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Good afternoon. [DOG JOKE?] Let me begin by wishing you happy holidays. Before I take your questions, I briefly want to review the progress we have made this year in our mission to prepare America for the 21st Century.

Five years ago, when I first ran for President, I said that our goal must be to keep the American dream alive for all who would work for it. Today, we can say with confidence that we are keeping that dream alive in very new and very challenging times. In 1993, we put in place a new economic strategy, and we sealed it into place with the balanced budget that I signed this summer. It is clear that America's economy continues to be the strongest in a generation. That balanced budget also served to reinforce our basic values, by with the most significant new investment in higher education since the GI Bill a half century ago, and in children's health care since the creation of Medicaid in 1965. We also took bipartisan action to strengthen America's international leadership, [with ratification of the CWC & China.] And the agreement on Climate change reached in Kyoto last week marks a significant step to protect the next generation from almost unthinkable health and environmental risks -- and to do so in a way that promotes the economy as it protects the environment.

1997 has been a very good year for America. We achieved a great deal to strengthen our values and meet our challenges. Now, in 1998 and beyond, we must do even more to strengthen the American dream, to give all our people the opportunity to prosper in the new economy, and to strengthen America's security at home and abroad.

One of the earliest and most important tests of our willingness to seize this moment will be [nato ....].
PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON
REMARKS FOR NEWS CONFERENCE
WASHINGTON, DC
DECEMBER 16, 1997
Good afternoon.

It is only fitting that we gather today in Dean Acheson Auditorium. For, as Acheson was in his time, we truly are "present at the creation." The creation of a post-cold-war era that might be unrecognizable to the wise men of Acheson's time; a new era of promise and peril being defined by men -- and women -- determined that the 21st Century be known as a new "American Century."

I briefly want to review the progress we have made this year in our mission to prepare America for the 21st Century.
Even as we reaped the hard-earned benefits of the strongest economy in a generation, this nation refused to be complacent. We confronted big issues in 1997. We passed a plan to balance the budget. We made college affordable -- and community college virtually free -- for every American. We cut taxes for middle-class families. We extended health insurance to 5 million poor children. We cut crime, reduced welfare and strengthened our schools. We made the world safer by ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention, and in Kyoto, with the Vice President’s leadership, took an important step toward protecting our environment even as we promote our economy.
We renewed the consensus for engagement with China. We stood strong against a rogue regime in Iraq. We made real progress toward lasting peace in Bosnia. Next week I will personally thank our troops there and talk to the Bosnian people about their responsibility for the future.

Of course, even as we reflect on how far we've come in our mandate to carry our enduring American values into a new century, we realize how far we have to go. 1998 will be a year of vigorous action on the vital issues that will shape the century to come.
Earlier today, with the simple stroke of a pen, we helped make European history. Secretary Albright and her NATO counterparts signed Protocols of Accession for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic -- formalizing our intent to welcome these nations as NATO's newest Allies in a grand effort to defend our shared values and advance our common destiny.

This is a milestone in the enterprise I launched four years ago to adapt our Alliance to the challenges of change, and open NATO to Europe's new democracies. The entry of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic into the Alliance will make America safer, NATO stronger, and Europe more stable and united.
The decision to add new members to NATO must be ratified by all 16 Allies. I'm gratified that the Congress has already taken an active, bipartisan role -- through the Senate NATO Observer Group that joined us at the Madrid Summit and the extensive hearings and resolutions this fall. I will promptly seek the Senate's advice and consent on NATO expansion when Congress returns in January. The United States has led the way in transforming our Alliance for the future. Now we should be among the first to vote yes for NATO's historic enlargement.
We are well on our way to the goal I set last year of welcoming the first new members by NATO's 50th anniversary. And today, I am pleased to announce that the Alliance has accepted my invitation to come to Washington for that special summit in the Spring of 1999. Together we will strengthen NATO for another 50 years, and -- I hope -- welcome its newest members.
And now, before I take your questions, I want to wish you and your families all happy holidays. And in the room where President Kennedy held so many memorable press conferences, let me remind you that he once praised these exercises, with tongue only somewhat in cheek, saying "it is highly beneficial to have some 20 million Americans regularly...observe the incisive, the intelligent, and the courteous qualities displayed by your Washington correspondents." I'm sure you'll live up to that today.

