and Senate have had bipartisan votes indicating their support for strong hate crimes legislation and it should become law this year.

The bill fails to address in any meaningful way the real privacy concerns about Social Security numbers raised by the Administration. Regrettably, it does not include needed protections against the inappropriate sale and display of individual citizens' social security numbers. Moreover, the bill creates loopholes that seriously undermine the goal of the legislation to protect privacy. In addition, by not reauthorizing the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, the bill fails to support successful Federal efforts to protect critical law enforcement funding and reduce violent crime.

We also understand that a range of anti-environmental, anti-competitive, and other damaging riders have been under consideration and may have been added to this bill. I urge Congress to refrain from adding riders that would reward special interests at the expense of the public interest. I also urge Congress to drop the rider that would prevent the Federal Communications Commission from licensing new low-power FM radio stations to provide for a diversity of voices in communities around the country. And regrettably, Congress has attached a deeply flawed Commerce, Justice, and State bill to an otherwise signable District of Columbia bill.

I urge the Congress to complete its work by sending me acceptable bills. I regret that the bipartisan discussion to resolve these issues in this bill were abandoned. The recent passage of several other appropriations bills shows that when we work together and Congress puts progress over partisanship, we are able to deliver real results for the American people. It is long past time for Congress to do the same for the Commerce, Justice, and State bill and to produce a bill I can sign.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks on the Budget and the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 27, 2000

The President. Good morning—good afternoon. [*Laughter*] Don't tell anybody I didn't know what time it was. [*Laughter*]

I would like to say a few words about the budget, the progress we have made, and the work still to be done in this Congress.

The appropriations bills we pass every year do a lot more than keep our Government running. They tell us something very basic about our priorities as a nation. There's no great secret to getting things done around here. When we put progress over partisanship, we get results. When we work together, we get results.

For example, I just signed a very fine VA/HUD appropriations bill, along with the energy and water appropriations bill. It includes some impressive advances for the American people: 79,000 housing vouchers to help people move from welfare to work; more support for housing for the elderly and disabled; investment for our economic empowerment agenda that the Vice President has led, including empowerment zones and community development banks; more funds for AmeriCorps; funds for climate change research and technology in the Energy Department; funds to support our space program; the largest increase ever in the Veterans Administration and in the National Science Foundation, something that is critically important to our future; and adequate funding for FEMA to meet our national emergencies.

The energy and water bill also contains funds for climate change technology and research in solar and renewable energies. These things will have a direct, positive impact on our long-term energy future and help us to become less dependent on and less vulnerable to supply interruptions and price explosions in oil. This is very, very important.

Now, I could say the same thing about the Interior bill I signed the other day, which

many of you were here for, the largest appropriation for land preservation ever in our country's history for our lands legacy initiative. And the foreign operations bills, which the Congress has passed in a completely bipartisan way, funds the debt relief initiative for the poorest countries in the world, which is one of the most significant achievements in the international arena in years and years for the United States and, I believe, for years to come will provide a foundation upon which my successors, whoever they are, will build to help advance America's interests and build a more peaceful world.

So we can do things that really matter around here, even though we have differences. Do I agree with every little thing in these bills? No, I do not. Did I get everything I wanted in these bills? I did not. But we all worked together, and we had some remarkable successes.

Now still, here we are, almost a month past the end of the fiscal year, and there are still some very vital work to be done by Congress. And I have the feeling that the congressional majority has not yet decided whether to wrap up with more progress or score partisan points and leave town, and that would leave vital national needs unmet.

Two days ago I made a good-faith offer to the Republican leadership. I said, let's work together to meet our most pressing outstanding priorities and pass responsible tax relief for middle class families and small business. The answer I got was disappointing. Instead of meeting us on common ground, instead of working with the White House or congressional Democrats, the Republican leadership closed its doors to compromise, literally closed the doors to compromise.

They crafted their own partisan tax package and passed it last night on a party-line vote. The Republican tax package fails to meet the test of fairness to our children, our seniors, or the millions of Americans without health care coverage. If it reaches my desk in its present form, I will have no choice but to veto it.

Congress has to get back to work on this, so let me be clear about my concerns. First, the bill is unfair to children. We can't expect to lift them up if we put them in schools that are falling down. That's why I've proposed to repair old and crumbling schools and build new ones. Unfortunately, the majority's inefficient tax incentives help only a few, and ironically, most of the help would go to the schools and school districts that need it the least.

