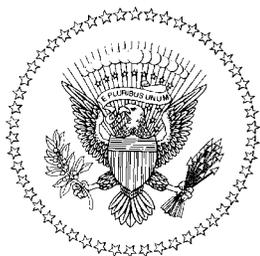


Weekly Compilation of
**Presidential
Documents**



Monday, January 24, 2000
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Editor's Note: The President was in Los Angeles, CA, on January 21, 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

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, January 21, 2000

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on
Action on Title III of the Cuban
Liberty and Democratic Solidarity
(LIBERTAD) Act of 1996**

January 14, 2000

Dear _____:

Pursuant to section 306(c)(2) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (Public Law 104–114), (the “Act”), I hereby determine and report to the Congress that suspension for 6 months beyond February 1, 2000, of the right to bring an action under title III of the Act is necessary to the national interests of the United States and will expedite a transition to democracy in Cuba.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 15.

The President’s Radio Address

January 15, 2000

Good morning. On Monday America will celebrate, through reflection and service, the birth of the 20th century’s great champion for justice and civil rights, Dr. Martin Luther King. Today I want to talk with you about new steps we’re taking to fulfill Dr. King’s dream and redeem America’s promise.

Of course, we’ve come a long way. I’m joined today by a woman named Charlotte Filmore. Mrs. Filmore is 100 years old.

Through the years, she’s seen her share of discrimination. A good while ago, she worked at the White House and back then, even here, she had to use a side door. Well, today Charlotte Filmore came to the White House through the front door, and all the way to the Oval Office. But there is still more to do. So, this morning I want to tell you about what we’re doing to open more doors of opportunity for all Americans.

In his last speech, Dr. King reminded us that the work of dignity and justice is as old as America itself. He said it’s about going back to those great wells of democracy dug deep by our Founding Fathers and the Constitution. To draw from that well, Dr. King challenged us to dig deep within our own hearts to face our flaws, renew our values, live up to our Nation’s creed.

We are doing better. We have the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, and thankfully, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest African-American poverty rate ever recorded, and the lowest Hispanic poverty rate in 25 years. We are coming together as a community. Our social fabric is on the mend.

But still there are people and places throughout America that have been left behind by this economic recovery. Minority unemployment and poverty still is about twice the national average. Still there are too many barriers on the road to opportunity, too many examples of Americans facing discrimination in daily life.

No American in the 21st century should have to face such discrimination when it comes to finding a home, getting a job, going to school, securing a loan. That’s why I’m very proud that my budget for the coming year will include the largest ever investment to enforce our civil rights laws, to help make sure that protections in law are protections in fact. I’m proposing a 20 percent increase for the Civil Rights Division of the Justice

Department. That would almost double the annual budget for the office since I became President 7 years ago.

Under the leadership of Acting Assistant Attorney General Bill Lann Lee, the Civil Rights Division has enforced our civil rights laws justly and fairly. And so, again, on behalf of all Americans, I ask the Senate to confirm Mr. Lee as our Nation's top civil rights enforcer.

Our budget also includes a 14 percent increase for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, so that it continue its work to enforce laws prohibiting employment discrimination. And we're beefing up our other civil rights enforcements effort throughout our National Government.

We must also do more to root out forces of hate and intolerance. We've seen far too many acts of violence targeted at others solely because of who they are, from the dragging death of James Byrd to the brutal killing of Matthew Shepard to the murder of the African-American basketball coach and the Korean-American student in the Midwest to the shooting at the Jewish school in Los Angeles and the murder of the Filipino postal worker. Such hate crimes leave deep scars, not just on the victims but on our larger community, for they take aim at others for who they are. And when they do, they take aim at America. So once again, I ask Congress to stop the delay and pass strong hate crimes legislation.

Taken together, these efforts will move us closer to building one America in the 21st century.

Dr. King taught us the most important civil right is to provide every citizen with the chance to live the American dream. This is the best chance we've had in my lifetime—maybe even in Mrs. Filmore's lifetime—to give every American a shot at that dream.

So as we celebrate Dr. King's life and legacy, let's keep following his footsteps to draw from that deep well of democracy and deepen the meaning of freedom for all Americans.

Thanks for listening.

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

Exchange With Reporters at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington

January 17, 2000

Israel-Syria Peace Talks

Q. Mr. President, are the peace talks still on track?

The President. We're working on it. That's what I've been doing this morning.

Q. Who are you talking to?

The President. Just our team, so far today.

Q. Mr. President, the Syrians say there is an issue that needs to be resolved before they can come; they may not come on Wednesday. Is that right?

The President. I'll probably put out something later today. I'm working on it, trying to make sure—we're trying to figure out what the most effective way to go forward is. The good news is I'm convinced they both still want to do it. They're not as far apart as they might be; they're not as far apart as they have been. So that's the good news.

The difference is right now about how or what the best way to go forward in the—so I'm working on it. We'll try to make a decision by the end of the day, the next couple of days, about what the best way to go forward is, and we'll let you know.

Q. Meaning a decision as to whether there will actually be talks on Wednesday?

The President. Yes. The decision about what the best way is, based on where they both are, to take the next steps.

Move to Chappaqua

Q. Are you going to start doing this in Chappaqua?

The President. If I need to. [*Laughter*] I've done a lot of other stuff. We've got a lot of work to do on that place. But it's a great house, and we're making progress. We did a lot of work the last few days when I was up there.

President's Race Initiative Report

Q. Mr. President, some are curious about how your book on race relations is coming on this Martin Luther King Day. Can you give us an update on that?

The President. You know, I'm not going to put it out until I have lots of time personally to spend on it. I don't want it to be something somebody else did that my name is on. The Middle East peace talks took away a lot of the time that I was going to spend on it, so I'm a little behind. But I'm working on it.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:01 a.m. in the computer lab. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington

January 17, 2000

Thank you very much. Good morning. First of all, I want to take my notes out, because the older I get the worse my memory is. [Laughter] I want to begin by thanking Alex and all the people of DC Cares—the executive director, Susan Linsky, and all the others who are here with DC Cares. I want to thank the Washington CEO of the Boys & Girls Clubs, Pat Shannon. Thank you. And I want to say, Charles Mann, it's good to see you. Wish you had been on the field. [Laughter] Next year. We'll get it next year.

Let me also say how honored I am to be here with your Mayor and your Representative in Congress. The Mayor used to be a member of our administration, actually—a lot of people don't know that. I always think that's why he's such a successful mayor; he got good preparation. [Laughter] And everything he said about Eleanor Holmes Norton is absolutely true. When she asks you for something, there is only one question: Are you going to do it now, or are you going to do it later? [Laughter] Because, in the end, she always gets what she wants. She's been a brilliant Representative.

When Hillary and I moved here to Washington, we wanted to be good citizens of the District of Columbia. Some of you may remember, one of the first things I did after I moved to Washington was to go to Georgia Avenue and walk up and down it, talk to business people there. And ever since then, we've tried to be involved in the life of the city. And it's a source of immense pride to me to see the success that Washington is having,

and to have had the opportunity to work with so many of your local officials.

I see also my good friend Charlene Drew Jarvis back there—welcome. And Sharon Ambrose, who is the councilperson for this ward, I think is here. Thank you very much. Where are you? There you go.

So this is, to me, a source of immense pride to see DC really coming back and doing well. But it won't happen, we cannot realize the full potential of this city without Greater DC Cares, without other volunteers, without people—companies like AT&T doing their part to help everybody become what they ought to be, and to make all these neighborhoods come alive again.

And let me also say a special word of appreciation to the head of our national service program, who has already been mentioned several times, Senator Harris Wofford. It is actually Harris Wofford and another good friend of Martin Luther King, Congressman John Lewis, who had the idea for making the King holiday a day on, not a day off. And AmeriCorps volunteers—when we started—I signed this bill 6 years ago to make the King holiday a national holiday and a day of service. And I think we had 10,000 volunteers that day. Now we have hundreds of thousands of volunteers, all across America, doing things like what we did today, thanks in no small measure to you, sir. And we thank you very much for your leadership.

And now I just want to do one other thing. I want to acknowledge the young people who worked with me today—we were in there staining the bookcases in the computer room—because they made sure I didn't mess up too bad. [Laughter] So, thank you, Dietrich, Marcus, Dedra, Artile, and Shawntesse. Thank you. Raise your hands, all the people who worked with me. Thank you all very much. They're here somewhere. There they are, back there. [Applause]

I just want to say one final thing that I hope will go across America today. You look at all these young people here, with your T-shirts on, doing good things—Dr. King once gave a sermon at the National Cathedral here in Washington in which he said we are all caught up in—and he had a wonderful phrase—he said, “in an inescapable web of mutuality,” which is an elegant way of saying

that I can never be fully what I want to be unless you have a chance to be fully what you want to be. And you can never be fully what you want to be unless I have a chance to be what I want to be; that we are in this together, that we are members of the community of this city, the community of this Nation, and the community of humanity.

And frankly, we all know that in the last 30-plus years since Martin Luther King left this Earth, we have forgotten that too much. And I have done my best to remind the American people of the truth of that at every single opportunity for 7 years now. And it is a source of immense pride and joy to me every time I see people reaching across the lines that divide them to do things that lift us all up. This holiday embodies that. All these children embody that.

In my lifetime, and perhaps in the lifetime of our country, we have never, ever, ever before had at the same time so much economic prosperity and social progress, with the absence of internal crisis or external threat. And that means that we have an enormous obligation, those of us who are grown now, to make the most of this magic moment; to bring to all the people, the neighborhoods, and the children who haven't been a part of this economic prosperity, a chance to live their dreams, too. To bring to bear—yes, you can clap for that. That's all right. *[Applause]* To bring to bear our best efforts to meet the long-term challenges of this country and not to forget that more than a billion people in this old world of ours still live on less than a dollar a day; and that there are people, not only at home but around the world, that the United States ought to be lifting up. And if you believe Martin Luther King was right, every time we give a child in America a chance, every time we give a child in Africa, Latin America, or Asia a chance, all the rest of us are better off, too. Every time you give a little, you always get more back.

Let's remember that as Dr. King's enduring legacy.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:48 a.m. in the game room. In his remarks, he referred to Alex Orfinger, chairman of the board of directors, and Susan Linsky, executive director, Greater DC Cares; former NFL Washington Redskin Charles

Mann; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Washington, DC, Councilmembers Charlene Drew Jarvis, ward 4, and Sharon Ambrose, ward 6; and Boys & Girls Club members Dietrich Williams, Marcus Harrison, Dedra Gamble, Artile Wright, and Shawntesse Jefferson.

Statement on the Election of Ricardo Lagos as President of Chile

January 17, 2000

I congratulate Ricardo Lagos on his victory in Chile's Presidential election on Sunday, January 16. I also congratulate the Chilean people for an election that was a model of civic participation and evidence of their strong commitment to democratic government.

I look forward to working with President-elect Lagos and to deepening the friendship and cooperation that have characterized the excellent relations between our two nations.

Remarks on the National Firearms Enforcement Initiative in Boston, Massachusetts

January 18, 2000

Well, Mayor, I was just thinking that you should hope that Detective Holmes stays in police work and out of politics. *[Laughter]* Didn't she give a good speech? Let's give her another hand. That's great. *[Applause]* I thought it was great.

Mr. Mayor; Senator Kennedy; Representative Joe Moakley; Barney Frank; Mike Capuano; to Commissioner Evans and all the members of the Boston Police Department that are here; representatives of law enforcement who have come to Boston today to be with us—Jerry Flynn of the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, Tom Nee of the National Association of Police Organizations—I thank you all for welcoming us.

I want to say that in addition to the Attorney General, we are joined today by Treasury Under Secretary Jim Johnson; the Director of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division, Brad Buckles; and of course, as the Attorney General mentioned, our United States attorney, Don Stern.

I also want to thank Lynn Jackson for welcoming us to Orchard Gardens Community Center. She was nervous when she got up here to speak. I said, "Go on, you're supposed to start." She said, "I'm not supposed to start until they sit down." So I said, "You go up there and speak. I'll make them sit down." [Laughter] So then when you stood up for Lisa Holmes, she said, "Make them sit down. Make them sit down." I said, "Not on your life." [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, I am profoundly grateful to the people of Boston and the State of Massachusetts for being so good to me and to my family and to our administration. I've been running over in my mind all the wonderful moments I've had here just since 1991 when I first started exploring whether I should run for President, the first time I visited City Year here in Boston, and the day I spent—Commissioner Evans and the mayor took a half a day with the Attorney General and me to explain what you'd done to lower juvenile crime and lower dramatically the fatalities among children in this community—all the other incredible times I have spent in this city and in this State, including the times that Hillary and Chelsea and I have been vacationers here and contributed, I might add, to the tax base of Massachusetts. [Laughter]

But this is a special day for me, because it is an enormous source of pride for me to stand up, after hearing a community leader, a police officer, the mayor, your Representatives in the United States Congress, and our Attorney General talk about what you have done to give real life and real freedom back to this community.

When I ran for President, the biggest issue on most people's minds was the economy. Here I am in Boston, just south of New Hampshire—8 years ago, I would have been up there today—but they were all concerned about the banks closing and people having their mortgages foreclosed and all these other problems. But I knew that the challenges facing America were not simply economic and that we had to have a policy to try to move people from welfare to work. We had to have a policy to try to open up educational opportunities to all of our young

people, and we had to have a policy to lower the crime rate.

In Washington, the primary debate then was whether we needed more prevention or tougher punishment and whether the Federal Government ought to just give speeches about it, because it was primarily a local problem, or give money and walk away. Well, I felt that on both counts, we should do both.

The first elected job I ever had was attorney general of my State. Before that, when I was a young lawyer, and even when I was a law student, I used to teach criminal law, criminal procedure, and constitutional law to law enforcement officials. I have always been interested in this, and I have always been convinced that we had to have the proper balance of punishment and prevention and that the police could never do it alone, not without the community, not without the people in the street and the neighborhoods, not without the parents and the kids, people who want the blessings of a normal, safe life in every neighborhood in this country.

And so we've been working to try to give you the tools to do both, to prevent more crime, to save more kids, to effectively punish those who violate the law. In 1993 we passed the Brady bill. Congress passed it. It had previously passed, but it had been vetoed by the previous President. I signed it and said I wanted to sign it, and I believed in it. And I heard all that talk about how terrible it was going to be and what an awful burden it is. And now we have almost half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers who have not been able to get handguns because of the Brady bill, and not a single hunter in America who's been inconvenienced. It was the right thing to do. There are more citizens alive; there are more police officers alive today because the Brady law is in effect.

In 1994 the crime bill provided funds for 100,000 police officers over a 6-year period. Thanks to the leadership of the Attorney General and those working with her, we distributed those funds and got those folks hired, under budget and ahead of schedule. We passed the assault weapons ban, cracked down on illegal gun dealing to young people, kept an eye out also for the most innovative local crimefighting strategies like Operation Cease Fire here in Boston.

Now, the things you have done, and the things we've tried to help you do, have transformed life in America. As the Attorney General said, the crime rate's dropped now for 7 years in a row; the overall crime rate's at its lowest level in 25 years; the murder rate is the lowest level nationwide in 31 years; gun crime down 35 percent; juveniles committing homicides with guns down 57 percent; gun prosecutions up at all levels of government, local, State, and Federal. Federal firearms prosecutions are higher today than they were in 1992, but they're up 25 percent just since 1998 to 1999, those convicted of Federal gun crimes serving longer sentences.

We are trying to send a message, an unambiguous message, to people who violate the law: If you commit crimes with guns or violate gun laws, you will pay a heavy price. No city has sent that message more clearly than Boston. But your message is more than that. You have made us know that this is not just a numbers game. You have shown that to reduce crime most, and therefore to increase freedom most, among your families, your children, and your neighborhoods, prosecutions must be targeted where they'll have the greatest impact—in Boston's case, on violent repeat offenders and on gun traffickers who supply them.

You have also shown that there needs to be a team effort, partnerships with citizens and leaders in every community, focused on saving kids and preventing crime before it occurs. And so after all these years of effort and the leadership of your great mayor and others, you have made Boston one of the safest cities in America. It is essential to making America what we want it to be in the 21st century.

