

**Remarks at the Dedication  
Ceremony for the Dale and Betty  
Bumpers Vaccine Research Center  
in Bethesda, Maryland**

*June 9, 1999*

Thank you very much, Senator Harkin, for your friendship, your leadership, and for your successful efforts to get this facility named for Dale and Betty Bumpers. You know, ever since the Republicans won a majority in the House and the Senate in 1994, it's been impossible to get anything named for a Democrat. [*Laughter*] We named more buildings than ever before in the history of the country, at a breathtaking rate, and I just wanted to come here to make sure this was actually going to happen today. [*Laughter*] And I really thank you, Tom Harkin, for your persistence.

Thank you, Dr. Varmus, Dr. Satcher. Secretary Shalala, thank you for your remarks and what you said. I want to thank all the leaders of the NIH who are here, and others involved in all the various endeavors, especially Sandy Thurman, who leads our efforts on AIDS. I want to say a special word of appreciation to the families of Dale and Betty Bumpers who are here, including two of their three children.

I want to express the regrets of the First Lady and the Vice President for not being able to be here today. And in particular, because of our long friendship and common interest, I know that Hillary wanted to come.

Forty-four years ago Edward R. Murrow described the day Dr. Salk announced his discovery of a polio vaccine with these words, "The Sun was warm, the Earth coming alive. There was hope and promise in the air. The occasion called for banners in the breeze and trumpets in the distance."

Indeed, that discovery did herald the dawn of a golden age of development of vaccines and prevention of disease. In the 50 years since, we have benefited from the discovery of vaccines against some 20 infectious diseases; tens of millions of lives have been saved; tens of millions of children have been spared the agony and crippling pain of polio, mumps, rubella, measles, most recently, meningitis.

Twenty years ago we eradicated smallpox, the disease that for thousands of years struck down men, women, and children all around the world and destroyed entire civilizations. We have eliminated polio from our own hemisphere and, as you've already heard, we'll eliminate it from the Earth early in the new millennium.

The triumph of vaccines over infectious disease is one of the great achievements of a remarkable 20th century. And at century's end, the men and women who labor in labs to unlock the mysteries of human biology and disease, especially those here at the National Institutes of Health, have made this one of America's great citadels of hope, not only for our people but for people throughout the world.

I think it is important to note, though, that we are here today because the triumph of immunization over disease is also the triumph not just of scientists but of countless citizens across America, public health specialists, advocates, volunteers, leaders in Government, who work together to support new research and to bring lifesaving vaccines to all people. It is the triumph of the couple we honor today, my friends of many, many years, Dale and Betty Bumpers.

More than 25 years ago, Betty Bumpers was the first person to open my eyes to the fact that though many vaccines had been discovered, approved, and marketed, too few children in our State, then, and across America, were being immunized. As the First Lady of our State, she visited every community and every school, talking to parents and teachers about the necessity of immunizing their children. In fact, Betty became so identified with the immunization cause that people used to joke that every time she walked into a school, the kids would start to cry. [*Laughter*] They knew that when she came in, somebody was going to have to get a shot.

Her work inspired President Carter to launch a nationwide campaign to immunize all children by the time they entered school. Today, I am still amazed by her tirelessness in traveling across the country with Rosalynn Carter to ensure that every child is immunized by the age of 2. I'd also like to say something that many of you know: She is here today, just 2 days after back surgery,

which is an ultimate testament to her grit and determination.

She's made sort of a second career, Betty has, out of deflating egos, especially her husband's and mine. [Laughter] And I told her today, she just hit me one more time. I got a huge applause in the State of the Union Address a couple of years ago, railing against these HMO's and hospitals that kicked people out after drive-by surgery. And she's exhibit A for drive-by surgery. [Laughter] I mean, here she is; she looks great. I'm going to have to at least modify my position on that issue, I guess.

When Betty was working at the grassroots, Dale was working in Government. Over four terms and 24 years, representing our home State in the United States Senate, he became the resident expert and the greatest champion for immunization in that body. Through dark times, when it looked as if Congress and the White House might fail to do their part to make vaccines more widely available, his passionate and persuasive arguments would stir consciences and, on occasion, change votes.

After the measles epidemic of the late eighties and early nineties, Dale Bumpers rallied his colleagues. He took to the Senate floor to lament 27,000 cases of measles, cases he called, and I quote, "totally shameful and avoidable." He challenged his colleagues to rise to their responsibility to protect our children. Our children have been lucky to have his heart and his voice at their service.