This bill is unfair to hospitals, to community providers, and to patients. It is a massive give-away to the HMO's, tens of billions of dollars at the expense of teaching and rural hospitals, home health agencies, and other community providers who really need the help. And even though they are spending the Medicare resources, their plan allows the HMO's to take the money and then abandon the Medicare patients, which is the alleged pretext for giving them so much of this money, that they've been dropping people from their Medicare program out in, especially in the rural areas of our country over the last couple of years.

Now, we have to make improvements in the Medicare and Medicaid allocations here. At the same time, the majority is blocking bipartisan proposals to extend health care coverage for children and pregnant women who are legal immigrants or to expand coverage for children with disabilities. Just an hour ago I met here at the White House with a group of Americans with disabilities who lead various groups across our Nation. They have a vital interest in adequate funding for home- and community-based services in this Medicare-Medicaid allocation bill, a need the that Republican bill grossly shortchanges because it disproportionately gives the money to the HMO's.

The priorities of this leadership bill do not reflect the priorities and needs of the American people. The bill is unfair to seniors. The tax package the House passed last night abandons my bipartisan approach to providing significant, long-term care relief for families' long-term care costs. It also fails to address the lack of pension coverage for more than 70 million hard-working Americans.

So again, I ask Congress: Send me a tax bill that helps us build new schools and repair old ones; a bill that helps our workers, all of them, save for retirement; a bill that expands long-term health care coverage for Americans who need it; a fair tax bill.

I also want to raise the minimum wage but not with a Republican bill that stacks the deck against American workers. The leadership should not play games with the minimum wage. They should stop holding it hostage to tax breaks for special interests, stand up for working Americans, and send me a bill I can sign. We can do that and still have appropriate small-business tax relief.

There is more we should do and some more things we must do. We certainly should pass the voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit and a real Patients' Bill of Rights. And we must pass fairness for Latino immigrants. We have a hate crimes legislation we ought to pass. And they've had a bill there that has enormous bipartisan support throughout the country to strengthen the equal pay laws for women.

Again I say, there's no secret to getting things done. We have to work together. Look at the VA/HUD bill I just signed, the energy and water bill. Look at the Interior bill. Look at the foreign operations bill. This Congress has done some good things. But whenever the Republicans shut the Democrats and the White House out and go behind closed doors and try to make an agreement among themselves for the benefit of the elements in the rightwing of their caucus, we wind up with a bill that is unacceptable to the American people.

So I'm here. I'm prepared to keep working. But as we celebrate these good days, we ought to finish the business of the public in the right way.

Thank you very much.

Need for Bipartisan Approach

Q. Mr. President, the leadership says it's you that's playing politics, trying to help the Vice President and the Democrats who are running.

The President. Well, look at the facts. The problem with that charge is, it doesn't stand up to the facts. I have signed every appropriations bill that has been the product of a bipartisan process, every single one. The only one we don't have now is the Labor/HHS bill which contains the education budget of the country, which is the most important one, but we're making real progress there. If you notice, even though it hasn't passed—and it should have passed—I didn't say a word of criticism in my remarks about it because we're continuing to work together in a bipartisan fashion.

What happened with this Commerce/State/Justice bill and the immigration issues and the other issues and this tax bill is that the Republicans basically kicked the Democrats and the White House out of the room. And they came up with a bill, and then they called us and said, "Now, we took care of this, that, or the other concern of yours. Now you guys just be cooperative and sign off on what we have decided to do. The leadership has decided this is the only bill we can get past our rightwing, and you'll just have to take it."

Well, that's not the way to go. I have never tried to play politics with this in this year. Look, I bragged on them today. Every time we do something in a bipartisan way, I try to give credit where credit is due. I have bent over backwards for 8 years here to work with both Republicans and Democrats. But I will not bend over backwards to be run over, not because of me or the Democrats in Congress but because it's not good for the American people.

Now look, we just have these two appropriations bills, and we have the tax legislation, and we have to put some money back into health care. And we can do this, but we're going to have to do it together. We can't just—we can't have our Republican friends say, "Hey, we're having a really tough time getting agreement within our caucus, so you guys have to go away, and we'll go in our caucus, and we'll try to fight it out with each other, and whatever we can live with by ourselves, the rest of you have got to take." Now, that is what happened. That is the fact.