You know, yesterday we celebrated the annual holiday honoring Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, and I was honored to sign the bill that made it not only a national holiday but a national day of service. We call it a day on, not a day off. Yesterday, in keeping with my tradition, I went to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Washington, DC, with a group of citizens called Greater DC Cares and some young AmeriCorps volunteers, and we worked on rehabbing a facility. But in preparation for that day, I thought about all the other King holidays we've had since I've

been President and an astonishing opportunity I had back in 1993 to speak in the Mason Temple Church of God and Christ in Memphis, Tennessee. That's where Dr. King spoke the night before he was killed.

We had all the leaders of that great church in America there at a time when America was a much more unsafe place. And I just started thinking off the top of my head, with the crowd, I said, "You know, if Dr. King could come back to Earth today, what would he say?" He'd say we've done a pretty good job of integrating our society, and we have more African-Americans and other minorities moving into the middle class, taking jobs in public service, being fairly compensated for what they do. But he would be sick by the crime and violence that is ravaging all the poor neighborhoods of this country. And he would say, "I want you to know I did not live and die so that children could destroy children, so that children could destroy themselves with drugs and become millionaires destroying the lives of other children."

And a lot of you are nodding your heads about that. This is a different country today because of you. Yes, those things still happen, but now America knows we can make it better. All you have to do is tell somebody the story of Boston and all cynicism disappears, all skepticism disappears. Everybody knows we can make it better. We don't have to give up on our kids. We don't have to give up on our neighborhoods. We don't have to tolerate a level of fear and violence and crime and insecurity that no civilized society will tolerate.

Now, that is the good news, and we can all celebrate that good news. But if I were to ask you this question—and I won't make you do it—but if I were to ask you this question, if I were to say to you, "Now, everybody that now thinks that Boston and Massachusetts and America are safe enough, please raise your hand," nobody would raise their hand, right? Even though we're at a 31-year low in the murder rate, even though the juvenile murder rate with guns has gone way down, even though the crime rate's at a 25-year low, nobody believes that America is as safe as it ought to be. No one who knows

anything believes that all of our kids are as safe in their childhood as they ought to be.

And so I say to you, what are we going to do with this moment of promise? We don't have any excuses anymore. You know, maybe 7 years ago people could throw up their hands and say, "Oh, we can't make it better. Just support the police, lock them up longer, and hope someday it'll get better." Nobody really knew.

Now we know. We don't have any excuses now. We know how to drive the crime rate down, down, down. And we know how to keep kids out of trouble in the first place. We know how to save children. I think it's time we had the real goal we ought to have as a nation. We ought to say, "Okay, we got the crime rate down. Here's our real goal: We want America to be the safest big country in the entire world."

We can do that, not with a silver bullet but by continuing to build on what has worked. And in my new budget and in the State of the Union Address, I'm going to ask the Congress and the country to continue to move forward in the direction that has worked. Today I want to announce to you five specific initiatives that I believe will help us a lot.

First, in my new budget I will call for hiring 500 new ATF agents and inspectors, the largest increase in ATF firearms enforcement ever. These new agents and inspectors will help us to crack down on violent gun criminals, illegal gun traffickers, and bad-apple dealers, a small percentage of the dealers who supply a very large percentage of the guns that go to criminals and to kids.

Second, we will add, as the Attorney General said, 1,000 new Federal, State, and local prosecutors to help take dangerous gun criminals out of our communities and put them where they belong, behind bars.

Third, to strengthen the hand of the prosecutors, we will invest more in the ATF's national gun tracing center and supply local law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to utilize that center, from computers to training. We want to make it possible, and we can make it possible, to trace the origin of every single gun used in every single crime in the United States.

Fourth, we will create a groundbreaking national ballistics network that eventually will enable us to trace almost any bullet left at a crime scene anywhere in America to the gun of the criminal who fired it.

Fifth, the budget provides local communities with grants to run the same kind of anti-gun-violence media campaigns that have been such an important part of the successful strategy used to reduce gun crime here in Boston or in Richmond or in other cities which have tried it.

All together, these efforts represent the largest national gun enforcement initiative in the history of the United States. They will help communities across America to push violent crime rates down by cracking down harder on gun criminals and, again, by interrupting the flow to prevent more crimes.

But I ask Congress to support them and also ask Congress to start this new century by abandoning another stale debate. For in addition to the old debate about whether we should focus on punishment or prevention and whether the Federal Government should make speeches or give money, there's a debate that unfortunately hasn't died out in Washington, and that's about whether it's better to strengthen the enforcement of the existing gun laws or to have strengthened gun laws.

The truth is, just like the other questions, the real answer is, we should do both. That's what we've done with the Brady bill. That's what we have done with the assault weapons ban. And we should do more. The drop in the crime rate has been due both to changing laws and to better enforcement and better prevention.

Last year we passed some sensible measures in the United States Senate, thanks to the help of Senator Kennedy and with the Vice President casting a tie-breaking vote. As he says, whenever he has to vote, we win. [Laughter] So by one vote, we were able to defeat the high-pressure tactics of the NRA to pass an important advance in doing background checks at gun shows and urban flea markets, having child safety locks for all new handguns, a ban on importing large capacity ammunition clips. But we couldn't pass it in the House of Representatives, even after the travesty of Columbine High School. I believe

passing commonsense gun safety legislation should be the very first action of this Congress.

I will say again, to all the people who listen to these arguments, there has been no discernible increase in the burden on any law-abiding sportsperson in this entire country with the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, but we've saved a lot of lives of kids, police officers, and citizens. And closing the gun show loophole, which is something I know something about because they're very popular in my part of the country, or the urban flea market loophole or banning the import of these large-capacity ammunition clips, which people can't manufacture and sell here at home anyway, or requiring these child safety locks for kids, is an important advance, and it ought to be done. It'll have the same impact that the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban did. It won't cause anybody who is law-abiding any hassle, but it'll save lives. It's important that we do this, too.

I also want to say I think it's important that the gun industry take more responsibility in changing the way it designs, markets, and distributes firearms. [*Applause*] And let me say to all of you who care about this—there was some spontaneous applause there—you should know this. There are responsible citizens in the gun industry who actually want to work with us to find new ways to make sure the guns they sell don't wind up in the wrong hands and that kids aren't killed accidentally with them. Part of the answer may be in new technologies that could reduce accidents.

I want all of you to listen to this. The law enforcement officers probably won't be surprised by this, but this is important that you know this. The accidental gun death rate of children under 15 in the United States is 9 times higher than that in the other 25 biggest industrial countries combined—combined. We don't have to put up with that either. Technologies now exist that could lead to guns that can only be fired by the adults who own them. My budget helps the gun industry accelerate the development of this technology. So we need to support that as well.

In his last campaign in 1968, Robert Kennedy said the fight against crime, and I quote, "is a fight to preserve that quality of commu-

nity which is at the root of our greatness." We saw something about the root of America's greatness today here in Orchard Gardens: a community leader proud of her center; a police officer who grew up just a stone's throw from here; elected leaders who know the people who live in this area whom they represent; a mayor proud of the progress that people working together can do; all these people in uniform justifiably proud of what they have achieved. That's what this is all about, all of us working together and helping each other.

I say again, for all the progress we have made, we should never rest, not any of us, as long as there's one more child whose life needs to be saved, as long as there's one more kid that can be turned away from drugs and guns and violence and kept out of prison in the first place, as long as there's one more street to make safe. We shouldn't quit until your country, your State, and your community are the safest places in the world.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:20 p.m. in the Orchard Gardens Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston; Lisa Holmes, detective, and Paul F. Evans, commissioner, Boston Police Department; Gerald Flynn, alternate national vice president, International Brotherhood of Police Officers; Thomas J. Nee, executive vice president, National Association of Police Organizations; and Lynn Jackson, director, Orchard Gardens Community Center. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Francine Kiefer and Skip Thurman of the Christian Science Monitor in Boston

January 18, 2000

Elian Gonzalez

Q. Mr. President, I know your time is valuable. Let me start my recorder here. The first thing I wanted to ask you, there have only been a couple of times in this century that Congress has come together, got their heads together enough, both sides of the Congress, to come together and pass legislation to give somebody citizenship. It happened with Winston Churchill, a few other people. I

wanted to know if Congress does—it looks like the first thing they’re going to do when they come back into town is work on the Elian Gonzalez case. If they did pass a private bill in both Houses and they feel like, politically, they’ve got enough backing to do that, what would you do with that bill if it got to your desk?

The President. I don’t know. I haven’t thought about it. I think it would be—this is not Winston Churchill, for one thing. You know, I don’t think that Congress should put it—unless they know more about the facts than I do, I don’t think they should put themselves in the position of making a decision that runs contrary to what the people who have had to do all the investigation have done.

I think that, obviously, if they believe the INS made a mistake, their decision is subject to challenge in Federal court. And the Congress—even Members of Congress can petition to be heard there. But I think that we’re setting a—I think that it would irrevocably lead people to the conclusion that this was much more about politics than it was whether that little boy ought to be taken away from his father.

They’re basically taking a position that if you live in Cuba, if we can take you away from your father, you’re better off—your parents. And I think that’s—the INS reached a different decision, having exhaustively looked at what was best for that child.

As you all know, I have no sympathy for the Castro regime. I signed the present bill. I think it is tragic how they have blown every conceivable opportunity to get closer to the United States. Just as we were making progress, they murdered those pilots. So I’m not sympathetic there. But I think that we need to think long and hard whether we’re going to take the position that any person who comes to our shores, who is a minor, any minor child who loses his or her parents should never be sent home to another parent, even if that parent is capable of doing a very good job, if we don’t like the Government of the country where the people lived.

And again, I say I am not—I have no brief for the Castro government or for many of their policies. I think the way he has attempted to politicize this is also terrible. It’s

not just the Cuban-Americans that have attempted to politicize it. He has responded by attempting to politicize it. So this poor little boy is 6 years old. He has scars from his mother’s death of which he can only be dimly aware, and making a judgment about what is in his best interest and what is most likely to give him a stable, healthy, whole childhood and allow him to grow into an adult as a solid person, I’m sure, may not be free of difficulty. And I just think that the decision ought to be made, insofar as possible, independent of countervailing political pressures.

State of the Union Address

Q. Mr. President, the State of the Union is right around the corner, so I guess is the State of the Union part of the interview. In the previews that you all have made available of what’s coming up, it seems like most of it is beefing up programs that you already have, like today’s announcement, and returning to—

The President. It’s quite a beef up. This is the biggest thing ever done—yes—

Q. Quite a beef up—which is—or trying to get back to unfinished business. And I was wondering whether you were planning on trying to go for some new breakthrough issue this year, or whether that’s not really possible in a last year.

The President. Oh, I think that when you see everything we recommend in the aggregate, you might think that in terms of specifics, it’s the most ambitious set of proposals since my first year.

Last year was a very ambitious speech, but in terms of what I asked the Congress to do, it required some willingness on their part to meet with me and work through a joint position on Social Security, for example, or joint position on Medicare. I still think we may get a joint position on Medicare, and we may get part way there on Social Security. I’m still going to try to persuade them to take all the interest savings that we get from not spending the Social Security surplus and putting that in the Trust Fund; that will take Social Security out to 2050, beyond the life of the baby boom generation.

So I'm still not sure we won't make that, but if you just look at the specific policy proposals I will make, not just in the unfinished business area but in the new area—and the unfinished business is important. I mean, you've got the Patients' Bill of Rights, closing the gun show loophole, and banning the import of large ammunition clips. You've got the minimum wage. You've got the hate crimes legislation, the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," the prescription drug for Medicare. So we've got a huge—even though we got a great deal done at the very end of the last Congress, there's a big unfinished business list. And then, as you know, I've been rolling out a lot of these new proposals.

And actually, there will be a couple of things that will be quite new that I'm not prepared to release yet. But I will have a couple of new proposals. But I think that the most important thing to me is to keep the country moving in this direction and aggressively embracing change, the right kind of change. That, I think, is critical to keep the recovery going, to keep bringing more people into the process of prosperity, and to keep bringing the country together. I think that's very important.

So a lot of what I will recommend that is new is certainly consistent with what I've been doing for 7 years. I came to office with a very clear idea of where I thought America was off base, what I thought we ought to do, what kind of governing strategy I would have. And I believe that it's working. And I think people—some people will say, "Well, he does things in increments." But if you walk down the road 7 years and you look back—I mean, if I told you 7 years ago, after 12 years of quadrupling the national debt, I'll give you in year 6 and 7 the first back-to-back balanced budget surpluses in 42 years, from a \$300 billion debt, you'd say that's not an incremental change; that's a big change. But you do those things in small steps.

If you look at the millions of people—we've cut the welfare rolls about in half—it happened in incremental steps. But it's a huge thing in the aggregate. And all the economic changes—we've got the lowest African-American, Hispanic unemployment rate

ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, lowest poverty rate in 20 years, lowest single parent household poverty rate in 46 years. So you take it in steps, but if you keep walking in the same direction, all of a sudden your steps constitute a giant leap forward.

Federal Budget

Q. In that larger mosaic, how do you—of your record and your legacy in what you've done incrementally—down the road, how important will it be if, 15 years from now, we haven't made significant advances on the debt? I mean, already your budget soon will break the '97 Balanced Budget Act. And certainly the surpluses are far greater than was predicted at that time. But how will history judge this generation of leadership if significant—

The President. I think we should pay the debt off. And I think we should do it in 15 years. And the proposals that I will make are consistent with that, based on our latest numbers.

Now, I have two things to say about the '97 budget caps. They were very severe, and they were thoroughly shredded by the Republican majority last year by turning everything into an emergency. I mean, the census was an emergency; Head Start was an emergency; continuing defense expenditures were emergencies. So the caps are not disappearing this year; the caps were shredded last year.

So the real question is—the question I asked our people to look at, and we spent lots of time on it the end of last year—is whether we could present to the Congress a budget that was not full of gimmicks, that reflected what the Congress spent last year, inflation in areas where with—had that—for example, in the defense area where we know they intended—and still could we do that based on what we now believe the figures are and what our costs are in health care programs and other things and still get this country out of debt in 15 years and still not spend the Social Security surplus.

And the answer, we believe, is yes, that you can avoid spending the Social Security surplus, continue to get the country out of

debt in 15 years, and have a spending program for the next 5 years that reflects the decisions made by the Congress in the last year, without all those gimmicks. And you could still have a modest tax cut, nothing anywhere near the high end of what people had talked about in the campaign and what the Congress tried to do last year, but you could still have a modest one.

So I think this is an honest budget that is fiscally responsible and still gets us out of debt. And I believe that we ought to embrace these big challenges, and I think that our children will judge us very well if we do and somewhat harshly if we don't. Because in my lifetime—you've heard me say this over and over again, but I'm not young any more. I'm 53 years old. In my lifetime we've never had this combination of economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, with the absence of internal crisis or external threat. Not that we have no problems at home or no threats abroad, but none of it is sufficient to derail us from trying to imagine the future and then go after it.

And it seems the one—that one of the elements of that future ought to be a commitment to take America out of debt. Another element of the future ought to be a commitment from going to—what I said today—trying to make our country the safest big country in the world. Another element of that future ought to be trying to prove that we can grow the economy and dramatically reduce the global warming by maximizing technology. We ought to be able to prove that we can equalize the economic opportunity, that we can—without holding anybody back, that we ought to be able to bring economic opportunity to these poor people in poor places that haven't had it.

And I think in all those areas, in the education area, in the health care area, I think we will be judged by whether we made the most of what is truly a magic moment. The last time we had this sustained rate of economic growth with low inflation was in the early sixties, about 40 years ago. And if you look at the indicators now, compared to then in the aggregate, I think you would say our economy is stronger today, but there were a couple of years there where unemployment

averaged under 4 percent and without much inflation.

And it all came apart, first trying to come to grips with the civil rights crisis at home and then trying to pay for the war on poverty and the war for equal opportunity and civil rights and the war in Vietnam abroad. So that, basically, we had a moment there that we lost, not only because we became divided as a people politically but because our system simply could not accommodate building the America of our dreams.

Q. So what do you see as a threat to that? I mean, if the Vietnam period and all of that was a threat, what's the threat to that now?

