

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, March 15, 1999
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(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

Editor's Note: The President was in Texarkana, TX, on March 12, 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.

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Week Ending Friday, March 12, 1999

Memorandum on the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization

March 4, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-16

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: U.S. Contribution to KEDO: Certification Under Section 582(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1999, as contained in Public Law 105-277

Pursuant to section 582(b) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1999, as contained in Public Law 105-277, I hereby certify that:

- (1)(A) the parties to the Agreed Framework have taken and continue to take demonstrable steps to assure that progress is made on the implementation of the January 1, 1992, Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in which the Government of North Korea, has committed not to test, manufacture, produce, receive, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons;
 - (B) the parties to the Agreed Framework have taken and continue to take demonstrable steps to assure that progress is made on the implementation of the North-South dialogue; and
 - (C) North Korea is complying with all provisions of the Agreed Framework and with the Confidential Minute between North Korea and the United States.
- (2) North Korea is cooperating fully in the canning and safe storage of all spent fuel from its graphite-moderated nuclear reactors;
 - (3) North Korea has not significantly diverted assistance provided by the United States for purposes for which it was not intended; and

(4) the United States is fully engaged in efforts to impede North Korea's development and export of ballistic missiles.

You are authorized and directed to report this certification to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 5. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

March 6, 1999

Good morning. This week we learned the good news that our efforts to raise academic standards for our children are beginning to pay off. The National Assessment of Education Progress, or NAEP, released State test scores on Thursday that show that our children's reading scores have risen, with some of the greatest gains in States that once scored below the national average.

Today I want to talk to you about what I think we must do to build on our progress, by putting more teachers in the classroom and reducing class size in schools around our country.

We all agree that to build a stronger nation we must build up our Nation's public schools. I have proposed a comprehensive education agenda to strengthen and improve our schools with more accountability, higher standards, more volunteer reading tutors for young children, and mentors for teenagers, with Internet connections in every classroom, and with more well-trained teachers in smaller classes.

As any parent, teacher, or school principal can tell you, smaller classes make a huge difference in our children's lives. Studies show that teachers in smaller classes spend less time on discipline and more time teaching.

Students spend less time competing for attention and more time learning. Students in smaller classes out-perform their peers.

For children in struggling communities, from remote rural areas to inner-city neighborhoods, small class size is even more critical. And with school enrollments at record highs and expected to keep rising, we must act now to reduce class size in all our Nation's public schools.

Across the country, more and more communities are recognizing the importance of smaller class size and trying to do something about it. To help them meet this challenge I called on Congress early last year to pass my initiative to reduce class size by helping school districts hire 100,000 highly trained teachers. I'm pleased that Republican Members of Congress joined with Democrats and did the right thing in making a big downpayment toward meeting our goal.

Today the Department of Education is releasing guidelines that will let every school district in our Nation know how much money they will receive and how best to use the funds to reduce class size in time for school this fall. But communities deciding now whether to hire and train new teachers for next year need to know whether they can count on the commitment Congress made last year to help them reduce class size for years to come. It is time to finish the job.

Now, this week the Senate and House will vote on a bill that gives States the flexibility they need to improve their public schools in spending Federal aid they receive. I support this bill. But I also strongly support efforts by Senators Murray and Kennedy, and Representatives Clay and Wu, to add an amendment to it that will fully fund 100,000 well-trained teachers over the next 6 years.

Unfortunately, Republican leaders are trying to shut down debate on the ed-flex bill before this important amendment on more teachers and smaller classes can even be voted on. Now, last October, just before the election, Republicans joined us in promising the American people more teachers and smaller classes. Less than 5 months later, we now have the first big test of whether this Congress is really willing to work together across party lines and with the White House to get things done for the American people,

whether the Congress is serious about giving our children the education they need and deserve.

The choice is simple: Are we going to give Americans smaller classes or more partisanship? Are we going to put politics ahead of progress or put 100,000 teachers in our Nation's classrooms? I call on the Senate to allow an up-or-down vote on the Murray-Kennedy class size amendment, and I urge every Senator to vote for it. When it comes to our children's future, politics must stop at the schoolhouse door.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:08 p.m. on March 5 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 6. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 5 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on the Death of Amir Essa bin Salman Al-Khalifa of Bahrain

March 6, 1999

I would like to express my deep sadness at the news that Shaikh Essa bin Salman Al-Khalifa of Bahrain has passed away. The prayers and condolences of all Americans go out to the royal family and the people of Bahrain.

The Amir was a good friend of the American people and a good friend of peace. He shared our desire to see a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region. I take heart from the personal commitment to forwarding the cause of peace the Amir expressed during his recent June visit to the United States. The Amir shared his heartfelt hope to see peace come to his region in eloquent and passionate words.

Shaikh Essa did much to deepen and strengthen the historic relationship between America and Bahrain. He will be missed.

Remarks to the Community in Posoltega, Nicaragua

March 8, 1999

Thank you very much. President Aleman, Mayor Zeledon, Mayor Palacios, Bishop

Vivas. To our school director, Julia Martinez Toruno, and all the children who are here; to the members of the Government of Nicaragua and the National Assembly; to the—*[inaudible]*—Boys Choir and to the young woman who sang the national anthems of both nations, the granddaughter of former President Violeta Chamorro; and to all the people of Nicaragua: thank you for making us feel so very welcome today.

My fellow Americans and I are moved and humbled to be here in Posoltega, where the terrible mudslide took so many sons and daughters, mothers and fathers, neighbors and friends. I have come to pay my respects to those who lost their lives and to reaffirm the support of the American people for those who were spared and for your rebuilding. In this decade, with courage and strength, you have created a new Nicaragua. You have earned the world's admiration, and now you deserve the world's support in this moment of need.

Somos humanos, y nos ayudamos. We are brothers and sisters, neighbors and friends. We must help each other.

I thank President Aleman for recognizing the work of the United States to provide food, shelter, and health care; to renew the farms and small businesses; to rebuild the roads and bridges and homes. I thank our Armed Forces for all they have done, including building a new health center in Wiwili, north of here. Now our Agency for International Development will provide equipment, training, and immunizations for this health center and others in Nicaragua, so that your people can get back on their feet and stay healthy as they rebuild their lives.

Today we have brought 3,000 pounds of school supplies for the children of Posoltega, donated by organizations all across America and by our own workers at the White House. I know that you need more temporary shelters until permanent homes can be built. I know you need to speed the discovery and the removal of landmines left from the war, because the hurricanes may have moved them and made them more dangerous. With these tasks, too, we will help.

I know that more is needed, and urgently. I have asked our Congress for \$956 million to support our reconstruction effort here. I

am grateful that leaders in our Congress from both political parties have expressed support, and I thank the Members of the United States Congress who have come to Nicaragua with me and are sitting over here—Senator Graham and Congressmen Becerra, Deutsch, and Reyes.

This aid will help to speed the rebuilding of homes, farms, businesses, and roads. It will help your Government to deliver aid better. It will allow us to send more Peace Corps volunteers. And I would like to thank the Peace Corps volunteers who are here today for their service in Nicaragua.

As we see the dust in the wind today, it reminds us that you must rebuild in a way that helps you to manage the environment better by preserving trees that can help prevent a mudslide or curbing pollution that can cause temperatures to rise. We can avoid or lessen future catastrophes. We can manage the land and water and grow your economy, and I know you want to do that.

To help you focus on reviving your economy, my aid package would also forgive or defer much of Nicaragua's—and Honduras'—debts to our Government. And I have asked our Congress to reduce trade barriers between the two of us so that all the people of Central America can work and grow their way back to prosperity and normal life.

We have provided temporary immigration protection for Central Americans in our country, and I will seek a fair solution to all the immigration issues this tragedy has heightened.

In times past, there was conflict, turbulence, and distrust between our two nations, but now we are bound together in our common commitment to democracy. And democracy will light the way to a brighter future for Nicaragua through government, through voluntary organizations, through local officials working with citizens who are participating in decisions that affect their lives, through leaders working to see that no one exploits this tragedy for personal gain and no one is left behind. And we will work with you every step of the way.

A hurricane, a mudslide—they can destroy lives; they can destroy homes; they can destroy a life's work. But they must not be allowed to destroy hope. Not so long ago, your country overcame a terrible war and emerged even stronger. You will overcome this adversity as well. And we will work with you every day until the task is done.

Thank you. God bless you. *Muchas gracias.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the outdoor field at Jose Dolores Toruno Lopez High School. In his remarks, he referred to President Arnoldo Aleman of Nicaragua; Mayor Felicita Zeledon of Posoltega; Mayor Eligio Palacios of Chichigalpa; Monsignor Bosco Vivas, Bishop of León; and Maria Andres Chamorro, who sang the national anthems.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Las Casitas Volcano Mudslide Survivors in Posoltega

March 8, 1999

[President Arnoldo Aleman of Nicaragua opened the discussion by presenting four survivors of Hurricane Mitch and directing them to tell their stories to President Clinton and to express their needs for assistance.]

President Clinton. Could I just say one word? This is Senator Graham, who is from the State of Florida in the United States. First of all, thank you for agreeing to meet with me. I know it must be hard to relive your story. But I think it is very important for us to be able to go home to the United States, having seen not only the President, who is my friend—I enjoy that—but also the people who have lived personally through this terrible tragedy.

It is also important for the health of Nicaragua's democracy that he and I, when we respond to this terrible tragedy, respond in a way that helps you the most and that is consistent with your wishes. So I would like it if, in your own words, you could just tell us a little about what happened to you and your family and what would help most going forward.

[Survivor Ricardo Santeliz thanked the President for his visit and for the assistance from

U.S. and international relief organizations. He described Hurricane Mitch and the resulting mudslide down Las Casitas Volcano as a tragedy which devastated his community and altered its future. Mr. Santeliz described his family's experience attempting to flee from harm and said that he had lost 22 relatives, and his wife had lost 45. President Aleman asked Mr. Santeliz about the death toll from Posoltega and El Porvenir, a neighboring community, and Mr. Santeliz said it must have been about 4,000. President Aleman asked about the experience of a little boy, Juan Pablo Montoya Narvaez, who was present. Mr. Santeliz described finding the boy beneath enormous tree branches and said that Juan Pablo lost his parents, but two of his brothers survived.]

President Clinton. So he has two brothers now?

Mr. Santeliz. One is 13, and one is 21.

President Clinton. And are both of them living with him—he's living with both of them?

President Aleman. Are you going to school, Juan Pablo?

Juan Pablo. No.

President Aleman. Why not, sweetie? You were going to school back in—

Juan Pablo. No.

President Aleman. No? Didn't you go to school back in—but there was a school there, wasn't there?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Aleman. Is your other brother going to school?

Juan Pablo. Tonio.

President Aleman. Tonio, is he the one going to school?

Juan Pablo. No, he's not.

President Aleman. And how many of your brothers and sisters died?

Juan Pablo. Three.

Mr. Santeliz. And his mother died.

President Aleman. And you have uncles and aunts?

Juan Pablo. No.

President Aleman. Did your father have any brothers or sisters? What about your mother?

Juan Pablo. One.

President Aleman. And where are your uncles and aunts? Did they die?

Juan Pablo. Yes, the whole family.

President Clinton. So now it's you and your two brothers?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Clinton. And you have to stay close with them.

Juan Pablo. Yes.

[Survivor *Diega Olivia Cortes Pantoja*, from neighboring *Rolando*, explained that during the hurricane she was away at a clinic for an operation and was consequently spared. However, she lost most of her family and relatives in the tragedy. She described the danger and difficulty her surviving children experienced in searching the mud for family members. President Aleman asked how many survived in *Rolando*, and Ms. Pantoja estimated 2,000 to 2,500. She stated that a lot of surviving residents were in *Costa Rica* seeking work at the time because the crops in *Rolando* were finished. President Aleman asked her for *Rolando's* death toll, and she estimated there were 3,000 between *Rolando* and *El Porvenir*. Ms. Pantoja thanked the U.S., the Red Cross, and Save the Children for relief efforts and added her concern for people's need for shelter and opportunity to work in the wake of losing their livelihoods. Survivor *Esperanza Mirales Acosta* thanked the President and described being buried in the mud for 3 days. She said in spite of everything, she held out hope that she'd be able to find her family, but she never did. She said she lost 25 family members.]

President Aleman. No one from your home was saved, my dear? No one?

Ms. Acosta. My sisters were saved because they had gone to work in *Costa Rica*. But the people who were living there, who were still there from my family, I'm the only one who survived.

President Aleman. And where were you?

Ms. Acosta. In *El Porvenir*.

President Aleman. And that's exactly where the mudslide went through?

Ms. Acosta. When it came through, it was a terrible noise of helicopters. My husband went out, and he shouted at me, "Sweetheart, run." And I grabbed my little girl, and I ran out. But when I ran out, the house had been destroyed, and I was dragged by

the water. I lost my little girl, and I never found her again.

President Aleman. And your husband died, too?

Ms. Acosta. Yes. And my little girl was shouting at me, asking me to save her, but the water was dragging me away, and I couldn't do anything. I was struggling to try and stand up again, but I couldn't do anything. I couldn't see anything.

President Aleman. And who rescued you?

Ms. Acosta. I was rescued by people from the Red Cross who were there and some people from the area. Two people from the area were there, as well. They found me. I was terrified, and they were able to get me out. They were able to dig me out of the mud. I was there stuck for 3 days.

President Clinton. So what are you going to do now with your life?

Ms. Acosta. I still have problems with one knee. I want to get well, and I want to fend for myself, because now I have nothing and no one left. All I want to do now is work to survive and just get by.

President Aleman. She said, "I just want to work until my day comes to go."

Ms. Acosta. That's all I'm waiting for.

President Aleman. And what's wrong with your leg?

Ms. Acosta. I had a cast on this leg, and it wasn't set properly. And so now they have to x ray it again and see what they can do.

President Aleman. And where are you staying now?

Ms. Acosta. I'm over there in the shelter.

President Clinton. You know, the President was explaining to me when we were coming out that the people need not only homes again but homes that are close enough to land which can be farmed again, because a lot of this land which is covered by the mud, even though it's dried out, it may or may not be suitable for crops now. And a lot of trees will have to be replanted to guard against further flooding.

So I think we in the United States have to try to get some financial help to the President to do that. And then you will have to work together to identify the land where the people can farm again; and then the houses can be built.

You were explaining that to me, on the way out, what you have done—find the land.

[President Aleman agreed and said his country needs to dig deeper channels to avoid future flooding. He inquired about a nearby “co-op,” a cooperative farm, and suggested help be given to individuals like Ms. Acosta and Juan Pablo and work be found for them. He then asked Ms. Acosta if none of her children survived.]

