

on the bottom line but that, over the long run, will be highly profitable and that immediately provide tremendous benefits to society as a whole.

Third, last week I signed legislation to help accelerate competition in the telecommunication industry, to give consumers more choices and lower prices. I also signed a bill to strengthen and streamline our patent and intellectual property system, to strengthen the incentives for the next Alexander Graham Bell or Steve Jobs, to create the inventions and innovations that will drive the 21st century economy.

No one today can say for sure what our economy will look like in 25 or 50 years or what as yet unimagined technologies will transform our lives. But we do know that it will be truly amazing, and it will happen with breathtaking speed and scope. And we know that our Nation has always prospered when Government has invested in giving people the opportunity to make the most of their vision and their dreams, from financing the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition to the Interstate Highway System and the space program.

The American people have always been a bold and innovative bunch. We are always drawn to uncharted lands over the next horizon. Who will pack our bags and head out to the latest gold rush or tinker in our basements for years to invent a product no one else has ever imagined? That's what we do.

Today, thanks to wise investments made by Government and the private sector over many years, the American people have before them the unexplored continent of cyberspace and the prospect of discovering what is in the black holes in outer space. By continuing these commitments, we can celebrate more days like today.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Marvin Dawkins, former AT&T employee who took advantage of retraining opportunities to begin a new career, who introduced the President; Marc Andresen, cofounder Netscape Communications Corp.; and musician Stevie Wonder.

Statement on United States Military Training on Vieques Island

December 3, 1999

For several weeks, we have been working on how best to reconcile the imperative of providing satisfactory training for our Armed Forces, with the strong feelings of many residents of Vieques and Puerto Rico about the impact of training operations there. I have discussed this with the Governor of Puerto Rico, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and others.

Today the Secretary of Defense has recommended a plan of action which I believe offers the best avenue to addressing both needs. I have accepted that recommendation and am directing the Secretary of Defense to work with the people of Vieques and Puerto Rico so that we can move forward in a cooperative manner.

I understand the longstanding concerns of residents of the island. These concerns cover a wide range of issues, from health and safety to the economy and the environment. They reflect a distrust that, unfortunately, has been building for decades. Those concerns must be addressed, and I believe our plan will do so in a constructive manner.

At the same time, as Commander in Chief, I cannot send our service men and women into harm's way if they have not been adequately trained. The training that our Atlantic Fleet has undertaken on Vieques since 1941 is important. While the Navy and the Marine Corps will develop a satisfactory alternative for the upcoming exercise, it will take several years to develop a comparable long-term replacement.

The plan I am adopting today provides for the end of training on Vieques within 5 years, unless the people of Vieques choose to continue the relationship; restricts training activities during the transition period to those required by the Services; sets forth an ambitious economic development plan for Vieques that would be implemented during this transition; and gives the people of Puerto Rico and the Navy an opportunity to discuss this plan in order for it to be understood fully

before training resumes this spring for this transitional period.

In particular, the following steps will be undertaken:

First, the Navy and the Marine Corps will make alternative arrangements which they deem satisfactory for training of the Eisenhower Battle Group and the WASP Amphibious Ready Group, scheduled for December. While such arrangements can be undertaken for the Eisenhower and WASP groups, they do not constitute a long-term alternative to Vieques. Rather, this period will provide an opportunity for the people of Vieques to discuss this plan with the Navy and the Marine Corps and understand it fully.

Second, we will resume training next spring for a transition period, no longer than 5 years. This will enable the Navy to develop a suitable, long-term alternative. Training on Vieques will cease after this transition period unless the people of Vieques decide it should be continued. The Navy and the Marine Corps will develop a timetable to phase out operations in Vieques as soon as possible during the transition period, including transferring title of land to Puerto Rico beginning with the western quarter of the island.

Third, when training resumes for this transition period, it will be limited to inert ordnance only—no live fire—unless and until the people of Vieques decide differently. Training will be authorized for 90 days a year, what we need to meet our essential training needs.

Finally, when training resumes, we will implement an ambitious program that addresses the concerns that the community has had for so long—and that has been spelled out by the Secretary of Defense.

I am convinced that this plan meets my essential responsibility as Commander in Chief to assure that our military forces are satisfactorily trained and ready, while at the same time addressing the legitimate concerns of the people of Vieques. It provides some breathing space so that the people on the island and the Navy and Marine Corps can proceed in an orderly and mutually respectful fashion.

Statement on Signing the Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000

December 3, 1999

Today I have signed into law H.R. 1555, the "Intelligence Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000." The Act authorizes appropriations for U.S. intelligence and intelligence-related activities during fiscal year 2000. This legislation contains numerous provisions that will help to ensure that the U.S. Intelligence Community retains the capability to counter threats to our Nation's security.

This Act contains a provision, known as the "Foreign Narcotics Kingpin Designation Act," that establishes a global program targeting the activities of significant foreign narcotics traffickers and their organizations. The new Act provides a statutory framework for the President to institute sanctions against foreign drug kingpins when such sanctions are appropriate, with the objective of denying their businesses and agents access to the U.S. financial system and to the benefits of trade and transactions involving U.S. businesses and individuals. Working with other nations, I intend to use the tools in this provision to combat the national security threat posed to the United States by international drug trafficking.

No nation alone can effectively counter these supra-national criminal organizations. The United States must continue to cooperate with, assist, and encourage other nations to join in coordinated efforts against these organizations. Consequently, as kingpin designations are made under this law, we look forward to working with appropriate host government authorities to pursue additional measures against those designated.

I am concerned about several parts of the legislation as well as segments of the accompanying joint explanatory statement. Although not law, classified language in the statement accompanying the bill, entitled "State Department Restrictions on Intelligence Collection Activities," could, if required to be implemented, interfere with my responsibilities under the Constitution to conduct foreign policy and as Commander in Chief. My Administration is committed to