The President. I don't think there is one. That's why I think we have no excuse not to really—this should be a truly historic moment in America. I can't think of any time in our history when we've had this sort of opportunity. You might argue that it was similar, that the times which produced Theodore Roosevelt's administration, and then Woodrow Wilson's, were similar, where we were an emerging global power, we were basically at peace, where the world was becoming more integrated.

You go back and read McKinley's speeches around the turn of the century—he was the first President of the last century—he said a lot of this. It's quite interesting. And so you might argue that that was a time like this. But I think that—and I think it is a time in our history that most closely parallels this.

If you go back to the early 19th century, you can find historical parallels in the exploration of Lewis and Clark and the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory. But the world was so different then, it's hard to do.

So I just don't think we ever have had a time like this. It's not to say we have no foreign crises or security threats. We do. But they can all be managed. And the cost of managing them now is not inconsistent with what our obligations are in science and technology, in education, in economic opportunity, across the range of other areas.

President's Agenda on Race

Q. Mr. President, you spoke a while ago about how you wanted to keep pushing for change. And I was thinking what's happened to minorities under your administration, that

they have seen a pretty drastic improvement in their standard of living because of the strong economy. But one could also say that attitudes toward race maybe haven't changed that much. And I was wondering whether there was something that you thought you could still do about attitudes towards race in your last year.

The President. Well, I think they have—first of all, I dispute the premise. I think they have changed. I think that we continue to see evidence that it's still a real problem. I mean, the unfortunate comments that the Atlanta baseball player made, that's really troubling. On the other hand, the fact that Hank Aaron and Andy Young met with him is encouraging. I mean, you know, 30 years ago that wouldn't have happened.

I think—last night I watched—I was working on the State of the Union last night, and I had basketball on, on TV, muted. And I was watching the Minnesota Timberwolves play the Indiana Pacers. And they beat them on a buzzer-beater shot. And then they interviewed Kevin Garnett, who is a very young man. I think he's the highest paid player in basketball, but he's very young, didn't finish college. And they asked him what Dr. King meant to him, and how his life had changed, and you could just see—of course, 30 years ago no young African-American would be making that kind of money and would have the kind of slant he had.

So I think things are changing. But I think what I have to do—I think there are three things generally I should be doing.

Number one, I think we have to continue to try to close the differential in education and economic advancement. For example, the African-American high school graduation rate right now is about equal to the white, non-Hispanic high school rate, which is quite extraordinary. But the college-going rate is different. And the Hispanic dropout rate is still quite a bit higher, largely because of the immigrants, first—immigrants. So I think that this economic empowerment agenda I have, and the education agenda, the Hispanic education initiative, all those things, closing those gaps, that's important.

Number two, I think we need to continue to have a vigorous enforcement of the law

and highlighting those things we do not agree with.

And number three, I think we have to continue the activities of the President's Office on One America. I think we need to continue to appoint more people from different backgrounds. We need to continue to have more meetings. We need to continue to highlight the problems. And I need to continue to speak out and work on this in America.

I said three, but I like to say the fourth thing is I think that when our country continues its mission to try to end racial and ethnic and tribal and religious conflicts around the world, I think that has a reverberating effect here at home. I can give you just one, very concrete example.

Chelsea and I went to Kosovo together, and we went to the military camp. And you have this highly racial and ethnically diverse American military, very conscious of what they were doing in Kosovo and trying to end ethnic cleansing. And also very aware that insofar as they work together and live together and create a genuine community where everybody was treated equally, the power of their example could have as big an impact on the people of Kosovo as the force of their arms.

So I don't think this—this is the sort of work that may never be done, since in all of human history we haven't succeeded in rooting out people's fear or suspicion of those who are different. And there always will be those radicals which seek to advance themselves by demonizing groups of others. But I think we're doing better there. I think we're doing—and I think there is a lot more we can do.

Cyberspace War and Cyberterrorism

Q. The Chinese Army's daily newspaper has signaled its willingness to aggressively use the Internet as a venue for warfare, to attack our military websites and our military—attack us through on-line methods. You in your critical infrastructure report recently sort of achieved parity with that and—with your ROTC Corps idea and that sort of thing. But I'm wondering what precedents that sets. Even what we did in the conflict with Serbia, the precedents that that sets is sort of like fighting each other, attacking each other's

satellites. Are you concerned about the precedent that using on-line warfare in any form will have for future generations, since we are the most vulnerable set on the planet from E-commerce to a lot of our Government installations?

The President. Because we're more open, you mean?

Q. Yes sir, because we're more open.

The President. And more Internet—

Q. So we bring down—in a hypothetical conflict, we bring down the PLA's air defense system, and they just take out our 911 systems and all that—turn out all the lights at every 7-Eleven in the country.

The President. Well, I think, first of all, it is unrealistic to think that such systems would not be the targets of our adversaries. I think they're far more likely to be the targets of terrorists, organized criminals, narcotraffickers, than other countries.

I believe that the answer is that we have got to be as strong as we possibly can be in the whole area of cyberspace safety. We've got to be as resistant to cyberterrorism and assault as we possibly can.

And interestingly enough, this is something we get to practice on every day a lot, because every day there are always people trying to break into our computers, break into the Defense Department computers, break into various security computers. And so we get to work at it every day. And we've given a lot of thought to how you protect power systems, how you protect telephone systems, how you protect financial records.

And so all I can say is that the question you asked confirms what I said at the National Academy of Sciences, I guess over a year ago. I think that's when I spoke there. We have got to be prepared to deal with the explosion of technology in ways that could threaten our security, not only on data systems themselves, another thing you're going to see—everything involving technology is getting smaller, the miniaturization of everybody. Everybody's got their little notepads now.

Q. I just got the Palm Pilot.

Q. He's way ahead.

The President. You ought to see old Kris's Palm Pilot. It's got everything from his great grandfather's birthplace—I just saw the new-

est AT&T and Nokia telephone that fits right inside the palm of the hand. Now, that same miniaturization process is bound to go on with weapons. So you're not only going to have the attempt that you mentioned to invade, to invade telecommunication systems and computer systems, but you're also going to have a miniaturization system that will affect chemical and biological weapons and other sophisticated traditional weapons, which will make them harder to detect, easier to use, easier to comport. You may have composite materials that don't show up on airport scanners. All these things are going to happen.

That's why we're going to make cars out of different materials, make weapons out of different materials. And in the whole history of combat among nation-states and before that, feudal groups or tribal groups, the normal thing that happens is a weapons system will be developed, and it will enjoy a period of success, and then a defense will be developed to it, and then there will be equilibrium until a new weapons system is developed that will give some dominance, and then you'll have some equilibrium. What we're trying to do with this massive investment we're making against bioterrorism, chemical terrorism, nuclear terrorism, cyberterrorism, is to collapse the timespan between offense and defense.

One of the things, for example, that we really hope that will come out of the human genome is that we'll be able to develop software programs that will immediately adjust the antidote for certain viruses. If there's a biological warfare attack and you've got a mad scientist somewhere who changes the—I'm just making this up—but who changes the anthrax virus, for example, in some way it's never before been changed, and so then this person—and then they spread it over 400 people in some town, and they begin to come around—what we're attempting to do with the human genome project, what I think one of the corollary benefits will be is that you'll have software packages developed so that you will be able to immediately analyze that, and someone will tell you exactly how you would have to modify the antidote to anthrax to meet the new strain that is resistant to all known antidotes.

So this whole struggle as things change faster and faster and faster, and you have the miniaturization of weapons systems to parallel with the miniaturization of other communication systems, will be to keep closing the gap between offense and defense, until there is close to no difference as possible.

That is the struggle for security in the 21st century. And I have tried to put America on that path. Without frightening the American people, without raising alarm bells, I've tried to make sure that when I left office we would have in place a properly funded, properly staffed system to prepare for the security threats of the 21st century. All the press goes to the high-dollar hardware systems—should we have a strategic defense initiative, a missile defense.

Q. Mr. President, we're running out of time here, so do you mind if we move on to some other topic?

The President. This is a big issue. All I'm saying is—I'm not—missile defense is important if we can do it. And missile threat is important. But you should know that I consider both the cyber threats and the miniaturization of these other threats very significant. But I do believe when I leave office we'll have for my successor and for our country a system that will enable us to deal with it.

President's Spiritual Growth

Q. Since you are talking to the Christian Science Monitor, we are interested in your spiritual journey which you've mentioned a couple times. And you've talked about how amazed you've been by the power of forgiveness, especially in the last 18 months. And I was wondering if you could share with us what your own spiritual growth has been. Have you found any Bible passages particularly dear? Have you found any concepts that you've held on to that have helped promote your own spiritual growth? Could you just describe what's been happening with your own growth in the last 18 months?

The President. Well, this is a subject I think people in public life should address with some amount of humility and reluctance, not because people shouldn't be willing to affirm their faith but because we should remember the story that Christ told,

in effect, bragging about the people that prayed in their closets instead of on the street corner. So I say that with all—but having said that, I think the thing that has struck me is that in this journey I have made to try to—that really has been a lifetime journey for me, and it's certainly something that's deepened since I've been President, and something that I had to really focus on the last 2 years, I think the thing that I have really had to work on is trying to gain some spiritual anchor that will enable me to give up resentments and disappointment and anger and to understand that in seeking forgiveness I had to learn to forgive.

It's easy to ask for forgiveness. A lot of people think it's hard, but I think it's—when you plainly need it, it's easy enough to ask for. But we're taught over and over again that we can't get it unless we give it. And I think what is—you know, there's the wonderful Scripture where people are admonished to forgive those not just in the same measure that they're forgiven but 70 times 7.

I think that what I have gained more than anything else is a certain humility in recognizing how important forgiveness is, but how it doesn't count, and it can't count unless you can give it as well as ask for it. And that basically—I used to see life as a struggle for always learning more things, cramming more things in my head, anywhere I could do more things, you know. Now I see the search for wisdom and strength is also a process of letting go. A lot of things you have to let go of.

And I've been helped a lot by a lot of these ministers that have met with me and the Scriptures they've given me to read; by a lot of Christians and even sects of Christians have written me around the country with tracts on forgiveness, how you merit it in what you do and how you have to give it in turn; and also a number of people with whom I have worked as President.

I learned a lot—I've had on more than one occasion the opportunity to talk to Mr. Mandela about how he came to forgive those who were his oppressors, you know, and how he felt about it, and how he—what kind of forgiveness he ever sought for himself. I've really tried to deal with this in a very serious way, and I think I've learned quite a lot about

myself in the process. And it's an ongoing effort. But I have to remember every day that human nature is so prone to find self-respect in some element of one's character that you think is superior to someone else, and a lot of this is a matter of letting go. You just have to learn to let that go, just get up every day, try to do the best you can, be the best person you can be, and continue that individual journey of growth.

And I work on it—hard. And it's been a very humbling experience, but I think very much worthwhile for me, personally.

Chelsea Clinton

Q. Mr. Lockhart is giving me the one-more-question signal, so I thought what I might do is use an old Wolf Blitzer trick which is—

The President. Which is what—ask three questions?

Q. Ask a question with the second question. [*Laughter*] Well, briefly, you mentioned Chelsea just a moment ago. And as you know, the White House can be a pretty tough place on first kids. But the thing you always hear everybody talk about is the poise and the grace that she has now as a young woman. I'm wondering basically what you attribute that to, and how you feel the press has been on her—if they've kind of been giving her a fair shake as the kind of parameters were laid out from the very beginning?

And secondly, not at all related to that, is you were heavily criticized for the FALN commutations, and there's a lot of irony in that in that you're the least pardoning President in the modern history. You've issued fewer pardons than any President in the modern era. I'm wondering why you haven't availed yourself of that Presidential power more, since aside from the FALN thing, there's typically very little fallout for that, using that power.

The President. Well, let me say first, I think—let me answer the first question first. Say exactly what you asked me about Chelsea again.

Q. The thing you hear everybody talking—

The President. Oh, how the press treated her.

Q. How the press treated her, but how she, under the hothouse environment that the White House can be with all the looking in—

The President. I feel, first of all, very grateful that even though I don't agree with everything—first of all, I think it's impossible to generalize about “the press,” and it will become harder and harder to refer to something called “the press.” Where is the press in the publications in the merger of America Online and Time Warner, right? So I'm always reluctant—I sort of knew what that was, I thought, when I got elected. I'm not sure I know what that is anymore.

But I think that, by and large, all elements of the press, with some very few exceptions, have been willing to let my daughter have her life and try to grow up and deal with all the challenges that entails and the extra burdens of her parents being in public life and all the controversies and ups and downs we've exhibited, without trying to shine the glare on her. And I am profoundly grateful for that, because I think every young person needs the chance to find his or her own way to maturity. And it's very difficult when your parents are as publicly exposed and prominent in daily life as her parents are.

And it's made more difficult if you are prematurely turned into a public figure. I think to some extent she is one anyway, whether she's in the press or not. But I think basically the press has been sensitive to that. And I am profoundly grateful for that.

And I hope that the life that her parents have lived in public life has been—has offered more good than bad for her, as a child growing up. And she's a young woman now, and I hope that, on balance, it's been a positive thing. We love her very much, and we hope that it's—and believe that on balance it's been good.

Now—

Presidential Pardons

Q. On the related question of the pardons—[*laughter*].

The President. Let me say about—

Press Secretary Joe Lockhart. She's going to get a pardon. [*Laughter*]

The President. I want to say something here that nobody has ever given me a chance

to say in public before. This is important to me. And I've been working on this hard. I did not know until—ironically, until the controversy over the FALN thing that I had, apparently, both commuted fewer sentences and issued fewer pardons than my predecessors. I did not know that, but you should know what my generic attitude is.

Generically, I believe a President should rarely commute sentences and should have good reasons for doing so if he does, knowing that that will always be somewhat controversial—that is, if you attenuate a jury or a judge's sentence. That's what I did in the FALN case. I did it after Chuck Ruff, my lawyer, did an extensive survey. I thought it might be controversial. I regret it became as controversial as it was. I still think, based on the facts of those cases, I did the right thing. I still believe strongly that I did the right thing.

And I can tell you categorically there was no politics in it, that Chuck Ruff handled this, and everything he says about it is true. I think everyone knows him as being an extremely truthful person. He handled it entirely, and only he handled it. And then he dealt with me on it.

Now should we do some more commutations? Perhaps we should. But I think I would probably always be on the low side of that. On the other hand, I tend to have a much more generous attitude on pardons, particularly because under the Federal system—I think people ought to get their voting rights back; I don't think they ought to be discriminated about in getting jobs or keeping jobs or getting contracts if they have discharged their sentence and they've been out in law-abiding society.

Now over time, before I ever got there, there developed a whole apparatus in the Justice Department which is its own independent bureaucracy for evaluating these things. And the tradition is that the President doesn't rule on them, one way or the other, until you get all these recommendations sent to you. And I think what I believe is that—although this operation has a life of its own, I've asked—I've tried to review it now because my instinct is that we should be granting more pardons. I don't mean we should just be cavalier. I mean if you still think

somebody might be involved in something wrong—not so much to wipe away the past as to free people up to live in the present and future.

There are all kinds of—suppose when you're 18 you commit some offense which gets you a 5-year sentence. And suppose—and let's suppose under the sentencing guidelines then applicable, you served 2 years of the sentence. Well, my view is if you served the 2 years, then you get out, and you've got 3 years on parole. So the 5 years is discharged. Then you have to serve—then you live a couple more years, and you have a totally exemplary life. I don't think that your past mistake should unduly cramp your present and future life.

If you do something really terrible, you're going to be in prison for a long time. But I mean, people are just getting out all the time—90 percent of the people who go to jail get out. When they get out, we do not have a vested interest in seeing them continue to be punished. Our interest as citizens, after they pay their debt to society, is to see them be successful. I mean, when somebody pays—then when they get out, surely we don't want them to keep on paying. If they have to keep on paying, that's why you end up with more crime and a less successful, less healthy society.

So my instinct is that—again, I speak for myself; each President will be different on this—is that the President should be pretty reluctant to shorten sentences but should be willing to do so in appropriate cases but that the President should be more forthcoming in being willing to grant pardons when it's not really for the purpose of pretending that it didn't happen but of liberating people to make the most of their todays and tomorrows, because every single American has a big stake in people who actually do get punished later going on and living their lives in a straight and effective way. So that's my take on this. And we're looking to see whether there are any kind of changes we can make to be more effective in that regard.

