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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 12, 1991

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE ASIA SOCIETY

Waldorf Astoria Hotel  
New York, New York

7:20 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all very much. And John Whitehead, thank you, sir. John has served this country with great distinction over the years, and it's great to join him and Nancy here this evening, the other distinguished leaders here with me, and all of you -- so many ambassadors from countries in Asia, charges, United Nations contingents, Washington D.C. contingents. And I'm just delighted to be here with all of you.

It's also a pleasure to see Asia Society President Robert Oxnam, and then Vice Chairman Peter Aaron. To you, and to the distinguished men and women in this audience, greetings -- and my thanks for this opportunity to speak with you on topics of great concern to us all. And I heard you were having broccoli so I asked to speak before the dinner. (Laughter.) I hope this doesn't really foul things up, but I feel strongly about that. (Laughter.) No, but seriously, we do have to go back, and I'm very pleased for this accommodation and I hope you'll all understand.

But as you know, I have just returned from Rome, that NATO meeting, and The Hague for an EC meeting. There, I worked with other Western leaders to help build a post-Cold-War world that's characterized by mutual security, democracy, individual liberty, free enterprise, and unfettered international trade. I want to talk tonight about those topics, with the accent on Asia.

But first, for audiences here and in Asia, I think it's important to discuss once again why I will not travel to the region this month, later this month. As President, I must serve the entire nation in the domestic and foreign arenas. Sometimes those obligations clash. When we planned our trip a couple of months ago, worked out the schedule, Congress had planned to adjourn early in this month. I believe it was November 2nd, possibly November 4th. Now the members say that they will wrap up by November 22, but who knows? We will reschedule the trip, but I will not leave while Congress is wrapping up a session. It can commit too much mischief in times like that. (Laughter.)

I saw Home Alone, that movie -- (laughter) -- and I just don't feel comfortable -- (laughter) -- leaving Congress home alone. But make no mistake, however, I will not turn my back on my responsibility to do the nation's business here and abroad. And in times of economic pain, I certainly will not give up an opportunity to work with our allies to create new markets, new jobs and new opportunities for American workers -- in agriculture, in manufacturing and in service industries.

And I certainly will not permit us to retreat into a kind of Fortress America, which will doom us to irrelevance and poverty. The notion that we can separate domestic and foreign policy rests upon a stubborn fantasy that we can live as an isolated island

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surrounded by a changing and developing world. We tried isolationism, and we ended up fighting two bloody world wars.

We tried economic isolationism -- protectionism -- and we helped set off a worldwide depression. I remain deeply committed to building closer ties with the Asia-Pacific region. Although much of our nation's heritage comes from Europe, our future points equally, importantly, toward Asia.

Asia's transformed itself in the space of a generation into the most rapidly growing region on the face of the Earth. Asia-Pacific nations enjoyed staggering real economic growth in the decade of the '80s: The Australian economy grew 41 percent; Japan's nearly 52 percent; Malaysia almost 60 percent; Hong Kong -- there are many here from Hong Kong tonight -- 89 percent; Singapore, 93 percent; Taiwan, 116 percent and South Korea, 150 percent.

The Asia-Pacific region has become our largest and fastest growing trade partner. We conduct more than \$300 billion worth of two-way trade annually. Together, we generate nearly half -- listen to this one -- together we generate nearly half of the world's gross national product. American firms have invested more than \$61 billion in the region, and that figure will grow. Asians have invested more than \$95 billion in the United States. In everything from automobiles to microchips, from baseball to Australian rules football, we grow closer each day.

A few years ago, it was fashionable to refer to the 20th century as the American Century and the 21st as the Pacific Century, as if we were engaged in some long-term competition with our Asian allies. I don't see it that way. The United States will remain large and powerful, but in years to come, we will deepen our partnership with our Asian friends in building democracy and freedom.

We'd be here forever if I tried to tick off our interests and activities, country by country. So, forgive me, but instead, I will address three central issues in our relationships with the nations of the region: security, democracy, and trade.

In the area of security, Asia's variety has spawned a diverse pattern of political and strategic cooperation. Our custom-made agreements and relationships provide a strong foundation for future security.

Let me give you a few examples of how we seek to build the peace. The conflict in Indochina has preoccupied this nation for years. Finally, we've entered into a period of healing and constructive cooperation. We will work step by step to resolve the painful issues left by that war. The ASEAN nations, Japan, Australia and the U.N. Security Council's permanent members recently forged a Cambodian peace process that promises free elections in a nation previously rent by tyranny and genocide. Just yesterday, for the first time in 16 years, we sent an accredited diplomat to Cambodia, to participate in the peacemaking arrangements.

