

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Contents

Addresses and Remarks

See also Bill Vetoes; Meetings With Foreign Leaders
Adoption bonus awards—1801
Congressional Black Caucus Foundation dinner—1772
Democratic Business Council luncheon—1811
Democratic National Committee, fall meeting—1804
Hay-Adams Hotel, departure for—1790
Hurricane Floyd—1779
Lane Kirkland, memorial service—1796
Middle East peace process—1798
National Democratic Institute dinner—1800
New York City
Arrival—1779
United Nations
General Assembly—1779
Luncheon hosted by Secretary-General Annan—1784
North Carolina, community in Tarboro—1776
Radio address—1771
Receptions
Gore 2000—1791, 1792
Regina Montoya Coggins—1788
Russia, radio remarks on terrorist attacks—1772
Tobacco companies, U.S. lawsuit—1790

Bill Signings

Organ Donor Leave Act, statement—1817

Bill Vetoes

“Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999”
Message—1795
Remarks—1793

Communications to Congress

See also Bill Vetoes
Denmark-U.S. tax convention with documentation, message transmitting—1787
Germany-U.S. tax convention, message transmitting protocol—1787
Iran, message transmitting report on national emergency—1799
Italy-U.S. tax convention with documentation, message transmitting—1788
National Money Laundering Strategy for 1999, message transmitting—1799
UNITA, message on continuation of the national emergency—1786

Communications to Federal Agencies

Drawdown of commodities and services for the U.N. Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, memorandum—1785
Military assistance for states participating in the Multinational Force for East Timor, memorandum—1785
U.S. contributions to the International Fund for Ireland, memorandum—1791
Waiver of Sanctions on India and Pakistan, memorandum—1785

(Continued on the inside of the back cover.)

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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Contents—Continued

Interviews With the News Media

- Exchanges with reporters
- Oval Office—1798
- West Portico—1790

Meetings With Foreign Leaders

- Palestinian Authority, Chairman Arafat—1798

Notices

- Continuation of Emergency With Respect to UNITA—1786

Proclamations

- National Farm Safety and Health Week—1769
- National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week—1770

Statements by the President

- See also* Bill Signings
- Death of Raisa Gorbacheva—1779
- Education appropriations legislation—1799
- National Medal of the Arts and National Humanities Medal recipients—1784
- Taiwan, earthquake—1779
- Tobacco companies, U.S. lawsuit—1791

Supplementary Materials

- Acts approved by the President—1820
- Checklist of White House press releases—1820
- Digest of other White House announcements—1818
- Nominations submitted to the Senate—1819

Proclamation 7224—National Farm Safety and Health Week, 1999

September 17, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

President Franklin Roosevelt once called America's farmers and ranchers "the source from which the reservoirs of our nation's strength are constantly renewed." It was during his Administration, in the critical years of World War II, that Americans began to realize that thousands of agricultural workers and their families suffered disabling and fatal injuries each year in their work of producing food for our Nation and the world. The tragic statistics were so troubling that President Roosevelt, with the encouragement of his Secretary of Agriculture and the President of the National Safety Council, signed the initial proclamation for National Farm Safety Week in 1944.

We have achieved substantial progress in the decades since that first proclamation. Farm equipment manufacturers have engineered safety features into their machinery that have decreased the likelihood of severe injuries among operators. Chemical manufacturers have reformulated pest control products to reduce the potential for poisoning incidents. Personal protective equipment is now available to protect farm and ranch workers. And safety and health professionals have made great strides in the development and implementation of educational initiatives that raise awareness among agricultural workers of measures and equipment they can use to reduce on-the-job injuries and health risks.

But we cannot afford to become complacent. Children continue to be the most vulnerable members of farming and ranching families. Those who work with livestock and around farm machinery should be carefully supervised and should be assigned chores that are commensurate with their level of

awareness, knowledge, and ability to perform the job safely. Older Americans working in agriculture also are at risk; farmers and ranchers often work well past retirement age in a determined effort to maintain the farming heritage of their families and to continue contributing to the vocation they love. Many of these older men and women have suffered work-related hearing impairment over the years, and many also have limited mobility due to previous injuries or arthritis. Their families and coworkers should be vigilant in overseeing the activities of these older workers to help ensure their safety as they carry out their daily responsibilities.

America's farmers and ranchers are the backbone of our economy and the lifeblood of our land, and their skill, effort, and determination provide food and fiber for our country and the world. Our farming and ranching families stand for the values that have kept America strong for more than 220 years—hard work, faith and family, perseverance and patience. We all have a vital interest in their success, and we can all play an important role in ensuring their continued well-being. As we observe this year's theme of "Protecting Agriculture in the Next Century," I urge all Americans to show their appreciation for the dedication and sacrifices of our Nation's farmers and ranchers by renewing our efforts to protect their safety and health. Together, we can ensure that the time-honored traditions of American farming and ranching will flourish in the new century.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 19 through September 25, 1999, as National Farm Safety and Health Week. I call upon government agencies, businesses, and professional associations that serve our agricultural

sector to strengthen their efforts to promote safety and health programs among our Nation's farm and ranch workers. I ask agricultural workers to take advantage of the many diverse education and training programs and technical advancements that can help them avoid injury and illness. I also call upon our Nation to recognize Wednesday, September 22, 1999, as a day to focus on the risks facing young people on farms and ranches. Finally, I call upon the citizens of our Nation to reflect on the bounty we enjoy thanks to the labor and dedication of agricultural workers across our land.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, 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-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:16 a.m., September 21, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 22. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7225—National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week, 1999

September 17, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have provided a crucial avenue to educational and economic advancement for African American youth for more than 150 years. These institutions, dedicated to equality and excellence in higher education, have their roots in a segregated society; their survival in the face of limited financial resources or outside support stood as a beacon of hope for generations of African Americans.

While our society has changed in the intervening decades, the need for these institutions has not. Our Nation's HBCUs have as-

sisted African American and other students from low-income communities in achieving their educational goals and reaching their full potential, while keeping tuition costs affordable. The vast majority of African Americans with bachelor's degrees in engineering, computer science, life science, business, and mathematics have graduated from one of the 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. According to the Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics, HBCUs conferred 28 percent of all bachelor's degrees awarded to African American graduates in 1996, although enrollment at HBCUs constituted only 16 percent of all African American college students.

In addition to giving students the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in today's challenging global economy, HBCUs also offer students leadership opportunities that build self-confidence, a nurturing learning and social environment, and networks of successful alumni who serve as positive role models and mentors for graduates. Cultural programs and educational outreach to minority- and low-income areas in our Nation help preserve African American heritage and make HBCUs a source of pride and knowledge for the communities they serve.

By serving the African American community, HBCUs serve all Americans. These institutions embody many of our most deeply cherished values—equality, diversity, opportunity, and hard work. HBCUs prepare talented young men and women to succeed in every sector of our economy. And the alumni of HBCUs have contributed immeasurably to our Nation's success—as scientists, businesspeople, educators, public servants, and so much more. As education and diversity become increasingly important in the 21st century, graduates of HBCUs will continue to be at the vanguard of America's progress.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 19 through 25, 1999, as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week. I call

upon the people of the United States, including government officials, educators, and administrators, to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities honoring America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their graduates.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of September, 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-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:16 a.m., September 21, 1999]

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The President's Radio Address

September 18, 1999

Good morning. This month millions of students across America are beginning the last school semester of the 20th century. Today I want to talk about our obligation to give them the education they deserve to succeed in the new century, for more than ever, in this information age, education is the key to individual opportunity and our share of prosperity.

That's why, even though we've worked hard to cut spending to balance the budget, we've also nearly doubled our investment in education and training. Many people said we couldn't do it, but we proved them wrong.

Today, we have the longest peacetime expansion in our history. After years and years of deficits, we now have budget surpluses for years ahead. More people have a chance to realize the American dream than ever before. More children have the chance to realize their full potential than ever before. We've laid a foundation to preserve our prosperity for future generations.

Now, as the budget deadline rapidly approaches this year, we face many of the same tough choices again. And once again, I think the answer is clear: To build a strong nation

in the new century, we must continue to invest in our future. That means we must strengthen Social Security, secure and modernize Medicare, pay off the national debt in 15 years, making America debt-free for the first time since 1835. And once again, it means we must invest in education, not sacrifice it.

Months ago now, I sent Congress a responsible budget to maintain our fiscal discipline and honor our commitment to our children's education. So far, the Republicans in Congress haven't put forward a budget of their own. In fact, they're so busy trying to figure out how to pay for their irresponsible tax plan that they're in serious danger of not meeting their obligation to finish the budget by the end of the budget year. Even worse, they're preparing to pay for their own pet projects at the expense of our children's education.

We know now that the Republicans' risky tax cut would force us to slash vital funding for education by as much as 50 percent over the next 10 years. But what many people don't know is that next year alone, the Republican plan would cut the bill that funds education by nearly 20 percent.

Now, if carried out, this plan would lead to some of the worst cuts in education in our history. More than 5,000 teachers, hired as part of my class size initiative, could be laid off. Fifty thousand students could be turned away from after-school and summer school programs. More than 2 million of our poorest students in our poorest communities would have a smaller chance of success in school and in the workplaces of the future. These aren't just numbers on a balance sheet; they're vital investments in our children and our future.

In a time when education is our top priority, Republicans in Congress are making it their lowest priority. So let me be clear: If the Republicans send me a bill that doesn't live up to our national commitment to education, I won't hesitate to veto it. If it undermines our efforts to hire high-quality teachers to reduce class size or to increase accountability in our public schools, I will veto it. If it fails to strengthen Head Start, after-school and summer school programs, I'll veto it. If it underfunds mentoring or college scholarship programs, I will veto it. If it sends

me a bill that turns its back on our children and their future, I'll send them back to the drawing board. I won't let Congress push through a budget that's paid for at the expense of our children and our future prosperity.

So, again, I ask Congress to put partisanship aside and send me a bill that puts our children's education first. Let's use the last school semester of the 21st century to prepare our children and our Nation for excellence in the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Radio Remarks on Terrorist Attacks in Russia

September 18, 1999

On behalf of the American people, I want to extend our deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who lost their lives in the recent terrorist bombings in Russia. We share your outrage over these cowardly acts. We know what kind of pain such tragedies can cause. Our own citizens have suffered from repeated acts of terrorism.

Not very long ago, a terrorist bombing took the lives of more than 160 Americans in our State of Oklahoma. The World Trade Center in New York City was bombed. Last year bombings at our Embassies in east Africa took the lives of American diplomats, along with hundreds of Kenyans and Tanzanians.

The crimes they suffered remind us that terrorism knows no borders, and that acts of terror anywhere are a threat to humanity everywhere. While we stand united with you in our grief, we also stand united with you in our resolve that terrorism will not go unpunished and will not undermine the work of democracy.

The United States is ready to work with Russia and the Russian people to stand against the scourge of terrorism. We are working with the allies elsewhere to make sure there is no safe haven for terrorists, and we want to work with Russia to isolate nations that support terror. Together, we can ensure that the future belongs to peacemakers not bomb throwers.

In the days ahead, our thoughts and our prayers will be with you as you work to rebuild from these terrible tragedies.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 10:45 a.m. on September 18 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast in Russia. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.

Remarks at the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Dinner

September 18, 1999

Ladies and gentlemen, the main thing I want to say tonight is, thank you. Thank you to the Congressional Black Caucus for your leadership and your partnership, for your genuine friendship. Thank you to Jim Clyburn; to my friend of 27 years Eddie Bernice Johnson; to Eva Clayton; to the dean of the delegation, John Conyers; to your retiring member, and a great champion of education and human welfare, Bill Clay; to Corrine Brown and Elijah Cummings and Sheila Jackson Lee and all the other members of the CBC—I thank you for your kindness, your friendship, your support to me, to Hillary, to Al and Tipper Gore, to what we have done together. I thank Senator Carol Moseley-Braun for her continuing willingness to serve.

I welcome and congratulate the award winners, my friends Julius Chambers and Alvin Brown and Tom Joyner. Can you imagine Tom Joyner and his son thanking Al and me for being on his radio program? [*Laughter*] You know, even the people that don't like us don't think we're stupid. [*Laughter*] And I want to thank and congratulate Rear Admiral Evelyn Fields, who has done such a great job. She started as a cartographer and went on to chart a new course of opportunity not only for African-American women, but for all women. And thank you for honoring them.

I also would like to welcome the President of Haiti here, President Rene Preval. We're delighted to have him here, and we thank him for his friendship.

There are so many people here who have been associated with our administration, and

they were all asked to stand. You know them well. I want to just mention two, if I might. One is my chief speech writer, Terry Edmonds, because he's the first African-American to ever hold that job, and the reason I'm introducing him is, since Al and Eddie Bernice and Jim talked, I can't give half the speech that he wrote for me, so the least I can do is acknowledge that he did it. Thank you my friend. You're doing great.

The other person I want to thank for his extraordinary leadership as our special representative to the continent of Africa is Reverend Jesse Jackson; and I want to thank him very much for that, and particularly his role in ending the disastrous conflict in Sierra Leone.

I want to congratulate some of the current judicial nominees, more than half of whom are women and minorities, including Judge James Wynn, who would be the first African-American to serve on the Fourth Circuit; Judge Ann Williams, the first African-American on the Seventh Circuit; and this week I nominated Kathleen McCree Lewis to serve on the Sixth Circuit. I congratulate them.

There are just two more people I want to thank. I want to thank my wife for her love, her friendship, and for her leadership for our children and our future; for the way she has represented us around the world and for having the courage to stay in public service. After all we've been through, she would be the best United States Senator you could ever elect to anything.

I also want to thank all the members of the administration here, the Cabinet members—some are African-American, some are not. But one of the most interesting things that anyone ever said to me is, the Presidential scholar, that the Vice President and I knew, came from Harvard one night to a dinner at the White House. And we were pretty low; it was after we had been waxed in the '94 congressional elections. And this man said, "I have been studying administrations for a long time, and you should know that I believe that yours will be reelected; and one reason is, you have the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson's second administration." So to all who are here—Secretary Slater, Madame Attorney General,

Secretary Herman, any other members of the Cabinet who are here, our Veterans Affairs Secretary, all the others—I want to thank them.

And finally, and most of all, I'd like to thank the Vice President, without whom none of the good things we have accomplished together would have been possible. He has been, by far, the most influential, active, passionate, intense, effective Vice President of the United States in the history of our Republic, and I am very grateful to him.

Now, you know, this has been an exciting year for African-Americans. A lot of things have happened. I mean, Serena Williams became the first black woman since Althea Gibson to win the U.S. Open. Ken Chenault was named the first black CEO of American Express. And this is very important. I want you all to listen to this. The magnificent African-American writer Toni Morrison agreed with an extreme rightwing journalist that I am the first black President of the United States. *[Laughter]*

Chris Tucker came to see me today—*[laughter]*—and I was in stitches. He's here somewhere tonight. Where are you? Stand up there. *[Applause]* So Chris Tucker is in there; he looks at me with a straight face and says he's coming in to case the Oval Office because he's about to make a movie in which he will star as the first black President. I didn't have the heart to tell him I had already taken the position. *[Laughter]*

I want to make a couple of points. Most of what needs to be said has been said. One of the most interesting books of the Bible is the Book of James. It challenges us to be "doers of the word, and not hearers only." This, truly, is a caucus of doers. And I'm grateful for all the things that have happened that everyone else has mentioned. But none of it would have been possible without you.

Now we come again to what has become a fairly usual moment in the last 2 years—the end of another budget year in which we must all make an accounting of ourselves to the American people for what we have done and what we are about to do and what we are going to do with the money they give us from the sweat of their brow.

Now, our Republican friends have sent me a tax bill, and it is quite large. The middle

class and working class and lower income relief in it is, oh, about the size of our bill, but their bill is more than 3 times the size of ours. And people in upper income groups who are doing pretty well in the stock market get all the rest of the relief.

But the main thing is that the bill makes choices. We all make choices in life, often when we pretend not to and often when we deny that we are, but we do. And so even when things don't seem to be happening, sometimes decisions of the most momentous consequences are being made. The Vice President courageously presented himself for public office, for the highest office in the land. Many of the rest of you will be running this year—perhaps the First Lady will be among you.

But while we are doing these things, which we know are big, decisions will be made in this Congress which will affect what they can do if the American people are good enough to send them into office.

Why do I want to veto this bill? Not because I enjoy these interminable partisan fights; I, frankly, find them revolting most of the time. It's not really what the Framers had in mind. They wanted us to debate our differences in advance and then figure out what we could agree on and go on and do it. But there are choices here.

Do you know the number of people over 65 is going to double in the next 30 years? I hope to be one of them. [Laughter] When that happens, there will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare. We ought to use this surplus to deal with the challenge of the aging of America and take care of Social Security and Medicare and give a prescription drug benefit.

Do you know we've got more kids in our schools than ever before? You heard the Vice President talk about what our agenda is and what he wants to do. Well, you can't do it if you give away the store first. We ought to invest in our kids. We have the most diverse, largest group of children ever in our schools, and they are carrying our future in their little minds every day when they show up. And we need to give them all a world-class education.

And if we do this right, believe it or not, we'll be paying down the debt. We could actually make America debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835. Now, here's why progressives ought to be for this: Because if we do that, we'll drive down interest rates, and we'll be able to get more people to go invest money in places that haven't yet felt our prosperity. We'll keep interest rates down for homes, for college loans, for car loans, for credit cards. We'll guarantee that we'll have a generation of prosperity. We will pass something on to our children. This is a choice.

What I want to say to you is, I want us to get as much of this done as we can so that we leave for our successors in office the chance to do something meaningful. Nothing, in some ways, is more important than trying to make sure every American has a chance to participate in our prosperity. I was so proud of Alvin Brown tonight when I was listening to his speech on the film—getting ready to give him his award; so grateful that the Vice President gave him a chance to lead our empowerment zone and enterprise community programs; so glad that we are continuing to try to involve businesses—the Vice President is determined to bridge the so-called digital divide and put computers in every classroom in America, not just those who can afford it on their own, and make sure they can afford to use them. Thank you, Chairman Kennard, for what you've done on that.

It's very important that we fund the next round of empowerment zones, that we fund the new markets initiative, that we give Americans the same incentives to invest in poor neighborhoods here we give them to invest in poor places overseas. I want to continue with all these incentives. I wish we did more for the Caribbean, for Central America, for South America, and for Africa. I just want to do the same thing for the poor neighborhoods of Appalachia, of the Mississippi Delta, of the Indian reservations, of the cities that have been left behind.

