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Now, one of three things can happen now: This earthquake can make your situation worse, it can have no impact, or it can actually make it better. And you're going to have to decide. We have a couple of responsibilities in that regard at the national level. The first thing we've got to do is to get this money out in a hurry.

We'll work with you on that, both the emergency money and that which comes in the supplemental. That will have a positive economic impact which at least will partially offset the negative things which have occurred in the short run.

The second thing we have to do is to make sure that structurally nothing happens. For example, I thought what Senator Watson said about looking at the different road routes was an interesting thing. You have got to figure out how to make sure you don't lose a single job on this. And as Rodney Slater pointed out to me earlier, you also ship a lot of produce and other products out of California on the highways. And we can't help that. And you can't do that by mass transit. They're still going to have to get on a truck and go. So you have to figure that out. And whatever we're supposed to do to help you do that, we've got to do.

The third thing I want to say is, we will do whatever we can that is legally possible working with Chairman Panetta here to accelerate the funds and to reduce the bureaucratic burdens of moving on this highway construction. But I would urge you, as we talked at the site today, to consider things like 7-day work weeks, 24-hour-a-day construction where the neighbors will permit it. Things that will actually put more people from southern California to work.

If you build these roads quicker than you normally would, you will by definition, have to hire more people than you normally would in a short period of time which could actually give you a little bit of economic boost when you desperately need it. So we will try to help you, but I want you to come up with a plan to tell us how you want to do it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Hollywood-Burbank Airport. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

January 22, 1994

Good morning. This week we saw how events beyond our control can test the courage and fortitude of our people.

For many in the eastern half of our Nation, life is beginning to return to normal after the harshest stretch of winter in memory. And in southern California, there was another kind of disaster. I went to Los Angeles and saw the devastation that can occur in just a matter of moments in an earthquake. Freeways were crumbled, homes were destroyed, lives were shattered.

But even in this kind of adversity, or maybe even because of it, our people have become more determined. We've seen neighbor helping neighbor and total strangers performing acts of quiet heroism. In addition to Federal funds we've pledged, our recovery efforts are being coordinated on the site by the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency James Lee Witt and HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros, who are looking for more ways to help the quake's victims.

Los Angeles will come back. Together, with the people of Los Angeles, we'll help to make that happen. That's the American way. At every crucial moment in our history, our people have somehow found the courage, the will, and the way to come together in the face of a challenge and to meet it head on. For the last year, we've been doing just that here in Washington.

It was one year ago this week that I took office as your President. The challenges before us were many. We faced a debt that has been mortgaging our future; we were burdened by the cynicism created when Government does wrong by people who do right.

For two decades, the middle class had been working longer and harder just to hold its ground with stagnant wages. Seemingly secure jobs were lost and, along with declining wages, people lost the security of stable and reliable health insurance.

Well, after one year, the challenges aren't gone, but together we are surmounting many of them. We've moved to offer opportunity, challenge our people to assume more respon-

sibility, and restore a sense of community to our land.

We built the foundation for a lasting economic recovery. We've broken gridlock and made Government an instrument of our common purpose as a people. And from meetings in Moscow to promote democracy to meetings in Tokyo to revive the world economy, our seriousness of purpose is winning respect around the world and getting results.

Here at home we've transformed America's agenda, addressing problems long deferred or denied. Now the debate is not over whether to provide health security but how and how quickly, not whether to reform welfare but how, not whether to make well-intentioned but ultimately futile efforts to protect American workers from economic change but how to give them the tools and the skills to make those changes their friend. At long last, we're addressing our challenges with clarity and confidence instead of running away from them.

We built the foundations for a real recovery that will endure and enrich the lives of all our people. Of course, the recovery is not yet complete. Many Americans haven't felt it yet, and our work can't be done until every American has the security to embrace the future without fear. We do have a long way to go. But clearly, we've turned the corner, and we're moving in the right direction.

We passed an economic plan that reflects our new approach: doing more with less, cutting Government spending that doesn't work, and investing in people and in what does work. Our plan will reduce the deficit by $500 billion over 5 years, cutting $255 billion in spending.

Before our plan passed, the deficit for next year alone was projected at $300 billion. That's $300 billion. But I've just learned from our Director of the Office of Management and Budget Leon Panetta that the deficit projection for next fiscal year is now under $180 billion, over $120 billion less, thanks to the enactment of the economic plan. That's lower even than our initial projections.

