(10) successful initiatives will require effective partnerships and cooperation among governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector, and greater consideration should be given to financial, legal, and other incentives that will promote improved prevention and treatment actions.

Sec. 3. *Scope.* (a) This order prohibits the United States Government from taking action pursuant to section 301(b) of the Trade Act of 1974 with respect to any law or policy in beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries that promotes access to HIV/AIDS pharmaceuticals or medical technologies and that provides adequate and effective intellectual property protection consistent with the TRIPS Agreement. However, this order does not prohibit United States Government officials from evaluating, determining, or expressing concern about whether such a law or policy promotes access to HIV/AIDS pharmaceuticals or medical technologies or provides adequate and effective intellectual property protection consistent with the TRIPS Agreement. In addition, this order does not prohibit United States Government officials from consulting with or otherwise discussing with sub-Saharan African governments whether such law or policy meets the conditions set forth in section 1(a) of this order. Moreover, this order does not prohibit the United States Government from invoking the dispute settlement procedures of the World Trade Organization to examine whether any such law or policy is consistent with the Uruguay Round Agreements, referred to in section 101(d) of the Uruguay Round Agreements Act.

(b) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not create, any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies or instrumentalities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
May 10, 2000.

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Interview With Diane Rehm of WAMU National Public Radio

May 10, 2000

Ms. Rehm. Mr. President, thank you for joining us.

The President. I'm glad to do it.

Normal Trade Relations With China and the Vice President

Ms. Rehm. It looks as though the normalized trade relations with China isn't likely to go through. Would you agree with that?

The President. I'm not sure yet.

Ms. Rehm. You're still not sure?

The President. We don't have the votes yet. I think we'll get the votes, because I think it's the right thing for the country. But I think it will be—I won't know for a few days yet.

Ms. Rehm. If you do, how might that hurt or help Mr. Gore in his bid for the Presidency?

The President. Well, I think that, on balance, it will help him because he's been a very strong supporter of this agreement and, generally, of our trade policy. And even though some of the strongest elements of the Democratic Party and some of our best friends are on the other side of this fight, it shows that he's willing to take an independent stand to do what he believes is right. And I think that's very, very important.

I think that's something people will look to, and they might compare that, for example, with Governor Bush's going to Bob Jones University and defending his outreach to Jerry Falwell and the members of the far right and his party, and conclude that—our people, the people that we're disagreeing with are good folks, and we're proud to have them as a part of our party; we want them to. But we need a President who will make an independent judgment from time to time.

Ms. Rehm. So you think it's not going to hurt him?

The President. Yes, I think it's a net plus. I think that—let me just say this—I think the reverse is, it would be a problem for our country. That's the most important thing. I

think it would be a big problem for our country if it didn't pass, because it would increase the chance that something bad would happen in that area; it would give aid and comfort to the reactionaries in China; and it would make it possible for people to question whether the Democrats were running away from our global responsibilities.

Right now, that's the burden the Republicans have to bear, because they defeated the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. They opposed our efforts to lead a global march on ending the testing of nuclear weapons. And I think that was a terrible mistake by them. So it's a problem they'll have to come to grips with. I just don't want to see our party responsible for walking away from another big opportunity and responsibility of the United States.

Million Mom March and Gun Safety Legislation

Ms. Rehm. The Million Mom March takes place this Sunday. How do you address the concerns of law-abiding citizens who own guns, who feel that any additional controls would be an infringement on their personal rights, on their second amendment rights?

The President. Well, I'd just disagree with them. I think that every law-abiding gun owner ought to want to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children and should recognize that no strategy will succeed that doesn't have a lot of prevention.

For example, I don't see why any gun owner could possibly object to closing the gun show loophole and the Brady background check. We now know these background checks have kept 500,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from buying handguns. I don't see why any law-abiding gun owner would object to having a photo ID and a license for anybody buying handguns that proves that, A, you've passed the background check and, B, you've passed a safety training course on a gun. We do that for cars.