All the things that have been mentioned, I just want to say, me too. To the fair and accurate census, me too; to making sure that our children have safe and good places to learn, me too; to meeting the challenge of

quality health care, and passing an enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, and doing more in the battle against AIDS, here at home and around the world, and restoring trust between the community and police, passing the hate crimes legislation, and passing the other things that we talked about.

I want to say a few words, seriously, about a topic that the Vice President touched on, and I really appreciated it. And I don't want to trivialize this. I think the killing of innocent people, en masse, in America has been the most painful thing that he and I and our families have had to endure in discharging our responsibilities to the American people—the bombing at Oklahoma City; the terrible school violence at Littleton, Colorado; and, before that, across the country, Arkansas and Mississippi, all the way to Oregon, and all the other places that were affected; this awful spate of race-related killings, and then, apparently, people just with their anger out of control, from Illinois and Indiana out to Los Angeles, over to Georgia and back to Fort Worth, Texas.

None of us should seek to make any capital out of this, but all of us should seek to make sense out of it. That's why we started this big grassroots campaign against youth violence, that I hope all of you will be involved in. Two or three people came up to me tonight and said you were doing things back in your home communities, and I'm grateful.

But the Vice President brought up this subject about whether it was evil rather than guns, since that is the debate as it has been posed in the paper and by some others, to explain the terrible thing that happened in the church in Texas, and many of these other things. And he said, essentially, both.

I just want to ask you to think about this, because—you think about how many times in your life you're in a—*[inaudible]*—and you would like to avoid taking responsibility for something that you could actually do something about, in your personal life, in your work life, as citizens. You can always find some other cause for the problem that you can still do something about.

You know, our country has the highest murder rate in the world. And here, I'll tell you another thing you probably didn't know. The number of children who die accidentally

from gun deaths in the United States is 9 times higher than the number who die in the next 20 biggest economies combined. Now, if you believe this is about the human heart, you must believe two things: If the murder rate is higher here and the accidental death rate is exponentially higher, you must believe that we are both more evil and more stupid than other countries. Don't laugh. I know it's kind of funny, but don't laugh.

The point I'm trying to make is, the NRA and that crowd have got to stop using arguments like this as an excuse to avoid our shared responsibilities. It may be true that if we had passed every bill that I have advocated, and every bill that the Vice President says he'd pass if he were President, that some of these killings would have occurred. But it is undoubtedly true that many would not. And that is what we have to think about.

And when we go into this political season, where everybody will turn up the rhetoric, you ought to have your antennae working real good, and ask yourself, are these people looking for a way to assume responsibility, or to duck it? And when I say that, I mean no disrespect to anyone.

Of course, it is because something horrible had happened to that man's heart that he walked into that church in Texas and killed those people—of course it is. And the same things that happened to the children in Los Angeles and the Filipino postal worker, and the same thing that happened to all those people in Illinois and Indiana—of course it is. But we cannot use that as an excuse not to ask ourselves, what's the difference between our setup here and everybody else's setup? And is it worth the price we're paying, or is there something we can do collectively to make America a safer place, and make it clear that more of our children are going to grow up safe and sound and healthy? That's what we ought to be doing. Make this election year about assuming responsibility, not ducking it, for America's future. You can do it, and we need you to do it.

Finally, let me just say for the record and for the press here, most of the things the Congressional Black Caucus has really worked for in the nearly 7 years I've been privileged to be President have not benefited African-Americans exclusively—sometimes

not even primarily. Most of the things that you have fought for were designed to give all Americans a chance to live up to the fullest of their God-given capacity, designed to give all Americans a chance to live on safe streets, designed to give all Americans a chance to come together.

And in that sense, it may be that in the end, the efforts we have made—now manifested in our office for One America in the White House, that Ben Johnson leads—to bring this country together as we move forward, may be the most important of all. You know, no one can foresee the future. I have loved doing this job, and I'm going to do it to the best of my ability every day that I have left on my term. I am going to do it to the best of my ability. I am going to be a good citizen for the rest of my life and tell people exactly what I think.

But no one can see the future, and no one has all the answers. But I know this, and you do, too. If every American really believed that we were one nation under God, if every person really believed that we are all created equal, if every person really believed that we have an obligation to try to draw closer together and to be better neighbors with others throughout the world, then all the rest of our problems would more easily melt away.

And so I ask you, as we go through the last difficult and exhilarating challenges of this year, as you head into the political season next year, keep in your mind—especially those of you in this Congressional Black Caucus—the enormous potential you have to reach the heart and soul of America, to remind them that we must be one.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10 p.m. in the ballroom at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Representatives James Clyburn, chair, Eddie Bernice Johnson, first vice chair, and Eva M. Clayton, John Conyers, Jr., William (Bill) Clay, Corrine Brown, Elijah E. Cummings, and Shelia Jackson Lee, members, Congressional Black Caucus; Tom Joyner's son, Oscar; and actor Chris Tucker. This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 20.

Remarks to the Community in Tarboro, North Carolina

September 20, 1999

Thank you very much. Well, let me begin, ladies and gentlemen, by thanking Mayor Morris for welcoming me. And I thank Mayor Perkins, from Princeville. I flew over there and saw all the houses still buried underwater. I want to thank all the city officials, all the county officials, all the State officials for the magnificent job that they have done, the lives they've saved, and all the things they've done to try to ease your way.

I'd like to thank the Members of Congress who came with me today. Your Congresswoman, Eva Clayton, when she was speaking, I started to call her "Reverend Clayton," she did such a good job. *[Laughter]* She talks to me just like that in Washington all the time. If she wants something for you, she comes in the White House and talks to me just like she did today. And Congressman David Price, Congressman Bob Etheridge, I want to thank them, too.

I want to thank the members of my administration who came here, and I'd like to introduce them to you. This is Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater; Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera. They did a lot of work for us—he's back here behind me. I want to thank the military, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration—they'll be doing a lot of work up and down this street—Aida Alvarez. And I want to thank the people who have spoken before for their praise of the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, James Lee Witt. Thank you.

I also want to thank my good friend Governor Jim Hunt. You know—I know all of you know this anyway, but he is in the process of completing a term, after which he will have served 16 years as Governor of North Carolina. And I served 12 years as Governor of my State—would have made 2 more if you hadn't been good enough to send me to Washington. *[Laughter]* And I can tell you, it will be—next January will be 21 years since I started working with Jim Hunt—21 years. We didn't have so much gray hair back then. *[Laughter]* He is the finest Governor in this country, and a ferocious advocate. So I will

do my best to do what he wants so that I will not have to put up with him camping out on the White House lawn to get help for you.

Let me say, if there's one thing I've learned visiting so many natural disasters, as the President and, before that, for a dozen years as a Governor, is that no matter how much television there is, it doesn't do it justice. Because it can't show what it feels like inside for people to lose a business they've put everything into; to people who lose their home when they have to take their kids to a shelter and not know where they're going to spend the night next week; for farmers to have labored for 4 years and see a crop totally destroyed by water or the Sun and not know whether they can keep their land or wonder if they can ever buy seed again.

And that's why we have organized all these emergency measures, because—Jim Hunt and I were laughing; you know, we worked so hard to build the economy and to improve education and to protect the environment and take care of the health care needs and all of that, but as all the pastors out here in the audience know, every once in a while something happens that proves to you no matter how hard you work, you are never completely in control. And we are not completely in control.

So that when things like this happen to some of us, we know they could happen to all of us. And our country—first of all, our thoughts and prayers are with you. And secondly, we know we have a responsibility as members of the American family to help you get back on your feet again, and we intend to do it.

Now, the Federal Government has already worked very hard with the Coast Guard and others. We've been involved with your local people. I believe we think we saved almost a thousand lives. Too many people have died here, and not everyone is accounted for. And Governor Hunt told me today, you're still rescuing people that had been accounted for. But there are a lot of people alive today; and with all the loss, we can thank God that there are people who are alive who might not otherwise have been because of the efforts people have made.

So we're going to do what we can to help. And I want to tell you some things we can do in the very short run. We have already authorized FEMA to provide for direct Federal assistance to clean up the 66 counties in North Carolina that have been hurt. Today the Department of Agriculture will approve a disaster food stamp program to help people who need help to get food for their families. And people who need it ought to take it. There's nothing to be ashamed of here; people who need it ought to take it.

Today the Department of Agriculture, all they can do for the farmers, and that's what—is to offer the low-interest loans. Some of the bigger farmers, that'll be enough. Some of the family farmers will be ruined, not just here but in other places. And I'm going to do what I can to see that the emergency farm bill, which was drawn up to deal with the drought and historic low grain prices overseas, includes the victims of the horrible drought and then the floods on the East Coast, from North Carolina all the way up the East Coast, where our farmers are.

The Department of Labor has authorized \$12 million for temporary jobs and to assist in cleanup and restoration activity. People who need them ought to try to get them. The money is designed not only to help you clean up but to help people who are out of work and need some immediate income to get it. And if there's more needed, we'll try to get more down here.

The Small Business Administration has authorized disaster loans for homeowners to repair or replace damaged property and loans for businesses to repair property, equipment, and inventory, and provide companies—this is important—and provide companies with adequate capital until they can resume normal operations. And that's very, very important, so you all need to take advantage of these things.

FEMA has set up an 800 number for victims of the flood. And people who are eligible for the individual relief programs should call the hotline, the FEMA hotline, which is 800-462-9029. For the reporters in the audience, please put this in the paper—that's 800-462-9029.

Now, the next thing that we've got to do is to deal with the housing problem, which is a huge, huge problem. Some people are insured against the floods—and we just learned today, apparently because of blanket policies, but most people who have been flooded out, as has already been said, were not in any flood plain. Some of you in a 500-year flood plain, nobody gets insured for that. Many people beyond the 500-year flood plain—which means if you got flooded out, it shouldn't happen again for another 600 or 700 years—we know you'll be prepared. [Laughter]

Now, for you there are—and a lot of people here are low income people that don't have much money. And if people that can't repay any kind of loan can qualify for cash assistance, and everybody can qualify, we're going to try to do what we did in North Dakota, which is to get as many trailers as possible available for people to live in that can be taken to their property and plugged in, so people can supervise either getting another trailer if they were living in a trailer, or rebuilding their homes while they're on-site.

For those who don't want to do that and who need help, there are cash funds that are available to help you live somewhere else and other help available to buy furniture and do things of that kind. You need to make sure, as soon as you can, if you lost your home, as soon as these centers are clearly up and open—and I know a lot of you are dying to move out of these shelters, but it has got to be safe and the water has got to go down first—but you need to make sure that you know where the application centers are; that you go in, you figure out what you're eligible for.

Now, what we have to do is go back to Washington and complete the assessment of not only how much damage was done here, the worst place, but also in Virginia, which was hit pretty hard, and all the way up to New Jersey and New York, which were hit pretty hard. And then we've got to figure out if we have enough money to deal with the present problem. We know we need extra help for the farmers, but we've got to look and see if we've got enough extra money—Secretary Slater and I saw some roads that

were washed out. It costs money to fix some roads that were washed out. It costs money to fix those roads. We've got to make sure we've got the funds necessary to do what needs to be done. If we do, well, we'll flow them; if we don't, we'll go back to Congress and try to get some more.

But the American people know that no individual can handle this alone, and our community ought to be doing this together. So let me say, finally, I have been—as always, but particularly today—profoundly impressed by the spirit of the people here. One of the ministers over there—one of the ministers over there, who looks like a professional weight lifter, by the way—[laughter]—has got a shirt on that says, "Too blessed to be stressed." [Laughter] And I want you to keep that attitude.

I know—man, I can only imagine what it's like, especially for those of you with young children, spending night after night in the shelters with all these people, some of whom you know, some of whom you don't; everybody is bumping up against everybody else. You get tired of the prepared meals; you wonder where you're really going to be able to go. I know it's frustrating.

But we've got to wait until the water goes down. Then the mayor has got to be careful—both these mayors—before the water can be turned on again, to make sure that it's safe, that the supply hasn't been contaminated. There are just things that have to be done.

So I urge you to keep your spirits up and know we're going to be with you every step of the way. Know that you have strong advocates in your local officials, your wonderful Governor, and your very vigorous congressional delegations that are represented here. We're going to stay with you until you get back on your feet again, as long as it takes.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:27 p.m. on Main Street. In his remarks, he referred to Mayors Donald A. Morris of Tarboro and Delia Perkins of Princeville, NC.

**Statement on the Death
of Raisa Gorbacheva**

September 20, 1999

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Raisa Maksimovna Gorbacheva, wife of former Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev. We extend our deepest condolences to her family and friends in Russia and other countries. The example she set, through her help for child victims of leukemia and through her own courageous struggle against this terrible disease, was an inspiration to people everywhere.

**Statement on the Earthquake
in Taiwan**

September 20, 1999

Hillary and I were saddened by news of injuries and deaths sustained by the people on Taiwan as a result of a major earthquake today. Our thoughts are with all of those who have suffered losses and who may still be in need of assistance. We are in touch directly with the Taiwan authorities to determine what assistance from the United States may be needed.

Remarks on Arrival in New York City

September 21, 1999

Hurricane Floyd

Good morning, everyone. I'm a little hoarse—forgive me. I want to begin my visit by expressing our concern and support for the families and the communities in this area recovering from Hurricane Floyd.

As you know, I traveled to North Carolina yesterday and saw some of the worst storm damage and flooding that I have, personally, ever seen. I know people in New Jersey and New York have also been injured. I want to thank the city, county, and State officials for all the work they have done to get help to people quickly where it's needed.

We are doing all we can at the Federal level, and I'd like to mention just three things. First, last Saturday, I issued a major disaster declaration for New Jersey. Sunday I issued a similar one for Orange, Rockland,

Putnam, and Westchester Counties in New York. These actions help to speed Federal assistance for individuals and communities recovering from flood damage.

Second, FEMA officials are on the ground now responding to the challenges with clean water, housing, and restoring communication and power links. Housing inspectors, small business teams, community relations specialists are on the scene to help meet people's needs. Starting today AmeriCorps volunteers will be helping people clean up the damages to their homes and pick up the pieces of their lives.

Third, I'm sending our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, to New Jersey and New York today to inspect the damage and report back immediately on what more we need to do. I want to make sure that the assistance is delivered responsibly, efficiently, and in adequate amounts.

Again I want to say, as I did yesterday, that in difficult times like this, we're reminded that the power of the American spirit is even stronger than the power of a hurricane. The American people are supporting all those who have been injured in this, and we will stand by them until they recover.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 a.m. at the Wall Street Landing Zone.

**Remarks to the 54th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly
in New York City**

September 21, 1999

Thank you very much. Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, members of the United Nations General Assembly, good morning. I hope you will forgive me for being a little hoarse today. I will do the best I can to be heard.

Today we look ahead to the new millennium, and at this last General Assembly of the 20th century, we look back on a century that taught us much of what we need to know about the promise of tomorrow. We have learned a great deal over the last 100 years: how to produce enough food for a growing world population; how human activity affects the environment; the mysteries of the human

gene; an information revolution that now holds the promise of universal access to knowledge. We have learned that open markets create more wealth; that open societies are more just. We have learned how to come together, through the U.N. and other institutions, to advance common interests and values.

Yet, for all our intellectual and material advances, the 20th century has been deeply scarred by enduring human failures, by greed and lust for power; by hot-blooded hatreds and stone-cold hearts.

At century's end, modern developments magnify greatly the dangers of these timeless flaws. Powerful forces still resist reasonable efforts to put a human face on the global economy, to lift the poor, to heal the Earth's environment. Primitive claims of racial, ethnic, or religious superiority, when married to advanced weaponry and terrorism, threaten to destroy the greatest potential for human development in history, even as they make a wasteland of the soul.

Therefore, we look to the future with hope but with unanswered questions. In the new millennium, will nations be divided by ethnic and religious conflicts? Will the nation-state itself be imperiled by them or by terrorism? Will we keep coming closer together, instead, while enjoying the normal differences that make life more interesting?

In the new century, how will patriotism be defined, as faith in a dream worth living or fear and loathing of other people's dreams? Will we be free of the fear of weapons of mass destruction or forced to teach our grandchildren how to survive a nuclear, chemical, or biological attack?

Will globalism bring shared prosperity or make the desperate of the world even more desperate? Will we use science and technology to grow the economy and protect the environment or put it to risk—put it all at risk in a world dominated by a struggle over natural resources?

The truth is that the 20th century's amazing progress has not resolved these questions, but it has given us the tools to make the answers come out right, the knowledge, the resources, the institutions. Now we must use them. If we do, we can make the millennium not just a changing of the digits but a true

changing of the times, a gateway to greater peace and prosperity and freedom. With that in mind, I offer three resolutions for the new millennium.

First, let us resolve to wage an unrelenting battle against poverty and for shared prosperity so that no part of humanity is left behind in the global economy. Globalism is not inherently divisive. While infant mortality in developing countries has been cut nearly in half since 1970, life expectancy has increased by 10 years. According to the U.N.'s Human Development Index, measuring a decent standard of living, a good education, a long and healthy life, the gap between rich and poor countries on this measure has actually declined.

Open trade and new technologies have been engines of this progress. They've helped hundreds of millions to see their prospects rise by marketing the fruits of their labor and creativity abroad. With proper investment in education, developing countries should be able to keep their best and brightest talent at home and to gain access to global markets for goods and services and capital.

But this promising future is far from inevitable. We are still squandering the potential of far too many—1.3 billion people still live on less than a dollar a day; more than half the population of many countries have no access to safe water; a person in South Asia is 700 times less likely to use the Internet than someone in the United States; and 40 million people a year still die of hunger, almost as many as the total number killed in World War II.

We must refuse to accept a future in which one part of humanity lives on the cutting edge of a new economy, while the other lives at the knife edge of survival.

What must we do? Well, we can start by remembering that open markets advance the blessings and breakthroughs we want to spread. That's why we in the United States have worked to keep our markets open during the recent global financial crisis, though it has brought us record trade deficits. It is why we want to launch a new global trade round when the WTO meets in Seattle this fall; why we are working to build a trading system that strengthens the well-being of

workers and consumers, protects the environment, and makes competition a race to the top, not the bottom; why I'm proud we have come together at the ILO to ban abusive child labor everywhere in the world.

We do not face a choice between trade and aid but instead the challenge to make both work for people who need them. Aid should focus on what is known to work: credit for poor people starting business; keeping girls in school; meeting the needs of mothers and children. Development aid should be used for development, not to buy influence or finance donors' exports. It should go where governments invest in their people and answer their concerns.

