

Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



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Editor’s Note: The President was in Chicago, IL, on November 5, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, November 5, 1999

**Remarks at a Democratic National
Committee Dinner in Atlanta,
Georgia**

October 29, 1999

Thank you so much. Well, first, Larry and Carol, thank you for opening your home. This is a beautiful tent. I was complimenting Larry on the tent, and he said, "Well, it covers the parking lot." [Laughter] And I said, "Well, maybe you ought to just leave it up then." [Laughter] It's wonderful, and we could probably, most of us, be back tomorrow night if you'll have us here. [Laughter] This is really, really beautiful.

And I want to compliment you, too, Doctor, on your short speech, where you said everything that needed to be said. And maybe we'll get a chance to vote for you someday; if you give speeches like that, you'll be elected to anything.

I want to thank our DNC chair, Joe Andrew, for coming down with me tonight and for his leadership, and my good friend Andy Tobias and your State chair, David Worley. Thank you, David. I also want to acknowledge our finance director, Fran Katz, who is here. And her sister's family is here tonight. And I think this is Fran's last event. She has been magnificent for us, and thank you, Fran, for all the work you've done.

I want to thank my longtime friend Senator Max Cleland and tell all of you that in my opinion, at least—I may be a little biased because we've been friends a long time, and I was the happiest person in America outside Georgia when he got elected in 1996. But he is doing a wonderful job for you, and you should be very proud of him.

I want to thank Senator Charles Walker, the majority leader of the Senate, for being here; and Mike Thurmond, your labor commissioner; and all the other officials that are here—my longtime friend Michael Hightower, the Fulton County executive. Thank you all for coming.

I will try to make a fairly brief speech tonight, but it occurred to me you have so many new people here tonight that don't normally come to these things, and two of them I see are from Arkansas. I don't know if the others have any excuse or not. [Laughter] But it occurred to me that if people were asking you why you were doing this, that tomorrow, people might ask the rest of you why you were here. And I would like to give you a few reasons, because they're why I'm here.

And Joe Andrew's right. I guess I don't have to be here; I'm not running for anything. I kind of hate it; I wish I could. [Laughter] But that's the system we've got and—every time I see a debate, I wish I were part of it. When the Republicans were debating in New Hampshire the other night, I wish I had been part of it, you know. [Laughter] I'm always convinced I could turn just one more, you know.

I come here tonight because I believe in what we have done these last 7 years, because I believe the choices before the American people are stark but also marvelous. And because I believe that we are now in a position to do something that in my whole lifetime—in my whole lifetime—which now spans 53 years, we have never been able to do as a country before. We are, for the first time in my lifetime, economically and socially and politically strong enough and free enough of external and internal debilitating crises that we actually have a chance to write the future of our dreams for our children.

And I'd like to tell you how I think that came to be and what I think the choices are. And tomorrow I hope you'll be able to tell people why you came.

When I came to Georgia in 1991 and 1992, the United States was in a period of economic distress, social division—we had a big riot in Los Angeles, remember?—political

drift, where the so-called vision thing was derided and government itself had been discredited. Even liberals thought government would mess up a two-car parade. And I came before the people of Georgia, and I said, "Look I have some new ideas. It's time to put people back at the center of our politics. It's time to work for unity, not division. It's time to build a country with a goal of opportunity for every citizen and responsibility from every citizen and a community of all of our people—meeting our responsibilities at home, but also our responsibilities to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity."

And Georgia was good to me. I remember when I ran in the Georgia primary, all the Washington experts said that "Governor Clinton heads south to Georgia in deep trouble. If he doesn't get at least 40 percent in the Georgia primary, he's toast." It was by then I'd already been declared dead three times. Now it's happened so often, I'm going to open a tombstone business when I leave office. [Laughter] But anyway—and the people of Georgia in the primary gave me 57 percent of the vote in 1992 and sent me on my way. And I'm very grateful for that.

And then I remember, we had a rally in a football stadium outside Atlanta, in the weekend before the election of '92. You remember that, Max? And we filled it. And I think Buddy Darden was there. We filled the rally. And I remember Hank Aaron was there, and there were over 25,000 people there. And we won the State by 13,000 votes. So everyone who spoke at that rally can fairly claim to have made me President of the United States, since there were twice as many people there as we won the State by. But we made it, and the rest is history.

I believe that a parallel process has been going on in Georgia, trying to create a new Democratic Party with Max and, first, Governor Miller and now Governor Barnes, with the election of Mike Thurmond and Thurbert Baker, Senator Walker, all the other people on your team, a new generation of leadership, reflecting the broad society of this great State.

We've been working at this now, the Vice President and I and our team, for 7 years. And when I came in '92, we made an argu-

ment to the people. We said, "Hey, give us a chance; the country's in trouble" And the American people gave us a chance. But there is no more argument, because the results are in. And from the day I became President to this day, this is the record: We have 19½ million new jobs and the longest peacetime economic expansion in history, which by February, if it continues, will be the longest expansion ever, including all that has occurred during our wars; we have the highest homeownership in history, the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest teen pregnancy rate in 30 years, the lowest crime rate in 30 years, the first back-to-back budget surpluses in 42 years; we've paid \$140 billion, all for the national debt, the largest in history in the last 2 years; and we've done it with the smallest Federal Government in 37 years.

Now, those are not arguments; those are the facts. And it was done by a Democratic Party with a modern philosophy rooted in old values that proved that we could manage the economy, balance the budget, reform welfare, be for high standards and more investment in education, be for the right kind of crime policies, and move this country forward. And it wasn't easy.

We had our casualties. One of them is Buddy Darden, sitting right back there. He was one of the people who was brave enough to stand up and vote for my economic plan. When the Republicans said, falsely, that it would raise taxes on all Americans—it didn't; it raised taxes on most everybody in this room, including me—[laughter]—but not all Americans. And we said, "Look, everybody's been talking about this deficit, but nobody wants to do anything about it. If we don't cut the deficit in half in 4 years, we're never going to turn the economy around." And most everybody in this room has made more from the stock market and their investments and the healthy economy and low interest rates than the higher taxes of '93 cost. But Buddy Darden's just one of the people who was brave enough to lay down his job in Congress to build up a better future for our people and our country, and I will never forget it.

So the first thing I want to say is, these are real numbers. And everywhere along the way, we had to fight in the face of bitter partisan opposition for our economic plan, for our crime plan, for the right kind of welfare reform that required able-bodied people to work, but also protected their children's food and medicine, and gave their parents more child care. And it's working. It's working. And you should be proud of that.

So the first thing you can say is, "Well, we gave those guys a chance 7 years ago, and it's worked out pretty well." Now, that ought to be the first part of your answer.

And the second thing we have to ask ourselves is, now what? You know, all these polls say, well—and the press always, because they love to kind of stick the knife in and see if you squirm while they're sticking you—they're always saying, "Well, but the polls say 70 percent of the people want a change." And I always say, "Well, if they'd polled me, I'd have been in the 70 percent." If someone said, "Vote for me; I'll do everything Bill Clinton did," I'd vote against that person. Why? Because the world is changing very fast. And because what I have tried to do, compared to where we were in 1991 and 1992, is get this country turned around. It's like turning around an ocean liner in the middle of the ocean; you can't do it overnight. And we are moving in the right direction. But there are a lot of big challenges out there.

So the second thing I want you to think about is, what are we going to do now? My belief is, since this is the chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams, we ought to be taking on the big challenges and seizing on the big opportunities. And I'd like to tell you what they are. And then I'd like to compare our position with the contemporary Republican position.

But first, let me just make a general observation here. Twenty-one years ago, when I ran for Governor for the first time—and I was 32 years old and I didn't know what I was doing, I don't think—I asked this kind of old sage in Arkansas, I said, "You got any advice for me?" I was about 30 points ahead in the polls. He said, "Yes, Bill." He said, "Let me tell you something. In this business, you're always most vulnerable when you

think you're invulnerable." And if you think about that, that's a pretty good rule for life. You know, I'm convinced one of the reasons that we've had such intense partisan battles in the last year is that the majority party of Congress believe they have the luxury of doing it because the country's doing so well, so there can't be any really adverse consequences to not paying our United Nations dues and not ratifying the test ban treaty and not funding the Wye peace talks or anything else—fooling around with the environment. Because, after all, things are going well and everybody's in a good humor, and so this will be treated with a certain amount of frivolity.

And if you think about it, countries are no different than businesses or families or individuals. How many times have you made a mistake in your life because you relaxed your concentration or you got diverted when things were going well, and you felt that nothing possibly could happen very bad? I see a lot of you nodding your heads. This is a common human challenge.

So it is not self-evident that we will use this great moment of prosperity and success to do what we ought to do. But if you think about the children and the grandchildren that we all have or hope to have, and what we owe to them and how, at least in my 53 years, our country has never had this kind of a chance before, we'll have a hard time explaining why we didn't make the most of it if we don't.

So here's what I think we ought to be doing to build that bridge to the new century for our kids. Number one, we have to deal with the aging of America. We're going to double the number of people over 65 in 30 years. That means we have to save Social Security for the baby boom generation, which is a gift not only to the baby boom generation but to their children and grandchildren who won't have to support us if we save Social Security. It means we have to save Medicare, and we should reform it to make it more like the best private sector practices in medicine, but also we should add a prescription drug benefit, because 75 percent of our seniors don't have affordable prescription drugs.

It means that we should deal with the children of America. For the first time ever in the last 2 years, we have more kids in the

public schools than we had in the baby boom generation. And they're a very different crowd. They are the most racially and ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse group of children we have ever had. It is true here in Atlanta, where you have more foreign companies headquartered than any other city in America. It is true just across the river from the Nation's Capital in Washington, in Fairfax County, which has the most diverse school district in America, children from 180 different national and ethnic groups in one school district. It's true in my home State of Arkansas, which in the 1980 census had the highest percentage of people living in Arkansas who were born there of any State in the country except West Virginia, now ranks second in the country in the percentage growth of Hispanics. This is a nationwide thing. We are changing the whole scope of what it means to be an American in our schools before our very eyes. And we must be committed to giving these kids, every one of them, a genuinely world-class education.

We need higher standards; we need more accountability; we need to be committed to turn around failing schools or close them down. But we don't need to brand kids failures if the system is failing them. We need the after-school programs, the summer school programs, the modern schools, all of our classrooms hooked up to the Internet, smaller classes that we want to bring with 100,000 teachers there. There are a lot of things we can do. But we don't get there unless we make it our priority.

We need to deal with the fact that not everybody in our country has participated in our recovery. I'll give you some surprising examples. In the State of South Dakota, the unemployment rate is 2.8 percent. On the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, the unemployment rate is 73 percent. In the Mississippi Delta, we still have in my part of the country the poorest part of America, on the average, in the lower Mississippi Delta valley. In Appalachia, there are still places where, because of their physical isolation, there is no new enterprise and opportunity. In many of our inner cities from coast to coast that is so.

But I'll give you another surprising thing. If you look at New York State and you take

out New York City and the suburban counties in New York, the rest of New York ranks 49th in job growth since I've been President—if it were a separate State. That includes Albany, Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse—big towns that you know about.

I have proposed to double the number of the empowerment zones that the Vice President has managed so well over the last 6 years—which put intense effort into bringing cities back and rural areas back—and to pass something I call the new markets initiative, which would simply give people like you the same financial incentives to invest in poor areas in America we now give you to invest in poor areas in Latin America, in the Caribbean, in Africa, in China. I think that you should have those incentives.

I think we have to do more to build a balance between family and work in the 21st century, when almost all parents, fathers and mothers, will be working. We have to find a way to extend health care to all of our children. We have to find a way to extend child care to working families who need it. Only about 10 percent—in spite of the fact that we have increased dramatically in my administration, only about 10 percent of the people who are eligible for child care assistance actually get it.

We need to have a real equal pay law for equal work for women and men. We've still got problems there. We need to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. We need to continue to invest in biomedical research. We need to make a commitment that everybody who works 40 hours a week should not live in poverty. It's time to raise the minimum wage again. I feel very strongly about that.

But the main point I want to make is this: We need an administration with a focus on trying to balance family and work so that our goal is that people can succeed at home and at work. The most important job of any society is raising children. It dwarfs the importance of any other job.

So if people who are at work, either because they want to be or they have to be, are worried sick all day that their kids are in trouble, they're not going to be very productive workers. On the other hand, if people, because they're worried about it, don't go to work at all when they want to and

could, and could make a contribution to our society, we won't be as strong a country. We have got to be more deliberate and disciplined in creating a framework of support for people to succeed at home and at work.

I can mention a lot of other things. Just let me mention a couple more issues that are really important. We need a commitment to build 21st century communities that are both safe and livable. I told you the crime rate's at a 30-year low, and it is. And I'm proud of it. Murder rate's at a 32-year low. Does anybody in this audience tonight believe that America is safe enough? Of course not.

So I say we should set ourselves a real goal. If we're the freest big country in the world, why shouldn't we be the safest big country in the world? Why shouldn't we say, if it worked to put 100,000 police on the street, and it gave us a 30-year low in the crime rate—I promise you, if you put 50,000 more out there concentrated in the high crime areas, we can drive this crime rate down more.

If the Brady bill kept 400,000 people with criminal or mental health backgrounds from buying handguns, and didn't deprive one single hunter of a day of deer season or one single sports shooter of one contest, then we ought to close the loophole in the Brady bill and apply it to the urban flea markets and the gun shows and get some more people out there.

We also ought to recognize that having 21st century communities means we have to find a way to preserve the environment and grow the economy. We're going to have to do more to provide green space in urban areas. More people need to live in cities where you get to drive through woods, like we did to come here tonight. And we can do that. We can do that. We have a whole agenda before the American people.

One of the things that I'm proudest of as President is that under our administration, we have protected more land than any administration in the entire history of America except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt's, and I'm proud of that. But we have to do more of that.

So the aging of America, the children of America, the continuing poverty challenge of

America, balancing family and work, building 21st century communities, ensuring the long-term prosperity of America—you hear all these people running for President and they're promising all these tax cuts and all these spending programs, you just remember one thing. We got to the dance that we're enjoying today because we got rid of that awful deficit, and we had the first back-to-back surpluses in 42 years. And that has given us low interest rates and a booming environment for entrepreneurs to succeed in. We now have a chance. If we stay within the parameters of the budget I sent to this Congress, we can actually pay off the debt of America and be debt-free within 15 years for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835.

Now, if we do that, if we do that, what does it mean? Does it mean there will never be another recession? Of course not. But it means no matter what, interest rates will be lower, that means more jobs, higher incomes, more new businesses, cheaper home mortgages, car loans, and college loan payments. Because we have paid the debt down \$140 billion in the last 2 years, because the aggregate debt is over 1½—listen to this—trillion dollars less than the experts said it would be when I became President, that amounts to a tax cut and lower mortgage payments of \$2,000 a year to the average family, \$200 a year in car interest payments, \$200 a year in college loan payments to the average family in America.

We don't want to forget what got us here. The Democrats are the progressive party. We like to invest money in people. We like to help people. And we ought to. But we have to do it within a framework that says it is this economy that has been our best social program, those 19½ million new jobs. Every year a new record in new businesses started, creating an environment in which people like a lot of the great entrepreneurs here present have been able to be so successful.

So I say we ought to set a big goal—let's get ourselves out of debt over the next 15 years, and then we'll have more money than we know what to do with. And our children and grandchildren can look forward to a generation of prosperity.

You mentioned the world earlier, and how concerned you were. I believe that America has special responsibilities that are, if anything, even greater now that the cold war's over. And it bothers me that the majority in Congress don't want to pay our U.N. dues; that they so blithely walked away from a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty that our nuclear allies Britain and France and 150 other countries had signed; that they wouldn't even let us offer the safeguards that answered the problems they said were there with the treaty; that it was just a political issue.

It bothers me that they passed a foreign assistance package that not only had no money to meet America's commitments that I made—pursuant to a 25-year bipartisan involvement in the Middle East peace process—nothing for the Wye peace accord, to finance it and do our part, when we're at a very critical juncture in the Middle East talks, and I'm about to go off to Oslo to meet with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat; nothing to continue the denuclearization program started by Georgia's Senator Sam Nunn and Dick Lugar of Indiana, the Nunn-Lugar program, which has done more to make the world safe than anything else we've done lately, because it destroys nuclear weapons in Russia—no money for that—no money for America to join everybody from His Holiness the Pope to the European Union to Japan in providing debt relief to the poorest countries in the world in the year 2000, so they can begin to grow and buy our products. Some of them really think that the only thing we've got to do is build a bigger bomb and a bigger wall and we'll be fine, because the cold war's over. I think that is nuts.

You know, we went in and won a war in Kosovo so that people could go home and not be butchered because of their ethnic and religious background. But when we left, the European Union and our other Allies are bearing the lion's share of the costs and the burden in Kosovo now. We helped to end a terrible, brief, bitter conflict in East Timor, after the people there voted for independence, and stopped another ethnic slaughter. But when we left, our friends from Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and other places

went in and did the lion's share of the work. They needed us to help them get in there, but they did it. We get something out of cooperating with other people in the world. And if we stop it and we don't want to pay our fair share, then someday we'll be confronted with crisis after crisis after crisis where we either got to go alone or watch while nothing happens.

Every President since Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman endorsed the idea of the United Nations, has understood that America would be more influential if we were a good neighbor and a good partner, and did a responsible job of paying our fair share. And I think it's important.

And the last point I want to make is the most important of all. If I had to leave the Presidency tomorrow, as much as I have worked on all the things we just talked about—the economy, the family, the environment, the children, the seniors—and I could give America one gift, my one gift would be to give America the ability to be one America, to bridge all of the divides.

It is so ironic that we're celebrating the explosion of technology, the explosion of biology, the solving of the mystery of the human genome. We look ahead to all these unbelievable things happening, and the biggest problem of the world is the oldest problem of human society. We're still scared of people who aren't like us. And when you strip it all away, that's what's going on in Northern Ireland; that's what's going on in the Middle East; that's what's going on in the Balkans; that's what's going on in the tribal wars in Africa; and that's what you see when Matthew Shepard gets killed in Wyoming, or James Byrd gets torn apart in Texas, or the little Jewish kids get shot at going to the community center, and the Filipino postal worker gets murdered in California, or the Korean Christian gets shot coming out of church in Indiana, right after the African-American basketball coach gets murdered walking on the street in Chicago.

What happened to all these people? We still can't form a society where no one hates anybody else because they're different. And it all starts with fear, which leads to distance, which leads to looking down on people, which leads to eventually dehumanizing

them, which then justifies violence against them.

So if I could leave this country with one gift, it would be the gift of just being one America. Because people are smart in this country. We nearly always get it right when we've got enough time. That's why we're still around here after 200 years, you know, we eventually get it figured out. And the reason—so the second reason that I hope you will say, if people ask you why you're here, say, "You know, they had some good ideas, and they've got a good record, the Democrats do," first thing.

Secondly, "They want to take on the big challenges for the 21st century, and so do I, and I agree with them on what they are." The third thing I want to point out, just briefly, is that the new Republican Party wanted a tax cut that's so big, it would have spent all the non-Social Security surplus and there would have been no money to do any of this I talked about. We wanted a tax cut, too, but one that would be consistent with paying off the debt and investing in the education of our children and dealing with the aging of America.

The second thing I want to say is, it may be popular in the South, but I think it's wrong. I don't think it's so popular anymore—even the new Republican Party is for whatever the NRA says they ought to do on these gun fights.

Now, you know, I once had a lifetime membership in the NRA. I've even got my jacket here. I'm sure they revoked it somewhere now. [Laughter] But you listen—hadn't anybody missed a day of deer season on what I've done—nobody. And nobody's been knocked out of one sporting contest for what I've advocated. But there are people alive today because of these background checks. We did the right thing.

So we differ. We're for the Patients' Bill of Rights, and they're against it. We believe our education program ought to include 100,000 teachers, and we ought to build or modernize 6,000 schools. I was just in Philadelphia today where the average school building is 65 years old. In New York City, 40 percent of school buildings are over 70 years old, and they still are heated by coal. There are places in this country where we

cannot hook up the rooms to the Internet because they cannot be wired. I was in Florida, in a little town, the other day; there were 12 house trailers out behind the elementary school in a little town where the kids were going to school. This is an important issue.

In our budget, we not only don't spend the Social Security surplus; we extend the life of Social Security and Medicare. Their budget doesn't add a day to the life of Social Security and Medicare. They're opposed to our initiatives on the environment. You know what they've done in foreign policy; we've talked about it earlier. So we have profound differences.

And I hope tomorrow you'll say, "You know, whether I voted Democrat or Republican over the last 20 years, looking at the next 10, I agree with the Democrats. Those are three pretty good reasons to have been here. I like the record; I like the agenda; I agree with them on the differences."

But if you don't remember anything else, just remember this. We're all pretty lucky or we wouldn't be sitting under this tent tonight. The good Lord has been good to us. And most all of us would like for people to believe we were born in a log cabin we built ourselves, but the truth is we've all had a lot of luck and a lot of kindness and a lot of gifts. And with all the turmoil, the person in this room I believe has made the greatest sacrifices for our country is Max Cleland, and I think he would tell you even he feels lucky to be here and be with us.

So if you don't remember anything else, just remember this. I'm not running for anything. I'm 53 years old; I've had the best life I could imagine. I will never be able to give this country enough to repay what has been given to me. But if I could give you anything, you would remember this—believe me, this is the only chance in my lifetime we have ever had to build the future of our dreams for our children, and we dare not pass it by.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Dr. Larry and Carol Cooper; Andy Tobias, treasurer, and Fran Katz, national finance director, Democratic National Committee; State Democratic Party Chair David Worley; former Representative Buddy Darden; former Senator

Sam Nunn; State Senator Charles Walker; Fulton County Commissioner Michael Hightower; State Attorney General Thurbert E. Baker; baseball hall of famer Henry (Hank) Aaron; former Gov. Zell Miller and current Gov. Roy Barnes of Georgia; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Pope John Paul II. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Remarks to an Anti-Defamation
League National Commission
Dinner in Atlanta**

October 29, 1999

The President. Thank you so much—
Audience member. I came to kiss you, Mr. President!

The President. Well, if you came to kiss me, if you'll wait until I finish, I'll be right down there. [*Laughter*] Don't you go anywhere. I'll be right there. [*Laughter*] That sort of cuts the atmosphere, doesn't it? That's great. [*Laughter*] What was I going to say? [*Laughter*]

Howard, thank you for your introduction and for your many years of friendship and support and for your leadership. Abe Foxman, thank you for your long leadership of the ADL. Glenn Tobias, thank you for your service.

I know the president of the city council, President Pitts, is here; and De Kalb County Chief Executive Levetan is here—I thank them for their presence. And I'm especially grateful to be here with my friend and I believe one of the greatest living Americans, Congressman John Lewis. And Lillian, hello. Lillian, it's nice to see you. Thank you.

More than anything else tonight, except to get my kiss—[*laughter*]—more than anything else tonight, I came here to say thank you. Thank you for nearly 7 years of working with me and Hillary and the Vice President and Mrs. Gore, year-in and year-out. Thank you for your commitment to genuine peace in the Middle East. Thank you for fighting anti-Semitism and terrorism and for promoting religious freedom throughout the world. Thank you for developing a model hate crimes statute, which is now the law in 40 of our 50 States. Thank you for helping us to organize the first-ever White House Con-

ference on Hate Crimes. Thank you for standing with us to promote excellence and diversity and equal opportunity with the appointments of people like Bill Lann Lee and Jim Hormel. Thank you for your pioneering work to filter out hate on the Internet—which, lamentably, was a part of the poison that led to the tragedy of Columbine High School. Thank you for making a world of difference, through your World of Difference Institute, to teach tolerance on campuses and to law enforcement officials across our land. I thank you for all that.

The Talmud says, "Should anyone turn aside the right of a stranger, it is as though he were to turn aside the right of the most high God." Well, that passage carries special meaning in the world in which we live, because the great irony of this time is that we stand on the threshold of unbelievable discoveries in science and technology, amidst the greatest revolution in telecommunications the world has ever known.

I was in Silicon Valley the other night with a bunch of people that started this great company, eBay. You ever buy anything on eBay? Nearly everybody has now. What you might find interesting is that over 20,000 Americans, including many former welfare recipients, are now making a living on eBay—not working for the company, but trading on eBay.

I was talking the other night—just a few months ago—at one of the millennial lectures that Hillary put together, with the brilliant Cambridge physicist Stephen Hawking, who wrote a book called, "A Brief History of Time" which I pretended to read. [*Laughter*] And we were talking about how the new century will bring with it the discovery of millions, perhaps even tens of millions of new galaxies, and perhaps the capacity to pierce the black holes in the universe, to see what is there.