If you have to get a license to prove you can drive a car and that you're a law-abiding citizen and you have to observe seatbelt laws and speed limits, you don't hear people going around complaining about "car control." They don't call it "car control." They call it sensible public safety. I just think we need to look at the specifics of every proposal. Does this keep any law-abiding hunter out of the deer woods in deer season? No. Does it keep any law-abiding sports shooter away from his or her activities? No. Does it prevent any law-abiding gun owner who believes that he'll be safer having a gun in their home from having a gun in their home? No.

So if the answers to those questions is no, but it would clearly keep more guns out of the hands of children and criminals, then we ought to be for it, and everybody ought to be for it. That's what I believe.

President's Disappointments in Office

Ms. Rehm. You've had a number of successes during your administration. The economy is up. Unemployment is down. The crime rate is down. What has been your greatest disappointment or failure?

The President. I'm disappointed that we haven't been able to make health care available to all the working families of the country. You know, the very poorest people have health care through the Government Medicaid program. And we have extended health insurance to children of low-income working families through the Children's Health Insurance Program, and we're still enrolling more children in that. But I'm very disappointed in that.

And I'm disappointed that the two parties in Congress, once we became financially able to do it when we started running surpluses, we could save Social Security now for the baby boom generation. And as yet, they haven't taken me up on even the easiest part of my proposal, which is to dedicate the savings we will get from paying down the debt, because of the Social Security taxes we pay—dedicate those savings from lower interest rates on the debt to the Trust Fund.

If we did that, we could take the life of Social Security out to about 2054—just that—which would take it beyond the life expectancy of all but the most fortunate baby boomers and get this country over a big hump. Now, I think there are further Social Security reforms that should be enacted, but they'll have to await the election and probably a less—hopefully, a less partisan climate.

Relations With Republican Congress

Ms. Rehm. Of course, from the time you first came into office, there's been this animosity between you and the Republicans in Congress—and some of the Democrats, as well. What do you think it is that has created this climate of mistrust between you and the Congress?

The President. Well first of all, I disagree that there's very much among the Democrats. I have enjoyed, even in my first 2 years, I got a higher percentage of Democratic support for my programs than Presidents Johnson and Carter did, and Kennedy, as an historical fact. We didn't lose many Democrats. You always lose—some just disagree with you.

So they've been quite good to me. I think what happened is, I had more partisan opposition than at any time in history, and I think there were two causes. I think some Republicans thought that the Democratic majority in Congress had been too hard on their Presidents, and so they thought it was payback time. I think there was some of that.

But the overwhelming reason is that they resented the fact that they didn't have the White House. They thought that they owned the White House, and they thought they had found a formula that would always keep Democrats out of the White House. They would say we couldn't be trusted on the economy and foreign policy and national defense and welfare and crime, and we were going to tax people to death and all the things they always said. And when it didn't work, I think they were very angry.

And they decided that they would oppose me at every turn and in every way. I've had many of them come up to me and tell me that that's what they did. It was about power. It wasn't about all these things, and it had nothing to do with—oh, some of them may have very strong personal adverse feelings, but they're basically rooted in they thought that they owned the White House. And the people own the White House. I don't own it. The Democrats don't own it, either. But I think that's really what drove it.

And I certainly hope that after this next election that they will moderate their conduct. But we'll just have to see. I don't personally have—you know, I worked with all these people, and I've worked with them, and I think it's important to point out that in spite of all the partisan animosity, we have gotten a great deal done here. We passed the Balanced Budget Act together. We passed welfare reform together. We passed the bill to put 100,000 teachers in the schools together and a lot of other really big—we passed financial services reform, telecommunications reform. We got a lot done together because, in the end, if we keep working—in the end, to get anything done, we have to work together.

And I'd keep thinking this is easing off, and we're making improvements. I just—I have a lot of people that I have very good relationships with in the Republican caucus, and I will continue to just try to bring more of them around to the idea that we should all be in the business of governing. We have these elections on a regular basis, and before you know, it we have another one, and before you know it, there's a new crowd in town. And it's a terrible waste of energy to spend all your time in partisan fights.