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From education to the environment, from health care to child care, from expanding trade to improving skills, from fighting new security threats to promoting peace, we have so much to do, both here at home and around the world.
In Kyoto, just a week ago, the U.S. led the world in addressing the greatest environmental challenge before us — in a way that will spur economic growth and innovation. I want to thank VP Gore for his work in making this possible to his lifelong commitment to fighting global warming.
GOOD afternoon and happy holidays. [I know the news you've all been waiting for is the name of my new dog. I've appointed a bipartisan commission and hope to reach a decision soon.] Before I take your questions, I want to briefly review the progress we have made this year in our mission to prepare America for the 21st century and keep our leadership strong and sure.

Six years ago, when I first ran for President, I said that our goal must be to keep the American dream alive for all who would work for it. Today, we can say with confidence that we are keeping that dream alive in very new and challenging times. In 1993, we put in place a new economic strategy, and we sealed it with the balanced budget that I signed this summer. That balanced budget also reinforced our basic values, with the most significant new investment in higher education since the GI Bill half a century ago, and in children's health care since the creation of Medicaid in 1965. As we look ahead to the 21st century, America's economy continues to be the strongest in a generation.

Beyond our borders, we've sustained our role as the world's leading force for peace, freedom and prosperity. We've strongly supported the quiet revolution in democracy under way in our own hemisphere, where cooperation on issues like trade, the environment and drugs is benefiting all Americans. We've led in building a new Asia Pacific community -- renewing the consensus for engagement with China... and forging an action plan to help our Asian partners meet their financial challenges. And we've launched a new initiative to promote economic growth and opportunity in Africa -- and create new partners for America.
We’ve continued creating good jobs and growth here at home by opening markets worldwide, including landmark global agreements this year covering telecommunications, information technology and financial services – sectors where America leads the world.

We’ve acted to meet new threats to our security -- working with Congress to secure the Chemical Weapons Convention... preventing rogue states like Iraq from developing arsenals of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons... increasing arrests of drug traffickers by 1000 percent and cocaine seizures by 300 percent... bringing terrorists to justice like Mir Aimal Kansi, who attacked our CIA employees in Virginia in 1993... and forging an agreement on climate change to protect the next generation from serious health and environmental risks – and to do so in a way that promotes the economy as it protects the environment.

In this holiday season, we must also redouble America’s leadership for peace, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East, Korea, Haiti and Bosnia. Next week, I will visit Bosnia to thank our troops for their remarkable work in securing the blessings of peace... and to talk to the Bosnian people about the future, which ultimately is in their hands.

Our efforts in Bosnia reflect our broader commitment to build an undivided, democratic, peaceful Europe for the first time in history. We’ve made good progress in 1997 – supporting the region’s new democracies and building strong, unprecedented partnerships between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine.

And earlier today, with the simple stroke of a pen, we helped make European history. Secretary
Albright and her NATO counterparts signed Protocols of Accession for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic – formalizing our intent to welcome these nations as NATO’s newest Allies.

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The decision to add new members to NATO must be ratified by all 16 Allies. I’m gratified that the Congress already has taken an active, bipartisan role – through the Senate NATO Observer Group that joined us at the Madrid Summit and the extensive hearings and resolutions this fall. I will promptly seek the Senate’s advice and consent when Congress returns in January. The United States has led the way in transforming our Alliance for the future. Now, we should be among the first to vote yes for NATO’s historic enlargement.

We are well on our way to the goal I set last year of welcoming the first new members by NATO’s 50th anniversary. And here, today, in the Dean Acheson auditorium, I am inviting the Alliance to come to Washington for that special summit in April 1999. Together, we will strengthen NATO for another 50 years, and – I hope and expect – welcome its newest members.