We had an evening the other night, about which I'll say more later, a fascinating evening at the White House that Hillary sponsored, with a man named Vint Cerf, who essentially developed the architecture of the Internet and give the first E-mail, 18 years ago, to his profoundly deaf wife. He thought about the E-mail as a way to communicate with his wife while he was at work, because

she was so deaf even hearing aids could not help her. She now hears, by the way, because of deep implanted computer chips in her ear canals—and Professor Lander from Harvard, one of America's most prominent scholars of the human genome. And they were saying that in a matter of a few years, children will come home from the hospital with a genetic map and with the genuine prospect of a life expectancy of 100 years or more.

Isn't it interesting that in this most modern of all imaginable worlds, with even more breathtaking discoveries just around the corner, that I believe will also include cures for many of the most severe forms of cancer and the ability to give people with severed spinal cords the capacity to walk again—all these miracles, that the biggest problem the world faces is the oldest problem of human society, the fear of the other. We all still continue to turn aside the right of a stranger—people we do not know, therefore we do not understand, therefore we easily fear, therefore we easily dismiss and pretty soon dehumanize them after that—how easy it is to justify violence.

And so, the most urgent task, as we stand on the threshold of the new millennium, is not to plumb the depths of outer space or the inner depths of the human gene, but to follow the oldest admonitions of our Scriptures, and to build what Congressman Lewis, in his marvelous autobiography, and before him, Dr. King, called “the beloved community,” one in which we genuinely love those even with whom we disagree because we do not fear those who are different. The ADL has always stood for that. And most of all, I say thank you.

You know, I've spent a lot of time now going around to political events to try to stir the party faithful, and I feel like a beast of burden since I can't run for anything anymore doing that. I kind of hate that. But I do it—[laughter]—but I do it happily because I want to say to people, I think we're leading the country in the right direction. And it's nice for me, after these years of work and labor and often bitter disputes, to say to the American people that we have the longest peacetime expansion in history, 19½ million new jobs, and highest homeownership ever, and a 29-year low in unemploy-

ment, a 30-year low in welfare rolls, and a 30-year low in the crime rate and a 30-year low in inflation and a 20-year low in the poverty rate and the first back-to-back budget surpluses in 42 years achieved by the smallest Federal Government in 37 years. That's pretty good, and I like saying that.

This week I was able to say we had gone from a \$290 billion deficit to a \$123 billion surplus. In the last 2 years, we paid \$140 billion down on our national debt. That's the most we've ever done on that. I like saying that.

But what I want to say to you tonight is that the real issue is not the marvelous way America has come in the 7 years that I've had the privilege to be President. The real issue before the American people is, what are we going to do with this moment of great good fortune? And again, you can plumb the depths of our Scriptures to find ample evidence that sometimes a good time can be a great hazard to people.

A nation is no different from a family or an individual or a business—sometimes you're most prone to mess up when things are going well. And I often think that some of the bitter partisanship and sort of shortsightedness we've seen in the last 2 years have occurred because people think they have the luxury to do that, because things are going so well, they can't imagine there could be any adverse consequences to not paying the U.N. dues, or contributing our fair share to the alleviation of the debt of the poorest countries in the world, or adopting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, or moving to clean up the environment, or any of the number of other issues.

And what I have tried to say to the American people is, I think this is an enormous responsibility that we have—not just me as President, or the Democrats and Republicans in Congress, but as a people. I'm 53 years old. And in my lifetime, not once, not even once, have we had the combination of prosperity, social progress, and the absence of emergency necessary to allow a people to literally imagine the future of their dreams and build it for their children.

We had an economy maybe almost this good in the sixties, but we had to deal with

the awful realities of the civil rights revolution and then with the burden of the Vietnam war. Before that, it was the cold war; and before that, World War II; and before that, the Depression. We have never had a time like this in my lifetime.

And I have asked the American people to meet the challenge of the aging of America, save Social Security, save Medicare, add a prescription drug benefit to it; meet the challenge of the largest and most diverse group of schoolchildren in our history, give them all a world-class education, turn the failing schools around or shut them down, but give the kids the after-school programs, the summer school programs, the modern schools, the Internet, the small classes they deserve; to meet the challenge of—now that we have a 30-year low in the crime rate, no one thinks it's as safe as it ought to be in America—make our country the safest big country in the world.

And do the things we know will help us to do that—do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children; do more to put police on our streets in the most violent neighborhoods; do more to make our communities more livable and meet our international environmental responsibilities and still grow the economy; do more to bring economic opportunity to people in places left behind.

The other day, I was in South Dakota, where the unemployment rate is 2.8 percent, on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, where the unemployment rate is 73 percent. I think we ought to give all of you the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America we give you to invest in poor areas in Latin America, or Africa, or Asia, because if we don't—we can't bring enterprise and opportunity to our poorest Americans now, we'll never get around to dealing with it.

That's why I've asked America to guarantee our long-term prosperity by adopting a long-term plan for the budget that by the year 2015 will have us completely out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President in 1835, because I believe it'll bring long prosperity to us.

But I would say to you, all—as important as those things are, there are two things that relate to the irony I mentioned at the begin-

ning: the fact that we enter a new millennium with all these modern possibilities bedeviled by the oldest failing of human society. But there are two other issues without which we cannot proceed successfully.

One is to meet our responsibilities around the world as the world's leading force for peace and freedom and reconciliation, against terror and the other forces of destruction, including proliferation of nuclear and chemical and biological weapons. That's why we ought to pay our debt to the U.N. That's why we ought to make our contribution to alleviate the debt of the poorest countries in the world. That's why we ought to continue to fund the program begun by former Senator Sam Nunn from Georgia, to take down these nuclear weapons in Russia, that they want us to help them destroy. And that's why we ought to pay our commitment, made at the Wye peace talks—pursuant to 25 years of bipartisan—bipartisan—efforts for peace in the Middle East—to contribute to the success of the Wye talks, and the modified efforts under Barak and Arafat.

On Sunday night I will leave for Oslo to honor the memory of my friend Yitzhak Rabin and to continue his mission. We're now at a critical moment in the peace process. Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have made some real movement forward. They've made some hard decisions. They're working hard on preserving security and fighting terrorism, and they're making progress in implementing the provisions of the Oslo agreement.

We actually have a chance within the reasonably near future for peace for Israel and its neighbors, for security so necessary for progress and prosperity, and freedom and justice all across that region.

But like all chances in life, it is fleeting. It will require hard choices and hard work within a short time frame. And it cannot be done without the support of the most determined friends of peace, like those of you in this room.

I still believe that we're either going to go forward or drift backward. We can't just freeze this moment. The region could reverse course. There's still plenty of extremists and terrorists out there. There's still people all over the world who represent the forces

of destruction and the enemies of the nation-state—not simply Israel, but everywhere, working to develop weapons of massive destruction that can be miniaturized and carried around and used at a moment's notice. And the same technology that gives you a tiny, tiny cell phone that guys with big fingers like me can hardly dial these days will lead to the miniaturization of weapons in the 21st century.

Make no mistake about it. Our problems with the enemies of peace, with the terrorists, are far from over. And I'll make you a prediction. Within 10 years, it will be normal to see a very sophisticated alliance all around the world between terrorists, drug runners, and organized crime, maximizing the same modern technologies that we all seek to access to do good.

This is the moment that we must seize. It is so important for America to support the peace process and to provide the resources to make peace work. I don't know how many times I have heard one of my leaders at the Pentagon say, "Mr. President, the most expensive peace is far, far cheaper than the cheapest war." It is inexcusable that we would not fund a national security budget for peace, necessary to meet our responsibilities in the Middle East.

Congress sent me a foreign aid bill without the \$800 million I requested this year, or the \$500 million for next year to fund our part of the Wye River agreement. The bill sent a terrible signal to our friends in the Middle East, the strongest possible encouragement to the enemies of peace that there will be no immediate rewards for peace. That's why I vetoed it, and I'll veto it again if it doesn't provide for the funding of our obligations around the world.

I ask you to support the other provisions of the bill, the funds necessary to reduce the nuclear threat from Russia, to provide debt relief to the poorest countries as the Pope and so many others have asked us to do in the millennial year, to meet our obligations to the United Nations, to do the other things that promote democracy and opportunities for trade and investment.

We must sustain America's leadership. I want you to know, on a subject I know you care a lot about, I have urged the Russian

leadership not to allow the current challenges they face to undermine respect for human rights and individual liberty and opposition to anti-Semitism in Russia. If we want—I will say again, if we want to have influence with other countries, none of them are asking us to buy our way into their favor. But as the wealthiest, most powerful country in the world at the moment of our greatest success, for us not to even pay our fair share when already we spend a smaller percentage of our income on nonmilitary national security measures than any major country in the world is inexcusable.

So for all of those other challenges I mentioned, we must be a force for good around the world. And we cannot do that for free. We get a lot out of our interdependence with others. We contribute to the United Nations so that when something happens like Kosovo—yes, our planes flew the bulk of the mission and, yes, we bore the bulk of the financial burdens to save those 800,000 people from ethnic cleansing, and I'm glad we did it.

But today, as they work to rebuild, the bulk of the burdens in manpower and in money is being borne by our Allies in Europe. Yes, it was necessary for the United States to take a strong position on the problem in East Timor to stop the terrible slaughter there as a result of their vote for independence. But now the bulk of the load is being carried by our friends, like Australia and Malaysia and others there, because we live in an interdependent world where we share responsibility.

Yes, we spend some money in Africa to train troops, but that means the next time a horrible slaughter like Rwanda comes along, it can be handled by the Africans and we can give them support, and they won't have to look at us and say, "Why didn't you send 100,000 Americans to stop this before it started?" We get a lot out of being good neighbors and responsible parties, and we need to continue to do it.

The last point I want to make is one the ADL well knows. We can't be a force for good abroad unless we are a force for good at home. And while, thank God, we have been spared the ravages in the modern age of mass conflict based on religion as in

Northern Ireland, or religion and ethnic differences as in the Middle East or the Balkans, or tribal bloodshed as in Rwanda, Burundi, and other places in Africa.

We see in these hate crimes—the murder of young Matthew Shepard in Wyoming, the horrible dragging death of James Byrd in Texas, the killing of the postman, the Filipino postman; and the shooting of the children at the Jewish community center in Los Angeles, the murder spree in the Midwest that took the lives of the African-American basketball coach outside Chicago and a young Korean Christian as he walked outside his church, those perpetrated by a man who claimed he belonged to a church that did not believe in God, but did believe in white supremacy—we see that we are not immune from this. And why is that? Because it is a part of human nature. Why was it in the Torah in that provision I read earlier? Because of the knowledge from God that in us, there is all the tendency, in all of us, to turn away from the right of a stranger.

Every one of us, I believe—maybe you don't; maybe you guys are perfect—I wake up every day, and I know—I sort of think of my life and my attitude toward the world and of its people as being governed by an internal scale, and on one side of the scale there is light and on the other side there is darkness. And you always want it tilting toward the light, but not so much as to be naive, but enough to have a genuine charitable view toward others—a genuine respect, a genuine humility—and understand that you may not always be right, but you have an obligation to recognize the integrity and the common humanity of others.

But it's easy to get that scale out of balance. Even all of us have our good days and our bad days. When it gets badly out of balance, then the fear and the dehumanization of the other drives people to these terrible, tormented acts of slaughter. Sometimes there's a political patina on it, so people can actually act as if it's justified. Sometimes it's just some poor, demented, twisted soul, acting out of pain and fear and anger and blindness. Nothing is more important to our future than flushing that not only from the killers but flushing that feeling in its less violent manifestations from all of our hearts.

If I could leave America after my Presidency with one wish, it would be to be one America—to revel in our diversity, to respect it, to celebrate it, to enjoy it, to make it interesting.

It can only happen—you can only have fun—in a diverse country. You can only find it interesting to examine whether someone else's religious perspective or cultural heritage has some validity for you, something you can learn—you can only really revel in it if you believe that our common humanity is more important than the things which make us different.

Now, that means, it seems to me, we need to stand against manifestations of our inhumanity, and we need to do more to reaffirm our common humanity. That's why I was so disturbed when the Republican majority on the relevant committees of Congress took out the hate crimes legislation in the form of the bill that had already passed the Senate. I vetoed the bill that came to me, in part because it didn't contain those hate crimes provisions.

And I think it's very important that we say, "Look, it's not that the victims of these hate crimes"—you know, the people that say we don't need these things are saying, "You're saying those victims are more important than other victims." That's not true. What we are saying is that hate crimes victimize not only the victim but they victimize society as a whole in a special way, because they contradict the very idea of America we are trying to build. We're not letting somebody else off the hook. We're saying we want a clear and unambiguous stand against things that contradict the very idea of the America we want to build.

The other point I'd like to make is, it's not enough just to be against things. We need to be for things that will enable us to live up to our full potential. That's why I'm also for strengthening the equal pay law, for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," or the so-called Kennedy-Jeffords bill to let people with disabilities go into the workplace and keep their Government health care through Medicaid, so that they can work and be a part of our society. We need to be for things that bring us together.

I want to close with these two stories. I told you earlier we had this millennial

evening at the White House, with the genome scholar from Harvard and Vint Cerf, who was one of the architects of the Internet. And we were talking about—they were talking about how the mysteries of the human gene could not have been solved without the advances in computer science. And then they put them all up on the screens, the formula for what our genes look like. And I pretended to understand that. [*Laughter*]

But I did understand the point they were making. So I said to them, I said, “Look, with these 100,000 sequences and all the possibilities and permutations, how much are we alike or different?” And Professor Lander said, “The truth is that all people, genetically, are 99.9 percent the same.” That confirms your philosophy, right?

Here’s the next point he made, which is more interesting to me. He said if you were to get groups of people together by ethnicity or race—let’s suppose you’ve got 100 European Jews together, and you’ve got 100 Arabs, and you’ve got 100 Iranians, and then you’ve got 100 people from the Yoruba Tribe in Nigeria, and you’ve got 100 Irish people together, and you put them all in a room with their groups, here’s what they said. They said the genetic differences among the individual groups—that is, among the Yorubas, among the Irish, among the Jews, among the Arabs—the genetic differences within the groups would be greater than the genetic differences between any one group and any other group. Now, think about that.

When you look at a profile of any sizeable ethnic group—Hispanic, African, you name it—the genetic differences of the individuals within the group are greater than the group genetic profile of one group as compared with another. In other words, the most advanced scientific knowledge confirms the wisdom of the Torah and tells us not to turn aside a stranger. Because it turns out a stranger is not so strange after all.

In the summer of 1994, as I remember, it was just before we went to the Wadi Araba to sign the peace agreement between Israel and Jordan. The late Prime Minister Rabin and the late King Hussein addressed the United States Congress. Near the end of his speech, Rabin turned to Hussein and said, and I quote, “We have both seen a lot in

our lifetime. We have seen too much suffering. What will you leave to your children? What will I leave to my grandchildren? I have only dreams,” he said, “to build a better world—a world of understanding and harmony; a world in which it is a joy to live. That is not asking for too much.”

That dream has united those of you in this organization for 85 years now. That dream in our time requires us to build one America and requires America to be a force for peace and harmony in the world. Think of it—Rabin gave his life so that we might build a world in which it is a joy to live. It is not asking for too much, but it will require all we can give.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:25 p.m. at the Grand Hyatt Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Howard P. Berkowitz, national chairman, Abraham H. Foxman, national director, and Glenn Tobias, national executive committee chairman, Anti-Defamation League; Atlanta City Council President Robb Pitts; De Kalb County Chief Executive Liane Levetan; Representative John Lewis’ wife, Lillian; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid; Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President’s Radio Address

October 30, 1999

Good morning. Two weeks ago I reaffirmed our Nation’s commitment to environmental protection and announced our plan to protect more than 40 million acres of roadless area in our national forests. Today I’m announcing new actions we’re taking to protect our air, our water, and some of our most precious lands.

One of the simplest but most potent tools in our fight against pollution is public information. By requiring industries to tell communities how much they pollute the air and water, we empower citizens to fight back and create a powerful incentive for industry to pollute less. Remarkably, in the decades

since the public's right-to-know about chemical releases became the law of the land, industry's toxic pollution has fallen nearly 50 percent.

Today, my administration is again expanding the public's right-to-know. We're acting to protect families against some of the most dangerous chemicals ever known, including mercury, dioxin, and PCB's. These chemicals are troubling for two reasons. First, they don't break down easily; instead, they build up in the environment and in our bodies. Second, many of them heighten the risk of cancer or other illness, even at very low doses.

Right now companies are required to disclose their uses of these chemicals only if they handle huge quantities. Beginning January 1st, we'll require companies to inform the public even if they're using much smaller quantities—in some cases, just 10 pounds a year. In the case of dioxin, a chemical that can cause harm even in minute quantities, companies must report if they produce as little as a tenth of a gram.

By posting this information for all to see, we can speed the day when families no longer need worry about hidden dangers in the air they breathe and the water they drink.

As we step up our fight against pollution, we must work as well to preserve lands across America that are still pristine. Today I'm announcing a new effort to protect the incomparable California desert so future generations can enjoy it in all its splendor. Five years ago I signed the California Desert Act, preserving millions of acres of stark but fragile landscape, rich with history and precious wildlife.

Today, to mark the anniversary, the non-profit Wildlands Conservancy is donating to the Federal Government an additional 14,000 acres within the Joshua Tree National Park—lands that otherwise might be developed. It's through partnerships like this that we can protect vital pieces of our national endowment.

We have also just completed our agreement to preserve New Mexico's spectacular Baca Ranch, home to one of the largest herds of wild elk anywhere in the world. I'm working closely with Congress to secure the fund-

ing to complete this purchase so that we can preserve this extraordinary land for all time.

In my balanced budget for this year, I proposed a \$1 billion lands legacy initiative to preserve other natural treasures and to help communities protect local green spaces. Regrettably, Congress has failed to provide even half the necessary funding.

And even more troubling, the Interior bill that Congress has produced once again is laden with provisions that would benefit special interests at the expense of our public interest and our environment. One of these provisions would allow excessive logging on our national forests. Another would let mining companies dump more toxic wastes on public lands. A third would grant a windfall to major companies that produce oil on Federal lands.

This makes no sense. Today, while I'm taking action to protect communities against toxic chemicals, Congress is giving special interests license to pollute our public lands. While I'm taking action to save some of our most treasured places, Congress is putting other precious lands at greater risk.

So let me be clear: If Congress sends me this Interior bill, I'll veto it. Again, I urge Congress to work with me on a better bill that is unburdened by these anti-environmental provisions and that has adequate funding to protect our natural landscape through the lands legacy initiative.

All through this century, since Theodore Roosevelt set us on the path of conservation, Americans have worked together across party lines to protect public health and restore and protect our environment. As we begin the new millennium, let our gift to the future be a new effort, together across party lines, to clean our air, to ensure safe water, and to preserve healthy, thriving lands.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:59 p.m. on October 29 at a private residence in Atlanta, GA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Statement on Naming a Guided Missile Destroyer in Honor of the Late Senator John H. Chafee

October 30, 1999

I am honored to announce today that the 40th ship of the *Arleigh Burke* class of guided missile destroyers will be named in honor of the late Senator John H. Chafee of Rhode Island. Senator Chafee distinguished himself throughout a life dedicated to serving our Nation as a United States Senator, as Secretary of the Navy, as Governor of Rhode Island, and as a United States Marine in World War II and the Korean war. Given Senator Chafee's long association with the sea—with the Marine Corps, the Navy, and the great maritime State of Rhode Island—I can think of no better way to honor his many contributions than to name a warship in his honor.

The ship named in honor of Senator Chafee will be one of the most technologically advanced ships in the United States Navy. It will be capable of performing a wide range of missions in support of U.S. national security. Whether showing the flag in peacetime to build good will with other nations or employing its potent combat power in conflict, the ship will carry on Senator Chafee's legacy of honorable service to our Nation.

Remarks Following Church Services and an Exchange With Reporters

October 31, 1999

EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy

The President. Like all Americans, Hillary and I are very saddened by the crash of the EgyptAir flight off the coast of Massachusetts. We are working on the recovery efforts. We know there has been an extensive loss of life, and we don't yet know what caused the accident. So I really think I can't say any more now, except—

Q. Have you talked with anyone, sir?

The President. Only our people. They've briefed me. But we don't know, we don't know what the cause of the accident is. We'll keep working until we find out.

Q. Concerns about foul play, sir?

The President. We don't know. We have no evidence of that at this time, and I think it's better if people draw no conclusions until we know something.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. outside Foundry United Methodist Church. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Bryant Gumbel of the Columbia Broadcast System's "Early Show"

October 31, 1999

Mr. Gumbel. Mr. President, first off, thank you very much for the time. I'm grateful.

The President. You're welcome. I'm glad to see you. Congratulations on your new program.

Mr. Gumbel. Thank you very much.

The President. It's going to ruin your golf game getting up at 4 o'clock every morning.

EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy

Mr. Gumbel. Well it's not bad, though, you're on the tee by noon so it's okay. Let me turn serious for a moment.

We meet against the backdrop of the EgyptAir 990 crash. At this point in time, have you any reason to believe this was anything other than an accident?

The President. No. I don't. But I think it's important that we draw no conclusions about it and just let the investigation take its course.

Mr. Gumbel. Given history, given the volatile nature of Mideast relationships, do you see the absence of answers in any way impacting the Mideast talks in Oslo?

The President. Based on what I know now, I don't. I had a good talk with President Mubarak. I called him immediately when I got up this morning, and we talked about it a little bit. We're working together with the Egyptian Government in every way we can on this crash. So, now, I don't. So, unless there is some question I don't know about that arises in the next day or 2, I don't think it will.

Mr. Gumbel. Would you say President Mubarak shares your view right now that there is no reason to believe this was anything other than an accident?

The President. Well, I think we agree that the evidence doesn't give us any indication that there was, now. But the evidence doesn't say anything one way or the other. We don't know. And I think the honest answer to people who ask is that they shouldn't have a prejudice about it one way or the other. We should just look and see.

Upcoming Middle East Peace Talks in Oslo, Norway

Mr. Gumbel. As you look to Oslo, what are your realistic expectations of what you can accomplish?

The President. Well, I hope that by getting together with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat in a setting designed to honor the memory and to evoke the memory of Yitzhak Rabin, we can give some new energy to this process. They've done really quite well with their cooperation on security, with opening the safe passage from the West Bank to Gaza, with agreeing to a very disciplined timetable. But now they're getting into these issues which are all hard. And my strong conviction is that we've known what these issues are for a long time now; they're not going to get any easier. So whatever I and whatever the United States can do to facilitate a timely resolution of these issues I think will be positive. So I think this will have a positive impact on getting the process going along here.

Mr. Gumbel. Is it easier for you to feel a degree of optimism because it's Barak involved right now instead of Netanyahu?

The President. Well that may be part of it. But I think the main thing is that Barak and Arafat have now made an agreement and they're implementing it. And they're also cooperating on security issues. And Barak has made publicly clear that he had a timetable for resolving this, and he's received the support of the Israeli people. So that whole set of circumstances make me optimistic.

On the other hand, I want to say again, we're now down to the hard decisions. When Oslo was negotiated, the Oslo agreement, way back at the very end of '92, they knew

what they were doing in saying, "Okay, here is what we're going to do now; here's what we're going to do in the next 4 or 5 years; here is what we're going to do at the end." And they left the hard stuff to the end. It was the right decision, but we're now down to the end and we have to deal with the hard stuff.

President's Role in 2000 Elections

Mr. Gumbel. Let's move closer to home. Let's talk politics, close to your heart, of course. The two people who have been closest to you for 7 years are about to get out there on the campaign trail while you stay at home and deal with the issues. Is that terribly frustrating?

The President. No. Actually, I enjoy it. I knew when I started that it would come to an end. I was hoping I would be fortunate enough to serve two terms, and I have been. And I've loved every day of it. And now it's important that the work of the country go on and that the direction that we have taken continue and that the changes that still need to be made by the country be made. So I'm actually very—I'm proud of the Vice President, and I'm very proud of my wife for being willing to stick their necks out and do this. And I wish them well.

Mr. Gumbel. What role do you see yourself playing in their campaigns?

The President. Well no official role, really. And I shouldn't. But I will do what I'm asked to do. I've helped the Vice President at a couple of fundraisers, and we talk with some frequency. And of course, I talk to Hillary all the time, every day. And it's so funny because our roles are almost completely reversed now. All the things that she did for me over more than 20 years, all the encouragement, reminders, helpful suggestions, everything, all the things, we've just kind of reversed roles. And I'm enjoying it. I'm trying to do a good job in my new role.

Mr. Gumbel. How do you view the polls that have suggested that if you're on the campaign trail with them, you may be more of a liability than a positive?