The thing that I'm most discouraged about right now is that the Senate has been here since January and has only approved 11 of my proposed appointments. I've got over 250 proposed appointments up there. And they can say, "Well, this always happens in election year." That's simply not true. If you look at—it's true that the appointments process slows down in election years if you have a President of one party and a Senate of another. It slows down. But it doesn't come to a grinding halt like they're doing now. And again, this is about political power. But it's not good for the taxpayers. It's not good for the public interest. And I hope that I'll be able to persuade the Senate to resume fulfilling their constitutional responsibility to act on these appointments. And they ought to vote against them if they don't like them.

Ms. Rehm. There seemed to have been some personal animosity against you, personally, right from the start, before you left Arkansas.

The President. Yes, I think there was. But it was rooted in—there's a new book out by Joe Conason and Gene Lyons called "The Hunting of the President" that explains what it was about. It was, they were afraid I was

going to win. And they thought it would upset their automatic hold on the White House and their little formula. Maybe they didn't like me, but I think mostly what they didn't like was the prospect that they wouldn't win the White House for ever and ever and ever.

I think it's not too much to say that before the '92 election, they really thought they had found a formula, and there would never be another Democratic President, not for a long, long, long time. Maybe a third party would have to come up before they'd ever be challenged. And it made them very angry. And I kept telling them that politics is about ideas and action, and we've got elections all the time, and nobody stays around forever. They need to relax and have a good time and go to work.

Whenever they did, we got a lot done. We got a lot done together. I enjoyed working with them. But I think, to me, spending your time on personal animosity is highly counterproductive. Life is too short for that.

Impact of 2000 Election

Ms. Rehm. How and to what extent do you think the character and the goals of the Federal Government might change if either George Bush or Al Gore is elected in November?

The President. Well, I think both the nature and the goals will change. I think if the Vice President—regardless, because the country is changing. And the environment in which our people live and, therefore, in which our Government operates will change.

I think if the Vice President is elected, he will do what he said he would do, which is to stay with the economic policy that has brought us this unprecedented prosperity but to modernize it. I think he will implement his—keep paying down the debt. He will continue to try to do more for the poor areas of our country and the cities and the rural areas that have been left behind. And I think he will try to save enough money to make sure we protect Social Security and Medicare and reform it for the baby boom generation and to continue to invest in education. So I think that's what he'll do.

If Governor Bush gets elected, I think he'll do what he said he would do. I think it's not necessary to attack these people personally. I mean, most people do what they say they're going to do. And what Governor Bush said he was going to do is have a tax cut much bigger than the one I vetoed before, defense increases bigger than the ones that I proposed, and vouchers for our schools. And I believe if that happens, we'll basically be back to the Reagan-Bush economic philosophy, which is cut the revenues of the Government, even if it means going back to deficits and higher interest rates. And it will mean that we won't have much money left over to invest in education or the environment or health care. That's what they've—but I think you have to just look at what they say they're going to do and ask yourself what the consequences are.

I think if Al Gore gets elected, he'll try to grow the economy and keep cleaning up the environment. I think if Governor Bush gets elected, he will do what he did in Texas. He will let the people who basically are the primary polluters control environmental policy. That's what he did in Texas. He got rid of all the environmental commissioners, appointed someone who represented the chemical industry, someone from the Farm Bureau, and someone who was a political activist. I think—but that's what they—we shouldn't be surprised if people do what they say they'll do.

I think that the next President will get two to four appointments to the Supreme Court. So I think if the Vice President gets elected, he'll continue to appoint diverse judges who are committed to individual liberties and basically in the mainstream of American constitutional history, the way I've tried to do. And I think if Governor Bush gets elected, he'll appoint judges more like the ones appointed by the previous Reagan and Bush administrations. And if they get two to four appointments on the Supreme Court, I think *Roe* v. *Wade* will be repealed, and a lot of other things that have been a part of the fabric of our constitutional life will be gone. Because—and again, I just think—just look at what these people say they believe, both candidates, what they say they're going to do and assume that they will do it. There's been a lot of studies which show that, by and large,

people who get elected President do what they say they're going to do.

Ms. Rehm. What about foreign policy, and the question of how the two might deal differently with issues of foreign policy?

