

on these big challenges, because that's what I've been working for. I've been working for the day that when I left office, this country would have both the self-confidence and the capacity to build the future of our dreams for our children. And we can do it now. That's what I think we ought to be doing. [Dr. Smith and Mayor Coleman thanked the President for his participation.]

**The President.** Thank you all.

NOTE: The roundtable began at 4:40 p.m. in the East Room at Eastgate Elementary School. In his remarks, the President referred to State Representative Joyce Beatty; City Council President Matthew D. Habash; State House Minority Leaders Jack Ford; and Gary Allen, vice president Ohio Education Association. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

### **Statement on Legislation on Trade With the Caribbean Basin and Africa**

*May 4, 2000*

Today's vote is a key milestone toward enactment of legislation that will launch a new era of cooperation between the United States and our partners in Africa and the Caribbean Basin. This important measure will strengthen our economic partnership with these nations, lower trade barriers, help developing nations to lift their people out of poverty, and create a more secure world. I congratulate those Members of Congress who have worked hard to reach agreement on this bill. I look forward to signing this historic legislation into law upon final passage.

### **Message on the Observance of Cinco de Mayo, 2000**

*May 4, 2000*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

This annual celebration of the Mexican Army's triumph at the Battle of Puebla reminds us all of Mexico's long-standing commitment to the ideals of freedom and self-determination. United by our common convictions, the United States and Mexico have long enjoyed warm ties of friendship and mutual respect, and in recent years, our two na-

tions have worked hard to cultivate this increasingly close partnership. From the arts to business to education to the environment, citizens of the United States and Mexico are gaining a greater understanding and a new appreciation of each other, increasing our prospects for a future of peace and prosperity.

We must continue working to open new bridges of friendship and cooperation. This is a promising time for the Americas, and we have an historic opportunity to build our collective economic strength, improve the well-being of our people, and advance the movement toward democracy of all the nations in our hemisphere. As we celebrate Mexico's valiant fight for independence, let us rededicate ourselves to the principles that inspired the Mexican patriots who fought at Puebla and strive together to forge a brighter future for all our citizens.

Best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

**Bill Clinton**

### **Proclamation 7303—National Day of Prayer, 2000**

*May 4, 2000*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Throughout our Nation's history, Americans have come before God with humble hearts to ask forgiveness, to seek wisdom, and to offer thanksgiving and praise. The framers of our democracy, on a quest for freedom and equality, were fueled by an abiding faith in a just and loving God, to whom they turned often for guidance and strength.

Succeeding generations of Americans, striving to preserve that freedom in the face of challenges posed by enemies abroad or conflict at home, also turned their hearts and minds to God in prayer. Today, whether celebrating the special moments in our lives, searching for strength and meaning in the face of problems or grief, or simply giving thanks for the blessing of a new day, Americans continue to use the powerful medium of prayer.

Now more than ever, Americans treasure our religious freedom, which embraces the many diverse communities of faith that have infused our society and our cultural heritage through more than two centuries. Millions of Americans gratefully sustain the tradition of prayer in churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, and other houses of worship across our country.

And we continue to rely on our faith as a pillar of strength, even in this era of unprecedented peace and prosperity. We pray for the spirit of reconciliation, so that we may overcome the divisions of race, religion, culture, and background that have scarred our society in recent years. We pray for the spirit of compassion so that we will reach out to others who have not shared equally in this world's bounteous blessings—those here at home who struggle for economic and educational opportunity and those around the globe whose lives have been darkened by the shadows of poverty, oppression, natural disaster, or disease. And we must always pray for wisdom—the wisdom to raise children with strong values and loving hearts; the wisdom to live in harmony with our environment and to preserve its health and beauty for the benefit of future generations; and the wisdom to keep America the world's greatest hope for freedom, peace, and human dignity in the 21st century.

The Congress, by Public Law 100–307, has called on our citizens to reaffirm the role of prayer in our society and to honor the religious diversity our freedom permits by recognizing annually a “National Day of Prayer.”

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 4, 2000, as a National Day of Prayer. I encourage the citizens of this great Nation to pray, each in his or her own manner, seeking strength from God to face today's challenges, seeking guidance for tomorrow's uncertainties, and giving thanks for the rich blessings that our country has enjoyed throughout its history.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourth day of May, 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, 8:45 a.m., May 5, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 8.

### **Memorandum on Additional Guidelines for Charter Schools**

*May 4, 2000*

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Education*

*Subject: Additional Guidelines for Charter Schools*

My Administration has taken landmark steps to help State and localities improve educational opportunities for students by providing much needed resources to reduce class size, improve teacher quality, and expand summer school and after-school programs. Last year, for the first time ever, the Federal Government provided funds to States and localities specifically to intervene and assist low-performing schools. This year, our School Improvement Fund will provide \$134 million to States and localities to help them turn around low-performing schools. In addition, through the 1994 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and Goals 2000, States have developed standards and accountability systems to identify schools that are low performing. Already, we are seeing results from this focus on standards-based reform and greater investment, including a rise in test scores among our most disadvantaged students. Nonetheless, much work remains to be done. In too many communities, predominately low-income communities, there is still a shortage of high-quality educational opportunities available to students.

One of the most heartening educational developments during my Administration is the extraordinary growth of public charter schools. In 1992, just before I took office, there was only one charter school in the country, City Academy in St. Paul, Minnesota. Since then, because of strong leadership at the local, State, and Federal level, the number of charter schools has exploded and it is now estimated that there are more than 1,700 charter schools nationwide. The Federal Government has invested almost \$400 million in charter schools since 1994,