

in this awful bankruptcy and have lost life savings. And one of the things this group is going to do is take a good, hard look at it.

Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:42 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his

remarks, he referred to Kenneth L. Lay, chairman and chief executive officer, Enron Corp.; former Gov. Ann Richards of Texas; U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East Gen. Anthony Zinni, USMC (Ret.); and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing the Department of Defense and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations for Recovery from and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States Act, 2002, in Arlington, Virginia  
January 10, 2002

*The President.* Thank you very much. At ease. [Laughter] I always love being introduced by a matinee television idol. [Laughter] Who would have thought it? [Laughter]

*Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.* Not my wife.

*The President.* Only his mother. [Laughter] Thanks so much, Mr. Secretary. He's doing a fabulous job.

*Secretary Rumsfeld.* Thank you.

*The President.* He really is. And so are the men and women who work in this building, and the men and women who wear the uniform. We're really proud of you.

I'm honored to sign this bill because the Nation owes the men and women of the military our full measure of respect and our full measure of support. We owe you decent pay and a decent quality of life. We owe you the best leadership and training. We owe you the best equipment and weaponry. We owe you, our service men and women, our best, because we owe you our freedom.

This bill, which includes both this year's defense appropriations and emergency supplemental spending, keeps the commitment to our military and keeps the commitments of our country. It was passed with bipartisan support in the Congress. It will be implemented by this fine Secretary, and a fine Deputy Secretary in Paul Wolfowitz.

As Commander in Chief, I'm really proud to sign this bill here in the Pentagon. It shows that at an hour when freedom is under attack, America is steady and standing tall in freedom's defense. I too want to thank the Members of the United States Congress who are here, particularly Chairman Bill Young. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for coming. Senator Dorgan, I appreciate you being here, sir. Rodney, thank you for coming, and Jim and George. I guess you're supposed to be formal with the Senate and informal with the House. But thank you all for taking time to be here. It's a kind gesture for you to come.

I also want to thank the members of the Joint Chiefs and the leadership of our military who are on the stage with me here. Dick Myers is doing a fabulous job. He is steady; he is strong. He sends such an important signal throughout our military that we mean business, we're a no-nonsense group of people who have got one thing in mind, and that is victory.

I remember talking about our plans with the Secretary and others in my administration. And as we set our plans, there was no question that our military was ready. The Secretary made that clear; Dick Myers made that clear; Hugh Shelton made that clear. And since September the 11th, the skill, the daring, and the courage of our