The President. Well, what I think people are saying is we want these people to sell themselves. And we don't want anyone to tell us how to vote. That's the point I tried to

make in Philadelphia when I was campaigning for John Street, that I don't want to tell you how to vote. I would like to offer you some reasons about why you should vote.

And I think particularly in New York where Hillary—which has been wonderful to me; I got 58 percent of the vote; we won by 1.8 million votes in New York in 1996, but that doesn't mean that those New Yorkers believe I should tell them who should be their Senator. They want to see Hillary out there committed to them, their issues, their needs, their future. And the more she does that, the more everybody else will be able to make arguments about why she should be elected. But I think—and that's just the way the democratic process works. And it's good.

Mr. Gumbel. Would you welcome the chance to get out there and stump against Rudy Guiliani, or if the case calls for it, George W. Bush?

The President. Well, what I hope that I will be able to do is to remind the American people of where we were 7 years ago, where we are now, where we need to go in the future. I agree with the majority of people who say they still want change. The question is, what kind of change do we want? And the vote of the public in the year 2000—the American people will not decide whether we're going to change or not; we are. You know, things are changing at a breathtaking pace, and we have to keep up. The question is, what kind of change will we embrace? And insofar as I can offer my observations, not only as the President but as a citizen, as someone who wants our grandchildren to live in the strongest possible country, I will do that.

But you have to be careful. I can't expect anybody to vote for anyone, not just the Vice President and Hillary, not anyone, just because I say they should do it. So the only thing I can do is hope that the position I have will get people to listen to whatever reasons I offer.

Vice President's Candidacy

Mr. Gumbel. Why do you think, turning to the Vice President's campaign for a second, if might, why do you think the Vice President is having such a difficult time

opening up ground between himself and Bill Bradley?

The President. Well, first I think he's doing a good job on his campaign right now. I thought he did a good job in the debate. I think he did a good thing to go home to Tennessee. And I think that if—by historical standards, he's doing quite well. I think Bill Bradley is an intelligent, a compelling man with a good life story and a lot of friends built up in professional basketball and 18 years in the Senate and all the other things he's done. And he's out there running a credible campaign.

But if you look at the last time this happened, when then-Vice President Bush was running against Bob Dole, at this time in that race Vice President Bush was only one point ahead of Bob Dole in the national polls.

People want to see the Vice President out there establishing his own identity with his own program for the future, making clear where he wants to go. If he does, I think he will be nominated. And I think he's doing a good job of that now.

Gov. George W. Bush of Texas

Mr. Gumbel. It would seem that at this point that whoever prevails will be going up against George W. Bush. In style and personality, Governor Bush has been characterized as the GOP's version of you. Flattering? Offensive?

The President. It's certainly not offensive. I think he's got—he's a very accomplished political leader, and he's got good instincts for where the political center is.

Mr. Gumbel. Flattering then?

The President. And I think—well, let me say, and I think he's made a deliberate decision to present his candidacy as sort of a new Republican—kind of a kinder, gentler Republican alternative. What I hope the American people will focus on when they get to the general election—and we're not there yet. Let me say, I don't think Senator McCain is out of this yet. I think he's a very credible alternative. And I think that the fact that he's been willing to participate in these debates, and Governor Bush hasn't, I think is a plus for McCain.

Assuming we get to that point, then I think the issue will be, what does the Republican

nominee offer for the future? What does the Democratic nominee offer to the future? What would the combination of a Republican President and Republican Congress bring to our future? Will it bring back this tax cut I vetoed? Does it mean the NRA will continue to control the gun debate? Or will we have somebody trying to have sensible gun restraint mechanisms? Does it mean we'll never get a Patients' Bill of Rights because the health insurance companies don't want it? There are all these issues that I think will become quite clear—maybe not even until next August—but in August, September, and October, you're going to see a very vigorous debate that will shape not only the next 4 years but maybe the next 10 or 15 years of America's new century.

Mr. Gumbel. Before I leave the subject of Governor Bush, what's your take on the demarkation line he's drawing on past drug use for his personal life?

The President. I'm going to leave that to—that's up to the public really. The people are in the driver's seat now. And the press will express their views and do what they think is right, and the politicians will express their views and do what they think is right. But in the end, the public has to be the judge of that.

Mr. Gumbel. Let me rephrase. In your opinion, do you believe previous cocaine use should disqualify someone from sitting in this office?

The President. My opinion is that the public will make a decision. That if—most people think they ought to know if there is some serious problem in someone's background, and if so, how that person has dealt with it. The American people tend to be forgiving about many things, but there are some things they want to know and then there are other things they don't want to know. And they may change their mind from time to time. Maybe they think it depends upon how long ago it was. Maybe they think it depends upon how it was treated.

But I think that if I get in the middle of this debate, it will interfere with having a debate that's free of distraction, that is, my opinion would only be a distraction given the way—the kind of treatment I got from '91 forward from the Republicans and their al-

lies. And I think I should stay out of it and let the people make the right decision.

Mr. Gumbel. New York Times Magazine cover, as I think you probably saw, had a cover a week and a half ago of "Slam, Bam Sham," suggesting that modern culture generates Presidential candidates whose lone qualifications are fame and a degree of celebrity. Do you see that as a disturbing trend?

The President. Well, I certainly didn't have any fame or celebrity when I ran. In President Bush's terms, I was the Governor of a small Southern State.

Mr. Gumbel. I think the headline was aimed at those who are courting the Reform Party at this point.

The President. Oh, I know. But no, I don't. You know, Governor Bush is in part of the position he's in because his father was President. But in the end, the voters will judge him, I think, based on his own merits.

The Kennedys have spawned, now, two generations, and it won't be long before there will be a third generation, of young people who present themselves for public service. They're aided in the beginning because of their name, but in the end, their judged on their own merits.

And I don't think someone should be disqualified for seeking public office because they've been in entertainment, or business, or athletics. But sooner or later, the voters look at them and they say, "Well, can this person perform?" So I don't see it as a bad thing. I basically trust the voters on this. As long as they've got time enough to make a good decision, I think they normally make it. That's why we're still around here after 200 years.

And the more—the bigger the country gets, the more people will have an advantage, who for some reason or another, are already known by a lot of people. On the other hand, if somebody really good and is known by no one has a chance to start, the same mass media can make you famous in a hurry. So I'm not particularly worried about this.

Post-Presidential Plans

Mr. Gumbel. Are you going to miss being President?

The President. I think so, yes. I think I will because I love the job. You know, just today I got up—I do what I did Sunday afternoon, every Sunday afternoon. I went through all my work for the last week that I hadn't done, and all the plans for the next week. I love this job. I've worked at it, and I've loved it, and it's been an honor to serve. So yes, I will miss it.

On the other hand, I'm so focused, almost to the point of obsession, on what we can still get done here. And I'm genuinely looking forward to what I'm going to do when I'm not President anymore.

Mr. Gumbel. And that would be?

The President. Well, I'm going to set up my library and public policy center. And I'm going to try to be a very good citizen without getting in the way of the next President.

Mr. Gumbel. What kind of odds would you quote on you ever running for office again, any office?

The President. Oh, I think they would be pretty long. Although, you know, I used to joke that I might run for the school board someday. I don't know. I certainly have no plans to run for office. And I'm going to have to get out here and earn a little money and try to make sure that my wife and daughter are okay. Maybe something could happen someday and I would want to run. I just don't know.

President's Legacy

Mr. Gumbel. Presidents generally get one line in the history, if they get one line. JFK was shot. Nixon had Watergate. Reagan beat communism. Clinton?

The President. Turned the economy around and prepared America for a new century.

Mr. Gumbel. You would be satisfied if your legacy was erasing the Nation's red ink?

The President. I think that's one of my legacies. But I think the real legacy is—America is genuinely transformed from where it was 7 years ago. Look at where we were in '92. We had economic distress. We had social divisions, as embodied in the riot in Los Angeles. We were in political drift; government was completely discredited. And I said, "Look, give me a chance. I've got some new ideas to create opportunity, to increase

responsibility among our citizens, to build a community of America." And we set about changing. Meanwhile, America was changing.

The day I took office as President there were only 50 websites on the Internet in the whole world, 50. That's how much we've changed. So yes, we've got the strongest economy in history. And yes, we're paying off the debt instead of being in debt. But we also have cut our welfare rolls in half. We've got the lowest crime rate in 30 years. We've got the lowest poverty rate in 30 years. We've reversed this wage inequality. All groups are growing. A couple of million children have been moved out of poverty. The air is cleaner. The water is cleaner. We set aside more land to protect it than any other administration except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt.

So the whole Nation has been transformed. We literally have prepared the country for another century. If you compare it from now to then; instead of a distressed economy, you've got a booming economy. Instead of a divided society, you've got the social problems being solved. And instead of political drift and discrediting of government, we've got the smallest Government in 37 years, and it's actually doing things for people, empowering people.

So I think that I have been fortunate enough to serve as President at a time of dramatic transformation, when we really have—in the metaphor I used in 1996—built a bridge to the future. And now the American people are going to have to decide how they want to walk over it.

President's New York Residence

Mr. Gumbel. Final note. If my research is correct, you sign papers next week, final papers, on the house in Chappaqua. Do you happen to know what's the closest golf course to your house in Chappaqua?

The President. I don't, no.

Mr. Gumbel. Whippoorwill Country Club in Armonk. Do you know who is a member there?

The President. Are you?

Mr. Gumbel. Yes, sir.

The President. I would be happy to be your guest any time. I'm easy about that.

Mr. Gumbel. Mr. President, safe travels.
The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:08 p.m. in Oval Office at the White House and was videotaped for broadcast on November 1. In his remarks, the President referred to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Philadelphia mayoral candidate John F. Street; and former Senators Bill Bradley and Bob Dole. A portion of this interview could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Departure for Oslo, Norway, and an Exchange With Reporters

October 31, 1999

EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy

The President. Good afternoon. Before I leave for Oslo, I would like to make a few comments. First, I want to say, as I did earlier today, how deeply saddened I am over the disappearance of EgyptAir Flight 990 early this morning off the coast of Massachusetts.

We know there has been a loss of life. The Coast Guard, supported by the Navy, is conducting extensive search and rescue operations in the area. The effort will continue for as long as necessary. We are also working with Egyptian authorities, and I spoke earlier with President Mubarak of Egypt today to express my condolences and to assure him that we would be working together closely until this matter is resolved.

We do not know what caused this tragedy, but we will devote every necessary resource so that we can understand exactly what happened. At this moment, the thoughts and prayers of all our people should be with the families of the passengers and crew of Flight 990 from the United States and other places throughout the world.

In a few minutes, I will leave for Norway, where leaders will gather to honor the memory of one of the great heroes of this century, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. We will honor him by not only remembering his life but by pursuing his vision of a peaceful Middle East.

I will meet with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, who are moving forward on an ambitious agenda to reach a comprehensive peace agreement. There are tremendous challenges ahead. I will do everything I can to help, because peace in the Middle East is strongly in the interest of the American people. And we have been working on it on a bipartisan basis for several years now.

Now, before I leave, I also want to say just a few words about the budget debate here in Washington and how that debate may affect another matter of great interest to our people, the education of our children.

This is now the seventh budget season I have been through as President. Each and every time, the Vice President and I have insisted that Congress produce budgets that live within our means while living up to the values of the American people. There is no greater value than education, especially in this information age. So even as we have reduced the size of Government to its smallest size in 37 years, we have nearly doubled our investment in education and training.

We have turned deficits into surpluses. We have sparked an economic expansion because of it, that come February will be the longest in American history. But we have not stopped increasing our investment and targeting our investment to higher standards and higher quality education.

Last fall we took another very important step. We reached an agreement with Congress to help States and school districts begin to hire 100,000 new teachers, new high-quality teachers that were well trained, to reduce class size in the early grades. The need for this was obvious. School enrollments are exploding; they are already the largest in history. And record numbers of our teachers soon will be retiring. Moreover, the research is clear that students learn more in classes with smaller, quality teachers.

Today we've learned about a new report indicating that our class reduction initiative already is producing results. Moments ago, I was briefed by the gentleman here to my left, Mike Casserly, the executive director of the Council of Great City Schools, on the council's just completed survey of 40 of the Nation's largest school districts.

The survey shows that our class size reduction initiative has so far done precisely what we said it would. It has put more teachers in the classroom and increased training for those already there, with a minimum of red-tape and bureaucracy. The report shows that these school districts have not only hired over 3,500 well trained teachers, but they have hired them for hard to fill positions that add the greatest impact, including teaching reading, math, and special education.

I'm not surprised by these results. Every time I've visited a school in recent months, teachers, principals, parents, administrators all have complimented, even raved about our class size reduction initiative.

This report confirms that this targeted effort to hire more teachers is what local schools need and want. Last fall the congressional Republicans agreed to support this proposal. Many of them went home in the election seasons and enthusiastically shared the credit for it, which they were then entitled to do. I know that some of them even ran ads touting this idea as they embraced it.

Now, suddenly, the Republican majority has changed its mind. And this week Congress will consider a labor and education budget bill that doesn't commit to hiring 100,000 new quality teachers. In fact, it reverses the targeted funding for the first installment of 30,000 that we passed last time. Nor does it put a dime into our effort to demand accountability for results by helping States and school districts to turn around or shut down their lowest performing schools.

Moreover, it makes mindless across-the-board cuts in everything from education to health to safety. If that bill passes, I will veto it. I don't think the proper response to our education challenge is fewer teachers, no accountability, and across-the-board cuts in education.

I want to hire 100,000 more teachers, 50,000 more community police to build on the effort that has given us the lowest crime rate in 30 years. I want to protect the environment and invest in education strategies that work.

Let me also reemphasize something. Many of those who say they don't want to target this money for hiring more teachers, say the

money is needed to improve the quality of the existing teaching force. These 40 school districts I just mentioned not only hired over 3,500 new teachers; they gave professional development to over 22,000 teachers to improve their skills in the classroom.

Our bill provides that money can be used to train existing teachers, and money can be used for recruitment as well as for salaries. In other words, this fund is flexible where it needs to be flexible but targeted where it needs to be targeted. This report shows conclusively that what we did in 1998, as Republicans and Democrats alike, was right. It shows that the Members of Congress in the Republican Party who ran ads in 1998 complimenting themselves for the 100,000 teacher initiative were right then, and they shouldn't be changing their mind now.

So once again, I ask Congress to put partisanship aside, read this report, and work with me to reduce class size, increase quality in teaching, and increase performance in our schools. We should be funding education strategies that work.

Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Casserly.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, are you optimistic about Oslo?

The President. Well, yes I am, based on the work that Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat have done already. You know, they've now opened the safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza. They're working very closely together on security arrangements.

But when the Oslo accords were made at the end—the very, very end of 1992—the people who put them together and the leaders who ratified them were quite smart. They left certain issues to be decided at the end, the so-called final status issues. They left them to the end because they're the hardest.

And so now it's come time to make the hard decisions. This will be difficult for both sides. But I believe that they're well aware of what the options are, and I don't believe they'll get much easier with the passage of time. So I think it's very important that the United States do whatever we can to create

the conditions and provide the support necessary for these people to come together and do what they genuinely want to do. And so yes, I'm hopeful. I don't expect that we'll announce the resolution of all the final status issues at Oslo, but I do think that we'll be moving the process right along.

EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy's Effect on Oslo Talks

Q. Mr. President, are you worried that the EgyptAir crash will overshadow the Oslo trip?

The President. Based on what I now know, and my conversation with President Mubarak—based on what I now know, I do not believe that, no. I have no reason to believe that there is any element involved in this which would overshadow or shadow the work of peace.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:45 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Proclamation 7246—Child Mental Health Month, 1999

October 30, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As a Nation, we have made much progress in ensuring the physical health of our young people. But we are only beginning to make similar strides in protecting their mental health. The symptoms of mental illness in children and adolescents too often go unrecognized and therefore untreated—a tragic failing that can lead to profound effects on their development. Even very young children can experience anxiety and depressive disorders that can have a long-term negative impact on their social interactions at home and at school.

Unfortunately, our attitudes regarding mental illness have compounded this problem. While we now know that more than one in five Americans experiences some form of

mental illness each year, that many mental disorders are biological, and that they can be treated medically, too many people still believe that mental illness is a personal failure. Because of this widespread misconception, many parents are reluctant to acknowledge that their children need help, and many children who need help are afraid to ask for it.

During Child Mental Health Month, I encourage all parents, teachers, pediatricians, school nurses, other health care professionals, and concerned citizens across our country to learn more about children's mental health. By doing so, we can recognize more quickly the early warning signs of mental illnesses and disorders. We can detect depression before it deepens into serious illness, raise awareness of risk factors for suicide, and work to prevent more acts of youth violence.

We must do all we can to intervene in the lives of young people who are mentally or emotionally unstable before they cause harm to themselves or to others. I am pleased that some schools have responded to the recent youth violence tragedies by improving mental health services, expanding after-school and mentoring programs, and offering in-home counseling for vulnerable families. To ensure the success of these efforts, we must work to fight the stigma and dispel the myths that surround mental illness. By engaging in efforts that raise public awareness of our children's mental health, we can replace stigma with acceptance, ignorance with understanding, and fear with new hope for the future.

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 November 1999 as Child Mental Health Month. I call upon families, schools, communities, and governments to dedicate themselves to promoting the mental health and well-being of all our children.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of October, 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, 8:45 a.m., November 3, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 1, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on November 4.

Exchange With Reporters on Arrival in Oslo, Norway

November 1, 1999

Middle East Peace Process

Q. What is your hope for the peace process?

The President. Well, first of all, I would like to thank the Prime Minister, the Government, and the people of Norway for hosting this meeting. I think it's coming at a good time. I believe that Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat want to continue the peace process. And we are now to the point where the really difficult decisions lie ahead. So coming back to Oslo, where the Oslo accords were born, coming here to honor the memory of Yitzhak Rabin, who gave his life for this peace process, it's a good thing to do.

And so we're hopeful that we'll make some progress. And we'll see, and probably the less we say about it in public, the more likely we are to get something done. But I'm hopeful. And I'm honored to be here in Norway. This is my first trip, as President, to Norway. I haven't been here in 30 years—30 years ago next month was my first trip to Norway.

President's First Visit to Norway

Q. Do you remember it well?

The President. Very well, yes. It was wonderful.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 7 a.m. at Oslo International Airport. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway and an Exchange With Reporters in Oslo

November 1, 1999

Prime Minister Bondevik. Mr. President, dear journalists, it's a very special occasion for us in Norway. This is the very first visit from a sitting President of the United States to our country. So we are so glad to receive President Clinton here.

We have had fruitful discussions, where we could continue our talks from the White House in Washington, only 2 weeks ago. And of course, we have discussed the Middle East peace process. We think that the ceremonial commemoration tomorrow for the late Prime Minister Rabin and the talks in that framework can stimulate the peace process. And we are both committed to assist the two parties. The main responsibility for a final solution is, of course, upon the two parties.

Norway and the U.S. will seek ways to expand our common efforts in a number of areas for security, development, and for well-being. The President and I have today agreed on an initiative to follow up the Reykjavik Conference on Women and Democracy, where the First Lady, Hillary Clinton, participated. We are also agreed on a joint initiative on funding for support of disabled victims of the war in Sierra Leone.

Mr. President, I believe that you want to say a few words before we answer one or two questions. Mr. President.

President Clinton. Thank you. First, Prime Minister, let me say I am delighted to be here, honored by your invitation to come a few weeks ago, and then by the King's invitation to come to Norway. As you perhaps know, I traveled here alone as a young man some 30 years ago—it was actually 30 years ago this December—and I fell in love with this country. I'd long wanted to come back. I was amazed to discover that I am the first sitting President ever to visit Norway. I can't imagine what the others were thinking about—[laughter]—but I am delighted to be here.

I also would like to thank you for the wonderful reception that my wife and my daughter received when they represented our Nation in Lillehammer at the Olympics, and for the support, Prime Minister, you have given to the women's conference and the women's issues that Hillary has tried to raise, most recently in Reykjavik with representatives of your country and the other countries in the region.

We have been friends for a long time. We have been allies for 50 years with NATO. Today the Prime Minister and I discussed building a Europe that is united, democratic, and free; and I am looking forward to seeing the Prime Minister again shortly in Turkey at the meeting of the OSCE. And I'm very grateful that Norway is now the leader of the OSCE, serving its term as chair.

We did discuss the Sierra Leone, and I would just like to say again, I am profoundly grateful that Norway has agreed to work with the United States to provide prosthetics, to provide artificial limbs to as many people as we possibly can, many of them children, whose limbs were deliberately amputated in the cruel civil war in Sierra Leone.

I also want to thank you, Prime Minister, for Norway's support for our common efforts to end the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. And I want to say a special word of thanks to the Norwegian people, because I believe that when the 800,000-plus Kosovar Albanians were driven from their home, on a per capita basis, Norway took in more of the refugees from Kosovo than any other country in the world. And that is something that you can be very proud of and something for which your friends must be very grateful. So I want to thank you for that.

And finally, let me thank you for your continuing interest in the Middle East peace process and for having this wonderful occasion to honor the memory of my friend and partner, former Prime Minister Rabin. I think it will be very successful, indeed. Your country has a lot to be proud of. You have enormous influence for your size, and it is very much earned and deserved. Thank you.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, do you believe that the Middle East talks here in Oslo can move the peace process substantially forward?

President Clinton. Yes, I do. I don't think you should expect some sort of major announced breakthrough here, because, keep in mind, the parties have had—since, in the last couple of years, they had the Wye peace agreement under Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat. Then when Prime Minister Barak came in, they modified the Wye peace agreement and agreed to an even faster schedule of implementation.

Since then, Israel has released controversial political prisoners, agreed to establish safe passage between—and started it, actually, started the safe passage between the West Bank and Gaza, and agreed to open a port, which was a source of great tension between them before. Now they have to move into the final status talks, as conceived almost 7 years ago now here in Oslo, with the Oslo accords. So the important thing now is that the two leaders know that they have set themselves an ambitious timetable and that they agreed about how they're going to meet the timetable. This is the hard part—I mean the really hard part. And we all need to support them.

But do I believe that we can come out of this meeting and this solemn occasion with a renewed commitment to the peace process? Yes, I do.

EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy

Q. Mr. President, they're still combing the wreckage of EgyptAir Flight 990. Do you know any more about the cause of the tragedy, whether it was a mechanical malfunction or has terrorism been ruled out? And have there been any threats recently against any carriers flying out of the United States?

President Clinton. We know nothing more than I said to you earlier today—it seems like half a lifetime ago—when I came out of church with Hillary. We are still searching. We have to find—as you know, to make a final determination about the cause of the crash will require the recovery of as much of the airplane as possible, as well

as the equipment, which will give us some—if the usual case is present here, give us a pretty definitive idea of what happened.

But that has not been done yet, and therefore, I will say again, nothing has been ruled in, nothing has been ruled out. And I hope no one will draw any conclusions one way or the other until we finish the work.

President's Legacy

Q. Mr. President, how do you hope that people will remember you as the President of the United States? And is the peace process in the Middle East important in that regard? Would you like to be remembered as the President that created peace in the Middle East?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, that's a question I'd feel more comfortable answering if I weren't President anymore, because I hope I'm still piling up memories for them. But I can tell you what I tried to do.

What I tried to do is, first of all, take a country which I've found in economic distress and social division and turn it around toward greater prosperity and greater harmony, and convince people that, working together, we could solve our social problems. And then, I hope I will be remembered as someone who got our country to assume its responsibilities in the post-cold-war world, to make America a major force for peace and freedom, and against terrorism and racial and ethnic and religious hatreds. That is what I have worked to do and what I intend to continue working to do every day I have left to serve.

Threats to U.S. Air Carriers/Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. President, two things. Could you address Mr. Katz' question about whether there had been any threats to U.S.—to carriers, airline carriers flying out of the United States? And also, do you see any merit to the idea that's been floated about having a Camp David-style negotiation in January to help Israel and the Palestinians meet the rigorous deadlines that they've set for themselves on the toughest issues in the talks?

President Clinton. First, Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press], on the first question you ask—and I didn't mean to evade it—if

there have been any such threats, I do not know about them. That is, I am not aware of any specific threats against American airlines or airplanes flying out of American airports with large numbers of American passengers. If there have been any such, I don't know about them.

Now, it is possible that there could have been some that I don't know about, so I don't want to—I can't tell you the things I don't know about didn't happen. But I can tell you that I'm not aware of any, and as you know, I work on my intelligence information every day.

As to the possibility of a Camp David-style meeting, I think it is premature to discuss that at this time. What we need now is an understanding of the parameters of where we're going and how we're going to get there. I wouldn't rule out anything, but there is, as you know, going all the way back to '93, there is nothing I would not do if I thought it would genuinely help to build a lasting peace in the Middle East. There is nothing I would not do. So—and I'm prepared to reaffirm that to Prime Minister Barak and to Chairman Arafat.

