violations are being aggressively pursued.

6. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from May 3 through November 2, 1998, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Sudan are reported to be approximately \$375,000, 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 Bureaus of Economic and

Business Affairs, African Affairs, Near Eastern Affairs, Consular Affairs, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), and the Department of Commerce (the Bureau of Export Administration and the General Counsel's Office).

7. The situation in Sudan continues to present an extraordinary and unusual threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. The declaration of the national emergency with respect to Sudan contained in Executive Order 13067 underscores the United States Government's opposition to the actions and policies of the Government of Sudan, particularly its support of international terrorism and its failure to respect basic human rights, including freedom of religion. The prohibitions contained in Executive Order 13067 advance important objectives in promoting the antiterrorism and human rights policies of the United States. I shall exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton.

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

Digest of Other White House Announcements

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

October 31

In the morning, the President traveled to Falls Church, VA, and later returned to Washington, DC.

November 1

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

November 2

In the morning, the President participated in a radio conference call with African-American leaders and celebrities.

November 3

The President announced his intention to appoint Stephen J. Moses as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation.

November 4

In the morning, the President met with Prime Minister Janez Drnovsek of Slovenia in the Oval Office.

November 5

The President declared a major disaster in Kansas and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on October 30 and continuing.

The White House announced that President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique will make a working visit to Washington, DC, on November 30.

November 6

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Highfill, AR, where he participated in the dedication ceremony for the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport. In the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Tropical Storm Mitch on November 4-5.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: The Congress having adjourned *sine die* on October 21, no nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released November 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the killing of Brian Service in Belfast, Northern Ireland

Released November 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released November 4

Transcript of remarks by Chief of Staff John Podesta on newly instituted personnel changes

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of Slovenian Prime Minister Drnovsek

Released November 5

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Deputy Chief of Staff Maria Echaveste; NSC Senior Director of Multilateral Affairs Eric Schwartz; Agency for International Development Administrator J. Brian Atwood; Joint Chiefs of Staff Director for Operations Brig. Gen. Robert Wagner; and Deputy Under Secretary of Agriculture Jim Schroeder on the administration's response to Hurricane Mitch

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing emergency funding to support anti- and counter-terrorism activities and recovery from natural disasters

Statement by the Press Secretary: Visit of President Chissano of Mozambique

Fact sheet: U.S. Government Response to Hurricane Mitch

Released November 6

Fact sheet: Stepped Up Disaster Assistance for Central America

Acts Approved by the President

Approved October 29¹

S. 2468 / Public Law 105-307
Dante Fascell Biscayne National Park Visitor Center Designation Act

Approved October 30¹

H.R. 700 / Public Law 105-308
To remove the restriction on the distribution of certain revenues from the Mineral Springs parcel to certain members of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

H.R. 1274 / Public Law 105-309
Technology Administration Act of 1998

H.R. 1756 / Public Law 105-310
Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Strategy Act of 1998

H.R. 2675 / Public Law 105-311
Federal Employees Life Insurance Improvement Act

H.R. 2807 / Public Law 105-312
To clarify restrictions under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act on baiting and to facilitate acquisition of migratory bird habitat, and for other purposes

H.R. 3055 / Public Law 105-313
Micosukee Reserved Area Act

H.R. 3494 / Public Law 105-314
Protection of Children From Sexual Predators Act of 1998

H.R. 3528 / Public Law 105-315
Alternative Dispute Resolution Act of 1998

H.R. 3687 / Public Law 105-316
Canadian River Project Prepayment Act

¹ These Public Laws were not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.