We envision normal relations with Vietnam as the logical conclusion to a step-by-step process that begins by resolving the problems in Cambodia and by addressing thoroughly, openly and conclusively the status of American POW-MIAs.

Today, I am announcing that we will upgrade our relations with Laos, and that we soon will place an ambassador in Vientiane.

The Republic of Korea has moved to build better ties with North Korea while boldly challenging the North to abandon its menacing nuclear weapons program, which is the greatest threat to regional peace.

We welcome recently organized efforts involving us and the Japanese and the Soviets, Chinese and Koreans to bring North Korea's nuclear program under international supervision. Meanwhile, we will maintain our military presence in the south as long as the people want and need us.

In laying the foundation for peace through our global partnership, we have worked closely with Japan in the area of foreign aid. We are the world's two foremost providers of such aid. We also cooperate on development assistance, more and more on environmental protection, trade, arms control, refugees and regional peace. We've urged the Soviet Union to take a progressive attitude toward the Northern Territories in its discussions with Japan.

The Japanese have joined us in trying to lead the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe toward free enterprise. They support more than 45,000 U.S. military forces in Japan with \$3 billion in annual host nation contributions. Japan contributed nearly \$13 billion to the multinational forces for the Gulf war, 10 billion of which went to the United States. This required new taxes -- a very tough thing for any politician to ask of working people -- but Japan deserves praise for choosing the right course.

To the south, Australia casts a presence far larger than its relatively small population would suggest. It takes justifiable pride in its long tradition of defending democracy, and its economic, political and cultural presence helps unite the Asia-Pacific region with the rest of the world.

We can help ensure future peace in the region and defend our interests through a range of military arrangements. Bilateral alliances, access agreements and structures such as the five-power defense arrangement give us the flexibility we need.

While we must adjust our force structure to reflect post-Cold-War realities, we also must protect our interests and allies. In this light, we cannot afford to ignore the important sources of instability: in North Korea; in Burma, where socialist despotism holds sway, despite, I might say -- I might add, despite the heroic efforts of freedom fighters like Nobel Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi; in China and other states that resist the worldwide movement toward political pluralism -- and that contribute to the proliferation of dangerous weapons.

Let me mention just a few words regarding China. China is vitally important. It is our policy to remain engaged. We believe this is the way to effect positive change in the world's most populous nation. That's exactly what Secretary of State Jim Baker is doing there this week.

Fortunately, the key to future stability in the region lies not with arms, but with ballots. Democracy has swept across Asia -- with some notable exceptions, such as Burma, China, North Korea, and Vietnam. Yet we remain engaged in the region, and especially in China. If we retreat from the challenge of building democracy, we will have failed many who have worked hard, even died, for the cause.

The United States will support democracy wherever it can, understanding that nations adopt political freedom in their own ways, in manners consistent with their histories and cultures. After decades of uncertainty, the future really does seem full of hope, and even the intransigent few seem likely to join the rest of the world in building a commonwealth of freedom.

Then this brings us then to the third focal point, and a crucial ingredient in a stable, free society: and I'm talking, of

course, about economic prosperity. No nation can ignore the incredible vitality of this region -- or afford to. Yes, we disagree on some important trade issues, but we also recognize a more important fact: Our fates and values have become linked forever.

Contrary to the opinions of American protectionists, free trade requires efforts by all parties involved. Too often, trade disputes bring out the worst in people. Japan bashing -- you've heard that expression -- Japan bashing has become a minor sport in some places in the United States, and some in Japan have become equally scornful of the United States. Both our nations must reject those who would rather seek out scapegoats than tackle their own problems.

We made a good start: The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Group encourages growth and trade. The Uruguay Round of GATT talks remains the single most important vehicle for advancing the cause of free trade and fending off the scourge of protectionism. We call upon Japan and Korea to work with us in breaking down old barriers to trade, opening up markets in manufacturing, services and agriculture. Our Structural Impediments Initiative, those talks have helped lower barriers to trade and investment. But we need to give those talks new life -- give them them a kick -- and create a better climate in Japan for U.S. businesses.