But one of the things we have also learned here is that, in the end, the hard decisions have to be made by the parties. The United States can help with financial support, with military support, with moral backup. The rest of the world can help in many ways. But we have to get a framework of going forward that is consistent with the timetable they, themselves, have adopted, because I don't think we want to slip the timetable. Even though these decisions are very hard, they've been looming out there for several years now, and they're not going to get any easier, in my judgment, by letting them linger. So I will do what I can to get this thing going.

Prime Minister Bondevik. Last question.

Q. Yes, Mr. President, what do you regard as a real progress in the discussions with you and the Palestinians and the Israelis concerning the discussions about peace in Palestine and Israel?

President Clinton. The real problems?

Q. The real progress. What will you regard as the real progress?

President Clinton. Oh, I'm sorry. Well, I would feel that real progress has been made

if they made agreements about the modalities under which they will proceed—the procedures, the process, how it's going to operate—so that we can move into and then through these decisions in a timely fashion.

There's no way in the world they can come here and agree in talks with me on the big issues. You know what all the big issues are. That's why they're final status issues. But if we can get everybody sort of focused on what it would take to get there within the time allotted, the time they have allotted themselves, then I think that that would be a very good thing, indeed.

Keep in mind, you have here leaders who have demonstrated their commitment to peace and demonstrated their willingness to take risks. And you also have leaders who have been supported by their people for taking those risks. So I don't think this is a time for handwringing. But when you have a lot of implementation, like you did recently with the Wye modified agreement, and then you have the prisoners release, you have the port decision going forward, you have the safe passage open, you have some settlements closed and not all settlements closed—what it does is, it whets everyone's appetite, on the one hand, for more to be done; and it also builds in a little bit of a resistance to more being done. It's like, "I'm tired; I did this last week," you know? And what we've got to do is to create a renewed energy to make the process continuous, until you work all the way through to the end.

Prime Minister Bondevik. I'm sorry, I just have to end up by saying that I know that you have been informed that I could be to your disposal after the President has left this building. Unfortunately, because we are on overtime for the luncheon at the Royal Castle, I also have to leave now. But I can be to your disposal at the Grand Hotel at 2:15, approximately, and tell you even more about our discussions.

We have, of course, also discussed the situation in Chechnya, our relations to Russia. We have found that we have very much in common regarding the priorities in foreign policy, combating poverty, promoting human rights, preventing conflicts. And I feel that

our meeting has served to strengthen the already close ties between our two nations.

Thank you so much.

NOTE: The remarks began at 12 p.m. in the Prime Minister's Office. In his remarks, the President referred to King Harald V of Norway; former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and current Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete..

Joint Statement by President Clinton and Prime Minister Kjell Bondevik

November 1, 1999

We share concern about the growing problem of trafficking in women for the purpose of placing them into slavery-like conditions. This is a problem worldwide, although trafficking in women within the OSCE area has come more into focus recently. The need to address this issue in the Nordic-Baltic region also arose as one of the recommendations of the Reykjavik conference on Women and Democracy. We attach great importance to cooperation between our two countries to focus on the need to combat this problem.

It is important to focus on the economic and social structures that give rise to prostitution and sexual exploitation, and to find methods to empower the women involved.

Norway is proposing to host a conference next spring on trafficking in the OSCE area. The aim would be to (1) develop national and international policies to combat trafficking and (2) to design and put into practice joint action.

The issue should also be addressed at the OSCE Summit in Istanbul. Norway, in its capacity as OSCE Chairmanship, is actively considering the possibility of an event focusing on trafficking on the margins of the Summit.

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

Remarks at a Luncheon Hosted by King Harald V of Norway in Oslo

November 1, 1999

I must say, Your Majesty, that is a much more elegant fanfare than I normally get before I speak. *[Laughter]* Thank you for hosting me and all of our American company here. To both of you, we are honored to be in your presence. And I am deeply honored to be the first sitting American President to visit your wonderful country.

The United States and Norway are allies and friends. Our friendship is rooted, of course, in our common shared interests and our common shared values; also, a remarkable textured, shared history. Vikings from these shores were among the first Europeans to walk the shores of North America. Since July 4th, 1825, when the first Norwegian ship sailed for the United States, millions of Norwegians seeking freedom and opportunity have, as His Majesty has noted, contributed immensely to our society.

I think it's worth noting a few of them, for their descendants include many luminaries from our past and present: national leaders from Congressman Sabo's home State, like Walter Mondale and Hubert Humphrey; great jurists like the late Chief Justice Earl Warren; great thinkers like Thorstein Veblen; giants of entertainment like Jimmy Cagney; sports heroes like Knute Rockne; and, of course, Secretary Albright's predecessor, Warren Christopher.

Today, there are almost as many people, perhaps even more people of Norwegian descent in the United States than in Norway. So, most of all, I suppose I should be here, simply thanking you for the precious gift of your people.

Our two nations have also shared the history of some of the darkest days of this century when the royal family, as the King has said, spent the years of the war living in the United States, including several weeks in the White House. I must say one of the most interesting experiences I have had as President in my entire tenure was having the opportunity to welcome you back to the White House, where you were as a small boy. I hope someday someone will welcome me back in

that fashion—*[laughter]*—but I won't have quite the memories you do.

President Roosevelt's last formal statement, just 3 days before his death, was a statement in praise of the people of Norway and the people of Denmark for their courage during the occupation. The King said that he remembered standing behind President Roosevelt during his fourth inauguration. At the time, the war was still going on. The President was not feeling well, and so, at the insistence of his advisers, he agreed to be inaugurated actually inside the White House. It is the only time in the entire history of our country that a President was inaugurated in the White House. Lucky enough for us, it enabled a young man to stand behind him, and to carry a memory for more than half a century.

In President Roosevelt's fourth inaugural address, he summed up the lessons learned from the war. He said this: "We have learned that we cannot live alone at peace; that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations far away. We have learned that, to be citizens of the world, we have learned to be members of the human community. We have learned the simple truth, as Emerson said, the only way to have a friend is to be one."

Those words still ring true today—in the United States, in Norway, in the Middle East. Let us do all we can to remind all those in positions of influence, within our countries and beyond our borders, that we share a common destiny, and the only way to have a friend is to be one.

We also share an important history in the recent past, that I would be remiss if I did not comment upon briefly. In this decade, America and Norway have stood side by side as allies and friends to fight ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, to prevent the spread of dangerous weapons, to promote human rights, and of course, to build peace in the Middle East. That is our focus this week. And again I thank our Norwegian hosts for all they have done to make the talks that we will have today and tomorrow possible.

Once, Franklin Roosevelt said that any nation seeking to resist tyranny and build democracy need only, and I quote, "look to Norway." It remains just as true today. Free

people still look to Norway and will always do so.

Your Majesty, I am grateful for all you have done to keep our friendship strong, to prepare our kindred nations for a new century and a new millennium, when we will have some more shared history based on our shared values.

I ask all of you now to join me in a toast to King Harald, to the Queen, to the people of Norway, and to our wonderful alliance.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 1:30 p.m. in the Banquet Room at the Royal Palace. In his remarks, he referred to Queen Sonja of Norway. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of King Harald V.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority in Oslo

November 1, 1999

EgyptAir Flight 990 Aircraft Tragedy

Q. Mr. President, is there anything new on the crash, sir? Has the Pentagon radar or satellite imagery been able to yield any clues as to what happened to EgyptAir 990?

President Clinton. Nothing that I've been briefed on.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Chairman, what would you like the President to do to be helpful to your aspirations, as you put it?

Chairman Arafat. Not to forget that first agreement which had been started here in Oslo had been signed under his supervision in the White House. We cannot forget it.

NOTE: The exchange began at 5:52 p.m. in the Gamlebyen Room at the SAS Radisson Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on the Death of Walter Payton

November 1, 1999

We were saddened to hear of the death of Walter Payton. In the long highlight reel

of this life cut short, Walter Payton will always be a man in motion: breaking tackles, breaking records, clearing every obstacle in his path. From the first day he donned the uniform of the Chicago Bears in 1975, until his retirement 13 years later, Walter Payton missed only one game—and that was because the coach ordered him to rest his ankle. He followed a long line of great Bears running backs and became the greatest of them all. The record books confirm that. But individual triumphs would never mean as much to Walter Payton as a victory he could share with his teammates and with the fans who endured, season after season, the icy winds of Soldier Field. Walter Payton would not stop running until his Bears were as great as the Bears of old, until they had again won the Super Bowl—which they did, in dramatic fashion, in 1985.

Walter Payton faced his illness with the same grit and determination that he showed every week on the football field. The people of Chicago—and all Americans who love the game of football—will miss him profoundly.

We would like to offer our condolences to Walter's wife, Connie, and to their two children, Jarrett and Brittney. Our hearts are with them today.

NOTE: This statement was released by the Office of the Press Secretary as a statement by the President and the First Lady.

Proclamation 7247—National American Indian Heritage Month, 1999

November 1, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Ours is a nation inextricably linked to the histories of the many peoples who first inhabited this great land. Everywhere around us are reminders of the legacy of America's first inhabitants. Their history speaks to us through the name of our cities, lakes, and rivers; the food on our tables; the magnificent ruins of ancient communities; and, most important, the lives of the people who retain

the cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and kinship bonds that have existed for millennia.

As we reflect on the heritage of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, we also reaffirm our commitment to fostering a prosperous future for native youth and children. At the foundation of these efforts is our work to provide a quality education to all Native American children. In particular, we have sought significantly increased funding to support Bureau of Indian Affairs school construction and 1,000 new teachers for American Indian youth. My 1998 Executive order on American Indian and Alaska Native Education sets goals to improve high school completion rates and improve performance in reading and mathematics. And we are working to get computers into every classroom and to expand the use of educational technology.

We are also seeking ways to empower Native American communities and help them prosper. My Administration is expanding consultation and collaborative decision-making with tribal governments to promote self-determination. We also support tribal government economic development initiatives, particularly those that increase or enhance the infrastructure necessary for long-term economic growth. My New Markets Initiative seeks to leverage public and private investment to boost economic development in areas that have not shared in our recent national prosperity. In July, I visited the Pine Ridge Reservation of the Oglala Sioux, as part of my New Markets Tour, to explore opportunities for economic development in Indian Country.

Among the most serious barriers to economic growth facing tribal communities is a lack of housing, physical infrastructure, and essential services. My Administration is working with tribal leaders to build and renovate affordable housing on tribal lands, bring quality drinking water to economically distressed Indian communities, and improve public safety. We are moving to assist tribal governments in developing the physical infrastructure needed for economic development, including roads, fiber-optic cabling, and electric power lines.

In working together to shape a brighter future for Indian Country, we must not lose

sight of the rich history of Native Americans. Just weeks ago, the Smithsonian Institution broke ground on the National Mall for the National Museum of the American Indian. This wonderful facility will preserve and celebrate the art, history, and culture of America's indigenous peoples. It is also fitting that the first U.S. dollar coin of the new millennium will bear the likeness of Sacajawea and her infant son—an image that captures the importance of our shared history.

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 November 1999 as National American Indian Heritage Month. I urge all Americans, as well as their elected representatives at the Federal, State, local, and tribal levels, to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of November, 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, 8:45 a.m., November 3, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 4.

Remarks at a Ceremony Honoring the Memory of Yitzhak Rabin in Oslo
November 2, 1999

Your Majesties, Prime Minister and Mrs. Bondevik, Mr. Mayor, President Ahtisaari, Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Barak, Chairman Arafat, Leah Rabin, ladies and gentlemen, today we bear witness to the wisdom of the Psalm which says, "the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." We honor a righteous man whose memory is everlasting, because he devoted his life to the security of his country but gave his life to the promise of peace.

Yitzhak Rabin's life was a lesson, teaching us that old fears and suspicions and hatreds

can, in fact, be overcome—for he would be the first to remind us that he felt all those things, too, but he let them go—teaching us that there could be no security without lasting peace and no peace without charity for all and malice toward none, teaching us that the only final answer to violence is reconciliation.

Almost 7 years ago, those principles brought Israelis and Palestinians to this city of peace to find common ground. And today our friend brings us back to Oslo. We can almost hear his kind, but stern voice telling us, “Well, this is all very nice, but if you really want to honor me, finish the job.” He would be pleased to see Israel’s cause represented by Prime Minister Barak, his friend, fellow soldier, and fervent ally for peace.

In his last hour, Yitzhak Rabin, who was a shy person in public, sang to a peace-loving throng of Israelis the *Shir Ha Shalom*, the “Song of Peace.” Its words sing out to us today: Don’t say the day will come; make it come. Today, in honor of our friend and leader, we must all say we will make it come—a new day of peace that is more than the absence of war; a new day of tolerance and respect, of trust and shared destiny, when the fears of the past are released so that the hands and heart are free to embrace the promise of the future.

The enemies of peace remain alive and active. Even in this day we see their dark work. But the Scripture reminds us that evil can be overcome by good, and only by good. So we pursue Yitzhak Rabin’s vision not only because we loved and admired him—although we surely did—but because it is right and the only way.

We have now a chance, but only a chance, to bring real and lasting peace between Israel and her neighbors. If we let it slip away, all will bear the consequences: Israel still trapped within a circle of hostility; the Palestinians still saddled with poverty and frustration and pain; both—and their Arab neighbors wrapped in an endless and pointless cycle of conflict.

So if Rabin were here with us today, he would say there is not a moment to spare; “All this honoring me and these nice words, they’re very nice, but please finish the job.”

The way ahead will be full of challenges for the Israelis, the Palestinians, the Syrians, the Lebanese, for the friends of peace here represented. President Mubarak and King Abdullah will be important to our efforts. I am determined that the United States will do all we can, including living up to the commitments we made at Wye River. But the most important thing we can do today is to say to our friend, Rabin, we can still hear you; we are prepared to finish the job.

When President Kennedy was assassinated, Abba Eban said, “Tragedy is the difference between what is and what might have been.” That is the way we felt in the months and years after Prime Minister Rabin was killed. Today let us say together we are done with tragedy. We will close the gap between what is and what might have been.

The other night my wife had to the White House one of the great scientists in our country, who is unlocking the mysteries of the human gene. And he said to us the most astonishing thing—he said all humanity, genetically, are 99.9 percent the same. And if you get any group, ethnic group, together—100 Norwegians—with another ethnic group—100 west Africans—you find that the genetic differences among individuals within each group are greater than the genetic profile of differences between the Norwegians and the Africans. Think of that.

Think of all the bodies that have been piled up, one after another, the young and the old, throughout human history in tribute to that one-tenth of one percent difference. Think about what brings us here today—that the greatest quality a human being can have is the ability to reach beyond that last one-tenth of one percent to unite in the common humanity of the other 99.9 percent.

Yitzhak Rabin led us in that great reach out—reaching across the last divide of one-tenth of one percent. It was his greatness. It is his lesson. It is his message to us today. Let us hear him, even as we loved him.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the Main Hall at City Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway and his wife, Bjorg; Mayor Per Ditlev-Simonsen of Oslo; President Martti Ahtisaari of Finland; former Prime Minister Shimon Peres and

current Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Leah Rabin, widow of Yitzhak Rabin; President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt; and King Abdullah II of Jordan.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and an Exchange With Reporters in Oslo

November 2, 1999

Middle East Peace Process

The President. I think I can speak for all of us when I say, first, we're very grateful to the Government of Norway for inviting us here for this important ceremony. And we now have to give some real energy to the framework talks, but I think even though the issues are difficult, the will is strong, and we're off to a good start.

Q. How do you see the strong focus, Mr. President, on the issue of the settlement?

The President. I think that the less we say now to the public and the more we work in private, the better off we'll be and the more likely we will be able to get an agreement.

Q. —a summit in January or February in Washington, or maybe in Camp David?

The President. I wouldn't—I don't think we should rule it out or in. We ought to make sure—see how much progress we can make between now and then. You know, I would do anything I could to help them.

Q. What is the main issue you will discuss right now when you start negotiations?

The President. I think we just have to talk about—to get agreement on the ground rules, how we're going to proceed.

NOTE: The exchange began at 5:45 p.m. in the U.S. Ambassador's residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on House Action on the Proposed "African Growth and Opportunity Act"

November 2, 1999

Today's vote is an important milestone in our effort to build a new economic relationship with sub-Saharan Africa and deepen ties with our Caribbean and Central American neighbors. This legislation will help increase trade, enhance opportunity, and boost economic growth in America and nations in Africa, the Caribbean, and Central America. I urge the Senate to pass this bill as soon as possible.

Statement on the Cyclone in India

November 2, 1999

On behalf of all Americans, Hillary and I offer our deepest condolences to the families who lost loved ones to the devastating cyclone that struck eastern India Friday and Saturday. It is gradually becoming clear just how much destruction was wrought along the seacoast and inland in those terrifying hours. There are reports that thousands of lives were lost and hundreds of thousands of homes were destroyed. It is truly a national calamity.

Our hearts go out to the Indian people, and we are prepared to do what we can to help. The Government of India has an immense task ahead in providing assistance to the people who were affected by this tragedy. The United States Government is providing more than \$2 million worth of food and \$100,000 worth of tents and plastic sheeting to help alleviate the hunger and immediate suffering. I also encourage the American people to help through charities involved in international relief.

Statement on Senate Action on the District of Columbia, Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill

November 2, 1999

Today, by a narrow margin, Congress completed action on a deeply flawed spending bill that I will veto. This bill is a catalog of missed opportunities, misguided priorities, and mindless cuts. It forces America's schoolchildren to pay the price for Congress' failure to make responsible choices. I will not let it become law.

The bill—which includes the Labor/Health and Human Services/Education appropriations measure—makes a blind, across-the-board cut that will hurt everything from national defense to veterans' programs, from education to the environment. It reneges on last year's bipartisan commitment to fund 100,000 teachers and reduce class size in the early grades, replacing this proven approach with a risky block grant that opens the door to private school vouchers. It fails to include a key accountability initiative to help turn around failing schools. And it shortchanges many other priorities, including efforts to enhance worker safety, expand child care, detect emerging infectious diseases, and protect Americans from the threat of bioterrorism.

This debate is not just about how much we spend but also how wisely we spend. I sent Congress a budget, for education, health care, and other programs, that invests in results and is fully paid for. But Congress continues to pursue an agenda of irresponsible cuts and ill-conceived allocations. The patience of the American public is wearing thin. It is time for Congress to put aside partisanship and make the targeted investments our Nation's future demands.

Remarks Following Discussions With Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak and an Exchange With Reporters in Oslo

November 2, 1999

Middle East Framework Agreement

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, we have just completed a very good meeting. I feel that we have revitalized the peace process, and we've got these final status—the framework talks off to a very good start.

The two sides have not only named their teams; they have agreed that the leaders will personally continue to meet on a regular basis. They have agreed to work very hard to avoid public comments or actions which will cause enormous difficulty for the other side in the next 100 days or so when they're trying to come to agreement on the framework. And they have agreed with me that we might well have a summit at the end of this process if enough progress has been made to make us all believe that, in good faith, we can actually get an agreement at a summit.

Q. Is that the framework process, Mr. President?

The President. The framework process, yes.

Q. When will you have that summit?

Q. [*Inaudible*—their intentions, though?

The President. Well, when and whether depends upon what we're doing. We have a very ambitious timetable here. I think the timetable is the middle of February that they've agreed to have the framework agreement. So you won't have to wait long for answers to the details. We'll all be in high gear between now and then.

Thank you very much.

Q. Mr. President, is this more than you expected to come out of Oslo? Are you surprised?

The President. I feel quite good about it. I feel very good about it. I'm very pleased by it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at the U.S. Ambassador's residence. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the American Embassy Community in Oslo

November 2, 1999

Thank you very much. Well, Mr. Ambassador, Doreen, Mr. DCM, Congressman Sabo, thank you for coming with us. And thank you so much, Secretary Albright, for all you've done to make this a safer, better world.

Now, Hermelin did not tell you the truth. [Laughter] He says, "Come to Norway. I guarantee you a standing ovation." That's why you don't have any chairs today. [Laughter] He did not even tell you the truth about how he got this job—this deal about, "Oh, I got to go to Norway, and I thought I hit the lottery." That's not what happened. [Laughter]

He called me and he said—you said, "Name one person in America who has done more for you than I have"—[laughter]—"just one." I said, "Hillary." [Laughter] He said, "You can't make her an Ambassador." So I said, "Well, what do you want?" He said, "I want to go to Norway." I said, "David, you can't even find Norway on a map." [Laughter] He said, "No, you have to appoint me to Norway." He said, "You know, the Oslo accords and the role they have in the Middle East peace process." I said, "Yeah, sure, of course, I do." He said, "I, David Hermelin, am the last remaining Norwegian Jew on the face of the Earth." [Laughter]

So even though it isn't true—[laughter]—hasn't he been good for the American Embassy? You know, one of the great joys of my life, because I've spent so much of it in public life, I'll be—when I leave on January 21st, 2001, I'll be moving out of public housing for the first time in 20 years. [Laughter] One of the great joys of my life is, I've gotten to meet so many thousands of people from all over the world, all over our country, from all different walks of life with all different slants on things and all kinds of different talents. And this man and his wife, his children, and his family are truly among the most won-

derful human beings I've ever met anywhere in the world. And I am so blessed that they have been with me.

I also want to say again to those of you who are Norwegian nationals, how profoundly grateful I am to His Majesty, the King, and to the Prime Minister and the Government and people of Norway for inviting me to come and for opening once again their hearts to the peace process in the Middle East and having this truly remarkable event today in honor of our friend Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

And for those of you who were there or who saw it on television, I'm sure you'll agree it was a very moving event. And I can tell you, I met just before I came here with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, and I think that the event and the feeling of the people and the luncheon that followed really did help to put them in a good frame of mind as we kind of head for the last sprint toward getting a framework agreement on all these final status issues by next February. It will be very difficult to do.

The chances that we can do it now are dramatically increased in no small measure because we have had one more great gift from this small but remarkable and wonderful country. So I thank them very much for that.

I would like to thank all the people who are here, our career Foreign Service officers, beginning with you, Mr. Gundersen, and all the others who are here, people who have worked for the other departments of the Federal Government, the military people who are here. I'd like to thank the young musicians for providing our music today. Thank you very much. It was very good.

But I want to especially thank those of you who have given your life in service to our country. And I want reiterate and reaffirm what Secretary Albright said. You know, in my lifetime, literally in my lifetime, which, unfortunately, is getting older by the minute, our country has never before been in quite this position where we had the strongest economy in our history, where our social fabric was coming together, not being driven apart, where we have a very high level of confidence that we can do things.

For those of you who are Americans, I can tell you, back home in America if our economic expansion continues—it's already the longest peacetime expansion in history—if it continues until next February, it will be the longest one we ever had, including those that embraced the wars. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest crime rates in 30 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years. Our country is moving in the right direction.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the cold war, this is literally the first time in my lifetime that we have had both a very strong economy and a society coming together and the absence of an overarching threat from outside or from inside our country.

I would argue to all of you that that imposes upon us enormous responsibilities, greater than we have had in the past, even in the cold war, to try to build the Nation of our dreams for our children in the new millennium but also to try to bring the world to the point where the forces of peace and freedom are triumphing everywhere and the sense that humanity will continue to increase its sway against all the forces of darkness will be far more deeply embedded. And if we walk away from that, we will never be able to explain it to our children.

So, yes, I want to pass a good diplomatic budget; yes, I think the United States should lead the world toward forgiving the debt, much of the debt of the poorest countries in this world for the millennium, just as the Pope and others have asked us to do. I think the United States should help to bring empowerment opportunities of education and health care and the economy to poor village people, particularly poor village women and guarantee that their little girls, as well as their little boys, can go to school, on every continent. And I think that we ought to continue to lead the world's fight against the proliferation of dangerous weapons and against terrorists.

I know we didn't ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, but I think we will do that

before it's all done. And I do not believe the United States will withdraw from the world. But to all of you who have stayed on the forefront of this important public service all these years, I just want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. And I want to urge you to do whatever you can to urge your friends, your relatives, and others back home to think about this moment in terms of what it means for our country.

Every advanced country has to deal with the aging of its population; most of them, like us, have to deal with the increasing diversity of its children. But no other country can do what we should be doing now to advance peace and freedom and to stand against terrorism and the proliferation of dangerous weapons. We cannot walk away from this. And you're a good example—you and what happened here these last 2 days—of why we don't need to and why we can be successful.