It is true that the bills are not as awful as they once were. It is true that they took some things out. But the bills are not what they would be if they were like all the other appropriations bills, the products of a genuine bipartisan negotiation. That's all I'm asking for. That's all I've ever asked for. And like I said, in these bills that I signed today, there are hundreds, literally hundreds, of projects that the Members wanted that I did not support.

They cut back on the investment in some things that I thought were important. But when you sit down and negotiate with people, you have a good-faith obligation to try to come to agreement. We honored that, and we got the agreement. And I'm very, very pleased with these bills. But the ones that are still out there, they do more harm than good, and we need to clean them up. And we need to do it in a hurry so they can get out of town and go on about their business.

Q. Mr. President, the Senate majority leader says that the tax cut bill gives you 80 to 90 percent of what you wanted and what you were asking for and that no President should expect to get 100 percent of what he wants.

The President. I agree nobody should expect to get 100 percent, but I don't agree that it's 80 to 90 percent. I explained what I thought was the matter with it. That's just not a—I do not believe that is an accurate characterization of the tax bill. And again I say, you know, whenever I'm involved in a peace process around the world, I hear the same sort of thing. If people aren't talking to each other, they say, "Well, why don't they like this? This is more or less what they've asked for." And it's very important that you understand what happened.

On these bills, unlike the other work we have done, they sent the Democrats and the White House out of the room, because they were having trouble agreeing among themselves. Once they made an agreement among themselves and made some changes based on objections we had raised, they said, "Well, why aren't you happy?" And again I would say, all we need—if we get a negotiation, we will have a compromise bill that will be an honorable compromise.

But you all know this is so, because you follow this. The way these bills were produced, the tax bill and the Commerce/State/Justice appropriations, was different from the way all the other bills were produced. Today we had Senator Mikulski in here, a Democrat from Maryland, Congressman Walsh, a Republican from New York in here talking about what they did together on the VA/HUD bill. That's the way we need to get this done.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Four more Palestinians died this morning in clashes with Israeli troops. Are you trying even harder now to try to arrange separate meetings with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, or do you think that violence still has to stop before there is even any point in bringing them here?

The President. I think there has to be a much lower level of violence before they could meet together and talk about the long-term prospects for peace. I worked on this for several hours yesterday, and we obviously keep up with it. And I'm very disturbed about today, because we actually had 2 or 3 good days here, where there was very little violence.

We're trying to get to the bottom of seeing what happened and see what, if anything, we can do to undermine the causes of today's violence so that it won't recur. But we've got to get the level of violence down before there can be a resumption in negotiations.

In terms of who comes here when, that is still subject to discussion. We're talking to the Israelis. We're talking to the Palestinians. We're talking with others around the world, and—look, I'm working really hard on this. I'm frustrated—I'm just as frustrated as you are, and it's heartbreaking. We've just got to try to get a hold of it, and I—but don't lose sight of the fact that we had 3 pretty good days. And I would say to the people in the region not to lose sight of the fact that we did, and tomorrow needs to be a good day, not a bad day, because of what happened today.

Budget

Q. Mr. President, are you in danger of playing into Governor Bush's hands on this budget battle? After all, Governor Bush has run largely on the premise that he can get things done—as a Washington outsider, he can come in here and break gridlock. Now, you're threatening to veto.

The President. Well, first of all, let's have a little reality therapy here. You know, I said that I would do that, and I have. I kept waiting for someone to point out—some of you to point out when they kept saying, "The partisanship is terrible in Washington, and nothing ever gets done"—well, let me just point

out—since they came in, it is true that they shut the Government once down because I wouldn't agree to abolish the Department of Education and agree to the biggest Medicare cost increases on recipients in history and the biggest education and environmental cuts in history.

But when that was over, look what's happened: We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill that passed with big majorities in both houses of both parties; we had a bipartisan balanced budget bill that passed with big majorities in both Houses in both parties, including the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest increase in children's health in 35 years. We had a bipartisan Telecommunications Act that provided the E-rate that has taken us to 95 percent of our schools now hooked up to the Internet, created thousands and thousands of businesses, hundreds of thousands of new jobs. We've had 100,000 police. We've had 100,000 teachers. We've gone from zero to serving 800,000 kids in after-school programs, all done in an entirely bipartisan way. I just went over this breathtaking litany of things that were done at the end of this negotiation process in a purely bipartisan way.

