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officer, Kathryn G. Thompson Development Co.; and Lodwrick M. Cook, chairman and chief executive officer, ARCO.

Statement Announcing Airdrops Providing Humanitarian Aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina

February 25, 1993

The war that has raged in Bosnia-Herzegovina over the past year has taken a staggering toll: Thousands have been killed or imprisoned, thousands more are at risk due to hunger and exposure, and over 2 million people have been forced from their homes. The humanitarian need is particularly great in eastern Bosnia, where areas have been denied basic food and medicines.

In view of the emergency humanitarian need, I am announcing today that in coordination with the United Nations and UNHCR, the United States will conduct humanitarian airdrops over Bosnia. The airdrops are an extension of the airlift currently underway into Sarajevo. Their purpose is to supplement land convoys. This is a temporary measure designed to address the immediate needs of isolated areas that cannot be reached at this time by ground. Regular overland deliveries are the best means to ensure that the long-term needs of the Bosnian population are met, and the United States calls on the parties to guarantee the safe passage of the humanitarian convoys throughout Bosnia.

The priority for air deliveries will be determined without regard to ethnic or religious affiliation. These airdrops are being carried out strictly for humanitarian purposes; no combat aircraft will be used in this operation. The Department of Defense will be working with the UNHCR to determine the timing and locations for the airdrops.

I am grateful for the considerable international support given to this initiative.

Exchange With Reporters During a Meeting With Close-Up Foundation Students From Arkansas

February 25, 1993

Aid to Bosnia-Herzegovina

Q. Mr. President, do you care to say any more about the operational details of the airlift?

The President. No.

Q. How about explaining to the American people why it's an important issue for the United States to undertake?

The President. What?

Q. Why is it an important mission for us to put people at risk for that?

The President. Well, I'll say again, General Powell believes the risk is quite limited and not appreciably more than many training flights that our airmen do every year. It's important because we believe if—number one, there are a lot of people over there who need the food and can't get it by road, so it's a humanitarian gesture. And secondly, we think if we do it, we will be able to create a somewhat better climate for negotiations, and we're pushing to try to have good-faith negotiations. So we're hoping it works out.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:01 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Proclamation 6531—National FFA Organization Awareness Week, 1993

February 25, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's roots run deep in agriculture. We have long prospered through the twin blessings of our natural resources and the productivity of the American farmer. Agriculture has contributed heavily to the economic and social progress of the United States, making our Nation the world's largest