Let me say, in closing, it has been a very great honor for me to serve. I gave you all those numbers not because I think that I brought them about singlehandedly but because this is what I want America to be like at the close of the 20th century. But it only matters—it only matters if now we do the right thing with our good fortune and our prosperity. And anything you can do to make sure that we do and to tell people back home about a country like Norway, the burdens they bear, the responsibilities they shoulder, the dreams that we share, will help.

So again, let me thank you all and urge you all on. And thanks for David Hermelin's guaranteed standing ovation.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in the foyer at the U.S. Embassy. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Ambassador David B. Hermelin and his wife, Doreen; Jon Gundersen, U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission; King Harald V and Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik of Norway; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; and Pope John Paul II. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval to the House of Representatives the District of Columbia, Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill and an Exchange With Reporters

November 3, 1999

Shootings in Honolulu and Seattle

The President. Good afternoon. Let me begin by saying that I join with all Americans in expressing shock and profound sorrow at the shootings which have occurred over the last 2 days in Honolulu and Seattle. I have been briefed on both situations. The Federal Government has offered all appropriate assistance to local officials. Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and with their families.

Veto of H.R. 3064

Yesterday I returned from Oslo, Norway, where, with American support, Israeli and Palestinian leaders entered a new critical phase in their efforts to resolve their ancient conflict. Tomorrow I will begin a journey to places here in America that are only just beginning to feel the benefits of our remarkable economic recovery, an expansion which, in February, will become the longest in the history of our country. I will highlight new ideas and efforts that can make these communities and those like them all across America new markets for American investment, entrepreneurship, and opportunity.

In the last 7 years, our country has gone from conditions of economic distress, social division, and political drift to a nation headed in the right direction for the 21st century. But to truly fulfill our promise, we must all continue to do our jobs. And Congress, in that vein, must produce the right kind of budget, a budget that reflects the values of our people, respects the need for Government to live within its means, and looks to our future.

Moments ago I vetoed a bill because it does not meet those criteria, a Labor, Health, and Education bill that Congress sent me yesterday. The bill is a catalog of missed op-

portunities, misguided priorities, and mindless cuts in everything from education to national defense to the environment. It forces school children to pay for the failure of Congress to make responsible choices. And it fails to reflect our deepest values.

We value education. Yet this bill fails to invest the right way in education. It reneges on last year's bipartisan agreement to fund 100,000 new, highly trained teachers to reduce class size in the early grades. And at the same time, it opens the door for Federal funds to be used for private school vouchers. We need more teachers in smaller classes in our public schools, instead.

The bill fails to include my initiative to demand accountability by helping school districts to turn around failing schools or close them down. And it shortchanges other priorities, from enhancing worker safety to expanding child care to immunizing our children, at the moment when we have finally reached our goal of immunizing 90 percent of them, to protecting Americans from the threat of bioterrorism.

We value fiscal responsibility. But this bill abdicates that responsibility by imposing across-the-board cuts that clearly will damage vital priorities, even as the Republican majority has larded the budget with wasteful projects.

For example, Congress would spend hundreds of millions of dollars for projects the Pentagon did not ask for. Yet this bill would force the military to cut jobs for tens of thousands of soldiers and other military personnel. It would mean fewer FBI agents to fight crime, no food assistance to tens of thousands of low-income women, infants and children, and less help to master the basics to over 100,000 children in our poorest school districts.

We value a clean environment. But the budget Congress has passed would roll back important environmental protections. We value the safety of our families and the fact that we now have the lowest crime rate in 30 years and the lowest murder rate in 32 years. But their budget fails to put 50,000 new community police officers in our neighborhoods where the crime rates are highest, to keep those rates coming down until we're the safest big country in the world. We value

peace and freedom and security. But their budget would undermine our ability to lead the world in pursuit of these goals.

Some Members of Congress have said they're willing to restore funding for one critical effort they left out of the bill that was passed, our commitment to the Middle East peace process. That is very good but not good enough. We also need a budget that will enable America to advance our critical interests all around the world, including paying our U.N. dues, continuing America's work to reduce nuclear weapon threats in Russia, and doing our fair share of the world's efforts to reduce the debt of the poorest nations.

Now Congress is more than a month behind schedule. I know a lot of the Members want to leave town. But the American people want Congress to lead first and to do their work first. There are a lot of important matters that remain unfinished. Let me just mention a few of them.

Our Nation continues on this day to be reminded of the horrors of gun violence. We need to do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. Congress needs to send me commonsense legislation that closes the gun show loophole, bans the importation of large ammunition clips, and has child safety locks as a requirement of new gun sales.

To ensure that every American and every health plan has the protections they need, Congress should pass the Patients' Bill of Rights. To meet the challenge of an aging America, Congress should act on my plan to extend the life of Social Security to 2050 and to reform Medicare and add a prescription drug coverage.

To ensure the financial health of our hospitals, nursing homes, and other health care providers, Congress must moderate the cuts that resulted from the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. To give millions of people with disabilities a chance to experience the dignity of work without losing health coverage, Congress must send me the "Work Incentives Improvement Act." To give hardworking families a chance to share in our growing prosperity, Congress should pass an increase in the minimum wage.

To keep our economy on the cutting edge of scientific and technological change, Con-

gress must extend the research and development tax credit, and it should expand others, as well, such as our welfare-to-work tax credit, which has helped to give us welfare rolls that are about half what they were 7 years ago.

To provide our children the schools they need, Congress should pass tax credits to build or modernize 6,000 schools. To shine the light of prosperity on communities like those I will visit in the next couple of days, Congress must pass the new markets tax credits to give investors the same incentives to invest in new markets here we give them to invest around the world.

The budget I sent Congress shows that we can do all this in a way that is paid for, doesn't spend the Social Security surplus, allows us to pay down the debt over the next 15 years so that we can be debt-free for the first time since 1835. So I urge Congress to put partisanship aside and work with me to complete the work the American people sent us here to do.

Just before I came here, I had a very good talk with Speaker Hastert and Senator Lott. I have not given up and neither have they. We have agreed that we will continue to work, beginning this evening, as hard as we can to try to resolve the differences that remain between us. If we do that, if the Democrats and the Republicans in the House and the Senate work with the White House, we can still make this a very good legislative session for the American people and, again, set ourselves on our way to a new century of promise.

Thank you very much.

Budget Process

Q. Mr. President, it sounds like from what you say that there's really been very little progress. These are the same issues we've been talking about for a while. How would you rate the budget talks so far, and is there any chance that it's going to get done before your trip to Europe?

The President. Well, let me just say this: On several occasions I've had the feeling that we had an agreement and that some of the leaders in the Republican Party wanted to make an agreement, and then they were, in effect, undercut. And so I think that if we

were allowed to working with the chairs of the appropriations committees and the other appropriate committee chairs, I think we could reach agreement.

But we will never reach agreement unless there is honorable compromise. That is always found in the center. So I feel—I sympathize with their position because whenever we make an agreement, then there's an attempt by some in the Congress to pull them back to the right. But we have to find agreement in the center.

I will say again, I had a good talk with Senator Lott and Speaker Hastert, and I am committed to working with them. And I told them that I understood they wanted to leave town, and I was not trying to keep them here. But I was trying to finish the job the American people sent us here to do and that I and our people would be prepared to work virtually around the clock to get an agreement that is consistent with what I pledged to the American people and what I believe that they want.

Trade With China

Q. Mr. President, what is the status of the WTO negotiations with China? Have you made a new offer to the Chinese, or do you still want the deal that you almost had back in April?

The President. Well, a lot of people have said we had an agreement in April, and we walked away from it because there was opposition from the American labor movement. I've read that a hundred times. That is absolutely not true. Number one, we didn't have an agreement, and number two, let me remind you of what the climate was at that time. It wasn't because of what the labor leaders were saying. Some of the very people now who want the WTO agreement with China, at that time were banging away at China on a whole wide range of issues, which all of you remember very well. So I don't want to go forward implying that we had an agreement before because we didn't. And the Chinese say we didn't.

Now, I have, as has been reported in the press, I have made an effort to restart these negotiations. I have told President Jiang that I think we ought to go forward. But I don't believe that I can facilitate a successful reso-

lution of this by discussing the details in any way. I won't agree to anything I don't believe is in the interests of the American people. That's all I can tell you.

And I think that it is in the long-term interests of our people and in the interests of an open China that is a responsible partner—in a world in which China will be at some point in the 21st century, if it keeps growing, the biggest economy in the world—that they be part of the rule-based system of global trading and investment.

So I hope that we can work it out. And I'll do my best. I do want to say that if we could work it out, I am completely committed to trying to get passed in the Congress permanent normal trading status for China. And I do believe that we can prevail now. I think there's a sense in both parties that this is a very large issue that is important for our Nation's long-term security and economic well-being. And I will do what I can to achieve it.

Violence in American Life

Q. Mr. President, when you were briefed as you were today on yet another shooting, be it in a workplace or a schoolyard, do you believe that this has just become something fundamental and inevitable in American life, or is there something that can be done to alter the dynamic?

The President. Well, I think there are a lot of things that can be done. But let me say, if you go back over the last 20 years, we have had periodic outbursts of shootings where more than one person was killed. But let's not forget, 13 of our kids get shot every day, killed every day. And just because they die one and two at a time in distant places or tough neighborhoods, we don't—and I'm not criticizing you, we're almost enured to it. I don't think we understand fully just how much more violent the United States is than other countries. That's the point I'm trying to make.

And I don't want to diminish the agony of these two incidents that are truly awful or what happened at Columbine or all the other schools. But I think we have to acknowledge the fact that we have been willing to tolerate a much higher level of violence than we should have.

Now, the good news is, in spite of these terrible incidents, we have the lowest murder rate in 32 years, the lowest overall crime rate in 30 years. If you want it to be lower, you have to do more of what we have been doing. You have to put more community police on the street; you have to do more work in the schools to teach children to avoid violence; and you have to do more to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

What we are doing—and I don't mean we, the Federal Government; I mean we, the American people, starting with the police on the street and the community leaders—is working. We should be not desperate here; we should be determined. But every time one of these things happens, all I can say is what we are doing is working, but we haven't done it enough, and we need more efforts in the directions that we're going. We do not have to tolerate this level of violence.

There will never be a time when any society can guarantee that no one will ever kill anybody else. And we have, as all of you know, well over 200 million guns in our society right now; nobody knows exactly how many. But we can do much, much more, without interfering with people's hunting and sporting rights, to keep guns out of the wrong hands. And we can do more to put more police on the street. We can do more to work with our children. And we have to do all of that.

But there is no silver bullet here. If people are really upset about it, they should ask us to do what has brought us to this point. If you compare it now with 7 years ago, we're in better shape. If you compare where we are now with where any other country in the world would find a tolerable level of violence, we are not in good shape, and we have to do more.

African and Caribbean Basin Trade

Q. Mr. President, now that the Senate has overcome the delaying tactics, do you expect the African trade bill and the enhancement of the Caribbean Basin initiative to be passed during this term?

The President. I certainly hope so. There is strong bipartisan support for both of those things. It's a way of our being good neighbors; it's a way of our being responsible part-

ners; and it's very good economics for the United States over the long run.

I would just point out that, with regard to our neighbors in the Caribbean and Central America, they have actually suffered an unintended consequence of the agreement we made with Canada and Mexico because there were preferences given to Mexico that did not go to them. And so we ought to at least put them on equal footing.

We can do that without being unfair to our Mexican neighbors, but we've got to be good neighbors with the people in the Caribbean and Central America. We don't want to put them in the position where the only way they can make a living is to be transit points for the drugrunners of the world. And this is very important.

And the Africa trade bill, the potential that has to reward the Africans that have good government and are following market economies is enormous. Some of you went with me on my trip to Africa. And I would hope that you came out of it with the same feeling I did. You go to a place like Uganda, which has had the biggest drop in AIDS rates of any country in the world, I believe, over the last 5 years, showing you what competent, well-organized, well-directed countries can do because the people are intelligent, they're innovative, they can do all kinds of things. And we have a big future in Africa, and I think that we owe it to the American people, as well as to our world responsibilities, to pass both these things.

I hope they will pass. I was elated that the Senate voted to invoke cloture and to proceed to the bill, and I'll continue to push it.

1999 Elections

Q. Mr. President, if in the elections last night, the Democrats and Republicans each can claim a bit of a victory, how do you analyze those results?

The President. Well, of course, I feel very good about it because of what has happened—Mississippi was truly historic and several other places. And I also feel good because in the places where the Republicans won, they won by running on education, on health care, on economic development, on

progressive issues, and entering into a constructive contest of ideas to try to build a dynamic center in America. That was the analysis even across the river here in Virginia, where, basically, the Democrats did well in northern Virginia, the Republicans did well elsewhere.

But if you look at the—what is the debate about, and it seems to me that the real message coming out of this was that the people who offer positive programs that bring people together and move people forward are going to get a good hearing from the voters. I think that is the message. And that is the message that we ought to keep in mind here as we try to bring these budget negotiations to a successful conclusion.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China.

Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval the District of Columbia, Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill
November 3, 1999

To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 3064, the FY 2000 District of Columbia and Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

I am vetoing H.R. 3064 because the bill, including the offsets section, is deeply flawed. It includes a misguided 0.97 percent across-the-board reduction that will hurt everything from national defense to education and environmental programs. The legislation also contains crippling cuts in key education, labor, and health priorities and undermines our capacity to manage these programs effectively. The enrolled bill delays the availability of \$10.9 billion for the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and other important health and social services programs, resulting in delays in important medical research and health services to low-income Americans. The bill is clearly unac-

ceptable. I have submitted a budget that would fund these priorities without spending the Social Security surplus, and I am committed to working with the Congress to identify acceptable offsets for additional spending for programs that are important to all Americans.

The bill also fails to fulfill the bipartisan commitment to raise student achievement by authorizing and financing class size reduction. It does not guarantee any continued funding for the 29,000 teachers hired with FY 1999 funds, or the additional 8,000 teachers to be hired under my FY 2000 proposal. Moreover, the bill language turns the program into a virtual block grant that could be spent on vouchers and other unspecified activities. In addition, the bill fails to fund my proposed investments in teacher quality by not funding Troops to Teachers (\$18 million) and by cutting \$35 million from my request for Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants. These programs would bring more highly qualified teachers into the schools, especially in high-poverty, high-need school districts.

The bill cuts \$189 million from my request for Title I Education for the Disadvantaged, resulting in 300,000 fewer children in low-income communities receiving needed services. The bill also fails to improve accountability or help States turn around the lowest-performing schools because it does not include my proposal to set aside 2.5 percent for these purposes. Additionally, the bill provides only \$300 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, only half my \$600 million request. At this level, the conference report would deny after-school services to more than 400,000 students.

The bill provides only \$180 million for GEAR UP, \$60 million below my request, to help disadvantaged students prepare for college beginning in the seventh grade. This level would serve nearly 131,000 fewer low-income students. In addition, the bill does not adequately fund my Hispanic Education Agenda. It provides no funds for the Adult Education English as a Second Language/Civics Initiative to help limited English proficient adults learn English and gain life skills necessary for successful citizenship and civil participation. The bill underfunds programs designed to improve educational outcomes

for Hispanic and other minority students, including Bilingual Education, the High School Equivalency Program (HEP), the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), and the Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities program.

The bill underfunds Education Technology programs, including distance learning and community technology centers. In particular, the bill provides only \$10 million to community based technology centers, \$55 million below my request. My request would provide access to technology in 300 additional low-income communities. The bill provides \$75 million for education research, \$34 million less than my request, and includes no funding for the Department of Education's share of large-scale joint research with the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health on early learning in reading and mathematics, teacher preparation, and technology applications.

The bill does not fund the \$53 million I requested to provide job finding assistance to 241,000 unemployment insurance claimants. This means that these claimants will remain unemployed longer, costing more in benefit payments. The bill also provides only \$140 million of my \$199 million request to expand services to job seekers at One-Stop centers as recently authorized in the bipartisan Workforce Investment Act. The bill funds \$120 million of the \$149 million requested for efforts to improve access to One-Stops as well as continued support for electronic labor exchange and labor market information. It funds only \$20 million of the \$50 million requested for work incentive grants to help integrate employment services for persons with disabilities into the mainstream One-Stop system.

The bill also does not provide funding for Right Track Partnerships (RTP). I requested \$75 million for this new competitive grant program. Designed to help address youth violence, RTP would become part of the multi-agency Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative, expanding it to include a focus on out-of-school youth.

The bill provides \$33 million less than my request for labor law enforcement agencies, denying or reducing initiatives to ensure workplace safety, address domestic child

labor abuses, encourage equal pay, implement new health law, and promote family leave. In particular, the bill provides an inadequate level of funding for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, cutting it by \$18 million, or 5 percent below my request.

The bill also fails to provide adequate funding for the Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB). The bill funds ILAB at \$50 million, \$26 million below my request. The bill would prevent ILAB from carrying out my proposal to work through the International Labor Organization to help developing countries establish core labor standards, an essential step towards leveling the playing field for American workers.

The bill's funding level for the Bureau of Labor Statistics is \$11 million less than my request. The enrolled bill denies three important increases that would: (1) improve the Producer Price Index, which measures wholesale prices; (2) improve measures of labor productivity in the service sector; and, (3) improve the Employment Cost Index, used to help set wage levels and guide anti-inflation policy. It also denies funding for a study of racial discrimination in labor markets.

The bill denies my request for \$10 million to fund AgNet, even though the Senate included report language that supports AgNet in concept. AgNet, an Internet-based labor exchange, would facilitate the recruitment of agricultural workers by growers and the movement of agricultural workers to areas with employment needs.

The bill would cut the Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) by \$209 million below FY 1999 and \$680 million below my request. The SSBG serves some of the most vulnerable families, providing child protection and child welfare services for millions of children. In addition, the failure to provide the Senate's level of \$2 billion in advance appropriations for the Child Care and Development Block Grant would mean 220,000 fewer children receiving child care assistance in FY 2001. The bill also fails to fund my National Family Caregiver Support program, which would provide urgently needed assistance to 250,000 families caring for older relatives.

By funding the Title X Family Planning program at last year's level, family planning clinics would be unable to extend comprehensive reproductive health care services to an additional 500,000 clients who are neither Medicaid-eligible nor insured. The bill also fails to fund the Health Care Access for the Uninsured Initiative, which would enable the development of integrated systems of care and address service gaps within these systems.

The bill fails to fully fund several of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) critical public health programs, including:

- *childhood immunizations* (–\$44 million), so that approximately 300,000 children may not receive the full complement of recommended childhood vaccinations;
- *infectious diseases* (–\$36 million), which will impair CDC's ability to investigate outbreaks of diseases such as the West Nile virus in New York;
- *domestic HIV prevention* (–\$4 million);
- *race and health demonstrations* (–\$5 million), which will impair better understanding of how to reduce racial disparities in health; and,
- *health statistics* (–\$10 million) for key data collection activities such as the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey and health information on racial and ethnic population groups.

The Congress has failed to fund any of the \$59 million increase I requested for the Mental Health Block Grant, which would diminish States' capacity to serve the mentally ill.

In addition, the Congress has underfunded my request for the Substance Abuse Block Grant by \$30 million, and has underfunded other substance abuse treatment grants by a total of \$45 million. These reductions would widen the treatment gap in FY 2000 and jeopardize the Federal Government's ability to meet the National Drug Control Strategy performance target to reduce the drug treatment gap by 50 percent by FY 2007.

The bill provides only half of the \$40 million requested for graduate education at

Children's Hospitals, which play an essential role in educating the Nation's physicians, training 25 percent of pediatricians and over half of many pediatric subspecialists.

The bill underfunds the Congressional Black Caucus' AIDS Initiative in the Public Health and Social Services Emergency Fund by \$15 million, thereby reducing current efforts to prevent the spread of HIV. By not fully funding this program, the scope of HIV/AIDS prevention, education, and outreach activities available to slow the spread of HIV/AIDS in minority communities will be more limited.

The bill fails to fund Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) program management adequately. These reductions would severely impede HCFA's ability to ensure the quality of nursing home care through the Nursing Home Initiative. The bill does not adequately fund the request for Medicare+Choice user fees. This decrease would force HCFA to scale back the National Medicare Education Campaign. The Congress has not passed the proposed user fees totaling \$194.5 million that could free up resources under the discretionary caps for education and other priorities.

The bill includes a provision that would prevent funds from being used to administer the Medicare+Choice Competitive Pricing Demonstration Project in Kansas and Arizona. These demonstrations which are supported by MEDPAC and other independent health policy experts, were passed by the Congress as part of the Balanced Budget Act in order to provide valuable information regarding the use of competitive pricing methodologies in Medicare. The information that we could learn from these demonstrations is particularly relevant as we consider the important task of reforming Medicare.

The bill contains a highly objectionable provision that would delay the implementation of HHS' final Organ Procurement and Transplantation rule for 90 days. This rule, which was strongly validated by an Institute of Medicine report, provides a more equitable system of treatment for over 63,000 Americans waiting for an organ transplant; its implementation would likely prevent the deaths of hundreds of Americans. Since almost 5,000 people die each year waiting for

an organ transplant, we must be allowed to move forward on this issue and implement the rule without further delay.

The bill does not provide any of the \$9.5 million I requested for HHS' Office of the General Counsel and Departmental Appeals Board to handle legal advice, regulations review, and litigation support, and to conduct hearings and issue decisions on nursing home enforcement cases as part of my Nursing Home Initiative. This would increase the backlog of nursing home appeals and impair Federal oversight of nursing home quality and safety standards. A reduction in funds for enforcement is inconsistent with the concerns that the GAO and the Congress have raised about this issue.

The bill cuts funds to counter bioterrorism. It funds less than half my request for CDC's stockpile, limiting the amount of vaccines, antibiotics, and other medical supplies that can be stockpiled to deploy in the event of a chemical or biological attack. In addition, the bill does not include \$13.4 million for critical FDA expedited regulatory review/approval of pharmaceuticals to combat chemical and biological agent weapons.

The bill provides full funding of \$350 million in FY 2002 for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. However, the bill provides only \$10 million of the \$20 million requested for the digital transition initiative in FY 2000. This funding is required to help the public broadcasting system meet the Federal deadline to establish digital broadcasting capability by May 1, 2003.

The enrolled bill delays the availability of \$10.9 billion of funding until September 29, 2000. While modest levels of delayed obligations could potentially be sustained without hurting the affected programs, the levels in the enrolled bill are excessive, resulting in delays in NIH research grants, delays in CDC immunizations for children, and delays in the delivery of health services to low income Americans through community health centers and rural health clinics.

The bill also seriously underfunds critical Departmental management activities in the Departments of Labor and Education and the Social Security Administration (SSA). For Education, these reductions would hamstring efforts to replace the Department's account-

ing system and undermine the new Performance-Based Organization's plans to streamline and modernize student aid computer systems. Reductions to the Department of Labor (DOL) would undercut the agency's ability to comply with the requirements of the Clinger-Cohen and Computer Security Acts, adjudicate contested claims in several of its benefits programs, and examine and update the 1996 study on Family and Medical leave policies. For SSA, the reductions would result in significantly longer waiting times for disability applicants and millions of individuals who visit SSA field offices.

In adopting an across-the-board reduction, the Congress has abdicated its responsibility to make tough choices. Governing is about making choices and selecting priorities that will serve the national interest. By choosing an across-the-board cut, the Congress has failed to meet that responsibility.

This across-the-board cut would result in indiscriminate reductions in important areas such as education, the environment, and law enforcement. In addition, this cut would have an adverse impact on certain national security programs. The indiscriminate nature of the cut would require a reduction of over \$700 million for military personnel, which would require the military services to make cuts in recruiting and lose up to 48,000 military personnel.

In adopting this cost-saving technique, the Congress is asserting that it will not have to dip into the Social Security surplus. However, this cut does not eliminate the need to dip into the Social Security surplus.

For these reasons, this across-the-board cut is not acceptable.

In addition to the specific program cuts and the 0.97 percent across-the-board reduction, the bill contains a \$121 million reduction in salaries and expenses for the agencies funded by this bill, exacerbating the problems caused by the bill's underfunding of critical Departmental management activities. If, for example, the \$121 million reduction were allocated proportionately across all agencies funded in the Labor/HHS/Education bill, HHS would have to absorb an approximately \$55 million reduction to its salaries and expenses accounts, Labor would be cut by about \$14 million, Education by

about \$5 million, and SSA by some \$45 million. This would dramatically affect the delivery of essential human services and education programs and the protection of employees in the workplace.

With respect to the District of Columbia component of the bill, I am pleased that the majority and minority in the Congress were able to come together to pass a version of the District of Columbia Appropriations Bill that I would sign if presented to me separately and as it is currently constructed. While I continue to object to remaining riders, some of the highly objectionable provisions that would have intruded upon local citizens' right to make decisions about local matters have been modified from previous versions of the bill. That is a fair compromise. We will continue to strenuously urge the Congress to keep such riders off of the FY 2001 D.C. Appropriations Bill.

