

as the day goes on, and we'll probably know a lot more about it tomorrow.

Strategic Petroleum Reserve

Q. How close are you, sir, to making a decision on tapping the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and what sort of time constraints do you have to work with, given the fact that winter's coming?

The President. Well, first I want to—I really do want to see what is the considered market judgment about the recent OPEC move, and I don't think we've seen it yet. It's been sort of complicated by speculations about Iraq, about speculations about what the refinery capacity is, and some uncertainty, still, about how much oil is on the seas now based on production.

So I'm studying this very closely. I've talked to a lot of people about it; I will continue to do that. But we have some time before it will be too late to affect the supplies and availability of all the products we'll need as the cold weather sets in. I just think we need a few more days to see what the real market impact of the OPEC decision is. And as all of you know—you've read all the stories and analyses about what the decision might or might not mean, and I just want to see what the lay of the land is, and then I'll make the best judgment I can.

Q. Would mid-October be too late?

Independent Counsel's Report

Q. Mr. President, there's word that Independent Counsel Ray will release a statement tomorrow about his findings on Whitewater, including the role of your wife. Six weeks away from the election, do you question the timing?

The President. Well, you know, even Mr. Starr said almost 2 years ago that there was nothing to any of that stuff that's just been coming out now, a year and a half later. So I think people are capable of drawing their own conclusions about that. I don't think I can serve much of the public interest by commenting on it. I think it's pretty obvious.

We had a report from a truly independent source in 1996, saying that nothing wrong was done and that Hillary's billing records fully supported her account—1996. So nothing has changed in this thing in the last few

years, and I think people will just be able to draw their own conclusions.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:42 p.m. in the James S. Brady Briefing Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and former Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. A reporter referred to current Independent Counsel Robert W. Ray.

Statement on the Need for Congressional Action on a National Blood Alcohol Content Standard To Combat Drunk Driving

September 19, 2000

A new study released today by Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater underscores the need for Congress to act swiftly to strengthen protections against drunk driving.

The study by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Transportation Safety Administration makes clear that crucial driving skills are seriously impaired when an individual's blood alcohol content (BAC) reaches .08. Simply put, this study lends further proof that at .08, a person is too impaired to safely get behind the wheel. To help stem drunk driving and other safety hazards, the Department is releasing nearly \$44 million in highway safety grants to 38 States and the District of Columbia. These grants will provide important incentives for States to save lives through tough programs and penalties to reduce drunk driving and increase seat belt use.

But we must do more to make our streets and highways safer. In the Transportation Appropriations conference report, Congress has the opportunity right now to save an estimated 500 lives a year by setting a nationwide standard of .08 BAC. The Senate courageously passed this lifesaving measure in June, thanks to the leadership of Senators Lautenberg and Shelby. I urge the Congress to send me a final bill that helps make .08 BAC the law of the land without further delay.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report on
Telecommunications Payments
to Cuba**

September 19, 2000

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 1705(e)(6) of the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, 22 U.S.C. 6004(e)(6), as amended by section 102(g) of the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, Public Law 104–114, 110 Stat. 785, I transmit herewith a semiannual report detailing payments made to Cuba as a result of the provision of telecommunications services pursuant to Department of the Treasury specific licenses.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 19, 2000.

**Remarks at the Debut of “Speak
Truth To Power: Voices From
Beyond the Darkness”**

September 19, 2000

Thank you very much. President Arias, first let me thank you for your presence here tonight and your remarkable leadership.

And Kerry, I want to join this great throng in telling you how grateful we are that you have undertaken this project with such passion and commitment. I know that in spite of the fact that half the seats tonight are filled by your family—[laughter]—there are a lot of people here who feel just as strongly about you as Andrew and Ethel and your mother-in-law, Matilda, and Senator Kennedy and the others who are here. You are an astonishing person, and we thank you for amplifying the voices of the human rights defenders who have honored us by their presence here tonight.

These men and women have carried on against unimaginable obstacles, knowing the truth once spoken can never be completely erased, that hope, once sparked, can never be fully extinguished. They have seen injustice aided by apathy. In spite of all the nice things you said about me tonight, a full half dozen of them were prodding me along to-

night before I came out here to do even better, and I like that a lot. They have carried on knowing that even a single act of courage can be contagious, and their courage, and that of so many others around the world, has indeed proved contagious.

More people live in freedom today than at any time in human history, and in 1999 more people around the world won the right to vote and choose their leaders than was in even the case in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell. From Bosnia to Croatia to Kosovo, we are no longer struggling to stop crimes against humanity but, instead, working steadily to bring perpetrators to justice and to create the conditions of humane living. From South Africa to Chile, people are confronting the injustices of the past so that their children will not have to relive them. And all over the world, people finally are recognizing, as Hillary said in Beijing, that women’s rights are human rights.

Yet for all the brave work that is captured in this magnificent book and that will be honored tonight, freedom’s struggle is far from over. And I think it is appropriate tonight that we all ask ourselves at this magic moment of prosperity and peace for our country, what are our responsibilities to advance the struggle? How can we use this global age to serve human rights, not to undermine them?

Globalization is not just about economics. It has given us a global human rights movement, as well. Whether activists are fighting for press freedom in Ivory Coast or the rights of children in America, they can talk to each other, learn from each other, and know they are not alone. Indeed, maybe the most important lesson of this evening is to say to all of them, whom we honor, you are not alone.

Global economic integration can, if done right, make it harder for governments to control people’s lives in the wrong way. Information technology can be one of the most liberating forces humanity has ever known.

Twenty years ago it was a great victory if we could smuggle a handful of mimeograph machines to dissidents in Poland or Russia. When I went to the Soviet Union 30 years ago, young people would come up to me on the street and try to figure out if there was some way I could smuggle a book back in to them. Now, hardly a government on