

we'll be able to resume our talks, and if we resume them, obviously, I hope we'll be able to bring them to a successful conclusion.

### **Religious Persecution in China**

**Q.** Sir, have you seen the new State Department report on religious persecution out today, and do you plan on talking about China's actions when you meet—

**The President.** On what?

**Q.** —the State Department report on religious persecution. Have you seen that today, and do you plan on talking about China's actions, the allegations, when you see President Jiang on the weekend?

**The President.** I have not seen it, but I will see it, and if I think it's appropriate, I'll certainly bring it up. I brought it up before, and as you remember, I actually sent a delegation of religious leaders to China to tour around the country and to talk to religious leaders in China and also talk to high representatives of the Chinese Government about that. That's a big issue for the United States. We have legislation on it, and it's a very large issue for me, personally.

I've been working on that issue ever since I got here and in many countries, so I look forward to having a chance to review the contents of the report and to taking appropriate action. Thank you.

### **Attorney General and FBI Director**

**Q.** There's a lot of pressure on Reno to resign. Do you think Freeh should resign?

**The President.** I think Janet—first of all, in terms of the merits of this and the FBI, I don't have anything to add to what I said last week. I think that she did the right thing in asking an outside person to review it. I think that Mr. Freeh did the right thing in supporting that. I think—I've known Senator Danforth for—well, I met him when President Carter was in office, sometime during that period, so somewhere around 20 years. And I have always thought him an honorable man and an intelligent and straightforward man.

The only thing that I would ask is that he conduct a thorough and honest inquiry and do it as promptly as he can so that we can get the facts, take appropriate action, and go forward. But based on what I know of him

and what I have observed, I think that's a good move by the Attorney General, and I certainly don't think there's any reason for her to resign.

Thank you.

### **Clemency for Members of the FALN**

**Q.** Mr. President, can you say that New York senatorial politics played no role in the Puerto Rican decision?

**The President.** Absolutely. Absolutely. I got the memo from Mr. Ruff. I didn't know it was coming; it came with all the other papers I get every day and every week, and I dealt with it the way I deal with everything.

**Q.** The First Lady says you didn't tell her about your deadline when she—

**The President.** That's also true.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:26 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; President Jiang Zemin of China; Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia; U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan; former President Jimmy Carter; Archbishop Desmond Tutu; Prime Minister Antonio Guterres of Portugal; Prime Minister John Howard of Australia; Prime Minister Jennifer (Jenny) Shipley of New Zealand; former Senator John C. Danforth, recently appointed Special Counsel to investigate the Justice Department's role in the 1993 siege in Waco, TX; and former Counsel to the President Charles F.C. Ruff. A reporter referred to FALN, the Armed Forces of National Liberation.

### **Statement on the Recommendations of the Patten Commission**

*September 9, 1999*

I welcome the unanimous recommendations of the Independent Commission on Policing (the Patten Commission), which represent an important outcome of the Good Friday agreement. While it is up to the people of Northern Ireland to address the specific proposals, I strongly endorse the report's guiding objective—to take politics out of policing in Northern Ireland. The benchmarks identified—effectiveness, efficiency, impartiality, accountability, representativeness, and respect for human rights—are the guideposts for good policing everywhere.

The Commission's recommendations focus on assuring a professional police service in Northern Ireland that meets the highest possible standards and that enjoys the support of the community as a whole. The Commission's approach draws on best practices from other police forces, including those in the United States. I am pleased that two distinguished Americans served on the Patten Commission, and I commend Chris Patten and all the members of the Commission for their efforts.

### **Statement on the Convention Concerning Safety and Health in Mines**

*September 9, 1999*

Today I am sending to the United States Senate for advice and consent to ratification International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention Number 176, the "Convention Concerning Safety and Health in Mines." I have previously submitted to the Senate ILO conventions on employment discrimination (Convention Number 111) and the worst forms of child labor (Convention Number 182). Taken together, these steps demonstrate the importance I place on the ILO's work and my commitment to work together with labor and business interests through the ILO to raise labor standards around the world.

Mining has long been recognized as one of the most dangerous jobs in the world. Men, women—and sometimes even children—are exposed to hazards that can claim their lives or destroy their health. Mining employs more than 30 million people worldwide. Although that figure accounts for only one percent of the world's entire work force, mining is responsible for about 8 percent of fatal accidents at work, or around 15,000 per year. Despite the considerable advances in safety and health throughout this century, mining remains one of the most hazardous occupations worldwide.

In the United States, miners are protected by a strong and effective Federal statute, enforced by the Mine Safety and Health Administration in the Department of Labor. A tripartite panel of American Government,

labor, and business representatives has reviewed the Convention and has concluded that the United States can ratify Convention 176 without changing our laws or regulations. But in other countries, miners may lack the legal protections they need and deserve. I urge the Senate to give its advice and consent to ratification of this Convention, to help ensure safety and healthful working conditions for miners the world over.

As an institution, the International Labor Organization plays a vital role in our efforts to put a human face on the global economy. My administration, led by Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman and joined by our partners in labor and business, will continue to support the efforts of the ILO.

I look forward to working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate leadership to advance Convention Number 176, and the other ILO conventions, toward ratification.

### **Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention Concerning Safety and Health in Mines**

*September 9, 1999*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification of the Convention (No. 176) Concerning Safety and Health in Mines, adopted by the International Labor Conference at its 82nd Session in Geneva on June 22, 1995, I transmit herewith a certified copy of that Convention.

The report of the Department of State, with a letter from the Secretary of Labor, concerning the Convention is enclosed.

As explained more fully in the enclosed letter from the Secretary of Labor, current United States law and practice fully satisfies the requirements of Convention No. 176. Ratification of this Convention, therefore, would not require the United States to alter in any way its law or practice in this field.

Ratification of additional ILO conventions will enhance the ability of the United States to take other governments to task for failing to comply with the ILO instruments they have ratified. I recommend that the Senate