The fact is that Japan, which nearly half a century ago became a focal point of American hatred, has become one of our closest and most treasured allies. I enjoyed a warm and constructive relationship working with Prime Minister Toshiki Kaifu. And I look forward to spending time with my old friend, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa -- significantly, a man steeped in Western and Eastern culture and superbly equipped to build bridges of culture and trade between our two great nations.

Together, we can build an even more prosperous and spectacular future -- but only if we take up the tough, rewarding task of promoting worldwide economic liberty. We seek a vibrant international economic system that unites markets on every continent.

We in the United States also must strengthen our economy. We level an unacceptably high effective tax rate on capital gains. Germany -- no capital gains tax. The complicated Japanese tax averages about one percent. This puts our own business people, our own entrepreneurs and venture capitalists at a huge and shameful disadvantage compared to our Asian trading partner.

We run an enormous and growing budget deficit, which inflames political divisions within our own country. We must take powerful action to reduce that deficit while nourishing economic growth. To compete internationally we must modernize our banking industry and make our industrial base more competitive. We must work with our allies to build a stable and sound monetary regime.

Perhaps most important, we must build human capital. We have an obligation to prepare future generations for life in the 21st century. The integrated global economy will demand more of us than ever before, and our schools must meet the challenge.

Technological change can do much more than make our lives more comfortable. It can sweep away totalitarianism and forge the foundation for lasting liberty. We live in an age of liberation technology, and no technology does more for the cause of freedom than the means of mass communication. No wall is high enough and no government sufficiently despotic to shut off what some call a revolution of electrons. As we compete with our allies in this area, we must remember that information feeds intellect, and good information fosters freedom.

Let me close by summarizing our general approach to relations with Asia. Our administration sees six keys to promoting lasting peace in the Asia-Pacific region: progressive trade liberalization; security cooperation; a shared commitment to democracy and human rights; educational and scientific innovation; respect for the environment; and an appreciation of our distinct cultural heritages.

Americans have always looked to the horizons for their destiny, even from our earliest days. And we've grown great because we've welcomed people from every continent and every country, and we've tried to make use of their distinct talents when they come here, while constructing a common culture.

Today, we celebrate that diversity, and celebrate the prospect that in years to come, we will develop with our Asian friends even greater ties of trade and culture.

I look forward to traveling soon to Asia, to advance these important principles and to expand market opportunities for tens of thousands of American workers and businesses. As President, I will continue building ties with our allies because those ties mean peace at home and jobs for American men and women.

I want to thank the Asia Society for its vital contributions to the cause of peace, prosperity and understanding. I look forward to your help as I seek to build closer bonds of affection and interest with the peoples of the vast, marvelous, varied Asia-Pacific region.

Thank you all. And may God bless our Asian-Pacific friends and the United States of America. Thank you very very much. (Applause.)

END

7:43 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 13, 1991

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

I hereby report to the Congress on developments since the last Presidential report on May 30, 1991, concerning the national emergency with respect to Iran that was declared in Executive Order No. 12170 of November 14, 1979, and matters relating to Executive Order No. 12613 of October 29, 1987. This report is submitted pursuant to section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), and section 505(c) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985, 22 U.S.C. 2349aa-9(c). This report covers events through September 30, 1991. My last report, dated May 30, 1991, covered events through March 31, 1991.

1. No amendments have been made to the Iranian Transactions Regulations ("ITRs"), 31 CFR Part 560, or the Iranian Assets Control Regulations ("IACRs"), 31 CFR Part 535, since my last report.

2. The Office of Foreign Assets Control ("FAC") of the Department of the Treasury continues to process applications for import licenses under the ITRs. The great majority of licenses issued by FAC involve the importation of nonfungible Iranian-origin goods, principally carpets, which were located outside of Iran prior to the imposition of the embargo and that did not result in any payment of benefit accruing to Iran after the effective date of the embargo.

During the reporting period, the Customs Service has continued to effect numerous seizures of Iranian-origin merchandise, mostly carpets, for violation of the import prohibitions of the ITRs. FAC and Customs Service investigations of these violations have resulted in forfeiture actions and the imposition of civil monetary penalties. Numerous additional forfeiture and civil penalty actions are under review.

FAC worked closely with the Customs Service during the reporting period to develop procedures to more expeditiously dispose of cases involving the seizure of noncommercial importations of nonfungible Iranian goods by certain first-time importers. The opportunity for immediate reexportation of such goods, under Customs supervision and upon payment of a mitigated forfeiture amount, has been made available in appropriate cases to reduce the total cost of the violation to those importers.

