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*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

have been kept away by work. And of course, Senator Arlen Specter is with us today. I would like to welcome Mr. Angelopoulos from Athens, who presented me this commemorative medal in the Oval Office just a minute ago. We are delighted you are here, sir.

This Greek-American—this Greek Independence Day—I say Greek-American day because Americans of Greek heritage celebrate it—it's a wonderful day for the Greek-American community and for all of us who cherish freedom. Greece can never be just another country to the United States. And the U.S. and Greece are the firmest of friends, the strongest of allies. And I might take this opportunity to salute Prime Minister Mitsotakis, with whom I have a very cordial relationship, most cooperative relationship. I talked to him just the other day on the phone.

We are committed to maintaining the close cooperation that has developed with his government, and we will continue to serve as a catalyst in the U.N. Secretary-General's effort to negotiate a fair and a permanent settlement to the Cyprus issue. In our view, there is one Cyprus, and we are going to continue to heal the division that scars this lovely island. Now, we have consistently made clear our view that the time has come to settle this question, and I am going to continue to give it my personal attention. We're also sensitive to Greek concerns about the breakup of Yugoslavia. And I've been in touch again, I mentioned, with my dear friend Prime Minister Mitsotakis about this highly sensitive issue. And as his Government works towards a solution to this, it can be assured of our support.

Neither Greece nor America is a stranger to the struggle for freedom. And as allies in NATO we've worked in common cause to preserve the peace. Today we remember that our ideals and values have been preserved at high cost, the valor and sacrifice of our nations' finest young men and women. Greek heritage is, in so many respects, American heritage. And I'm deeply moved to realize how important it is to interpret for future generations the significance of our independence days. We must not forget, and we cannot let our children forget, lest the struggle be repeated. And so we celebrate these anniversaries of freedom, and we tell the old stories in order to preserve that which we value so highly.

This morning I want to commend the Greek-American community for the way you've preserved your traditions. The Greek-American culture continues to provide a model for greatness. I can cite many examples, but I want to particularly commend the value that this wonderful community places on family and on tradition. Through your commitment to strong families, those great traditions have endured, and your culture has thrived in this new land. These values, the ones that we pass along from one generation to the next, are the greatest of all legacies. But these are not just a comfortable luxury. They are a vital part of the social capital that a nation must possess if it's to be great, but more significantly, if it's to be good.

Today as we join with you to commemorate the 171st anniversary of Greek independence, we also celebrate Archbishop Iakovos' 33d year as Archbishop of the Americas. As His Eminence was at the forefront of the march for civil rights, now the Greek-American family is at the forefront in the modeling for today's generation those enduring personal and family values that are the necessary underpinning for continued democracy and freedom.

I still remember Archbishop Iakovos' benediction at our convention in 1988, and he prayed in a nonpartisan way, I want to say. But he prayed that we would, and here was the words, "Carry, renew, and redefine the legacy and mandate to keep this Nation under God in an unending quest for unity, justice, moral integrity, and spiritual alertness and readiness." On this Greek Independence Day, let that be the prayer and the challenge to us all.

And now it is my real pleasure to put pen to paper and proclaim Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy.

*Note: The President spoke at 11:18 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Christos Zacharakis,*

*Greek Ambassador to the United States, and Panayiopis Angelopoulos, Greek industrialist.*

*The proclamation is listed in Appendix E at the end of this volume.*

## Statement on House of Representatives Action To Sustain the Tax Bill Veto

*March 25, 1992*

I am pleased that the House of Representatives has voted to sustain my veto of the Democratic tax increase. This 215–211 vote indicates broad support for my position in both parties. We don't need a tax increase. We do need an economic growth package that will spur savings and investments in this country and create new jobs. I am hopeful that the many Democrats who gave us majority strength on the veto vote might join us on proposals to speed the economic recovery.

## Statements by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the President's Physical Examination

*March 26, 1992*

The President is in great shape. He completed a routine physical examination today at Bethesda Naval Hospital and is in excellent health. The President's examination lasted approximately 4 hours. The physical was conducted under the direction of Dr. Burton Lee, the President's personal physician. "The President remains in excellent health," Dr. Lee said. "He will continue his normal busy work schedule and physical activity."

Ophthalmologists continue to test the President for the raised pressure in his left eye, but his condition remains stable and there is no evidence of any development of glaucoma signs or symptoms. No treatment is indicated at the present time.

Among his test results are: chest x-ray, normal; x-rays of hips and neck, mild degenerative osteoarthritis; electrocardiogram (EKG), normal; urinalysis, no abnormalities; normal urologic exam; blood tests completely normal including cholesterol, triglyceride, and lipoprotein levels; and dermatology, no significant problem or change. There is no evidence of any heart disease. His thyroid function remains completely normal, on Synthroid .15 milligrams a day.

[*Later in the day, Press Secretary Fitzwater issued the following additional statement on the President's physical examination.*]

The President's physical checkup this morning showed no evidence of skin cancer. However, the doctors did "freeze" with liquid nitrogen four very minute keratoses on the President's face. These will appear as small dark spots on the President's face and will disappear within a few days. The President has had keratoses removed on previous occasions over the years.