Ms. Acosta. I had four.

President Aleman. All of them little?

Ms. Acosta. The oldest was 13. My little girl was 7—13, 12, 10, and 7.

President Clinton. And how old are you?

Ms. Acosta. I’m 29.

President Clinton. You’re still young.

President Aleman. So you became a mother when you were 16?

President Clinton. What about you, Juan Pablo? Do you want to say anything to us? Do you want to say anything to your President about this terrible thing?

Juan Pablo. I lost my whole family, and I miss them—my mama and my papa.

President Aleman. Where are you living, Juan Pablo? With his brother?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

Mr. Santeliz. Yes, he lives at the co-op there with his brother.

President Aleman. How many people are in that co-op? Fifty people, they said? And all these new people are coming in? You said that there are 2,500 people in a block. Will they accept them there?

[Mr. Santeliz stated his opinion that everyone involved—governmental and international organizations and survivors—needs to sit down together and visualize solutions, discover alternatives. President Aleman said all the co-ops in the El Porvenir sector were destroyed, but a co-op in Posoltega, with 50 people farming about 2,000 acres, survived. He noted the trouble was convincing the 50 to accept 300 survivors from El Porvenir and offer them 3 or 4 hectares per family to cultivate. Mr. Santeliz interjected that he understood the land has been rented to people with money.]

President Aleman. The co-ops, themselves, are doing that?

Mr. Santeliz. Yes.

President Aleman. We have to sit down and talk with them so we can convince them.

Mr. Santeliz. I think what we need to do there is sit down, as I was saying, to see what points they propose, see what they want to do.

President Aleman. And what about Juan Pablo’s brothers? Have they already been admitted?

Mr. Santeliz. No, they’re in the same situation.

President Aleman. So you’re like squatters?

Mr. Santeliz. No, I’m not there. I was given a parcel, it’s 12x20, by an organization from the U.S., as well—in Washington. An Evangelical church gave us a little plot of land, about 6 blocks of—

President Clinton. World Vision, was it World Vision?

Mr. Santeliz. It’s managed by the Evangelical Conference of the Assembly of God in Washington.

So since we didn’t have anything, we said, “Okay, give me a little plot of land where I can go.” And that’s where I am. The only thing is that we’re all so very much reduced right now and we’re under so little plots of land.

President Clinton. How much land did the average family farm before the hurricane and the mudslide?

Mr. Santeliz. About 5 or 6 blocks—what they call blocks, which are actually more like hectares.

President Clinton. Ten acres? So the average family had 10 acres?

President Aleman. Per family, that’s what each family had.

President Clinton. And then this block, you say, with the 50 families, they have an average of 25 hectares?

President Aleman. It’s like, 100 acres per family—this particular group.

President Clinton. So they could actually sell it out?

President Aleman. And what they’re doing is, they’re renting out the land that they’re not farming themselves.

President Clinton. So it's your proposal for the Government to buy this land on behalf of the other people, if they will accept them?

President Aleman. That would be the ideal situation. The problem is that the co-op with those 50 people—and it's very, very good land; they know that land, very fertile land. This co-op got it back in the Sandinista days. So I don't think they're going to want to give it up. They're not going to give it to anyone or sell it.

They prefer it, as he was saying, to rent it, to lease it, because it's better business for them. We'll see what measures can be taken. And the discussions we're trying to hold—we'll see how we can change this. Because the other problem we have, Mr. President, is there's land, but not in this area, not on the Pacific side.

President Clinton. Too far away?

President Aleman. This has been traditionally farm land. But we'll see what solution we find. Faith in God.

Juan Pablo, you have to go and study now. Do you promise you're going to study?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Aleman. Are you going to study? You promise?

Juan Pablo. Yes.

President Clinton. You can learn a lot and pray to God to take care of your mother and father. And they will know and be very proud of you.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 3:45 p.m. in the auditorium at the Cotton Research Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Joe DiMaggio

March 8, 1999

Today America lost one of the century's most beloved heroes, Joe DiMaggio. This son of Italian immigrants gave every American something to believe in. He became the very symbol of American grace, power, and skill. A brilliant individual performer, he led his magnificent Yankees to the World Series 10 out of his 13 years. His electrifying 56-game hitting streak, unequaled to this day, is one

of the most remarkable achievements by any athlete in any sport.

He stood tall off the field as well. In 1943 he volunteered for the Army and swapped his Yankee paycheck for \$50-a-month private's salary. He and the foundation he started gave mightily to help poor children benefit from the world's best medical care. And he was an incredibly devoted father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

I have no doubt that when future generations look back at the best of America in the 20th century, they will think of the "Yankee Clipper" and all that he achieved. Hillary and I extend our thoughts and prayers to his family.

Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

March 8, 1999

The Republican leadership continues to block a vote on an amendment to finish the job of hiring 100,000 teachers to reduce class size. Communities across the country need to know that Congress will live up to the bipartisan commitment we made last fall to fund this effort. The American people expect us to work together to improve the education of our students. I call on the Republican leadership to allow an up-or-down vote on more teachers and smaller classes.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting the Report on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty Compliance

March 8, 1999

Dear _____:

In accordance with Condition (5)(C) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Document Agreed Among the States Parties to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) of November 19, 1990, adopted by the Senate of the United States on May 14, 1997, enclosed is the Report on CFE Compliance.

The Report is provided in both a classified and unclassified version.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; and Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

Remarks to the Community at the Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras

March 9, 1999

President Flores, Colonel Ramirez, General Wilhelm, Colonel Rosner, members of the Honduran and American militaries, to the people of Honduras, the American delegation and Members of Congress who came here with me, ladies and gentleman. Yesterday in Nicaragua, today in Honduras, we see that this disaster has taught us that what happens to one in the Americas affects us all. It reminds us that in good times and bad, *todos somos Americanos*.

Mr. President, I thank you for your kind words about the First Lady. I spoke with Hillary last night, and she asked me to give you her best. She remembers so well her trip here, and she wishes you well.

Mr. President, as our military leaders know, at this Honduran air base, our Armed Forces trained together for this sort of disaster just a few months before the storm. When the real test came, they passed with flying colors.

This long runway, turned into a lifeline, connected the countries all over the world. Over 47 million pounds of supplies came through here. Helicopters performed daring rescues and delivered food; engineers repaired roads; medical teams gave treatment and comfort; relief workers provided clean water, built schools and shelters, and restored faith in the future that nearly washed away.

Operation Fuerte Apoyo turned into one of the largest humanitarian missions performed by the United States military since the Berlin airlift 50 years ago. To all who

were a part of it, I thank you for your courage, your confidence, your compassion.

I believe the United States must do more. I have asked Congress for \$956 million to support the reconstruction effort in Central America. We expect almost a third of that to come to Honduras to improve public health, to build homes and schools, to rebuild roads so farmers can move their produce to market, and to prepare for future hurricanes. It will also forgive and defer Honduran debt, and it will be targeted to local communities to make sure the people who need it get the assistance.

I would also like to announce \$56 million to expand our New Horizons program which brings civilian guardsmen and reservists to the region for 2 weeks of training and relief work.

Mr. President, I know Hondurans are determined not just to rebuild but actually to create something better out of this tragedy: to build a reconstruction that protects the environment so that people are not exposed to unnecessary risks in the next storm; to build a reconstruction that ensures that those who suffered most participate fully and benefit equally; to build a reconstruction that consolidates democracy by engaging local government, NGO's, and the private sector.

I would like to especially thank the members of our Armed Forces for their hard work to advance these goals, for their enthusiasm and good cheer, even when you have to sleep in hootches in Tent City—[laughter]—for your cooperation between the services and between our U.S. personnel and our Honduran hosts. You have shown the people of Central America the true colors of our men and women in uniform.

Today I am proud to announce the award of Humanitarian Service Medals to all those members of the U.S. Armed Forces who served in support of the relief effort in Central America. And to announce that I have just presented to Colonel Rosner a Joint Meritorious Unit Award to JTF Bravo for its sustained commitment to our mission in this region. Congratulations on a job well done.

Later today I will see the Juan Molina Bridge in Tegucigalpa. It was built jointly with U.S. assistance and Honduran efforts.

I can't think of a better symbol of JTF Bravo's efforts or our cooperation, building bridges between people and nations in Central America, with Central America itself the bridge between North and South America.

In this tragedy's aftermath, Hondurans and Americans have given new meaning to the words written by Juan Molina in his poem "Eagles and Condors": *Pueblos Americanos en este continente debemos ser hermanos*.

Not far from here is Comayagua, the old capital of Honduras, built because it was near the center of Central America and of the entire New World. That city boasts a clock said to be the oldest in the Americas, made by Spanish-Moors in the 12th century. When that clock began ticking, about 900 years ago, the world was a smaller place in every way. Now that clock is ticking away the final hours and days of the 20th century, headed toward a new millennium. But one thing remains as true today as the day the clock was built: We humans still have the urge to chart a new course for the future and the obligation to make it a better one for our children.

Thanks to your work here, a new and better world truly lies within our grasp. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in Hangar 1 at the Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras. In his remarks, he referred to President Carlos Roberto Flores of Honduras; Col. Alberto Ramirez-Mathia, Honduran Base Commander; Gen. Charles E. Wilhelm, USMC, Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command; and Col. Elliot J. Rosner, USA, Commander, Joint Task Force Bravo.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Hurricane Mitch Reconstruction Efforts in Tegucigalpa, Honduras

March 9, 1999

President Clinton. Thank you, Mr. President, for your remarks and for the extended visit we have already had today about these matters.

I wanted to have the opportunity today to hear from a broad cross-section of citizens of this country, and so I will be extremely brief. I agree with the President that this pe-

riod of reconstruction should be seen as the opportunity to build something even better than what was here before. And furthermore, I believe that if all elements of a society are properly involved and feel fairly treated, that the country's social fabric, sense of community, will be stronger than it was before the disaster occurred.

Many of you have paid a very high price for what has occurred, and the losses have been staggering. But I think the—I have been quite impressed by what has already been done and by the attitude of the people. What the United States is interested in is how we can best be an effective partner with you from our end. And so I'm quite interested in your perspective on that, as well as anything you would like to tell me about your present activities.

I'd also like to introduce—this is Congressman Xavier Becerra, who came here before with the First Lady and has just finished a term as the head of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. He is from California. And I am delighted to have him back with me. And Congressman Reyes from Texas is also here with us.

Moderator. We have our Archbishop—perhaps he can kick off the discussion.

[*Archbishop Oscar Rodriguez began the discussion by thanking President Clinton, the people, and the churches in the U.S. for their assistance in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. He asked that the President support efforts to expand trade by allowing NAFTA parity, cease deportation of Hondurans, and support Central American efforts within the G-7 for multilateral debt relief.*]

Moderator. And this is the mayor of Tegucigalpa. I think you know about the accident she had in the helicopter. And after that, she took his job, and here we have her now.

[*Mayor Vilma de Castellanos stated that 30 percent of the city was destroyed and briefly mentioned the impact of loss of life and damage to the economic and social infrastructure of the city. She closed by presenting the President with the key to the city.*]

Moderator. And now we have Mario Canawati, who is president of the Chamber

of Commerce and Industry of San Pedro Sula and Cortés.

[Mr. Canawati thanked the Government and people of the U.S. for support during the crisis and reconstruction. He noted that Central America is one of the most important trade partners of the U.S. and that the U.S. has been instrumental in Honduran economic and democratic development through the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). He cited the textile and apparel industry as one which had been excluded from the CBI and that the revenue it generated compared unfavorably with Mexico. He said the only alternative to creating permanent jobs and sustained economic growth was through the implementation of a trade field that allowed Honduran exports to compete under the same conditions as NAFTA products.]

Moderator. And perhaps Jacqueline Foglia from the Honduran American Chamber of Commerce would like to speak.

[Ms. Foglia stated that Hurricane Mitch affected agricultural more than other sectors of the economy. She noted that the garment industry and tourism sectors were not highly affected, and these might provide the motor for economic reconstruction. She went on to outline steps that the Honduran American Chamber of Commerce was taking to advance reconstruction efforts with the Association of American Chambers of Commerce of Latin America, in Washington, DC, which included working toward a U.S. legislative reconstruction package which would include the Caribbean Basin Trade Enhancement Measure which would, through greater access to U.S. markets, allow for a faster economic recovery, job creation, and overall economic benefits for Honduras.]

Moderator. And now, Jorge Quinones, director of the Vida Foundation.

[Mr. Quinones thanked the President and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for its help in Honduran environmental projects. He stated that in the aftermath of the hurricane, reforestation and sustainable management of water basins were the most formidable challenges in reconstruction. He added that environmental education

needed to be a central part of the reconstruction agenda.]

Moderator. And Mariano Flanos now, from Save the Children.

[Mr. Flanos stated that Save the Children supported over 50,000 people with different kinds of financing from the people and Government of the United States, especially from USAID, and had also benefited from the support of human resources from U.S. organizations in Honduras for areas that went far beyond reconstruction and infrastructure.]

Moderator. And now, Ricardo Maduro, a businessman.

[Mr. Maduro, president of a private education foundation, stated that the Honduran infrastructure in education was substantially damaged by Hurricane Mitch and indicated the worst effect had been to reduce the capacity, public and private, to invest in education. He described the education levels in the country and stated that to move forward they need to use nontraditional methods such as radio and television to reach students. He expressed the market-driven need for more computers in education and teaching English as a second language. A spokesman for the Flores administration said the Government was attempting to reach an early agreement with the International Monetary Fund for bilateral and multilateral debt relief. He indicated the Government was working to develop a reconstruction master plan with a consultative group in Stockholm, Sweden, while simultaneously strengthening the mechanisms of financing transparency through international auditing. Representative Xavier Becerra made brief remarks commending the Hondurans for the improvements made since his visit in November, 1998. He pledged to work hard in Congress to provide as much support for the region as possible.]

President Clinton. First of all, I would like to thank you all for your presentations and for making them quite specific and to the point. I would like to respond to a number of the points that were made. First of all, I have sent legislation to the Congress, just last week before I came here, asking for greater liberalization of trade for the Central

American and Caribbean nations to move closer toward parity with NAFTA in Mexico. I have—it does not go as far in everything that I'm sure a lot of you would do, but it does as much as we believe we can pass in the Congress.

I was profoundly disappointed last year that we did not pass the trade-opening initiative. And of course, after the hurricane struck, I was even more disappointed. I think now, ironically because of the hurricane, we may have a better chance to pass a bill. And I will do everything I can to that end.