We should also come to the aid of countries struggling to rise, but held down by the burden of debt. The G-7 nations adopted a plan to reduce by up to 70 percent the outstanding debt of the world's poorest countries, freeing resources for education, health, and growth.

All of us, developed and developing countries alike, should take action now to halt global climate change. Now, what has that to do with fighting poverty? A great deal. The most vulnerable members of the human family will be first hurt and hurt most, if rising temperatures devastate agriculture, accelerate the spread of disease in tropical countries, and flood island nations.

Does this mean developing countries then must sacrifice growth to protect the environment? Absolutely not. Throughout history, a key to human progress has been willingness to abandon big ideas that are no longer true. One big idea that is no longer true is that the only way to build a modern economy is to use energy as we did in the industrial age. The challenge and opportunity for developing countries is to skip the cost of the industrial age by using technologies that improve the economy and the environment at the same time.

Finally, to win the fight against poverty, we must improve health care for all people. Over the next 10 years in Africa, AIDS is expected to kill more people and orphan more children than all the wars of the 20th century combined. Each year diseases like malaria, tuberculosis, pneumonia leave millions of children without parents, millions of

parents without children. Yet, for all these diseases, vaccine research is advancing too slowly, in part because the potential customers in need are too poor. Only 2 percent of all global biomedical research is devoted to the major killers in the developing world.

No country can break poverty's bonds if its people are disabled by disease and its government overwhelmed by the needs of the ill. With U.N. leadership, we've come close to eradicating polio, once the scourge of children everywhere. We're down to 5,000 reported cases worldwide. I've asked our Congress to fund a major increase to finish the job; I ask other nations to follow suit.

We've begun a comprehensive battle against the global AIDS epidemic. This year, I'm seeking another \$100 million for prevention, counseling, and care in Africa. I want to do more to get new drugs that prevent transmission from mothers to newborns, to those who need them most. And today I commit the United States to a concerted effort to accelerate the development and delivery of vaccines for malaria, TB, AIDS, and other diseases disproportionately affecting the developing world. Many approaches have been proposed, from tax credits to special funds for the purchase of these vaccines.

To tackle these issues, I will ask public health experts, the chief executive officers of our pharmaceutical companies, foundation representatives and Members of Congress to join me at a special White House meeting to strengthen incentives for research and development, to work with, not against, the private sector to meet our common goals.

The second resolution I hope we will make today is to strengthen the capacity of the international community to prevent and, whenever possible, to stop outbreaks of mass killing and displacement. This requires, as we all know, shared responsibility, like the one West African nations accepted when they acted to restore peace in Sierra Leone; the one 19 democracies in NATO embraced to stop ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo; the one Asian and Pacific nations have now assumed in East Timor, with the strong support from the entire United Nations, including the United States.

Secretary-General Annan spoke for all of us during the Kosovo conflict, and more recently in regard to East Timor, when he said that ethnic cleansers and mass murderers can find no refuge in the United Nations, no source of comfort or justification in its charter. We must do more to make these words real. Of course, we must approach this challenge with some considerable degree of humility. It is easy to say, "Never again," but much harder to make it so. Promising too much can be as cruel as caring too little.

But difficulties, dangers, and costs are not an argument for doing nothing. When we are faced with deliberate, organized campaigns to murder whole peoples or expel them from their land, the care of victims is important but not enough. We should work to end the violence.

Our response in every case cannot or should not be the same. Sometimes collective military forces is both appropriate and feasible. Sometimes concerted economic and political pressure, combined with diplomacy, is a better answer, as it was in making possible the introduction of forces in East Timor.

Of course, the way the international community responds will depend upon the capacity of countries to act and on their perception of their national interests. NATO acted in Kosovo, for example, to stop a vicious campaign of ethnic cleansing in a place where we had important interests at stake and the ability to act collectively. The same considerations brought Nigerian troops and their partners to Sierra Leone and Australians and others to East Timor. That is proper so long as we work together, support each other, and do not abdicate our collective responsibility.

I know that some are troubled that the United States and others cannot respond to every humanitarian catastrophe in the world. We cannot do everything everywhere. But simply because we have different interests in different parts of the world does not mean we can be indifferent to the destruction of innocents in any part of the world.

That is why we have supported the efforts of Africans to resolve the deadly conflicts that have raged through parts of their continent; why we are working with friends in Africa to build the Africa Crisis Response Initiative,

which has now trained more than 4,000 peacekeepers from 6 countries; why we are helping to establish an international coalition against genocide, to bring nations together to stop the flow of money and arms to those who commit crimes against humanity.

There is also critical need for countries emerging from conflict to build police institutions, accountable to people and the law, often with the help of civilian police from other nations. We need international forces with the training to fill the gap between local police and military peacekeepers, as French, Argentine, Italian, and other military police have done in Haiti and Bosnia. We will work with our partners in the U.N. to continue to ensure such forces can deploy when they're needed.

What is the role of the U.N. in preventing mass slaughter and dislocation? Very large. Even in Kosovo, NATO's actions followed a clear consensus expressed in several Security Council resolutions that the atrocities committed by Serb forces were unacceptable, that the international community had a compelling interest in seeing them end. Had we chosen to do nothing in the face of this brutality, I do not believe we would have strengthened the United Nations. Instead, we would have risked discrediting everything it stands for.

By acting as we did, we helped to vindicate the principles and purposes of the U.N. Charter, to give the U.N. the opportunity it now has to play the central role in shaping Kosovo's future. In the real world, principles often collide, and tough choices must be made. The outcome in Kosovo is hopeful.

Finally, as we enter this new era, let our third resolution be to protect our children against the possibility that nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons will ever be used again.

The last millennium has seen constant advances in the destructive power of weaponry. In the coming millennium, this trend can continue, or if we choose, we can reverse it with global standards universally respected.

We've made more progress than many realize. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine courageously chose to give up their nuclear weapons. America and Russia have moved forward

with substantial arms reduction. President Yeltsin and I agreed in June, even as we await Russian ratification of START II, to begin talks on a START III treaty that will cut our cold war arsenals by 80 percent from their height.

Brazil has joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty, capping a process that has almost totally eliminated the threat of nuclear proliferation in Latin America. We banned chemical weapons from the Earth, though we must implement the commitment fully and gain universal coverage. One hundred and fifty-two nations have signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and while India and Pakistan did test nuclear weapons last year, the international reaction proved that the global consensus against proliferation is very strong.

We need to bolster the standards to reinforce that consensus. We must reaffirm our commitment to the NPT, strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention, make fast progress on a treaty to ban production of fissile materials. To keep existing stocks from the wrong hands, we should strengthen the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials. And today, again, I ask our Congress to approve the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

We must stop the spread of nuclear weapons materials and expertise at the source. Since 1992, we have worked with Russia and the other nations of the former Soviet Union to do that. We are expanding that effort because challenges remain. But thus far, we can say that the nightmare scenario of deadly weapons flowing unchecked across borders, of scientists selling their services, en masse, to the highest bidder has been avoided. Now we must work to deny weapons of mass destruction to those who would use them.

For almost a decade nations have stood together to keep the Iraqi regime from threatening its people and the world with such weapons. Despite all the obstacles Saddam Hussein has placed in our path, we must continue to ease the suffering of the people of Iraq. At the same time, we cannot allow the Government of Iraq to flout 40—and I say 40 successive U.N. Security Council resolutions and to rebuild his arsenal.

Just as important is the challenge of keeping deadly weapons away from terrorist groups. They may have weaker capabilities than states, but they have fewer compunctions about using such weapons. The possibility that terrorists will threaten us with weapons of mass destruction can be met with neither panic nor complacency. It requires serious, deliberate, disciplined concern and effective cooperation from all of us.

There are many other challenges. Today I have just spoken about three: the need to do something about the world's poor and to put a human face on the global economy; the need to do more to prevent killing and dislocation of innocents; the need to do more to assure that weapons of mass destruction will never be used on our children. I believe they are the most important. In meeting them, the United Nations is indispensable. It is precisely because we are committed to the U.N. that we have worked hard to support the management—effective management of this body.

But the United States also has the responsibility to equip the U.N. with the resources it needs to be effective. As I think most of you know, I have strongly supported the United States meeting all its financial obligations to the United Nations, and I will continue to do so. We will do our very best to succeed this year.

When the cold war ended, the United States could have chosen to turn away from the opportunities and dangers of the world. Instead, we have tried to be engaged, involved, and active. We know this moment of unique prosperity and power for the United States is a source of concern to many. I can only answer by saying this: In the 7 years that I have been privileged to come here to speak to this body, America has tried to be a force for peace. We believe we are better off when nations resolve their differences by force of argument, rather than force of arms. We have sought to help former adversaries, like Russia and China, become prosperous, stable members of the world community, because we feel far more threatened by the potential weakness of the world's leading nations than by their strength.

Instead of imposing our values on others, we have sought to promote a system of government, democracy, that empowers people to choose their own destinies according to their own values and aspirations. We have sought to keep our markets open, because we believe a strong world economy benefits our own workers and businesses as well as the people of the world who are selling to us. I hope that we have been and will continue to be good partners with the rest of you in the new millennium.

Not long ago, I went to a refugee camp in Macedonia. The people I met there, children and adults alike, had suffered horrible, horrible abuses. But they had never given up hope because they believed that there is an international community that stood for their dignity and their freedom. I want to make sure that 20 or 50 or 100 years from now, people everywhere will still believe that about our United Nations.

So let us resolve in the bright dawn of this new millennium to bring an era in which our desire to create will overwhelm our capacity to destroy. If we do that, then through the United Nations and farsighted leaders, humanity finally can live up to its name.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. in the Assembly Hall. In his remarks, he referred to United Nations General Assembly President Theo-Ben Gurirab; United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan; and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in New York City

September 21, 1999

Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished leaders: Tomorrow we will be exactly 100 days away from the beginning of the new millennium. The calendar tells us how old the world is, but we are thinking about something fresh, something new. And it is altogether fitting that we should be here at the United Nations, which is a very young attempt by the world to make ourselves better and to make our children's future brighter.

I would like to say how deeply pleased I am that the United Nations is being led today by a man of the ability and character of the Secretary-General. He continues to speak and act with authority. He said recently that the aim of the U.N. Charter is to protect individual human beings, not to protect those who abuse them. He reminded us that even in these times of phenomenal prosperity, half of all humanity subsists on less than \$3 a day.

So, Mr. Secretary-General, I thank you for your leadership and your direction.

Let me say that I'm thinking, myself, also a lot about the future. And I plan to be, at least part of the time, a future resident of New York. Now, when I move here, I will be able to complain about all the traffic jams around the U.N.—[laughter]—and all those important people who keep me from getting to my appointed rounds. If I get very upset, I may even write a letter to my United States Senator. [Laughter]

But let me say, again, in all candor, the United States is humbled and honored to host the United Nations. We are honored to be a part of your leadership for peace in East Timor and in so many other places. And we look forward to going into a new century, to a new millennium, to a new era, with your leadership.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in a toast to the Secretary-General and the United Nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. in the North Delegates Lounge at the United Nations. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-General Annan. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement Honoring the National Medal of the Arts and National Humanities Medal Recipients

September 21, 1999

This year's recipients of the 1999 National Medal of the Arts and National Humanities Medal stand at the pinnacle of American artistic and academic achievement. Through their ideas, their scholarship, and their works of art, they have opened all our eyes to the

richness and the miracle of the human experience. All Americans owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Memorandum on Waiver of Sanctions on India and Pakistan

September 21, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-38

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, The Secretary of the Interior, Director, United States Information Agency

Subject: Waiver of Sanctions on India and Pakistan

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President of the United States, and consistent with section 902 of the India-Pakistan Relief Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), to the extent provided in that section, I hereby waive until October 20, 1999, the sanctions and prohibitions contained in sections 101 and 102 of the Arms Export Control Act insofar as such sanctions and prohibitions would otherwise apply to assistance to the Asian Elephant Conservation Fund, the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund, and the Indo-American Environmental Leadership Program.

The Secretary of State is hereby authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Memorandum on Military Assistance for States Participating in the Multinational Force for East Timor
September 21, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-39

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Military Assistance Under Section 506(a)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as Amended, to States Participating in the Multinational Force for East Timor

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 506(a)(1) of the Foreign Assistance

Act of 1961, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2318(a)(1) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that:

- (1) an unforeseen emergency exists that requires immediate military assistance to states that may participate in the Multinational Force for East Timor; and,
- (2) the emergency requirement cannot be met under the authority of the Arms Export Control Act or any other law except section 506(a)(1) of the Act.

Therefore, I direct the drawdown of defense articles from the stocks the Department of Defense, defense services of the Department of Defense, and military education and training of an aggregate value not to exceed \$55,000,000 to provide military assistance to such states to support their efforts and to enhance their capabilities to restore peace and security to East Timor.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Memorandum on the Drawdown of Commodities and Services for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
September 21, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-40

Memorandum for the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Drawdown of Commodities and Services Under Section 552(c)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as Amended, for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 552(c)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2348a(c)(2) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that:

- (1) as a result of an unforeseen emergency, the provision of assistance under Chapter 6 of Part II of the Act

in amounts in excess of funds otherwise available for such assistance is important to the national interests of the United States; and,

- (2) such unforeseen emergency requires the immediate provision of assistance under Chapter 6 of Part II of the Act.

Therefore, I direct the drawdown of up to \$5 million in commodities and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Defense for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress and to arrange for its publication in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Notice—Continuation of Emergency With Respect to UNITA

September 21, 1999

On September 26, 1993, by Executive Order 12865, I declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), prohibiting the sale or supply by United States persons or from the United States, or using U.S. registered vessels or aircraft, or arms, related materiel of all types, petroleum, and petroleum products to the territory of Angola, other than through designated points of entry. The order also prohibits the sale or supply of such commodities to UNITA. On December 12, 1997, in order to take additional steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12865, I issued Executive Order 13069, closing all UNITA offices in the United States and imposing additional sanctions with regard to the sale or supply of aircraft or aircraft parts, the granting of take-off, landing and overflight permission, and the provision of certain aircraft-related services. On August 18, 1998, in order to take further steps with respect to the national emergency declared in Executive Order 12865, I issued Executive Order 13098, blocking all property and interests in property of UNITA and designated

UNITA officials and adult members of their immediate families, prohibiting the importation of certain diamonds exported from Angola, and imposing additional sanctions with regard to the sale or supply of equipment used in mining, motorized vehicles, watercraft, spare parts for motorized vehicles or watercraft, mining services, and ground or waterborne transportation services.

Because of our continuing international obligations and because of the prejudicial effect that discontinuation of the sanctions would have on prospects for peace in Angola, the national emergency declared on September 26, 1993, and the measures adopted pursuant thereto to deal with that emergency, must continue in effect beyond September 26, 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 UNITA.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 21, 1999.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 22, 1999]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on September 23.

Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to UNITA

September 21, 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 emergency declared with respect to the

National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) is to continue in effect beyond September 26, 1999, to the *Federal Register* for publication.

The circumstances that led to the declaration on September 26, 1993, of a national emergency have not been resolved. The actions and policies of UNITA pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the foreign policy of the United States. United Nations Security Council Resolutions 864 (1993), 1127 (1997), 1173 (1998), and 1176 (1998) continue to oblige all member states to maintain sanctions. Discontinuation of the sanctions would have a prejudicial effect on the prospect for peace in Angola. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure on UNITA to reduce its ability to pursue its military campaigns.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 21, 1999.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Denmark-United States Tax
Convention With Documentation**
September 21, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, signed at Washington on August 19, 1999, together with a Protocol. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

It is my desire that the Convention and Protocol transmitted herewith be considered in place of the Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation, signed at Washington on June 17, 1980, and the Protocol Amending the Convention, signed at Washington on August 23, 1983, which were transmitted to the Senate with messages dated September 4, 1980 (S. Ex. Q, 96th Cong., 2d Sess.) and

November 16, 1983 (T. Doc. No. 98-12, 98th Cong., 1st Sess.), and which are pending in the Committee on Foreign Relations. I desire, therefore, to withdraw from the Senate the Convention and Protocol signed in 1980 and 1983.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and other developed nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for resolution of disputes and sets forth rules making its benefits unavailable to residents that are engaged in treaty-shopping.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 21, 1999.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
a Protocol to the Germany-United
States Tax Convention**
September 21, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Protocol Amending the Convention Between the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Estates, Inheritances, and Gifts signed at Bonn on December 3, 1980, signed at Washington, December 14, 1998. The Protocol provides a *pro rata* unified tax credit to the estate of a German domiciliary for purposes of computing U.S. estate tax. It allows a limited U.S. "marital deduction" for certain estates of limited value if the surviving spouse is not a U.S. citizen. In addition, the Protocol expands the United States jurisdiction to tax its citizens and certain former citizens and long-term residents and makes other changes to the treaty to more closely reflect current U.S. treaty policy.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 21, 1999.

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Italy-United States Tax
Convention With Documentation**

September 21, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Italian Republic for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with Respect to Taxes on Income and the Prevention of Fraud or Fiscal Evasion, signed at Washington on August 25, 1999, together with a Protocol. Also transmitted are an exchange of notes with a Memorandum of Understanding and the report of the Department of State concerning the Convention.

This Convention, which is similar to tax treaties between the United States and other developed nations, provides maximum rates of tax to be applied to various types of income and protection from double taxation of income. The Convention also provides for resolution of disputes and sets forth rules making its benefits unavailable to residents that are engaged in treaty-shopping or certain abusive transactions.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to this Convention and that the Senate give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 21, 1999.

**Remarks at a Reception for Regina
Montoya Coggins**

September 21, 1999

The President. I was hoping Regina would speak, since I'm so hoarse. [*Laughter*]

I've spent all day at the United Nations, and I'm delighted to see all of you—Texans, Washingtonians, Michigans—Michigan-ers—[*laughter*]—

Audience member. New Hampshires. [*Laughter*]

The President. —and whoever came from New Hampshire—

Audience member. I did.

The President. —we can give you one night off between now and—[*laughter*].

Let me say, first of all, I am delighted that Lloyd and Libby have opened their beautiful home and let me come in through the kitchen. [*Laughter*] I'm delighted that Regina is running for Congress. Most of you know that she was, first, assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs; she's had a distinguished career in the nonprofit sector, as a lawyer; and she did great in the White House. And she's been my friend a long time. Her husband has been a distinguished United States Attorney in Texas. So she is supremely well-qualified to go to Congress. We are just a few seats away from being in the majority, and this should be one of them.

I just want to make three brief points. I have to take care of my voice a little bit, but I think it's worth your saying this to people all over America as the election season begins.