For a long, long time, Hillary and I have been inspired by Dale and Betty's personal crusade. In 1993 I took office committed to renewing America and preparing our country for a new century. A key to the strategy we embraced was investing in our people, investing in technology, and dramatically increasing our efforts in research and development in areas that were pivotal opportunities for the future of Americans' quality of life. We made funding basic science research that could lead to new vaccines one of our top priorities. We launched a new initiative to improve immunization services, to make existing vaccines safer and more affordable, and to boost immunization rates across America.

And I was profoundly proud when, two summers ago, Hillary and I were able to in-

vite Dale and Betty to the White House, where we announced that finally America had reached its highest immunization rate ever and more than 90 percent of all 2-year-olds in our country have received their most critical doses of recommended vaccines, thanks in no small measure to the years and years and years of effort that they have spear-headed.

Therefore, it is entirely fitting that today we dedicate this state-of-the-art facility to them, two great Americans, two wonderful human beings. Today we also lay a new cornerstone in our ongoing efforts against HIV and AIDS. With biotechnology accelerating the development of new vaccines and making existing ones even safer, it is a hopeful moment for vaccine research in America, including the challenge of finding a vaccine against AIDS.

Today, one out of every 100 people in the world is living with HIV and AIDS. With the recent news that AIDS has surpassed tuberculosis and malaria to become the leading infectious killer in the world, claiming 2½ million lives in 1998 alone, and growing, I might add, at truly breathtaking rates in Africa and India, we cannot afford to waste a second in our fight against it.

Over the past 6 years, we have worked hard to conquer this disease. We have established the Office of National AIDS Policy to lead an effort full-time, expanded our investment in AIDS research to a record \$1.8 billion, accelerated the approval of new drugs. Two years ago, as Secretary Shalala said, I challenged America to come together to develop a vaccine for AIDS within 10 years. Our balanced budget will target \$200 million toward this goal. And until an AIDS vaccine is tested and approved, it will remain the primary mission of the Dale and Betty Bumpers Vaccine Research Center.

I am confident that this is a place where miracles will happen, miracles born of hard work, ceaseless effort, visionary dreams. I look forward to the day when I can come back here, to a grand facility with, in Murrow's words, "banners blowing in the breeze, and trumpets in the distance," heralding another great vaccine achievement for mankind, the end of AIDS.

When that day comes, it will be due in large part to the people who will be here at the Bumpers Center, and to the two truly wonderful people for whom the center is named.

Thank you, for your work and for letting me be a part of today's ceremony. And God bless you, Dale and Betty.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. at the National Institute of Health. In his remarks, he referred to Harold E. Varmus, Director, National Institute of Health; Surgeon General David Satcher; and Director of National AIDS Policy Sandra Thurman.

### **Statement on the Military Technical Agreement on Kosovo**

*June 9, 1999*

The agreement reached today by NATO and Serbian military officials is another important step toward achieving our objectives in Kosovo. It lays out the details to meet the essential conditions for peace: the rapid, orderly withdrawal of all Serb forces from Kosovo and the deployment of an international security force, with NATO at its core, which means a unified NATO chain of command, so that Kosovars can return home safely. We and our Allies will watch carefully to see whether the Serb forces are peacefully leaving Kosovo in accordance with the agreed timetable. We have made clear to the leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army that we expect them not to hinder the Serb withdrawal.

NOTE: The statement referred to the Military Technical Agreement Between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia.

### **Remarks on the Military Technical Agreement on Kosovo and an Exchange With Reporters**

*June 10, 1999*

**The President.** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I have just spoken with NATO Secretary General Solana, who, as you know,

has determined that the Serb forces have begun their withdrawal from Kosovo, an essential step toward meeting NATO's conditions and restoring peace.

Accordingly, NATO has suspended its air campaign against Serbia. An International Security Force, including American troops, is preparing to enter Kosovo. I will address the Nation this evening, but I would like to make a few points now.

We and our Allies launched our campaign in the face of Serbia's brutal, systematic effort to remove Kosovars, ethnic Albanians, from their land, dead or alive. From the beginning, we had three clear objectives: the withdrawal of Serb forces, the deployment of an international security force with NATO at the core, the return of the Kosovars to their home to live in security and self-government. Serbia now has accepted these conditions and the process of implementing them is underway.