With regard to debt relief, part of the package that I have proposed to the Congress in aid, as opposed to trade, about a \$955 million package, a part of it involves the debt deferral and outright debt forgiveness, both of which would give very much needed debt relief not only to Honduras but to the other Central American nations. If the Congress will go along with me and pass this, it will give me the standing to argue more forcefully to the other nations and to the international organizations that they must follow suit.

I think, clearly, Honduras should be given relief under the highly indebted countries initiative that the United States has done a lot to create. I believe we should do more. I think the fact that the Holy Father has made this a year in which he's calling for people to do more debt relief will, frankly, be enormously helpful, and I told him that when I was in St. Louis recently. And I would urge you to communicate this to the Vatican, that if there could be more of this, like sort of a constant reminder, it would be highly effective, even perhaps establishing some sort of priority saying you ought to do at least Central America and then something in Africa and something in Asia to give hope to the people on those continents, something like that.

But I think on a thing like this it's not enough to say it one time. We have to keep working. But I think Central America has a special claim here, Honduras, Nicaragua, the other countries as well, because one of the arguments I always hear, even in my own country, about debt forgiveness is, "Well, look, you know if you"—and the former banker here understands this—"if you forgive it all, well, then nobody will want to loan

any money tomorrow because they'll think all of that will be forgiven, too."

Well, in the aftermath of the worst natural disaster in centuries here, it seems to me that argument just doesn't hold water here. It might be true in the case of an Asian country that had a bad banking system and got in an economic problem for local reasons, but it seems to me, insofar as the present predicament of Central America is a direct result of the hurricane, that argument has no standing.

So I will do the best I can. But again, I would urge all of you to stay on that because relieving the government of the financial burden of the payments will free up a lot of money for education and other things as well.

On the deportation, I think you know, Archbishop Rodriguez, because you spoke in a way that indicated you did, I have done what I could to minimize the impact of some of our immigration laws, not only on Hondurans but on all the people of Central America. I, frankly, believe I have done all I can do under the law. Now, because there was such hardship here, so much devastation, I was able to provide some greater consideration for the Hondurans that have come to the United States.

But I think it would be a mistake to sort of openly encourage more people to come, in violation of our laws and quotas, because there is—I have gone to the limit of what I can now do. And I think it is far more important for us to concentrate on getting this aid package passed, getting the debt relief, getting the trade relief, getting the renewal of the economy here going.

Let me just mention three other issues very quickly. One of you mentioned the need for more loans for small business and micro-businesses. We have our USAID Director here with me, Mr. Atwood. I think the United States funded 2 million microenterprise loans last year through AID around the world. My wife is—probably talked about that when she was here. This is a passion of hers and has been for about 15 years now.

And we have found, in our own country, when we have a natural disaster—you know, we had a flood, a 500 year flood in the Mississippi River 5 years ago, and one of the

most important funds that we have is the fund that provides for special credit for small businesses who otherwise could not get it.

So I don't know whether there's anything special, Mr. President, we could do to help, for the small- and micro-enterprises or to try to establish even a broader and more adequate international fund for such things in the face of disasters. But we always find, even in America, which has a very sophisticated banking system, that they are the first casualties of natural disasters that wreck the economies of whole communities. So if we could help you in that, I would be happy to.

There are just two other things that were mentioned. With regard to the environment, I think that—you said, sir, that you felt that the disaster would have been even worse had it not been for some of the environmental practices here in Honduras. Yesterday, when I was in Nicaragua, there was no question that it was worse in the places where there had been vast deforestation and nothing to protect the people from the mudslides. And you have a lot of serious—the President was telling me today, you have a lot of serious decisions to make about, you know, how to replenish the soil which has been destroyed, where the topsoil has been carried away, or perhaps the nutrients have been washed away and the crops won't grow anymore.

I will do whatever I can. In this aid package, we have some significant amount of money for environmental investments. But I will do whatever I can to be particularly helpful there. I think it would be—not only with the United States but with others as well—I think the more we know about the specific plans and strategies, the better off we will be.

But if you look at our hemisphere, our region here, it's perfectly obvious that the countries that have done the best job of preserving their natural environment are going to be the strongest economically, also, over the long run. And yet, one of the greatest battles we face in the world today, in this larger struggle over climate change, which may or may not have had anything to do with Hurricane Mitch—we don't know. No one knows for sure. But the larger battle is that in most countries, most decisionmakers do not believe you can grow an economy unless

you continue to use its resources at an unsustainable rate—that is, at a greater rate than they can be replaced—and do not believe you can grow an economy unless you increase, year-in and year-out, the amount of fuel and energy you are using that contributes to greenhouse gases, coal, and oil, for example.

Now, all the evidence is against that proposition, but old ideas die hard. And I do believe that because economies have—[*inaudible*—if for no other reason, and because of some of the stunning examples already set by the preservation of the biosphere or by the energy patterns adopted in Costa Rica, for example, that Central America may be in a unique position to get lots of investment to prove to the rest of the world that we don't have to destroy the environment to grow the economy. And so I would be happy to exert some extra efforts to help you get some investments in that regard, but again, I think the specifics are important.

For example, I'll just say one thing. The last time I was in Costa Rica, I noticed they were driving—the buses they were using, the school buses they were using, the transportation buses they were using—were powered by electricity or natural gas, and they were all made by a company in Vice President Gore's home State. And there are lots of things—if we knew what the strategy was here and what the priorities were, there might be a lot of things we could do to be helpful.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I want to endorse what was said earlier by you, Mr. Maduro, about education. And I would be happy for us to have a long-term partnership on that, but again, I don't feel that I know enough to know what your immediate priorities are. The United States has had some success in working with countries in various parts of the world in helping to increase more rapidly the number of children going to school.

And of course, as you pointed out, there's no point in increasing the number of children going to school unless you have a place for them to go to school, a teacher to teach them, and materials with which they learn. But I do not believe that you can come anywhere

close to doing what you want to do in Honduras if it takes you a decade to add one more year to the average schooling. And there may be a way—I'm going to talk about this a little bit tomorrow—but this is a year in which a lot of countries are trying to pass this international convention against child labor, which the church has been solemnly supportive of, and which I strongly support.

But I think it would be interesting to see whether we could marry the commitment of countries to support the convention against child labor with a commitment of the advanced countries that are pushing to help to dramatically increase investment in those countries in education, so that you're saying not just that you don't want the children in the factory but you do want them in the school.

And there may be a way that we could dramatically accelerate the rate, the average schooling here. Now, I have all these people from my administration here, plus Lieutenant Governor MacKay, former Lieutenant Governor of Florida, who now will be my new Special Envoy to Latin America, and Mr. Atwood and the others are all here, so—and your Ambassadors. He's our Ambassador, but I think he's really your Ambassador. [*Laughter*] But we will follow up on this.

On the environment and on education, the more specific you can be about what you want us to do, the more we can be helpful, I think. On all these areas, I will do my best.

The last thing I'd like to say is I'd like to thank the gentleman from Save the Children. My wife and I have been involved with Save the Children for more than 20 years, long before we ever thought we would be in national political life. And as soon as this hurricane occurred, she gave some money from her foundation to Save the Children through operations here. So I thank you for what you're doing. The organization has done great work in our home area as well, and I thank all of you.

This was a very good set of presentations, and you gave me a lot to go home and work on.

[*President Carlos Roberto Flores of Honduras expressed his appreciation to the President and noted the representation in the au-*

dience of nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, private enterprise, and religious groups. With regard to Archbishop Rodriguez' remarks on immigration, President Flores said his government did not want to promote emigration to the United States. Regarding those who went in earlier days, he asked that they receive the same treatment other Central American countries' nationals receive by law.]

President Clinton. Well, I think you know that I strongly believe in that. I think that the present American immigration law and how it treats people that were in our country as of some time ago is an inexcusable remnant of the cold war and wrong. I haven't said anything to you I haven't said at home. I think that—people came to the United States because they felt oppressed and are entitled to stay in our country because they came here, it shouldn't matter whether they felt the oppression from the left or the right. I mean, if it's a rational category, people should be treated the same regardless of what the facts are. But the real issue is that all the countries in Central America should be treated the same insofar as whatever the objective facts were that brought the people to our country. So if people should come home, then they should be treated the same; if people should be able to stay, they should be treated the same. That's what I believe.

[*President Flores said he was optimistic about Honduras' recuperation from Hurricane Mitch but expressed concern that the difficulties it presented could undermine the democracy which they had fought so hard to attain. He said the challenge would be to show the Honduran people that the system works for them. He concluded by thanking the President for coming.*]

President Clinton. Thank you. Let me just say one thing as we break up. I have heard this—and one of the reasons I am grateful that we have Members of our Congress here is that we have these bills up there; they can be addressed now. I think there is an overwhelming understanding in both parties in the Congress that we have to pass the aid bill, and I think the only thing that we have to do is to make sure that political considerations in America, that have

nothing to do with Central America, things that are back home don't in any way hold up the consideration of either piece of legislation, and so we will work hard on it.

Thank you.

Oh, I have to get my key to the city. If I wear this to dinner tonight, I'll get a discount. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 2:52 p.m. in the conference room at the Central Bank. In his remarks, the President referred to Pope John Paul II. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the Kennedy-Murray Amendment to Proposed Education Flexibility Partnership Legislation

March 9, 1999

For the second day in a row, the Republican leadership has continued its efforts to stand in the way of voting on an amendment to finish the job of hiring 100,000 teachers to reduce class size. Communities across the country need to know that Congress will live up to the bipartisan commitment we made last fall to fund this effort. The American people expect us to work together to improve the education of our students. I call on the Republican leadership to allow an up-or-down vote on more teachers and smaller classes, and I call on every Senator to support the Murray-Kennedy measure to reduce class size and hire well-prepared teachers across the Nation.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Endowment for the Arts

March 9, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

It is my pleasure to transmit herewith the Annual Report of the National Endowment for the Arts for Fiscal Year 1997.

The Arts Endowment awards more than one thousand grants each year to nonprofit arts organizations for projects that bring the arts to millions of Americans. Once again, this year's grants reflect the diversity of our

Nation's culture and the creativity of our artists. Whether seeing a classic theatrical production in Connecticut or an art exhibition in Arizona, whether listening to a symphony in Iowa or participating in a fine arts training program for inner-city students in Louisiana, Americans who benefit from Arts Endowment grants have experienced the power and joy of the arts in their lives.

Arts Endowment grants in 1997 supported:

- projects in theater, dance, music, visual arts, and the other artistic disciplines, demonstrating that our diversity is an asset—and helping us to interpret the past, understand each other in the present, and envision the future;
- folk and traditional arts programs, which strengthen and showcase our rich cultural heritage; and
- arts education, which helps improve our children's skills and enhances their lives with the richness of the arts.

The arts challenge our imaginations, nourish our spirits, and help to sustain our democracy. We are a Nation of creators and innovators. As this report illustrates, the NEA continues to celebrate America's artistic achievements and makes the arts more accessible to the American people.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 9, 1999.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Trade Policy Agenda and a Report on the Trade Agreements Program

March 9, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 163 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2213), I transmit herewith the 1999 Trade Policy Agenda and the 1998 Annual Report on the Trade Agreements Program. This report includes the Annual Report on the World Trade Organization, as required by section

124 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act (19 U.S.C. 3534).

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 9, 1999.

**Remarks to the Legislative Assembly
of El Salvador in San Salvador**

March 10, 1999

To the president of the Legislative Assembly, thank you very much for your welcome and your fine comments. To the president of the Supreme Court, the leaders and members of the Assembly; to the other leaders from Central America who are here; members of the diplomatic corps; other distinguished public officials from El Salvador; members of the American delegation. Mr. President, I noticed you said you would officially certify the results of the recent Presidential elections today, so I don't want to jump the gun, but apparently, the President-elect is here. And I'm delighted to see him as well.

I have come to Central America with gratitude for our partnership, gratitude for the warm reception that my wife received when she came here recently, and later the wife of our Vice President, with a distinguished delegation of Members of Congress, heads of our Federal agencies, members of the White House staff, my new Special Envoy to Latin America, former Lieutenant Governor of Florida, Buddy MacKay, and others.

For 2 days now, we have been seeing and speaking with many different kinds of people in Nicaragua and Honduras, now in El Salvador, about efforts to recover and rebuild in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. We have met people who have lost everything but hope. I have been moved and humbled by their refusal to be defeated in the face of the deaths of their children, their husbands, their wives, their parents, the loss of all source of income.

I am very proud and grateful that the United States, through our soldiers, our aid workers, and our Peace Corps volunteers, our private donations, have had the opportunity to work alongside the people of Central America in the rebuilding process.

The message I have heard from all kinds of people is that it is not enough now simply to fix things which were destroyed and move on; that, together we must build a better life for future generations, restoring people's lives and livelihoods as soon as possible, in a way that strengthens freedom and peace and the rule of law over the long run.

No one can forget that just a few years ago, the people of Central America were suffering from a legion of manmade disasters far more cruel than anything nature can bestow on us. There was a time not long ago when many in this region believed they could only defend their point of view at the point of a gun, a time when civil war and repression claimed tens of thousands of lives and cast many thousands more into exile, a time when farmers were pushed off their land and children were torn from their parents, a time which provoked, in the United States, bitter divisions about our role in your region.

You have worked hard here in El Salvador to shed light on that dark and painful period. Now, all of us as friends and partners, can and must join in building a common future, determined to remember the past but never to repeat it.

I hope the people of Central America now see the United States in a new way, as a partner, a friend, a colleague in the process of strengthening democracy, in reconstruction, in reclaiming your rightful future.

The wars are over. Every country in Central America now is governed by elected leaders accountable to their people. What once was a no-win contest for power has turned into a win-win contest for better schools, safer streets, and economic opportunity. A battlefield of ideology has been transformed into a marketplace of ideas. Decades of struggle have brought a victory for democracy, the only revolution of our time that has not betrayed its principles.

In so many other parts of the world things are different. Nations still short-change schools and hospitals to pay for arms in the vain pursuit of weapons of mass destruction—not in Central America and certainly not in El Salvador. In so many other places in the world financial turmoil has undermined confidence in open markets and societies—not in Central America and certainly

not in El Salvador. In so many other places people still try to resolve ethnic, religious, and political tensions by the force of arms rather than the force of argument—not in Central America. And no nation has traveled a greater distance to overcome deeper wounds in shorter time than El Salvador. You reached another plateau through your elections on Sunday.

A hurricane can transform villages full of life into valleys of rubble and death. But it will not wash away the foundations of good government and goodwill the people of Central America have laid. It cannot, it will not, take away from you the power to shape your own destiny.