3. The Iran-United States Claims Tribunal ("the Tribunal"), established at The Hague pursuant to the Algiers Accords, continues to make progress in arbitrating the claims before it. Since my last report, the Tribunal has rendered 14 awards, for a total of 521 awards. Of that total, 354 have been awards in favor of American claimants: 216 of these were awards on agreed terms, authorizing and approving payment of settlements negotiated by the parties, and 138 were decisions adjudicated on the merits. The Tribunal has issued 34 decisions dismissing claims on the merits and 78 decisions dismissing claims for jurisdictional reasons. Of the 55 remaining awards, three approved the withdrawal of cases and 52 were in favor of

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Iranian claimants. As of September 30, 1991, payments on awards to successful American claimants from the Security Account held by the NV Settlement Bank stood at \$2,040,683,379.21.

The Security Account has fallen below the required balance of \$500 million 34 times. Iran has periodically replenished the account, as required by the Algiers Accords, by transferring funds from the separate account held by the NV Settlement Bank in which interest on the Security Account is deposited. Iran has also replenished the account twice when it was not required to do so by the Accords. Iran has not, however, replenished the Security Account to the required balance of \$500 million since the November 29, 1990, report. In order to facilitate Iran's compliance with this obligation, the United States amended the ITRs to authorize the case-by-case licensing of Iranian oil imports, provided that the importer certifies that the oil to be imported is in settlement of an outstanding claim against Iran, or the proceeds from the sale of the oil are otherwise to be deposited into the Security Account. FAC has licensed eight such transactions, of which seven have been completed, resulting in a transfer to the Security Account of \$220,492,464.96. As of September 30, 1991, the total amount in the Security Account was \$426,278,225.26, and the total amount in the interest account was \$14,331,443.56. The aggregate amount that has been transferred from the interest account to the Security Account is \$832,872,986.47.

4. The Tribunal continues to make progress in the arbitration of claims of U.S. nationals for \$250,000.00 or more. Since the last report, 13 large claims have been decided. Over 80 percent of the nonbank claims have now been disposed of through adjudication, settlement, or voluntary withdrawal, leaving 95 such claims on the docket. The largest of the large claims, the progress of which has been slowed by their complexity, are finally being resolved, sometimes with sizable damage awards to the U.S. claimant.

5. As anticipated by the May 13, 1990, agreement settling the claims of U.S. nationals against Iran for less than \$250,000.00, the Foreign Claims Settlement Commission ("FCSC") has begun its review of 3,112 claims. The FCSC has issued decisions in 212 claims and expects to complete its adjudication of the remaining claims by September 1993.

6. In coordination with concerned Government agencies, the Department of State continues to present United States Government claims against Iran, as well as responses by the United States Government to claims brought against it by Iran. Since the last report, the United States Government has settled two cases with Iran, resulting in a payment to Iran of \$416,000.00. Additionally, the Department of State has represented the United States before the full Tribunal in a case involving an interpretive dispute.

7. Only two bank syndicates remain with claims against Dollar Account No. 1 at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. One of the syndicates has reached a settlement that will be paid soon. The other syndicate has not expressed an intention to pursue its claim against Iran. Appropriate steps will be taken to return the account balance to Iran following payment pursuant to the settlement.

8. The situation reviewed above continues to implicate important diplomatic, financial, and legal interests of the United States and its nationals and presents an unusual challenge to the national security and foreign policy of the

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United States. The IACRs issued pursuant to Executive Order No. 12170 continue to play an important role in structuring our relationship with Iran and in enabling the United States to implement properly the Algiers Accords. Similarly, the ITRs issued pursuant to Executive Order No. 12613 continue to advance important objectives in combatting international terrorism. I shall continue to exercise the powers at my disposal to deal with these problems and will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments.

GEORGE BUSH

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
November 13, 1991.

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*Handwritten:* Civil Rights

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 21, 1991

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1745, the "Civil Rights Act of 1991." This historic legislation strengthens the barriers and sanctions against employment discrimination.

Employment discrimination law should seek to prevent improper conduct and foster the speedy resolution of conflicts. This Act promotes the goals of ridding the workplace of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, and disability; ensuring that employers can hire on the basis of merit and ability without the fear of unwarranted litigation; and ensuring that aggrieved parties have effective remedies. This law will not lead to quotas, which are inconsistent with equal opportunity and merit-based hiring; nor does it create incentives for needless litigation.

