

authority, and to arrange for the publication of this determination in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 26.

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony for Pope John Paul II in St. Louis, Missouri

January 26, 1999

Your Holiness; Archbishop Rigali; Archbishop Montalvo; Governor Carnahan; Mayor Harmon; County Executive Westfall; Ambassador Boggs; Members of Congress; members of the Cabinet; our visitors from the Vatican; my fellow Americans:

Your Holiness, on behalf of all of us gathered here today, indeed, on behalf of all the people of our beloved Nation, we welcome you back to America. Your return brings joy not only to the Catholic faithful but to every American who has heard your message of peace and charity toward all God's children. And we thank you for first going to Mexico and for reaching out to all the people of the Americas.

We greet you, and we thank you. For 20 years, you have lifted our spirits and touched our hearts. For 20 years, you have challenged us to think of life not in terms of what we acquire for ourselves but in terms of what we give of ourselves.

This is your seventh visit to the United States, your 85th visit abroad as the Bishop of Rome. Through it all, you have given of yourself with a boundless physical energy which can only find its source in limitless faith. You have come in the final year of a century that has seen much suffering but which ends with great hope for freedom and reconciliation. It is a moment anticipated by countless prayers, brought forward by countless hands, and shaped very much by you, Holy Father, and your 20-year pilgrimage.

We honor you for helping to lead a revolution of values and spirit in central Europe and the former Soviet Union, freeing millions to live by conscience, not coercion, and freeing all of us from the constant fear of nuclear war. We honor you for standing for human

dignity, human rights, and religious freedom and for helping people to find the courage to stand up for themselves, from Africa to Asia to the Western Hemisphere.

We honor you for your work to bring peace to nations and peoples divided by old hatreds and suspicions, from Bosnia and Kosovo, to central Africa, to Indonesia, to the Middle East, even to our own communities. People still need to hear your message that all are God's children, all have fallen short of His glory, all the injustices of yesterday cannot excuse a single injustice today.

Holy Father, we are moved by your desire to mark the new millennium with a journey to Jerusalem, to bring mercy and reconciliation to all those who believe in one God, in the holy place where all our faiths began.

Your Holiness, we honor you, too, because you have never let those of us who enjoy the blessings of prosperity, freedom, and peace forget our responsibilities. On your last visit to the United States you called on us to build a society truly worthy of the human person, a society in which none are so poor they have nothing to give and none are so rich they have nothing to receive. Today you visit an America that is thriving but also striving, striving to include those who do not yet share in our prosperity at home and striving to put a human face on the global economy by advancing the dignity of work, the rights of women, the well-being of children, and the help of our common environment.

You will see an America that is not simply living for today but working for future generations, an America working harder to be what you have asked us to be, an example of justice and civic virtues, freedom fulfilled, and goodness at home and abroad.

The Catholic Church in America is helping all of us to realize that vision. Here in St. Louis, Catholic charities are helping families conquer violence and drug abuse, helping people in need to find work and to finance their first homes, helping refugees from war-torn lands to build new lives, building housing for the elderly, including the new Pope John Paul II Apartments, and leading countless other efforts that lift our people's lives.

All over our country, the Catholic faithful do this work for the sake of all Americans,

and they are joined in their work by Americans of all faiths.

Your Holiness, every American welcomes you and hopes that you will come to see us again. I am nowhere near as gifted a linguist as you are, Holy Father, but as they say in your native Poland: *Sto lat i wiecej*—may you live 100 years and more. And may you keep working and teaching and lighting the way, for all of us and all the world.

Welcome to the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Missouri Air National Guard Hangar. In his remarks, he referred to Archbishop Justine Rigali of St. Louis; Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo of the Holy See; Governor Mel Carnahan of Missouri; Mayor Clarence Harmon of St. Louis; St. Louis County Executive George Westfall; U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See/Vatican City Corinne Claiborne Boggs. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Pope John Paul II.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Pope John Paul II in St. Louis

January 26, 1999

Q. Mr. President, are there any thoughts you'd care to share with us, now, as you sit down with the Holy Father?

The President. Well, we have a lot of things to discuss, so I'm looking forward to it. We're going to talk about many places in the world, and I'm anxious to hear his thoughts on his recent trip to Mexico. And then I expect we'll go through a lot of other hot spots in the world.

Q. How has his advice affected your decisions so far in your Presidency?

The President. He reminds us to think of the people, not just the governments of other countries but the people of other countries. And that's an important thing for an American President to keep in mind.

Press aide. Thank you, pool. To your left, please. We have another wave.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

The President. I think the Church should buy the company producing the film, and you could fund all the Catholic charities all over

the world with it. We could sell all the film the photographers use. [Laughter]

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:28 p.m. at the Air National Guard Base. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Social Security and Medicare

January 27, 1999

The President. Thank you, and good morning. The Vice President and I are delighted to welcome you here. We have an unusually large delegation from the United States Congress here today, and I believe I have all their names, and I would like to acknowledge Senator Thomas and Representatives Becerra, Bliley, Borski, Cardin, Hill, Nadler, Pickering, Portman, Pomeroy, Markey, Smith, and Tauscher. I think I have got them all. And give them a hand. [Applause] I think that's amazing that they're here.

I would like to thank Secretary Shalala, Social Security Commissioner Apfel, and Gene Sperling for their work on this meeting today. I'd like to thank our panelists Laura Tyson, Uwe Reinhardt, Martha McSteen, Hans Riemer, and Stuart Altman for their presence. And they will be introduced in a few moments.

In my State of the Union Address last week, I challenged Congress and the American people to meet the long-term challenges our country faces for the 21st century. Today you all know we are here to talk about perhaps the largest of those, the aging of America.

The number of elderly Americans will double by 2030. Thanks to medical advances, by the middle of the next century, the average American will live to be 82—6 years longer than today. These extra years of life are a great gift, but they do present a problem for Social Security, for Medicare, for how we will manage the whole nature of our society.

As I have said repeatedly, this is a high-class problem, and the older I get the better it looks. [Laughter] But it is one, nonetheless, that we have to face. Fortunately, we are in a strong position to act because of our prosperity and our budget surplus.