Now, the only thing I have objected to is the unipartisan, if you will, the single-party production of a tax bill and one appropriations bill. That's it. And I don't think that party should seek to—should be able to benefit from their failure at bipartisanship.

Let me just give you another example. We have a bipartisan majority in this Congress, in both Houses, for hate crimes, for a good school construction bill, for a minimum wage increase, for a Patients' Bill of Rights, for campaign finance reform. Now, it's not bipartisanship that is keeping those bills from passing. It is the leadership of the other party in the Congress blocking a bipartisan majority. I fail to see how you could argue that the voters ought to reward people for creating the problem that they are complaining about. I think that's a pretty hard sell.

Yes, sir, go ahead. This gentleman has had his hand up.

Pork Barrel Projects

Q. Thank you. Critics of spending, of Federal spending, identified the VA/HUD bill as an example of legislation that's so stuffed with pork that next year we may not have an on-budget surplus, and whoever succeeds you in office won't have enough money for their proposals. And I'm wondering, how can you sign a bill like that and say it's a fine bill, when it has so many pork-barrel projects in it?

The President. Well, the one thing about—first of all, it does have too many pork-barrel projects, for my taste, but that's what the Republicans wanted. If I wanted to get the money to help people move from welfare to work and have housing, if I wanted to get the funds to help create—continue to help create jobs in poor areas that have been left out and left behind, and the other things that are in the VA/HUD bill, they were also willing to—you know, they never agreed with me and the Vice President on global warming before, and they came in and really supported our budget for research and development and new energy technologies.

And most of these projects—I saw an article in the press today that estimated that this spending in this Congress would reduce the projected surplus by $900 billion. Let me just say, I don't—it will reduce the projected surplus, but I think it's by more like half that, and let me explain why.

Because the one thing about these so-called pork-barrel projects—and I've found in Washington and in life, a pork-barrel project is the other guy's project. It's never yours. If it's the project in your hometown, it's the greatest thing you ever saw. But they are—because they are capital projects, they are not repeating. So the assumption that this erodes almost half the surplus is based on the fact that you'd have this rate of increase every year to sustain that. And that does not have to be the case, because a lot of these projects are—you know, they got the funding, and they'll do the project, and they don't have to repeat it next year. And that's the difference in that.

So I do think that the estimated surplus will have to be reduced, but I think that the assumption that these spending projects require us now to assume that spending will increase by this amount every year for a decade, I do not agree with that. And it shouldn't, and we shouldn't.

Peru

Q. Mr. President, you've always been interested in promoting democracy in Latin America and fighting drugs. There is a problem now in Peru, in which the ex-head of intelligence went to Panama, has returned. President Fujimori supposedly is looking for him, and the situation—political situation in Peru is really very perilous. What do you think is going to happen, and what can the United States and the OAS do to help it out?

The President. Well, I don't know what's going to happen. I'm following it closely, and I don't know. I think what we have to do is to continue to support democracy and the rule of law in whatever way is appropriate. I don't know that I can say much more than that right now.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. One more on the Middle East. How can you have peace in the Middle East until you train the younger generations of both Palestinians and Israelis to stop hating each other?

The President. Well, you know, that's—I must say, that's what the Seeds of Peace program was about and a lot of these young Palestinians and young Israelis, along with other young Middle Easterners I've met, young Jordanians and young Egyptians, in the Seeds of Peace program, young people from other Arab countries.

I think, obviously, a big part of what is driving these demonstrations is a profound alienation of young people in the Palestinian community who have not seen any economic benefits from peace over the last 8 years, and who despair that it will ever actually be completed. I think finding a way to reach out to the young and give them some more positive contact with each other across the lines that divide them is very important.

I think one of the best things I've seen in the whole region over the last 8 years is this Seeds of Peace program and what these young people have done together. And that kind of dialog is what has to replace the bullets and the rocks.

Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus

Q. Mr. President, despite your personal involvement for a Greek-Turkish rapprochement over the Aegean and Cyprus, Ankara has become more aggressive against the territorial integrity of Greece and the Republic of Cyprus in the last days. May we have your comments?

The President. I don't know if I can comment on what's happened in the last few days, simply because I've been so overwhelmingly involved in the Middle East. But I can say that one of the relatively small number of real disappointments I have after 8 years of working in the foreign policy field is that I have not made more progress in helping to resolve the Cyprus issue, because I have always felt that Turkey should be integrated into Europe. I have always felt that Turkey and Greece should be natural allies because they're allies in NATO. I've seen them work together.