All the Central American leaders with whom I have visited have told me that if reconstruction is managed in the right way, if it clearly benefits all segments of society in a transparent way, if it carves out new roles for local government and voluntary organizations, if it reflects the necessity of protecting the environment, then this region will emerge in stronger shape than before the storm.

You are striving to build true democracies in which all people have a stake and human rights are respected; to build more equitable societies that have conquered not only the bitter divide between right and left but the embittering divide between poverty and wealth; to build safer communities in which people can live in peace and have faith in police and judicial institutions; to build a more integrated community of the Americas in which borders are open to travel and trade but closed to deadly traffic in drugs and guns and human beings.

The United States will work with you to realize that vision from relief to reconstruction to renewal. It is the right thing to do. Clearly, it is in America's interests. Years ago, we learned that when Central America suffers, we suffer, too. In the last 10 years, we have learned how very much we benefit when Central America prospers in peace. Our exports to Central America and trade between us have more than tripled in this decade of reconciliation and hope. But to keep rising together, we have much more to do.

First, we need to keep in mind the extent of the challenge just before us, the hurricane-damaged infrastructure that will cost \$8.5 billion to repair. Hope cannot be restored by aid alone. We also must expand trade and investment to restore growth. I have asked our Congress for funds totaling over \$950 million to help restore Central America.

On Friday I sent to Congress a new proposal for an enhanced Caribbean Basin Initiative that would provide for Central America and the Caribbean even greater benefits than the proposal I made last year before the hurricane. It would eliminate our tariffs on all textiles assembled here from U.S. fabric, as well as on all textile handicrafts. It would allow us, also, to treat all nontextile imports from Central America exactly as we treat such imports from Mexico under NAFTA. The only requirement is that all nations must meet their obligations under the World Trade Organization and participate in the effort to create a free-trade area of the Americas.

Now, if our Congress agrees, clearly this will help people in Central America find jobs, market their exports, stand on their feet. It will bring us closer to a day when goods move freely from Alaska to the tip of South America with benefits to all nations.

In every country, including the United States, the progress of open markets is met by some skepticism and resentment. But look at the facts. Hundreds of millions of people on every continent have risen from poverty because finally they had the chance to produce goods and services for buyers beyond the borders of their nation. This will continue if we continue to tear down barriers that shut off countries from their customers. Exports have been the main engine of your country's growth the last few years. They have helped the United States, too. Our expanding trade with Latin America clearly has lifted our own growth and limited the impact on us of the global financial crisis.

As we build a free-trade area of the Americas, however, we must remember that trade has to work for ordinary citizens everywhere, to contribute both to wealth and fairness. We must build a trading system that upholds the rights of workers and consumers, so that

competition is a race to the top, not the bottom. We must conclude a treaty to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world this year.

But I know it is not enough to keep children out of work. We must get them into school in every nation. Today I am pleased to announce that the United States will provide over \$8 million in new funding to help the children of America start school and stay in school.

I must say, as I drove along the streets of San Salvador today—first, to see the President and then to come here—I was very moved by the friendly faces of people waving to me. But the most touching of all were the children that stood out in front of their schools in their uniforms with their little signs and their smiling faces. And I could only think that our obligation is to give all the children of this region the chance to stand in those lines, in those uniforms, and learn what they need to know to prosper in the century ahead.

We must also protect our environment. It is essential to the wealth of our nations and the health of our people. One of the central lessons of this hurricane is that we have to protect the environment to protect people. It was the deforested hillsides, for example, that experienced the deadliest mudslides. In places that retained their trees, lives were saved.

Now, we cannot stop hurricanes or earthquakes or storms, but we can minimize the damage they do so that every act of God is not a disaster of biblical proportions. We can reforest watersheds and preserve wetlands. We can grow crops in a way that preserves instead of spends the fertility of our soil. We can build more safely for the future. We in the United States are providing computer software and aerial imagery to Central America to tell you where flooding and mudslides are most likely to occur during the next storm, where roads and infrastructures must be rebuilt to last.

But we also can do more. We must join together to stop the warming of our planet. Otherwise, there will only be more of the storms, floods, droughts, and record-breaking temperatures that have caused so much misery in the last few years, not only in our

own backyard but throughout the world. We can do this together, and we can do it without forgoing economic growth. Each year we are developing cleaner technologies and cleaner sources of energy.

For example, here in Central America you have an abundance of geothermal energy in hot springs just waiting to be tapped. We simply must face the fact—all of us—that in this new information age, nations need not, indeed, nations cannot continue to grow their economies by clinging to the industrial age energy practices and land management practices and water management practices of the past. We can do better. And if we do, we will create more jobs and grow our economies faster, whether it is in Central America or the United States. And it is a critical lesson for the leaders of every nation to teach the people.

Each time—[*applause*]*—it's okay if you hesitate on that; my Congress is not sure I'm right, either. [Laughter]* But I am. I can only tell you this from our own experience. Each time the United States has set higher environmental standards, our businesses have created the technologies to meet them, and we have actually had more jobs and faster growth as a result. Of course, this has to be done in a sensible way. It matters how it is done, but it can be done.

Healthy market economies, in the end, cannot resist change, they must adapt to change. Like protecting the environment, protecting our people from drugs and crime is a challenge we must meet together. We have come far in the last few years in building a common understanding of the drug problem. The United States has recognized that we have a fundamental responsibility to reduce demand for drugs. The nations of Central America have recognized that drugs cannot pass through a society without leaving addiction and crime in their wake. So we are fighting the scourge together today for the sake of all our children.

We also have to join forces to fight the proliferation of small arms to criminal gangs. For all the deadly advanced weapons technology in the world today, the weapon most responsible for the most death and destruction is not a missile or a bomb but the rifle. In too many parts of the world it is easier

and cheaper to buy a gun or a grenade than to buy a schoolbook or a life-saving drug. No country suffered more in Central America's civil wars than El Salvador. Today, no country suffers more from the weapons and gangs left over from the war than El Salvador. This assembly here can help to meet this challenge by expanding our extradition agreement and preventing criminals from escaping punishment by flight across borders.

But America must also do our part to meet this threat to us all. We will continue to help you to train police forces that can fight gangs and gunrunners while respecting human rights. We have tightened our laws to prevent Americans from making arms deals abroad that would be illegal at home, beefed up controls on our southern border, and stepped up prosecution of smugglers. Together we helped to negotiate an OAS convention that criminalizes the unregulated manufacture and sale of firearms, mandates strong export controls, and requires all firearms to be marked so they can be traced from one end of our hemisphere to the other.

I am determined to try to extend that convention to the entire world by the year 2000, and I hope I can count on your support for that endeavor. Now, if we can do these things, if we can create jobs, lift people out of poverty, protect our environment, build safer communities, we also will diminish the pressure that causes so many people in this hemisphere to leave their homes in search of a better life. Legal migration from Central America has enriched the United States greatly. It has made us a stronger, a more vital, a more enterprising, a more diverse society. But poverty and the yearning for a better future have also brought many illegal migrants to our Nation.

As the President said, people do not leave their families and their homes and risk a dangerous journey for the uncertain prospects of life in a strange land willingly. Most illegal immigrants are not, by nature, lawbreakers. Most are simply looking for the chance to live in dignity and provide for their children. Nevertheless, we must continue to discourage illegal immigration, for it undermines the control of our borders, which every nation is entitled to pursue. And even more, it punishes hardworking people who play by the

rules and who wait for their turn to come to the United States. Therefore, we must enforce our laws, but we will do so with justice and fairness. I believe fairness means treating people equitably, whatever their country of origin.

Now, during the 1980's, many Central Americans fled oppression by both the right and the left. Some were hurt by soldiers, some harmed by rebels. All whose lives were shattered have a right to sympathy, safety, and justice. Many who have been in the United States for a long time have established deep roots in our communities. At my request, following the Central American summit in Costa Rica 2 years ago, our Congress passed legislation to help them. But it did so by establishing different treatment among groups of Central Americans, depending upon where they were from. I will do everything I possibly can to overcome that different treatment.

And I will work with our Congress to write laws that are more evenhanded. Our treatment of people from Central America should reflect what they suffered, rather than who caused the suffering. This is wrong, and we should change it.

Now, it is important for all of us to stop looking backward and start thinking forward about the future we want to build for our children. More than half the people of your nation today are under the age of 20. The same is true in Guatemala and Nicaragua and across Central America. These young people with no adult memories of war will not be defined by the need to take sides in a bitter struggle between two ideological extremes.

Instead, they will come of age in the 21st century with the unquestioned right to choose their leaders and shape their destinies. Now they will use that right, I believe, to demand of their representatives better education, good jobs, fair justice, clean water, safe streets. They will want the things that will give them the tools to live their own dreams, that can help them to give value and meaning to their lives.

I believe we have a solemn obligation to make democracy deliver for them so they will see a bright future, a future that is their future here in Central America. *Juntos para un mejor futuro. Se lo debemos a los*

fallecidos; se lo debemos a nuestros hijos. We owe it to the fallen; we owe it to our children.

Muchas gracias. Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Legislative Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to the President of the Legislative Assembly, Juan Duch; Supreme Court President Eduardo Tenorio; and President-elect Francisco Flores and President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Arrival in Guatemala City, Guatemala

March 10, 1999

Mr. President, representatives of the Guatemalan Government, and people, we thank you for your warm welcome. I am honored to have the chance to be greeted here, in a place that recalls both Guatemala's cultural heritage and its past of conflicts and pain.

And I am especially grateful for the chance to meet you today, at a time when Guatemala is building a future of democracy, reconciliation, and peace. You have ended a cruel war. You have given your people—all your people—a chance to shape their destiny and to stand on their own. You have faced the past with candor and found the courage to move forward. You are teaching the world that no conflict is so bitter, no gulf is so wide that it cannot be overcome by the power of the government and by people of goodwill.

In a few moments, I will have the opportunity to discuss, with a broad range of Guatemalan citizens, the progress of peace in your country. I will reaffirm America's commitment to shed light on the dark events of the past, so that they are never repeated, and to help you implement the peace accords in a way that ensures that the human rights of the Guatemalan people are always respected.

Tomorrow I will meet with President Arzu, and we will join with the leaders of Central America in a summit in Antigua to continue our efforts to build in this hemisphere a community of true democracies in which all our nations finally can prosper together. That is our common goal. *Lo lograremos como socios y como amigos.*

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:15 p.m. in the courtyard at the National Palace of Culture. In his remarks, he referred to President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Peace Efforts in Guatemala City

March 10, 1999

President Clinton. Thank you very much. Mr. President, first let me say how much I appreciate this opportunity that has been provided for me to meet with citizens of your country to hear about the progress of the peace process and the challenges ahead. Because of the involvement of the United States, I think it is imperative, as we begin, for me just to say a few words about the report of the Historical Clarification Commission.

The commission's work and the support it has received from the government shows how far Guatemala has traveled in overcoming that painful period. I have profound respect for the victims and the families who had courage to testify and for the courage of a nation for coming to terms with its past and moving forward.

For the United States, it is important that I state clearly that support for military forces or intelligence units which engage in violent and widespread repression of the kind described in the report was wrong, and the United States must not repeat that mistake. We must, and we will, instead, continue to support the peace and reconciliation process in Guatemala. As many of you know, we provided one and a half million dollars in support for the commission. We classified over 4,000 documents at the commission's request. Now we will encourage the translation of the report into indigenous languages, and its wide dissemination. Consistent with the commission's recommendations, we also will continue our support of development programs in those communities which suffered most from violence and repression. This year, we plan to provide an additional \$25 million to support the peace accords through aid to the justice sector, to education, to literary

training, to the generation of income, and to citizen participation in government.

You have come a long way, as President Arzu just said, in forging a consensus in support of democracy and human rights and in finding a way to discuss your differences openly and peaceably. I applaud the difficult but essential effort you have undertaken.

Beyond the commission issues, I would also hope to discuss other matters critical to peace and to development and reconciliation, including economic liberalization, market opening measures, increased trade and investment—all of which are crucial to the overall well-being of the people of Guatemala. Now that you have chosen democracy and peace, it is imperative that the United States be a good partner in making sure that it works for all your people.

And again, Mr. President, I'd like to thank you and the government and the people of Guatemala for the road you have taken and for making me feel welcome today. Thank you, sir.

[At this point, the discussion continued.]

President Clinton. Well, first of all I would like to say how very impressed I was by the presentations. And I would like to say a few things at the end, but for now, I was asked a couple of questions, so I would like to respond.

First, I was asked about possible opportunities, greater opportunities, for women and young girls and children, generally. I think that the model which has worked best throughout the world for economic empowerment for women has been the whole—particularly rural women and indigenous populations—has been the whole concept of microcredit, as I'm sure my wife talked about quite extensively when she was here.

But I think even more important is getting schooling going and providing—you know, I'm involved in this effort to try to end child labor that's abusive, worldwide. But it's not as—it's also important to get the children into schools—all kinds of children—including the children of indigenous people, and girls as well as boys, for a longer period of time. This is a big problem not just in Latin America; it's a huge problem in Asia; it's a huge problem in Africa. But I think the

United States should be heavily involved, particularly in light of our past. We have a heavy responsibility to Guatemala and, indeed, to all of Central America to do more in this area.

I have asked the Congress of the United States to pass an aid package, tied to what happened in the hurricane, of something over \$950 million. A lot of it is designed just to support the rebuilding that has to be done, and that is important. But there is quite a lot of money for education and economic development and, to go to another point you made, for the efforts to institutionalize the rule of law, both for commercial and economic reasons and for human rights reasons.

This is an area in which I think those who have and those who have not, in Guatemala and throughout Central America, have a common interest, because the rule of law is essential to get more investment and more economic opportunity and to protect the investments that exist. It is also essential to establish, in an orderly way, human rights and the institutions of justice.

So, Mr. Atwood, our AID Director, is here, and he can talk more about that with you. But we have worked quite hard to put together a package that I hope will be helpful. And I will be prepared, over the next couple of years, to try to do more.

On the question of trade, I sent last Friday to the Congress another bill to try to provide more parity between our trading relationships with Mexico and Canada and our trading relationships with Central America and the Caribbean. And I believe we have a reasonable chance to pass that bill this year. And if we do, it obviously will lead to more opportunities for the sale of Guatemalan products in the United States, and more jobs, therefore, for the people here. I will work very hard to pass it.

I was asked about the immigration issue, and I would like to speak briefly about that. I gave a more extended statement today to the National Assembly of El Salvador, but I will briefly say what I said there.

I think it's important for every country to enforce its immigration laws and try to protect its borders. We have very generous legal immigration laws, and we have many, many immigrants from Central America making a

major contribution, positive contribution, to the United States. On the other hand, most of the illegal immigrants from Guatemala and other Central American countries are not lawbreakers by nature; they're people who are seeking a better life. It's hard to leave your family and your home and take the risks inherent in coming to a strange land without the approval of the law. And people do it because they want a better opportunity for themselves and their families.