Most of this Act's major provisions have been the subject of a bipartisan consensus. Along with most Members of the Congress, for example, I have favored expanding the right to challenge discriminatory seniority systems; expansion of the statutory prohibition against racial discrimination in connection with employment contracts; and the creation of meaningful monetary remedies for all forms of workplace harassment outlawed under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Similarly, my Administration has concurred in proposed changes to authorize expert witness fees in Title VII cases; to extend the statute of limitations and authorize the award of interest against the U.S. Government; and to cure technical defects with respect to providing notice of the statute of limitations under the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. I am happy to note that every one of these issues is addressed in the Act that becomes law today.

It is regrettable that enactment of these worthwhile measures has been substantially delayed by controversies over other proposals. S. 1745 resolves the most significant of these controversies, involving the law of "disparate impact," with provisions designed to avoid creating incentives for employers to adopt quotas or unfair preferences. It is extremely important that the statute be properly interpreted -- by executive branch officials, by the courts, and by America's employers -- so that no incentives to engage in such illegal conduct are created.

Until now, the law of disparate impact has been developed by the Supreme Court in a series of cases stretching from the Griggs decision in 1971 to the Watson and Wards Cove decisions in 1988 and 1989. Opinions by Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Byron White have explained the safeguards against quotas and preferential treatment that have been included in the jurisprudence of disparate impact. S. 1745 codifies this theory of discrimination, while including a compromise provision that overturns Wards Cove by shifting to the employer the burden of persuasion on the "business necessity" defense. This change in the burden of proof means it is especially important to ensure that all the legislation's other safeguards against unfair application of disparate impact law are carefully observed.

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These highly technical matters are addressed in detail in the analyses of S. 1745 introduced by Senator Dole on behalf of himself and several other Senators and of the Administration (137 Cong. Rec. S15472-S15478 (daily ed. Oct. 30, 1991); 137 Cong. Rec. S15953 (daily ed. Nov. 5, 1991)). These documents will be treated as authoritative interpretive guidance by all officials in the executive branch with respect to the law of disparate impact as well as the other matters covered in the documents.

Another important source of the controversy that delayed enactment of this legislation was a proposal to authorize jury trials and punitive damages in cases arising under Title VII. S. 1745 adopts a compromise under which "caps" have been placed on the amount that juries may award in such cases. The adoption of these limits on jury awards sets an important precedent, and I hope to see this model followed as part of an initiative to reform the Nation's tort system.

In addition to the protections provided by the "caps," section 118 of the Act encourages voluntary agreements between employers and employees to rely on alternative mechanisms such as mediation and arbitration. This provision is among the most valuable in the Act because of the important contribution that voluntary private arrangements can make in the effort to conserve the scarce resources of the Federal judiciary for those matters as to which no alternative forum would be possible or appropriate.

Finally, I note that certain provisions in Title III, involving particularly requirements that courts defer to the findings of fact of a congressional body, as well as some of the measures affecting individuals in the executive branch, raise serious constitutional questions.

Since the Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964, our Nation has made great progress toward the elimination of employment discrimination. I hope and expect that this legislation will carry that progress further. Even if such discrimination were totally eliminated, however, we would not have done enough to advance the American dream of equal opportunity for all. Achieving that dream will require bold action to reform our educational system, reclaim our inner cities from violence and drugs, stimulate job creation and economic growth, and nurture the American genius for voluntary community service. My Administration is strongly committed to action in all these areas, and I look forward to continuing the effort we celebrate here today.

GEORGE BUSH

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
November 21, 1991.

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Civil Rts.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 21, 1991

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AT CIVIL RIGHTS BILL SIGNING CEREMONY

The Rose Garden

1:18 P.M. EST

Welcome to the White House. And may I salute the members of the Cabinet who are here today, members of the Congress -- many members of Congress, distinguished guests.

Today, we celebrate a law that will fight the evil of discrimination while also building bridges of harmony between Americans of all races, sexes, creeds and backgrounds.

For the past few years, the issue of civil rights legislation has divided Americans. No more. From day one, I told the American people that I wanted a civil rights bill that advances the cause of equal opportunity. And I wanted a bill that advances the cause of racial harmony. And I wanted a bill that encourages people to work together. And today I am signing that bill, the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

Discrimination, whether on the basis of race, national origin, sex, religion or disability, is worse than wrong. It's an evil that strikes at the very heart of the American ideal. This bill, building on current law, will help ensure that no American will discriminate against another.

