

are—whether because of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability—they hurt more. These crimes affect entire communities and strike at the heart of our American system of values. This important legislation sends a message that everyone is protected under the law.

This legislation also recognizes that State and local law enforcement still have primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting hate crimes. It provides much needed assistance for State and local law enforcement agencies. It provides financial assistance through grants and help with investigations and prosecutions so that Federal, State, and local law enforcement can work together to ensure that perpetrators of hate crimes are brought to justice. In addition, the legislation ensures that Federal law enforcement officers confer with State and local law enforcement before bringing a case in Federal court.

Today a majority of the Senate has spoken. We must all work together to ensure that this amendment is not removed during conference. I urge all Members of Congress to send me this legislation to sign into law.

Statement on the Death of Former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita of Japan

June 20, 2000

I was saddened to learn of the death of former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita and wish to extend my condolences to his wife, Naoko, his daughters, and the Japanese people. Mr. Takeshita was a strong supporter of close U.S.-Japan relations and a good friend of the United States.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Tobacco Legislation

June 20, 2000

I am very pleased that the House of Representatives reversed its position in favor of tobacco companies and today passed an amendment to advance public health by siding with American veterans and taxpayers.

The House decision today to reconsider its support of tobacco companies clears the path for the Veterans Administration to help support tobacco litigation, which could mean billions of dollars to improve veterans medical care. I applaud the perseverance of a bipartisan group, led by Representative Henry Waxman, Representative Lane Evans, Representative Jim Hansen, Representative Martin Meehan, Representative Debbie Stabenow, Representative David Obey, and Representative Lloyd Doggett, whose efforts in past days have resulted in this significant victory.

In the coming days and weeks, there will be other attempts by Congress to block the Federal Government's tobacco litigation with riders supported by tobacco companies. This bipartisan victory should be a model for Congress. The legal responsibility of the tobacco companies should be decided in the courts by the judicial process. I call upon Congress to reject the interests of big tobacco and permit justice to run its course.

Remarks at a State Dinner Honoring King Mohamed VI of Morocco

June 20, 2000

Ladies and gentlemen, Your Majesty, members of the Moroccan delegation, welcome all of you to the White House this evening. No foreign guest is more deserving of a warm welcome here than King Mohamed.

Your Majesty, as I said this morning, it is well known that when the 13 separate States of America declared themselves the United States, your ancestor, Sultan Sidi Mohamed, was the very first sovereign to recognize our new Nation.

The greatest heroes of our early history were the strongest proponents of friendship with Morocco. The treaty of friendship between our Nations was urged on Congress by Benjamin Franklin, drafted by Thomas Jefferson, signed by John Adams, and affirmed by George Washington in a letter to the Sultan. Our treaty of friendship is the oldest American treaty of its kind still enforced today.

In the two centuries since it was first signed, we have seen much to admire and be grateful for in our friendship. As the Arab nation which lies closest to the West, you have been a bridge across cultures. You have a proud tradition of independence, known the world over for your generosity and hospitality. The oldest property owned by America on foreign soil is one of the most beautiful buildings in Tangier, a gift to our country from yours.

Your Majesty, Hillary and Chelsea have visited your country three times now. They have been charmed again and again by the special character of Morocco, the warmth and hospitality of your people, the beauty of the mountains and the Madinahs, and especially, your generosity of spirit.

For centuries, your land has been a model of religious tolerance. When she was there, Hillary asked people throughout your country, "Where did you learn this tolerance?" And over and over again they said, "We learned it from our parents." In Morocco, Your Majesty, that appears to be especially true of kings.

During World War II, your wise and courageous grandfather blocked efforts of the Vichy government to identify and label Moroccan Jews. Decades later, your father bravely opened a dialog with Israel, paved the way for the Camp David accords, and proved it is possible to be commander of the faithful and a bridge between faiths.

I was honored and humbled to represent the United States in Rabat last year to show our respect and affection for your father. I will never forget setting forth on foot from the Royal Palace to the mausoleum and seeing hundreds of thousands, indeed, millions, of mourners on rooftops and treetops and along the side streets, surging toward the cortege, expressing their deep devotion to him.

I am pleased to tell you tonight that we are establishing, in honor of your father, the King Hassan II Memorial Scholarship Program to enable students from Morocco to study here in America, and to study subjects close to the King's heart: international affairs and conflict resolution.

The people of Morocco also have immense devotion to you, Your Majesty. You have emphasized the need to improve schools for

children and create jobs for their parents. You have moved to heal old wounds, promote political freedoms, protect human rights, and reach out to your people.

You have shown the courage and vision to elevate Morocco as a model of openness, prosperity, and inclusion. This is vital, not only for Morocco but also for people far beyond your borders. Friends of peace and tolerance are needed now, perhaps more than ever, as we approach the moment of truth in the Middle East peace process.

Your Majesty, America is eager to continue and to deepen our two-century-old friendship. We are eager to work with you toward a world of greater hope and understanding across cultures and continents. In that spirit, we welcome you again to the land shown such favor by your forefathers.

Welcome to America. Thank you for your friendship, and may it last forever.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:24 p.m. in a pavilion on the South Lawn at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of King Mohamed VI.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Medal of Honor to Asian-American Heroes of World War II

June 21, 2000

Chaplain Hicks; distinguished Members of the Senate and the House who are here in large numbers; Secretary and Mrs. Cohen; Secretary and Mrs. West; Secretary Shalala; other members of the administration who are here, I thank all of you for being here on this profoundly important day.

In early 1945 a young Japanese-American of the 442d Regimental Combat Team lay dead on a hill in southern France—the casualty of fierce fighting with the Germans. A chaplain went up to pray over him, to bless him, to bring him back down. As the chaplain later said, "I found a letter in his pocket. The soldier had just learned that some vandals in California had burned down his father's home and barn in the name of patriotism. And yet, this young man had volunteered for every patrol he could go on."