The President. Well, the Vice President has a big advantage in the sense that he has worked on this for not only 8 years as Vice President, where he's had a major role in issues affecting our nuclear security and issues affecting biological and chemical warfare and our relationship with Russia, our relationship with South Africa, our relationship in the Middle East. So he's got a rich, real history here.

Governor Bush, like me when I got elected, is Governor, and he served far less time than I did as Governor. But he would say, I'm sure if he were here, "But my father was President, and I know all these big-time Republicans, and they're all for me. So I can get them all to come and give me good advice." And so I think, again, the best thing to do is to say that on the question of experience and record, I think the Vice President has the better claim there.

But I'm more concerned about the positions that Governor Bush has taken because, again, I think you have to assume these candidates are honorable people and they will do what they say. He's opposed to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and he says that he wants to build a much bigger missile defense system than the evidence warrants right now—it may support it later—no matter what the consequences are to the efforts we're making to reduce the nuclear weapons threat around the world.

So I think that that gives me some pause. I think that's troublesome, because it could cause the country a lot of trouble in the next 4 or 5 years. And he says that's where he says he is, and so I assume he—I believe he believes that.

President's Role in the Democratic Party

Ms. Rehm. Mr. President, as your time here in the White House winds down, what role do you see for yourself in the Democratic Party now?

The President. You mean, right now, or in the future? Right now?

Ms. Rehm. Right now.

The President. Well, I'm trying to help—first of all, I'm trying to help as many of our candidates as possible. I'm trying to help as many of our candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives. I will do whatever I can to help the Vice President in the fall. I will try to make sure that our side has enough funds to compete with the Republicans. They will have more money as they always do, but I think we've got a better message, and so I think if we've got enough money to get our message out, we'll be fine. So I expect to work on all that.

I remember in '98, they outspent us by $100 million, and we still won seats in the House because we had a good message. We said we were for 100,000 teachers in our schools, and we were for modernizing our school facilities. We were for a Patients' Bill of Rights. We had a good specific set of things we were for. And we will in the fall.

And so I'm going to do my best to just be a messenger for that and support other people. That's what I'm doing. I'm not a candidate anymore, so I get to go back to being a good citizen and be supportive of other people.

Post-Presidential Plans

Ms. Rehm. And what are you going to do as a good citizen after you leave the White House?

The President. Well, I haven't decided yet. In terms of any income-earning activities I might undertake, I think that it's premature for me to deal with that, because I need to wait as long as I possibly can—certainly until after the election and, if possible, when I leave office, to make final decisions on that.

I intend to write a book. I intend to maintain my activities in areas that I care a lot about around the world in supporting the peaceful resolution of racial and religious and ethnic conflicts, supporting my initiatives when I'm gone from office to provide economic empowerment to poor people at home and around the world. I'm interested very much in our continuing efforts to meet the challenge of global warming, which I think will dominate a lot of our concerns for the next 20 to 30 years.

So those are just three things I want to be involved in. And then I've got to build

a library and a museum and a public policy center in Arkansas——

Ms. Rehm. Where are you going to live?

The President. Well, I'm going to live in New York with my wife, and then I'm going to be in Arkansas a few days a week while I'm building the library and museum. We're going to build an apartment there, so that I'll have a place there and a place in New York. So I expect to be back and forth between the two places and then traveling around a little bit.

You know, I'll find something useful to do. I've never—every stage of my life I've always enjoyed. I've had a good time, and I'm not—I love this job. I'd do it forever if I could. But I'm not apprehensive, exactly, about what I'll do when I'm gone. I'll just have to think about it, and I don't want to spend too much time thinking about it while I'm here, because I'm trying to squeeze every last drop out of every minute I've got to be President.

Memorable Aspects of the Presidency

Ms. Rehm. But you know, at the White House Correspondents' dinner, you certainly received a lot of acclaim as a wonderful comedian. I was in the audience, but there certainly seemed to be a little bit of wistfulness in your presentation. What are you going to miss most about being here?

The President. The job. The work. That's what I'll miss most. I'll miss the opportunity every day to push an agenda that I think is good for America and ordinary citizens and the future of this country. I will miss that terribly, because I love this work. I just love it.