Q. Thanks.

The President. I'm glad you asked me. You're the only person who ever asked me that.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:13 p.m. in the 15th Floor Lounge at the Park Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to John Rocker, relief pitcher, MLB Atlanta Braves; Hank Aaron, member, Baseball Hall of Fame; Andrew Young, former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N.; Kevin Garnett, power forward, NBA Minnesota Timberwolves; and former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa. An interviewer referred to Wolf Blitzer, correspondent, Cable News Network. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Boston

January 18, 2000

Thank you so much. Let me say, I am delighted, first of all, to be back here in the Solomonts' home. I love this place, and it's obviously a place with a loving family, and I feel very good that they let us come in. I thank Steve and Barbara Grossman for their work for our party, and for their help in this event tonight, and all of you for being here.

I want to join Mayor Rendell in thanking you, Mayor Menino. We had a great day in Boston today, had a great anti-crime event. And Senator Menard, thank you. And I'd like to also thank our DNC treasurer, Andy Tobias, my longtime friend, for being here. And thank you, Brian Hardwick, and thank you, Fran Katz.

We're going to have a chance to visit later on. I just want to make a few points. First of all, the kids were fabulous, the singers. I loved that. I'm something of a music lover, and they sang that wonderful old Jim Croce song—those of you who are about my age, maybe a little younger—it's all the more wistful because he did die young. And there's that great line in that song: "there never seems to be enough time to do the things you want to do once you find them." It's something that the older you get the more sober it makes you to hear that line.

And I guess if I could say anything to you tonight that you haven't heard, is that we do have time to do what we want to do, as a country and as a people, to a degree virtually unheard of in our history. And we need, in this election and in this year, to continue to

find the right things and to find the strength and the vision and the will to do them.

I am profoundly grateful to the people of Boston and the people of Massachusetts. They have been very good to me and to Hillary and to Al and Tipper Gore. And indeed, all of New England has been very good to—we have carried all the States in New England in both elections. And that is something for which I am very grateful. And I am quite mindful of the fact that the energy and the drive for that came in no small measure out of Massachusetts and out of the uncommon kindness of the Democrats in New Hampshire and staying with me against all the odds on more than one occasion.

But what I want you to think about is this. A lot of you mentioned to me the wonderful 100-year-old woman who came to the White House on Saturday to the radio address. I love that lady because she was on television. She continually referred to me as a young man. [Laughter] And I just love that. [Laughter] And we got in a great discussion about older people, and Willard Scott asked me if I had anybody in my family who lived to be 100. I said, no, but I had a very close uncle who died at 91 a couple years ago, who helped to raise me.

And I told the story about how, when he was 86 he used to, once a week, take a 92-year-old woman for a drive and once a week take a 95-year-old woman for a drive. He was describing this to me, and I said, "Well, Uncle Buddy, you like those older women, don't you?" He said, "Yeah, I do. Seems like they're a little more settled." [Laughter]

So anyway, it's all a matter of your perspective whether you're young or not. And as I've gotten older, I've learned that the definition of young is anybody that's a day younger than I am. But I've lived a fair number of years now, and there has never been a time in my lifetime when our country has had at once this level of economic prosperity, social progress, self-confidence, without overwhelming internal crisis or external threat. Therefore, I would argue to you that we have an unparalleled opportunity to do the things we want to do and that every year, it's about defining them, finding them, and dreaming them.

The second thing I want to say is that—Alan talked about all the tough times when we've been here. The great British essayist Samuel Johnson said that "Nothing so concentrates a man's mind as the prospect of his own destruction." And many times, when the Democratic Party's been under the gun, when the administration's been under the gun, people marveled at how well we did. Well, what option did we have? If we wanted to show up for work every day for the American people, we just had to concentrate, take a deep breath, and keep on working.

I have found that sometimes people are most vulnerable to making errors when they think things are going along so well they don't have to think about them. And this is not just—this is true of people—everybody here who is over 30 in this room—certainly everybody over 30—everybody who can think of at least one instance in your own life, when in your personal life, your family life, or your business life, something went wrong because you thought things were going so well you didn't have to think about it anymore.

So I would say to you that the thing that I am seized with here in this final year of my Presidency is keeping the attention of the American people on the future and making people understand that this is an enormous opportunity and, accordingly, a profound responsibility, to define the dreams that we have for the 21st century and then to come up with a strategy toward achieving them.

For me, it means finishing the unfinished business of the last year, the Patients' Bill of Rights, the hate crimes legislation, the prescription medicine for people on Medicare, gun legislation. It means an aggressive agenda, which you will hear more about in the State of the Union, for the last year that I will be your President. But it also means defining those big, long-term goals that can't be achieved in a year that we have to move toward.

And I believe that elections are always about the future. And I believe we have—I have always believed, as anybody who's had any conversation with me about this—I have always believed we would do fine this year if we were proud of our record, explained how it was part of a coherent philosophy that was driving us into the future, but more im-

portantly, articulated a vision that America could buy into for tomorrow and that we then had to be competitive, in terms of communicating our message. And that's what you've helped us to do.

So, we'll have more to say about this as the night goes on, but I think it would be helpful—you all know what I think the big challenges of the future are. I think we have to make the most of the revolutions in science and technology, especially in biotech and telecommunications, in materials development and environmental technologies.

I think we have to embrace, not run away from, globalization, but put a more human face on it so that everybody has a chance to feel they're treated fairly and has a chance to win. I think we have to give every child in this country a 21st century education, something we've never really done in our whole history, giving every child whatever the globally excellent education was at the moment, and that we've got to deal with the aging of America. We've got to decide what we're going to do with Social Security and Medicare, and how we're going to prepare for this explosion in the number of people over 65 doubling in the next 30 years. Most of us who are here hope to be among them.

We have to decide what our responsibilities are in an increasingly interdependent world to deal with the global challenges we have. And I think most important of all, as I have repeatedly said since the day I got here, we have to decide whether we really believe we're all in this together, and we have to keep expanding the real family of America. We have to—that's why I'm so strongly in favor of the hate crimes legislation, the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act," continuing to work toward reconciling the differences that rend America and the world apart day in and day out. Every day now, it seems like I'm spending more and more time trying to reactivate the Middle East peace process. But in a calm setting like this, and you see all those children up there singing tonight, it's self-evident to all of us that we have more in common than whatever it is that divides us.

And somehow, if I could leave one gift to America, I would leave us the ability—if I

could just wave a magic wand, instead of getting up and going to work in the White House every day—I would leave us the ability to remember that, every hour of every day, in everything we do, because we waste so much energy and we get ourselves in so much trouble in this old world just trying to pull ourselves up by putting other people down. And I am convinced that the only way we can make the most of all the modern wonders of tomorrow is to learn this most ancient of lessons.

So those are my big ideas for the 21st century. But the Democratic Party has been reformed, reenergized, and reborn in the last 7 years, in a way that is entirely consistent with our history and our values. And we can be really proud of the role we've played in the economic revitalization of America and the declining crime rate and welfare rolls and the fact that 90 percent of our children are immunized against serious diseases for the first time and all the progress that has been made.

But every election is about tomorrow. And I believe, with all my heart, if we make time to do the things we should do, we will do fine in the year 2000. The only thing that can keep us from ratifying this important direction the country has taken in the last 7 years is if either we don't care enough to exert the effort to fight and to finance our side of the argument or we don't care enough to articulate the choices so that it's clear what the election is about.

And all I can say is, if everybody in the country who thinks the way we do were as committed as you are, then I wouldn't even worry about that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Alan D. Solomont, former national finance chair, Democratic National Committee (DNC), and his wife, Susan; Steven Grossman, former DNC national chair, and his wife, Barbara; Edward G. Rendell, DNC general chair; Mayor Thomas M. Menino of Boston; State Senator Joan M. Menard, chair, Massachusetts State Democratic Party; Fran Katz, former DNC national finance chair; and former Today Show weatherman Willard Scott.

Remarks on the Health Insurance Initiative and an Exchange With Reporters

January 19, 2000

The President. Good morning, everyone. I'm glad to be joined today by Secretary Shalala, Secretary Herman, Deputy Secretary Eizenstat, and OPM Director Janice Lachance. We want to talk to you about the health care of America's families, one of the biggest challenges we face still in this new century.

Today I want to talk about two major proposals that are in my budget for 2001, which will help Americans to shoulder the cost of health care by extending coverage to millions of people who do not now have it and by helping Americans of all ages meet the demands of long-term care. These proposals are a significant investment in the health of Americans, another step toward giving every American access to quality health care.

As our Nation ages and we live longer lives, we face the need to provide long-term care to larger and larger numbers of Americans. Yesterday we put forward proposals to help Americans to face these new challenges, first by providing a \$3,000 tax credit for the cost of long-term care—that is 3 times the one I proposed in last year's State of the Union—second, by expanding access to home-based care through Medicaid; and third, by establishing new support networks for caregivers. We shouldn't let another year go by without helping those who are doing so much to help others. And I will say again, we should also, this year, pass the Patients' Bill of Rights.

We must also keep fighting to extend affordable health care to Americans who lack it. This is a continuing problem in our Nation, as all of you know. Still there are too many children who lose their hearing because an ear infection goes untreated or wind up in the emergency room because they couldn't see a doctor in a more regular way. Too many parents skimp on their own health to provide coverage for their children; too many missed chances to prevent illness and prepare young people to lead healthy lives—all these the products of the fact that tens

of millions of Americans still don't have affordable health care.

So today I'm announcing that my budget will set aside more than \$110 billion over 10 years to expand health care coverage. If enacted, this would be the largest investment in health coverage since the establishment of Medicare in 1965, one of the most significant steps we could take to help working families.

This proposal has four components. First, it's hard to have healthy children without healthy parents. We know parents who have access to health care themselves are more likely to get care for their children. And children who see their parents getting regular medical care learn good habits that last a lifetime. Yet, most of the parents of the children covered in our Children's Health Insurance Program, the CHIP program, are themselves uninsured.

That's why, as the Vice President has urged, I propose to allow parents to enroll in the same health insurance program that now covers their children. I thank the Vice President for this proposal. I believe it can make a difference to millions of families. You all remember that we set up the CHIP program in the 1997 Balanced Budget Act.

Second, we will work with States to reach every child now eligible for CHIP or for Medicaid. We've doubled the enrollment in the CHIP program in just the last year, as the States have really gotten up and going and taken the right initiatives on this. We now have something over 2 million children in the program.

But still, many children are missing out. To find them, we have to take information and enrollment to where they and their parents are: in school lunch programs, in day care facilities, in centers for the homeless. Our budget will fund efforts to do just that, because there is no reason for any child in America to grow up without basic health care.

Third, we are reaching out to Americans who have few or no options for affordable insurance. The numbers of people without insurance are growing fastest among those nearing retirement, an age when many people are already on fixed income or have limited health insurance choices.

I met a woman who lost her home trying to pay medical bills on a retirement income while she was waiting to become eligible for Medicare. This shouldn't happen to anyone. I've already proposed that this group of Americans be allowed to buy into Medicare coverage, that is, those between the ages of 55 and 65. And now, this new budget will provide for them a 25-percent tax credit to help them do it.

It's also hard to keep insurance for those who change jobs or are laid off, something that happens more and more in our fast-moving economy. That's why we have the COBRA benefits, allowing workers to pay to stay enrolled in health insurance when they're laid off. But too many workers cannot pay the full costs themselves. That's why we're also proposing tax credits that will make COBRA insurance affordable to more people and help workers take advantage of job flexibility without worrying every single day that they may lose their health insurance coverage if they do so.

We will also build on public and private sector insurance programs to help cover 19- and 20-year-olds aging out of insurance, people moving from welfare to work, employees of small businesses, and legal immigrants.

Finally, we must strengthen the network of clinics, hospitals, and dedicated professionals who serve the uninsured. They care for families in need and help to provide the referrals that get children and parents into insurance programs. And their resources are stretched very thin. So I will ask Congress to make a significant investment in these public health facilities next year.

Investing in health care coverage is a smart choice for America. We're meeting our responsibilities to all our American citizens, supporting seniors, helping make our children more ready for the future. I look forward to working with Congress to seize these opportunities this year.

Again, let me say what I have said so many times: In my lifetime we have never had this much economic prosperity and social progress with the absence of paralyzing internal crisis or external threat. We have an opportunity now to really make a dent in this problem of health insurance coverage, in the

problem of long-term care, and we ought to do it. I hope we will.

2000 Presidential Campaign

Q. Mr. President, are you happy that health care is an issue on the campaign trail? And what do you think of Bill Bradley's plan? You seem to be endorsing Gore here.

The President. His plan is more extensive than mine, too, the Vice President's is. But they're in a different position. Number one—let me answer your first question—I am elated that health care is an issue in the campaign. It is a good thing. It's an issue in people's lives. You can see that every time we debate a health care issue. You can see that support we got for the Children's Health Insurance Program in '97. You can see it in the enormous grassroots support for the Patients' Bill of Rights.

And just as Hillary and I predicted in 1994, when the health care proposal was defeated, we said there would be an increase in the number of uninsured people because the cost of insurance would go up and it would be harder for employers, particularly smaller business employers, to continue to cover their employees. So I think that what's going on in the campaign is a great thing for America.

Both the candidates have proposed—made proposals even more sweeping than the one I make today, even though if this were adopted, as I said, it would be the biggest expansion in health coverage since Medicare. But the reason—they should be doing that because they're looking at what they can do over 4 years, what they can do over 8 years. This is a proposal for this year's budget, and it is a very ambitious one-year proposal that will add millions of people to the ranks of those with insurance.

It also is very important because of the \$3,000 long-term care tax credit. That's something that I've been involved with, well, for more than 20 years now, something that I feel I know something about and I care a great deal about, and I believe there will be a lot of bipartisan support for that.

Go ahead, Mark [Mark Knoller, CBS Radio].

Prospects of Congressional Action

Q. What makes you think that you can get a more expansive health care program through Congress this year than you were able to get through last year?

The President. Well, for one thing, the budget picture is clearer. At least so far, the Republican leadership in the Congress has not put on the table a tax program which would make it impossible to pay the debt off and make it impossible to meet our fundamental obligations.

And I believe if you just look at what's going on in the election season this year, the public cares a lot about health care, and they're talking a lot about it. And all these people, without regard to their party, who come here in the Congress, they've been home talking to the people they represent; they've been listening to this; they know what their folks are up against; they know what kind of problems people face with long-term care. And I think they also, those with a lot of experience, understand how very complex this is and how difficult it is to add to the ranks of the insured in a cost-effective way. And this is clearly, based on our experience, the most cost-effective way to add people to the ranks of the insured.

Let the parents of kids in the CHIP program buy into CHIP or cover them with our funds. And let the people between the ages of 55 and 65 buy into Medicare and give them a tax credit to do so. Republicans, you know, naturally are inclined to have tax solutions to social problems, and in the case of long-term care, that is exactly the right thing to do. The tax credit is exactly the right way to go there, because there are so many different kinds of long-term care options out there that are appropriate for different families given different circumstances. So I'm actually quite hopeful that we can work together and get something done on this.

Harry and Louise

Q. Do you think Harry and Louise will support you this time?

The President. Well, I hope so. They've been acting like they want to support me. And I'd like to get together with Harry and Louise; I thought they were pretty effective last time, and we ought to be on the same

side. So I'm hoping old Harry and Louise—I wish they would come into the Oval Office here, and we could have a little press conference, a Harry and Louise press conference, endorsing this expansion of health coverage.

Q. After what they did to you?

Q. Can we cover it? [*Laughter*]

The President. You bet. I want you all to be here. It will be a crowded room if they come, but I'd love it if Harry and Louise would just sidle right on in here and say that they think this is the greatest idea since sliced bread, and we could go forward together. And it would be great.

Israel-Syria Peace Talks

Q. Mr. President, you've spoken to President Asad. Do you have any reason to believe that the peace talks will restart soon?