I think there are two things that should be noted as we do try to enforce our immigration laws. The first is that we have to be sensitive and act with justice and understand the impact of recent events. The second is that the present American law is completely unfair in that it treats different—people from different countries in Central America differently. And it is a vestige of our, sort of—kind of, our cold war mentality and how we were involved here.

I can do two things about that. The first is to try to change the law. And we will aggressively work to try to change the law to get parity, equal treatment for all people from Central America without regard to the political past and whether the difficulties of the past were seen as coming from the right or the left. I think that's irrelevant. We should treat all countries the same.

The second is to use, to the maximum extent possible, whatever flexibility I have under present law to achieve the same goal. I will do that. But in the end, the problem cannot be fixed—the immigration problem cannot be completely fixed until there is a change in the law so that all countries would be treated the same under the law. And I will actively seek that this year.

Anyway, I think that responds to the questions that were asked of me. If I were to ask a question—if I could ask one question, I would like to say that, one of you said that we needed a dignification program, with priority given to the widows and orphans. And I would like to know whether you have specific suggestions over and above the programs I have already mentioned for what the United States could do to be helpful to deal with the large number of orphaned children and widows you have? What else could we do? What specific suggestions do you have

for me, over and above what has been mentioned?

[*The discussion continued.*]

President Clinton. Well, I think it is in the nature of such meetings that you only scratch the surface of what needs to be done and what the possibilities are. I will say again, I intend to go back home and do my best to pass the aid package, to pass the trade parity bill, and to get improvements in the immigration difficulties. Within the aid package, we will be able to support education initiatives and economic power initiatives like the women's credit program that President Arzu mentioned.

I think it is important that, after I leave Central America, the United States develop with every country the most specific possible plan for what it is you want to achieve that we can help you achieve, whether it is in dealing with the specific problems of the widows and orphans; the need for the education of the children; the need for the economic empowerment of women; the need for greater efforts with indigenous groups; the need to go further in the search for human rights, the rule of law; how to come to terms with the issues related in the commission report.

And I guess what I would like to leave you with is my commitment that I am willing to continue to push, Mr. President, to have these sorts of specific commitments on the part of the United States so we know we have a good roadmap for where we're going into the future, and you know what you can expect of our partnership. And of course, tomorrow, we'll have a greater chance to talk about what we can do regionally when you get all the Presidents together.

I would like to just leave you with this one thought. For all of your terrible suffering and the continuing difficulties you face, please do not underestimate how far you have come and what you have done. It is my responsibility as President of the United States to travel the world to deal with all of these problems that I see cropping up in other places. You know this, but I would like to just say, the last few years have brought a floodtide of changes in the way people work and live, and

in the political and social and economic relationships of people—the end of the cold war, the growth of the global market, the explosion in information technology—it has changed everything. And all over the world, people are searching for a new balance.

Most of these changes are good, but there are—not all of them are good. And they all present people everywhere with dilemmas. There is the question of integration versus disintegration. And I'll give you—you have it in Guatemala. You want—how do you balance the need for the nation to be sovereign with the legitimate rights of individuals and groups? How do you balance the need for the nation to be sovereign with the need to have greater cooperation with other countries? How do you balance the need to develop your economy with the imperative of preserving your natural resources? How do you balance the need for security and order with the imperative of individual rights to privacy and liberty and the rule of law, for both commercial and human reasons?

All of these challenges you face are being faced by other people elsewhere. In South Africa, for example, to go back to what many of you talked about, they had this Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which perhaps went a little further than your report. And I thought that they—we think they're making real progress there. But in the last week, four different political leaders have been killed. In central Africa, where there was tribal slaughter in Rwanda and Burundi, I met with indigenous peoples. I met a woman whose husband and six children were all killed, and she woke up and for some miracle reason she didn't die from the wounds she sustained. And she, like the woman here, is devoting her life to this reconciliation. And I thought we were making progress, and just last week the majority tribe killed a bunch of Americans and other people.

So I say, as awful as this is for you and as frustrating as it is, it is astonishing how much has been done in Guatemala and in the other countries of Central America, and the direction you have taken. For all the economic frustrations you face, you're doing better than many much larger countries in Asia and in Latin America, because you've shown greater discipline and innovation.

So I urge you to not get discouraged, and I urge you to—I have tried very hard to change the historic relationship between the United States and Central America, to be a genuine partner and to think about the future in different terms. And we won't solve all the problems today or tomorrow, but I think we have to say we are on a different track. We have turned a real corner. And I came here as much as anything else just to express my respect for you and to ask you not to get too discouraged.

You think about Europe as being a very rich continent, but look at these problems we're having in Kosovo and Bosnia, where they haven't been able to, in Kosovo, do what you have decided to do. They still think they can shoot their way out of their difficulties. And we're hoping and praying they will take a different decision in the next few days.

So I thank you for talking to me, and before me, to my wife when she came here, and for all the work you are doing. But I just want you to know that I am committed to changing our relationship over the long run in all these areas we have mentioned. And I will do my best to make sure that we have the kind of partnership that will make both our countries stronger and address the specific concerns you have outlined today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 4:45 p.m. at the Reception Hall in the National Palace of Culture. In his remarks, the President referred to President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala.

Radio Remarks on Proposed Airline Passenger Protection Legislation

March 10, 1999

Our country's airlines serve millions of Americans a year, but as more planes are taking off, so are passenger complaints. That's why I'm proposing a new law requiring all airlines to spell out how they will address problems such as delays, overbooking, and missing baggage. This airline passenger protection act has overwhelming bipartisan support. With its passage, we can make the best airline system in the world even better.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 4:15 p.m. on March 5 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Radio Actuality Line.

**Statement on the Kennedy-Murray
Amendment to Proposed Education
Flexibility Partnership Legislation**

March 10, 1999

I am pleased that the Senate leadership has finally agreed to allow an up-or-down vote on an amendment to hire 100,000 teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. Last year, with bipartisan support, Congress enacted a downpayment on this class size initiative, and school districts across the country will soon receive funds to begin hiring teachers. It is now time for Congress to finish the job by making a long-term commitment to class size reduction. I call on every Senator to vote for the Murray-Kennedy amendment to bring every class in the early grades down to a national average of 18.

I will vigorously oppose any Republican amendments to undermine the bipartisan agreement we reached last year on class size by diverting those funds to other uses, including special education. While we should increase funding for special education—as we have done in past years and as my budget recommends continuing to do in the future—we should not take this money from the recently enacted class size initiative. We should not pit our children against one another or change the rules now on our critical efforts to reduce class size. Smaller classes will help all students do better and will reduce the need for special education services by helping teachers identify and assist as early as possible children who have learning problems. I call on every Member of Congress to reject these efforts to tear down what we accomplished last year, and call on them instead to build on that significant bipartisan achievement.

**Notice—Continuation of Iran
Emergency**

March 10, 1999

On March 15, 1995, by Executive Order 12957, I declared a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including its support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. On May 6, 1995, I issued Executive Order 12959 imposing more comprehensive sanctions to further respond to this threat, and on August 19, 1997, I issued Executive Order 13059 consolidating and clarifying these previous orders. The last notice of continuation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 6, 1998.

Because the actions and policies of the Government of Iran continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States, the national emergency declared on March 15, 1995, must continue in effect beyond March 15, 1999. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to Iran. Because the emergency declared by Executive Order 12957 constitutes an emergency separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, by Executive Order 12170, this renewal is distinct from the emergency renewal of November 1998. This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 10, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., March 11, 1999]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on March 12.

**Message to the Congress on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to Iran**

March 10, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701-1706) is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 1999, to the *Federal Register* for publication. This emergency is separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the Iranian hostage crisis and therefore requires separate renewal of emergency authorities. The last notice of continuation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 6, 1998.

The factors that led me to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, have not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, its efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and its acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. Accordingly, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad programs I have authorized pursuant to the March 15, 1995, declaration of emergency.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 10, 1999.

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

**Opening Remarks at the Central
America Summit in Antigua,
Guatemala**

March 11, 1999

President Arzu, President Aleman, President Flores, President Calderon Sol, President Rodriguez, President Fernandez, Prime Minister Musa. First, President Arzu, let me thank you, your government, and the people of Guatemala and especially the people of Antigua for the wonderful welcome and hospitality I have received here.

When Hillary came back from her trip to Central America last November, she told me about the devastation she had seen in four nations, but she also said, "At the end of the trip, you have to go to Antigua."

You know, this is the first time the President of the United States has been anywhere in Guatemala outside of the airport in Guatemala City. President Johnson visited there 30 years ago. This visit is long overdue. More importantly, this moment in history is long overdue.

I came to the Presidency in 1993 determined to establish a new partnership with the peoples of Latin America and especially to reach out to our neighbors in Central America. At long last, Guatemala and all its neighbors have a chance to prosper in freedom and peace, in a hemisphere united by shared values.

We have come together in this old capital to find new solutions. The damage the hurricanes left, some of which I have seen, of course, has increased the urgency of our deliberations and our action. We are determined to respond to this calamity so that what was destroyed will be built back better than ever. We commit today to build a common future here in Antigua, a city that knows a great deal about rebuilding.

Our challenge is to consolidate the remarkable achievements of Central America in the last decade, to build on them, and to accelerate them. I am committed to lowering trade barriers between us, both to speed recovery and to build a free-trade area in this

region that will benefit all the citizens of all the countries.

I am committed to a common struggle against violence and drug trafficking and drug abuse, to shared responsibility for the care of our environment, for the education of our children, for the health of our people. I am committed to justice and to institutions which will maintain it. I am committed to fair immigration laws, fairly enforced, and especially to the principle that we should treat people from Central America equitably, whatever their country of origin, and recognize the special circumstances of those nations that Hurricane Mitch hit hardest.

Our new partnership has made quite a bit of progress since our last summit in Costa Rica. We still face daunting challenges. But now we face them with a unique sense of solidarity and a common commitment to freedom, to democracy, to open markets, and to meeting the demands of our people for better schools, safer streets, wider opportunities.

Even before the United States was created, a North American poet, Anne Bradstreet, complained about the harshness of our weather. But she added, "If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant." Well, Central America has had a long and difficult season, aggravated by the recent hurricanes, but we can truly rejoice that the springtime of renewal and rebuilding is here. The Sun shines on us today, in Guatemala and throughout this region. For all the problems that people face, we must never forget how far they have traveled, and we must never lose sight of the path that leads to a brighter tomorrow. We must go on that path together, to build a new American century for all the people of the Americas.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 a.m. in the courtyard at the Casa Santo Domingo. In his remarks, he referred to summit participants President Alvaro Arzu of Guatemala, President Arnoldo Aleman of Nicaragua, President Carlos Roberto Flores of Honduras, President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador, President Miguel Angel Rodriguez of Costa Rica, President Leonel Fernandez of the Dominican Republic, and Prime Minister Said Musa of Belize.

Closing Remarks at the Central America Summit in Antigua and an Exchange With Reporters

March 11, 1999

The President. Good afternoon. President Aleman, thank you for your words and your leadership. President Arzu, thank you so much for bringing us to this magnificent place and for hosting this very valuable meeting. To all my fellow leaders of the Americas, I thank you for the examples you are setting within your countries and by working together.

As we see here in Guatemala and, indeed, in all the nations represented in this extraordinary region, they are blessed with natural and with man-made monuments of ancient grace and spectacular beauty. Now the people have built a new monument—also spectacular and, hopefully, just as enduring—the monument of peace.

Kosovo

Because of developments in Washington and in Europe, I hope my fellow leaders will forgive me if I take my only opportunity today to appear before the press to say something about another area in which we are working for peace—in Kosovo, where a serious civil conflict has been occurring and where much bloodshed might still occur.

Today our House of Representatives in Washington is debating a resolution on the potential deployment of American troops. I hope the House will act in a way that supports our efforts to achieve a strong peace agreement. I have and will continue to work closely with the Congress as we seek to bring peace to Kosovo. As I have repeatedly said, a final decision on whether we would send our troops as part of a peace force depends upon the achievement of a genuine agreement, on an immediate cease-fire, on rapid withdrawal of most Serbian security forces, and demilitarization of the insurgents.

Both sides must agree to a NATO force. Europe's troops must make up the great majority of the forces. And we must have a NATO strategy that includes a clear plan for bringing our forces home. If, and only if, these conditions are met, I strongly believe

United States forces should contribute to securing the peace in Kosovo. We have a strong stake in bringing peace there, just as we have a strong stake in peace in Central America. If we don't end the conflict now, it will spread; and when it does, we will not be able to avoid participating in stopping it; and when we do, it will come at far greater risk and far greater cost.

Central America Summit

Now, let me talk a moment about what we have met about today, how to turn this region of peace and shared values into a region of joint endeavors and common progress. I have made it clear that the United States supports greater debt relief, and I outlined my proposal for that; that we support more open trade to create jobs and opportunity through an enhanced initiative of the Caribbean Basin, the countries of Central America and the Caribbean, and eventually through a free-trade area of the Americas.

We also discussed other economic issues: what can be done to increase investment in tourism, what can be done in the environment. Our United States Agency for International Development, I am pleased to say, will contribute another \$25 million to support CONCAUSA, the agreement we signed in 1994 in Costa Rica to promote environmental cooperation among us. This contribution will help the people of Central America to protect their forests and coastlands, to reduce industrial pollution, to fight climate change.

We talked a lot about immigration, as you might imagine. I reaffirmed my intention to support our immigration laws fairly and justly but to work strongly for the elimination of any disparities in our law so that they treat Central Americans equitably, whatever their country of origin.

We also spoke today about the danger of gangs and guns and drugs. In many ways, they represent the final stage of Central America's internal conflicts. We talked about what we could do together to combat them.

Let me just say in closing that this has been a very moving trip for me, personally. When my wife came here a few months ago, in the aftermath of the hurricane, she came home and talked to me a lot about what she saw

and what people were doing. But no description can adequately replace the personal experiences of what I have seen.

In Honduras and Nicaragua, I met people who were devastated, but undaunted, determined to rebuild in a way that reinforces the transformation of this region. In El Salvador, and today in Guatemala, I have been privileged to see two nations that have found the courage to face a painful past and move forward to build a truly hopeful future.

At this summit I have seen Central America's leaders working together for the future. And I have tried to demonstrate that for the future, beyond the service of my Presidency, America must be a partner and a friend, not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it is in our interest to do so.