I will miss the people. I will miss living in the White House. The people who work here are wonderful, and it's a great place to live. I'll miss working in this beautiful office we're sitting in now. It's the most beautiful place I've ever worked because of the shape of the room and the size of the windows. There's always light here, even when it's raining outside. I'll miss Camp David. I'll miss the Marine Band. I'll miss flying on Air Force One. I'll miss a lot of things. But the thing I'll miss more than anything else is the chance to do this work for the American people every day. It is a joy.

I've spent a lot of time since I've been here reading histories of other administrations, both ones that are very well-known and those that aren't. And I'm amazed at how many people, beginning with George Washington, complained about how hard it was to be President and how all their motives were suspect. George Washington said, once he got to be President, people treated him like he was a common criminal. [*Laughter*]

And of course, in the beginning of the country, the politics was about as rough as it is now. The three periods which have been most partisan were, in the beginning, Jefferson and Adams, and then, around the Civil War, and this time we're living through now.

But a lot of people referred to—Harry Truman referred to the White House as a great white prison and all that, you know. And if they were serious, I must say I just disagree with them. I think—and I've had a pretty rough time here, but it's still—it's just part of the costs of doing business. And I think the job is a joy. I mean, it's just a gift to be able to do this kind of work. I've just loved it.

Family Life in the White House

Ms. Rehm. What does 8 years in the White House do to a marriage?

The President. Oh, I think it's been good for ours, because I got to live above the store. You know, until Hillary started running for the Senate, we actually probably had more time together than we did previously. And of course, in the early years our daughter was finishing up junior high school and high school, and we were together at night a lot. You know, we talked about her schoolwork and what was going on in her life, and that was a lot of fun for us. Then, after Chelsea left and went off to college, we were able to go to Camp David more.

This is really quite a wonderful place to live. It's a great place to—there's a swimming pool here, and Hillary and I spent a lot of happy days out there just talking and reading, or on Sunday afternoons up on the Truman balcony. I mean, you can get busy and drift apart, I guess, in any circumstances. But for us, we worked hard before we got here, and we had a lot of things to do, and we've probably had more time together in our time here

than at any point in our marriage. And I've enjoyed that immensely. It's been wonderful for us.

Outlook for the Future

Ms. Rehm. Looking ahead, when Chelsea is 50, what kind of a world is she going to see? Is it going to be better or worse than it is today?

The President. I think it will be better. No one can foresee the future, but I believe it will be. I think that it will be a world in which, first of all, the average life expectancy will be bumping 100 years, because of the human genome discoveries and all the things that will happen.

I think the world will be even smaller than it is now and that the ability to collapse time and space through travel and the Internet will be greater. I think that our familiarity with, understanding of, different cultures and religions and racial groupings will be greater. And I think we will be a much more polyglot society, and I think we'll be much more comfortable with it.

Ms. Rehm. So you're optimistic.

The President. I'm very optimistic. I think the problems that we will have will be the flip side of the positive changes. That is, I think that the likelihood is that the security problems over the next 30 years—that's what you asked me about—will be from—we may have a conflict with other nations. I hope we won't. That's one of the reasons I hope this China initiative will pass. I hope we won't, but I think it's virtually certain that there will be kind of a global rough alliance between the terrorists, the gun runners, the narcotraffickers, the organized criminals. I think it's virtually certain that the technological advances which may allow us to put computers and DNA strands together in a way that are exponentially powerful may make it possible for the bad guys to have very small—I mean, less than the palm of your hand—sized chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. We don't know.

So we're going to have—and I think the enemies of the nation-state, the enemies of the ordered society, under the guise of religious or ideological causes or maybe just making their purses bigger, will probably be a bigger security threat 20 to 30 years from now than other nations will be to America and to others.

I think that we will—unless we're prepared to have a much bleaker future, two big challenges we'll have to take on beyond our borders are global warming, which if we don't deal with it is going to be very serious, and we'll also have to view global public health problems as our own. We've got to roll back the AIDS crisis, and we've got to deal with malaria. We've got to deal with TB in Africa and other places around the world. And we have to keep working until every child in the world has access to clean water. We still lose as many kids from dysentery and diarrhea and just basically poison-polluted water as we do to these diseases every year.