For these reasons, this is a very good bill. Let me repeat: this is a very good bill. Last year -- back in May of 1990 in the Rose Garden, right here, with some of you present, I appealed for a bill I could sign. And I said that day that I cannot and will not sign a quota bill. Instead, I said that the American people deserved a civil rights bill that -- number one, insisted that employers focus on equal opportunity -- not on developing strategies to avoid litigation. Number two, they deserved a bill that was based upon fundamental principles of fairness -- that anyone who believes their rights have been violated is entitled to their day in court -- and that the accused are innocent until proved guilty. And number three, they deserved a bill that provided adequate deterrent against harassment based upon race, sex, religion, or disability.

I also said that day back in 1990 that "this administration is committed to action that is truly affirmative, positive action in every sense, to strike down all barriers to advancement of every kind for all people." And in that same spirit, I say again today: I support affirmative action. Nothing in this bill overturns the government's affirmative action programs.

And unlike last year's bill -- a bill I was forced to veto -- this bill will not encourage quotas or racial preferences because this bill will not create lawsuits on the basis of numbers alone. I oppose quotas because they incite tensions between the races, between the sexes, between people who get trapped in a numbers game.

This bill contains several important innovations. For example, it contains strong new remedies for the victims of

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discrimination and harassment, along with provisions capping damages that are an important model to be followed in tort reform. And it encourages mediation and arbitration between parties before the last resort of litigation. Our goal and our promise is harmony -- a return to civility and brotherhood -- as we build a better America for ourselves and our children.

We had to work hard for this agreement. This bill passed both Houses of Congress overwhelmingly with broad support on both sides of the aisle. A tip of the hat goes to Senator Kennedy and former Congressman Hawkins, who, way back in February of 1990, got the ball rolling -- and I congratulate and thank particularly Senators Dole, Danforth and Hatch, Congressmen Michel, Goodling and Hyde for ensuring that today's legislation fulfills the principles that I outlined in the Rose Garden last year.

No one likes to oppose a bill containing the words "civil rights" -- especially me -- and no one in Congress likes to vote against one, either. I owe a debt of gratitude to those who stood with us against counterproductive legislation last year -- and again earlier this year -- as well as to those who led the way toward the important agreement we've reached today. I'm talking about Democrats, I'm talking about Republicans and those outside the Congress who played a constructive role. And to all of you, I am very, very grateful, because I believe this is in the best interest of the United States.

But to the Congress I also say this: The 1991 Civil Rights bill is only the first step. If we seek -- and I believe that every one of us does -- to build a new era of harmony and shared purpose, we must make it possible for all Americans to scale the ladder of opportunity. If we seek to ease racial tensions in America, civil rights legislation is, by itself, not enough. The elimination of discrimination in the workplace is a vital element of the American Dream, but it is simply not enough.

I believe in an America free from racism, free from bigotry.

I believe in an America where anyone who wants to work has a job.

I believe in an America where every child receives a first-rate education ... a place where our children have the same chance to achieve their goals as everyone else's kids do.

I believe in an America where all people enjoy equal protection under the law ... where everyone can live and work in a climate free from fear and despair ... where drugs and crime have been banished from our neighborhoods and schools.

And I believe in an America where everyone has a place to call his own -- a stake in the community, the comfort of a home.

I believe in an America where we measure success not in dollars and lawsuits -- but in opportunity, prosperity and harmony. I believe in the ideals we all share -- ideals that made America great: decency, fairness, faith, hard work, generosity, vigor, and vision.

The American Dream rests on the vision of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. In our workplaces, in our schools, or on our streets, this dream begins with equality and opportunity. Our agenda for the next American Century -- whether it be guaranteeing equal protection under the law, promoting excellence in education, or creating jobs -- will ensure for generations to come that America remains the beacon of opportunity in the world. Now, with great

pride, I will sign this good, sound legislation into law. Thank you very much.

(The bill is signed.) (Applause.)

Q Sir, are you concerned about the feeling of a sense of disarray because of the Counsel's memo?

THE PRESIDENT: The which?

Q Boyden Gray's idea on affirmative action.

THE PRESIDENT: Listen to what I say, and don't get off -- too caught up. It's all worked out and feels good. I think it's very sound legislation.