Now, I’m happy to take your questions.

Michael W.
translating to A+ A+ 
1997 been a good year. Lots
to even more. Lots
to say about that soon.

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PHOTOCOPY
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Kale, Dora A.

From: LaFleur, Vinca S.
Sent: Monday, December 15, 1997 12:44 PM
To: LaFleur, Vinca S.; @NSA - Natl Security Advisor
Cc: @PLANNING - Strat Plan & Comm
Subject: RE: REVISED Press Conference Statement, 12/16 [UNCLASSIFIED]

PLEASE SUB FOR PREVIOUS VERSION - THANK YOU!

The attached includes the domestic insert described below, plus a few more small cuts to keep it at 3 pages.

[Attachment]

Press Conference, Dec 16 - 5.d...

--- Original Message ---
From: LaFleur, Vinca S.
Sent: Monday, December 15, 1997 12:14 PM
To: @NSA - Natl Security Advisor
Cc: @PLANNING - Strat Plan & Comm
Subject: REVISED Press Conference Statement, 12/16 [UNCLASSIFIED]
Importance: High

<< File: Press Conference, Dec 15 - 4.doc >>

FOR SRB/JS REVIEW

Attached is a revised version of tomorrow's press conference statement. It reflects Jim's request to add financial services, Kyoto and Kansi... and Sandy's request to cut it to 3 pages. Based on a conversation Tony and I had with Michael Waldman in this morning's Ann Lewis meeting, it also leaves space for a domestic insert that Waldman will provide.

Comments to Vinca please at 6-9376, fax 6-9210 or page 4611
Good afternoon, and happy holidays. [I know the news you've all been waiting for is the name of my new dog. I'm reviewing the interagency memo -- but I hope to reach a decision soon.]

Before I take your questions, I want to briefly review the progress we have made this year in our mission to prepare America for the 21st century and keep our leadership strong and sure.

Six years ago, when I first ran for President, I said that our goal must be to keep the American dream alive for all who would work for it. Today, we can say with confidence that we are keeping that dream alive in very new and challenging times. In 1993, we put in place a new economic strategy, and we sealed it with the balanced budget that I signed this summer. That balanced budget also reinforced our basic values, with the most significant new investment in higher education since the GI Bill half a century ago, and in children's health care since the creation of
Medicaid in 1965. As we look ahead to the 21st century, America's economy continues to be the strongest in a generation.

Beyond our borders, we've sustained our role as the world's leading force for peace, freedom and prosperity. We've led in shaping a new Asia Pacific community -- renewing the consensus for engagement with China... and forging an action plan to help our Asian partners meet and beat their financial challenges. We've strongly supported the democratic revolution under way in our own hemisphere, where cooperation on issues like trade, the environment and drugs is benefiting all Americans. And we're working to bring African nations into the mainstream of the 21st century economy - and create new partners for America.

We've continued creating good jobs and growth by opening markets worldwide, including landmark global agreements on telecommunications, information technology and financial services - sectors where America leads the world.

We've acted to meet new threats to our security -- working with Congress to secure the Chemical Weapons Convention... fighting the spread of weapons of mass destruction and constraining rogue states like Iraq that seek to obtain them...
increasing drug trafficker arrests by 1000 percent and cocaine seizures by 300 percent... bringing terrorists to justice like Mir Aimal Kansi, who attacked our CIA employees in 1993... and forging an agreement on climate change to protect the next generation from serious health and environmental risks - and to do so in a way that promotes the economy as it protects the environment.

In this holiday season, we also can all be proud of America’s leadership for peace. from Northern Ireland to the Middle East, Korea, Haiti and Bosnia. Next week, I will visit Bosnia to thank our troops for their remarkable work in securing the blessings of peace... and to talk to the Bosnian people about the future, which ultimately is in their hands

Building an undivided, democratic, peaceful Europe remains the first of our foreign policy priorities. We’ve made good progress in 1997 - supporting the region’s new democracies and building strong, unprecedented partnerships between NATO and Russia and NATO and Ukraine.

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