We have never been closer to realizing the dream of a hemispheric community based on genuine respect and genuine partnership. Something great has happened here in Central America in the last decade. As we move out of the past and away from the damage of the hurricanes, we do so in a way that we are determined to see this area emerge from adversity, in a way that places all of us on higher ground. I am proud to have been given the chance to be a part of it.

Thank you very much.

Global Strategy for Central America

Q. Good afternoon to all the Presidents. My question is for the President of the United States, Mr. Clinton. What do you think of the statement by President Alvaro Arzu with regard to the need to have a global strategy, a long-term strategy for the Central American region?

The President. I think he's right about that. One of the things that I pointed out in our morning meeting is that Central America, for all of its economic difficulties, basically is being well managed. And I believe that if there were a way for all these leaders together to demonstrate to the world that they are determined to avoid the kinds of financial problems and economic problems, for example, that have caused such trouble in Asia and, frankly, caused difficulties for all developing economies—caused the interest rates for funds even in Central America to go up—if there were a way for

this region to say as a region, look, we know what caused those problems there; we're not going to do that here; this is a good place to invest—then I believe not just the United States but people in Europe, people in South America, people in Asia would be far more likely to invest here, to bring Central America not just into a better partnership with the United States but with all the world in a way that would lift the lives of people here.

So I agree with President Arzu that there should be a global strategy. But I believe that because we're neighbors, for the foreseeable future, for the next 50 years, our major economic relationship should be one with another. And that imposes special responsibilities on the United States, but it also gives us a lot of opportunities.

The President said to me, and I'd like to say to my fellow Americans not only here but those who might be listening to this press conference or who will hear the reports of it, that our trade with Central America far outstrips our trade with countries that are much, much larger than the combined population of Central America. And it has an enormous potential to benefit not just the people of this region but the people of the United States, as well.

U.S. Congress and Kosovo/Apologies for Past Administrations

Q. For President Clinton. Mr. President, particularly given that part of your reason for being down here is to express your regret and apologies for what past White Houses have done over the objections of Congress, can you please explain why it is that your administration has been so adamant about Congress not registering its opinion on the situation in Kosovo, and what exactly is your exit strategy if U.S. troops are sent over there?

The President. Well, first of all, Congress has a right to express its opinion on anything it likes. I have two things to say about it. One is, it's premature. I do not believe that—until we know that we have maximized the chances for both sides to say yes to the peace agreement—it's not at all clear that they will—I do not believe that the Congress should take any action that will, in effect, preempt the peace process or encourage either

side to say no to it. So I thought it was premature. I don't object to Congress expressing its opinion on anything. That's their job.

Secondly, every President has reserved the right to both receive the advice and consent and support or endure the opposition of Congress, but not to give up the constitutional responsibility to deploy United States forces in peacetime. And I think that my predecessors were right about that.

It's not that—what I apologized for has nothing to do with the fact that there was a difference between the policy of the administration and the Congress in previous years, going back for decades, and including administrations of both parties. It is that the policy of the executive branch was wrong. And what we're doing here is in the open; it's not a secret.

What was your other question? Oh, the exit strategy. Well, the exit strategy should be defined by the missions. You will be able to see that we have an exit strategy if we define the missions properly—just as in Bosnia we defined the missions and we have cut, I think, reduced our troop strength by more than 70 percent now. And we continue to bring them down.

I'm in a sort of a double bind here, you know. We tried in Bosnia to give a date certain for when we thought we could withdraw, based on what the Pentagon said they believed would happen in cooperation with our other agencies. We turned out to be wrong. Then people said, "Well, maybe the President misled us about how long we would stay there."

So we decided in Kosovo the right thing to do was to say what the benchmarks of the mission would be, and the Congress has to approve money every year for such things so they would be able every year to see whether we were meeting the benchmarks, but we wouldn't mislead them about knowing in advance exactly how long it would take. So when we did it that way, then people said, "Well, we're making an open-ended commitment." That's not true. I don't intend to make an open-ended commitment; I think that would be wrong.

Guatemalan Peace Process

Q. Question for the President of the United States, Bill Clinton. What is your personal opinion of the peace process of Guatemala?

The President. Well, first of all, I think the fact that you had elections and that people are free to speak their minds, that I met with an elected Vice President of Guatemala, who is a representative of the indigenous population, yesterday, that the differences are freely expressed, and that according to President Arzu, you have a free and sometimes contentious and critical press—I'd say that's all healthy.

I also think this commission report was a brave thing to do. And I think you know that the United States supports the peace process, including the effort to find the truth, even if it's not that favorable to the United States. We contributed a million and a half dollars to the work of the commission; we declassified 4,000 documents at the request of the commission. So I basically support what you are trying to do, strongly.

No nation can tell another exactly how to come to terms with its past and to move into the future. And the answer will necessarily be different from nation to nation. What South Africa did, what Chile did, what El Salvador did will not necessarily work in Guatemala. Neither will what you do necessarily work for some other country. The main thing is, is there an honest effort being made to bring about reconciliation and the rule of law and human rights and genuine freedom? And I don't think there is any question that Guatemala has been moving in the right direction. And for that, all of us who believe in freedom and human rights can be grateful.

Chinese Nuclear Espionage/Calls for NSC Director's Resignation

Q. President Clinton, did your administration ignore evidence of nuclear espionage by the Chinese in order to further your policy of engagement? And what do you have to say to Republicans calling for Sandy Berger's resignation?

The President. Well, first of all, we did not ignore evidence. Quite the contrary; we acted on it. Let me say for the benefit of all the press, both American and others, look-

ing at this issue there are two questions that need to be looked at separately. One is, did we respond in an appropriate, timely, and aggressive way to indications of espionage? The second is, is our policy toward China of engagement the right one?

Now, the answer to the first question is, I believe the record is clear that we did respond in an appropriate way. In 1996 we were notified that there was some indication of a breach of security at one of the energy labs and that the appropriate agencies were investigating. The appropriate congressional committees were notified at the same time. Since then, they have received at least 16 briefings on this issue.

Now, in 1997, in July, we were notified that the scope of the potential espionage might be very broad and might be directly related to lax security at the energy labs. At that time, we moved quickly and decisively not only with the continuing FBI investigation and with the CIA review but also with an intense review of the counterintelligence capacities of our energy department labs.

As a result of that, in February of '98, I signed a Presidential directive to dramatically improve the counterintelligence capacities of the lab. In April of '98 we set up a counterintelligence office by the energy labs, headed by a 35-year FBI veteran with a record of dealing with espionage. We doubled the counterintelligence budget. We raised the standards for foreign visitors to the labs; we said foreign scientists had to be accompanied to the labs. I think we began to polygraph DOE employees at some point. Only two agencies, DOE and the CIA, have their employees subject to polygraphs.

Simultaneous with that, in terms of technology controls, we subject China to the tightest restrictions of technology transfer that we have on any country that is not on an embargo list for the United States. So I think the record is that we acted aggressively. I think Mr. Berger acted appropriately, and therefore, I would not release him or ask for his resignation. I just don't think there's any evidence to support that.

Now, let me say, the second question—and this affects the welfare of everybody else in the world, if you realize how China is growing, both economically and the size of

their population; this affects the welfare of every person in Central America—whether the United States and China are at odds in a conflict or have a constructive relationship that has honest disagreements, where nobody is under any illusions that the facts are different than they are.

I would argue that our efforts to have an honest and open policy with China, so that they don't think that we have made a decision in advance to try to contain and limit them in their economic growth and their development as a nation, has paid dividends. I do not believe that China would have signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; I do not believe they would have practiced the restraint they have practiced in the transfer of various dangerous materials to countries like Iran and Pakistan if we had not been constructively engaged with them.

I do not believe that we would have had the level of cooperation in Korea in trying to limit North Korea's ability to develop nuclear capacity that we have had. I do not believe we would have had the cooperation we have had in trying to limit the impact of the Asian financial crisis, which has plunged tens of millions of people from the middle class into poverty in Asia, and represents the biggest short-term threat to democracy and to stability in Asia. I do not believe those things would have occurred if we had not had an open, candid, honest relationship with China, aware of all the facts.

Keep in mind, this is about a case that developed in the mid-eighties. We have known about China's nuclear capacity and their capacity to pose a strategic threat and, more or less, what the dimensions of that were since the 1980's. And this raises the question of whether some espionage in the eighties was somehow related to that capacity. We have investigated it; we continue to investigate it. We have dramatically increased our counterintelligence. I believe we have taken all appropriate steps.

I do not believe that that evidence justifies an isolated no-contact relationship with China when we have gotten the benefits not only to ourselves but to the rest of the world of our engagement policy.

Central American Immigrants

Q. I have a question for President Clinton. What are the commitments that the U.S. has acquired with Central America with regard to the migratory problem?

The President. Well, as you know, for one thing, I stayed all the deportations for all the countries affected by the hurricanes. I had to lift the stay for all the countries, other than Honduras and Nicaragua, because under our law a temporary stay because of the collapse, in effect, of the national infrastructure of a country due to natural disaster, is very specific in our law.

The fundamental problem with American law is that, essentially, with regard to people who have been in the United States a long time, is that we treat people from different Central American countries differently based on the source of the oppression of human rights, rather than whether people had hardships that caused them to come to the United States.

The commitment I made was twofold: One, that within the law—and I brought Doris Meissner, our Immigration Commissioner here with me—that within the law, I would do all I could to avoid a disruptive return to people because of the law that I think we all admit is unfair; but that in the end, to fix the problem entirely, we would require legislative change. And I would seek that from the Congress, and I believe there is support from Members of both parties for that sort of change.

Now, beyond that, I recognize that most of the people who might still want to come to the United States, particularly in the aftermath of the hurricanes, are not by nature lawbreakers. They're people looking for a better life for themselves and for their families. But we have to enforce our immigration laws. And if we don't, it's not fair not only to people in other parts of the world but to other Central Americans. There are thousands and thousands of Central Americans who have registered to come to our country under the laws that exist now in a lawful way. There is no reason that people who line up like that and try to do it should be deprived of their legal right to come to the United States as a result of a reaction in our country

because of the large flow of illegal immigrants.

So I made a commitment to try to be as reasonable as possible under the existing law, but I have to uphold the law. I made a commitment to try to change the law to treat all people from all Central American countries the same. And finally, let me say, I believe the most important commitment that I made is the commitment on debt relief, to pass our aid package to help the reconstruction effort—which is a genuine emergency—to try to expand trade, to try to develop the economy.

In the end, economic development at home will stem the flood of illegal immigration—genuine opportunities for people—more than anything else we can do. So those were the commitments that I made.

NATO and Kosovo

Q. President Clinton, you've said often that NATO is prepared to act if the Serbs attacked ethnic Albanians in Kosovo. Violence is now on the rise. Why isn't NATO responding, and what are you doing to keep the peace talks from collapsing there?

The President. Well, as you know, Senator Dole has just come back from Kosovo, also I think quite frustrated. The real problem, of course is—I don't want this to be misinterpreted—there is no, in my view, moral equivalence between what has been done by the Serbs and what has been done by the Kosovar Albanians to try to secure the autonomy which was unlawfully striped from them a decade ago. But it is clear that in this interim period, when they went home from Rambouillet and they're arguing about whether they should take this peace agreement, there are a lot of tensions and crosscurrents.

The consensus among our NATO allies now is that in the next few days we should be doing everything we possibly can to get these people on both sides to realize that this is—it is crazy for them to go to war, to kill each other, to compromise their children's future, when they have an agreement which, from the point of view of Mr. Milosevic, only requires him to do what the law requires him to do anyway—to respect the autonomy of the Kosovar Albanians—which, from the

point of view of the Kosovars, avoids a bloody war and gives them a chance to establish the mechanisms of self-government without foreclosing or guaranteeing a future of independence, to see how they do in the next 3 years.

It seems to me that a present war is the worst of all circumstances. Now, if the prospect of the agreement were totally destroyed by an outright military offensive, I would be the first to argue that our NATO allies have to take action and take action now. But the situation is, frankly—even though you're absolutely right; there have been some actions by the Serbs—the situation is sufficiently murky and the present status of the peace agreement and whether either side can bring itself to agree is sufficiently shaky, that all the NATO allies at this moment on this day believe that we should devote all of our energies trying to get the agreement.

But I can speak for myself and, I believe, at least for most of my NATO allies, that if this thing come apart at the seams, we still have a commitment. And I'm determined to honor our commitment.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:07 p.m. in the Casa Santo Domingo, Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to President Arnaldo Aleman of Nicaragua; President Alvaro Arzu and Vice President Luis Alberto Flores of Guatemala; former Senator Bob Dole; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Joint Central American-United States Declaration (CONCAUSA) and Presidential Decision Directive (PDD-61).

Declaration of Antigua

March 11, 1999

We, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, the United States of America, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, and the Prime Minister of Belize, meeting in Antigua, Guatemala, on March 11, 1999, welcome the special opportunity afforded by this meeting to secure a prosperous future for our peoples after the devastation wrought by Hurricanes Mitch and Georges.

Hurricane Mitch was the worst disaster in the history of our Hemisphere, killing nearly

10,000 people, affecting at least 6 million others, and causing property damage totaling approximately \$6 billion. Aware of the enormous impact on our countries of this disaster, we are meeting to combine efforts to rebuild and transform the region in such a way as to bring swifter development that will ensure the prosperity of all our citizens.

For the first time in the history of our region, all our countries are enjoying peace, stability, democracy, and freedom. Preserving these achievements requires decisive, forward-looking action in order to avoid jeopardizing the stability of our countries achieved through great sacrifice and to stay on the course of progress.

In a spirit of solidarity, the Central American Presidents gathered for a special, emergency meeting in Comalapa, El Salvador, on November 9, 1998, to appeal to the international community for solidarity and to adopt joint decisions on how best to coordinate our efforts to help one another in the task of rebuilding and transformation.

Despite the tragedy we face, we recognize that the current situation also offers a unique opportunity to reconstruct our economies, transform our societies, and lay the economic foundation for sustained growth to prepare our nations to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. With our own efforts and with the staunch, sustained support of the international community, we will overcome the challenges ahead.

The Central American nations and the Dominican Republic deeply appreciate the strong show of support, generosity, and solidarity to our peoples, and the valuable cooperation and emergency assistance provided by the international community. We take this opportunity to express particular gratitude for the speedy, timely response of the people and the Government of the United States of America. The President of the United States of America reiterates his commitment to contribute efforts to transform and rebuild Central America and the Dominican Republic.

Reconstruction and Transformation

We welcome the opportunity this Summit offers to intensify the frank dialogue we began in San Jose. We reaffirm the values we share as peoples and nations, based on

democracy, the free market, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the effective rule of law, the campaign against international crime, and our commitment to environmental protection.

