

struggling Soviet economy. So we're in a critical time here in terms of meetings, in terms of G-7 or summit. And I'm anxious to hear from Mr. Primakov, who is Gorbachev's special emissary. Just as he was anxious to hear from our agricultural specialists that went over there, come up with some good ideas. And this is the way you do it. You talk to each other and you keep going. And it's true for U.S.-Soviet, it's true for G-7, and it's true for the Middle East.

Thank you all very much.

Note: The President spoke at 3:30 p.m. at the North Portico of the White House. The President referred to Nicholas E. Calio, Dep-

uty Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs (House); Frederick D. McClure, Assistant to the President for Legislative Affairs; U.S. Trade Representative Carla A. Hills; Representatives Dan Rostenkowski and Richard A. Gephardt; Thomas S. Foley, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; Marlin Fitzwater, Press Secretary to the President; Yevgeniy Primakov, Soviet Presidential Council member and envoy for Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev; Supreme Court Associate Justice David Souter; Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir of Israel; and Secretary of State James A. Baker III.

Statement on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's Action Approving the Administration's National Energy Strategy

May 23, 1991

I am pleased to congratulate Chairman Bennett Johnston, Senator Malcolm Wallop and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee on the energy bill they approved today. The 17-3 vote by the committee demonstrates a genuine bipartisan commitment to balanced, realistic, and comprehensive energy legislation.

When I announced my National Energy

Strategy (NES) on February 20, I challenged the Congress to do its part to pass the legislation recommended in the NES. The committee's action today, taken on a bipartisan basis, marks a very constructive first step in this process.

The committee's action helps move America toward a more secure, cleaner, and more efficient energy future.

Exchange With Reporters on the Assassination of Former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of India

May 24, 1991

The President. Well, may I pay my respects to all the Embassy staff, too, and thank you very much for coming out to pay honor to this—we feel this very strongly, your loss.

Q. Mr. President, how confident are you that Indian democracy will pass through this crisis?

The President. India's democracy is strong, steadfast, and it has the full support

of our country. It always has, and it always will. And this is a terrible tragedy. It tests the souls of India, and it tests the hearts of all of us. But I fear not for India's democracy.

Q. Mr. President, are you worried about—

The President. I really must go on.

Q. Are you worried about the sectarian violence and really just wanted to—

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The President. Well, I hope that India will cope. They always try to do that. There are people that feel passionately about this, but this is no time for more violence. This is a time for calm, for peaceful resolution to differences. And if anybody ever stood for that, it was Rajiv Gandhi and his family.

Q. Do you have a small message for the Indian people?

The President. No. The United States will deal with the Indian Government with respect and quality. And so, I have no worries about that at all.

Q. What did you write on the book?

Q. Any message for the Indian people?

The President. Well, I tried to express my sentiments there. And I'm sure the Ambassador will share it with you.

Thank you.

Q. Do you ever worry about the possibility of a terrorist attack against yourself?

The President. No, I never worry about that. See you all.

Note: The President spoke at 8:40 a.m. at the Indian Embassy. In his remarks, he referred to Abid Hussain, Indian Ambassador to the United States.

Remarks at the Dedication Ceremony for the Khalil Gibran Memorial Garden

May 24, 1991

Please, those who have chairs be seated, and the rest of you, thank you for the warm welcome, really. I told them to leave Millie at home over here. I don't know what the barking is. [*Laughter*] But let me first salute my old friend, my dear friend Bill Baroody, and thank him for his leadership; to Sheryl Ameen and Colonel Tannous, Adelaine Abercia, our friend Ambassador Lahoud, and, of course, our distinguished Representative, Congresswoman Oakar. To all of you I would say, without your sponsorship we wouldn't be standing here today. I want to single out Flip Wilson for his help in making this possible; it's greatly appreciated. Salute another old friend, Jamie Farr.

And ladies and gentlemen, it's an honor—I mean this from the heart—it is an honor to be asked to dedicate this garden to a man who has done so much for poetry and, through poetry, for all of us. Barbara and I were pleased when Bill asked us, and others asked us, to serve as honorary co-chairmen of the dedication committee. And now that I see—Barbara's seen it—the beauty of this place, I'm struck by the committee's dedication.

They and all who contributed to this memorial offer it as a real tribute to Gibran's legacy—his belief in brotherhood, his call for compassion, and perhaps above all, his

passion for peace.

The spot where we now stand holds a special place in my heart because, as most of you know, for 8 years I lived up the street with my family. And this memorial renders this place so much more special by honoring a man who enlivened candor with cadence and lent song to truth.

Gibran once wrote that "remembrance is a form of meeting." So, in this garden, we meet this man again. The graceful symmetry and the slope of these grounds lead the eye in a sweep that is, indeed, poetry in motion. The cedars of Lebanon that will someday canopy the poet's memorial remind us of those which once sheltered his birth. His words carved on these benches—and they are so beautiful—echo those he has etched on our memory. And as the entrance's footbridge brings us into his garden, so his work "leads us to the thresholds of our own mind."

Perhaps his greatest bequest was the key by which we opened our own imaginations. His was not poetry for the passive but for the participant. He wrote that the wisest teacher reveals "that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of your knowledge." And his poetry sounded that reveille with a song of beauty and truth.

When Gibran said that "work is love