The President. Well, first of all, I think it's very important that you—I think this has been well and accurately reported, as nearly as I can tell. But I want to reiterate, neither side has decided to back away from the peace talks, call an end to them, call a freeze to them. That's not what's going on. They are having a genuine dispute about sequencing now that I'm trying to work through for both of them.

But the good news about this is that both these leaders, I think, want a peace that meets each other's needs. That is, they're both quite mindful of the fact that there won't be a peace agreement unless the legitimate concerns of both sides are met.

And I would not say the gaps in the positions are 90 percent; I'd say they're much closer to 10 percent than 90 percent. But keep in mind, these folks had not dealt with each other in a very long time. And that week they spent together at Shepherdstown was really the first time they had had these kind of direct contacts, get a feel for where they were; they wanted to go home and reassess their positions. And so we need to do some trust-building. We've got some work to do, but I'm actually quite hopeful.

And I see that both sides have continued to evidence a fairly high level of confidence that they can succeed, and that's good news. So we're in a little patch here where I've just

got a little extra work to do, and I'm working at it. And hopefully, we can do it.

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*Asad today or yesterday?

The President. Yes, I talked to President Asad, I think yesterday, wasn't it?

Q. But since then—

The President. No, not since yesterday morning. But I'll be in regular contact with him continuously. So we're working this very, very hard. And of course, we're also working on the Palestinian track, and tomorrow Chairman Arafat will be here, and I expect to have a good meeting with him. You know, if this were easy, it would have been done a long time ago. But we're working at it, and I'm pretty hopeful.

President's Last Year in Office

Q. Are you mournful that tomorrow is the last—the start of your last year in office, sir?

The President. Yes, tomorrow is the day, isn't it?

Q. Yes.

The President. Well, I will certainly mark the day.

Q. In what way?

The President. I mean, I'll just be conscious of it, in all kinds of little ways. When I go in a room in the White House now, I look around more carefully to make sure there's something—that I've actually noticed something that I may not have seen. You'd be amazed when you're living a busy life, and you're working really hard—I bet it happens to you, too—how many times you walk in and out of a room, and you'll see something in a room that, you've been in the room for 5 years, and you never noticed before. So I'm sensitive to all that.

But I'm actually very—I'm so grateful that the country is in the shape that it's in. And I'm so grateful that I've had the chance to serve. And I'm so energized about the State of the Union and, in many ways, in the sweep and depth of the proposals that I will make to the Congress and the country in the State of the Union are arguably the most far-reaching since the very first one I made. So I'm feeling good and grateful, and I just want to milk every last moment of every day.

The only thing, I wish I didn't have to sleep at all for a year. [*Laughter*] I wish that God would give the capacity to function for

a year without sleep. That would make me very happy. *[Laughter]* But I think it highly unlikely. Therefore, I will keep trying to get some.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Harry and Louise, characters in Health Insurance Association of America-sponsored television advertisements in opposition to the 1993 "Health Security Act"; President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Gala

January 19, 2000

Thank you very much. I would like to begin this evening by asking you all to give another round of applause to my friend Phoebe Snow and her band. I thought they were great here tonight, and I thank them for coming. *[Applause]*

I want to thank Ed Rendell for agreeing to become the chair of our party, for the work we have done as friends and partners in the last 7 years. I want to thank Joe Andrew, who has really been an indefatigable sparkplug. You know, most people think I'm in a good humor most of the time, but he makes me look like a sourpuss. *[Laughter]* I mean, the guy is always up. He's like the—and I don't mean this in a demeaning way, but he's sort of like our Energizer bunny. He's just always plugging away there. He's always there, and I thank him for that.

I always tell the people that work around me, in good times and bad, that reality is composed more or less in equal parts of what happens and how you react to it because we can't control everything that happens, but we can always control how we react. This guy is always reacting in the right way, and I thank you, and we're in good shape today and well poised for this millennial election year.

I want to thank all the other officers of the DNC, the former officers who are here, especially the three new co-finance chairs who are here: Carol Pinsky, Joel Hyatt, and

Joe Cari, all long-time friends of mine, and I thank you for your willingness to do this.

I will be brief tonight for two reasons: You've heard me give a speech or two before, and secondly, if I'm not careful, I'll blow what little I haven't revealed about my State of the Union Address, and I don't want to do that. Let me try to just say a few things that I hope you will remember and carry with you when you leave tonight and wake up tomorrow.

First of all, I want you to know that I am profoundly grateful for the support and the friendship I have received from so many of you in this room who have been with me and Hillary and Al and Tipper all along the way, in good times and bad. Secondly, I want you to know that I am also very grateful for the success America has enjoyed during my tenure and the fact that we were able to end the 20th century and begin the 21st on such a high note. Most of the credit belongs, as it always does, to the American people, without regard to party, people who just get up every day and dream their own dreams and take care of their own families and obey the law and pay their taxes and make this country hum.

But it really does matter what tools they have to build their dream. It really does matter whether the conditions in which they live and labor and raise their children help or thwart those dreams. And that is why politics matter. That is why ideas matter.

I was so glad that Mayor Rendell said what he did—I don't know how many times I've said that in the last 4 months. I actually find myself watching these debates—and I tried to watch the debates, no offense, that the other party was having, too, but I think ours are more interesting because our guys actually know a lot of things so they have something to say in these things. *[Laughter]* And it really is fascinating to me to listen to them talk. I think that's great.

But underneath all the specifics, the Democratic Party has been transformed and in the process has helped the transforming of America over the last 7 years. When we celebrated over the millennial new year's the great achievements of the 20th century, for the world and for the United States and the triumph of freedom, it is easy to forget that

7 years ago two guys that worked for the Philadelphia Enquirer, in Mayor Rendell's hometown, in 1992 wrote a best-selling book, the title of which was, "America: What Went Wrong?" And it swept the country. I read it through twice, underlined it.

Why was that a best-selling book? Because we had an unusual combination of high unemployment, social decline—that is, exploding welfare and crime rolls and all the other indicators—political gridlock in Washington, and after 12 years of trying, the Republicans had finally succeeded in discrediting the Government of this country. They told us how sorry it was. It took 12 years, and they just about convinced people. So there we were in quite a fix: economic distress, social decline, political gridlock, and a discredited government.

And at least to someone like me, sitting out in the country a long way from Washington, it appeared that the debates that were going on here were like a broken record. Over and over and over again, you know, there was a prescribed Democratic position and a prescribed Republican position. There was the prescribed liberal position and a prescribed conservative position. And everybody was put in these little boxes, and they lobbed their rhetorical artillery across a no-man's land at each other. And not much happened, but it was enough to fill the airwaves at night. And I thought to myself, you know, if I ran my State like that, we'd never get anything done, and we'd just be in a ditch. If people ran their businesses like that, we'd have 20 percent unemployment. If people ran their families like that, the divorce rate would be 100 percent. It was just crazy. It was like we were stuck in this sort of over and over and over again way of doing things.

So I said to the American people, "I have an idea. I'm a Democrat by heritage, instinct, and conviction. But I think we're living in new times; we have to have new approaches. We've got to be willing to try new ideas. We've got to be willing to break out of old patterns, but we ought to be anchored in the fundamental ideas that every American should have opportunity, but every American should be a responsible citizen and that all of us are part of a community, and whenever the least of us is in trouble, the rest of us

are lessened. And no one should be shut out of this community just because they're not like the rest of us, as long as they're willing to show up every day, obey the law, and be good citizens. And beyond that, we ought not to rule out anything; we ought to be willing to try new ideas.

"And the first thing we've got to do is get this country out of debt. But we can't pretend that you can do it by calling for a constitutional amendment to balance the budget and then never do anything about it. You either have got to raise taxes or cut spending or do both." Somebody said, what was the single new reform I brought to Washington? I think it was arithmetic. [Laughter] We brought arithmetic back to Washington.

Anyway, the rest is history. But I want you to understand that this idea—we proved, for example, that the progressive party, or the liberal party, if you will, could run the first back-to-back surpluses in 42 years—not the conservative party, the progressive party—and that we could do it and still double our investment in education and training because we've given you the smallest Government in 37 years; we've eliminated hundreds of programs; we've cut out 16,000 pages of Federal regulations. We got rid of stuff that nobody ever comes up to me and tells me how much they miss. I'll give anybody here \$5 if before I walk out of here tonight, you can come up and say, "I really miss this regulation," and tell me what it was; or, "I really wish you hadn't gotten rid of that program." And I got rid of hundreds of them. So just come tell me one. Tell me how you yearn for its return. [Laughter]

So we said, "Why should we choose between investing in education and science and technology and the environment and health care and getting rid of the deficit? Let's do both. Why should we choose between tougher punishment or better prevention to lower the crime rate? Why don't we do both? Why should we choose between improving the environment and growing the economy, especially with the present state of development of technology and energy? Let's do both."

And the results, I think you'll all agree, have been pretty good. And it's not just about economics. Twenty million people have been

able to take a little time off from work without losing their jobs when there is a sick parent or a baby is born under the family leave law, a bill vetoed in the previous administration, vetoed because it was supposed to be so bad for business. Almost a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers haven't gotten a handgun because of the Brady bill, a bill vetoed in the previous administration because it was supposed to undermine our freedom to keep and bear arms. Ninety percent of our kids immunized against serious diseases for the first time. And I could go on and on.

Now, the first thing I want you to go out and tell people is—I used to say when I was at home, “When you find a turtle on a fencepost, the chances are it didn't get there by accident.” We have worked hard to modernize our party and to modernize our country. And we don't claim credit for every good thing that went on in this country, but we did establish the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. And that's what we believe the role of the National Government is in the 21st century.

And the second thing, elections are always about tomorrow. I said on New Year's Eve that as long as our dreams outweigh our memories, we can be forever young. And that is the destiny of this country. And so what Americans have to think about is, in '92 we had economic distress, social decline, political gridlock, discredited Government; 2000, we've got the strongest economy in history, the social fabric is clearly on the mend; we have developed as a nation a new consensus, even though sometimes you can't tell it here in Washington, for a progressive politics that is fiscally responsible but socially concerned; and the credibility of the Government's ability to do its job has been restored. And for the first time all these things have happened, and we are not paralyzed by an internal crisis or an external threat.

So the big issue about—if the 20th century was about freedom and its triumph, the beginning of the 21st century is about whether we will use this wisely. What are we going to do now? And that's what I want you to focus on all year long. When you get tired of coming to these things and calling somebody else to help our party, when you get

weary or some little bump in the road occurs in these elections, I want you to remember we didn't get here by accident; you brought us here. All those times you wrote checks you'd just as soon not have written, all those nights you went to those dinners when you had rather stayed home and watched a movie, all those times you've showed up at some public event because you wanted to be loyal.

This is about ideas and change, and the people's lives have changed. And we are in a position never before existent in my lifetime to write the future of our dreams for our children. What I always hoped we could do in my tenure as President is turn this country around and get us moving in the right direction, so that our children would literally have a chance to build the future of their dreams.

And so the big question for us now is, what are we going to do with this magic moment? Are we going to indulge ourselves in it, pretend that the elections don't matter, take some sort of short-term benefit that may or may not help us get there? Or are we going to say, “Thank you, God, for giving us this moment. Give us the wisdom to use it well and try to honestly say, now what are the big opportunities and the big problems that are out there staring us in the face, and what in the world are we going to do about it?”

And for the next year I'm going to do my best to finish the unfinished business of the last Congress, from the Patients' Bill of Rights to sensible gun legislation to hate crimes and employment nondiscrimination legislation to trying to extend the life of Medicare and get a sensible prescription drug benefit for our seniors—75 percent of them don't have it today. I'm going to try to chart the long-term direction that I want America to go in. And then I'm going to have as ambitious a program for what we can do in the next year as I have ever offered the American people in the State of the Union, because I think they hired us to show up for work.

People keep telling me, “Well, it's election year, you know.” And I say, “Well, we're all drawing a paycheck, aren't we?” It's election year, and then people who aren't in the election want to use that as an excuse not to go

to work or not to get anything done. I don't understand that. I think we ought to get more done this year because we're not running. I don't understand that.

But hear me well, now. As Democrats we have two obligations that you must shoulder. We must be competitive in this campaign. We must be determined not to be so outspent we can't be heard, and we must never forget that our job, since we are governing, is to do good things for the American people, including good things with our friends in the Republican Party whenever they're willing to work with us, and if they're not, to the best of our ability on our own. So just remember, you've got a lot to be proud of; you've got a good story to tell.

But the American people now have to decide whether they think this turtle got on the fencepost by accident and where they want to go with this magic moment in the future. And what I really care about is thinking that all this stuff we've labored to do the last 7 years can be used together to sort of liberate the energy, the imagination, the heart, the spirit of America; to be a force for peace and freedom and prosperity around the world; to give all the poor people in this country who are willing to work a chance to live the American dream; to give everybody a world-class education; to bring health insurance to the people who can't afford it now; to deal with these big challenges.

You can make your own list, but just remember the most important thing. If you look at where we are now compared to where we were then, we got there because we had good ideas, rooted in good values, with a real vision. If you look at where we are now, compared to where we can go, and you understand that the sky is the limit, you begin to appreciate the importance of this election.

Joe and Ed talk about how I show up at the drop of a hat, even though I'm not running for anything. There is a reason. I have never forgotten a day I was here, for whom I was working. I have never been under the illusion that I was anything other than the hired hand of the American people. And it's contract time again. And they're going to give a lot of employment contracts this year, from the White House—in Joe's terms, from the White House to dogcatcher. Just once in my

life I hope I meet the Democratic nominee for dogcatcher some day. There have been days where there is not much difference in that and the White House. *[Laughter]*

Anyway, it's contract time again. And if you believe in what we've done, if you believe in why you drug yourselves out in good weather and bad and when you weren't feeling good and you worked all these dinners and receptions, if you believe in why you wrote all those checks and did all those things, remember, it's contract time again, and the people have to decide again.

And if we blew this decision, we wouldn't be the first people to blow a decision just because things were so good. How many times have you made a mistake in your life because things were going along so well, you thought there were no consequences to what you did or what you decided on any given day? This is a momentous election. The American people have been well served by our party. They need to be well served by our voices and by our continued service. I'll do my part; you'll do yours; we'll have the biggest celebration yet in this millennial year.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:27 p.m. in the North Hall at the Corcoran Gallery of Art. In his remarks, he referred to entertainer Phoebe Snow; and Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, and Carol Pensky, Joel Hyatt, and Joe Cari, finance co-chairs, Democratic National Committee.

Notice—Continuation of Emergency Regarding Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 19, 2000

On January 23, 1995, by Executive Order 12947, I declared a national emergency to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States constituted by grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process. By Executive Order 12947 of January 23, 1995, I blocked the assets in the United States, or in the control of United States persons, of foreign terrorists

who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. I also prohibited transactions or dealings by United States persons in such property. On August 20, 1998, by Executive Order 13099, I identified four additional persons, including Usama bin Ladin, who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. I have annually transmitted notices of the continuation of this national emergency to the Congress and the *Federal Register*. Last year's notice of continuation was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1999. Because terrorist activities continue to threaten the Middle East peace process and vital interests of the United States in the Middle East, the national emergency declared on January 23, 1995, and the measures that took effect on January 24, 1995, to deal with that emergency must continue in effect beyond January 23, 2000. Therefore, in accordance with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing the national emergency with respect to foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

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

William J. Clinton

The White House,
January 19, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:18 a.m., January 20, 2000]

NOTE: This notice was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 20, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on January 21.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of Emergency Regarding Terrorists Who Threaten To Disrupt the Middle East Peace Process

January 19, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for

the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the emergency declared with respect to grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that disrupt the Middle East peace process is to continue in effect beyond January 23, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on January 22, 1999.

The crisis with respect to the grave acts of violence committed by foreign terrorists that threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process that led to the declaration on January 23, 1995, of a national emergency has not been resolved. Terrorist groups continue to engage in activities with the purpose or effect of threatening the Middle East peace process, and which are hostile to United States interests in the region.

Such actions threaten vital interests of the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States. On August 20, 1998, I identified four additional persons, including Usama bin Ladin, who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to deny any financial support from the United States for foreign terrorists who threaten to disrupt the Middle East peace process.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 20.