When we started in 1992, we made an argument to the American people. We said, "Look, the country's in the worst recession since the Great Depression. The social divisions in this country are deepening. The basically anti-government philosophy that had dominated the last 12 years masked a growth in the Federal Government and a profligate explosion in the Federal debt. And we were in trouble." So we said, "Give us a chance, and we'll cut the deficit until we get rid of it. That'll drive down interest rates and bring jobs. We will expand trade, because we're only 4 percent of the world's people, and we've got 22 percent of the world's income, so we have to sell something to somebody else. And we will find a way to do this and continue to invest in the education of our children and the other things that bring us together." That's why we say it was an argument. We said, "We believe it'll work." And

enough people agreed with us that the Vice President and I were elected.

None of what has happened in the last 6½ years-plus would have been possible without the support of the Democrats in the Congress, because we have lived through the most partisan era in my lifetime, even more, I think, if you go back and look at the division of votes and the rhetoric, than the McCarthy era, probably.

But now it's not an argument anymore. We don't have to argue with anybody. It is an established fact that the policies we implemented have given us the longest peacetime expansion in history: millions more jobs than were created during the Reagan boom, which was fueled by massive deficit spending; the biggest surplus we've ever had; lowest minority unemployment in history; the lowest unemployment in 29 years; the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years; and the lowest crime rates in 26 years.

We had some other arguments. We said, "We believed that we ought to do more to help balance work and family. So unlike the previous President, I won't veto the family and medical leave law. I will sign it." And they said, "Oh, if you do that, you will raise the cost of employing people. Small business will go under. It'll cut jobs." Well, we've got 19.4 million jobs, and for 6 years in a row we've set records every year for new small businesses getting started. It's not an argument now; it's a fact.

We said, "We ought to—unlike the previous administration, I would sign, not veto, the Brady bill." And I thought we ought to ban assault weapons. They told all the hunters and sportsmen they'd lose their guns, and everything would be miserable. And nobody who shouldn't have a gun would have any difficulty getting one. Now we know 400,000 people didn't get guns because of the Brady bill. We know that nobody's hunting or sport shooting has been interrupted. And we know we've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years. So it's not an argument anymore; it's an established fact.

I say that because every election is always about change, and it should be. This country should never stand pat, even when it's working. The question will be not whether the election is about change, whether it's a Presi-

dential election, a Senate election, or an election for the House of Representatives. The question will be: What kind of change are we for, and are we going to build on what works, or take it down?

That is the issue. Therefore, every single race for the House of Representatives is a race that matters enormously to the people who live in that district and also will have huge implications for the United States as a whole.

So now we're having a new debate, where we say, "Look, before we squander this surplus it took us 30 years to get back—last one we had was 30 years ago, and we never had one this big—shouldn't we take account of the fact that the number of people over 65 is going to double in the next 30 years, that there'll only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security and Medicare? Shouldn't we take account of the fact that Social Security is supposed to go broke in a little over 30 years and Medicare in 15 years? Shouldn't we fix Social Security and Medicare? Shouldn't we give the elderly people of this country access to prescription drugs, since if we were starting Medicare today, we'd certainly cover drugs, because it substitutes for so many medical procedures? Before we give all this surplus away, shouldn't we figure out what we've got to invest in education and health care and the environment and medical research and science and technology, the things that will keep us strong in hope? And shouldn't we, since we know lower debt leads to lower interest rates, higher growth and higher incomes, shouldn't we get this country out of debt over the next 15 years for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President?"

Now, in the Fifth Congressional District in Texas, if what we're fighting for comes to pass, the elderly will be better off; the children will be better off; the poor will be better off; the middle class will be better off. And the Republicans will have more money to give to their candidates in the 2002 election. [Laughter] You know, when I see how much money they're raising, it's just testimony to how successful our economic policy is. [Laughter]

And so I say that, because this is—it's something that's very important for people

to realize. And we haven't done all this work, to get the country up to the point where it's working, to go into reverse. We need to continue to change, but we need to change from the base of what is working.

There's still a lot of poor people in this country. There's still too many poor children in this country. There's still places, from the Indian reservations to the Mississippi Delta, to the inner cities, to the rural farming communities, and the little towns that have lost their industries, that haven't felt this recovery. There are still too many working people who don't have any insurance for their children. There are still significant environmental challenges. There are still enormous opportunities out there. We're trying to get funding for the next generation of the Internet, because it's becoming so clogged. The fastest growing instrument of human communication in history. Everyone knows we need a next generation; everyone knows we need some Government money to fund the basic investment. Their party's against funding it; our party's for it. We want to rehabilitate 6,000 schools. They want to rehabilitate 600 schools. We want to put 100,000 teachers out there to make classes smaller so our children will learn more. They don't want to do that.

There are significant differences. They are huge. And they will affect the lives of every family in America.

So what I want you to say is that every race is important. This one's really important, and she is superbly qualified. That we now are not making an argument to the American people; we are taking the evidence to them. And we have to remind them of what it was like before, so they can remember the difference.

It really matters who's in the Congress, and what decisions are made on any given issue. And as someone who—probably I'm the only person in this room that can't run for office again, or for the first time—[laughter]—my interest is seeing my country do well. That's what I want.

Yes, I think the world of Regina. And yes, I feel very loyal to my party. But we have delivered for this country. And there is so much more to do. There are still vulnerable people. There are still unseized opportuni-

ties. And there's still a lot of change to make, but it needs to be the right kind. And if you want it made, you need to send her to Congress.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:14 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Representative Lloyd Doggett and his wife, Elizabeth; and Mrs. Coggins' husband, Paul Coggins, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas. Mrs. Coggins is a candidate for Congress in Texas' Fifth Congressional District. This transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 22.

Remarks on Departure for the Hay-Adams Hotel and an Exchange With Reporters

September 22, 1999

U.S. Lawsuit Against the Major Tobacco Companies

The President. Good afternoon. Last January, in my State of the Union Address, I announced that the Justice Department was preparing a litigation plan to recover the costs of smoking-related illnesses. Over the years, smoking-related illnesses have cost taxpayers billions of dollars through Medicare, veterans' health, and other federal health programs.

Today the Justice Department declared that the United States is, in fact, filing suit against the major tobacco companies to recover the cost borne by taxpayers. I believe it's the right thing to do. The tobacco companies should answer to the taxpayers for their actions. The taxpayers of our country should have their day in court.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, the tobacco companies say this lawsuit is pure politics, sir. What do you say?

The President. Well, if you look at the record of this administration, we've been out there on this issue a very long time. No one else ever tried to do that. We did our best to work with them and with the Congress to resolve many of these matters legislatively, and they declined. And I believe this is the appropriate thing to do.

North Korean Moratorium on Missile Testing

Q. Do you think the North Koreans, sir, are going to stick to their moratorium on missile testing now, after the lifting of sanctions?

The President. I do. And of course, if the future proves otherwise, then there are always other options open to us. But former Defense Secretary Bill Perry, and others who worked with him, worked very hard on this, and then our negotiator in Berlin did a very good job. We worked very closely with the Japanese and with the South Koreans on this approach. They are agreed with it. And it offers the most promising opportunity to lift the cloud of uncertainty and insecurity and danger that otherwise would hand over that whole region, including the American service men and women who are there.

So I'm very, very hopeful about it. If it works, it does; if it doesn't, then there will be other options open to us.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5.45 p.m in the West Portico at the White House.

Statement on the United States Lawsuit Against Major Tobacco Companies

September 22, 1999

Today the Justice Department announced that the United States is filing suit against the major tobacco companies to recover the costs of smoking-related illnesses. As I said in my State of the Union Address in January, smoking has cost taxpayers billions of dollars through Medicare, veterans' health, and other Federal health care programs. The Justice Department is taking the right course of action. It is time for America's taxpayers to have their day in court.

Memorandum on United States Contributions to the International Fund for Ireland

September 22, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 99-41

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Certification to Permit U.S. Contributions to the International Fund for Ireland with Fiscal Year 1998 and 1999 Funds

Pursuant to section 5(c) of the Anglo-Irish Agreement Support Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-415), as amended in section 2811 of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1999 (Public Law 105-277), I hereby certify that I am satisfied that: (1) the Board of the International Fund for Ireland, as a whole, is broadly representative of the interests of the communities in Ireland and Northern Ireland; and (2) disbursements from the International Fund (a) will be distributed to individuals and entities whose practices are consistent with principles of economic justice; and (b) will address the needs of both communities in Northern Ireland and will create employment opportunities in regions and communities of Northern Ireland suffering from high rates of unemployment.

You are authorized and directed to transmit this determination, together with the attached statement setting forth a detailed explanation of the basis for this certification, to the Congress.

This determination shall be effective immediately and shall be published in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

Remarks at a Gore 2000 Reception

September 22, 1999

Thank you, Peter. A lot of you know I've been hoarse, so for me, less will be more,

too. [Laughter] I wrote out this very elaborate speech here, you can see.

Let me say the most important thing I can say to you tonight is, thank you. Thank you for being here; thank you for your commitment; thank you for your friendship to me and to the Vice President, to Hillary, to Tipper, to our administration over these last years; and thank you for your commitment in this election.

I want to make some very brief points that I hope you won't be shy about repeating around the country. I think it's important that people remember what this country was like when Al Gore and I went out to the people in 1992 and asked them to give a chance to put people first. We had the largest, the deepest recession since the Great Depression. We had increasing social division which was aggravated by the previous administration's vetoes of things like the family and medical leave law and the Brady bill.

We asked the American people to give us a chance, and they did. And the results are clear. It's not even really an argument anymore. We've got the lowest unemployment, crime, and welfare rates in a generation, and the longest peacetime expansion in history.

Now, election time is coming. What is the Vice President's great challenge? People think at election time they're supposed to vote for change, and I agree with them. The American people always want change. The issue is what kind of change are we going to vote for. Are we going to build on all the good things that are going on in America to meet the big challenges still out there, or are we going to go back to the approach that got us in so much trouble in the first place? That is the central question.

Now, all of you know this, but the Vice President has played a more pivotal role in the good things this administration's been able to do than any Vice President in history. He cast a deciding vote on the economic plan in 1993, and just a few weeks ago he cast the deciding vote in the Senate on the plan to close the gun show loophole in the Brady bill, the background check law, a law that has, in spite of what its critics said would happen, resulted in 400,000 people who shouldn't have gotten guns not getting them,

and no inconvenience to hunters and sportspeople.

So along the way, he's played the critical role in our efforts to hook up all the schools in this country to the Internet and giving the American people the smallest Government since John Kennedy was President, in dealing with a whole host of foreign policy and national security issues, in managing a lot of our environmental policy, in helping us to generate the Technology Telecommunications Act, which has already generated about 300,000 jobs, high-paying jobs, for our country, and I could go on and on.

Even more importantly, he's told the American people how he would change things with an education plan, with a health care plan, with an anticrime plan, with a plan to save Social Security and Medicare. And in every critical respect, it is markedly different from the approach taken by all of the candidates running for the Republican nomination.

Now, it seems to me that if we go out to the American people and tell them those things, and tell them what he stands for, which he can speak for himself better than me, and what kind of person he is and what kind of record we've made and what the real choice is—the question is not whether we're going to change; it's how we're going to change.

He needs you. Everything we have worked for all these years requires your continued efforts. And I am profoundly grateful that you are here in support of him. He has not only been the finest Vice President in our history; he would be a magnificent President of the United States.

Mr. Vice President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:16 p.m. in the Concorde Room at the Hay-Adams Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Peter S. Knight, who introduced the President.

Remarks at a Gore 2000 Reception

September 22, 1999

Thank you very much. You have to give me 2 seconds to recover myself; Ann Richards just told me a joke. [Laughter] I've got to collect myself here. [Laughter]

I'll be quite brief tonight, first because I'm hoarse, and secondly, because you're all hungry, and thirdly, because I want to listen to the Vice President. But I want to say a few things, beginning with thank you. Thank you for being here; thank you for supporting his campaign; thank you for giving the good things that we have done these last 8 years a chance to be the springboard for positive change in America.

You know, a lot of people have forgotten that when Vice President Gore and I went out across the country in 1992, we were in the worst recession since the Great Depression. We had a lot of division in our society that was complicated by the previous administration's vetoes of the Brady bill, which is now the law, and the family and medical leave bill, which is now the law. And we asked the American people to give us a chance to put them first and to take a new direction. And the results are clear: We've had the lowest unemployment, welfare rolls, and crime rates in a generation, and the longest peacetime expansion in history.

So the question facing the American people now is not, as it is often put, do we need a change? The answer is: Yes, we do. The question is not, will we change? The question is: How are we going to change? Are you going to build on the good things that are going on in America now to face the unmet challenges of the country in the 21st century? Or will we basically go back to the approach that got us in so much trouble in the first place? That is the choice before the American people.

And I want you to know three things about Al Gore. Number one, he's done more with the job he's had the last 6½ years than any person in history, whether it was something very public and visible, like breaking the tie to give our economic plan the chance to bring the American economy back or breaking the tie to stand up for closing the gun show loophole so the background check law really works, to things that you may not see, like taking the lead in giving us the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, hooking up every classroom in this country to the Internet, managing big chunks of our foreign relations, being the main person in the administration in the drafting of the Telecommuni-

cations Act, which has already created 300,000 high-tech jobs in this country. The American people ought to know that.

The second thing that I think is very important is, he has really told you what he would do if he got to be President. And I'll let him speak for himself on that, but I think one of the principal reasons for the success we had in the last 6½ years is that I was forced to sit down and think through precisely what I would do if the American people gave me this job. And then when he joined the ticket, we sat down together, and we reissued a blueprint. He's done that in greater detail than anybody else.

The third thing I want you to know is, I believe, having done this job now, I have some sense of what it takes to succeed and who would be good at it. He has the character, the integrity, the experience, the intelligence, the energy, and the ideas necessary to lead this country into the new millennium.

He can only do it if you help him. I hope you will keep helping him, because America needs him, and I thank you for being here.

The Vice President.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:40 p.m. in the John Hay Room at the Hay-Adams Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Gov. Ann Richards of Texas.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives the "Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999"

September 23, 1999

Good morning. Thank you. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Thank you, and good morning. As all of you know, Congress has sent me the tax bill I have repeatedly pledged to veto. In a moment, I will do that because, at a time when America is moving in the right direction, this bill would turn us back to the failed policies of the past.

In the 12 years before I became President, irresponsible policies in Washington piled deficit upon deficit, quadrupling the national debt, leading to high interest rates, eventually bringing us the worst recession since the

Great Depression. Interest rates and unemployment were too high; wages were stagnant; growth was slow.

Vice President Gore and I came into office determined to change all that with a new economic strategy focused on fiscal discipline, expanded trade, investment in our people. The strategy has worked. In the past 6½ years, it has produced lower interest rates and ushered in the longest peacetime expansion in our history, with more than 19 million new jobs, rising wages, the lowest unemployment in a generation, and recordbreaking levels of homeownership. And by balancing the budget for the first time in a generation, we have changed red ink to black, turning a deficit of \$290 billion into a budget surplus of \$99 billion this year, with growing surpluses projected for years to come.

The American people understand that these are not simply numbers on charts. The progress we've made is something they see and feel every day in more jobs, higher paychecks, HOPE scholarships that help send their children to college, lower interest rates for owning a home and buying a car. This is the right course for our people, and our Nation. It is making a difference in the lives of Americans. And they want us to stay on it.

Our hard-won prosperity gives us, also, the chance to do something few people ever have, the chance to invest our surplus to meet the long-term challenges of America. We can lift the burden of debt from the shoulders of the next generation. We can secure the future of Social Security and Medicare. We can ensure a first-rate education and modern schools for our children.

Unfortunately, the tax bill Congress has sent me would deny those opportunities to the American people. The bill is too big, too bloated, places too great a burden on America's economy. It would force drastic cuts in education, health care, and other vital areas. It would cripple our ability to pay down the debt. It would not add a day to the Social Security Trust Fund. It would not add a day to the Medicare Trust Fund or modernize Medicare with prescription drug coverage. Nearly a trillion dollars in tax cuts, but not one dollar for Medicare. I will veto this bill because it is wrong for Medicare, wrong for

Social Security, wrong for education, and wrong for the economy.

Now, in the face of my determination to do this, many in Congress seem ready to throw in the towel. That would be a disservice to the American people. They sent us all here to get things done. And we have proved in the past, with the welfare reform bill of 1996 and the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, that we can work together to get things done and bring good results to our country. So, instead, I ask Congress not to go home until we have worked together once again, in a good-faith effort to meet the long-term challenges our people face.

First, let's reach a bipartisan agreement to save Social Security. The congressional majority's current plan and its so-called lockbox would fail to protect the Social Security surplus from being spent, and it would not add a day to the Social Security Trust Fund. Instead of this weak lockbox and no additions to the Trust Fund, I ask Congress to work with me to construct a real lockbox that would keep Social Security solvent until the year 2050.

Second, let's work together to save Medicare. With Medicare facing insolvency in just 16 years and with three out of four seniors lacking dependable, affordable prescription drug coverage, we know we must not put off this challenge. Months ago, I put forth a detailed plan for Medicare that would reform and modernize it with a voluntary prescription drug benefit. It would address the immediate, critical needs of teaching hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and other priorities, while extending Medicare's solvency to the year 2027.

Now, I don't expect the Republican majority to agree with me on every detail of my plan. I never thought that would be the case. But I do expect, and the American people have a right to expect, that we will work together in good faith to meet these long-term objectives.

Third, we should fulfill our obligations to the future by producing a real budget that pays down the debt, brings down interest rates, and makes vital investments in education, the environment, national security, biomedical research, health care, and other areas so vital to our future.

If we do this, within the framework I have outlined, we can not only invest in our future; we can pay down America's debt over the next 15 years and make our country debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was here and planted that big magnolia tree in 1835.

So I say again, let's do first things first: pay down the debt; save Social Security; save and modernize Medicare; invest in education.

In the days ahead, I will ask the Republican majority to work with me to fulfill these fundamental obligations we have to our children and to our future. If we can work together to meet these objectives, we can also work together to pass tax relief we can afford, affordable, middle-class tax relief that reflects the priorities of both parties and the values of the American people. That would be a good bill I would happily sign.

Every generation of Americans is called upon to meet the challenges of its time. But few have the unprecedented opportunity we have to meet the challenges not only of our time but the great challenges of our future. We must seize that opportunity.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:10 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the "Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999"

September 23, 1999

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 2488, the "Taxpayer Refund and Relief Act of 1999," because it ignores the principles that have led us to the sound economy we enjoy today and emphasizes tax reduction for those who need it the least.