I commend the Congress for providing the Federal funds I requested for the District of Columbia. The bill includes essential funding for District Courts and Corrections and the D.C. Offender Supervision Agency and provides requested funds for a new tuition assistance program for District of Columbia residents. The bill also includes funding to promote the adoption of children in the District's foster care system, to support the Children's National Medical Center, to assist the Metropolitan Police Department in eliminating open-air drug trafficking in the District, and for drug testing and treatment, among other programs. However, I continue to object to remaining riders that violate the principles of home rule.

I look forward to working with the Congress to craft an appropriations bill that I can support, and to passage of one that will facilitate our shared objectives.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 3, 1999.

Statement on District of Columbia Appropriations Legislation

November 3, 1999

After bipartisan negotiations to resolve the District of Columbia appropriations bill,

Congress and my administration agreed to provide essential funding for the District while modifying some of the most objectionable provisions infringing on the rights of local citizens to make decisions about local matters—the principle of home rule.

I would have signed this legislation, but the House attached to it highly objectionable legislation that would have failed to fund important priorities in education, health, and other areas and would have resulted in an across-the-board cut in funding for important programs from defense and veterans' programs to education, law enforcement, and the environment.

Unfortunately, the House voted today on a replacement DC bill that runs contrary to the earlier bipartisan agreement and undercuts the progress that has been made for the benefit of the people of the District of Columbia. The consensus bill on the District passed by both Houses remains acceptable to me, and I would sign it if it were presented as a stand-alone bill or unattached to objectionable legislation. I urge Congress to act for the benefit of the citizens of the District and our Nation's Capital by sending me the agreed-upon legislation, unencumbered by objectionable legislation or provisions.

Statement on the Verdict in the Matthew Shepard Murder Trial

November 3, 1999

Today's verdict closes a chapter in the tragic story of the killing of Matthew Shepard. Although the verdict cannot bring Matthew back, perhaps it will bring some sense of closure to Dennis and Judy Shepard, as well as other family and friends of Matthew. The First Lady and I offer our prayers for them and our hope that their memories of Matthew's life will sustain them in the difficult time ahead.

The verdict is a dramatic statement that we are determined to have a tolerant, law-abiding nation that celebrates our differences rather than despising them. Our Nation must unite in outrage against hate-based violence. We cannot surrender to those on the fringe of our society who lash out at those who are different. Their crimes impose a particular

cost on society by tearing at the social fabric. It is my continued hope that together, as a nation, we will work to repair that fabric.

Statement on Patients' Bill of Rights Legislation

November 3, 1999

Today's overwhelming vote in the House is an encouraging step toward passage of a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights. Unfortunately, the House Republican leadership is seeking to defeat the will of the House—now expressed clearly for a second time—by refusing to appoint conferees who support this legislation. Despite the leadership's action, the message of the House vote to the conference could not be more clear: Reject the false promise of the Senate-passed bill and send me the bipartisan measure that delivers the real protections that patients deserve.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Australia-United States Agreement on Technology for the Separation of Isotopes of Uranium by Laser Excitation With Documentation

November 3, 1999

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit to the Congress, pursuant to sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended (42 U.S.C. 2153(b), (d)), the text of a proposed Agreement for Cooperation Between the United States of America and Australia Concerning Technology for the Separation of Isotopes of Uranium by Laser Excitation, with accompanying annexes and agreed minute. I am also pleased to transmit my written approval, authorization, and determination concerning the Agreement, and an unclassified Nuclear Proliferation Assessment Statement (NPAS) concerning the Agreement. (In accordance with section 123 of the Act, as amended by title XII of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-277), a classified annex to the NPAS, prepared by the Secretary of State

in consultation with the Director of Central Intelligence, summarizing relevant classified information, will be submitted to the Congress separately.) The joint memorandum submitted to me by the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Energy, which includes a summary of the provisions of the Agreement and the views of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, is also enclosed.

A U.S. company and an Australian company have entered into a contract jointly to develop and evaluate the commercial potential of a particular uranium enrichment process (known as the "SILEX" process) invented by the Australian company. If the commercial viability of the process is demonstrated, the U.S. company may adopt it to enrich uranium for sale to U.S. and foreign utilities for use as reactor fuel.

Research on and development of the new enrichment process may require transfer from the United States to Australia of technology controlled by the United States as sensitive nuclear technology or Restricted Data. Australia exercises similar controls on the transfer of such technology outside Australia. There is currently in force an Agreement Between the United States of America and Australia Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, signed at Canberra July 5, 1979 (the "1979 Agreement"). However, the 1979 Agreement does not permit transfers of sensitive nuclear technology and Restricted Data between the parties unless specifically provided for by an amendment or by a separate agreement.

Accordingly, the United States and Australia have negotiated, as a complement to the 1979 Agreement, a specialized agreement for peaceful nuclear cooperation to provide the necessary legal basis for transfer of the relevant technology between the two countries for peaceful purposes.

The proposed Agreement provides for cooperation between the parties and authorized persons within their respective jurisdictions in research on and development of the SILEX process (the particular process for the separation of isotopes of uranium by laser excitation). The Agreement permits the transfer for peaceful purposes from Australia to the United States and from the United States to Australia, subject to the nonproliferation

conditions and controls set forth in the Agreement, of Restricted Data, sensitive nuclear technology, sensitive nuclear facilities, and major critical components of such facilities, to the extent that these relate to the SILEX technology.

The nonproliferation conditions and controls required by the Agreement are the standard conditions and controls required by section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 (NNPA), for all new U.S. agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation. These include safeguards, a guarantee of no explosive or military use, a guarantee of adequate physical protection, and rights to approve re-transfers, enrichment, reprocessing, other alterations in form or content, and storage. The Agreement contains additional detailed provisions for the protection of sensitive nuclear technology, Restricted Data, sensitive nuclear facilities, and major critical components of such facilities transferred pursuant to it.

Material, facilities, and technology subject to the Agreement may not be used to produce highly enriched uranium without further agreement of the parties.

The Agreement also provides that cooperation under it within the territory of Australia will be limited to research on and development of SILEX technology, and will not be for the purpose of constructing a uranium enrichment facility in Australia unless provided for by an amendment to the Agreement. The United States would treat any such amendment as a new agreement pursuant to section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act, including the requirement for congressional review.

Australia is in the forefront of nations supporting international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. It is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and has an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the application of full-scope safeguards to its nuclear program. It subscribes to the Nuclear Supplier Group (NSG) Guidelines, which set forth standards for the responsible export of nuclear commodities for peaceful use, and to the Zangger (NPT Exporters) Committee

Guidelines, which oblige members to require the application of IAEA safeguards on nuclear exports to nonnuclear weapons states. In addition, Australia is a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, whereby it has agreed to apply international standards of physical protection to the storage and transport of nuclear material under its jurisdiction or control.

The proposed Agreement with Australia has been negotiated in accordance with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and other applicable law. In my judgment, it meets all statutory requirements and will advance the nonproliferation, foreign policy, and commercial interests of the United States.

A consideration in interagency deliberations on the Agreement was the potential consequences of the Agreement for U.S. military needs. If SILEX technology is successfully developed and becomes operational, then all material produced by and through this technology would be precluded from use in the U.S. nuclear weapons and naval nuclear propulsion programs. Furthermore, all other military uses of this material, such as tritium production and material testing, would also not be possible because of the assurances given to the Government of Australia. Yet, to ensure the enduring ability of the United States to meet its common defense and security needs, the United States must maintain its military nuclear capabilities. Recognizing this requirement and the restrictions being placed on the SILEX technology, the Department of Energy will monitor closely the development of SILEX but ensure that alternative uranium enrichment technologies are available to meet the requirements for national security.

I have considered the views and recommendations of the interested agencies in reviewing the proposed Agreement and have determined that its performance will promote, and will not constitute an unreasonable risk to, the common defense and security. Accordingly, I have approved the Agreement and authorized its execution and urge that the Congress give it favorable consideration.

Because this Agreement meets all applicable requirements of the Atomic Energy Act,

as amended, for agreements for peaceful nuclear cooperation, I am transmitting it to the Congress without exempting it from any requirement contained in section 123 a. of that Act. This transmission shall constitute a submittal for purposes of both sections 123 b. and 123 d. of the Atomic Energy Act. My Administration is prepared to begin immediately the consultations with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House International Relations Committee as provided in section 123 b. Upon completion of the 30-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 b., the 60-day continuous session period provided for in section 123 d. shall commence.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 3, 1999.

**Remarks in a Discussion With
Project GRAD Students at Malcolm
X Shabazz High School in Newark,
New Jersey**

November 4, 1999

The President. You know Senator Lautenberg, Congressman Payne, your Mayor James.

Jayson, don't you think you ought to introduce Mr. Katz to these people?

[*At this point, New Jersey Nets player Jayson Williams made brief remarks and introduced Nets co-owner Lewis Katz, who also made brief remarks.*]

The President. Tell us about this Project GRAD program—anybody want to tell me about it? Go ahead.

Student. Project GRAD is a scholarship program that guarantees you a \$6,000 scholarship.

The President. If you do what?

Student. If you maintain a 2.5 grade point average, and you have to take two summer institute college preps for two summers. And you have to go to Malcolm X Shabazz for 4 years and graduate within that 4 years. You can't do it in 5 years but 4 years. You have to take college preparatory courses.

The President. So harder courses and two summer schools?

Student. Not harder courses, it's like college prep.

Student. We also have to take 40 hours of community service in our 4 years. We can take 10 hours a year—we can do how many hours that we can do in our 4 years.

The President. What community service are you doing?

Student. Me, I'm a freshman, so—

The President. You haven't started yet. Do you think the community service requirement is a good thing?

Students. Yes, yes.

The President. In the State of Maryland, Maryland is the only State in America where you have to do community service as a requirement. It's like taking American history or English or whatever. It's like a requirement for getting your high school diploma. And it's a requirement to be in this program.

Are you in the band?

Student. Yes.

The President. What's your instrument?

Student. Trumpet.

The President. Good. How long have you been playing?

Student. Six years.

The President. That's great. It's not quite as big a thrill as Jayson Williams, maybe, but I also got to—I spent a lot of time with Wynton Marsalis. He's the only musician, I think, in the world who is both the greatest jazz musician and the greatest classical musician on his instrument. Good guy.

What else do you want to tell me about this program?

[*At this point, the program continued.*]

The President. Is there a limit to the number of young people who can be in the program in this high school?

Student. No. You just have to meet all the requirements.

The President. So anybody who meets the requirements can be in the program?

Student. Yes.

[*At this point, the program continued.*]

The President. How long has this program been going on, do you know?

Student. This is the third year. This will be the third year.

The President. Are there three groups of people who have already graduated from high school?

Students. No.

The President. You're the first. Just juniors. And how many juniors are in the program? Most of them? And do you think 100 percent of the juniors in the program will go to college?

Student. Yes.

[At this point, the program continued.]

The President. Is Bob Milliken here? Mr. Milliken started the Communities In Schools program—how long ago now? He's been working at this for 25 years, and over 15 years ago, when I was Governor of Arkansas, he came to Arkansas, and he put some of—the program started off in big cities like Newark, and then he put them in small towns and rural areas, too. It's a wonderful thing. People that commit their lives to this are real heroes in my opinion.

[At this point, the program continued.]

The President. What you're doing is better, I think, it's more comprehensive. We couldn't afford nationally to put it in everywhere. What we're doing I think can be used also by you. This GEAR UP program is one that Congress adopted last year that was developed based on a model that colleges in Philadelphia had pioneered, and the Congressman from Philadelphia, Chakah Fattah, got Mr. Payne and Senator Lautenberg and others to help, and we passed a program that basically provides funds to help college students go in with junior high school kids, middle school kids, and say, "Look, you've got a guarantee of going to college if you make your grades, and we'll help you." And then the colleges come in and tutor and mentor the kids and work with them wherever we have this.

This is better because it works from the beginning of school all the way up. But anything we can do, it seems to me, to make every young person know that college is a real possibility if they stay in school and do the work and learn the subjects I think are very important.

How does the scholarship program work? Where does the money come from? Do you put up the \$6,000 for all the kids?

William M. Freeman. It's not just Lucent Technologies, Mr. President. It's a combination of a lot of things together. And we give \$1,000 the first year, \$1,000 the second, \$2,000 the third, and \$2,000 the fourth year. And that's reserved for each child from when you start out. And we committed over 12 years, so that the first kindergarten class is guaranteed when they graduate, from that year through 12.

The President. And you can calculate based on your family income whether you can also get a Pell grant. And they get it over and above, don't they?

Mr. Freeman. Yes, no matter what, they get that.

The President. And whether you're eligible for college loans and all that. Those of you who have families who can help, they're also entitled to a \$1,500 tax credit for what they pay towards your college education. So if you get the scholarship and the Pell grant and your family puts up \$1,500, they can get the money back from their taxes.

So if you put it all together now, we pretty much open the doors of college to everybody.

[At this point, the program continued.]

The President. I was out in Los Angeles the other day, the first one of these tours we took called the new market tour, trying to get more investment into our cities. And I went to this program where young people like you who were interested in automotive engineering were designing their own cars by computer. And they had this software program where they could manage—the program would allow them to drive their cars and see how their design worked when they took sharp curves at high speeds, how they handled crashes, how they did everything. It was an amazing thing.

By the time you go to school on this, you could do the whole thing on a computer with a software program to figure out how to build the cars of the future. They're already building automobiles with—experimental cars, for example, with composite materials, that is, not all steel. And I went to the Detroit Auto Show, and they can build cars now that weigh

500 to 1,000 pounds less than the normal car, but that don't get hurt anymore in crashes.

They've always been able to make real light cars to get high mileage and be efficient, but they've been more dangerous. And now the materials are being developed so that we can make very light cars which are much more energy-efficient, pollute the atmosphere a lot better, and which don't get—if anything, they're safer in collisions and crashes.

So it will be very exciting. By the time you get into that, we'll be doing things with transportation we can't even imagine now. And to avoid traffic jams, you'll be able to put a little computer program in your car and just program it, and your car will take you wherever it's necessary to avoid the traffic, which, for people that live in highly congested areas will be a welcome development. You may be the most popular person in your class. [*Laughter*]

[*At this point, the program continued.*]

The President. I'll tell you, one great thing about our country is that, of all the countries in the world, we have the best system of undergraduate college education. And so, the good news for you is that we have—there are literally probably 300 schools in America, maybe more, where you can get a world-class undergraduate education in a whole lot of different areas, which means that it's a good thing to have it in your mind where you want to go to school, but you also should remember that you've got a lot of options, and you can't lose. So it's not like—if you think you want to go one place, and it doesn't work out there, and you get a better deal somewhere else, you really should know that America has—we're so blessed. We've got this wonderful, wonderful system of undergraduate education and colleges where there are literally hundreds of good choices. So you'll all do well.

And I just want to thank you for what you're doing with your lives and what an example you're setting for other young people in this community. I hope my coming here will give this program and you some nationwide publicity so more schools will set up

things like this, because this is really wonderful.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 a.m. in the library. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Sharpe James; jazz musician Wynton Marsalis; and former Gov. William E. Milliken, of Michigan, founder and president, Communities In Schools, Inc. William M. Freeman is president and chief executive officer, Bell Atlantic-New Jersey. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Williams and Mr. Katz. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Community in Newark

November 4, 1999

Thank you. Let me begin by saying that, as an old school musician, I appreciate the band being here today and playing for us. Thank you very much.

Secretary Herman, thank you very much for your introduction; and my good friend Mayor Sharpe James—I told Jayson, when Mayor James was talking, I said, "You know, I really like Sharpe. He never loses his enthusiasm. He's always out there pumping, and you need that for leadership, to make something go."

I thank Secretary Herman for her leadership. Secretary Slater, thank you for being here. Your principal, Lanni Paschall, better? The third time I'll get it perfect. Your superintendent, Marion Bolden, thank you for being here. Senator Lautenberg, Congressman Payne, who used to—Don Payne used to teach and coach at this school, and we thank him for being here.

I am also joined by Congressmen John Larson from Connecticut and Paul Kanjorski from Pennsylvania. We thank them for being here. And I'm especially honored by the presence here today of a man who believes passionately in this cause and has worked on trying to give all of our children a better future, your former Governor and my former colleague, Governor Tom Kean, now the president for a university. Thank you for being here, sir.

I want to thank Lew Katz, who will speak in a moment; and Ray Chambers the owners

of the Nets and partners in the Yankees. Ray Chambers has been a real guardian angel of this city. He's never forgotten where he came from, and I thank Ray and Lew, and I'll have more to say about that in a minute. I thank Jayson Williams and the New Jersey Nets for being here today.

You know, I thought I was a reasonably tall person until—[laughter]—Bob Lanier of the NBA met me at the airport. And Paul Tagliabue, the NFL Commissioner, is here. He used to actually play basketball, and he feels short on this stage today. Wendy Lewis, from major league baseball, is here. Bill Milliken, from Communities In Schools, which has been active here.

And we have some business leaders here: the CEO of Prudential, Art Ryan; COSTCO co-founder, Bob Craves; AT&T Network Services president, Frank Ianna; Bell Atlantic New Jersey president, Bill Freeman; Lucent general counsel, Richard Rawson. I thank all them for being here.

And I'd like to introduce some of the other people who came here with me. First of all, a man who has believed in bringing economic opportunity to the poor communities of our country for many, many years and has worked for it, Reverend Jesse Jackson. Make him feel welcome here. [Applause] I'd like to thank Al From, from the Democratic Leadership Council; Hugh Price, from the Urban League; and Maria Echaveste, my Deputy Chief of Staff; and Gene Sperling, my national economic counselor. All of them have played a role in this day.

Now, I want to be brief here because I want you to hear from all the people who really came to tell you what they're going to do to give more of our children a better future. But let me say, I am honored to be here, at Malcolm X Shabazz High School. I am honored to be a part of this day.

We got the day off to a great start because I just met with a number of the Project GRAD scholars. And let me say that this is an unbelievable program. For those of you who are here who don't know what it stands for, it means, "graduation really achieves dreams." And thanks to all the companies that have worked on it and the Communities In Schools program and the people here in the school, all these young people will have

the guarantee that they can go on to college if they make their grades, they do community service, they take the right courses, and they make the right life choices. That's the kind of opportunity we need for every single child in the United States of America, and I thank you for giving it to these young people.

Last July, I went around America to a lot of places that haven't participated yet in our economic recovery, the hills of Appalachia, the rural Mississippi Delta, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, the inner cities of East St. Louis and Phoenix and Watts.

The whole idea was to say to the rest of America, "Look, we've got the lowest unemployment in 30 years, over 19 million new jobs, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment ever recorded, a 20-year low in poverty, a 30-year low in the welfare rolls, a 30-year low in the crime rates. If we can't now face the fact that in spite of all this prosperity there are neighborhoods, there are people, there are places that our economic recovery has still not touched and left behind, we will never get around to dealing with this.

Now is the time to say the rest of America should be part of our prosperity, and they're our next great economic opportunity, the new markets of the 21st century. That was the purpose of the July trip. This is the second new markets tour. This time, we're focusing not only where to find potential but how to turn that potential in our inner cities and our rural areas into long-term economic partnerships. And there is no better place for America to look than right here in Newark.

Newark went through a terrible period of economic decline and along with it, a lot of the social problems that inevitably occur when people can't get up and make a decent living every day to support their families. But look what's going on now: the young people being helped in Project GRAD; the unbelievable performing arts center that I visited last March here; Ray Chambers and Lewis Katz, the commitment to have the Nets here in Newark and to dedicate nearly 40 percent of the profits of the enterprise to reinvesting in this community, its children, and its future. We can see it in the Newark Alliance and the New Community Corporation.

Of course, there's still a lot of things that need to be done here. You need more jobs and new businesses and more opportunity and hope and more reconstruction. But wow, what a start you have made.

And I can see it, most importantly, in the lives of those young people that I met with this morning from the Project GRAD group. And I went around and asked them all, where are you going to go to college? What are you going to study? What are you going to do with your life? And they all had an answer. And they're young; maybe they'll change their minds along the way. But the point is, they know. They know—because of those of you who've been involved in this effort—that they can go to college and they can live their dreams, that they can have a chance in America.

That's all any of these great athletes were given, a chance. There are a lot of guys this tall that aren't playing basketball. They got a chance, and they made the most of it. And that's what we ought to offer to every child and to every adult and to every community and every neighborhood in this entire country. And I will say again, if we cannot do this now, at the time of our greatest prosperity, we will never get around to it. Now is the time to create new markets in every place that has not yet been in the strong sunshine of this economic recovery.

You know, we can do part of it with the Government, and I'll say more about that in a minute. But I think that people can make the most difference, visionaries like Ray Chambers and Lew Katz, who have seen that a sports team can not only thrill people while the game is going on but actually share the rewards of their popular support with the communities in which they live. This is an astonishing thing that they have done. I want all of you to hear me: This is an astonishing thing that they have done.

And if every franchise in America would follow that lead, and some of the other things you're going to hear about in a minute, America would be a very different place. I have seen Jayson Williams dedicate so much of his time to being a role model for our young people and helping our young people, and more and more of our athletes are doing this.

But the Nets have found a way to do it on a systematic and widespread basis that can change the lives of hundreds of people, maybe thousands of people, maybe the whole future of this community. And this is an amazing thing. Because what we want to do in America is to find a way for people to do well and to do good. And we always find that the more good we do, the more those of us who are fortunate do well. But they are living it, and they are living it with a plan, with a system. They worked the plan, and they have good people who believe in it. And we need to do that everywhere.

Sports teams everywhere can make a difference. They can site their stadiums in urban areas as part of a comprehensive community economic development plan. They can set up mentoring partnerships with their suppliers to help small and minority-owned businesses get in the game of doing business. They can reach out to young people and lead them on a path to college and a better life.

So today we are here, as much as anything else, to challenge all the sports teams in America to listen to and match the path-breaking commitment of Lewis Katz, of Ray Chambers, of Paul Tagliabue, of the others from other athletic organizations who will speak to you in a few minutes.

Think about the obligations owed to people in your city. Go beyond making appearances for good causes to change the cause for everyone in your community. Make investment in your community second only in your priorities to bringing home the championship trophy. That way, every single sports team in America can be a true champion for the children and the future of our country.

I also want to briefly thank some of the other businesses represented here today for what they're doing. But let me just mention it, because if every business in America copied them, this would be a very different and better country. Prudential, one of the oldest and most generous corporate citizens in Newark, has just approved a \$2½ million grant to help young people gain vital management skills. Yes, give them a hand. [Applause] Bell Atlantic and Ford Motor are

going to build on an existing \$5 million commitment to add a new distance learning laboratory to their youth automotive training center. AT&T is launching a new corporate mentoring program and a new information technology academy for young people. And the Mills Corporation, a major developer of shopping malls, has pledged to hire 1,000 local residents and invest \$1 million to provide training, transportation, and child care for these and their other new workers.

What are we going to do in Washington? Well, we're doing our best, the Members of Congress who are here from New Jersey and other States and me and our administration, to try to give American companies and individuals more incentives to invest in the people and the places that are still not full partners in our recovery. We have asked Congress for bipartisan legislation to create tax incentives and loan guarantees to spur \$15 billion in new investment. Congress has already taken the first step and passed initial funding for the plan. And I've worked very hard to make this a bipartisan, nonpolitical effort, because what I want to do in passing this program is nothing more or less than to give American business people and other investors the same incentives to invest in the poorer communities of America we give them today to invest in the poorer communities of South America or Africa or Asia or any other place.

And let me say, I support giving Americans incentives to invest in other countries. I want us to be partners with people around the world who are trying to live their dreams. But we have a heavy obligation to take care of people at home who haven't been part of this recovery yet.

One last thing I'd like to mention. I want to thank Reverend Jackson and others who are here for supporting community banks and a strong Community Reinvestment Act. That law helps to pump over \$80 billion in investment into our communities last year. And there was a serious attempt to weaken it, even as we gave banks new powers. So we said, "If you're going to expand the powers of banks, we want to expand the reach of the Community Reinvestment Act." People who have banks in communities ought to loan money in the communities where

their depositors are and help to build their future there. And I want to say I thank them for that.

Let me say one last word about Newark, because I hope the story coming out of this today will be, if they can do it in Newark, why can't we do it in our community. That's what I want the story to be. When people see pictures of those young people that I met from Project GRAD on the news tonight, I want people to say, "If those kids are being given the help they need and the guarantee they can go on to college, I want our kids and our community to have the same guarantee to go on to college and the help they need to learn what they need to know."

