

WILLIAM J. CLINTON
STATEMENT ON THE RETIREMENT OF MICHAEL JORDAN
January 13, 1999

Today's announcement on the retirement of Michael Jordan marks a sad day for all those who love basketball -- and for sportsfans around the world. In his 14 years on the court, Jordan brought superhuman skill, unmatched athleticism, competitive drive, and teamwork to an all-American sport.

Fused with a strength of will and body, Jordan's finesse and artistry and his incomparable athleticism has made him unlike any other player in the history of the sport.

Jordan retires with the most impressive credentials any basketball player has ever had -- breaking records on every front. He has led the league ten times in scoring. His career average 32.15 points per games the best in league history. Jordan was MVP of the NBA finals six times, a league record, and MVP of the league five times. His six championships with the Chicago Bulls trails only that of Boston Celtics great Bill Russell. And, of course, like the Wright brothers, Michael Jordan proved that human beings could fly.

But more than any picture of a high-flying dunk or a twisting, impossible lay up, Jordan showed generations of young sports fans how to be a good person while being a good sport. Although we are very sad that he's retiring, ending his career on a championship-winning three-point shot is exactly the way he should be remembered.

As a life-long Chicago fan, I know that Hillary will be particularly sad to see him go. As we all will. Thank you Michael Jordan for a career of sheer thrill and unsurpassed athleticism.

###