

fair parliamentary elections in 1999 and presidential elections in 2000, which will serve as a demonstration of Kazakhstan's commitment to democratic principles.

Presidents Clinton and Nazarbayev noted the positive evolution of defense cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan, as well as the continuing progress in Kazakhstan's integration into emerging European security structures, including NATO's Partnership for Peace and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The successful CENTRASBAT-97 peacekeeping exercise that took place in September 1997 is a concrete example of cooperation aimed at promoting regional stability. The two Presidents renewed their commitment to regional security cooperation, including enhanced bilateral military-to-military cooperation, as reflected in the Defense Cooperation and Military Contact Plans for 1998, signed during President Nazarbayev's visit.

The two Presidents praised the extensive U.S.-Kazakhstani cooperation on issues related to non-proliferation of nuclear and non-nuclear weapons. During President Nazarbayev's visit to Washington, agreements were signed on Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation, Defense Cooperation on Counter-Proliferation, and Long-term Disposition of Aktau BN-350 Nuclear Material, among other agreements.

President Clinton welcomed President Nazarbayev's firm commitment to prevent the transfer of technology and materials associated with weapons of mass destruction, and sophisticated military technologies, to countries that pose a threat to regional and global security. The United States and Kazakhstan agreed to establish a regular experts' dialogue on non-proliferation issues.

The two Presidents also discussed the serious threats posed by international terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and international criminal activity and committed their governments to expand cooperation in combating them.

**Statement on Signing the
Agriculture, Rural Development,
Food and Drug Administration, and
Related Agencies Appropriations
Act, 1998**

November 18, 1997

I am pleased to have signed into law today H.R. 2160, the "Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 1998."

The Act provides \$13.6 billion in discretionary budget authority for programs of the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. These programs include the Special Supplemental Feeding Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC); food safety programs; efforts to reduce children's access to tobacco products; and various programs to protect and support rural communities.

The Act provides a total of \$35.3 billion for the Food Stamp program, the Child Nutrition program, the Commodity Credit Corporation, and other mandatory programs.

I am disappointed that the Congress failed to provide the full amount of my requested increase for the WIC program in order to reach a full participation level of 7.5 million women, infants, and children. Full participation in WIC is one of my highest priorities, and the funding level that this Act provides does not assure that we can achieve this goal in FY 1998.

I am concerned about the provision of this bill that alters the administration and funding for research on nutrition programs serving the poor and disadvantaged. The research needs of these important programs should continue to be addressed in the context of the programs' administration. I am asking the Secretary of Agriculture to look into this matter and to work with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget on the most effective approach to address my concerns.

I am pleased, however, that the Act includes nearly all of my request for the Food Safety and Inspection Service. The funding

provided for meat and poultry inspection will ensure adequate inspection coverage and allow the agency to further implement the modernization of the inspection system that I announced on July 6, 1996. I am also pleased that the Act provides almost all of the requested level for my Administration's food safety initiative and the requested level for our efforts to reduce children's access to tobacco products.

In addition, the Act provides significant increases in rural development programs to improve the quality of life in rural America and help diversify the rural economy. The Act also includes a portion of my proposal to create a Rural Development Performance Partnership, which will provide greater flexibility to tailor Federal assistance to local needs, reflecting my Administration's belief that there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to the economic challenges facing rural areas. I will continue to seek authority to utilize the full flexibility that was authorized for these programs in the 1996 Farm Bill.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 18, 1997.

NOTE: H.R. 2160, approved November 18, was assigned Public Law 105-86.

**Teleconference Remarks to the
Council of Jewish Federations**
November 18, 1997

Thank you. And, ladies and gentlemen, I have been told that because I was a few moments late, that Dore Gold filled in for me, and that's a pretty good substitute. I want to thank him as well.

It's an honor for me to be able to speak to the Council of Jewish Federations General Assembly and to all of you who are watching your local federations over the CJF satellite network. I'm pleased to know that Connie Giles, Joel Tauber, Billie Gold have convened this general assembly to further the proud tradition of the Jewish federation system, and I trust that my good friend Jeff Smulyan is being a gracious host in his home town of Indianapolis.

Six years ago, when I announced my candidacy for President, I said that I had a vision for America in the 21st century—a vision that would put us on a mission to keep the American dream alive for every person who is responsible enough to work for it, to continue to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, and to bring our own people together, across all the lines that divide us, into one America.

We've worked hard to advance this vision here at home, thanks in great measure to the volunteer efforts of groups like CJF and Jewish federations all across our Nation. I share with you the deep belief that the strength of our society is the product of our active commitment to one another. Volunteer organizations are the glue that hold our communities together, and I've worked hard to make sure the National Government sticks by you as your steadfast partner.

If not for Government support, Jewish federations and other groups would have to drastically scale back their health and human service efforts. We must never let this happen.

We also know we can't allow Congress to deny charities and other not-for-profit groups the right to take a stand on public issues. It would lessen our democracy if you were deprived of your voice, for your voice has given strength and support to millions of other Americans. For example, as we worked to enact a balanced budget, you made sure we did it in the right way. You spoke out on behalf of legal immigrants; together, we restored critical health and disability benefits that had been taken from these groups unfairly. You spoke out on behalf of older Americans, and together we protected and strengthened Medicare and Medicaid. And I'm very grateful for your voice and your support.

I would also like to thank you for your support of our administration's effort to expand peace and stability in the Middle East and around the world. We must never give in to the forces of destruction and terror. We must never give up on promoting peace. Our law enforcement officials went halfway around the world to bring to justice the man responsible for the cold-blooded murder of Americans outside the CIA Headquarters. The