The fact is, if we stay on this plan, we will have cut the deficit in half as a percentage of our national income by 1996. But we must pass health care reform if we're going to keep the deficit going downward for the long haul and eventually bring the budget into balance.

Slowly but surely, our economic plan is creating new opportunity and providing new security for middle class families. Today more of these families are buying cars and homes or refinancing their mortgages because deficit reduction has helped to push interest rates to record lows.

In our steady aim to create jobs and increase incomes, we've provided bold new initiatives for small businesses, encouraging growth in an important source of new jobs. Last year alone the private economy created 1.6 million new jobs, 1½ times as many as in the previous 4 years. We've reinforced these gains by passing NAFTA, by lifting export controls, by tearing down barriers to trade. All of these will translate into more jobs.

With the family and medical leave law, we've allowed Americans the freedom to take care of a sick loved one or a newborn without worrying that they'll lose their jobs for doing so. This is an important thing because restoring our social fabric is critical. And providing the opportunity for work, protecting the worker, and helping to keep families and communities together are crucial elements in achieving that social fabric. And so is protecting our citizens' safety on the streets, in homes, and in our schools. That's why we enacted the Brady bill, to put common sense into gun selling, and why when Congress returns next week, I will ask them to quickly pass the crime bill and send it to me for signing.

Step by step, we are reviving our economy, renewing our sense of common community, and restoring our people's confidence that our Nation can be strong at home and abroad and our Government can work for the benefit of ordinary Americans.

Yes, we've done a lot, but we have so much more to do.

As we enter this second year of taking on these challenges together, we know this: What's important is not just how many programs we pass but how many lives we improve. What's important is not just what we do for people but also what we can help our people to do for themselves. Ultimately, that will be the measure of our success.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6 p.m. on January 21 in the East Room for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 22.

Remarks in a Teleconference on the Los Angeles Earthquake

January 24, 1994

The President. Hello.

Q. Hello, Mr. President.

Q. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. It's good to hear your voice. I've got Federico, Henry, and James Lee on the phone?

Q. Yes, sir.

The President. That's great. Well, I know you've all been working very hard. I know there was a problem with the overcrowding at the disaster assistance centers at first, but I'm really pleased by the work you've done. And I was glad to note in this morning's Los Angeles Times an acknowledgement that we'd gotten those centers up more quickly than in previous disasters and that things seem to be going better. But why don't you all give me a briefing. James Lee, why don't you start and just give me an overall briefing about where we are.

[*Director James Lee Witt explained what the emergency response team is doing to help the victims of the earthquake and stated that FEMA is in the process of providing applicants with disaster assistance checks.*]

The President. How long will it take to get the checks out?

Director Witt. We had checks coming out yesterday, and we will have thousands of checks coming out each day, and there will be more each day coming out. We're processing them very quick.

The President. What about the language barriers?

Director Witt. We have worked with Secretary Cisneros and Secretary Peña and other Cabinet secretaries and the State and local emergency management people in all of the language barriers, in printing every type of information in every language of that community.

The President. That's good. You mentioned Secretary Riley. I know he's on the way back, but we got a report from him, and I've already directed the Department of Education to send $7 million to the school district there to provide emergency services for the students. That may not be enough, but it will get them started anyway. And I'm glad to hear that.

Henry, where are we on the housing situation?

[*Secretary Henry Cisneros explained that tents and shelters are being made available to the increasing number of victims who have lost their homes. He stated that a voucher system is being used to provide permanent housing, but it will take a long time to help.*]

The President. You know, there were a lot of other communities affected. What about their housing? I mean, what kind of system do we have to make sure we get out there to the other communities, too?

[*Secretary Cisneros explained that HUD is working closely with housing authorities in surrounding communities.*]

The President. Now, I know that only a minority of the houses had earthquake insurance, but what about those that had insurance? Are the insurance companies there? Are they speeding up payment? What's going to happen there?

Director Witt. Yes, sir, they are there. They're in there speeding up the payments as quick as possible.

[*Secretary Cisneros explained that many people do not have earthquake insurance because of high premiums and high deductibles.*]

The President. Is the voucher system the preferred way of dealing with this? I mean, are you going to come back and—will that be part of the supplemental that Leon Panetta sends up to Congress?

Secretary Cisneros. We've extended in this first effort 10,000 vouchers. I believe we probably will need to be on the safe side and ask for more. So the answer is, yes, it will be in the supplemental.

The President. Federico, what about the transportation situation? How are we doing