We have a strong economy because my Administration and the Congress have followed the proper economic course over the past 6 years. We have focused on reducing deficits, paying down debt held by the public, bringing down interest rates, investing in our people, and opening markets. There is \$1.7 trillion less debt held by the public today

than was forecast in 1993. This has contributed to lower interest rates, record business investment, greater productivity growth, low inflation, low unemployment, and broad-based growth in real wages—and the first back-to-back budget surpluses in almost half a century.

This legislation would reverse the fiscal discipline that has helped make the American economy the strongest it has been in generations. By using projected surpluses to provide a risky tax cut, H.R. 2488 could lead to higher interest rates, thereby undercutting any benefits for most Americans by increasing home mortgage payments, car loan payments, and credit card rates. We must put first things first, pay down publicly held debt, and address the long-term solvency of Medicare and Social Security. My Mid-Session Review of the Budget presented a framework in which we could accomplish all of these things and also provide an affordable tax cut.

The magnitude of the tax cuts in H.R. 2488 and the associated debt service costs would be virtually as great as all of the on-budget surpluses the Congressional Budget Office projects for the next 10 years. This would leave virtually none of the projected on-budget surplus available for addressing the long-term solvency of Medicare, which is currently projected by its Trustees to be insolvent by 2015, or of Social Security, which then will be a negative cash-flow position, or for critical funding for priorities like national security, education, health care, law enforcement, science and technology, the environment, and veterans' programs.

The bill would cause the Nation to forgo the unique opportunity to eliminate completely the burden of the debt held by the public by 2015 as proposed by my Administration's Mid-Session Review. The elimination of this debt would have a beneficial effect on interest rates, investment, and the growth of the economy. Moreover, paying down debt is tantamount to cutting taxes. Each one-percentage point decline in interest rates would mean a cut of \$200 billion to \$250 billion in mortgage costs borne by American consumers over the next 10 years. Also, if we do not erase the debt held by the public, our children and grandchildren

will have to pay higher taxes to offset the higher Federal interest costs on this debt.

Budget projections are inherently uncertain. For example, the Congressional Budget Office found that, over the last 11 years, estimates of annual deficits or surpluses 5 years into the future erred by an average of 13 percent of annual outlays—a rate that in 2004 would translate into an error of about \$250 billion. Projections of budget surpluses 10 years into the future are surely even more uncertain. The prudent course in the face of these uncertainties is to avoid making financial commitments—such as massive tax cuts—that will be very difficult to reverse.

The bill relies on an implausible legislative assumption that many of its major provisions expire after 9 years and all of the provisions are repealed after 10 years. This scenario would create uncertainty and confusion for taxpayers, and it is highly unlikely that it would ever be implemented. Moreover, this artifice causes estimated 10-year costs to be understated by about \$100 billion, at the same time that it sweeps under the rug the exploding costs beyond the budget window. If the tax cut were continued, its budgetary impact would grow even more severe, reaching about \$2.7 trillion between 2010 and 2019, just at the time when the baby boomers begin to retire, Medicare becomes insolvent, and Social Security comes under strain. If the bill were to become law, it would leave America permanently in debt. The bill as a whole would disproportionately benefit the wealthiest Americans by, for example, lowering capital gains rates, repealing the estate and gift tax, increasing maximum IRA and retirement plan contribution limits, and weakening pension anti-discrimination protections for moderate- and low-income workers.

The bill would not meet the Budget Act's existing pay-as-you-go requirements, which have helped provide the discipline necessary to bring us from an era of large and growing budget deficits to the potential for substantial surpluses. It would also automatically trigger across-the-board cuts (or sequesters) in a number of Federal programs. These cuts would result in a reduction of more than \$40 billion in the Medicare program over the next 5 years. Starting in 2002, they would

also lead to the elimination of numerous programs with broad support, including: crop insurance, without which most farmers and ranchers could not secure the financing from banks needed to operate their farms and ranches; veterans readjustment benefits, denying education and training to more than 450,000 veterans, reservists, and dependents; Federal support for programs such as child care for low-income families and Meals on Wheels for senior citizens; on many others.

As I have repeatedly stressed, I want to find common ground with the Congress on a fiscal plan that will best serve the American people. I have profound differences, however, with the extreme approach that the Republican majority has adopted. It would provide a tax cut for the wealthiest Americans and would hurt average Americans by denying them the benefits of debt reduction and depriving them of the certainty that my proposals for Medicare and Social Security solvency would provide as they plan for their retirement.

I hope to work with Members of Congress to find a common path to honor our commitment to senior citizens, help working families with targeted tax relief for moderate- and lower-income workers, provide a better life for our children, and improve the standard of living of all Americans.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 23, 1999.

Remarks at a Memorial Service for Lane Kirkland

September 23, 1999

Irena, members of the Kirkland family, Father O'Donovan, Monsignor Higgins, distinguished Members of Congress, visitors from other lands, and my fellow Americans:

I am profoundly honored to be here to pay tribute to a person I admired for many years before I ever thought I would have the chance to work with him as President, a man whom I was honored to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom, because he was in our time the very embodiment of the cause of freedom, a man who was both brilliant

and articulate, and still almost irrationally passionate about the things he knew to be right.

Back in 1985 Lane Kirkland went home to South Carolina, to the State university, and gave one of the most eloquent speeches on the role of Government ever delivered. Perhaps the most memorable line was his reflection on the terms “liberal” and “conservative.” If you look at who is here today to pay tribute to Lane, it’s a pretty good place for me to start my remarks.

He said, “As one who has been afflicted by both labels, depending on the stance of the afflictor and the foreign or domestic nature of the issue, I doubt their utility in this day and age for anyone except slapdash journalists.”

Not only did Lane reject such labels, we all know that he defied the labels, “liberal” and “conservative.” In fact, in many ways, he defied all labels.

He was a man of remarkable contrasts. You’ve already heard others speak about his humility. He was a true five-star general in the global fight for human liberty, but so down to earth, he was offended if anyone called him anything but Lane.

He was such a powerful force for justice, he could lead hundreds of thousands of working people to march on Washington. But for years, the most powerful force in his own home was a little dachshund named Stanley. He was a man of idealism and strong opinions, but he was genuinely open to people who had the courage to differ with him. He was a gifted intellectual, but on Sunday afternoons, he put his books aside to watch the Redskins on TV. He was a man of the arts, whose perhaps favorite artistry was his harmonica rendition of “Solidarity Forever.” For all of his contrasts, there was a remarkable consistency underlying everything he thought and said and did.

Both George Meany and Lane used to say, “The role of the trade unions is to try to keep the big guys from kicking the little guys around.” That was his philosophy of life. And believe me, I got my fair share of lectures about it. [*Laughter*]

He lived it when he walked the picket lines with hotel workers in Las Vegas, when he got arrested with miners in Appalachia, when

he quoted the fiery words of Zapata to mistreated Latino janitors in L.A. He lived it when he stood in solidarity with the oppressed workers of the Soviet bloc or helped to tear down the Iron Curtain in Poland and elsewhere in the communist world. He lived it when he struggled for racial and gender equality, when he fought to strengthen the Civil Rights Act, when he championed the cause of women and minorities within the America labor movement, when he helped to rescue the NAACP from bankruptcy.

You could see it in his own office, where he always treated even the most junior members of his staff with the same dignity and respect he demanded for working men and women throughout the world. He stood up for the little guy. It was his ideology. It was also his way of life.

I want to conclude today with a story that was passed along to us at the White House by one of Lane’s closest advisers. After he passed away, one of the medics who came to the house took Irena aside and said, “When I first took this call, the name Kirkland didn’t ring any bells. But when I arrived, I realized who your husband was. As the shop steward for my EMS unit, I want you to know how grateful I am for everything your husband did for us. He was a wonderful man, and I know that everyone in my unit feels the same way.”

Well, Irena, for all the distinguished speakers who will pay tribute to your husband today, I don’t think any of us could do better than that. So let me just say that I am grateful for this giant of a man, a true American hero, a man who stood up for the little guy. I hope all of us can be faithful to his admonition to do the same. It is the only way we can give him the legacy he has richly earned.

God bless you and your family.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:30 p.m. in Gaston Hall at Georgetown University. In his remarks, he referred to Mr. Kirkland’s widow, Irena; Father Leo J. O’Donovan, president, Georgetown University; and Monsignor George G. Higgins, former director, Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference (later known as the United States Catholic Conference).

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters

September 23, 1999

Middle East Peace Process

The President. Let me say, I am delighted to see Chairman Arafat again. We have a lot to discuss, obviously, about our bilateral relations, and especially about the permanent status talks. He and Prime Minister Barak have agreed on a very ambitious timetable, to have a framework agreement by February, final agreement by next September. The United States is prepared to do all we can to assist them in coming to an agreement.

And I would like to take this opportunity to say that we should first meet our own obligations under the Wye agreement. And I hope the Congress will give me the funding both for Israel and for the Palestinian Authority, so that we can meet our obligations there. And we're working hard. We're into the final budget legs now, and I'm quite hopeful.

Permanent Status Talks

Q. Mr. President, what did Chairman Arafat ask you vis-a-vis the permanent status talks? Did he ask you for a more active role, more involvement, sir?

The President. We're just starting—we're getting off to a late start, so we're just starting our conversation. But you know, I've been active in this all along, for 6½ years, now. I intend to continue to be active, to do whatever I can to help the parties come to an agreement. If they're willing—and they must be willing, or they would not have agreed to such an ambitious timetable—then I'll do what I can.

Israel-Syria Negotiations

Q. [Inaudible]—about the Palestinian-Israeli track? Prime Minister Barak said just yesterday, any time, any place, for the Syrians to resume negotiations. There has yet to be any positive response there. What's your sense of what the hangup is there, and what can you do to try to move that along?

The President. Well, we're working on it, and I actually am quite hopeful.

President's Involvement in the Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, is there a chance that you'll visit the area, to give it a push on both tracks?

The President. I would do anything that would be helpful to facilitate the agreement. Right now, I'm not sure that would be the most helpful thing. I would do anything I could to facilitate the agreement.

Palestinian State

Q. The question of the state of Palestine, Mr. President, are you willing to spend more capital and secure your legacy as the President of the United States who achieved the Palestinian state and the peaceful settlement of the Middle East?

The President. Well, I'm certainly willing to do anything I can to achieve a peaceful settlement in the Middle East. The question of the state, as you know—that was a very well-worded question. Congratulations. [Laughter] But the question of the state is one to be resolved in the permanent status talks that have just begun, so I think they will resolve it. I think, obviously, that the two sides will make an agreement on that, or there won't be an agreement.

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. Thank you, pool.

Q. Mr. President, what can you tell us—

Q. Mr. President, in your U.N. speech—

Israel's Role in the Peace Process

Q. [Inaudible]—what can you tell us about the performance of the Israeli side so far in the last one month?

The President. I'm encouraged. I think you should all be encouraged by the work that they've done together.

Press Secretary Lockhart. Thank you, everyone.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Statement on Education
Appropriations Legislation**
September 23, 1999

The House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations subcommittee today passed a partisan bill that would seriously undermine our efforts to strengthen public education, protect workers, and move people from welfare to work.

This bill is proof that America's highest priority—improving our schools—remains the Republican Congress' lowest priority. The bill eliminates our effort to hire quality teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. It denies hundreds of thousands of young people access to after-school programs, fails to improve and expand Head Start, cuts the successful America Reads program, cuts educational technology, and eliminates the GEAR UP program, which helps young people prepare early for success in college. It fails to give public schools the resources to succeed, and does nothing to demand accountability for results.

The bill also terminates the successful School-To-Work program and Youth Opportunity Grants, and makes deep cuts in programs that help dislocated workers, provide worker protections, and ensure worker safety. It undermines America's efforts to move people from welfare to work by reneging on our bipartisan commitment to the States on welfare reform. It contains a range of unacceptable provisions, which would prevent the government from effectively protecting the health and safety of the American people.

The subcommittee bill would also underfund public health priorities, including preventive health, mental health and substance abuse, health care access for the poor, and our efforts to reduce racial health disparities and the spread of AIDS worldwide. It would prevent us from continuing to provide important patient protections for American workers and improving our Nation's organ distribution system. It also would threaten our ability to manage key entitlement programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid.

I warned earlier today that the tax bill sent to me as part of the Republican budget plan would lead to major reductions in key na-

tional investments in education and other programs. The subcommittee's bill today is another step in the same misguided direction.

This bill is unacceptable. Our Nation's children deserve much better. I sent the Congress a budget for the programs covered by this bill that provided for essential investments in America's needs and was fully provided for. If this bill were to come to me in its current form, I would veto it. Instead, I urge the House not to pass the subcommittee's bill and to work on a bipartisan basis with my administration on acceptable legislation.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting the National Money
Laundering Strategy for 1999**

September 23, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the provisions of section 2(a) of Public Law 105-310 (18 U.S.C. 5341(a)(2)), I transmit herewith the National Money Laundering Strategy for 1999.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 23, 1999.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on the
National Emergency With
Respect to Iran**

September 23, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with

respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order 12957 of March 15, 1995.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 23, 1999.

**Remarks at the National Democratic
Institute Dinner**

September 23, 1999

Thank you very much. If you've been following the news, you probably know I'm a little hoarse, and I know you're a little tired, so you won't have to put up with me for very long here.

But I'm grateful for the chance to be here. I strongly support the NDI. I thank Ken Wollack and Paul Kirk and all the rest of you for the work you do. I thank my friend Senator Kennedy for being the embodiment of the commitment to democracy and freedom and human rights. Mrs. Kirkland, we're glad to see you here tonight, and I was honored to be at the service at Georgetown today.

I want to thank you for giving this award to President Shevardnadze. He has been a friend of the United States and a friend of ours. He has stood for democracy. You heard him tell the story tonight. He's like anybody who has converted; once he converted, he was really stuck as a true believer. He has endured assassination attempts, illegal coup attempts. He has been through ethnic difficulties in his own country. He has been through pressures from the outside and problems from the inside. He has watched the economy go down and things come apart and come back together again. But once he decided he believed, he stayed hitched, and he embodies something that I think we don't think about enough.

We talk a lot about what it takes to establish democracy, but once having established it, there are always people who will try to twist it to their own end, because we may eliminate communism from the world but we have not eliminated lust for power or greed that leads to corruption or the hatreds and fears in the human heart that lead to the oppression of those who are different from us in race or religion or belong to some other

minority group. This man has stayed the course when the price was high, and I thank you for awarding this to him tonight.

I thank you for giving Hillary this award tonight. I'm sorry Monica McWilliams couldn't be here. That's the only problem, a ruptured appendix, I have seen those Irish women unable to overcome almost instantaneously. *[Laughter]*

I was hoping—Hillary just got in today from out of town and I didn't have a chance to talk to her about what she was going to say tonight. And I was sitting there in my chair, saying, "Gosh, I hope you're going to tell them about those people in that African village." And I hope all my fellow Americans were listening tonight.

I'll tell you, when we walked in that room in Senegal, and all those women came with their token men supporters—*[laughter]*—a role with which I am becoming increasingly familiar. *[Laughter]* I'm telling you, it made chills run up and down my spine. And I wish, too, that every American could have seen it because then we would understand what a precious thing a vote is. And we would understand what a precious responsibility the public trust is.

We, in our country, we want democracy for everybody else, but sometimes we forget that it carries responsibilities of citizenship and responsibilities for those of us in representative positions to keep it going. We think we're so strong, nothing can happen to our democracy. But when a man like Yitzhak Rabin is killed, when we see our friends in Northern Ireland in both communities vote for a clear path to the future of peace and reconciliation and then vote for representatives to get the job done and they still can't seem to get it done—we're nowhere near giving up, by the way; George Mitchell is over there working on it right now—but when you see that, it is an agony because you're always afraid somehow, something will happen to twist it awry.

But what Hillary has done with this Vital Voices movement is simply to give voice and power to practical and compassionate women who find real human answers to human problems and who don't let lust for political power in and of itself or fear of those who are different from them or the desire for personal

recognition get in the way of their desire to perfect democracy.

What I would like to say to all of you tonight is, when we go to Bosnia or we go to Kosovo to stop ethnic cleansing or we help to train Africans so they can prevent another Rwanda or Burundi from occurring again, when we labor in America for peace in the Middle East and try to empower ordinary people everywhere, we should remember with humility that we are supposed to behave in our respective positions of citizenship and authority the way those village women did in Senegal, the way the Irish women do in the Vital Voices conference, the way the women did who had the microcredit loans that I have seen my wife visit on the Indian subcontinent or in Southeast Asia or in countless African and Latin American villages. People who have never had it before, you see, when they get it, they know what they want to do.

And we in the United States have a serious responsibility to the rest of the world and to our own people to stand for peace and freedom and democracy and human rights, and to stand for it at home as well as abroad and to never forget that the purpose of power is to liberate the human spirit, not to grasp onto yesterday's arrangements in a fleeting life that no matter how long we hold onto power, will be over all too soon, anyway.

Lane Kirkland has over 75 years old; to me, he was a very young man. We are all just here for a little while. The premise of democracy is, if people are truly empowered to live out their dreams and help other people solve their problems, that will bring more happiness and self-fulfillment than picking a few of us to increase our wealth and power or the power of our crowd to oppress another. And we need a little humility here along with our devotion to democracy.

We need to remember the travails of a man like President Shevardnadze who puts his life on the line when he shows up for work. And we need to remember the courage of people like those Irish women or those Senegalese women and their hardy male supporters who believe they could change the world if they only had a voice.

I am grateful to you for honoring this President and my wife, who has done more than anyone I know to give those kind of

people a voice. But when you leave here, remember that all of us can do that every day, right here.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 p.m. in the ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Kenneth Wollack, president, and Paul Kirk, chairman, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs; Irena Kirkland, widow of Lane Kirkland; President Eduard Shevardnadze of Ukraine, winner of the 1999 W. Averell Harriman Democracy Award; Monica McWilliams, cofounder, Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, and winner of the 1998 award, who was scheduled to present the 1999 award to Hillary Clinton; and former Senator George J. Mitchell, who chaired the multiparty talks in Northern Ireland.

Remarks Announcing the Adoption Bonus Awards

September 24, 1999

Thank you very much. When we have events here in this room, with people who have come to share their experiences, very often I feel like a fifth wheel. I think everything that needs to be said has already been said. [Laughter] But I want to begin by thanking Dawn Keane for her wonderful statement; her husband, Steve; and Sean, Brian, and Sarah. They're beautiful children. They did a good job at the microphone, didn't they? [Laughter] I want to thank Olivia Golden and Pat Montoya for their work at HHS on this important issue.