**Proclamation 7269—National
Biotechnology Month, 2000**

January 19, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

As we stand at the dawn of a new century, we recognize the enormous potential that biotechnology holds for improving the quality of life here in the United States and around the world. These technologies, which draw on our understanding of the life sciences to develop products and solve problems, are progressing at an exponential rate and promise to make unprecedented contributions to public health and safety, a cleaner environment, and economic prosperity.

Today, a third of all new medicines in development are based on biotechnology. Designed to attack the underlying cause of an illness, not just its symptoms, these medicines have tremendous potential to provide not only more effective treatments, but also cures. With improved understanding of cellular and genetic processes, scientists have opened exciting new avenues of research into treatments for devastating diseases—like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, diabetes, heart disease, AIDS, and cancer—that affect millions of Americans. Biotechnology has also given us several new vaccines, including one for rotavirus, now being tested clinically, that could eradicate an illness responsible for the deaths of more than 800,000 infants and children each year.

The impact of biotechnology is far-reaching. Bioremediation technologies are cleaning our environment by removing toxic substances from contaminated soils and ground water. Agricultural biotechnology reduces our dependence on pesticides. Manufacturing processes based on biotechnology make it possible to produce paper and chemicals with less energy, less pollution, and less waste. Forensic technologies based on our growing knowledge of DNA help us exonerate the innocent and bring criminals to justice.

The biotechnology industry is also improving lives through its substantial economic impact. Biotechnology has stimulated the cre-

ation and growth of small businesses, generated new jobs, and encouraged agricultural and industrial innovation. The industry currently employs more than 150,000 people and invests nearly \$10 billion a year on research and development.

Recognizing the extraordinary promise and benefits of this enterprise, my Administration has pursued policies to foster biotechnology innovations as expeditiously and prudently as possible. We have supported steady increases in funding for basic scientific research at the National Institutes of Health and other science agencies; accelerated the process for approving new medicines to make them available as quickly and safely as possible; encouraged private-sector research investment and small business development through tax incentives and the Small Business Innovation Research program; promoted intellectual property protection and open international markets for biotechnology inventions and products; and developed public databases that enable scientists to coordinate their efforts in an enterprise that has become one of the world's finest examples of partnership among university-based researchers, government, and private industry.

Remarkable as its achievements have been, the biotechnology enterprise is still in its infancy. We will reap even greater benefits as long as we sustain the intellectual partnership and public confidence that have moved biotechnology forward thus far. We must strengthen our efforts to improve science education for all Americans and preserve and promote the freedom of scientific inquiry. We must protect patients from the misuse or abuse of sensitive medical information and provide Federal regulatory agencies with sufficient resources to maintain sound, science-based review and regulation of biotechnology products. And we must strive to ensure that science-based regulatory programs worldwide promote public safety, earn public confidence, and guarantee fair and open international markets.

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 January 2000 as National Biotechnology Month. I call upon

the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord two thousand, 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, 10:34 a.m., January 21, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 20, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on January 24.

Remarks on Launching the Agenda for Higher Education and Lifetime Learning

January 20, 2000

Thank you very much, Nina, for being exhibit A for the announcement that we're here for today. Thank you, Secretary Riley, for your leadership in every aspect of education and especially in this one.

I thank Secretary Slater for coming. I suspect he's here for two reasons. One is, Rodney Slater grew up in a county that, when I was Governor, was one of the 10 poorest counties in America. And he happened to be a good football player and was able to go to college in Michigan and play football. And he, later in his career, became an officer at a university in our home State. So he also is exhibit A for why every child should be able to go to college.

I want to thank Representative Rush Holt for being here. He is not only a former distinguished professor at Princeton, but he has a task force on access to higher education in his congressional district. And the people who live in his district actually are among those who will be most benefited if this entire proposal passes, as we hope it will.

In their absence, I want to thank Congressman Ford and Senator Olympia Snowe, who had been very, very strong on this issue. And the two people I want to thank most obviously, are Senator Schumer and the First Lady, who lobbied me relentlessly on this for

the better part of a year. If you've ever been lobbied by either one of them, you know—[*laughter*]*—it's sort of like, are you going to say yes now, or put yourself through all this misery and say yes later? But it's been very interesting. I'll say more about it in a moment. [Laughter]*

We know when we open the doors to college, we open the doors to opportunity. When we make college more affordable, we make the American dream more achievable. That's why we're all here today. I'm glad there are so many young people here today. They're probably sorry that they're not really getting out of school; they could have gotten out of school anyway—[*laughter*]*—but I'm glad you all came and waited.*

Some in Congress, I note, are saying that because this is an election year, we really shouldn't try to do anything for the American people. We're here today to give perhaps the most powerful example for why we should reject that view. Nothing, not a national election or a Washington snowstorm, should get in the way of making a college education more affordable for all Americans. [*Applause*] Thank you. Students can't put off their growing up for a year; families can't put off going to work for a year; and neither should we.

Today is a happy day for me. This is my seventh anniversary as President of the United States. I am profoundly grateful for the long way we have come as a nation in these last 7 years, that today we have the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest unemployment and welfare rates in 30 years, the first back-to-back budget surpluses in over 40 years. I am grateful that we are coming together, that we have the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rates we have ever recorded, that we have the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest single-parent household poverty rate in 46 years, and that in the last couple of years we have finally begun to see a reversal in the increase in inequality of incomes of working people, which was going on for nearly three decades.

So the family of America is growing stronger, and that is fundamentally a tribute to the hard work and adaptability of the American people. It has also been helped along the way

by our hard-won economic strategy of increasing trade, getting rid of the deficit, and investing in the education of our people and in the economy in which they will live.

More than ever, with globalization and the information-based economy, investing in the minds of our people is the most important thing we can do to assure our continued success as a nation. But that has been the American policy for quite a long time now. The land grant college system was established under Abraham Lincoln; the GI bill after World War II; the Pell grants in the 1970's; and the HOPE scholarship in 1997. We have made education and access to higher education a bipartisan, national priority for quite a long while.

You heard the other stories that were told. I was sitting here thinking, I was the first person in my family to go to college. And I remember when I was accepted to Georgetown—rather late, I might add, in the year. [Laughter] And they gave me a \$500 scholarship, for which I was very grateful. And I think the tuition back then was about \$6,000, which 37 years ago, -6 years ago, seemed like all the money in the world to me. And I was literally guilt-ridden when I went off to college to think of the burden I was imposing on my family.

And I remember we had a family meeting about it. I remember my high school guidance counselor called me in the office and said I was nuts, that I'd pay it back many times over in the future. But it bothered me a lot. And then later, as I stayed in school and went on to law school, I was able to do it all because I had the help of scholarships and loans and jobs. And if I hadn't had that help, there's no way in the world I would be standing here today. I know that.

And because of the changes in the financial costs of higher education that Senator Schumer talked about and because of the changes in the economy, it's even more important that we do more today, not only for individual students but for the health and well-being of the American system. So that's why we're here. You have already heard that we have been working on this hard for 7 years. We've more than doubled college aid in those 7 years, increasing Pell grants by more than 50 percent, rewriting the student

loan program to make it easier and cheaper to get student loans, and then importantly, to let students pay off their loans as a percentage of their income, so there would never be an incentive for people who had those loans to drop out of school for fear that they could never repay them anyway.

We established AmeriCorps, which now has allowed 150,000 of our fellow citizens to serve in their communities and earn some money to go to college. We've expanded the work-study program from 700,000 to a million work-study slots. We've allowed families to save more in their IRA's and then to withdraw the money tax-free if it's being used to pay for a college education. And of course, as Secretary Riley said, we created the \$1,500 HOPE scholarship tax credit to make 2 years of high school after education through a community college just as universal as a high school education is today.

That HOPE scholarship tax credit and the lifetime learning tax credit, which helps families pay for the last 2 years of college, graduate schools, or going back to school or to a training program, were designed to open the doors of college to all, and to recognize that in this economy, learning must go on for a lifetime. And it's working.

Today—listen to this—today, 67 percent of high school graduates will be enrolling in college next fall. That's an increase of 10 percent just since 1993. But we know we haven't truly succeeded in opening the doors of college to all if you mean everybody who wants to should be able to go to a 4-year school and stay—and stay—until they finish.

Parents all across the country are genuinely stretched. And parents in a surprisingly wide range of income groups are stretched because of the loan eligibility, the Pell grant eligibility limits, and other things. So today what we're attempting to do is to launch an agenda for higher education and lifetime learning for the 21st century that will make college more affordable for more families and, in the process, genuinely open the doors of college to everybody.

But we also want to encourage more people to stay in college once they go. And we

want to do more to guide young people, starting in their middle school years, to be thinking about college so that if they can't afford it, they'll be able to get in and go.

First, the centerpiece of this budget for the coming year will be a landmark \$30-billion college opportunity tax cut to help millions of middle class families pay for college. It will give families a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 in tuition costs, providing as much as \$2,800 in much-needed tax relief. And as Senator Schumer said, this has never been done before.

Now, let me tell you how this works. I am for this, and I believe it's the right thing to do. But all of you need to know that we think there's a pretty strict limit on what the total aggregate tax cuts I can propose and sign into law is. I had to veto one last year, because I thought it was too big. Why? Because the main thing that's brought us all along is the strength of our economy and that requires us, in my judgment, to keep this budget balanced, to keep running surpluses, and to get this country out of debt over the next 15 years for the first time since 1835.

So as you might imagine, one of the things that we have to do, we have these huge, fascinating debates at this time every year about what does or doesn't go in the administration's budget. And that's where the arm-twisting from Senator Schumer and the First Lady came in. And they made the compelling argument—and you heard Chuck say he and Olympia had this bill in the Senate—that there was no benefit we could give to middle class people that would benefit more families more than this one and no benefit we could give to families that would benefit America more than this one.

So again, I say we know this idea has bipartisan support, even in Washington. And I'll bet you'd have to take a magnifying glass to find anybody out in the country who is against it, once I can explain that it won't affect our ability to balance the budget and pay off the debt.

So this is the core—this has never been done before by our country. And when you take this, plus what we've done with the HOPE scholarships, with the other lifetime tax credits, with the Pell grants, with the work-study slots, and with the changes in the

student loan program, we will really be able to say, everybody who wants to go to college can go. It is important that it pass, and I want to ask all of you to help me to pass it in this session of Congress.

Nina talked a little about her situation, but she was too modest to tell you that she's on the dean's list, so that helps her qualify for additional scholarship aid. But her father works overtime when he can, her mother works two jobs. Now, what does all this mean to her? For her family in their income group, with the HOPE scholarship, the new college opportunity tax cut would translate into a \$4,300 tax break for her family by the time her brother, George, enters college. That's real money. That will make a difference to her family, and it will make a difference to America.

This plan, I say again, is important for families, but it's also important for the state of our economy. We give tax relief today for businesses that invest in new plants and equipment; in an economy that runs on brainpower we ought to give tax credits and tax cuts for people that invest in that brainpower. With this action we are much closer toward taking the worry out of paying for a child's college education. We're another step forward toward helping the middle class with a targeted tax cut. And we're another step forward again in saying that we have literally opened the doors of college to all.

I am also pleased to announce that we will increase Pell grants to up to \$3,500, and that will benefit nearly 4 million Pell grant recipients. And that's important.

Now, for all of you who are in higher education—this is the second thing I want to say that's important—the second element of our plan is to strengthen our efforts to help Americans stay in college. We have really good numbers now, and it's going to get better with this—with the number of young people going to college. But the dropout rate is way, way too high, given the needs of the economy and the benefits to young people in staying and getting their degrees.

One-third of the lowest income students drop out of college and less than half of them earn degrees within 5 years. Our budget will establish the college competition challenge

grants to reduce the dropout rate and improve the chances of success for nearly 18,000 of these students. We're also going to expand the successful TRIO program to help even more students stay in college. We will launch a dual degree initiative to expand opportunities for students at minority institutions to allow about 3,000 minority students to earn a degree in fields where minorities today are woefully under-represented.

The third and final part of our higher education agenda is focused on helping young people get on the right track to college and to stay there. We need to encourage more students at an early age to get them excited about academic achievement and to give them a sense that they actually can go to college and get a degree and have the life of their dreams.

We passed an initiative we called GEAR UP, which does just that. It reaches out to middle school students who are at risk, using college students to mentor them, to encourage them to set high expectations, to stay in school, to study hard, to take the right courses to go to college, and to make sure they know exactly what kind of aid they would qualify for, so they didn't decide when they're 12 or 13 or 14 that they won't be able to afford to go.

Our budget will double the number of students who can participate in GEAR UP to include 1.4 million young people. Many of them come from families where they would never entertain the prospect of going to college and where the message they get now—on the street, in the school—is that because of their circumstances, they won't be able to make it. We're giving them the exact reverse message, that they will absolutely be able to make it. And young people in universities all across America who have participated in mentoring these kids deserve the thanks of a grateful nation. We're going to double this program, and I hope you'll help us pass that as well.

One more aspect of this is our youth opportunity grants, under the leadership of Secretary Herman at Labor and the Youthbuild initiative at HUD. These things are working again to reach young people who otherwise too often get let out and left behind. Taken together, these steps will provide families

with the college relief they need, students with the support they need, our economy with the skilled work force we need, and our communities and our Nation with the better citizens we all need.

People who decide to invest in their futures through education are taking the long look ahead, making sacrifices today for rewards tomorrow. That is the challenge we face today as a nation. We have, for the first time in my lifetime, economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, the absence of serious crisis at home or paralyzing threat from abroad. All those conditions have not existed at one point in my lifetime. And it is imperative that we take the long look ahead. There is no better way to make the most of this magic moment than by helping all Americans make the most of their God-given abilities.

Thanks for being here. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. in the Presidential Hall in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Nina McLaughlin, student, who introduced the President. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady.

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

January 20, 2000

Israel-Palestinian Peace Talks

President Clinton. Let me just say I am delighted to have Chairman Arafat back in the White House. As all of you know, I am absolutely committed to seeing a comprehensive peace agreement involving the Palestinians and the Israelis, committed to doing whatever I can to achieve that. The resolution of the issues between Palestinians and Israelis is at the core of the comprehensive effort that we all want to make for peace throughout the Middle East, and we have to work through them.

As in any process like this, there must be inevitable and difficult compromises. No one can get everything that either side wants. But

I'm convinced we can get there, and I'm convinced that Chairman Arafat is proceeding in great good faith, and so I'm glad to see him, glad he's here.

Q. Mr. President, is it possible for these talks to be completed by the deadline for the framework agreement? And if not, would you support extending it?

President Clinton. Well, I think that will have to be worked out between the two sides, and specifically between Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak. And they will work that out. I think the main thing I want you to know is that I'm convinced it's possible for them to reach a comprehensive peace in a reasonably short period of time. And I'm going to do whatever I can to facilitate it.

Q. Chairman Arafat, so far you've got promises and no action. How optimistic are you, sir, about the implementation of the accords?

Chairman Arafat. First of all, a few days ago we did receive the 5 percent of the territories according to the Sharm al-Sheikh agreement. And within 2 weeks we will receive the 6th percent. And this is something that Prime Minister Barak and I agreed to 24 hours, 48 hours before arriving in the United States.

There is no doubt that there will be difficulties along the way. These are expected difficulties. But there is also determination that we have to reach the comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East, not only on the Palestinian track but also on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, as well.

And here I would like to take this opportunity to thank President Clinton for all the efforts that he's exerting on the Syrian track, the Lebanese track, and of course, on our Palestinian track.

Q. Mr. Chairman, what do you think of the President's remark, which was said earlier at the State Department—so it must be U.S. policy, we're hearing it all over town now—that nobody can expect 100 percent, that there has to be some compromise. You know, we've just had an experience with Syria insisting on 100 percent, and the talks are now suspended. Will you settle for less than 100 percent of your demands?

President Clinton. I don't agree with that, by the way, that characterization of the question in the Syrian-Israeli talks.

Q. Okay.

Chairman Arafat. The negotiations is the best way. This is what happened with Egypt; this is what happened with Jordan; and this is what will happen with Syria, as well as Lebanon; and also it happened with the Palestinians with the help of President Clinton.

Q. Missing the deadline of February, will that inevitably mean the missing of the deadline of September, too, or will you work not to do that?