Based on these values, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, the United States of America, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and the Vice President of Guatemala, met in Washington, D.C., on December 11, 1998, to agree on mechanisms to rebuild and transform the region, and at that time received encouraging support and solidarity from the people and the Government of the United States of America.

Aware that our efforts should be complemented by long-term support from financial institutions, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, and the Vice President of Guatemala, met in Washington, D.C., on December 10-11, 1998, to report to the international community, at the Consultative Group convened by the Inter-American Development Bank, on the magnitude of the damage and to establish mechanisms for effective coordination with donors, thereby ensuring the resources necessary to begin the difficult task of rebuilding and transforming our countries.

We agree that the effective, lasting transformation of the region means enhancing democracy; promoting sustained economic growth as the best antidote for poverty; strengthening the rule of law and national reconciliation; ensuring the full effectiveness of human rights; strengthening judicial systems and good governance; fostering transparency; combating international crime; approaching in a humane manner the issue of migration; expanding trade and investment opportunities; supporting debt relief and financial cooperation; and implementing a program of sustainable development that includes natural disaster prevention.

The Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, and the Prime Minister of Belize, reaffirm our determination to achieve the rapid rebuilding and transformation of our countries with a view to establishing prosperous societies with equal opportunity for all.

We agree to underscore the importance of obtaining, during this initial rebuilding phase, non-reimbursable funds and concessionary lines of credit to finance programs in those areas most essential for economic, agricultural, and industrial recovery and for the reintegration of the people affected into the productive life of our countries. To that end, the Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize express appreciation for the request for special funds for rebuilding Central America that President Clinton sent to his Congress, and again call upon the international community and international financial institutions to lend their firm support to the efforts to rebuild Central America.

Debt Relief and Financial Cooperation

The Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize welcome the commitment by the President of the United States of America to provide debt relief to Nicaragua and Honduras, whose economies were especially devastated by Hurricane Mitch. Debt relief is critical to building a sustainable path to development for these countries as they work to rebuild and transform their economies.

The Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize view with approval the support provided by the United States of America within the Paris Club to extend a moratorium on debt servicing for Honduras and Nicaragua over the next two to three years, which will free up vital resources for reconstruction and transformation efforts. The President of the United States of America reiterated his commitment to play a leadership role in providing comprehensive external debt reduction for Honduras and Nicaragua under the Paris Club and consideration of eligibility under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. In addition, the President of the United States has requested authority for a \$25 million contribution to the Central America emergency trust fund in order to help pay debt service to the international financial institutions.

The President of the United States of America expressed his determination to support and contribute to both bilateral and

multilateral initiatives, in order to obtain the maximum additional resources needed on an urgent and concessionary basis at the May 1999 meeting of the Consultative Group in Stockholm, Sweden. That meeting will be a pivotal event in donor coordination and in confirming pledges of resources for the reconstruction and transformation of the region. The Presidents of Central America and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize expressed their appreciation for the determination by the United States of America to increase substantially bilateral aid programs for the reconstruction of their countries.

Trade and Investment

We recognize that the formulation of a comprehensive program of reconstruction and economic recovery for the region in the wake of Hurricanes Mitch and Georges would be incomplete without the consideration of trade and investment as essential components for economic development, regional integration, and prosperity. It is through commercial opportunities generated by better and more secure markets that sustainable development, long-term political and economic stability, and, therefore, widespread human development in the region can be achieved. We recognize that creating incentives for increased trade and investment will be advanced by our adherence to commitments agreed upon in multilateral trade negotiations such as in the World Trade Organization.

Two-way trade between the United States of America and its neighbors in Central America and the Caribbean has grown rapidly in this decade and has been highly beneficial for both sides. This reflects the continued success and relevance of the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) in promoting greater trade flows and investment and generating employment in the United States of America as well as in the region. Free market economies and private sector participation are essential to rebuilding our countries, consolidating democracy, and promoting closer economic relations. As we approach the new millennium, we are determined to rededicate our commitment to open markets and to

strengthen even more this mutually beneficial relationship.

We are aware of the importance of strengthening relationships that have developed in the areas of textiles and clothing, not only because of the enormous benefits for the United States of America and the nations of the Caribbean Basin, but also as a way of ensuring our mutual competitiveness in the context of the world market as we approach the year 2005.

President Clinton expressed his determination to work actively with the United States Congress to enhance the Caribbean Basin Initiative in a manner that responds effectively to the needs of the countries of the region. These enhancements should help prepare for the creation of a region of shared prosperity among Central America, the Dominican Republic, and the United States of America.

We welcome President Clinton's commitment to send the Bilateral Investment Treaties with El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua to the United States Senate for ratification. These treaties send a positive signal of the region's openness to foreign investment and its determination to protect property rights and to forge a partnership with business to rebuild and transform the economies victimized by Hurricane Mitch.

The leaders praised the excellent beginning to the negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The governments of the United States of America, the Central American countries, and the Dominican Republic affirmed their commitment to work together to achieve concrete progress in the FTAA negotiations, including by implementing a series of business facilitation measures. For this purpose, the governments will consult on cooperative efforts they can undertake to help the countries of the region to advance in this direction. In this regard, we highlight transparency as an important element of the FTAA process. We, therefore, look forward to the ongoing work of the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society.

Migration

We recognize that the effects of Hurricanes Mitch and Georges on Central Amer-

ica and the Dominican Republic have caused suffering for their population and have further complicated social and economic conditions for an adequate reintegration of their repatriated citizens. In this regard, the Presidents of the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic and the Prime Minister of Belize express appreciation for the temporary measures already taken by the Government of the United States of America aimed at mitigating the adverse impact of repatriations to the region, and we reaffirm our commitment to maintaining dialogue at the highest level with a view to finding humane and permanent solutions to the problems of migration.

Taking into account the origins, manifestations, and social, economic, and political effects of migration, and bearing in mind the interdependence of our countries, the Government of the United States of America will consider initiatives to address the disparities created by the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA). We recognize that migrants contribute to the development and prosperity of their region of origin and of their new country of residence and also recognize that, in order for these benefits to be realized, migration should be orderly. We will also cooperate to address disorderly emigration and its consequences. We affirm our belief that long-term reconstruction, investment, trade, and assistance should include joint efforts to create sustainable employment opportunities that would provide alternatives to the need for future emigration.

We recognize the difficulties some repatriated citizens face as they reintegrate into their countries of origin and the socio-economic implications this may entail for their countries. For this reason, we will pay special attention to the matter and will explore and encourage the adoption of new and comprehensive cooperative measures to ensure that they are treated appropriately, such as the signing of prisoner transfer treaties and memoranda of understanding on deportation procedures, to facilitate the reintegration of repatriated persons, with special emphasis on their well-being and on respect for their dignity and human rights.

We reiterate that illicit trafficking in persons is an affront to human dignity and reaffirm our commitment to increase cooperation in order to combat and punish this abominable practice. We commend the adoption of new laws in several countries against illicit trafficking in persons and urge other countries to implement similar measures. Our governments will continue multilateral cooperation in the Regional Conference on Migration and in other fora in order to exchange information and coordinate actions on migration matters in our countries. We will seek to establish mechanisms to share information and mutually collaborate to stop the organized smuggling of persons.

Democracy, the Rule of Law, and Human Rights

We applaud the achievement in the region of peace with harmony, mutual cooperation, and full respect for human rights. The end of internal conflicts in Central America has opened the way to reconciliation and the establishment of just, equitable societies that provide better opportunities for our peoples.

At this time of challenge and renewal, we reaffirm our commitment to continue the process of profound transformation, meeting the needs of our pluralistic democracies, based on strict respect for human rights, the effectiveness of the rule of law, mutual respect, the strengthening of local governments, and a more equitable and participatory civil society. We will continue doing our utmost to achieve economic well-being and the comprehensive development of our countries, and to preserve social peace, progress, and stability. We will also continue observing and promoting the rights of workers, including the elimination of any exploitative forms of child labor, in accordance with our respective Constitutions and with the Conventions of the International Labor Organization, as respectively ratified by our governments. In addition, working together within the Summit of the Americas process and the Organization of American States, we will endeavor to strengthen democracy and to increase prosperity throughout the Hemisphere.

We will work together to restore and create greater opportunities for the population affected by the hurricanes and to meet their needs with alacrity in order to prevent regional security from being threatened by the establishment of criminal networks. We will continue enhancing cooperation among our countries in the campaign against drug trafficking and organized crime.

We reaffirm our determination to bolster mutual legal assistance and information sharing arrangements that will deny safe haven to criminals. We support the modernization of extradition treaties and their vigorous application, within the legal framework of each country, to prevent impunity and to ensure that criminals are severely punished, in accordance with the severity of the crime committed. We will continue to modernize our laws against drug trafficking and money laundering and jointly seek opportunities to assist one another, through education, training, and technical support to prevent drug abuse. For these purposes, we are intensifying our efforts to execute the plan of action developed from the San Jose Summit.

Sustainable Development

The economic reconstruction of Central America and the Dominican Republic must address basic priorities such as reducing poverty, ensuring human development, and satisfying basic human needs with a sustainable management of natural resources. The region's sustainable development depends on overcoming obstacles such as imbalances in patterns of production, consumption, and human settlement; accelerated population growth; and high levels of poverty.

We have before us an unprecedented opportunity to rebuild the region and create jobs through domestic and foreign investment. We also have the opportunity of investing wisely, using sustainably our natural resources to ensure the well-being of present and future generations.

We recognize that global climate change has the potential to cause more frequent and severe natural disasters and thus recognize

the need for all Parties to meet their responsibilities under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Industrialized countries should reduce their emissions and developing countries should participate meaningfully in global efforts to address climate change.

We underscore the continuing leadership of Central America in advancing implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and in the evolution of the Clean Development Mechanism for implementation of climate-friendly projects, including clean energy development and the enhancement of carbon sinks. Building on the commitment of the San Jose Declaration, we recognize the importance of the actions that are being developed in Central America with the participation of our private sectors, especially those that will permit the concession of credits and other initiatives that will mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

Recognizing the impact of climatic disturbances in the region, we agree that key components in the mitigation of disasters and in sustainable development include improved management of watersheds, reforestation, preservation of coastal wetlands, and efforts to prevent soil erosion through improved farming practices. It is, therefore, important to strengthen mechanisms of cooperation in the areas of natural disaster prevention and mitigation through education, training, institutional strengthening, and the transfer of technology.

We, the Presidents of Costa Rica, El Salvador, the United States of America, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, and the Prime Minister of Belize, express our sincere gratitude for the hospitality shown to us by the people and Government of Guatemala during our sojourn in this historic city.

NOTE: The joint statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary but was not issued as a White House press release. An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement.

Statement on Selection of the Director of the National Institutes of Health Vaccine Research Center

March 11, 1999

I am very pleased to join Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, National Institutes of Health Director Harold Varmus, and my AIDS policy office director, Sandra Thurman, in welcoming Dr. Gary Nabel as the first Director of the new Vaccine Research Center at the NIH. Dr. Nabel's long and distinguished career as a research scientist will be an incredible asset in our efforts to find preventative vaccines.

The first order of business for Dr. Nabel will be the effort to develop a vaccine for HIV. This is a top priority of our AIDS research efforts. Here in the United States, over 40,000 people are newly infected with HIV every year. Across the world, the rate is nearly 6 million people per year. These are lives in jeopardy. Though we have made remarkable progress in treating HIV and AIDS, there is still no cure. So our best hope of bringing an end to the AIDS pandemic is to find a safe and effective vaccine.

I have issued a challenge to the scientific community to find an AIDS vaccine within the decade. We are making important strides towards that critical goal and the leadership of Dr. Nabel will help us progress even more. Dr. Varmus and his team of expert researchers at the NIH, working in collaboration with scientists from across the globe, have produced remarkable results in reducing AIDS mortality here and in many other developed nations. Their improved understanding of how HIV works will be invaluable in the effort to find a vaccine to prevent infection in the first place.

The human tragedy of AIDS throughout the world must move all of us to action. The search for a vaccine for HIV must continue to be a global priority because millions of precious lives hang in the balance.

**Statement on the Kennedy-Murray
Amendment to Proposed Education
Flexibility Partnership Legislation**

March 11, 1999

I have long supported the ed-flex concept, and I was pleased when the congressional leadership decided to take up this bill as one of its first matters of business. Today, however, the Senate used this bill to undermine one of our most important educational achievements—an initiative to hire 100,000 well-prepared teachers to reduce class size in the early grades to a national average of 18. The Senate not only voted down an amendment to ensure long-term funding for this initiative but passed an amendment that would allow local school districts to completely opt out of class size reduction. I will work hard for the elimination of this amendment in conference. We should be working together to make continued progress on obvious national needs such as reducing class size—not attempting to tear down the bipartisan work we did last year to address this problem.

**Statement on House Action To
Support Use of United States
Armed Forces in Kosovo**

March 11, 1999

I am pleased with the House vote which demonstrates the broad, bipartisan support for our efforts to bring peace to Kosovo. This vote sends a clear message to both parties that it is time now to sign an agreement that stops the fighting in Kosovo and creates real self-government for the Kosovar people. The vote confirms the strong commitment of the United States to continue our efforts to provide the leadership necessary to bring about a peaceful resolution to this conflict.

**Proclamation 7173—National Older
Workers Employment Week, 1999**

March 11, 1999

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

One of our Nation's most valuable but least appreciated assets is its workers aged 55 and older. Older Americans bring to the workplace sound judgment, broad knowledge and experience, proven problem-solving abilities, and a strong work ethic. Despite their often impressive qualifications, however, older men and women who attempt to change jobs or seek new careers frequently encounter difficulties. Some employers mistakenly fear that older workers lack the skills and flexibility to learn new technologies and procedures; others think that they no longer have the energy and motivation to compete in today's fast-paced and stressful work environment; still others are unwilling to pay older workers the salaries they deserve and prefer instead to hire younger, less experienced employees at lower rates. Such employers are short-sighted.

Americans are living longer, healthier, more active lives. In the next century, as our economy continues to expand and the demand for skilled workers continues to grow, older citizens will become an increasingly vital resource. If our Nation is to thrive in the 21st century, we must encourage businesses to recognize the rich potential of older workers, to make the most of their knowledge, skills, and experience, and to retain qualified older employees in the workforce.

We must also remain vigilant in protecting the rights and well-being of older Americans. Laws such as the Age Discrimination Act, the Older Americans Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act protect older workers from age bias and discrimination and help assure their fair treatment in the workplace. In addition, the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services, through such efforts as the Senior

Community Service Employment Program and the programs of the Administration on Aging, assist older workers who give their time and energy to contribute to our Nation's economy.