I'd like to thank this remarkable bipartisan delegation from the House of Representatives here, Dave Camp and Nancy Johnson and Ben Cardin and Maxine Waters, Sandy Levin and Congressman DeLay. This may be the only issue all six of these people agree on. [Laughter] And—Tom's nodding his head up and down. [Laughter]

I'll tell you a funny story—this is a true story. The other day I was reading a profile of Tom DeLay in the newspaper. And I got about halfway through, and he was giving me the devil for something. You know, he's very good at that. [Laughter] And he started grinding on my golf game and saying that I didn't count my scores and all this, and I was getting really angry. [Laughter] And then

I get to the next part of the story, and it talks all about his experience and his commitment to adoption and to foster children and the personal experience that he and his wife had. And my heart just melted. And all of a sudden, I didn't care what he said about my golf game. [*Laughter*]

And I say that to make this point: The Keane family, the Manis, the Brown, the Vasquez families who are behind me today, they represent what we all know is basic and fundamental about our families and our country—more important than anything else we can think of. And they open their homes and their hearts to children, and they open our hearts to them and to each other as we work for more stories like those we celebrate today.

I'd also like to say a special hello to the Badeau family. Some of you may remember this. Two years ago, almost, Sue and Hector Badeau joined us at the White House when I signed the Adoption and Safe Families Act. They brought 18 of the 22 children they have adopted. Now, you need to know that, as if they didn't have enough to deal with, this summer they also welcomed into their home a family of eight Kosovar refugees. So if you ever need proof that there's no limit to human goodness, you can look at Sue and Hector Badeau. I'd like for them to stand. Where are they? There you go. They've got some of their kids here. Stand up. [*Applause*] Thank you. God bless you. Thank you.

I would also like to say just a very brief word of thanks to Hillary. You heard her tell the story of her involvement in this, but when we were in law school together, before we were married, she was talking to me about how messed up the foster care and adoption laws were in the country, how many ridiculous barriers there were. And not long after we moved to Little Rock and I became attorney general of our State, she took a case for a young couple who had had a child from foster care for 3 years that they desperately wanted to adopt—this is over 20 years ago. And together they changed the law in our State so that foster parents could be considered for adoption, something that used to be verboten in most States in the country.

So I've watched her work on these issues now for almost 30 years, and I am very grate-

ful that one of the many blessings of our time in the White House has been the chance to make a difference on these adoption and foster care issues, and I thank her for making it possible.

Finally, let me say, again, I want to say a special word of thanks to the Members of Congress in both parties who have come to this event today. We have had a raging, often stimulating, occasionally maddening, debate on what should be the role of Government over the last 5 years in this town. But we have all agreed that Government has a role to try to protect children but to facilitate the most rapid, reasonable, orderly process for both foster care and for transition to adoption.

Hillary said that the House had adopted this provision to let kids coming out of foster care keep their Medicaid until they're 21. I'll just give you one more example of how these issues unify us. Within a 36-hour period, about 6 months ago, my cousin, who runs the public housing unit in the little town where I was born in Arkansas, which has 8,000 or 10,000 people, came up to a HUD conference. And she spent the night with me and we were having breakfast, drinking coffee, and she says, "You know, you've got to do something about these foster kids. They keep going out of the—they come out of the foster homes, and they've got no money, and they need to do some things." And then the next day, literally within 36 hours, I'm talking to these people from New York City who tell me it's maybe the biggest social problem they have now, with all these kids coming out of foster care. So this is an issue that spans the experience of America, the whole sweep of it. And I'm very grateful—I'm grateful that we have this consensus, and I'm grateful that they've acted on it. I urge the Senate to follow suit.

Now, you've already heard about the things that we're doing to try to double the number of children we help move into permanent homes. We have new evidence that these efforts are bearing fruit. The Department of Health and Human Services has just given me a report that tracks our progress in meeting our adoption goals. It shows that the number of adoptions from the foster care system increased from 28,000 in 1996, to

36,000 in 1998. That is the first significant increase in adoptions since the national foster care program was created almost 20 years ago. Now, that's an amazing thing. That's more than—it's about a 30 percent increase. That's a very impressive increase in 2 years. And we are well on our way to meeting our goal of 56,000 in 2002, doubling the number. For all of you that had anything to do with that, I say thank you. You should be very proud of yourselves.

Now, if you look at this HHS report—and I urge those of you who are interested in it to actually get it and scan it, at least—you will see how much this bipartisan cooperation I talked about and the work that's being done by people in the trenches to clear away the barriers is making a difference, a stunning example of what we can do when we put our children first. You will see that we have acted on each and every one of the 11 recommendations set forth in the original Adoption 2002 report, breaking down barriers to adoptions, ensuring accountability, rewarding innovation, supporting adoptive families themselves.

One of the key recommendations we adopted into law in 1997 was to give States, for the first time, financial incentives to help children move from foster to adoptive homes. Under the new bonus system, States are entitled to up to \$4,000 or \$6,000, depending on whether the child has special needs, for each adoption above their previous average.

Today I have the honor of presenting the first round of these awards, worth \$20 million, to 35 of our 50 States. The good news is that these States did this, using creative new approaches and exceeding their own high goals. Illinois, for example—listen to this—the State of Illinois increased its adoptions 112 percent—112—yes, you can clap for Illinois. *[Applause]* That's good.

Now, the bad news, if you can call it that, is that even though we believed this would work, we didn't think it would work this well this quickly—*[laughter]*—and we didn't put enough money in to give all the States all the money to which they're entitled. So I hope we can rectify that, because I think we all think that we want to give the States the incentives to figure out how best to do this.

But the fact is, I think all of us are very proud of what these States have done for some of their most vulnerable citizens. And I look forward to working with the Congress to make up this shortfall and get the other 15 States above their goals as well.

Today I am also awarding \$5.5 million in adoption opportunity grants to outstanding public and private organizations in 16 of our States to help fund research and new ways of increasing interstate adoptions and adoptions of minority children. Together these efforts will help to accelerate the remarkable progress we've seen.

Now, again let me say, I think the big goal we ought to have for this legislative session is to get the Senate to follow the lead of the House and schedule a vote on the Chafee-Rockefeller bill to ensure that the foster children are not cast out in the cold when their time in foster care ends. I hope—I know if we can get it up and get it on the calendar, it will pass with the same overwhelming bipartisan support that we've seen in the House. So I urge all of you to do what you can to make sure that that is a big priority for the Senate, and I will do my part.

Together, we can help our foster children—all of them—first grow up in good homes and, if they turn 18 as foster children, to make a good transition from—transit to independence with health care, education, housing, and counseling.

Now ultimately, let me say the credit in all this does not really belong to all of the political leaders, even though they've worked very hard, all of us have together. It does not belong to all the public servants, even though there is a real new attitude, I think, in the organizations, the social services organizations, to try to do the right thing and move this along.

But none of this will work if there aren't good people in every community like the Keanes, the Manises, the Browns, the Vasquezes, the Badeaus, who are willing to give a child unconditional love and a good upbringing. They are the proof of the unlimited goodness of the human heart. All the rest of us are trying to do is to unleash it. And we need to keep right on doing that.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to adoptive parents Dawn and Steve Keane, and their children Sean, Brian, and Sarah, who introduced the President. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

Remarks to the Fall Meeting of the Democratic National Committee

September 24, 1999

Thank you. Well, I'm glad to see you. And I seemed to have recovered enough of my voice to get through this, so I'll try to do that.

Governor Romer, Representative Sanchez, Mayor Archer, Joe Andrew, Andy Tobias and Beth Dozoretz, and all of our team. I wanted to begin by saying a simple thank-you to all the members of the DNC and to the leaders. I want to say a special word of thanks to the finance staff, with whom I have been dealing a lot lately; we've been working hard. And they've done a very good job, and we've done a good job under pretty difficult circumstances, raising the funds that our candidates and our party needs. And I want to thank them for their work.

I want to congratulate the convention team that was announced, Governor Romer, Lydia Camarillo, Don Foley, all the others; thank you for your determination to make Los Angeles a great success. And I want to thank my friend of many, many years, Roy Romer, for the work that he has done for our party.

I will recommend to the DNC tomorrow that, as Governor Romer moves on to this new responsibility, we elect Mayor Rendell of Philadelphia to the position of general chair. For those of you who know him, he has provided an absolutely astonishing leadership for us there. We've not had a Governor in Pennsylvania since I've been President. In the last election we carried the greater Philadelphia area by 370,000 votes, I think, about 20,000 votes more than our margin in the State of Pennsylvania. And in the city of Philadelphia, in 1996, for the first time the Vice President and I had the same victory margin that President Kennedy did in 1960, when there were 400,000 more peo-

ple there. I say that to tell you I think our party has been well led and will be well led.

I just want to mention one thing that Roy Romer will always have on his résumé. In 1998, when we gained five seats in the midterm elections, though we were outspent by \$100 million—\$100 million—and all the pundits said—I want you to remember this, as you're treated to more punditocracy over the next year—[laughter]—all the pundits said we were going to be wiped out. They were on all these shows, “I believe they'll lose 20 seats.” “No, I think they're going to lose 30 seats.” [Laughter] “No, I believe they might lose more.” “And they're certainly going to lose five or six in the Senate. They'll never be able to stop anything there.” I heard it for a year.

It was a terrible Senate election for us in terms of who was up, who was not. We lost no Senate seats. We gained five House seats, and it was the first time since 1822 that the party of the President had won seats in the midterm of a second term. [Applause] Thank you.

So for all of you that were part of that, I thank you. I thank you. And I want to just take a few moments to try to talk about where we are in this moment as a country, as a party, by referring briefly to the recent past and by looking at the present and the future.

When I first announced for President—it's amazing how much quicker things are happening now. You know, I did not even announce for President until October of 1991. It's September; I feel like I've been going through this campaign all my life. [Laughter] And I'm not even running. [Laughter]

But anyway, back to the subject at hand. In 1991, when I announced, I asked for change in our party, in our national leadership, and in our country. I asked America to embrace the new challenges that we faced with new ideas based on old-fashioned values of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans.

I asked that we have a new role, a clearly defined role, for our National Government, that didn't say we could solve all the problems, but didn't say we could walk away from them either. I asked us to stop demonizing Government, on the one hand, but to stop

defending everything Government did, on the other, and instead to focus on what we could do to give the American people the tools to meet their challenges, to solve their problems.

And then I asked the Vice President to join the ticket. We put out our economic plan, and we asked the American people to give us a chance to put people first. People gave us a chance in '92. We made a lot of very tough decisions. We passed an economic plan, I would remind you, with not a single Republican vote, with the Vice President breaking the tie in the Senate. And they told everybody in America we'd raise their taxes—even though, for most people, we hadn't—and that it would be a disaster and that a recession was on the way.

Then we passed a crime bill to put 100,000 police on the street, to ban assault weapons. We passed the Brady bill. They told everybody in America we were going to come take their guns away. *[Laughter]* Didn't they? And in 1994, they put out their "Contract With America," and they thumped us good—they beat us good—because the voters had not felt the benefits of the economic plan. We had just passed the crime bill a couple of months before, and for all they knew, some Government bureaucrat was going to knock on their door and take their guns away. Probably—that alone probably cost us the House of Representatives. And everybody said—same crowd said, "Oh, these guys can't win, they're history." Remember that? All their, "It's over."

I always believed if we got up every day and thought about the American people, the kind of people I met in New Hampshire that were being evicted from their homes, and we just thought about the people that nobody else in Washington seems to think about and we kept asking ourselves, what is the right thing to do for them, that we could marry good politics and good policy, and it would work out all right.

Well, 1996 came around. And the economy was cooking, and the country was pulling back together. And I went to New Hampshire, where they beat a Congressman who voted for the crime bill with the assault weapons ban in it. And I never will forget this. I went in '96 to New Hampshire—you know

I have a special feeling about the place. *[Laughter]* They voted for me twice, and they normally don't vote for Democrats.

And I got all these people there, and a bunch of them were kind of big, old rural guys in their plaid shirts, obviously hunters. And I stood up before this crowd in New Hampshire, and I said, "You know, in 1992 you voted for me to give me a chance. Then in 1994, you beat a Congressman who voted for my crime bill—I caused him to get beat—because they told you that we were going to take your guns away. And I feel terrible about it. So here's what I want you to do. If any one of you suffered any inconvenience at all at hunting season since we passed that bill, I want you to vote against me, too. But if you didn't, they lied to you, and you need to get even." *[Laughter]*

And so a majority of the voters in New Hampshire, a State where both independents and Republicans outnumbered registered Democrats, agreed. Then in 1998, as I said, under the leadership of our team, we ratified the course the country was on.

I think it is very important—a lot of you, almost all of you come from somewhere else. You actually live in America, with real people. *[Laughter]* And you go about your business every day. And it seems that a huge part of our job every year is to make sure that people can think for themselves and follow their own instincts and see the world as they experience it and not be swayed too much either by the financial advantage of other side or the conventional wisdom that emanates out of Washington. So I want you to be of good cheer and proud, because America is a better place than it was in 1992.

You know, I saw a survey the other day that said that times had been so good for so long, the American people couldn't remember when it was bad and tended to give everybody good ratings on the economy—Bush, Hoover, the whole crowd. *[Laughter]* It's been good a long time. *[Laughter]*

So let's take just a little walk down memory lane here, shall we? *[Laughter]* In the 12 years before I become President, the administrations told the American people the Government was the problem, and they railed against the Government. But under them the Government got bigger, not small; and the

deficits got bigger. They said that supply side economics would overcome the laws of arithmetic—[laughter]—that if you cut taxes and increased spending, it would somehow balance the budget. And boy, we stuck with that theory for a long time. We just kept doing the same thing over and over again. And after 12 years, we had quadrupled the debt of the United States of America. We had very high interest rates.

And it actually did work in the short run. My retired senior Senator, Dale Bumpers, used to say, “If you let me write a couple billion dollars’ worth of hot checks, I’ll show you a good time, too.” [Laughter] So, you know, it worked for a while; I mean, you know, we had all this money, and who knew where it came from? They just kept throwing this old money out there at us.

And so we got out of the early recession and got through ’84 and got through ’88. Then, lo and behold—but we never could get a recovery really going. We kept falling back, kept falling back. And lo and behold, after the ’88 election, we found ourselves in the worst recession since the Great Depression. And wages were stagnant, and unemployment was high. And unlike previous recessions, we couldn’t exactly go into deficit spending, because that’s what got us there in the first place.

So the Vice President and I went to the American people, and we said, “Look, we’re going to have to get rid of this thing, and here’s our plan to cut it in half, and after we do that, we’ll go on and get rid of it. We’ve got to do it because otherwise, for the people who care about the business economy; we’re never going to get interest rates down; we’re not going to be competitive in the global economy. And for our liberals that want the Government to have money to invest in social programs and education, we’re never going to do it because the budget’s paralyzed by the deficit.” And we’d gotten to the point where we were spending about 15 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes just to pay interest on the debt.

So we said, “We’ll find a way to do it. It won’t be easy, and we’ll make a lot of people mad. We might have to get rid of a bunch of stuff. But if you vote for us, we’ll go after the deficit. We’ll continue to invest in the

education of our children, science and technology, and helping the environment. But we’ll get rid of a bunch of stuff, too. And we’ll give you a new Government that’s smaller, but more active in the ways it needs to be.”

And the people gave us a chance. And it was an argument when we were elected; that is, we made an argument to the American people. And in ’94, in their lives it was still an argument. And we won the argument in ’92; we lost the argument in ’94. But the reason we won it in ’96 and ’98 is, it wasn’t an argument anymore. There were facts out there in people’s lives. So the debate took on a whole different turn when people’s lives, real people’s lives, had been changed.

And now we have the longest peacetime expansion in our history, instead of the worst recession since the Great Depression. We have over 19 million jobs, instead of a handful. We have rising wages instead of stagnant wages. We’ve got the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls—rates in 32 years, and the lowest crime rate in 26 years. Folks, this is not an argument anymore. It’s a fact, and you should be proud of it. [Applause] Thank you.

Instead of a \$290 billion deficit, we’ve got a \$99 billion surplus, and projected surpluses into the future for years. The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. The food is safer. We’ve cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps as they did in 12 years. Ninety percent of our kids are immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of this country. Nearly everybody now can afford to go to college because of the HOPE scholarship and the other college aid we’ve provided.

The strategy has been validated. You can get rid of the deficit and still invest in the things you have to invest in. We’ve eliminated hundreds of programs but nearly doubled investment in education, while getting rid of the deficit. You can expand trade in ways that help ordinary people. You can balance the environment and the economy, and you can balance work and family.

And I think this is very, very important for the American people to make the decisions now about where we go from now to 2000, because, you know, a lot of political

rhetoric, since people always want to change—and that's a good thing, not a bad thing, by the way. But a lot of political rhetoric is premised on the fact that we were all born yesterday; the older I get, the more I wish that was true. [Laughter] It would be nice for individuals like me but very bad for a country. So we can't allow a collective amnesia here.

There is a history here. There was a clash of ideas. Then there was a test of ours, just like there was a test of theirs. So the question is not whether we're going to change but how are we going to keep changing.

Here, now, what are we going to do with this surplus? I vetoed their tax bill yesterday; you all know that. But, you know, I will say again, I still believe there is the opportunity for us to work together. This is not an election yet. I mean, the election may be going on in the newspapers every day, but here, in the minds of the American people, they still think we should be drawing a paycheck to work for them. Where you live, for most people, the election is not going on. If you live in Iowa or New Hampshire, it's already going on. If you live in Arkansas, you're still worried about the price of cattle, you know?

So we got hired to show up for work, and we still get a paycheck here every 2 weeks—all these guys in Congress and me—we still get paid. And I believe that it is imperative—the reason I vetoed the tax bill is it would make it impossible for America to meet our long-term challenges, and we can do a lot of that now, before the next election.

What are they? Number one, the aging of America. We're going to double the number of people over 65 in 30 years. I hope to be one of them. [Laughter] The aging of America; that's a big problem not only for those of us in the baby boom who are going to age but for our children and grandchildren. Why? Because we're the biggest generation in American history until the kids that are now in school. They're bigger than we are, but it took that long.

So now that we have the funds, I believe we ought to save Social Security. By that I mean I think we ought to—[applause]—thank you. By that I believe we ought to do some special things. Most importantly, we ought to run the life of that Trust Fund out

at least 50 years. That will take you through the life span of the baby boomers when the generational balance will tend to right itself.