President Clinton. I don't think anything is inevitable here. I think that both these leaders and these parties are absolutely committed to resolving this in the most expeditious possible way. So I think we should always let them speak for themselves and make their own decisions, and I'll do my best to be helpful.

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*comprehensive peace in the Middle East in that one year?

President Clinton. Well, we certainly could have, and I'll be disappointed if we don't, because we have the leaders who can do it, the issues are clear—even if they're difficult, they're clear. And I certainly think we could have it, and I'm going to do everything I can, every day I've got to try to achieve it.

Israel-Syria Peace Talks

Q. Mr. President, when can we expect talks on the Syrian tracks to be resumed?

President Clinton. I think they'll both have something to say about that before long. I think they'll keep working right along. This is not—you shouldn't overreact to what has been said about this. I think they're both completely determined to get this resolved in an appropriate way. And I think they'll have things to say about it as we go along here. But don't read too much into this. Actually, the parties have a framework for making these decisions that's more clear and more bridgeable than I would have thought by now.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:22 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Prime Minister Ehud

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

Statement on James and Sally Barksdale's Pledge to the University of Mississippi

January 20, 2000

Hillary and I applaud James and Sally Barksdale for their dedication and leadership on behalf of the cause of literacy. Their generous pledge of \$100 million to the University of Mississippi will provide school children in that State—especially those in the most needy schools—with access to new reading programs, train teachers in reading education, and promote efforts to target and help students struggling to learn to read. Their generosity is an example of the extraordinary role philanthropy plays in providing a better future for our children, families, and country.

Statement on Senator Bob Kerrey's Decision Not To Seek Reelection

January 20, 2000

I have said before of Senator Bob Kerrey that he is always willing to be on the cutting edge of change. But the change he announces today is a bittersweet one for his family, his colleagues in the United States Senate, and his constituents in Nebraska.

Our Government and Nation are better because of Bob Kerrey's public service. I first got to know him when we served as Governors in the 1980's, when we shared a passion for education reform, farm problems, and deficit reduction.

In the Senate, Bob Kerrey provided pivotal leadership to turn our economy around by getting rid of the deficit. His creativity, political courage, and farsightedness have kept him at the forefront of the fight for educational excellence, entitlement and tax reform, a stronger military, and a modern intelligence capability. His leadership of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and recruitment of new blood and funds helped shape a party that is firmly focused on the future and prepared to do well in this year's elections.

As Senator, Governor, Medal of Honor recipient, Bob Kerrey served our Nation above and beyond the call of duty. "If I added to their pride of America, I am happy," said Carl Sandburg. By that measure, Senator Kerrey should be happy, indeed. Hillary and I wish him well as he embarks on a new chapter in his remarkable life.

Remarks at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, California

January 21, 2000

Thank you so much. Dr. Moore, President Baltimore; to the faculty and students at Caltech, and to people involved in NASA's JPL out here. I want to thank Representatives Dreier, Baca, and Millender-McDonald for coming with me today and for the work they do in your behalf back in Washington. I want to thank three members of our Science and Technology team for being here: my Science Adviser, Neal Lane; Dr. Rita Colwell, the NSF Director; and my good friend, the Secretary of Energy, Bill Richardson, who has done a great job with our national labs to keep them being innovators in fields from computational science to environmental technology.

One person who would have liked to have been here today, and I can tell you thinks that he would be a better representative of our administration on this topic, is the Vice President. When we took office together, the fact that I was challenged scientifically and technologically was a standing joke. [*Laughter*] And he wants all of you to know that he's campaigning all over the country with a Palm 7 on his hip. [*Laughter*]

He wants you to know that he loves science and technology so much, he's not even angry that Caltech beat out Harvard for top spot in the U.S. News rankings this year. [*Laughter*] I think it has something to do with the relative electoral votes of California and Massachusetts. [*Laughter*]

But before I came out here, I told Dr. Moore and Dr. Baltimore that it was a real thrill for me to meet Dr. Moore, that even

I knew what Moore's Law was, and that, before the Vice President became otherwise occupied, we used to have weekly lunches, and I'd talked to him about politics, and he'd give me lectures about climate change. [Laughter]

But we once got into this hilarious conversation about the practical applications of Moore's Law, like it explains why every cable network can double the number of talk shows every year that no one wants to listen to. [Laughter] And so it's a real thrill for me to be here. [Laughter]

Actually, I come with some trepidation. An 8-year-old child met me at the airport, and she and her brother came with their father, who is a friend of mine, and she brought me a letter from her third grade class. And the letter had all these questions: What was your favorite book when you were in the third grade? What did you collect then? What do you collect now? And one of the questions was, are you ever nervous when you're speaking before large audiences? And the answer—and I was writing all these answers so we could type up a letter—I said, "Not usually." But I mean, I'm sort of nervous here today. [Laughter]

And I told somebody I was nervous, one of the wags back at the White House with a sense of humor, and he said, "Well, you know the Einstein millennial story, don't you," trying to help me get unnerved. I said—[laughter]—so I said, "No." You always learn to be patient in the face of other people's jokes. It's one of the great social skills that an American can develop. [Laughter]

So I said, "No." And he said, "Well, God decides to give America a millennial gift, and the gift is to send Einstein back to Earth for a few days to talk to ordinary folks, because he was the greatest brain of the last millennium. And they have the first meeting in a nice little hall like this. And it's absolutely packed, and these three big, burly guys push their way to the front, shoving everyone else to the side. So Einstein politely takes them first, and he says to the first guy, 'Well, what's your IQ, young man?' And he said, '240.' He said, 'Wonderful, let's talk about how I thought up the theory of relativity.' And they have a terrific conversation.

"The second guy, he says, 'What's your IQ?' He said, '140.' He said, "Let's talk about globalization and its impact on climate change.' And they had a terrific conversation. And the third guy kind of hung his head, and he said, 'What's your IQ?' And he said, '40.' And Einstein said, 'Oh, don't worry. You can always go into politics.'" [Laughter]

I want you to know, though, in preparation for this day, I've been spending a lot of time trying to get in touch with my inner nerd. [Laughter] And my wife helped me, because she's been having these Millennium Lectures at the White House to discuss big things. And the other night, she had Vint Cerf, who was one of the founders of the Internet, and Eric Lander, who's helped to develop many of the tools of modern genome research. And that really got me thinking, and I want to say some more serious things about that in a moment. And then my staff challenged me to actually order Christmas gifts over the Internet. And I did that. And while doing that, I learned that with just a click of a mouse, I could actually order—and I did this, I'm embarrassed to say—I ordered Arkansas smoked ham and sausage delivered to my door. [Laughter] So I think the 21st century has more for me than I had originally thought. [Laughter]

As all of you know, Albert Einstein spent a lot of time here at Caltech in the 1930's. And 3 weeks ago, Time magazine crowned him the Person of the Century. The fact that he won this honor over people like Franklin Roosevelt and Mohandas Gandhi is not only an incredible testament to the quantum leaps in knowledge that he achieved for all humanity, but also for the 20th century's earth-shaking advances in science and technology.

Just as an aside, I'd like to say because we're here at Caltech, Einstein's contributions remind us of how greatly American science and technology and, therefore, American society have benefited and continue to benefit from the extraordinary gifts of scientists and engineers who are born in other countries, and we should continue to welcome them to our shores.

But the reason so many of you live, work, and study here is that there are so many more questions yet to be answered: How does the brain actually produce the phenomenon of

consciousness? How do we translate insights from neuroscience into more productive learning environments for all our children? Why do we age—the question that I ponder more and more these days. [*Laughter*] I looked at a picture of myself when I was inaugurated the first time the other day, and it scared me to death. [*Laughter*] And so I wonder, is this preprogrammed, or wear and tear? Are we alone in the universe? What causes gamma ray bursts? What makes up the missing mass of the universe? What's in those black holes, anyway? And maybe the biggest question of all: How in the wide world can you add \$3 billion in market capitalization simply by adding .com to the end of a name? [*Laughter*]

You will find the answers to the serious questions I posed and to many others. It was this brilliant Caltech community that first located genes on chromosomes and unlocked the secrets of chemical bonds and quarks. You were the propulsive force behind jet flight and built America's first satellites. You made it possible for us to manufacture microchips of ever-increasing complexity and gave us our first guided tour on the surface of Mars. With your new gravitational wave observatory, you will open an entirely new window on the mysteries of the universe, observing the propagating ripples which Einstein predicted 84 years ago.

Today I came here to thank you for all you're doing to advance the march of human knowledge and to announce what we intend to do to accelerate that march by greatly increasing our national investments in science and technology.

The budget I will submit to Congress in just a few days will include a \$2.8 billion increase in our 21st century research fund. This will support a \$1 billion increase in biomedical research for the National Institutes of Health; \$675 million, which is double the previous largest dollar increase for the National Science Foundation in its entire 50-year history; and major funding increases in areas from information technology to space exploration to the development of cleaner sources of energy.

This budget makes research at our Nation's universities a top priority, with an increase in funding of more than \$1 billion.

University based research provides the kind of fundamental insights that are most important in any new technology or treatment. It helps to produce the next generation of scientists, engineers, entrepreneurs. And we intend to give university based research a major lift.

The budget supports increases not only in biomedical research but also in all scientific and engineering fields. As you know, advances in one field are often dependent on breakthroughs in other disciplines. For example, advances in computer science are helping us to develop drugs more rapidly and to move from sequencing the human genome to better understanding the functions of individual genes.

My budget supports a major new national nanotechnology initiative worth \$500 million. Caltech is no stranger to the idea of nanotechnology, the ability to manipulate matter at the atomic and molecular level. Over 40 years ago, Caltech's own Richard Symonds asked, "What would happen if we could arrange the atoms one by one the way we want them?" Well, you can see one example of this in this sign behind me, that Dr. Lane furnished for Caltech to hang as the backdrop for this speech. It's the Western hemisphere in gold atoms. But I think you will find more enduring uses for nanotechnology.

Just imagine, materials with 10 times the strength of steel and only a fraction of the weight; shrinking all the information at the Library of Congress into a device the size of a sugar cube; detecting cancerous tumors that are only a few cells in size. Some of these research goals will take 20 or more years to achieve. But that is why—precisely why—as Dr. Baltimore said, there is such a critical role for the Federal Government.

As I announced yesterday, this budget also includes an historic initiative to make higher education more affordable. I am well aware of the fact that I would not have become President of the United State without loans and grants and jobs that helped me get through college and law school and that, more and more, given the cost of higher education, a higher and higher percentage of our students need more of all those things. This has been a virtual obsession for me ever since

I became President. I was determined to leave office saying we had opened the doors of college to all Americans.

We have come a long way, by changing the student loan program to make it less expensive and to give young people more options for paying off their loans, including as a percentage of their income when they leave school. We've increased the number of work-study grants from \$700,000 to \$1 million. We've dramatically increased the Pell Grant program, and the HOPE scholarship tax credit and the lifetime learning tax credits we adopted in 1997 last year alone had almost 5 million beneficiaries in institutions of higher education in the United States.

Yesterday, I proposed that, for the first time, we make college tuition tax deductible and that we do it in a way that would benefit even more people on more modest incomes so that they could get the same 28-percent benefit, even if they're in the 15-percent tax category. I think this is very important.

The budget contains another increase in Pell grants, special initiatives to help minority students get into science and engineering and graduate. Special efforts—that is basically a test program for several thousand students now—to try to do something about the extraordinarily high dropout rate from college.

Now, over two-thirds of the high school graduates are actually going to go into college this year. That's an increase of over 10 percent in the last 7 years. That's quite a large increase in a short time. But the dropout rate has increased correspondingly. We want to know why. Is it for financial reasons? Is it because people weren't prepared? Could they all be just idiosyncratic personal reasons? And we intend to do everything we can with a very large test group to see what we can do to turn this situation around.

And finally, we're going to double the size of our GEAR UP program to 1.4 million young people. That's the program where people in universities and college all across America mentor middle-school kids who are at risk to try to help them develop the skills and the belief that they can go to college and simultaneously to tell them and their parents exactly what they can expect in the way of aid under current law if they do go,

so they will know. Many people still don't know that the barriers to their going on to college have been removed. So I hope you will also support this part of our budget, because the young people of our country and their families need it.

In addition to announcing our new research budget and our efforts to make colleges more affordable, I'd like to try to achieve one other mission here today. First, I want to take a step back to acknowledge that we have not done a good enough job in helping all Americans to understand why we need very, very large investments in science and technology.

Far too many of our citizens think science is something done by men and women who are in white lab coats behind closed doors that somehow leads to satellite TV and Dolly the sheep. And it's all a mystery. It is our responsibility to open the world of science to more of our fellow citizens, to help them understand the great questions science is seeking to answer, and to help them see how those answers will actually affect their lives and their children's lives in profoundly important and positive ways.

First, we have to make sure Americans understand the contributions science and technology are making right now to the present level of economic growth, something Dr. Baltimore referred to. For example, because of our early investments in the Internet, America now leads the world in information technology, an industry that now accounts for a third of our economic growth, although only 8 percent of our work force; that generates jobs that pay 80 percent more than the private sector average.

If you look at that, what does that mean to ordinary people, and what does it mean to the nature of the economy we're living in? I have never told the American people that we had repealed the ordinary laws of supply and demand or the business cycle. But we have stretched them quite a lot.

In February, next month, we will have the longest economic expansion in the history of the United States, outstripping even those that required full mobilization for war. Now, part of that is because we have pursued, I believe, sound policies: to get rid of the deficit; to start running surpluses, the first back-

to-back surpluses in 42 years; to keep our markets open, with 270 trade agreements; to argue, as I have, that not only exports are benefited by open markets, we also benefit from the imports, because they're a powerful brake on inflation and allow us to continue to grow.

But the real reason this thing keeps going on and on and on is that—all we did in the Government was to set the conditions and provide the tools for the American people to succeed. The real reason is the exponential growth in information technology and how it is rifling through every other sector of our economy and reinforcing the material science revolution, which proceeded it by a few years, but which continues to the present day.

When I became President, there were only 50 sites on the Worldwide Web—50. When I became President—that seems like a long time ago to the students, but the rest of you will know—[laughter]—it's just like yesterday. There are now over 50 million. Think of it. In 7 years, from 50 to over 50 million. It is changing everything about the way we work and live and relate to each other.

I was in Northern California a few weeks ago with a lot of really fascinating young people who work with e-Bay. A lot of you have probably bought things, maybe you've even sold things on e-Bay. But for example, one of the things I learned is that in addition to the employees of e-Bay, there are now 20,000 people whose primary source of income is buying and selling on e-Bay. They do it for a living. And several of them, not an insubstantial number of them, were on welfare before they found a way to bring their entrepreneurial skills to bear by trading on e-Bay. It has changed everything.

So we have to say to people, if you like the fact that we have the lowest unemployment and welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest minority unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years, the lowest single-household poverty rate in 46 years, you have to understand that all that, at least in large part, is because of the ability of the discoveries of science and technology to rifle through our ordinary lives. And it is

very, very important that all of us do a better job of that.

I have proposed in this budget a 36 percent increase in information technology research alone, so that researchers will be able to tackle a wide array of other challenges. How do we find, precisely, the piece of information we're looking for in an ever-larger ocean of raw data? How do we design computers that are usable by everyone including people with disabilities?

One of the most fascinating relationships I've developed—we were talking on the plane ride out here about one of the great things about being President is nearly anybody will come to talk to you—once, anyway. [Laughter] And we were talking about all the people I had been privileged to meet in the last 7 years. You know, I have developed quite a good personal friendship with Stephen Hawking, who, as all of you know, has lived longer with Lou Gehrig's disease, as far as we know, than any person who's ever lived, partly, I am convinced, because of not only the size of his brain but the size of his heart. But it is fascinating to see what technology has permitted this man to do.

Just a few years ago, he could have had the biggest brain in the world, and no one could have known it because it could not have gotten out. He has no speaking capacity, almost no movement left. He can just move his thumb and hold in his hand this remarkable little tracer that goes through a whole dictionary of words that he has, that he runs through with rapid speed. He picks the word he wants, puts the sentences together, and then an automated voice tells you what he just said.