As we observe this special week, let us remember with appreciation the many invaluable contributions older workers make to our country's progress and prosperity, and let us resolve to give older Americans an equal opportunity to participate in the workplace.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 14 through March 20, 1999, as National Older Workers Employment Week. I urge employers across the Nation to recognize the energy and ability of older workers, and I encourage public officials responsible for job placement, training, and related services to intensify their efforts throughout the year to help older workers find suitable jobs and training.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:55 a.m., March 12, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 15.

Remarks on Arrival in Hope, Arkansas

March 12, 1999

I must say, I did not expect to see you here when I heard it was cold and rainy, and I am very grateful to you for coming. I want to thank all the Federal and State and local officials who came out to say hello to me there at the airport.

I'm delighted to be here. I want to just get out and shake hands with all of you and say again how very much I appreciate you coming out. I hope none of the kids get sick standing in this rain, and I hope it's some-

thing that when you dry off will always be a good memory for you.

I'd like to say just briefly to all the children that are here, you know, I'm coming home because we're going to dedicate the house that I lived in for the first 4 years of my life. And a lot of what I learned that was good that I took with me for the rest of my life I learned back then. And I want every one of you to believe that people from Rosston and Chidester and all the other small places around here—doesn't matter where you came from in life, it matters what you do with your life.

So make the most of your schools and have a wonderful time. And again, you'll never know how much I appreciate you being here. I was stunned when I saw the crowd out here, and I knew what the weather was. I always say that the people here stuck with me through rain or shine, and now it is literally true.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. on the tarmac at Hope Municipal Airport.

Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the Clinton Birthplace in Hope

March 12, 1999

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. My friend Tilmon Ross, thank you for the prayer. And Joe, thank you for the introduction.

I have to say that I'm here with mixed feelings. This is the coldest March the 12th in the last 100 years in Hope, Arkansas. [*Laughter*] You have totally destroyed the case I have been making for global warming for the last 5 years. [*Laughter*]

You know, we were out at the airport and the Congressman, the State officials, the judge, the country officials, the city board, everybody came out there, and it was worse there than it is here, believe it or not. It was raining a whole lot harder; the wind was blowing. And there must have been 600 people out there—all those school kids—I'm sure I made a lot of money for the hospitals in the area. [*Laughter*] There will be people

being treated for flu for 3 or 4 weeks after this.

But I was very moved. And in a funny way, the rain makes this day more poignant for me. I'd like to thank the young people who sang from the Hope and Yerger Choirs. I want to thank my good friends who are here from the State Legislature, and Jimmie Lou Fisher, Mark Pryor, and Gus Wingfield and Charlie Daniels, our State officials who came. I don't know if Congressman Dickey is still here—he was at the airport—I thank him. I thank all the people who had anything to do with this, the people on the foundation and those who gave their money and time, those who gave memorabilia and memories.

I'd like to thank all the members of my family who are here. I'd like to say a special word of appreciation because my brother and sister-in-law and my little nephew came all the way from California to be with us today, and they're over there. And I'm glad they're here.

I would like to thank all the people from Arkansas who came down here and who have been a part of my administration, but I have to single out my good friend Mack McLarty. He and Donna Kay came down and, as all of you know, he's been an integral part of every good thing that's happened since I've been President. And I want to thank him and thank them for coming down with me today.

And I'd like to thank—a lot of people from Arkansas came, but I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Bob Nash, because I'm going to Texarkana when I leave here and he's from there. Thank you, Bob. He also has the worst job in the White House, because he supervises my appointments, which means when I appoint somebody I write them a letter and they're happy; and when I disappoint them, which is about a 10:1 ratio, Bob has to tell them. *[Laughter]*

I want to thank Beckie Moore and Joe Purvis and my longtime friend Rose Crane for all the work they've done and along with the foundation board. The three of them just gave me a tour of the house. I saw the old pictures and the toys and everything, and I'm just stunned by the work that has been done.

There are so many more people I'd like to thank—Brent Thompson, the architect; Stan Jackson—all of you who rescued this

old place. Last time I was here before you started working on it was in 1990, and I thought when I walked through the front door it would come down around my ears. And I cannot tell you how moved I am by this.

It's cold and it's windy and it's rainy and I won't keep you long, but I would like to say a few things that I worked on last night and this morning. A poet once wrote, "The accent of one's birthplace lingers in the mind and in the heart, as it does in one's speech." Well, so many accents of Hope linger in my mind and my heart.

We're not far from the site of the old sawmill where my grandfather worked as a night watchman and where, as a little boy, I used to go and spend the night with him, climbing the sawdust pile and sleep in the back seat of his car. We're just minutes—I just drove by it—from the place on which his little grocery store stood, where I used to look up at the countertop and wish I could reach the jar of Jackson's cookies.

I still remember that my grandfather was the first person who taught me by his example to treat all people, without regard to their race, the same. And also, without regard to their income, because he gave food to people without regard to whether they had a dime in their pockets.

We're not far from Miss Mary Purkins' kindergarten where I went with my friends Mack McLarty, Joe Purvis, Vince Foster, George Wright, and maybe some more people who are here today, and where I broke my leg in the first of many major mistakes I was to make in my life, jumping rope in my cowboy boots. *[Laughter]*

And we're not far from Rose Hill Cemetery, where my beloved mother, my grandparents, and my father, whom I knew only in my dreams and my mother's memory, lie now in eternal rest.

In this house, I learned to walk and talk; I learned to pray; I learned to read; I learned to count from the playing cards my grandparents tacked up on the kitchen windows which are directly behind us now.

Though I was only 4 when I left this place, it still holds very, very vivid memories for me, and I just relived a lot of them walking through the house. I remember we watched

the house burn right across the street there, where the trucks are. I remember throwing a pocketknife into the ground in that backyard I shared with my friend Vince Foster. I remember hurrying down the stairs on Christmas morning and dragging my little toys across the living room floor; waiting outside on that sidewalk for my grandmother to walk home from work.

I remember watching the old telephone when it rang, always hoping that it was mother calling from New Orleans, where she went to study anesthesia after my father died. And I still miss her every day. She would love what you have done here—the fact that you preserved her mother’s rosebush and that her birthday club planted one of her bushes here. And I want to especially thank my good friends Elias and Jody Ghanem for this garden which they have made possible to be planted in her memory. Thank you, and God bless you.

In that wonderful video that my friends Harry and Linda Thomason made when I ran for President in 1992, I talked about how I used to fly all over this country, look out across the vast landscape of America, and think about how far I had come from this little woodframe house. Well, believe it or not, I still think about that no matter where I travel.

I said back then something I want to say again. In many ways, I know that all I am or ever will be came from here—a place and a time where nobody locked their doors at night, everybody showed up for a parade on Main Street, kids like me could dream of becoming part of something bigger than themselves. Of course, Hope wasn’t perfect; it was part of the segregated South, and it’s had its fair share of flaws. And as Mack and I were reminiscing this morning, it had a gossip or two. But in those long-ago days just after World War II, we were raised to believe in two great qualities that I have tried to bring back to America: a sense of personal optimism and a sense of community, of belonging, of being responsible for the welfare of others, as well as yourself.

I believed then, and I believe now, the places we come from say a lot about us. And places like this say a lot about America, Mr. Mayor. That’s why people take family trips

to towns like Lamar, Missouri, to see the birthplace of Harry Truman—it’s a small white frame house, just 20 by 28 feet—why they go to Stonewall, Texas, to see the two-story farmhouse where Lyndon Johnson was born.

We visit these places not because great events happened there, but because everyday events happened there. Not because they’re grand, but precisely because they are ordinary—the modest homes of modest people. We make them into landmarks because they remind us that America’s greatness can be found not only in its large centers of wealth and culture and power but also in its small towns, where children learn from their families and neighbors the rhythms and rituals of daily life. They learn about home and work, about love and loss, about success and failure, about endurance, and the power and dignity of their dreams.

I want to close with a story. Back when I was Governor, whenever I would come to Hope, I’d always drop by and visit with my Uncle Buddy and Aunt Ollie. They helped to raise me, and I loved them a lot. After they had been married well over 50 years, my aunt developed Alzheimer’s, and she had to be moved to that nursing facility that’s connected to the hospital.

One night, I stopped by to see my Uncle Buddy when he was living alone and going to see his wife, when most of the time she didn’t really know who he was anymore. Our talk was like so many we had over the years; it was full of his country wisdom and full of funny jokes, and he was laughing and making me laugh. But when I got up to go, for the first and only time in our long, long relationship, he grabbed my arm, and I turned around and I saw tears in his eyes. And I said to my uncle, “This is really hard, isn’t it?” And he said these words I will remember till the day I die. He said, “Yeah, it is. But I signed on for the whole load, and most of it’s been pretty good.”

Now, in this town, from my family and friends, that’s what I learned—to sign on for the whole load. Though far from perfect, I have tried to do just that for my family and friends, for our beloved State and Nation. If I had not learned that lesson here 50 years ago, we wouldn’t be here today.

And so to my family and friends I say, thank you for love and loyalty and the lessons of a lifetime; thank you for being there for me through this whole wonderful ride. To these young people I say, dream your dreams and know that you can best fulfill them if your neighbors get to live their dreams, too.

Because of these gifts I can say with even greater conviction what I said to America back in 1992, I still believe in a place called Hope.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. in front of his birthplace home. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Dennis Ramsey of Hope; Hempstead County Judge Wallace Martin; Joe Purvis, chairman, and Beckie Moore, executive director, Clinton Birthplace Foundation; State Treasurer Jimmie Lou Fisher; State Attorney General Mark L. Pryor; State Auditor Gus Wingfield; Commissioner of State Lands Charlie Daniels; Roger Clinton and his wife, Molly, and their son, Tyler; former Special Envoy to the Americas Thomas F. (Mack) McLarty and his wife, Donna; and architects Brent Thompson and Stan Jackson.

Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick's Day, 1999

March 12, 1999

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Saint Patrick's Day. Each year on this special day dedicated to Ireland's patron saint, I am proud to join millions of Americans in remembering our Irish heritage. We remember with pride our ancestors who stood on Ireland's western shores, yearning for the promise of America. Fleeing famine and injustice, they longed for a new world of opportunities. Millions of these courageous men and women set sail from Ireland to seek the promise of America. They gave to their new homeland their strength and spirit, sinew and determination, eloquence and wit. In return, America offered them the opportunity for a better life, the chance to rise above poverty and discrimination, and a future where they could live out their dreams.

The Irish who came to America endured many hardships, but they prospered and helped to build our country with innumerable physical and intellectual contributions. Irish Americans seized the opportunity of

freedom that America promised. They gave us Presidents and patriots, judges and journalists, social reformers, peacekeepers, artists, labor leaders, and educators. From their grand literary tradition to their deep religious faith, Irish Americans and their descendants have enriched every facet of American history. But this celebration is a time to look to the future as well as to the past. Today as we pay tribute to Saint Patrick and his example of faith and determination, we rejoice that the faith and determination of the Irish people have brought about the promise of peace in Northern Ireland and the resolve to approach differences not with weapons, but with words. Americans are a vital part of the process in Northern Ireland by virtue of our shared heritage and shared goal of lasting peace and a better future for all God's children. By lending our hearts, minds, and prayers to the work of peace, we can best fulfill our obligation to the generations of Irish men and women who have given so much to our Nation's life and history.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

Bill Clinton

NOTE: A original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

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.

March 8

In the morning, the President traveled to Managua, Nicaragua, and later, he traveled to Posoltega, Nicaragua.

In the afternoon, the President toured the area damaged by mudslides and participated in a plaque dedication ceremony in memory of the victims.

Later, the President traveled to San Salvador, El Salvador.

March 9

In the morning, the President traveled to Comayagua, Honduras.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where he was briefed by U.S. military personnel on the construction of the Juan Molina Bridge. Later, he returned to San Salvador.

March 10

In the morning, the President met with President Armando Calderon Sol of El Salvador in the Presidential Office at Casa Presidencial.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Guatemala City, Guatemala, and in the evening, he traveled to Antigua, Guatemala.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ann Lewis as Counselor to the President and Loretta Ucelli as Assistant to the President and Communications Director.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by near record snow on March 3-6.

The White House announced that the President sent the Congress a request for \$15 million in FY 1999 supplemental funding for the Department of the Interior.

March 11

In the morning, the President met with Central American leaders in Casa Santo Domingo.

In the afternoon, the President returned to Guatemala City, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint Amanda Aguirre, Jeffrey Brandon, Carlos Rene Gonzales, Rosemarie Marshall Johnson, Laurance N. Nickey, and Paul Villas as members of the U.S. section of the United States-Mexico Border Health Commission.

March 12

In the morning, the President traveled to Hope, AR, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Texarkana, TX.

In the evening, the President attended a dinner for Representative Max Sandlin at the A-Bar Ranch.

The President announced the appointment of Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, William E.

Kennard, and G. Mario Moreno to serve as members of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

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

Submitted March 8

Julio M. Fuentes,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Third Circuit, vice Robert E. Cowen, retired.

Robert A. Katzmman,
of New York, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit, vice Jon O. Newman, retired.

M. James Lorenz,
of California, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of California, vice Rudi M. Brewster, retired.

W. Allen Pepper, Jr.,
of Mississippi, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Mississippi, vice L.T. Senter, Jr., retired.

Karen E. Schreier,
of South Dakota, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of South Dakota, vice Richard H. Battey, retired.

**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 March 6

Statement by the Press Secretary: Murder of Americans by Colombian Rebels

Released March 8

Fact sheet: U.S. Immediate Relief Efforts Already Undertaken in Response to Hurricane Mitch

Transcript of remarks by Peace Corps Director Mark Gearan on Peace Corps activities in Central America

Released March 9

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Army Secretary Louis Caldera and Commander in Chief of U.S. Southern Command Charles Wilhelm on the U.S. military efforts in response to Hurricane Mitch

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore regarding the Kennedy-Murray ed-flex amendment

Statement by the Press Secretary: Medal of Freedom for George Mitchell

Fact sheet: President Clinton Outlines Central America Reconstruction Assistance

Released March 10

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger, Acting Assistant Secretary of State Peter Romero, Immigration and Naturalization Service Commissioner Doris Meissner, and Press Secretary Joe Lockhart on the President's visit to Guatemala

Statement by the Press Secretary on submission of a supplemental appropriation for the Department of the Interior

Announcement of nomination for U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Texas

Announcement of nomination for U.S. attorney for the Southern District of California

Released March 11

Fact sheet: President Clinton Highlights U.S. Support for Regional Cooperation at Antigua Summit

**Acts Approved
by the President**

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