

THE WHITE HOUSE

**Office of the Press Secretary
(Capetown, South Africa)**

For Immediate Release

March 26, 1998

**REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AND THE FIRST LADY
DURING VISIT TO VICTORIA MXENGE HOUSING PROJECT**

Capetown, South Africa

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. (Applause.) I am so pleased to be back here. I cannot even believe with my own eyes all that you have done in the year since I have been here. Congratulations to all of you for all of the hard work. (Applause)

I'm delighted to be here with your mayor and so many distinguished officials. But I'm mostly glad to be here with the women and all of you who have helped to build these houses. I have been talking about what I saw ever since I returned to the United States. I have been telling my husband about all of the work that is being done in South Africa to build this country; And I particularly told him about what I had seen here in Capetown.

So when it came to be that he was able to come on this trip to Africa, of course he wanted to come to South Africa; and of course he wanted to come to Capetown; and of course he wanted to come with me to see what you have done. (Applause.)

Now, you may remember you gave me this pot last year. And you told me to go home and cook a meal in it or my husband. Now, I have to you that I live in a very big house with many people who cook for my husband. So they did not like the idea of my taking their work away. So I will save this pot to cook for my husband when he is not the President any longer. (Laughter and applause.)

But you know, I brought the pot back because it reminded me of what you have done here. There is a wonderful story about a traveler wh went from place to place with only an empty pot. And he would go into a village and he would get some water and he put a stone in the pot. And he would put the pot on the fire. And people would come by and they'd say, what is this crazy man doing? He is boiling a stone. And then after a while someone would say, but he has a very good pot, maybe we should add something to the stone. So someone would come and they would add things to this pot. And pretty soon what did they have? They had something that everybody in the Village could eat.

Well, that is what you have done here. You have taken your hard work, you have taken

your motivation, your desire to have a house, and each of you has added something. We were just over helping put some of the blocks in the house. And now you have houses, you are building a community. I saw where the children are taken care of, where the store is.

So just like this empty pot, this was once empty land. But you have --each of you -- added something to this land so that now we all of these houses where these families can live. I hope that every one of you feels the kind of pride that I do in what you have accomplished. And as the Mayor said this is a real tribute to all of you.

Last year I asked you how many of you believed you would have a house. And everyone of you believed you would have a house. And every one of you raised you hands. This year I want to ask, how many of you have a house? All of you.

(Applause.) And way back over there.

Well, this has been a wonderful experience for me to see with my own eyes what you have built. But I am especially pleased that my husband could see with his eyes, as well. I wanted him to come, and it's the first thing that he's done since he came -- we arrive here very, very late. The Mayor was kind enough to meet us, it was about I guess 2:30 or 3:00 in the morning. But we wanted to come to see you, to tell you how grateful we are to have a chance to tell you in person how much you have accomplished.

So it gives me great pleasure to introduce my husband, to introduce someone who cares very deeply about what people can do for themselves, and works very hard in our country to help people and wanted to see who the women were who gave him the hope of a good meal when he is no longer President. (Applause.)

So let me introduce my husband, Bill Clinton. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Madam Mayor, Patricia, thank you all for making us feel so welcome.

I really didn't have a choice about coming here because my wife said to me when she got home one year ago from South Africa, she said, you will not believe this housing project I visited. These women are building their own houses, they're saving their own money, they're moving out of shacks and shanty villages into nice neighborhoods with good houses and a good future for their children and they're helping themselves. And I want you to go and see it.

And perhaps you have this situation in your family, but when Hillary says she wants me to go and see something, that means; you are going to see this at the first moment. (Laughter.)

So we got in late last night and we got up this morning and we came out here. I thank Mrs. Mbeki back there for showing us her home. Thank you, ma'am, and congratulations to you on your nice home. (Applause.) And I thank the ladies who are here who let me visit their construction project. And I said almost 30 years ago I actually spent the whole summer building houses. And when I was out helping you I realized it's pretty hard work, and that's why I went

into politics, so I wouldn't have to work so hard anymore. (Laughter.)

Let me also say, on a serious note, I believe what you are doing here -- building your homes, saving for them, taking a small amount of money and building a very nice house -- should be a model for people who don't have a lot of money all over Africa and all over the world. If you can do it here than in villages all over the world people can do the same thing.

And I came here today partly in the hope that through the coverage from --(gap in tape_ -- that all over the world people will see what you are doing in this neighborhood and say, I want my neighborhood to be like that, I want my children to live in good homes, I want them to have a good future, I want them to believe that they can do better with their lives. And we intend to support you.

Today, I'm pleased to announce that our United States AID program, which supports projects like this, will spend another \$3 million this year to try to help build more houses to make more success stories so we can see more people like Mrs. Mbeki and he family.

Thank you and God bless you all. Thank you. (Applause.)

END