How can we make it even easier for him? How can we make it even easier for other people? This will be a huge issue. Make no mistake about it, the liberation of Americans with disabilities is also in no small measure the product of the revolution in science and technology.

There are also other uses. I read the other day that manufacturers are soon going to introduce a refrigerator that can scan the bar codes of empty packages and expired goods—[laughter]—and order new groceries for you over the Internet. [Laughter] Now, everybody who's ever poured out a carton

of bad milk will love this. [Laughter] You don't have to smell your bad milk anymore. It won't be long before the computer will refuse to order what's bad for you—[laughter]—and only pick items off Dean Ornish's diet. And then we'll all be in great shape. [Laughter]

The second thing I think we have to do is, let Americans know how investments in science and technology, broadly stated, will allow us to lead longer, healthier lives. Everybody knows now that you can put money into cancer research—and thank God we've discovered two of the genes that are high predictors of breast cancer, for example, in the last couple of years—but we need for more Americans to understand why we need a broad research agenda in science and technology, for the health of Americans.

In the 20th century, American life expectancy went from 47 years to almost 77 years, thanks to penicillin and the development of vaccines for many childhood diseases. We were talking the other day about the impact—I'm old enough to remember the first polio vaccine. And I remember how our mothers herded us in line and made us stand there waiting for our shot. And it was like they were all holding their breath, praying and hoping that we would get our shot before we got polio. It's something that young people today can hardly imagine, but it hung like a cloud over the families of my parents' generation. Now, we have this incredible life expectancy. Today, the average American who lives to be 65 has a life expectancy of 83—already. And we are clearly on the cusp of greater advances.

Later this year, researchers expect to finish the first complete sequencing of the genome—all 3 billion letters and 80,000 genes that make up our DNA code. Since so many diseases have a genetic component, the completion of this project will clearly lead to a revolution in our ability to detect, treat, and prevent many diseases. For example, patients with some forms of leukemia and breast cancer soon may receive sophisticated new drugs that elegantly actually target the precise cancer cells with little or no risk to healthy cells. That will change everything.

Our new trove of genomic data may even allow us to identify and cure most genetic

diseases before a child is even born. Most people just take it as a given now that within the next few years, when young mothers bring their babies home from the hospital, they will bring along a genetic map of their children's makeup, what the problems are, what the challenges are, what the strengths are. It will be scary to some extent, but it also plainly will allow us to raise our children in a way that will enhance the length and quality of their lives.

But it's important to recognize that we never could have had the revolution in the genome project without the revolution in computer science as well, that they intersected. Research at the intersection between biomedical research and engineering will also lead to amazing breakthroughs. Already, scientists are working on—we've seen it on television now—an artificial retina to treat certain kinds of blindness and methods of directly stimulating the spinal cord to allow people who are paralyzed to walk. Now, you think of that.

Last year, for the first time, to give you an idea of the impact of technology on traditional medical research, last year, for the first time, medical researchers transplanted nerves from the limbs to the spine of a laboratory animal that had its spine severed and achieved movement in the lower limbs for the first time. That had never happened before.

Now, because of advances in the intersection between science and engineering, we may not have to keep working on that. We may actually be able to program a chip that will stimulate the exact movements that were prevented by the severing or the injuring of a spine. And all the people that we have seen hobbled by these terrible injuries might be able to get up and walk. Because there was medical research, yes, but there was also research on the engineering, nonbiological components of this endeavor. We have to do a better job of explaining that to the American people.

Third, advances in science and technology are helping us to preserve our environment in ways that preserve more sustainable and more widespread economic growth. And that is very important.

Let me just give you an example. Not far from here in Southern California, a couple years ago the Department of Energy, working with the National Homebuilders and HUD, helped to construct a moderate- and low-income housing community with glass in the windows that keeps out 4 or 5 times as much heat or cold and lets in even more light. And that, coupled with the latest insulation technology and the latest lighting in the house, enabled the houses to be marketed to people of modest incomes, with the promise that their electric bills would average 40 percent below what they would in a home of that size built in the traditional manner. I can tell you that after 2 years, the power bills are averaging 65 percent less. And we can't build enough houses for the people that want them.

The Detroit auto show this year is showcasing cars that, I'm proud to say, were developed as part of our partnership for new generation vehicles that the Vice President headed up, and we started way back in '93. We brought in the auto workers and the auto companies and we said, "Look, instead of having a big fight about this, why don't we work together and figure out how to use technology to dramatically increase mileage." And a lot of you are probably familiar—they're using fuel-injection engines, which cuts a lot of the greenhouse gas emissions; some using developed mixed-fuel cars that start on electricity, switch to fuel after you reach a certain stage, and then go back to electricity when you slow down back to that speed, because 70 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions are used in starting and stopping cars.

And there are all kinds of other things being developed. But this year the Detroit auto show has cars making 70, 80 miles a gallon, that are four-seater cars, that will be on the market in a couple of years. You can buy Japanese cars this year on the market that get about 70 miles to the gallon, but they're small two-seaters. Last year I went and saw cars that are 500 to 1,000 pounds lighter than traditional cars and score at least as well on all the damage tests—again because of the revolution in material science, with composite materials being used in the cars.

And the big thing that's coming up in this area is, before you know it, I believe we will crack the chemical barriers to truly efficient production of biomass fuels. One of the reasons you see this whole debate—in the Presidential campaign, if you're following it, you know the big argument is, is it a waste of money to push ethanol or not, if it takes seven gallons of gasoline to make eight gallons of ethanol. But they're on the verge of a chemical breakthrough that is analogous to what was done when crude oil could be transferred efficiently into gasoline. And when that happens, you'll be able to make eight gallons of biomass, not just from corn, but from weeds, from rice hulls, from anything, for about one gallon of fuel. That will be the equivalent therefore, in environmental terms, of cars that get hundreds of miles a gallon. And the world, the environmental world, will be changed forever. And that's— one-third of our greenhouse gas emissions are in transportation.

Now, I just want to kind of go off the script a little to hammer this home, because big ideas in science matter. And once you make a big breakthrough, then thousands and thousands of things follow that have immense practical significance. But you must also know and believe that being in the grip of a big idea that is wrong can be absolutely disastrous.

So today, in Washington and in much of the world, there is a debate that goes something like this: The overwhelming evidence of science is that the climate is warming at an unsustainable rate due to human activity. And then there's this old idea, which says, "Well, that's really too bad, but a country can't grow rich or stay rich and sustain a middle-class lifestyle, unless every year it puts more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than it did the year before. And you certainly can't drastically cut them and maintain your level of wealth."

Our administration spent hundreds of thousands of dollars last year complying with requests to appear before a House subcommittee that believes that our passion about climate change is some sort of subversive plot to wreck the American economy. *[Laughter]* Either that or—you know, I've

been reading too many kooky books or something. [Laughter] They think it's just crazy. Why? Because they can't face the fact that we would do anything to hurt the American economy, and they really believed it would. So I would argue to you that here is a place where we're in the grip of an idea that is wrong.

Our efforts to get India and China and other big countries that will soon surpass us in greenhouse gas emissions to cooperate with us, not in regulation but in new technologies, to help them grow rich differently, always keep running up against the barrier of suspicious officials who believe somehow this is kind of an American plot to keep them poor. Why? Because they're in the grip of an idea that isn't right anymore. It is simply not true that to grow rich, you have to put more greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

So again, I say we have to do a better job of explaining the contribution that science and technology can make to saving the planet and allowing us to still have prosperous lives and, I would argue, to allow us to have more prosperous lives and better lives that would otherwise be the case, certainly within 40 to 50 years, if we don't act and act now. This is profoundly important.

Finally, I think we have to do a better job of having an open debate about the responsibilities that all these advances and discoveries will clearly impose: The same genetic revolution that can offer new hope for millions of Americans could also be used to deny people health insurance; cloning human beings; information technology which helps to educate children and provide telemedicine to rural communities could also be used to create disturbingly detailed profiles of every move our citizens make on line.

The Federal Government, I think, has a role to play in meeting these challenges as well. That's why we've put forward strict rules and penalties to limit the use and release of medical records; why we've worked with Congress to ban the cloning of human beings, while preserving our ability to use the morally and medically acceptable applications of cloning technology, which I believe are profoundly important; why we're working with the Internet industry to ensure that con-

sumers—consumers—have control over how their personal information is used.

It's up to all of us to figure out how to use the new powers that science and technology give us in a responsible way. Just because we can do something doesn't mean we should. It is incumbent, therefore, upon both scientists and public servants to involve the public in a great debate to ensure that science serves humanity—always—and never the other way around.

On this campus nearly 70 years ago, Albert Einstein said, "Never forget this, in the midst of your diagrams and equations: concern for man himself and his fate must always form the chief interest of all technical endeavors." Today, at the dawn of this new millennium, we see for all of you, particularly the young people in this audience, an era of unparalleled promise and possibility. Our relentless quest to understand what we do not yet know, which has defined Americans from our beginnings, will have more advances in the 21st century than at any other time in history. We must be wise as we advance.

I told you earlier that the First Lady sponsored a Millennium Evening with Vint Cerf and Professor Lander. One of the most interesting things he said about his genomic research confirmed not other scientific research, but the teachings of almost every religion in the world. He said that, genetically, we are 99.9 percent the same. And he said, furthermore, that the genetic differences among individuals within a given racial or ethnic group are greater than the differences between groups as a whole, suggesting that we are not only our brothers' and sisters' keepers, but in fundamental genetic ways, we are our brothers and sisters.

And I leave you with this thought. I think the supreme irony of our time is that I can come here as President and have the high honor of discussing these unfathomable advances wrought by the human intellect, that have occurred and the even greater ones yet to occur, in a world where the biggest social problem is the oldest demon of human society: We are still afraid of people who aren't like us. And fear leads to distrust, and distrust leads to dehumanization, and dehumanization leads to violence.

And it is really quite interesting that the end of the cold war has marked an upsurge in ethnic and racial and tribal and religious hatred and conflict around the world and that even in our own country we see countless examples of hate crimes from people who believe that others are different and, therefore, to be distrusted and feared and dehumanized.

You have the power to put science and technology at work advancing the human condition as never before. Always remember to keep your values at the core of what you do. And tell every one of your fellow citizens, and indeed people with whom you come in contact all across the world, that every single scientific advance confirms over and over again the most important facts of life—our common humanity.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. at Beckman Auditorium. In his remarks, he referred to Gordon Moore, chair, board of trustees, and David Baltimore, president, California Institute of Technology; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom; Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; physicist Stephen W. Hawking; and Dean Ornish, founder, Preventive Medicine Research Institute, and author of several health and diet books. The President also referred to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's JPL, Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

Statement on the Geneva Protocol on Child Soldiers

January 21, 2000

Today the United States joined a consensus in Geneva on the text of a Protocol that addresses the problem of child soldiers. I am very pleased with the final result, and I look forward to the early adoption of the Protocol by the United Nations.

The forcible recruitment of very young children—some no more than 9 or 10 years old—into an increasing number of civil wars and other conflicts shocks the conscience and shames humanity. By addressing forced recruitment and the conduct of armed rebel groups, this agreement strikes at the heart of the problem of child soldiers. Countries

that become parties to the Protocol would prohibit the use of soldiers under 18 by non-state forces and would cooperate in rehabilitating and reintegrating child soldiers into society.

The Protocol also deals in a realistic and reasonable way with the issue of minimum ages for conscription, voluntary recruitment, and participation in hostilities by national armed forces. The Protocol would establish an 18-year minimum age for compulsory recruitment; require parties to raise their minimum age for voluntary recruitment to an age above the current 15-year international standard; and require parties to take all feasible measures to ensure that armed forces personnel who are not yet 18 do not take a direct part in hostilities.

This Protocol is an important advance for human rights. At the same time, it fully protects the military recruitment and readiness requirements of the United States. I am committed to a speedy process of review and signature and to working with the Senate on this historic achievement to protect the world's children.

NOTE: The Protocol was entitled the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts, adopted on January 21 by a working group of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

Statement on Indications of a Third Consecutive Federal Budget Surplus

January 21, 2000

Today we received further evidence that our economic strategy of fiscal discipline is working. The tough choices we made on deficit reduction have turned a deficit of \$290 billion in 1992 into a surplus of \$124 billion in 1999—the largest surplus in history and the second consecutive surplus in more than 40 years. The latest financial numbers from the Department of the Treasury indicate that we are on track this year to reach a third consecutive annual budget surplus. In the last 2 years, we have paid down more than \$140 billion in debt and these numbers confirm that we are continuing to pay down even

more debt. I remain committed to maintaining our strategy of fiscal discipline to keep our economy strong and pay down the debt by 2015 for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on the
Comprehensive Trade and
Development Policy for Africa**

January 21, 2000

Dear _____:

I am pleased to submit the fifth annual report on the Administration's Comprehensive Trade and Development Policy for Africa, as required by section 134 of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act. The past year has seen the broadening and deepening of our economic relations with Sub-Saharan Africa as we pursue common objectives under the Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity in Africa and set a course for the 21st century.

For the first time in history, U.S.-Africa Ministerial meeting was held in Washington in March 1999. The event was attended by 83 ministers from 46 Sub-Saharan countries, as well as representatives from 4 north African nations, the heads of 8 African regional organizations, and 8 members of my Cabinet and 4 agency heads. The Ministerial resulted in the *Blueprint for a U.S.-Africa Partnership for the 21st Century*, a document setting forth common perspectives and plans for U.S.-Africa cooperation on a series of important issues, including the integration of African states into the global economy, regional integration, development assistance, sector issues including investment, debt, and agriculture, and the broader issues of human resource development, HIV/AIDS, transnational threats, and conflict resolution. We will continue to build on this blueprint in the coming year.

The legislative cornerstone of our Africa trade policy is the African Growth and Opportunity Act. I am pleased that this legislation has been approved by both chambers of Congress, and I look forward to final approval by the Congress of this historic legislation early this year.

The African Growth and Opportunity Act will add further impetus to our Nation's bipartisan efforts to enhance economic growth and strengthen U.S. trade with and investment in Sub-Saharan Africa.

My Administration continues to be guided by the conviction that economic development in Sub-Saharan Africa will benefit both Africans and Americans. As highlighted in the attached report, the United States has made significant progress in supporting sustainable growth and expanded trade in Africa through a series of successful initiatives, focused on increased economic engagement, enhanced market access, technical assistance in implementing economic reforms, trade missions, development assistance, debt relief, and support for the region's integration into the multilateral trading system.

My Administration will continue working with the Congress, the private sector, the countries of Africa, and our other trading partners to implement the policies and programs contained in this report. We have charted the course and look forward to an even stronger, mutually beneficial U.S. partnership with the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; William V. Roth, Jr., chairman and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, ranking member, Senate Committee on Finance; and Bill Archer, chairman, and Charles B. Rangel, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means.

**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.

January 18

In the morning, the President had a telephone conversation with President Hafiz al-Asad of Syria.

Later, the President traveled to Boston, MA, arriving in the afternoon, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

January 19

In the evening, the President met with Crown Prince Hamad of Bahrain in the Oval Office.

Later, the President attended a game between the NBA Washington Wizards and Dallas Mavericks at the MCI Center.

The President announced his intention to nominate Scott O. Wright to be a member of the Board of Trustees to the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation.

The President announced his intention to appoint George B. Newton and Jim O. Llewellyn as members of the Arctic Research Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint John F. Leyden, Jr., as a member of the Federal Salary Council.

The President announced his intention to reappoint Steven Pennoyer as a member of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission.

January 20

The President announced his intention to reappoint Warren L. Miller as a member of the Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad.

January 21

In the morning, the President traveled to Los Angeles, CA.

**Nominations
Submitted to the Senate**

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

**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 January 15

Statement by the Press Secretary on the President's notification to Congress of an additional 6 month suspension of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996

Released January 19

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released January 20

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Education Secretary Richard Riley and National Economic Council Director Gene Sperling on the President's upcoming announcement of investments in education

Statement by the Press Secretary on the appointment of Mark C. Medish as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Russian, Ukrainian and Eurasian Affairs at the National Security Council

Released January 21

Transcript of a press briefing by Dr. Neal Lane, Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy, and Dr. Rita Colwell, Director, National Science Foundation, on the President's remarks at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, CA

**Acts Approved
by the President**

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.