I think the whole world was profoundly moved by the way that the Greeks and the Turks responded to each other's human losses in the earthquakes, and basically to see entrenched and unmovable positions in Cyprus in what really ought to be a fairly straightforward problem to solve, keep them apart, and keep Turkey more at arm's length from Europe, I think it's a price not worth paying, and I think it's a very sad thing. I still hope it can be resolved.

There is actually some chance we can make a little progress before I can leave office. If we don't, it's something I will keep an interest in and would be willing to keep working for even after I'm gone from here, because it just—it makes no sense in the larger context of the future of Greece, the future of Turkey, and the future of the Cypriots, themselves, to maintain this present impasse with all the bad feelings and conflicts and estrangements that it has brought us.

Week Prior to the Election

Q. Mr. President, if this budget process drags on into next week, are you concerned that it could cut into your efforts to get out the vote and energize the base for the Democrats? It's a busy week next week.

The President. Well, the most important thing I can do is to do my job. And events around the world could also cut into that. We just have to see what's going to happen.

As I have said to you all along, I've always been happy to do what I could basically to go out and say what I believe, which is that the country is in better shape than it was when I took office, that we're moving in the right direction, and I hope we'll build on that instead of reversing it.

And this ought to be a happy election for the American people. They ought to be out there excitedly debating the differences. But I think the Vice President and Senator Lieberman have made a very good case for themselves, and I think they will continue to do that. And I will do what I can to help, in terms of explaining to people how important it is that they go vote.

But the votes will be won or lost by the candidates in the ongoing, sort of 24-hour debate that will happen between now and election day. I would like to be helpful because I believe what we've done is important, and I think the progress should be continued. I think it's very important that we not get into a budget where the numbers don't add up and we get back into deficit. I think it's very important that someone be here in this job to restrain the impulses of the rightwing of the Republican Congress if they should stay in the majority in either House.

I think that—you know, all this is important. But the first thing I've got to do is, do what the American people hired me to do, because they're going to make their decisions based on their own evaluations of the candidates and the arguments they make.

I may be the only person here who has ever been on the other side of this, because I was a Governor for a dozen years when there were Republican Presidents who would come to my State from time to time in election season. I can say my sense was, when they came, that they did help get their own voters out but that the electorate who were undecided, who were listening, were listening more to what my opponent and I were saying than to what the President said about us. That's where I think we are here.

So my role has got to be, go out and tell the people this country is in great shape, and we're in better shape than we were 8 years ago. We're moving in the right direction. I hope we won't take a U-turn.

There are certain things I think I can speak with some credibility on, like the budget and the need to resist some of the extremist impulses in the Republican caucus. But by and large, what I want to do is just tell the American people this is a chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our kids, and you all ought to show up to vote.

We may never have another election like this where we've got this much prosperity and this much progress with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security. It may not happen again in our entire lifetime. And that's the message I hope I'll get to go out and deliver, and I'll do everything I can to do it.

President's Role in 2000 Campaign

Q. [*Inaudible*]—were out there doing it now?

The President. That's not true. No, that's not true. I've seen some of these stories, and I have to tell you, since August, I told—I was talking to Bill Daley yesterday, and he was reminding me, he said, "You first told me in August that you should stay in Washington and do your job with the Congress and do your job with the country until the last week or so of the campaign, except for the work you could do at night, helping to raise funds for the Congress and the Senate and the Democratic Party." And that's pretty much what I have done.

You know, as I said, I've actually experienced this in my former life, when I was a Governor. And the stories that imply that I have disagreed with that up to now are just not accurate. I believe that I have been doing what I should be doing, the work of the country. The political work I have done, even for my wife, I have done in a way that was consistent with, first of all, getting this work done.

Now, when you get down to the last week or so, I think the American expect everybody to get out and kind of mix it up, and they want us all to be out there. But make no mistake about it, they're going to make their judgments overwhelmingly based on what these candidates say to them.

And I think the Vice President has been doing a great job, and I feel comfortable. I just want to make sure the American people

understand what the stakes are and understand how truly unique this moment in history is. You know, most voters are now younger than me, and most people—a lot of voters will vote who have never lived in anything other than a time of economic expansion, declining crime and welfare rolls, an improving economy, increasing college-going, and all these things that have been happening. And you know, they may think it's just—that's the way things are, and so they don't have to factor all that into their voting.