So I think that Americans will be much more in tune to all that and feel much more immediately affected by what goes on in Africa or Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent or other places, than they do today.

President's Faith

Ms. Rehm. I have one last question. What is your concept of God, and how has that belief influenced your Presidency?

The President. Well, I believe in a God who is both a Creator, who created the world, who oversees the world, and who has provided an eternal existence for human beings. I believe in the eternal life of the soul.

And I think that that has helped me a lot. It's given me a lot of perspective. It's given me a lot of ability to withstand the bad times, to believe that I could overcome my own shortcomings, to understand why I had to forgive people that I thought were being unfair to me, just as I asked them to forgive me and, basically, to keep my eyes on the bigger things in life and to keep trying to grow personally, even as I was trying to do this job for the American people.

It's very important to me. And I think if you have a concept of the eternity of the human spirit, I think, as the creation of God, I think it makes it a lot easier to live with whatever happens. It keeps your head on straight when things are going well and keeps your back up and your spirits high when things are going poorly.

See that rock there? I always tell people this story. That rock came off the Moon. Neil Armstrong picked that off the Moon in 1969, and he brought it to me last year for the 30th anniversary of the Moon walk. It's a vacuum-packed rock. And it's been carbon dated at 3.6 billion years old.

Now, when people come in here and they get real mad at me or they're real upset about something, sometimes I say, "See that rock? It's 3.6 million years old. We're all just passing through here. Chill out. It's going to be all right." [*Laughter*]

Presidents need things that help them stay centered and keep perspective. It's very bad to think about yourself very much in this job. I don't mean in quiet moments, in reading, trying to build your personal life; I don't mean that. But I mean—most of the time when people attack you it's just part of the job. They're supposed to. That's part of the deal.

Presidents need devices, routines, systems, reminders, and friends and family to keep their focus on the American people. Because you're just here for a little while, and if you get all caught up in the things you started asking me about, the personal animosities and the partisan fights and all that, then you basically give a victory to your adversaries by letting them define how you spend your time and how you shape your feelings.

I used to tell the young people here that our job was to do the job we came here to do for the American people. Their job, they thought, was to stop us from doing our job. They could only win if we helped them by letting them get inside our heads and our hearts. And if we just kind of kept focused on what we came here to do, it was probably going to work out all right. So far it has.

Ms. Rehm. Thank you, Mr. President.

The President. Thank you.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 3 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House on May 10 for later broadcast, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 11. In his remarks, the President referred to Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; and Jerry Falwell, chancellor, Liberty University.

Remarks on the Observance of National Equal Pay Day

May 11, 2000

Forest Fires in Los Alamos, New Mexico

The President. Let me welcome you all here today. And before I acknowledge the Members of Congress and our participants, I need to say just a few words about the terrible fire that has surrounded and engulfed part of Los Alamos, New Mexico. I have been briefed on the situation. The fire is continuing to blaze. The residents have been evacuated. We have taken steps to protect our lab and the assets there. And most important, I just want to give my sympathies to the people who have lost their homes.

Yesterday I declared an emergency for the area, making them eligible for disaster assistance, and today our FEMA Administrator, James Lee Witt; Secretary Richardson; our Forest Service Chief, Mike Dombeck; and the Director of the National Park Service, Bob Stanton, are all there, or will be shortly, to assess the situation and to monitor our efforts.

This is a very, very difficult situation, and I know that the prayers and support of all Americans will be with the people out there.

National Equal Pay Day

I'd like to welcome Senator Harkin, Senator Feinstein, Representative DeLauro, Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton, Representatives Mink, Woolsey, Moore, Jackson Lee, and Eddie Bernice Johnson—all of whom are here today with Secretary Herman and Martin Baily, the Chair of our Council of Economic Advisers; Janice Lachance; our EEOC Chair, Ida Castro; and all the other people who are here representing working families.

In just a few moments, I'll introduce the woman to my left, who will speak after me and is really what this day is all about.

The first Mother's Day of the 21st century is shaping up to be a time of commitment and action led by women in America. On Sunday mothers from around the Nation will march for safer communities free of gun violence.

Today women and men are coming together to uphold core American values of