A few years ago, a lot of people were ready to give up on Newark. Some people could only remember riots. But the people of Newark represented more than 300 years of remarkable contributions to our Nation, from the building of the Conestoga wagons that helped us settle the frontier, to supplying the equipment that helped us win two World Wars. Where some people saw an abandoned downtown, the visionaries of Newark dreamed of a performing arts center. Where some saw empty lots, the visionaries saw community centers. Where some saw a city in trouble, the people who bought the Nets saw a place of the future.

And everybody here who believed in the children of this community, who believed that every child can learn and has a gift to give, not only to his or her own life but to all the rest of us as well, I want to tell you that I am profoundly grateful. And I just want the rest of America to see it. I want to help you succeed, and I want us to make these opportunities available to every single child in the United States.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. in the gymnasium at the Malcolm X Shabazz High School. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Sharpe James of Newark; Jayson Williams, player, and Ray Chambers and Lewis Katz, co-owners, NBA New Jersey Nets; State School District Superintendent Marion A. Bolden, Newark Public Schools; former Gov. Tom Kean of New Jersey, president, Drew University; Mayor Bob Lanier of Houston, member, Basketball Hall of Fame; Wendy Lewis, human resources director, Major

League Baseball; former Gov. William E. Milliken of Michigan, founder and president, Communities In Schools; Al From, president, Democratic Leadership Council; and Hugh B. Price, president and chief executive officer, National Urban League.

Interview With Neil Cavuto of Fox News in Newark

November 4, 1999

Mr. Cavuto. Welcome, Mr. President. It's a real honor to have you.

The President. Thank you.

New Markets Initiative

Mr. Cavuto. This is an interesting initiative because, on the one hand, you're compelling companies to do something good, but you also have to get them to respond to that message. How do you do that?

The President. Well, I find that a lot of them want to do it. I think there is a real awareness in America to that, that we're going through the best economy we've ever had, and yet, for whatever reason, there are people and places that are left behind.

I argue, number one, that it's our obligation to try to help, those of us that have done better; and number two, that it actually makes good economic sense, because one of the big questions on every business person's, every economist's mind, everybody that plays the market is, "Well, how long can this economic expansion go on? How much more growth do we have? How many more jobs can we create before either it runs out of steam or inflation takes over, and it has to be broken?" And my argument is that the best opportunity we have to continue this expansion without inflation is to invest in new markets. And the closest new markets are those here at home and the people and places that have been left behind.

Mr. Cavuto. Can you guilt them into doing that, though?

The President. No, I don't think that it's a matter of guilt. I have a positive approach that I think we do have an obligation to do it, but I think we'll feel better if we do. But I also believe it is in the economic self-interest of those who are doing well now.

I think there are real opportunities here, and I think that's what people like Lew Katz

and Ray Chambers think. These guys, they're doing this, dedicating a big percentage of their profits to reinvestment in downtown Newark partly because they feel a sense of obligation. They think it's the morally right thing to do. They think it's important for our country's long-term strength and coherence. But they also know there are real opportunities here. I mean, we can create a lot of jobs here, create a lot of businesses here. I just think it's a real opportunity.

Now, I'm also attempting to work out a bipartisan agreement with the Congress to pass a series of tax credits and loan guarantees which would, in effect, give investors the same incentives to invest in the poor areas in America we give them to invest in the poor areas in South America or Africa or Asia. And I think that will help a lot, too.

Independent Candidate Pat Buchanan

Mr. Cavuto. You know, when you mentioned that in your remarks earlier today, you almost sounded like Pat Buchanan, because that's his pitch.

The President. But the difference between me and Pat Buchanan is I think we ought to invest abroad, too. That is, I'm not an "America only," but I don't want to leave behind the people who are hurt in America.

Mr. Cavuto. But isn't his point that we have left behind some of the unfortunate in America?

The President. But he's right about that. He's right about that. But I don't think that the way to stop leaving them behind is to put up a lot of trade barriers because we've gotten 30 percent of our growth, until the Asian financial crisis, came from the expansion of American markets abroad. We only have 4 percent of the world's people; we have 22 percent of the world's wealth. We obviously have got to sell something to the other 96 percent of the folks out there.

So while I don't agree with him that we should put up barriers and, in effect, shrink the volume of world trade, I do agree that we have to do more to reinvest in our own country, in our own people, and create markets here. And if we can't do this now, when the economy is perhaps the strongest it has ever been, when will we ever get around to doing it?

Vice President Gore/Empowerment Zones

Mr. Cavuto. [*Inaudible*—could read into that, sir, that, you know, here your Vice President is in the fight of his life. There are many, for example, in the labor movement who, while ostensibly supporting him, fear that this administration, with support of international treaties, has somehow abandoned them, rightly or not. And I wonder whether your remarks today and these initiatives over the last few months are an effort to help Mr. Gore?

The President. Well, I think they should help him because he's been a part of it, but that's not why I proposed them. Keep in mind—look at the record. In January of 1993, my first month in office, I proposed the empowerment zones to try to get extra incentives into the inner cities and the economically distressed areas, even when the whole country was in economic trouble. And we set out this empowerment zone enterprise community program under the leadership of Vice President Gore way back in '93.

So this is something that we have done all along. And I have tried to—I've increased the number of empowerment zones. Now it's twice as many. We fought for funding for them in this budget cycle. Actually, what led to this proposal is that I was asking myself two questions. One is, how can I get beyond the empowerment zone? They help the areas where they are, but we can't put them everywhere; we don't have enough money to invest everywhere in the empowerment zones, everywhere there is a need.

And then the second question I was asking myself is, how do we keep the economic growth going without inflation? You know, I'm not all that surprised that we've been as fortunate as we have been because I believed always that if we could get a good economic policy—that is, if we could get rid of the deficit, get interest rates down, keep expanding trade, and make the right kind of long-term investments—that technology and open markets would give us higher growth with less inflation than most economists had estimated. I made this argument in December of '92 when we started all this.

But I have been very frustrated that we have not been able to bring jobs and businesses and the general entrepreneurial spirit

to some of the tougher neighborhoods and more isolated places in the country. So that's how we came around to this new markets idea. We were trying to figure out a way to keep the economy going and to get opportunity in the places where the empowerment zones wouldn't reach.

Administration's Relations With Corporate America

Mr. Cavuto. But you have to compel them to follow, right? I mean, you have to provide an inspirational lead for that. And I guess some of the companies that I noticed, Mr. President, who are involved with this—Aetna, for example—seem to get mixed reads from your administration: Yes, participate in these type of programs; at the same time, the Government is bashing HMO's.

There seems to be a disconnect among many in corporate America, I guess, with you personally and with the administration generally. Yes, it talks the talk and wants help and incentives and that sort of thing, but there's almost like an anti-corporate environment, whether its investigating Microsoft or looking down at Intel or now going after seven utilities and whether they are violating environmental laws—that this is an anti-corporate White House.

The President. Well, first of all, you have to deal with these things one at a time. But as a matter of law and practice, the White House has nothing to do with the Justice Department—

Mr. Cavuto. Absolutely. Absolutely. But you can see the theme—

The President. —or the EPA decisions. Although, I would point out there are an awful lot of businesses, a huge number who agree with the Microsoft action.

Mr. Cavuto. Do you think, by the way, that Microsoft is a bully?

The President. I think that I should not comment on an antitrust action. But I will say this. I've had more businesspeople spontaneously say to me they agree with it, than I have say they disagree. So I don't think you can view that pro- or anti-business.

Secondly, if you look at the work we have done from the beginning, from the first day I was here, I think this is the most pro-business Democratic administration we've had in

decades and decades. And I think the results show that. If I were anti-business, I've done a poor job of demonstrating it, given the—we've had a record number of new small businesses start every year; we've done a lot to reduce the regulatory burdens and specific tax burdens on small businesses, to give businesses incentives to hire people that were difficult to place, and a whole range of things we've done that we've been asked to do.

Now, on the HMO front, I would also like to say that there were 43 HMO's that endorsed all the principal elements of the Patients' Bill of Rights and asked for Federal legislation because they said they could not afford to extend these rights to their patients if their competitors didn't have to. So even there, there is some difference of opinion.

I just simply—I've never wanted to put them out of business. Remember in '93—when we had the health care debate in '94, I repeatedly said that I thought managed care on balance had been good for America, that before the managed care came along, health care costs were increasing at 3 times the rate of inflation. And that was unsustainable.

Democratic Presidential Candidate Bill Bradley's Health Plan

Mr. Cavuto. But the irony is now that it's Bill Bradley who's trumpeting that initial cause of yours and not your own Vice President.

The President. Well, if you look at the difference—there's a difference in how much their plans cost, but I think the Vice President's plan, even though it's a lot less costly, covers almost as many people. What Senator Bradley has proposed is quite different from what I've proposed, but it's designed to achieve the same goal. I think the American people can evaluate the two plans without my help, and I'm sure the candidates would be able to help. But the Vice President's plan, even though it's much less expensive, covers I think only 2 million fewer people than the Bradley plan does.

Budget Negotiations

Mr. Cavuto. Could I talk to you a little bit about the budget negotiations, sir? Last night I had an opportunity to speak with Senate budget chief Pete Domenici, and he

knew I was speaking to you today, and he had a message that was not so polite. But essentially he was saying, "When you talk to the President, tell him to stop grandstanding. There aren't big differences between us. The money issues are rather incremental." What do you say to that?

The President. Well, there aren't big spending differences although there would be if there are across-the-board spending cutbacks. The main difference is—you know, Senator Domenici, to be fair to him, has not been guilty of grandstanding, but his party has. Let's look at the main difference. The main difference is I sent them a budget that was paid for. They didn't want to pay for it. They had us spending the Social Security surplus. So instead of owning up to it, they ran ads accusing the Democrats of spending the Social Security surplus which is just false.

Mr. Cavuto. They say they're not.

The President. Well, they say they're not, and they may not be if they have a big enough across-the-board cut. But until their across-the-board cut they were, number one. Number two, if I could deal with Senator Domenici and with the House appropriators, there would be no problem.

Mr. Cavuto. Where's the problem?

The President. The problem is every time the Republicans make a deal, they go off, and they go back to their caucuses, and their rightwing says, "No, you can't do this." So they have to come back—and they have to come back and say, "Oh, I'm sorry. We can't do this." So we've had a lot of trouble here. So they say, "Well, they want me to put all our cards on the table."

I've made—keep in mind, since this Republican majority has been in there, we had one bad year, in '95, when they shut the Government down; '96, '97, '98, we reached agreement on budgets where we had their priorities and ours, where we compromised, where there were victories on all sides, where everybody would walk away and say, "We've done something good for America." That's not happening this time because this process is being driven for political reasons by their illogical extremists.

Mr. Cavuto. Do you put Senator Trent Lott in that camp, sir?

The President. That's something you do to try to force me into a fight. I had a good fight with Senator Lott and Mr. Hastert—had a good talk with them yesterday or the day before, and I hope we can work it out. I have a good relationship, personal relationship with Senator Lott and with Speaker Hastert. But they, in effect, are the prisoners of how their caucuses go.

But I think that is a strategy that Mr. DeLay and others have embraced and announced, that in the last couple days it appeared that Senator McConnell had embraced, for reasons that I don't quite understand, except I think it probably has something to do with campaigning and how they attract support.

Look, we made agreements. Look, I've got a record of this. I've made principled agreements with the Republicans on welfare reform and on budgets in '97—'96, '97, and '98. And the only reason we're having trouble now is that the right wing in the Republican Party is taking over the process. And if they'll give it back to the appropriations chairman and leaders, the responsible people, we'll make our principled compromises, and we'll get out of there.

Post-Presidential Plans

Mr. Cavuto. Finally, sir, I'd be remiss—you have 14 months left in office, and you've obviously indicated you want an aggressive last 14 months. You certainly don't want the "lame duck" label, and you've fought very hard to avoid that. But I am tempted to ask you, since I talk to a lot of CEO's and what they do when they step down, what are you going to do when you step down?

The President. Well, I haven't made a final decision just yet. And there are some decisions I can't make, particularly ones that related to financial matters I simply can't make until I leave. But what I want to do is to build my library and my public policy center and—

Mr. Cavuto. Would that require you being still an Arkansas resident? There is talk that you don't want to be a New York resident until that's resolved.

The President. Well, there's no requirement one way or the other. I'll be there a

lot, regardless. It will require me to be there often.

Mr. Cavuto. So do you become a New York resident first, Mr. President?

The President. Well, I don't even know, I haven't thought that through. All I'm saying is I'm going to be—I'm going to build my library, and I'm going to do a lot of work. I'm going to have it be, instead of some mausoleum to the past, the natural sort of continuation of the work I did as President. That is, I want to be a useful citizen of our country, and I want to have some constructive role around the world and help people that would like me to help them in however way I can.

Mr. Cavuto. Sort of like the Carter Center?

The President. Yes. I'll do different things but sort of like that. But it's very important to me not to get in the way of the next President, whoever the next President turns out to be. And so I don't want to do anything inappropriate. But I would like to have a very vigorous public-service-oriented career when I leave here and do something useful.

Mr. Cavuto. What about corporate boards?

The President. I've given no thought to that.

Mr. Cavuto. Really?

The President. No. You know,——

Mr. Cavuto. Two million dollar speeches?

The President. I've got to make some money for my family and take care of them, and I want to do what I can as quickly as I can to do that. But I haven't given a lot of thought to how to do it, because I've got to wait until I'm out of office to make a lot of those agreements.

The main thing I want to do is to have some constructive role in public life that is not in any way inconsistent with the fact that someone else will be President of the United States and has to do that job. But I think there are a lot of useful things I can do, and I'm looking forward to it.

Mr. Cavuto. Mr. President, thank you very much.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview began at 1:27 p.m. at Malcolm X Shabazz High School. In his remarks, the President referred to Lewis Katz and Ray Chambers, co-owners, NBA New Jersey Nets.

A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Dan Patrick of ESPN Radio

November 4, 1999

Mr. Patrick. Mr. President?

The President. Yes?

Mr. Patrick. It's Dan Patrick with Rob Dibble.

The President. Hey, Dan. How are you?

Mr. Patrick. I'm great. I appreciate you calling in. I've been dancing a little bit, ad-libbing for an hour and a half, but I know you're a busy man. I just want you to know, I've been sweating. [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm sorry. I owe you one.

Mr. Patrick. You know what I could use, a hug right now is what I could use. [*Laughter*]

The President. If I could give you one of those, I'd do that, too.

Mr. Patrick. I asked the callers to give me some suggestions for you. And do I have to call you Mr. President? In all respect, it's a very personable show. Can I call you something that—

The President. Call me whatever you want.

Mr. Patrick. No, you tell me what to call you. I want it to be comfortable here, because, Mr. President, that puts me at a disadvantage, asking you sports questions. [*Laughter*]

The President. You don't have to call me anything. Just ask the question.

Mr. Patrick. All right. Could I call you Bill?

The President. You can call me whatever you want. It's fine with me.

Team Jerseys

Mr. Patrick. Okay. What are you doing with all those jerseys that you get when teams come to the White House?

The President. Believe it or not, I save them all because I'm such a big sports fan. And when I get out of here, I'm going to put them all together and decide whether to either display them or take turns wearing them. But I actually save them all.

Mr. Patrick. Have you put one on in the White House and maybe, you know, tossed a football or played basketball in them?

The President. Yes, I played—I shot a few baskets with a Kentucky jersey they gave me the other day, not very long ago.

President's Favorite Athletic Events

Mr. Patrick. Now, what's the one event you would want to go to that you haven't been to, sporting-wise?

The President. That I have never been to? I'd like to go to a Super Bowl, and I'd like to go to a college championship, now that the new football system is in.

Mr. Patrick. You haven't been to the Super Bowl?

The President. Never. I've watched a lot of them, but I've never been to one.

Mr. Patrick. You know what? You can come with ESPN this year; it's in Atlanta. I'd be more than happy—

The President. I've never been. You know, I have seen some great events. I went to the NCAA championship game in Arkansas, one in '94, and that's the only time I've ever been to that. And then I went to—I saw the women's World Cup finals this year when we beat China with the overtime, with the kickoff at the end, which was stunning. It was one of the most exciting athletic events I've ever seen in my life.

SportsCenter

Mr. Patrick. Set the scene in the White House when you're watching SportsCenter.

The President. When I'm watching it?

Mr. Patrick. Yes, like where are you and—

The President. Oh, all right. Well, I watch it all the time, you know. I'm either in the kitchen, where Hillary and I and Chelsea, when she's home, we have our meals in a very informal atmosphere in the kitchen when there's no one else there, or I'm upstairs in what's called the Solarium; it's up on the third floor, and it's a big kind of sunny room. And I watch TV there at night, especially when my brother-in-law or someone else is staying with us.

Normally, I'm watching SportsCenter either around dinnertime when I come in or

late at night when I come in from an event and I'm sitting, visiting with other people.

Mr. Patrick. Have I said anything stupid on SportsCenter that maybe you wanted to criticize or critique me? Because you can—you get critiqued all the time. Feel free, you can take a shot at me.

The President. No, I don't think so. I think as long as I'm in office, I should be criticized but not return the favor. [Laughter] Everybody in America gets to criticize the President. That's part of the privilege of being a citizen.

Athletic Organizations' Community Involvement

Mr. Patrick. The President of the United States, joining us on the Dan Patrick Show here on ESPN Radio. You're a part of this new markets incentives. I know you're in New Jersey. The Nets are donating to the city of Newark, which I think is great. Do you see teams that don't give back to the community enough? The taxpayers build these stadiums, and maybe they don't get something in return for promoting and supporting their teams.

The President. Well, let me put it in more positive terms with regard to the Nets. I think that taxpayers finance these things because they enjoy having professional teams in their communities, because they believe it brings their communities some prestige, and because they think it generates a lot of other economic activity. But I think that the opportunity for a professional sports team to give something back to the community on a scale far greater than anything that's happened so far is embodied by what the Nets are doing.

I mean, this is a stunning thing that Lew Katz and Ray Chambers are doing with the Nets. And now, you know, they're partners with the Yankees, and so they've got a smaller percentage of the overall joint operations are going into community operations not only in Newark, New Jersey, but also in the Bronx, where the Yankees are.

I just think it's amazing. Here are these two guys that have made a lot of money, and they're going to dedicate almost 40 percent of the profits of this sports franchise to redeveloping the economy and developing the

lives of the children of Newark. I think that is an amazing thing.

Mr. Patrick. I think it's great. I think it's great. But I'm worried—we finance these stadiums. Should taxpayers finance the stadiums if we don't have any say on when those teams can leave?

The President. The practical answer to that is that stadiums cannot be financed unless the political leaders support it. And so the political leaders should decide on the front end, I guess, what they expect out of the teams in return for financing the stadium.

You know, it was interesting when Bob Lanier was mayor of Houston—one of the most popular mayors Houston ever had and a very able man—he let the football team go to Tennessee because he didn't want to finance a new stadium. So it's not like—nobody makes these communities do these things. They make their decisions. And I think if they think there ought to be some conditions or some requirements, that ought to be discussed with the owners in advance.

PGA Golfer Casey Martin

Mr. Patrick. We are going to have Casey Martin on in a little bit.

The President. Good for you.

Mr. Patrick. But you being the avid golfer that you are, do you think that having a golf cart is that much of an advantage in—I mean, the outcry over Casey Martin using a golf cart—did it surprise you? And where do you stand on that issue?

The President. I'm for him. I'm solidly behind him. I think he ought to be able to play. The only way it would be an advantage to him, in my view, is if he really didn't have the debilitating condition in his legs that he has. So I think that to me, this is like the golf version of the Americans with Disabilities Act, you know, where we try to make the workplace accessible with people with disabilities who are otherwise just as good at work as all the rest of us.

Well, Casey is just as good at golf and better than most of the rest of us, and he's got this condition, which will probably shorten his career, anyway. And so I think that the proper course is to say, "Look, we can't let everybody start running around the golf course. We don't want to change the nature

of the game, but this man has a unique disability which prohibits his walking around but doesn't prevent him from being a terrific golfer, and for however many years he can be competitive, we think we ought to give him a chance." That's what I think the rule ought to be.

Mr. Patrick. I agree with you, and I just thought that it was interesting, the outcry from everybody.

The President. What they're worried about, I think, is all the people who have to be the keepers of the tradition of any game or any club or anything else, they're always afraid that when they change any rules, it's a slippery slope, and pretty soon the whole character of a contest will be altered in ways that aren't good. But I just don't think that that objection holds water here.

I don't know Casey Martin. I've had some limited contact with him, but he seems like a terrific young man. He's bound to be a courageous young man. He could have folded his tent in the face of his physical disability. He could have sat around feeling sorry for himself. And instead, he shows up every day, and he's obviously got a lot of courage. And I think that we ought to support that. I think that's in the finest tradition of the sport.

So to me, it's not a difficult question. But I sympathize with the people who have the responsibility of preserving the traditions and the heritage of the game. I sympathize with them, but I just think all this resistance has been wrong. I think it's the right thing to do to let him get out there.

Greatest 20th Century Athlete

Mr. Patrick. Can I ask you one final question, aside from the question I just asked you?

The President. Sure.

Mr. Patrick. Who is the number one athlete of all time, in your mind? The Sports Century countdown of the top 50 athletes—who would you vote for number one?

The President. Ooh.

Mr. Patrick. Now, I know you released kind of a top 10—maybe it was a top 5—but if you were going to single out one athlete, who would it be?

The President. I believe the athlete in the 20th century that made the most important

contribution was Jesse Owens, because he won the multiple Olympic gold medals in the face of Nazi Germany and against Hitler's racial theories. So I think he was both a great athlete who had to show an extraordinary amount of personal courage, and he did something that was of profound significance at the time.

I think the most talented—physically talented athlete that I ever saw play, I think it would be a toss-up for me between Michael Jordan and Willie Mays.

Mr. Patrick. See, it's hard to go wrong. Once you get up to that stratosphere, then if you pick out somebody and—I always thought Jackie Robinson, to me, signified greatness as an athlete and what he overcame.

The President. Yes. Well, let me say, if you asked me who I thought made the greatest contribution to baseball, I'd have to say Jackie Robinson because he broke the color line and because he did it in a way—because he was a great player who was also a great human being. There's almost no way to go wrong here, but if you asked me who I think was the most—had the most stunning athletic attributes in my lifetime, I would have to say Jordan and Mays are the ones that I've physically witnessed. If you ask me—and I think Jackie Robinson, what he did was important. But I guess I would have to say the reason I picked Jesse Owens is because he did it up against Hitler.

Mr. Patrick. Mr. President, thank you for taking time out of your busy day. And you know, you're always welcome to talk sports on here.

The President. I love it. I loved talking to you, and I hope that more of our sports teams will follow the lead of the New Jersey Nets. What they have done is a great thing, and they're giving a lot of kids a chance at a better future.

Jayson Williams

Mr. Patrick. Well, we have the Nets' Jayson Williams. He's on hold. I think you met him today, but Jayson will—

The President. Oh, I know him. He is a terrific young man, and he's going to be well enough to play soon. But it's not going to stop him from spending some of his time

trying to give these kids a better future, and I hope more people will follow his lead, too.

Mr. Patrick. Mr. President, thank you, and we'll see you. Even when you're out of office, you want to talk sports, you're always welcome, okay?

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Patrick. I don't want you to feel like, that you're being neglected once you're out. You're still welcome here.

The President. You've got a deal.

Mr. Patrick. All right. Thank you.

The President. Bye.

NOTE: The President spoke by telephone at approximately 2:23 p.m. from the Malcolm X Shabazz High School in Newark, New Jersey. In his remarks, the President referred to Lewis Katz and Ray Chambers, co-owners, NBA New Jersey Nets; Michael Jordan, former player, NBA Chicago Bulls; Willie Mays, member, Baseball Hall of Fame; and Jayson Williams, player, NBA New Jersey Nets. Rob Dibble is co-anchor to Mr. Patrick.

Remarks to the North End Community in Hartford, Connecticut November 4, 1999

Thank you very much, first, to you Dick Huber, for being such a faithful member of our new markets team. You started out with us in Atlanta; you made the trip to Appalachia and to the Delta and other places; and you led me home to Hartford today for you. You know, the first time we were talking about this—I should say this about Dick; he talks about how cynical he is. That's a front. I'm a politician; I recognize a front when I see one. [Laughter]

He said, "You know, I'm not sure I'm happy about you taking all these other businessmen on this new markets tour. It looks to me like there's a great business opportunity here, and I hate for everybody else to find it before I do." And I want to come back to that, but I thank you.

I thank my longtime friend the president of Trinity College, Evan Dobelle, and Heidi Miller from the Citigroup. And thank you, Robert Fiondella and all the other business leaders that are here. Thank you, Governor. Thank you, Congressman, and also Congressman Kanjorski, who has been a faithful mem-

ber of all of our tours. I thank Speaker Lyons and Senator Sullivan and all the other leaders who are here.

