

## Interview With Cheryl Jennings of KGO Television, San Francisco, California

November 4, 1994

### *Midterm Elections*

*Ms. Jennings.* Mr. President, you are coming to California just before the November elections. Why are you choosing this State in particular?

*The President.* Well, I, first of all, try to come often to California. As you know, I've done a lot of work to try to bring back the California economy, to try to help deal with the immigration problems, to try to help deal with the problems of defense conversion. And I feel that I have a big stake out there in the success of California because the success of California determines, in some measure, the success of America.

And there are important races there, Senator Feinstein's race, Kathleen Brown's race for Governor. Many of our Members of Congress are in tough races for reelection. And I want to do what I can to be as supportive of those who have supported the approach we've taken. We're moving America in the right direction. In 21 months we've gone a considerable way toward reversing the problems that brought us the economic difficulties of the last 12 years. And I want the voters of California to give us a chance to keep on moving into the future.

### *Defense Conversion*

*Ms. Jennings.* Two issues you brought up: military conversion, the defense issue, of course, and immigration. Let's start with military conversion. You're coming to an area in Alameda County first that's very heavily hit by that. What can you tell those folks? What can you offer them?

*The President.* Well, I think most of the people there know that we have worked very hard, first of all, to invest significant sums of money in trying to help the places where bases have closed, in trying to put out new technology projects for the companies who have lost defense contracts. In the case of Alameda, we're doing what we can to move the port facilities over to the local community so they can be developed for commercial purposes.

### *Midterm Elections*

*Ms. Jennings.* You also talked—I heard you earlier on the radio today—about cutbacks, Social Security, for example, veterans benefits. And of course, since there are so many military bases in California, a lot of veterans are saying, "Hey, the Government lied to me. I made a contract to serve my country, and now they're not going to support me or pay for my benefits for the rest of my life."

*The President.* Well, we are; the Democrats are. But the Republicans are running for Congress, trying to get control of the Senate and the House, based on a commitment to a contract which says they're going to give huge tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans; they're going to increase defense spending and bring back Star Wars; they're going to balance the budget in 5 years. That costs \$1 trillion. The only way they can keep that promise is to cut Government spending across the board, 20 percent cut in Social Security, veterans benefits, Medicare, everything. If they take Social Security out, then they have to cut everything else 30 percent, Medicare, veterans benefits, all those things. There is no other way they can keep that promise.

If they're kidding, if they have no intention of keeping the promise and they're just going to do the easy things, the tax cuts, the spending increases, then we're looking at an explosion in Government debt, shipping our jobs overseas, putting our economy in deep trouble, just as it was when I took office.

So I hope that the American people, and particularly the people in California and those retired military folks, will see this contract for what it is, a bogus set of promises. I hope they'll reject it and vote for the people who are committed to continuing to move this country forward and to honoring our commitments to our veterans and to the Social Security recipients.

### *Immigration*

*Ms. Jennings.* Mr. President, before I lose you on the satellite, what about Proposition 187? That is the anti-illegal immigration issue.

*The President.* Yes, I'm familiar with it. I have two things to say about it. First of all, I sympathize with the people of California. They have a problem. The Federal Government should do more to help to stop illegal immigration and to help California bear the cost of the illegal immigrants who are there. But secondly, I don't think Proposition 187 is the way to do it. It seems to be clearly unconstitutional. And if put into effect, its primary impact would be on children: keeping children out of health clinics, which could cause public health problems in the general population; kicking children out of schools, which could turn teachers into police officers and put kids on the street where they could get in trouble and cause trouble for others, rather than in school. We already have too many kids on the street in this country.

So I think what we ought to do is to keep working on what we're doing, stiffening the Bor-

der Patrol, stiffening the sanctions on employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants, stiffening our ability to get illegal immigrants out of the work force, increasing our ability to deport people who have committed crimes who are illegal immigrants. And then the Federal Government simply must continue to do more to help California and other States deal with the corrections, the health, and the education costs of illegal immigration. I am committed to doing that. I don't think 187 is the way to do it.

*Ms. Jennings.* All right. Mr. President, thank you so much for giving us some of your time this morning.

*The President.* Thank you, Cheryl.

NOTE: The interview began at 9:59 a.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Holiday Inn in Duluth, MN.

## Interview With Luis Eschegoyan of KDTV, San Francisco November 4, 1994

*The President.* Hello, Luis, can you hear me?

*Mr. Eschegoyan.* Yes, Mr. President. Good afternoon.

*The President.* Good afternoon.

### *Immigration*

*Mr. Eschegoyan.* Thank you, Mr. President, for giving us the opportunity to talk to you. What is your impression of Proposition 187, included in the California ballot?

*The President.* I'm opposed to it. I do believe that the Federal Government has an obligation to do more to try to help California deal with the problems of illegal immigration. And I have worked hard on that, along with Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer. We've almost doubled the border guards in southern California; we have increased our sending the illegal immigrants who have been convicted of crimes back home. We've given money to California for the very first time to deal with the costs of imprisonment.

I've tried to get much more money for education and health care costs of immigration to California. But 187 operates primarily against children. It says, kick the children out of the health clinics. That could cause health problems

for the general population. It says, kick the children out of the schools, which means teachers are turned into police officers. It means that the kids can be on the street causing problems for themselves and for others. We've already got too many children on the street.

So I believe we have to do more. I'm working hard. I found a big immigration mess when I became President 21 months ago. But this is not the answer, in my opinion, and I hope the voters will turn out and vote and reject 187. It's a way of dividing our people, it's clearly unconstitutional, and it's looking for easy answers to a tough problem. After all, some of the people that are for 187 are part of the problem. When Governor Wilson was Senator Wilson, he responded to the powerful forces in California that wanted more illegal immigrants in California to do work. He sponsored legislation to make it more difficult to remove illegal immigrants from the workplace by going easier on the employers. Now he, all of a sudden, has turned 180 degrees on this issue. But this is a complicated issue without a simple solution. I'm committed to working with you to find a solution. I don't think 187 is the answer.