AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Democratic Congressional Leaders
February 15, 1993

Economic Program Presentation

Q. Are you going to appear before Congress, Mr. President, in parliamentary-style Q&A?

The President. That hasn't been resolved yet. I'm interested in it, but we haven't finally resolved that.

Q. What would determine it?

The President. We just haven't resolved it yet. We'll probably know by the end of the day.

Q. Is Wednesday night's speech shaping up as the most important of your life?

The President. Well, I don't—[*inaudible*]. In the sense that every one—the ones that are ahead are more important than the ones that are behind.

I think tonight is important. I think Wednesday night is important. But you know, we're trying to change a direction of 12 years and take a new course. I'm going to offer a program that will create half a million or more jobs in the short run, that is highly progressive, that is very well-balanced, that is faithful to the great middle class of this country and good for the things that we care about, jobs and education and health care. But I think it's going to be very important that I sell it to the Congress and to the American people and that we have a partnership here. So yes, it'll be big.

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:22 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Democratic Congressional Leaders
February 15, 1993

Energy Tax

Q. Mr. President, if I could ask a specific question. What is——

The President. I may not give you a specific answer. [*Laughter*]

Q. You don't have to get into too much detail, but from your perspective what's more progressive, a broad-based energy tax based on Btu's or an ad valorem type of energy tax? What would be more progressive for the middle class?

The President. Well, I think, first of all, you can't evaluate one of these things without seeing the whole package. But I think a Btu tax is, because an ad valorem tax reinforces price changes. In other words, if you have an ad valorem tax and the price of one fuel goes up, then the tax rate goes up. So, it would aggravate whatever price changes are out there in the market, and that would hurt the consumers more.

Q. Have you settled on a Btu tax?

The President. I answered a very specific question in a photo op. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:45 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Address to the Nation on the Economic Program
February 15, 1993

Good evening. I have chosen this day on which we honor two great Presidents to talk with you about the serious problems and the great promise of our country and the absolute necessity for change if we're to secure a better future for ourselves and for our children. On