I think we ought to do something for elderly women who are retired. They're the fastest group of seniors, and they tend to be poorer than the rest of our seniors and living on their own. And I personally would like to see the earnings limitation lifted, because I think we ought to encourage our seniors who want to work—who want to work—to work, and not penalize them for doing so.

I think we ought to do something about Medicare. It's supposed to go broke in 15 years. And as all of you know if you deal with health care at all, in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, as we feared, the one thing that hasn't worked out very well is, it's clear to me that the cuts in Medicare, in terms of teaching hospitals, rural hospitals, therapeutic services, nursing homes, that the cuts were too severe. And we have to put some more money back in it.

So we've give the Congress a plan that would lengthen the life of the Medicare Trust Fund to 2027, and that's the longest it's been alive, believe me, the Trust Fund, in—[inaudible]—who knows when. And it would provide for a modest, affordable, but significant prescription drug coverage.

Now, this is a big deal. If you were designing a Medicare program—if there were no Medicare and we were creating it today, we would absolutely have a drug benefit in it, because a lot of people can stay out of the hospital; a lot of people can stay alive longer; a lot of people can stay healthy longer. We would never consider having such a program without covering prescription drugs. And because we don't, about 75 percent of our seniors don't have affordable, adequate coverage.

And we can do this now. And we can do it without breaking the bank, because there are also some structural changes we can make which will save a lot of money over the next few years.

I believe—that's the first thing. I think we need to meet the challenge of our children's education. We have the largest and most diverse group of children in the history of America. Every one of them needs a world-class education—every one of them. If we—

if I had allowed this tax bill to become law, we would have had to have huge cuts in education or spend one-half of the surplus attributable to Social Security taxes, which would have really put us in a pickle, with the seniors about to retire, the baby boomers about to retire.

So I gave the Congress a plan that would save Social Security and Medicare, continue to invest in education and defense and the other things that are important, and do it in a way that over the next 15 years would pay down the debt so that in 15 years, for the first time since Andy Jackson was President, we'd be out of debt as a country—debt free.

Now, they think that's a bad idea on the other side, and they're supposed to be the conservative party. Why should the progressive party be for getting us out of debt? Why should the Democrats be for—I mean, we're supposed to be more liberal than them. We want to help poor people. Why in the wide world should we be for that? I'll tell you why. We live in a global economy where interest rates are set globally.

You saw what happened to Asia a couple of years ago, when everybody, all of a sudden, overnight, decided it wasn't such a good place to invest, and all of a sudden, all of these countries that thought they were doing a good job woke up with a severe headache.

And we've seen this sort of thing happen. No, the decisions aren't always rational or fair. But we know that money is an international commodity, and interest rates, therefore, are globally set, although we can all influence them. Obviously, the Federal Reserve can influence them; others can.

If we could take ourselves out of debt, publicly held debt, which is what I propose, for the first time since 1835, here's what would happen. For the next generation, even if we had a recession and we had to borrow some money then later to keep things going, interest rates would be much lower, because the Government wouldn't be competing with you for the money. That means all the working people, people like those who work in this hotel here, their credit card bills would be lower. Their monthly car payments would be lower. Your home mortgage payment would be lower. Your college loan payment would be lower. All the people we represent

would be better off if we could have long-term low interest rates and lower inflation. And that's why we ought to be for this.

Now, people that have lots of money and don't have to work very hard—I hope I'll be one of them one day, too; I doubt it—[*laughter*—you know, they're okay with high interest rates. They just move their money around and make more money. But we should be for this conservative position, because we have a progressive conscience and heart.

And so this is a plan that the Vice President and I and our administration have asked Congress to adopt. There are plenty of things that we can work together with the Republicans on, to work this out, but we ought to save Social Security and Medicare, keep investing in education, and get this country out of debt.

And if we could make an agreement—I might say, there's another reason the Republicans ought to be for it. So if we could make this agreement and keep the thing going on, then all their campaign speeches for the 2000 elections would make more sense. [*Laughter*] Because right now, every one of their Presidential candidates is out there telling us that they want to spend more money on defense or pay our service men and women more; you know, they don't want to stop investing in education or whatever it is they're saying out there. And every one of them are for this tax bill that I vetoed. And if it became law, they'd all be stuck. Every one of their campaign speeches would be bogus, because there would be no money to pay for all these things they're out there promising the voters. So they ought to be for what I'm doing, too. I'm saving them a red face in 2000. [*Laughter*] Everybody ought to be for it.

But just think of this: Think of how proud we can feel if we were to lift the burden not only off the baby boomers but off our children and grandchildren of the baby boom retirement by saving Social Security and Medicare, if we were to guarantee a generation of lower interest rates and greater investment and more jobs and higher incomes by getting this country out of debt; if we really committed ourselves to a world-class education for every child in this country, without regard to their race or their background or

where they lived. These are big things, and we have to lay the foundation now.

And as you look ahead, just remember there really are differences between these two parties that are honest and heart-felt. You know, we want to save Social Security, not privatize it and leave individual seniors to the luck of their own investments. We want to save Medicare, not force seniors, by pricing systems, into managed care plans. And the people that want to do that don't even want to vote for a Patients' Bill of Rights. We want a real, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights, and their leadership and a lot of their folks are still trying to find a way not to do that.

Keep in mind, this is the party that opposed family and medical leave before. Now they're against the Patients' Bill of Rights. Remember how they told us family and medical leave is going to bankrupt the country; it's a terrible thing. Millions of people—millions of people have taken time off now—millions—because of a baby being born or a parent being sick—millions of people. And every year, we've set a new record for new small businesses formed. They were wrong, and we were right about that.

We want to close the gun show loophole in the Brady bill. Why? Why? We want to do that because now 400,000 people who have criminal backgrounds or were otherwise unfit to get a handgun have been blocked by the Brady bill, but as they know that, more and more people are going to use the gun shows or the urban flea markets. So we want to close the loophole and do background checks.

It's the same old thing, you know, and the same old crowd's against it. And it's so interesting, it's funny to me—when they were against the Brady bill, they told us that crooks didn't buy guns in gun shops anyway, so the Brady bill was a total waste. It was just a burden on poor gun shop owners and poor gun buyers because no crooks—the guns—the crooks, they said, they all get their guns at the gun shows and the flea markets. [Laughter] That's what they said then.

So now, I say, "Okay, let's do the background checks," and they say, "Oh, we can't do that. It's too burdensome." And when we asked the leadership of the other party to

do it, when we asked the candidates running for President to do it, they flew like a covey of quails back to the nest of the NRA. There are differences between the two parties.

And again, in '92, it was an argument, because this issue of what is a sensible way to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children had not been seriously debated for 30 years, since—or then, 24 years, since Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated. And we had a brief, all-too-brief burst of focus on this, thanks to the leadership of President Johnson, who, like me, came out of a hunting culture and, like me, understood what was true about what the other side was saying and what was not. As a result, they don't like either one of us very much. [Laughter]

But I'm telling you, folks, this is a big deal going forward. This is a big deal. We have given you the lowest crime rate in 26 years by doing what law enforcement people and community leaders say makes sense. But this country's still too dangerous. There are still too many people getting killed, with people that have mental health problems walking around with guns.

A lot of these horrible killings we're seeing here, we need to do more to help these people; we need people identifying these people and getting them help quicker and doing things. You're trying to stop some of this stuff from going on. But you know, we can create a country in which everybody that wants to go hunting, can go hunting, everybody that wants to be a sport shooter can do it, and we can still stop putting weapons into the hands of children, criminals, and people who are unstable. We can do that.

We got the crime rate down to a 26-year low, but it's too high. We can make this the safest big country in the world. And the American people will make that decision in the next election by the decision they make. There are honest differences between us.

And what I want to say to you is, thank you. Let's get as much done as we can. People still, where you live, most of them don't think we're in a Presidential election. That's something that happens after the conventions. They think that they're paying good taxes to pay our salary, and they'd like us to work a while longer. And so let's do that.

And as you go into the next election, don't fight with people when they say we need a change. Tell them we certainly do; we always need a change. The question is not whether we're going to change but what kind of change we're going to make. And are we going to change based on all the good things that are going on in America now? Or would we instead take a U-turn and go back to the stuff that got us in so much trouble before the Vice President and I came here and got the help of the fine Members of Congress and others who have worked with us? That is the issue. And you don't have to argue so much anymore. You've got evidence.

Now, we'll be at a financial disadvantage, of course. One of the interesting consequences of the recovery of our administration, the economic recovery we sparked, is we've given all those Republicans a lot more money to spend on politics. [Laughter] You know, every time I see the total amount of money they're spending, I think, there's one more statistic for our economic plan. [Laughter] And some more evidence that some folks never learn. So we'll do that.

The last thing I want to tell you is, be of good cheer. Let me tell you something. I come to this hotel and give a lot of speeches, as you might imagine. And today I came in, and they had six working people from the hotel in their uniforms to greet me, not the executives, not the management, people that work here. And they gave me my very own employee ID card. [Laughter]

They're the people we're fighting for. You just imagine you had an employee ID card every day when we fight for the minimum wage and we fight to save and reform Medicare and Social Security and we fight for the education of our children, when we fight to let disabled people keep their Medicaid when they go to work, so they can go into the work force. We fight for all these things. When we fight for one America across all the lines that divide us, when we fight for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," when we fight for the hate crimes legislation, when we fight for these things, it's because we identify with each other.

It's a long time between now and November of 2000. In June of 1992, you know where I was in the polls? Not behind, third—third.

[Laughter] This is not a horse race. You don't collect any money if you show. [Laughter] But you know what I thought? I'll never forget, June 2, 1992: We win the California primary, and we win in New Jersey, and we win in Ohio, and we have enough votes to be nominated on the first ballot. And the story the next day is, "Oh, but we did exit polls in California, and what they really want is Mr. Perot, and not Governor Clinton." And you know, I got that probably because I'd had such wonderful national press during the entire nominating process. [Laughter]

But then, what happened? Then the election started for the real people. Then it wasn't—they weren't, you know, sort of saying, "Well, this is what I've heard," and this is sort of this vaguely—thing; then it became real. And people began to look and listen. And they opened not just their minds but their hearts, and they get—feel about these things, you know. And the American people nearly always get it right. That's why we're still around here after all this time. That's why we're still around here. It's the longest lasting great democracy in history. They nearly always get it right.

But you have to help them make sure that they hear every element of our side. A lot of times, young people come to me and ask me for advice on running for office. And I say, I always had one rule: I wanted to make sure that by election day, everybody that voted against me knew exactly what they were doing. [Laughter] You think about that. In a democracy, that's what you want. That's what you want.

Our party has been revitalized. People all over the world now are trying to do their versions of what we have done, to marry fiscal responsibility and a strong national posture involved in the rest of the world with compassionate policies at home that bring people together and lift people up. And it's working.

You think about having your own employee ID card. And let's not ever forget who we're here for, why we belong to our party, and why we did all this. And let's just work like crazy, keeping a good frame of mind. And I'll bet you anything, it will come out all right.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the Jefferson Ballroom at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Representative Loretta Sanchez and Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, general cochair, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Andrew Tobias, treasurer, and Beth E. Dozoretz, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Lydia Camarillo, chief executive officer, and Donald J. Foley, chief operating officer, 2000 Democratic National Convention; and Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia.

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Luncheon

September 24, 1999

Thank you. You think that story John told was true? [*Laughter*] I just—you better keep that Republican's name secret, or they'll subpoena him before a committee, before you know it. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank all of you at the DBC. I want to thank my long-time friend John Merrigan, and Mitchell Delk, and my good friend Jan Jones, and all the others who have been involved with the DBC. I want to thank our finance people, starting with Beth Dozoretz and Frank Katz, and going through all of the people who have worked on this event.

I want to thank all of you who give so consistently to our party, to give us a chance to get our message out. Thank you, Joe Andrew; thank you, Lou Weisbach, Lottie Shackelford, Janice Griffin. Thanks, Secretary Slater, for being here and for being there for me for nearly 20 years, now. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Roy Romer for his wonderful service to our party. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Our former chair, Don Fowler, is here. We've got a lot of other good folks here. But I wanted to say to all of you that I think it's quite important how you think and how you talk about where we are, where we've been, and where we're going. So if you will forgive me, I will get down to business. I'm sorry I'm a little late, but I had to spend an extra amount of time at the DNC, because they had a big crowd there, and I wanted to make sure they were thinking right about the moment. And I feel the same way about you.

In 1991, I asked the American people to give me a chance to be President. And I said, "If you'll vote for me, I'll do my best to change our party, to change our national leadership, to change the direction of our country. I think we need new ideas for the new economy and all of the new challenges in our society and the world at large. But they have to be rooted in old values of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans."

And I asked the American people to give me a chance. And I made an argument for them about what I would do. Then, when the Vice President joined the ticket, we reissued our economic plan and asked the American people to give us a chance to put people first. And I would like to ask you to think about that.

John said we brought the economy back and brought the Democratic Party back to the center. I think we did bring it back to the center, but I prefer to think of it as pushing the Democratic Party forward into the future, by getting out of making what seemed to me to be completely false choices. If you hang around Washington long enough, you learn that putting people and issues into categories—I'm sympathetic with people in Washington because they have to deal with so many people and so many issues—if you put everybody and every thing in a little box, it saves you the trouble of having to think. But it's a very poor way to run a country and to make decisions about the future of the country.

So we said, "Hey, give us a chance. We believe that the Democratic Party can be probusiness and prolabor. We believe we can be for family values and be against discrimination against women or gays or anybody else. We believe we can be for one America and still celebrate our diversity. We believe you can grow the economy while you improve the environment, not degrade it. We believe that we'll have a better work place if we also help workers to succeed at home in their parental responsibilities. We believe these things. We believe we can prevent crime and be tough on criminals who should be punished."

And so, we made this argument. And the results speak for themselves. But I want to

make just a couple of points. Number one, we've got to take a little longer walk down memory lane, because the economy's been so good now that people can't remember when it wasn't. I saw a poll the other day where people think the economy was good when President Bush was here. I think they think it was good when Herbert Hoover was here. [*Laughter*] It's been good a long time.

But it's important to point out that in 1980, when the Reagan revolution occurred, the premise of the Reagan revolution—there were two premises. One is, Government is your enemy and the cause of all of our problems, and you should dislike it and make it as small as possible unless it's building defense or pouring concrete. That was the first one. The second was, the way to have a strong economy forever and a balanced budget forever is to increase spending and cut revenues. Let me repeat that. You don't have to laugh, but I want to make sure you heard it. [*Laughter*] The way to balance the budget and have a strong economy is to increase spending and cut revenues. That was their whole deal, and we proceeded to try it for 12 years. And it got him elected and then reelected and then got President Bush to become only the second Vice President in American history to become directly elected after the President.

But did it work for a while? As I told the DNC today, my former senior Senator, Dale Bumpers, in talking to the Reagan years used to say, "Of course it worked. If you let me write \$2 billion of hot checks, I'll show you a good time, too." [*Laughter*] So it worked.

But by the third incarnation of it, between '88 and '92, the quadrupling of the national debt put us into a position of permanently high interest rates, which gave us stagnant growth, high unemployment, stagnant wages, and the longest, deepest recession since the Great Depression. That was the reality we confronted. And we kept getting out of these recessions, but every time we'd get out, we'd go right back in because of the high interest rates.

So Al Gore and I said, "Hey, give us a chance. We're going to try this other thing here." And we went in. And it was an argument in the beginning; that is, the ordinary voters couldn't know who was right because

they hadn't tried our way. And then we got in and we found the most partisan atmosphere in modern American history, and my economic plan passed with not a vote to spare and not a vote from a Republican. The Vice President broke the tie in the Senate. And we had only a two-vote victory in the House, which means if one had changed it would have been even and it wouldn't have passed.

Now, we've been through several incarnations. We also put our crime program through. And we passed the Brady bill, which the previous President had vetoed. We passed the Family and Medical Leave Act, the first big leg in our work and family bill, which the previous President had vetoed. We proceeded to clean up toxic waste dumps, clean the air, clean the water, make the food safer. The economy kept getting better, not worse, in spite of their fears.

And they said—when we passed our economic program they said the world would come to an end. They said, "We're going to try it the other way. We're going to cut expenses and increase revenues, until we get this deficit out of our hair." And they said, "Oh no, this is a terrible idea. It will bankrupt the country."

When we passed the crime bill and said we were going to put 100,000 police on the streets, they said, "You'll never do it. Even if you did, it won't bring the crime down." And when we said we could ban assault weapons and do background checks on handgun buyers, and we would keep more guns out of the wrong hands, they said, "Oh, the criminals will have guns, and all you're going to do is unduly burden hunters and sports people."

You remember all these debates. We did one thing; they said another. And so, now, after 6 years and 8 months, we're not having an argument anymore. We can still fight, but it's not an argument over the facts.

Our economic plan has unleashed your energies with low interest rates, and we now have the longest peacetime expansion in history, a 30-year low in unemployment, a 32-year low in welfare, and a 26-year low in the crime rate. We have the highest homeownership in history; the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded. And each year,

we've set a record for new small business startups.

But the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer. We have done away with 3 times as many toxic waste dumps as they did in 12 years and set aside more land in perpetuity protection than any administration in history except those of the two Roosevelts.

Along the way, we got 100,000 young people to serve their communities in AmeriCorps and immunized 90 percent of our kids against serious childhood illnesses for the first time, and opened the doors of college to all with the HOPE scholarship. It's been a pretty good run, but it's not an argument anymore. There are facts.

I never will forget—and the voters returned us to office in 1996. But let's look at these elections, and this one in connection with the others. So in '92 we won because people thought times were tough and they gave us a chance. In '94 we got beat bad. Why? Well, they ran with this contract on America, and they had a plan and a message and it sounded good. And they said that we had raised everybody's taxes, although we hadn't. We raised all of yours, but we didn't raise everybody's taxes. [Laughter] Over 90 percent of the people didn't have their taxes raised.

One of my friends who runs a Fortune 100 company—endangered species in that crowd, he's a Democrat—is going all over New York saying, "If you paid more in taxes than you made out of low interest rates in the stock market in the last 7 years, you ought to be for George Bush, but if you didn't, you ought to stick with us." It's a pretty good argument, isn't it? You might try it. [Laughter]

So anyway, in '92 they took a chance on us. In '94 we lost big. Why? Because people were told we'd raise their taxes, even when we didn't, and they hadn't felt the good economy yet and because we had just passed the crime bill and they terrified everybody saying we were going to take their guns away and because we didn't pass anything on health care, so the people who wanted something done were disappointed, and the people who believed their propaganda that we were trying to have the Government take over the

health care system believed it. It was the worst of all worlds and election results showed it. And our obituary was written. Remember that now when you read the papers in the next few months. Our obituary was written: hopeless, helpless, terrible situation. But in '96, we roar back in, bigger victory than '92. Why? Because there was no argument anymore. People had evidence.