The Kosovars have been victims of terrible atrocities. Their only hope was that the world would not turn away in the face of ethnic cleansing and killing, that the world would take a stand. We did, for 78 days. Because we did, the Kosovars will go home.

Our policy was designed to achieve our objectives in Kosovo and to do so in a way that advanced other important interests:

First, to prevent the violence from spreading to other nations in southeastern Europe and undermining the progress they have made toward deeper democracy, greater ethnic and religious tolerance, and broader prosperity. They felt the greatest strain, but they never wavered. And I thank them for that.

Second, to achieve our aims as an alliance, 19 democratic nations, with 780 million people, working together in the first sustained military operation in NATO's history, the Alliance did stay together. It is now stronger and more united than ever. And I thank my fellow leaders in the Alliance for their fidelity and their fortitude.

Third, to act in a manner that would strengthen, not weaken, our vital relations with a democratic Russia. Russia played an important role in achieving this peace, and we hope that, as in Bosnia, it will join us in securing the peace.

There are so many people to thank: first, Secretary General Solana and General Clark, who were steadfast and effective, our NATO Allies—I have spoken already with Prime Minister Blair and have calls out to many others. I hope to speak at least to President Chirac, Chancellor Schroeder, Prime Minister D'Alema, Prime Minister Chretien, Mr. Kok, Mr. Aznar, and many others. They were all—19 held together so well.

I want to thank President Ahtisaari and Mr. Chernomyrdin for their diplomatic mission, which played a critical role in this. I want to thank President Yeltsin for his strong instructions to his team to resolve these matters so that we can go forward.

I want to thank our allies in Congress in both Houses and both parties for believing in America's mission in Kosovo. I want to thank our team very much, those who are not here: the Vice President, who played a large role in putting together the Chernomyrdin-Ahtisaari team; Secretary Albright, whose passionate commitment to this cause is well-known; and Deputy Secretary Talbott, who was pivotal in the diplomatic efforts. I want to thank Secretary Cohen and General Shelton, who persevered with great confidence and calmness amidst criticisms and the early rough-going to achieve the victory that they have achieved.

And I want to say a special word of thanks to Mr. Berger, who has barely slept for the last 3 months and who has done a superb job. He and Mr. Podesta and Mr. Steinberg, our entire national security team has done a very, very good job.

And finally, let me say I am enormously proud of our men and women in uniform, and those of our Allies, who have performed with tremendous skill and courage, striking at Serbia's military machine and aiding the refugees. I am profoundly grateful for what they have done. I am very grateful that the loss of life was limited to the tragedies in the two training incidents and that we only lost two planes in the combat operation.

And I am grateful to the American citizens, who felt enormous compassion for the suffering of the people in Kosovo and understood the importance of standing up to the war crimes involved in ethnic cleansing and killing, and the kind of ethnic and religious big-

otry and violence we have seen against innocent civilians.

Now we are waiting for the United Nations to pass a resolution that the G-8 nations have embraced. We expect the Security Council to adopt it shortly.

We must be mindful that even though we now have a chance to replace violence with peace, ethnic and religious hatred with a democratic future, a bloody century in Europe with a Europe undivided, democratic, and at peace, there is still quite a lot to be done:

First, we have to make sure that the Serbs keep their commitments. That means the forces must rapidly and peacefully leave Kosovo under the agreed timetable, 11 days from yesterday. NATO's air campaign is suspended. It is not formally terminated, and Secretary General Solana retains the authority to resume strikes if Serbia violates its commitments.

Second, we face challenges and risks in bringing home the refugees and restoring stability. With determination and cooperation, an International Security Force of roughly 50,000 troops, including 7,000 Americans, can give the people of Kosovo the confidence to return, to lay down their arms, to heal their wounds, to live in peace. But there are operational difficulties with this, as well, which you will see over the next few days as we come to grips with them.

Finally, we face the broader challenge of preventing future crises by promoting democracy and prosperity in this region which has been so troubled. With our Allies and partners, we must intensify these efforts. In the past 4 months, we have seen some of the worst inhumanity in our lifetime, but we've also seen the bravery of our troops, the resolve of our democracy, the decency of our people, and the courage and determination of the people of Kosovo. We now have a moment of hope, thanks to all those qualities. And we have to finish the job and build the peace.

Thank you.

#### **KFOR Timetable**

**Q.** Mr. President, sir, is there anything you can tell the American people as to how long