H.R. 3903 / Public Law 105-317
Glacier Bay National Park Boundary Adjust-
ment Act of 1998

H.R. 4151 / Public Law 105-318
Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence
Act of 1998

H.R. 4293 / Public Law 105-319
Irish Peace Process Cultural and Training
Program Act of 1998

H.R. 4309 / Public Law 105-320
Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998

H.R. 4326 / Public Law 105-321
Oregon Public Lands Transfer and Protec-
tion Act of 1998

H.R. 4337 / Public Law 105-322
To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to
provide financial assistance to the State of
Maryland for a pilot program to develop
measures to eradicate or control nutria and
restore marshland damaged by nutria

H.R. 4660 / Public Law 105-323
To amend the State Department Basic Au-
thorities Act of 1956 to provide rewards for
information leading to the arrest or convic-
tion of any individual for the commission of
an act, or conspiracy to act, of international
terrorism, narcotics related offenses, or for
serious violations of international humani-
tarian law relating to the Former Yugoslavia,
and for other purposes

H.R. 4679 / Public Law 105-324
Antimicrobial Regulation Technical Correc-
tions Act of 1998

S. 231 / Public Law 105-325
National Cave and Karst Research Institute
Act of 1998

S. 890 / Public Law 105-326
Dutch John Federal Property Disposition
and Assistance Act of 1998

S. 1333 / Public Law 105-327
To amend the Land and Water Conservation
Fund Act of 1965 to allow national park units
that cannot charge an entrance or admission
fee to retain other fees and charges

S. 2094 / Public Law 105-328
Fish and Wildlife Revenue Enhancement
Act of 1998

S. 2106 / Public Law 105-329
Arches National Park Expansion Act of 1998

S. 2193 / Public Law 105-330
Trademark Law Treaty Implementation Act

Approved October 31

H.R. 678 / Public Law 105-331
Thomas Alva Edison Commemorative Coin
Act

H.R. 1853 / Public Law 105-332
Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied
Technology Education Amendments of 1998

H.R. 2000 / Public Law 105-333
ANCSA Land Bank Protection Act of 1998

H.R. 2327 / Public Law 105-334
Drive for Teen Employment Act

H.R. 3830 / Public Law 105-335
Utah Schools and Lands Exchange Act of
1998

H.R. 3874 / Public Law 105-336
William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Reau-
thorization Act of 1998

H.R. 4259 / Public Law 105-337
Haskell Indian Nations University and
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
Administrative Systems Act of 1998

H.R. 4655 / Public Law 105-338
Iraq Liberation Act of 1998

S. 1021 / Public Law 105-339
Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of
1998

S. 1722 / Public Law 105-340
Women's Health Research and Prevention
Amendments of 1998

S. 2285 / Public Law 105-341
Women's Progress Commemoration Act

Approved November 2

S. 2240 / Public Law 105-342
Adams National Historical Park Act of 1998

S. 2246 / Public Law 105-343

To amend the Act which established the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by modifying the boundary, and for other purposes

S. 2413 / Public Law 105-344

Prohibiting the conveyance of Woodland Lake Park tract in Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest in the State of Arizona unless the conveyance is made to the town of Pine-top-Lakeside or is authorized by Act of Congress

S. 2427 / Public Law 105-345

To amend the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996 to extend the legislative authority for the Black Patriots Foundation to establish a commemorative work

S. 2505 / Public Law 105-346

To direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey title to the Tunnison Lab Hagerman Field Station in Gooding County, Idaho, to the University of Idaho

S. 2561 / Public Law 105-347

Consumer Reporting Employment Clarification Act of 1998

S.J. Res. 51 / Public Law 105-348

Granting the consent of Congress to the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority Compact entered into between the States of Maryland and West Virginia

S.J. Res. 58 / Public Law 105-349

Recognizing the accomplishments of Inspectors General since their creation in 1978 in preventing and detecting waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement, and in promoting economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the Federal Government

Approved November 3

H.J. Res. 138 / Public Law 105-350

Appointing the day for the convening of the first session of the One Hundred Sixth Congress

S. 538 / Public Law 105-351

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain facilities of the Minidoka project to the Burley Irrigation District, and for other purposes

S. 744 / Public Law 105-352

Fall River Water Users District Rural Water System Act of 1998

S. 1260 / Public Law 105-353

Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act of 1998

S. 2524 / Public Law 105-354

To codify without substantive change laws related to Patriotic and National Observances, Ceremonies, and Organizations and to improve the United States Code