END

1:26 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)

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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
UNTIL 10:00 A.M. EST  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1991

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
IN THANKSGIVING ADDRESS TO THE NATION

Camp David, Maryland

From Camp David, Barbara and I would like to wish all Americans a joyous Thanksgiving. This holiday has always had a special meaning for the Bush family, as it does for most Americans. Thanksgiving captures our spirit as a people: our determination, our generosity, our industry, and our faith.

Thanksgiving brings to mind the joys of plenty and the anguish of want. As Americans celebrated Thanksgiving in 1777, George Washington and his troops huddled along the banks of the Delaware River. Buffeted by the brutal cold, haunted by British troops massed over the horizon, they stopped to offer humble words of thanks and praise, and to dedicate themselves to the cause of building a land of prosperous liberty. That simple moment helped establish the American character. Our Founders' faith and determination transformed this land from a patchwork of colonies into a Republic of ideals.

This Thanksgiving, many of us join friends and family around the table; others share time by phoning loved ones far away; and all of us will think of others. In places of worship across the land, people contribute canned goods or turkeys or clothing. They share their blessings with people suffering through tough times. And that's as it should be. Americans always have expressed their thanks by serving others.

Many people wonder how a President understands what goes on outside Washington, especially to people struggling to make ends meet. Of course, statistics paint a sobering picture: unemployment, tight credit, lower home values, sluggish job growth. But real life speaks far more eloquently than bare numbers. I have traveled to 48 states since becoming President: talking, meeting people, listening, learning. I will continue traveling around our great country because that's one way a President stays in touch with people.

Recently, many Americans have written me, saying they want me to know and understand that hard times have hurt them. They don't pull any punches. One man, who lost his job in September, described how he and his wife struggle to support two children at home, pay the bills and keep up their property while he seeks work. "Mr. President," he wrote, "now is the time to come to the aid of the American people .... The American people need to know that you mean what you say." A woman, who typed beneath her signature the words, "Average Middle American," was just as blunt. Her husband recently lost his job, and she wrote that "it's pretty thorny out there."

Well, I do understand. I am concerned. And I want to help. I know that for a person out of a job, the unemployment rate is 100 percent.

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As a Nation, we need to address today's problems and tomorrow's promise in a new world united in economic competition -- not frozen in nuclear conflict.

Over the years we have built a strong foundation for progress in this new, revitalized world. Inflation is down. Interest rates have fallen to the lowest level in years. This year we will export billions of dollars more in goods and services than ever before, and that means good jobs for American men and women.

This doesn't mean that we ought to sit back and hope for the best. We must take strong steps to move ahead. I have asked Congress to pass an important series of initiatives to boost our economy. These include tax incentives to unleash investment, reforms to help our banks do their job, proposals to set loose a revolution in American education, initiatives to keep health care costs down. Taken together, these proposals would let Americans do more, produce more, dream more, dare more. They would create more jobs, good jobs, for American workers.

Unfortunately, Congress did not send me a comprehensive package of economic growth measures. But we can't take "no" for an answer.

Now, I know we're about to enter an election year. And I know that both parties will spend a lot of time taking tough shots at one another. In our system of government, the opposition will attack the President aggressively. There is nothing new about this. But when people are hurting, a President cannot accept politics as usual.

Congress left town after a particularly bitter session. We now have a few weeks in which elected officials can cool off and hear from the people they serve. In this time we can build a foundation for greater prosperity. I will continue taking what independent steps I can to help the economy like fighting to create opportunities in foreign markets for American workers. I'll make sure that Administration agencies do everything they can to help the people, from getting unemployment checks out to easing the credit crunch. And I will insist that we get the money in our transportation bill out right away to build roads, fix bridges and create jobs.

When I give the State of the Union Speech in January, I will ask Congress to lay aside election-year politics at least long enough to enact a common-sense series of economic growth measures. I will ask politicians to restrain their personal ambitions at least long enough to get the job done. Afterward, the normal election-year battling can resume.

Politicians should remember that hot rhetoric won't fill an empty stomach. It won't create a job. It won't get the people's business done. Americans don't care about finger pointing in Washington, and they certainly have no tolerance for politicians who use tough times for political advantage. So I will continue to place top priority on the issues you care about: building a growing economy, world-class schools, and what our Founders called "public tranquility" -- a kinder, gentler nation rid of crime and united by bonds of brotherhood and service.