I want to say another word—I'm particularly glad to be in Hartford with Congressman Larson, because he's been after me to come here as well. And Secretary Slater, thank you for making all these trips. And Reverend Jackson, thank you for being such an inspiration for all of these efforts.

I want to thank the Collective founders, Jackie and Dollie McLean. I thought of giving up my speaking time and letting Jackie play. [Laughter] And I appreciate the "Hail To The Chief" with the saxophone. And I just heard the jazz band upstairs; they played an old Sonny Stipp tune that I knew back when I was a young man. I don't believe I'm good enough to play it anymore, but I was astonished at the musical quality of the people here. And it's a great gift to your community.

Today you're hearing in words rather than music, another sort of serenade for the people of this city. The corporate leaders together are pledging—listen to this—well over \$200 million to the future of Hartford. That's one of the most impressive commitments in any city to developing the market potential of people who have not been part of our prosperity anywhere in the United States of America. And you should applaud them, support them, and be very proud of them. [Applause]

They're all saying, "Hartford is our home; Hartford is worth working for, worth fighting for, worth believing in." And we are committed to working with you to succeed.

Today's announcements are just the latest sign of the renaissance of this city. Before I came here to the Artists Collective, I had a chance to meet some of the vendors at El Mercado, the Latino marketplace on Park Street. I actually had visited there in 1992, and I remarked, first of all, how excited I was to go back. I had a wonderful time there in '92. At the time I was battling with my weight, and they made it worse. [Laughter] I never wanted to leave any of the places. And I loved being back there today. And as far as I could see, everything was better than it was in '92, except for one thing. There was this picture of me when I was there in '92,

and I look worse. But they look better. Everything else is better. [*Laughter*] So I want to thank the people there for all the work that they have done.

Mr. Mayor, I want to compliment you on falling crime rates, dramatically falling crime rates. We have the lowest crime rate in America in 30 years, lowest murder rate in 32 years. No single person can take credit for this, but every person who has supported community policing, responsible law enforcement policies, and working together can take a lot of credit for it. So I thank you.

I also want to compliment everybody here who is responsible for the improvements we see in the schools here. I thank you for your commitment to the MetroHartford Millennium and Adriaen's Landing projects. I thank Trinity College, working with HUD, for Frog Holler, where they are turning a once devastated brownfield into a remarkable 16-acre learning corridor. I'm pleased to announce that Citigroup has just committed to build on the success of the learning corridor by offering more than \$7.4 million in equity and debt capital to help rehabilitate 70 single-family homes in the neighborhood, and I appreciate that.

Let me just say this. One of the biggest problems we have in America right now is the product of our prosperity. There is not enough affordable housing for all the people who have jobs and have incomes, but because of the economy being so strong, they're still being priced out of the housing market. Therefore, there is an enormous opportunity, if we can get the capital to the right place, to create more jobs for people who still need them in rehabilitating existing structures in a way that will make them affordable for working people. So this is very good thing, and I hope it will be built on, because you can, Governor, help people not only in Hartford but in Bridgeport, in New Haven, and all the other places that still need help in Connecticut.

And I want to say, if I might, I appreciate your being here, because I don't believe that this issue should be a partisan issue. I think all Americans want every American to have a chance to work, and I thank you.

I guess my message here is this: Number one, this is great; number two, let's build on

it; number three, every other city in America should follow your lead. If we have now the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years and the lowest poverty rates in 20 years and the lowest minority unemployment rates ever recorded since we have been trying for about 30 years to separate them out, if we have all this in the longest peacetime expansion in history, which come February, will be the longest economic expansion in the history of America, if we can't take this opportunity to bring real hope to the people in places who have not been touched by this recovery, we will never get around to doing it.

So the first thing I want to say is, because we care about one another, it is the right thing to do, and possible. The second thing I want to say is, it's the smart thing to do. That's what Dick said the first time he talked about it. You would be amazed how much time I spend as your President trying to figure out how to keep this economic expansion going, you know, because if you read in the paper, about once every month or so there will be somebody saying the sky is finally going to fall, we can't keep this thing going anymore, inflation's around the corner or it's going to run out of steam.

But the truth is, I always felt if we could get rid of this terrible deficit and start bringing down our debt, if we could still have enough money to invest in our people and new technologies, and if we could keep our borders open so we'd have to be competitive and keep inflation down, we could really grow this economy for a long time. I gave that speech back in '92, and I didn't know if I was right or not, but you all proved that that was right.

Now, we have to say, how can we keep it going? How can we have growth without inflation? The answer is, invest in the people in places who still haven't felt the opportunity. They need the jobs. They need the businesses. They need the capital. They need the work. And they will be new customers. It is an inflation-free strategy to continue the growth of America, to find the people in places still not touched.

So what I want to say to you is, yes, we have a lot of people in the clergy here. You

can say, and you'd be right, that it is the morally responsible thing to do for the business leaders of this community and this State and this Nation to invest in these places. But you also should say, it is the economically smart thing to do, because it's one of the clearest ways we can continue to have this economic expansion with no inflation. It is a magic moment, and we dare not let it pass us by.

Now, what I'm trying to do at the Federal level is to build a bipartisan coalition for giving the kind of tools you need to maximize the number of businesspeople and investors who can participate. The Congress has already, on a bipartisan basis, passed a bill which appropriates some of the money we need to start our national effort. And now, I'm trying to secure agreement to pass a set of tax incentives and loan guarantees, basically tax credits and loan guarantees, which would, for example, give—let's just take Aetna or any other business—the same financial incentives to invest in the inner city in Hartford, in a developing market in Hartford, or any other place in Connecticut, that they can get already to invest in a developing market in Central America, in South America, in Asia, in Africa.

Now, I don't want to stop investing in those countries, but I do think that people in America with money ought to get the same tax breaks to invest in poor communities, in poor people in America, we give them to invest around the world.

So I say to you, I am very grateful to Hartford for setting an example. I'm grateful for this vast and broad-based crowd of people for being here. But this is good business, as well as good social policy. We can be good citizens and actually improve the economy. And if enough of us believe that, then we can pass the laws we need to pass in Congress and get more people to follow the lead of the business investments we've seen here today. This is the right thing to do.

One hundred and thirty years ago, Mark Twain came here for the first time—I like Mark Twain—we ought to all laugh, and besides, he was the first guy who said that reports of his death had been greatly exaggerated, something I came to appreciate more and more as I stayed in this business. [*Laughter*] Here's what he said about Hartford, "Of

all the beautiful towns it has been my fortune to see, this is the chief. You do not know what beauty is if you have not been here."

Thanks to your commitment, your pride, your faith in your city, the beauty is shining through again in new and different ways, with all kinds of different people, from all different countries, and all different cultural backgrounds, contributing to a 21st century beauty for Hartford. You can see it in the beautiful children I saw dancing upstairs and all the work done here in the Artists Collective new home. You can see it in the pride of El Mercado and all those beautiful stores I saw up and down the avenue. You can see it in the brownfields transformed and the boarded homes made habitable again. This is what it means to develop America's new markets, and we ought to give the same chance to every hard-working American in every community in this country.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

I want to bring up here a man who was making this speech to me years ago and whose Wall Street project pioneered the partnerships we want everywhere in America between business and Government, to give people a chance and keep hope alive. Reverend Jesse Jackson.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:40 p.m. in the performance studio at the Artists Collective. In his remarks, he referred to Richard L. Huber, chairman and chief executive officer, Aetna, Inc., who introduced the President; Heidi Miller, chief financial officer, Citigroup, Inc.; Robert W. Fiondella, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Phoenix Home Life Mutual Insurance Company; Gov. John G. Rowland of Connecticut; State Representative Moira K. Lyons; State Senator Kevin B. Sullivan; and Mayor Michael P. Peters of Hartford.

Statement on Additional Assistance for Victims of Hurricane Floyd

November 4, 1999

Today I will seek congressional approval for \$429 million in additional assistance for the victims of Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina, New Jersey, and all the States affected by this disaster. These are existing

funds that will be reallocated within the Federal Emergency Management Agency. They will assist in the buyout and relocation of homes located in floodplains that remain vulnerable to future floods.

Additionally, I continue to urge Congress to fully fund my request for SBA's disaster loan program that can help families and small businesses rebuild in the wake of hurricanes and other natural disasters. I have already asked Congress to provide \$500 million that will help farmers in New Jersey and other States who have suffered severe crop losses due to drought and flooding. I urge Congress to meet my requests to help alleviate the suffering of those affected by Hurricane Floyd.

Statement on the Death of Daisy Bates

November 4, 1999

Hillary and I were very saddened to hear of Daisy Bates' death this morning. She was a dear friend and a heroine. She was known chiefly as a leader during the crisis of Central High School in 1957 and a mentor to the Little Rock Nine. But she was so much more.

President Kennedy so admired her for her civil rights work that he hired her to work in his administration. During her 84 years, she received over 200 awards for her civil rights work, including the NAACP's esteemed Spingarn Award. In 1957, the Associated Press named her one of the top nine news personalities in the world.

We were blessed to have Daisy as a citizen of Arkansas, where she and her husband, L.C., published the award-winning Arkansas State Press newspaper. For over 30 years, it was the only African-American newspaper in the State. Her death will leave a vacuum in the civil rights community, the State of Arkansas, and our country. Her legacy will live on through the work she did, the friends she made, and the people she touched.

Statement on Senate Action on Legislation To Reform the Nation's Financial System

November 4, 1999

I am pleased by the overwhelming, bipartisan passage of historic financial services legislation by the Senate today. I hope the House will do the same shortly and send it to me for my signature.

This legislation will help the American financial services system play a leading role in propelling our economy into the 21st century, continuing the longest peacetime economic expansion in our history. Eliminating barriers to financial services competition will allow American companies to better compete in the global economy. And consumers will benefit from greater choice of services at lower costs.

By preserving the Community Reinvestment Act and protecting consumer privacy, we have ensured that all Americans will benefit from this historic legislation.

Even after enactment, our work in the financial services area, particularly with respect to financial privacy and consumer protection, will continue. But today's action by the Senate is a historic step forward for our economy.

Statement on Signing the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2000

November 4, 1999

I have signed into law H.R. 2561, the "Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2000." The bill approves funds to cover the Department's most critical needs, consistent with my request that reflected my strong commitment to our Nation's security.

The bill provides funding for all critical Defense activities—pay and other quality of life programs, readiness, and weapons modernization. In particular, the bill fully funds

the key elements of the compensation initiatives I proposed and that were enacted in the FY 2000 Defense Authorization Act, including military retirement reform, pay table reform, and a significant pay increase. It also fully funds my request for training, spare parts, equipment maintenance, and base operations—all items essential to military readiness. I am pleased that the bill restores partial funding for the F-22 fighter aircraft, which is essential to guaranteeing early air dominance in any future conflict.

Regrettably, the bill goes beyond what is necessary, providing funding for a host of unrequested programs at the expense of other core government activities. It provides \$267.4 billion in discretionary budget authority, a funding level that is \$4.5 billion above my request. As testified to by our military chiefs, my budget request correctly addressed our most important FY 2000 military needs. Unfortunately, H.R. 2561 resorts to a number of funding techniques and gimmicks to meet the Appropriations Subcommittee allocation. These include: designating \$7.2 billion of standard operation and maintenance funding as a contingent emergency; deferring payments to contractors until FY 2001; and incrementally funding a Navy ship (LHD-8).

Furthermore, the bill contains several objectionable language provisions. I am concerned about section 8074, which contains certain reporting requirements that could materially interfere with or impede this country's ability to provide necessary support to another nation or international organization in connection with peacekeeping or humanitarian assistance activities otherwise authorized by law. I will interpret this provision consistent with my constitutional authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States and my responsibilities as Commander in Chief.

While I am troubled by a provision requiring the Department of Defense to seek specific authorization for the payment of fines or penalties for environmental violations, I will direct the Department to seek such authorization on any fine or penalty it receives, ensuring full accountability for all such violations.

Furthermore, while the provision in section 8174 of the bill prohibits the Department from contributing funds to the American Heritage Rivers initiative, I will direct the Department, within existing laws and authorities, to continue to support and undertake community-oriented service or environmental projects on rivers I have recognized as part of the initiative.

Finally, the bill provides only about one-quarter of the funding level requested for construction of Forward Operating Locations that would reestablish regional drug interdiction capabilities in Latin America. This amount will not adequately support our vital drug interdiction efforts in the Western Hemisphere.

I have signed this bill because, on balance, it demonstrates our commitment to the military, meets our obligations to the troops, maintains readiness, and funds modernization efforts that will ensure our technological edge into the 21st century.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 4, 1999.

NOTE: H.R. 2561, approved November 4, was assigned Public Law No. 106-79.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Minimum Wage Legislation

November 4, 1999

Dear _____:

I am writing this letter to encourage you to pass a straightforward minimum wage bill that gives working Americans the pay raise they deserve. If we value work and family, we should raise the value of the minimum wage.

In 1996, the Congress and I worked together to raise the minimum wage by 90 cents over 2 years. Since then, the American economy has created nearly 9 million new jobs—with more than 1 million of them in the retail sector where many minimum-wage workers are employed. The unemployment rate has fallen from the already low rate of 5.2 percent to 4.2 percent—the lowest in 29 years. We have enjoyed larger real wage increases for more consecutive years than at

any time in more than two decades, while inflation is the lowest it has been in more than three decades. The minimum wage increase has contributed to the 39 percent decline in the welfare caseload since the last minimum wage increase—bringing the welfare rolls down to their lowest level in three decades. And the minimum wage increase has been a crucial factor in reversing the wage stagnation and declines of the previous decade, contributing to rising wages for even the lowest income groups. Our recent experience clearly demonstrates that what is good for America's working families is good for America's economy.

But as our economy continues to break records, we must do more to ensure that all Americans continue to benefit from it. It is time to build on the steps we have taken to honor the dignity of work. The expansion of the Earned Income Tax Credit in 1993 and the increase in the minimum wage have ensured that no full-time working parent with two children has to raise his or her family in poverty. It is important that we take steps to achieve this goal in the future. That is why I have proposed to raise the minimum wage by \$1 an hour over the next two years—from \$5.15 to \$6.15. This modest increase would simply restore the real value of the minimum wage to what it was in 1982. More than 11 million workers would benefit under this proposal. A full-time, year-round worker at the minimum wage would get a \$2,000 raise—enough for a typical family of four to buy groceries for 7 months or pay rent for 5 months.

All Americans should share in our historic prosperity. This is why Congress should not let politics get in the way of raising the minimum wage. If you send me a clean bill that increases the minimum wage by \$1 over the next two years, I will sign it.

Unfortunately, some in Congress have proposed a more gradual increase in the minimum wage that would cost a full-time, year-round worker roughly \$1,500 over three years compared with my proposal. They have added provisions that would repeal important overtime protections for American workers. And they have been playing politics with the minimum wage bill, using it as a vehicle for costly and unnecessary tax cuts that would

threaten our fiscal discipline. As I have stated repeatedly, before we consider using projected surpluses to provide for a tax cut, we must put forth things first and address the solvency of Social Security and Medicare. If Congress sends me a bill that threatens our fiscal discipline, I will veto it.

If paid-for tax cuts are attached to the minimum wage bill, they should reflect our priorities and address urgent national needs like deteriorating schools and the communities that have been left behind during this time of prosperity. In contrast, the bulk of the provisions attached to the minimum wage bill in the House are directed away from working families. Some of these provisions could even *reduce* the retirement benefits enjoyed by millions of working Americans.

America's workers show up to work every day and get the job done. Congress should do the same this year. I urge Congress to pass a minimum wage bill that does not at the same time add poison pills that bypass the priorities of working families.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to the Speaker on the Selection Procedure for Participants in the Joint House-Senate Conference on the "Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care Improvement Act of 1999"

November 4, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am writing to underscore my deep disappointment with the unusual procedure employed in naming participants to the joint House-Senate conference on H.R. 2723, the Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care Improvement Act of 1999. The decision to appoint members that fail to reflect the overwhelming vote of 275 to 151 on the

Norwood-Dingell bill sends the wrong message to the American people, and the wrong messengers to the conference committee.

The Norwood-Dingell Patients' Bill of Rights legislation is the only patient protections bill in this Congress that has received strong bipartisan support. Yet, out of the 13 Republican members appointed as conferees, only one voted for this legislation, and only one voted in favor of yesterday's successful motion in the House that instructed conferees to insist on including the provisions of the Norwood-Dingell bill.

It is clear that the public longs for us to reach across party lines to address issues of national concern. There are few matters that are more important than enacting a strong Patients Bill of Rights. In this regard, I am asking you to use your authority under the House rules to expand the conference committee to include members who accurately reflect the will of the House.

We need to make certain that the results of this conference will be in the public interest; as currently constituted, this committee is weighted heavily in favor of the special interests that oppose this bill. Over the years, we have worked together on drafting and passing bipartisan health care legislation, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. I hope we can build on that record so that this Congress can respond to the public's need for patients' protections as our nation's health care delivery system undergoes change.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

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

Radio Remarks on Expansion of a Wildlife Refuge To Protect the Salmon Habitat in the Columbia River

November 5, 1999

Today I announced the expansion of a wildlife refuge to protect the prime salmon habitat along the Columbia River. This supports our treaty with Canada to protect Pacific Coast salmon.

My budget proposes increases for salmon restoration, but Congress has provided only a fraction of the resources necessary to do the job. So, again, I call on Congress to provide the necessary resources to support this treaty and to work with me on a budget process that observes our obligations and protects and preserves our environment.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded approximately at 12:15 p.m. at the Hermitage Tomato Cooperative Association in Hermitage, Arkansas. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Actuality Line.

Statement on Funding for the Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill

November 5, 1999

I am pleased that we have reached an agreement with congressional leaders on a budget that will permit America to advance its most critical priorities around the world. This agreement meets our commitments to the Middle East peace process, funds our efforts to safeguard nuclear weapons and expertise in the former Soviet Union, makes an initial investment in debt relief for impoverished countries, including in Africa and Latin America, and allows us to do our part in bringing stability and democracy to southeast Europe. I hope this marks the start of a bipartisan effort to ensure that America has not only the will but the resources to lead.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Disaster Assistance and Relocation Funding for States Struck by Hurricane Floyd

November 5, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

When Hurricane Floyd swept through the Mid-Atlantic region, it left in its wake a wide path of destruction and despair. Since that time, my Administration has been working closely with all of the affected States to ensure that Federal disaster assistance programs are used to the maximum extent possible to support residents as they repair and rebuild their communities and their lives.

An important element in this rebuilding process will be mitigating against a repetition of such widespread destruction. An unprecedented number of the homes destroyed—11,000 in North Carolina alone—were in flood plains and therefore remain vulnerable to future floods. To address this most pressing need, I am asking the Congress to approve the use of \$429 million of the contingent disaster relief funds recently appropriated to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to buy out many of these homes and relocate them to safer, higher ground.

During my visit to eastern North Carolina after Hurricane Floyd, I was profoundly moved by the resolve of the citizens of the region to recover from this incredible devastation. To support the long-term efforts of people in every affected community to reconstruct their homes, businesses, and infrastructure, assistance from the Federal Government must be responsive and prompt. Federal disaster relief programs already have provided more than \$600 million to help individuals and communities recover from the effect of Hurricane Floyd. Among other things, Federal assistance has provided temporary housing and shelter, disaster unemployment benefits, debris removal, funds to repair and reconstruct public infrastructure, and loans to rebuild homes and businesses. My Administration will continue to work with the States and with the Congress to assess remaining needs and provide further assistance.

The recent appropriation of \$2.5 billion for FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund will allow those working on the ground to continue to respond quickly and effectively. I urge the Congress now to provide both the funding that I have requested for the Small Business Administration's disaster loan program, and the additional \$500 million that I have requested, and for which my Administration will provide budgetary offsets, to provide for the unmet needs of farmers and ranchers. Together, these funds will ensure that the Federal Government continues to provide needed disaster assistance in a timely manner.

I know the rebuilding process will not be easy, but as I saw on my trip to North Carolina, the true spirit of America remains evi-

dent, with people from all backgrounds coming together when times are tough. Let us do our part and authorize the necessary funding to support the hard work being done to rebuild all of the States affected by recent disasters.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 30

In the morning, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Providence, RI, to attend the funeral service for Senator John H. Chafee, and in the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

October 31

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Oslo, Norway, arriving the following morning.

November 1

In the morning, the President attended an arrival ceremony and later met with King Harald V of Norway in the King's Office at the Royal Palace.

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel in the Holmenkollen Room II at the Radisson Plaza Hotel.

In the evening, the President attended a memorial dinner honoring Yitzhak Rabin in the Grand Ballroom at the Royal Palace.

The President announced his intention to nominate Michael G. Rossmann and Daniel

Simberloff to be members of the National Science Board.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Patrick D. Cannon and June I. Kailes as members of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

November 2

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin of Russia in the Library Room at City Hall.

The President had separate telephone conversations with Gov. Paul E. Patton of Kentucky; Lt. Gov. Ronnie Musgrove of Mississippi; Mayor-elect Bart Peterson of Indianapolis, IN; Mayor Woodrow Stanley of Flint, MI; Mayor-elect Michael Coleman of Columbus, OH; Mayor-elect John F. Street of Philadelphia, PA; Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia, chairman, Democratic National Committee; and B.J. Thornberry, executive director, Democratic Governors Association.

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

The President announced his intention to nominate Revius Ortique to be U.S. Alternate Representative to the 54th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The President announced his intention to nominate Irwin Belk to be Alternate Delegate for the 54th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

The President announced his intention to nominate Earl Anthony Wayne to be Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to appoint Gail S. Schoettler for rank of Ambassador as head of the U.S. delegation to the World Radio Conference.

November 3

In the afternoon, the President met with Deputy Prime Minister Abdallah Saud and Minister of Defense Prince Sultan of Saudi Arabia in the Oval Office.

In the evening, the President met with former Senator George J. Mitchell in the Residence at the White House.

November 4

In the morning, the President traveled to Newark, NJ.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Hartford, CT, where he toured the El Mercado marketplace.

In the evening, the President traveled to Little Rock, AR.

The President announced his intention to nominate Carol J. Carmody to be a member of the National Transportation Safety Board.

The President announced his intention to appoint Valdis Mezainis as a member of the Enterprise for the Americas Board.

November 5

In the morning, the President traveled to Hermitage, AR, where he toured the Hermitage Tomato Cooperative Association.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Chicago, IL, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

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 November 3

Irwin Belk,
of North Carolina, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the 54th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Carol Moseley-Braun,
of Illinois, to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Samoa.

Revius O. Ortique, Jr.,
of Louisiana, to be an Alternate Representative of the United States of America to the 54th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

Bobby L. Roberts,
of Arkansas, to be a member of the National Commission on Libraries and Information

Science for a term expiring July 19, 2003 (re-appointment).

Michael G. Rossmann,
of Indiana, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation for a term expiring May 10, 2006, vice Eve L. Menger.

Daniel Simberloff,
of Tennessee, to be a member of the National Science Board, National Science Foundation for a term expiring May 10, 2006, vice Sanford D. Greenberg.

Earl Anthony Wayne,
of Maryland, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, class of Minister-Counselor, to be an Assistant Secretary of State (Economic and Business Affairs), vice Alan Philip Larson.

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 October 30

Statement by the Press Secretary on the U.S. District Court of West Virginia's ruling on mining regulations

Text of a letter from Chief of Staff John Podesta to Speaker J. Dennis Hastert on legislation to protect the Social Security surplus

Released October 31

Announcement: Official Delegation Accompanying the President to Norway

Released November 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Statement by the Press Secretary on the Norway-U.S. initiative to provide prosthetic devices and rehabilitation services for mutilated and disabled victims of the war in Sierra Leone

Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Statement by Special Advisor to the White House Counsel James E. Kennedy on the closing on the First Family's house in Chappaqua, NY

Released November 2

Announcement of nomination of U.S. Marshal for the District of Columbia

Released November 3

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released November 4

Advance text of remarks by National Security Adviser Samuel Berger to the Bilderberg Steering Committee, entitled, Strengthening the Bipartisan Center: An International Agenda for America

Released November 5

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President and House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert have agreed to work together to enact legislation on the President's new markets initiative

Statement by Council of Economic Advisers Chairman Martin Baily on the labor market report

Acts Approved by the President

Approved October 31

H.R. 659 / Public Law 106-86
Pennsylvania Battlefields Protection Act of 1999

Approved November 3

H.R. 2367 / Public Law 106-87
Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 1999

Approved November 5

H.J. Res. 75 / Public Law 106-88
Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2000, and for other purposes