

Now—you're going to hear from a young man later who will do this better than me, but one of the greatest lines in "A Raisin in the Sun"—you ought to go back and read it—is, a character says, "All God's children got wings." That's another way of saying, genetically, we're 99.9 percent the same.

Do you believe that? Do you believe that all God's children got wings? Then you have to believe that all God's children can fly.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the gymnasium at Englewood High School. In his remarks, he referred to Illinois State Treasurer Judy Baar Topinka; Samuel Williams, principal, Englewood High School; David Shryock, partner, SB Partners LP; Jack Greenberg, chief executive officer, McDonald's Corp.; civil rights activist Jesse Jackson; National Football League Hall of Fame member Walter Payton, who died of cancer on November 1; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; and Edward M. Liddy, chief executive officer, Allstate Insurance Co. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Senate Ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

November 5, 1999

I am pleased that the Senate has given its consent to ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. In June I traveled to Geneva for the annual meeting of the International Labor Organization (ILO), where the business, labor, and government representatives to the ILO from countries around the world unanimously adopted this historic convention.

With this action, the Senate has declared on behalf of the American people that we simply will not tolerate the worst forms of child labor: child slavery, the sale or trafficking of children, child prostitution or pornography, forced or compulsory child labor, and hazardous work that harms the health, safety, and morals of children. With this action, the United States continues as world leader in the fight to eliminate exploitative and abusive child labor. This also is another important step forward in our continuing efforts to put a human face on the global economy.

I am particularly gratified by the bipartisan unanimity that carried this convention through the Senate from introduction to final approval. For this, I offer my sincere thanks to Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Jesse Helms, Ranking Member Joe Biden, and especially Senator Tom Harkin, who has been America's leading advocate for the world's laboring children. I also want to make note of the special efforts of the U.S. representatives to the ILO: John Sweeney of the AFL-CIO, Thomas Niles of the United States Council for International Business, and Labor Secretary Alexis Herman. They worked as a superb team in negotiating a convention that should be widely ratified throughout the world. Such bipartisan support and the coordinated efforts of labor, business, and government are key to building a new consensus on our approach to international economic policy.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Interview With Maria Elvira Salazar of Telemundo Noticiero in Hartford, Connecticut

November 4, 1999

Enforcement of Gun Control Laws

Ms. Salazar. Before we talk about your visit here to Hartford, the head of the NRA, Charlton Heston, said that the White House and the Justice Department lack the spine to enforce the existing gun control laws. How do you respond to this?

The President. Well, first of all, let me say what the substance of his claim is. They say that we are bringing fewer criminal prosecutions in the Federal courts for violations of the gun laws than were being brought a few years ago. The truth is that prosecutions for violations of the gun laws are increasing in America. But we have a partnership between the Federal prosecutors and the State prosecutors. And more of the minor cases are being brought at the State level now, and the major multistate cases are being brought at the Federal level. So it is simply not true that the gun laws are not being enforced.