Every day, as I confront the tasks ahead of us, I think of the people we serve -- the family struggling to make ends meet; police risking everything to keep peace on the streets. I thank God for our teachers, who must serve as psychologists, doctors, social workers and peacekeepers before getting a chance to teach the three Rs. And I do care about the people who write me letters, especially people in trouble, people out of work.

Finally, I also remember the American people I have seen in every state and on virtually every continent: People who will not take no for an answer, people with a zest for life; people who love their country.

Americans don't ignore tough realities; we tackle them. We don't wallow in self-pity or despair; we shove obstacles aside and make life better. Optimism, opportunity, realism, determination: These are oxygen to us; they let our society live and breathe. America grew strong with the help of the greatest resource on Earth, the American people. As we look ahead, we should be as realistic about our strengths as we are about our problems. Every time I talk with Americans, I see our strength and I feel all the more determined to do what you elected me to do: foster growth, keep the peace, and maintain our stature as the world's greatest Nation -- the standard by which all other countries measure themselves.

Two years ago, I talked to the Nation on the Eve of Thanksgiving about the challenges posed by the collapse of communism. We met those challenges.

One year ago today, Barbara and I stood in the sands of Saudi Arabia, looking into the eyes of the finest men and women this country has ever known. I wondered whether I would have to send those young people into battle. We were a Nation on edge, anxious about what lay ahead in the Persian Gulf. No one knew how it would work out.

But look at what they did; what we did. We pulled together. We fought for principle. We stood up to aggression. And when our men and women returned home, remember how we felt: proud, excited, confident, even relieved -- all because we knew that we did the right thing.

Today, democracy is on the march around the globe. Nations long enslaved have begun experimenting with liberty, exploring their own promise as free people. America led the way to this new world. We met the test of world leadership.

Just as we've met every challenge in the past, we will meet those that confront us today. As we do, let us remember who we are and what we've done. Let's give thanks for our blessings, for our families and our faith. Let's dedicate ourselves to the hard work this moment demands. Let's pledge to join hands in common purpose.

That's the Thanksgiving spirit, and it has lifted us since the pilgrims first celebrated it more than three centuries ago. Now let's call upon that spirit today to help those in need. Let's call upon that spirit as we move toward a new year and look forward to a new century.

Thank you. May God bless all of you and our great land, the United States of America.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Camp David, Maryland)

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EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE  
UNTIL 10:00 A.M. EST  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1991

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
IN THANKSGIVING ADDRESS TO THE NATION

Camp David, Maryland

From Camp David, Barbara and I would like to wish all Americans a joyous Thanksgiving. This holiday has always had a special meaning for the Bush family, as it does for most Americans. Thanksgiving captures our spirit as a people: our determination, our generosity, our industry, and our faith.

Thanksgiving brings to mind the joys of plenty and the anguish of want. As Americans celebrated Thanksgiving in 1777, George Washington and his troops huddled along the banks of the Delaware River. Buffeted by the brutal cold, haunted by British troops massed over the horizon, they stopped to offer humble words of thanks and praise, and to dedicate themselves to the cause of building a land of prosperous liberty. That simple moment helped establish the American character. Our Founders' faith and determination transformed this land from a patchwork of colonies into a Republic of ideals.

This Thanksgiving, many of us join friends and family around the table; others share time by phoning loved ones far away; and all of us will think of others. In places of worship across the land, people contribute canned goods or turkeys or clothing. They share their blessings with people suffering through tough times. And that's as it should be. Americans always have expressed their thanks by serving others.

Many people wonder how a President understands what goes on outside Washington, especially to people struggling to make ends meet. Of course, statistics paint a sobering picture: unemployment, tight credit, lower home values, sluggish job growth. But real life speaks far more eloquently than bare numbers. I have traveled to 48 states since becoming President: talking, meeting people, listening, learning. I will continue traveling around our great country because that's one way a President stays in touch with people.

Recently, many Americans have written me, saying they want me to know and understand that hard times have hurt them. They don't pull any punches. One man, who lost his job in September, described how he and his wife struggle to support two children at home, pay the bills and keep up their property while he seeks work. "Mr. President," he wrote, "now is the time to come to the aid of the American people .... The American people need to know that you mean what you say." A woman, who typed beneath her signature the words, "Average Middle American," was just as blunt. Her husband recently lost his job, and she wrote that "it's pretty thorny out there."

Well, I do understand. I am concerned. And I want to help. I know that for a person out of a job, the unemployment rate is 100 percent.

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