And then in '98, we had a plan. In a midterm election, we said, "Hey, we're not tired. We're not burned out. Vote for us, and we'll give you 100,000 teachers. We want to save Social Security and Medicare before we spend the surplus. We want to pay the debt down. We want to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. That's our national plan." And all over America we said it.

And you know what they said in '98. And they said and all the experts said, "Well, are they going to lose five, six, or seven Senate seats? Are they going to lose 20, 30, or 40 House seats?" And instead, while we were being outspent by \$100 million—\$100 million in 1998—we lost no Senate seats in the worst year I can remember for Democrats, in terms of whose we had up and whose was vacant, and we picked up five House seats. And it's the first time since 1822 that the party of the President had gained House seats in a midterm election in the 6th year of the Presidency. And only the third time since the Civil War it happened in any midterm election. Why? Because we decided what we were for. We decided ideas matter. Because we put them in, and they made a real difference in people's lives. And people who make the real decision, the voters out there, once they got a chance to take a look at our crowd said, "I think they care more about me than the other guys do."

And one real problem almost all people have sooner or later, if they stay in politics long enough, is they spend so much time with other people in politics, and commentators and experts and pollsters and people writing articles, that they forget that this is not about any of us. Most of you are going to be all right, no matter what—otherwise you couldn't afford to be here. This is about the great mass of people. And I hope that you're here because you believe, as I do, that all

of us do better when the country as a whole does better.

You know, my economy has made it possible for those Republicans to give George Bush all that money. [Laughter] Al Gore told me the other day, he said, "If I'd known this economy was going to make so much money for Bush, I'd have voted against your economic plan." [Laughter] I may start listing that as one of the achievements of my administration. [Laughter] See, it just depends on how you talk about this stuff—[laughter]—and how you think about it. We're all laughing, but I have a very serious purpose here.

So now we come to 2000. And we're first in this year. I believe that the Democratic Party has gotten a long way by being willing to work with the Republicans to get something done. We worked with them in '96, passed the welfare reform bill that's given us the lowest welfare rolls in a generation, but we didn't let them cut off medical care and food to those poor kids. And we made them come up with more child care so that when people go to work, they can still take care of their kids.

I believe we were right when we worked with them in '97 on the balanced budget bill, because it's continued this remarkable low interest rates and recovery of the economy. And I think we still ought to work with them, if they'll work with us, to save Social Security and Medicare and modernize Medicare with prescription drug coverage, to continue to invest in education, to invest in giving people—here's a tax cut I'm for: I'm for giving people the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America we give them to invest in poor areas around the world, so that we can go national with the empowerment zone program that the Vice President's done such a brilliant job of supervising in Mayor Archer's city of New York and other places.

But we need to take care of business. We need to do that. And if my plan were adopted, we would have the ability to save Social Security and Medicare, invest in education, defense, and the other things we need to invest in, still have a tax cut we can afford, and get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835, which would give us a generation of low interest rates and long-term recovery for our children.

Now, that's why I vetoed their tax bill. And once again, I did the Republican candidates for President a favor. Every one of them running on the other side is for this Republican tax bill, and if I had signed it, it would have made a lie to of every campaign speech they're going to give between now and the election about what they'll do, because they wouldn't have any money to do it.

I noticed one of them yesterday said, "Vote for me, and I'll give you new weapons and higher paid soldiers. And everything the Defense Department wants, I'll spend more money on"—ignoring the fact that we're just about to pay a big pay increase and build new weapons. And I thought to myself, this is a nice speech, but if I sign this tax bill that he's for there won't be any money for the promise he just made. I need to quit helping these Republicans this way.

But anyway, I vetoed the tax bill because if their bill passes, it wouldn't add a day to Social Security, not a day to Medicare—not a day. So when the baby boomers retire, all those risks would still be out there. It would force big cuts in education. We'd never get the debt paid off. It really had no special effort to get economic growth into the areas that have been left behind by our prosperity. So I vetoed it. But I still want to get things done. And I still want you to help us going forward.

And here's the point I want to make—I just want to make two or three points. Number one, the American people say they want a change. Guess what? I agree with them. If they polled me in all those polls, and said, "Do you think we ought to change?" I'd say yes. This country only works when it's in a perpetual state of creation and recreation. That's how it works. That's why we're still around here after all this time.

Why do you think I worked so hard so that we could just fix this country again so then we'd be free to look at these big, long-term challenges and seize the big, long-term opportunities, none of which were possible to deal with in the shape we were in, in 1992. So I'm for change, too. The question is going to be, what kind of change are you for?

Are we going to build on all the good things that are going on now to deal with the outstanding big problems and to seize

the outstanding big opportunities, or are we going to turn around and go back to the approach that got us in so much trouble in the first place? That's the question before the American people.

Do you want to save Social Security, or privatize it and worry later what happens to the people that lose in that deal? Do you want to save Medicare, or force everybody into a managed care plan even though you won't pass the Patients' Bill of Rights? Do you want to keep on with this program that's given us the lowest crime rate in 26 years, until we have the safest big country on Earth? Or do you want to give crime policy back to the NRA?

These are the questions we have to face. Meanwhile, there is a lot we can do now. But there are big questions. Do you really believe America's diversity is its strength and we can come together in our common humanity? Or do you agree with them that we shouldn't pass the hate crimes bill or the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act?" You've got to decide. There are big issues here.

And these economic issues—would we be better off if their tax bill passed, or would they be better off if my modest bill passed and we took care of Social Security, Medicare, our investments in our children, their education, and got the country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President? Because even if we voted for everything I want now, it could all be revisited next year.

So these are decisions worthy of a great nation. And I just want to say two or three things about the politics of this. Number one, what you do is terribly important. It's okay if they have more money than we do if we have enough. I will remind you they outspent us by \$100 million last time, if you take all their third party committees and all that stuff, and we won anyway. Why? Because we had enough, because the people out there knew what we stood for, because we had clear, sharp, unambiguous message and people heard it.

Number two, it's very important that you stay in the right frame of mind—you know how to talk about this. My philosophy, all the years I ran for office—now, I can say this since I'm not running anymore; I get to

sound like a wise man. I've had a lot of young people come up to me and say, "Mr. President, I want to run for office. Have you got any advice?" And I always say one thing. I say, "You know, every time I was on the ballot, my goal was to make sure that every single person who voted against me knew exactly what he or she was doing." Now, you think about that.

That's why your role is important. Because in a free society, if the people who vote against you know exactly what they're doing, you have no beef. None of us have a right to be here, for goodness sake. And the reason the money is important is so we can get the message out and to have enough. But you need to make sure when you go home and you start talking to other people, that people that aren't for us know exactly what they're doing and why.

You know, the American people nearly always get it right if they know. One of my favorite stories of what's happened to me, I went back to New Hampshire to run for reelection in '96. You know, I love that little place with all my heart. They kept me alive when the Republican Party and the pundits told them I was dead, and the voters of New Hampshire said, "I don't think so. We're not letting you tell us how to run our lives, thank you very much."

And then I went back in '96. And they gave Al Gore and me a majority of the vote in '96. Unheard of. Both Republicans and independents, I believe, have larger numbers of registered voters than the Democrats do there. They've been real good to us. But in '94, they participated in a whipping we took, and they beat one of their Congressmen because he voted for the crime bill.

So I go back to New Hampshire in '96, and I want you to think about this when you read all about this election, now, and all the experts, and what all they're telling you about. And we got a big crowd of people in Manchester. And I said, "Get me a bunch of redneck hunters there." And we had a bunch of big muscle-bound guys, in their plaid shirts, you know, waiting for deer season. [Laughter] And so we had them all up there, and I said, "Listen, guys. In 1994, your Congressman voted for the crime bill, which banned assault weapons, and voted for the

Brady bill. And you beat him because of it.” They all started kind of nodding their heads and shuffling their feet, you know. And I said, “Here’s what I want you to know. I feel terrible about it, because he did it for me. And he did it because I needed his vote, and I pleaded with him to do it.” So I said, “If a single person here has suffered any inconvenience in hunting or sport shooting in any way, if all the stuff they told you about how we’re going to come get your guns and mess with your lives, if it was true, then I want every one of you who experienced that to vote against me, too, because that guy did it for me.” But I said, “If that didn’t happen, they lied to you, and you need to get even.” [Laughter]

And so in Republican New Hampshire, we got a majority of the vote. Why? Because people got to think about what they really felt and what really counted and what had really happened. So I want to remind you of something else as you read the paper as happily for the next few months. This is September of 1999, a year and 6 weeks before the election.

In June of 1992, 3 months before the election, on June 2d I won the primaries in California, New Jersey, and Ohio and became the first-round—the certain nominee of the Democratic Party. And the next day, the only thing in the press was, “But who cares if he won all these things. We polled in the exit polls the voters in the California primary, and they’re really for Perot. They don’t care anything about this guy. We told them that he was no good, and the voters agree with us. We laid it out to them, and they ate it, and they’re doing exactly what we tell them to do.” That’s what they said. This was 3 months, 3 or 4 months before the election. I was in third place—not second, third. It’s not a horse race; you don’t get any money if you show. [Laughter]

Let me tell you something. They’re thinking about this race in Iowa, and they’re thinking about it in New Hampshire, and they’re thinking about it in the headquarters of all the candidates. At the sale barn at Conway, Arkansas, they’re still thinking about the price of cattle. And both parties would do well in Washington to remember that if most people still think they’re giving us a paycheck

up here and they want us to keep working for them for a little while longer, instead of dissolving into political indulgence.

But don’t you believe all these people who write our epithet because of the money they have or because of what they say about this, that, or the other thing. I’m living proof that they can chisel a lot of tombstones for you before you have to lay down. [Laughter] And you don’t understand, half of this stuff is designed to break your heart and your spirit anyway.

Now, here’s what I want to tell you. Who knows what’s going to happen next year? My gut is we win because we’ve done a good job for America, because we had an argument over ideas and we turned out to be right and because I know what the differences are going to be for the issues going forward, and I think we’re right about that. That’s what I think.

But what I really want you to believe is the American people nearly always get it right. And they have an extraordinary sense of enlightened self-interest. And if sometime during this whole process their minds will kick in and then their hearts will kick in and they’ll do what they really believe is right. And they’ll give everybody that wants a vote a fair hearing. They’ll try to be fair.

And what we owe to them is to make sure that however they vote, they know what they’re doing. And then whatever happens, none of us have any gripes. But people who get caught up in politics as an end in itself, who want the power, the position rather than the purpose, forget that no matter how much power you have and no matter how long you serve—and I’ve laughed at people, I said I’m glad we’ve got this two term limit because if I could run three or four more times, I probably would. That’s true. But no matter how long you serve, in the grand sweep of things, it’s like a minute or two.

I went to a memorial service for Lane Kirkland yesterday. He was over 75 years old; he seemed like a young fellow to me, because he kept his spirit young. But none of us are around here for very long. We don’t get to live very long. We don’t get to serve very long. And we need to remember that this is all about the people that served us lunch today. This is all about children that Hillary

and I were with this morning who got adopted because we used the power of the Federal Government to end the rules and the bureaucratic snarls that kept foster children from moving quickly into adopted homes.

This is really all about the American people, and it is a gift to be able to serve. And I believe it's a gift to be fortunate enough in this country to have resources to give. And I think we should walk out of this room, thanking our lucky stars that we could be here today, thanking God we got the chance to serve and test our ideas, and being absolutely determined that we are going to be of good cheer, of strong confidence, and we're going to make absolutely sure the American people know why we stand for what we stand for and exactly what we intend to do in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:40 p.m. in the York Room at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to John Merrigan, chair, Democratic Business Council; Mitchell Delk, vice chairman, Federal Home Mortgage Corp.; Mayor Jan Laverty Jones of Las Vegas; Beth E. Dozoretz, national finance chair, Frank Katz, national finance director, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Lottie Shackelford, vice chair, Democratic National Committee; Lou Weisbach, chief executive officer, HA-LO Industries, Inc.; and Janice Griffin, national chair, Women's Leadership Forum.

Statement on Signing the Organ Donor Leave Act

September 24, 1999

Today, I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 457, the "Organ Donor Leave Act," which would enhance the Federal Government's leadership role in encouraging organ donations by making it easier for Federal employees to become donors.

Currently, more than 65,000 Americans are awaiting an organ transplant. Last year, almost 5,000 Americans died while waiting for an organ to become available. This amounts to an average of 13 citizens each day. Many of these deaths could have been prevented if there were a sufficient supply of donor organs. H.R. 457 is a valuable tool to help address the needs of Americans wait-

ing for organs by encouraging donations by Federal employees.

In 1997, my Administration launched the National Organ and Tissue Donation Initiative, which included new efforts by the Federal Government to increase awareness among Federal employees of the need for organ and tissue donation. The Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with the Office of Personnel Management, has implemented a Government-wide campaign to encourage Federal employees to consider organ donation and, as the country's largest employer, to set the example for the private sector as well as other public organizations.

H.R. 457 builds on my Administration's long-standing commitment to increasing organ donations nationwide. Under current law, a Federal employee may use up to 7 days of paid leave each year, other than sick leave or annual leave, to serve as a donor. Recent surveys of doctors and hospitals indicate that the current 7-day limit is clearly insufficient for recovery from organ donation surgery. This bill increases the amount of paid leave available to Federal employees who donate organs for transplants, providing up to 30 days of paid leave, in addition to annual and sick leave, for organ donation.

In addition to our current efforts, my Administration will go forward in the coming weeks with the framework for an organ allocation system that will serve patients better. Our approach, which has been validated by the Institute of Medicine, calls for improved allocation policies to be designed by transplant professionals, not by the Government, and would ensure better and fairer treatment for patients. We need an organ allocation system that is as good as our transplant technology, and it is time for sound allocation policies to go into effect.

It gives me great pleasure to sign H.R. 457 into law. I welcome the opportunity to help Federal employees participate in this life-saving effort.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 24, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 457, approved September 24, was assigned Public Law No. 106-56.

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.

September 18

The President declared a major disaster in Virginia and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd, beginning on September 13 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Pennsylvania and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd on September 16 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd on September 16 and continuing.

The President declared an emergency in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd on September 16 and continuing.

September 19

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 Hurricane Floyd on September 16 and continuing.

September 20

In the morning, the President traveled to Raleigh, NC, where he was briefed by Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., at the airport. In the afternoon, he traveled to Tarboro, NC, where he toured areas damaged by Hurricane Floyd. Later, the President returned to Washington, DC.

September 21

In the morning, the President traveled to New York City, where he met separately with U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti at the United Nations.

In the afternoon, the President met separately with Prime Minister Mikulas Dzurinda of Slovakia, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, President Carlos Saul Menem of Argentina, President Andres Pastrana of Colombia, President Benjamin William Mkapa of Tanzania, and President Hugo Chaves Frias of Venezuela at the United Nations.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gregory A. Baer to be Assistant Secretary for Financial Markets at the Department of the Treasury.

The President announced his intention to nominate Ira Berlin and Evelyn Edson to be members of the National Council on the Humanities.

The President announced his intention to appoint David Berger, Lanny A. Breuer, and Nan H. Rich to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council.

The President announced his intention to appoint William C. Oldaker as a member of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint W. Robert Connor as a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jeremy Bernard to the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced the appointment of Alan Philip Larson as a member of the Board of Directors for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President declared a major disaster in South Carolina and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd, beginning on September 14 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Delaware and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd on September 15-17.

September 22

The White House announced that President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria will make an official working visit to Washington, DC, on October 28.

The President announced his intention to appoint Shirley J. Humphrey to the National Nutrition Monitoring Advisory Council.

The President declared a major disaster in Florida and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd on September 13 and continuing.

The President declared a major disaster in Pennsylvania and ordered Federal aid to supplement Commonwealth and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe flash flooding associated with Tropical Depression Dennis on September 6–7.

The President declared a major disaster in New Mexico and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on July 16–August 7.

September 23

The President announced his intention to nominate Skila Harris and Glenn L. McCullough, Jr., to be members of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

The President announced his intention to nominate William A. Halter to be Deputy Commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gerald V. Poje to be a member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board.

The President announced his intention to nominate J. Stapleton Roy to be Assistant Secretary for Intelligence and Research at the State Department.

The President declared a major disaster in Connecticut and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by high winds, heavy rains, and flooding associated with Tropical Storm Floyd on September 16 and continuing.

September 24

The White House announced that the President named Baltimore City Police Commissioner Thomas Frazier as Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) at the Justice Department.

The President announced his intention to nominate A.J. Eggenberger and Jessie M.

Roberson to be members of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board.

The President declared a major disaster in Maryland and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by Hurricane Floyd on September 16–20.

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 September 22

Gregory A. Baer,
of Virginia to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, vice Richard Scott Carnell, resigned.

James M. Lyons,
of Colorado, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Tenth Circuit, vice John P. Moore, retired.

Joel A. Pisano,
of New Jersey, to be U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey, vice Maryanne Trump Barry, elevated.

Allen R. Snyder,
of Maryland, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit, vice Patricia M. Wald, retired.

Mary Carlin Yates,
of Washington, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Burundi.

Submitted September 23

Skila Harris,
of Kentucky, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for the remainder of the term expiring May 18, 2005, vice Johnny H. Hayes, resigned.

Glenn L. McCullough, Jr., of Mississippi, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority for a term expiring May 18, 2008, vice William H. Kennoy, term expired.

Submitted September 24

A.J. Eggenberger, of Montana, to be a member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2003 (reappointment).

Jessie M. Roberson, of Alabama, to be a member of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board for a term expiring October 18, 2002, vice Herbert Kouts, term expired.

**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 September 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released September 22

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement by the Press Secretary: Official Working Visit of Nigeria President Obasanjo

Statement by the Press Secretary on the death of journalist Sander Thoenes in East Timor

Announcement of nominations for U.S. Court of Appeals Judges for the District of Columbia Circuit and the Tenth Circuit, and U.S. District Judge for the District of New Jersey

Released September 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released September 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing the appointment of the Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) at the Justice Department

**Acts Approved
by the President**

Approved September 24

H.R. 457 / Public Law 106-56
Organ Donor Leave Act