

With this action, the United States now has diplomatic relations with all 12 of the new States of the former Soviet Union.

The United States will open an Embassy in Tbilisi as soon as possible. In addition,

the United States will support Georgia's membership in relevant international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

## Statement on the Connecticut Presidential Primary Victory

March 24, 1992

I want to thank the voters of Connecticut who made it clear today: The answer is less Government spending, not more taxes. As I announced on March 20, the line-item spending cuts I am sending to Congress will eliminate some unneeded weapons systems made in Connecticut. Cutting spending is

a tough call, especially in a State where the economy is hurting. In spite of this, we won an impressive victory today from people who understand that being President of the United States sometimes means making difficult decisions.

## Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Republican Congressional Leaders

March 25, 1992

*The President.* Let me just say I want to thank you all, Republican Members of the House and the Senate, for coming in here; and first, to thank you all for your help last week in trying to stop the tax increase bill. And it was a heroic effort, but we were outnumbered. They passed the bill, only narrowly, and I vetoed it. And thanks to you all, we have the votes now to sustain that veto. And I just would urge that we go the extra mile to have a strong show of support against this tax-and-spend legislation.

So the other point I want to mention is there is an effort, as we all know, to knock down the firewalls, in other words, to remove the spending caps. And I am convinced the American people think that we are spending too much. One safeguard we've got, thanks to many people around this table, are those caps. We just must keep those in place, the one discipline that helps you in your fight against excessive spending there.

So, I want to win that vote for controlling spending. If we can't do that, again, the

only power I have to stand up against the excessive spending is the veto. And you all should know, I've told some, told the leadership personally that that certainly would be—and my intention would be to veto that kind of removal of the lid on spending. So we're going to keep doing it. I appreciate the support for the rescission approach. And we are going to make a change in attitude. This isn't just kind of a posturing for politics. I think the American people want to see significant change in the spending patterns and habits. You all have been magnificent in your leadership, and I just would urge you now as we go down to the crunch period here to do all you can to sustain this veto and to see that they don't take those caps off.

So thank you very much, and we can talk a little bit more about it as we go along here.

### *Federal Budget*

*Q.* Mr. President, since you're talking to us, I wonder if I could ask you how, sir, you can—

*The President.* I was really talking to these guys.

*Q.* —how you can boast of your economic plan's not increasing the deficit when your budget, sir, would result in the largest deficit in history?

*The President.* Well, I think I can boast of it because if we can get done what we want to do, we will begin to really put some checks on this deficit. There are some difficult things in my approach. For the first time, we're trying to control the growth, not cut but control the growth of these mandated spending programs. And that isn't easy, but it's a very important addition to the debate. And I'd like to see it done. So the program speaks for itself. And if we had more people like those around this table, we'd be able to make progress. It's just that clear.

#### *Connecticut Primary*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you disappointed by the rather sizable protest vote in your native State yesterday?

*The President.* No, I was very glad about the size of the win. You know, if I would win a general election by 65 to 20, or whatever it was, I would salute that as a magnificent victory. And I am very pleased the way it's going and grateful to many here that have been out on the stump helping with it.

*Q.* Are you pleased with how the Democratic race is shaping up?

*The President.* Let them sort out their business. Let them sort their business out. They don't need me to tell them who they

ought to vote for over there, but I see nothing to be unhappy about.

Thank you all very much.

#### *Cooperation With Congress*

*Q.* Mr. President, why have you refused to negotiate with the Democrats at all on your economic program?

*The President.* Listen, the American people know that from day one I held out my hand in trying to get something done. And now the time has come to take the case to the American people. The hand is still out there. But it's not going to be out there on the tax-and-spend plan. And that ought to be very, very clear. And if that's not clear now, it'll sure be clear when the debate really gets public out there in this election process. It goes on and on and on.

But that's the answer to it, and I don't think there's a single American that feels I haven't at least tried with the Congress. These people have tried. And every time they turn around, they have something jammed down their throat by majorities that simply are also aware of politics and want to put into play things that would not help this economy. We're trying to help it. We're trying to stimulate it. We're trying to increase investment. And we're not interested in more taxes, and we're not interested in ever-increasing levels of Federal spending. And that's the case that's getting in focus now.

Thank you all very much.

*Note: The exchange began at 10:08 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.*

## Remarks on Signing the Greek Independence Day Proclamation

*March 25, 1992*

Welcome to the Rose Garden on this beautiful day. We're so pleased to have you all here. Thank you for the welcome for His Eminence and me. It's a pleasure to welcome you, many of you, most of you, back to the White House.

First, may I pay my most sincere respects to Archbishop Iakovos, a true spiritual leader

for whom we have enormous respect. And I'm just delighted that he's here with us today. And I want to thank our Cabinet Minister Ed Derwinski, who is so well-known in Greece, and Ambassador Zacharakis, who is here. And also our congressional contingent: Mike Bilirakis, over here; George Gekas was to be here, but he may