I've lived long enough to live through many different cycles of life in America, and so I just want to get out there and make sure everybody understands what a unique moment it is. But if I have to do it from here, as I'm doing it today, because my job requires me to stay here, I'll stay here until election day, if I have to, to do right by the American people, because my first job is to take care of them.

Q. Mr. President, your feelings are not hurt? You're not angry?

The President. I have always believed that what I should do is to do my job here. When I can go out at night and on the weekends to help the House and Senate Members raise money, I should do that, or help our party. I should go to the Democratic Convention, make the best speech I could about giving an account of the last 8 years, and then I should do whatever I could to help increase the turnout and make sure the stakes in the election were understood in the last week or 10 days or so.

That's exactly what I thought should be done. So I actually feel quite good about this. And I think—what I want to see the American people have here is great clarity in what the choice is and what the consequences are, and I think they're getting more and more clarity with every passing day. So I feel good about that.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, one on Korea. Is it your intention that if you made a personal trip to North Korea now, do you think it would result in specific steps to have them reduce their missile production and export of missile technology, and do you intend to go?

The President. Well, the answer to the last question is, I have not made a decision yet. But I was very pleased with the reception that Secretary Albright received, and I hope that the North Koreans were pleased with the reception that General Cho received here. And we're talking about those things.

If I could just take a minute, I think it's important for the American people to understand just how far this issue has come, and yet what is still out there. When I became President, and I began to get—after the election, just as the new President-elect will find, I got all these briefings, and we went through all the national security stuff. The general consensus was that the most dangerous problem I was facing in late 1992 was North Korea's nuclear program and that it could lead to the development of not only nuclear weapons, which would imperil the Korean Peninsula and our then about 40,000 soldiers there—we have slightly fewer now—but that in the worst of all worlds, they might develop nuclear weapons and sell them to others, along with missiles, which would be devastating to the whole future of arms control.

And what happened? We got an agreement to end the nuclear program. The Japanese supported it. The South Koreans strongly supported it. We got other countries to kick in a little money. We've worked on it. We've continued to negotiate over missile testing and technology with them. And we refused to have an independent relationship except on arms control issues, in the absence of some improving relationship between North and South; the present President, Kim Dae-jung gets elected in South Korea, breaks this long icy relationship, justifiably wins the Nobel Peace Prize. I was elated for him. And then they come here; we go there. So let me just remind you, we are a long, long way in the right direction, compared to where we were back in January of '93.

But we still have substantial concerns in the missile area, as you pointed out. We're working on it, and that's all I think I should say now. We're working on it, and I haven't made a decision on the trip.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel;

Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; former Chief of Intelligence Vladmiro Montesinos and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru; National Defense Vice Chairman Cho Myong-nok of North Korea; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea.

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.

October 21

In the morning, the President traveled from Lowell, MA, to Indianapolis, IN, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

October 22

In the morning, the President traveled to Johnson City, NY. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel concerning the Middle East peace process. In the afternoon, he traveled to Alexandria Bay. In the evening, he traveled to Hempstead and New York City, and later returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Kingston, NY, and later, he traveled to Queens and New Rochelle. In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 24

In the evening, the President met with King Abdullah II of Jordan in the Yellow Oval Room at the White House to discuss the Middle East peace process.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jeffrey Akaka, Glenn T. Fujiura, and Jose R. Rodriguez as members of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Diane Josephy Peavey as a member of the President's Advisory Council on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kenneth Lee Smith to be Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks at the Department of the Interior.

October 25

In the morning, the President traveled to New York City, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 26

The President announced the nomination of Isaac C. Hunt, Jr., to be Commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate George (Buddy) Darden to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Christopher B. Galvin as a member of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gerald S. Segal to be a member of the National Council on Disability.

The President announced the nomination of Maria Otero to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The President announced the nomination of James A. Dorskind to be General Counsel at the Department of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to appoint Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman, Office of Management and Budget Director Jacob J. Lew, Deputy Secretary of Commerce Robert L. Mallett, R. Thomas Buffenbarger, Vance D. Coffman, Philip M. Condit, Ann R. Markusen, and David C. Mowery as members of the National Commission on the Use of Offsets in Defense Trade.

October 27

The President declared a major disaster in Arizona and ordered Federal aid to support State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on October 21 and continuing.