

try to get a lot of things going in a hurry—and we tried to get a lot of things going in a hurry because 4 years passes in a hurry—is that you wind up having people work very, very hard, but maybe getting a little out of focus. And I think we can tighten the focus a little, and I think that's what we ought to do.

The Economy

Q. Leading economic indicators are pretty grim. Do you think anything beyond what you've done, the empowerment zones, the economic stimulus package, has it got you thinking about either delaying the tax cuts further or any other kind of emergency push at this point?

The President. I'll answer the specific question first. The best thing we can do for the economy this year, this year, is to clearly pass a multiyear deficit reduction plan because of what it will do to interest rates. As Americans borrow money at lower rates or refinance their existing debt, the economists estimate that over the next year and a half, that will put \$110 billion back into this economy if we can get the interest rates down. That's a huge stimulant to the economy, totally in private sector investment to refinancing debt.

So my present feeling is that we have got to pass the multiyear deficit reduction package, which requires the spending cuts first and the tax increases, focused on people who have basically benefited from the last 12 years of lower taxes. Now, I think we're going to have to—we need to pass that, keep the interest rates down, and see what happens.

What I tried to do was make a down payment on the jobs plan. And I still would say what I've been saying since—well, all last year and even after the election, I tried to say that we were part of a global economy, where there was a lot of economic slowdown in Europe and elsewhere, and that people could not expect immediate results, and we were going to have to really focus on what it took to create jobs.

I will say that again: My major focus—if I can pass the budget, then we will move on to health care and job creation. And I think that we may try a lot of things over the next 4 years because we're in a period

of new and different economic forces which are all working to make it more challenging for us to create large numbers of new jobs.

But I'm not at all surprised. I started saying back in November that there's too much recession in the rest of the economy, and we have cut defense spending in America without offsetting investments in our people and new jobs on the civilian front. And we were being burdened by enormous debt. But I can't tell you that I think we ought to come off the deficit reduction. I think bringing that deficit down and keeping interest rates down is the best investment program we've got right now.

But we are going to have to keep our ears and eyes open, because this is a new and difficult and unprecedented time, and we've got to put the work of the American people first. So I wouldn't rule out anything down the road, but I'm confident we need to pass the budget first.

Bosnia

Q. Are there special forces in Bosnia on the ground?

The President. There aren't any. I saw the report, Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press]. I don't know what the basis of it is. I have not authorized that at all.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 10:30 a.m. The President spoke from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, the President referred to Andrew Cuomo, Assistant Secretary-Designate for Community Planning and Development at HUD. A portion of the teleconference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at the Democratic Congressional Dinner

May 4, 1993

For a minute there, I thought I was at a meeting of the Republican Senate caucus. [Laughter] I'm so glad to see all of you. I can't tell you how much I appreciate that warm greeting, how very much I appreciate being here with Speaker Foley and Senator Mitchell and Majority Leader Gephardt and Senator Graham, Senator Boxer, Congress-

man Fazio, Congressman Torricelli, and all of you out in the audience tonight who did so much to make our victory possible last November and who have done so much to try to help us make a difference to America.

I also want to say a special word of thanks to the Vice President. We have developed a remarkable partnership. And you know, sometimes when I hear him introduce me, I really think he believes it. He almost convinced me, I believe it. [Laughter] I can tell you this, that when the record of this administration is written, one thing will go down in the history books: There will never have been a Vice President in the history of the Republic who played such a constructive role in helping to advance the public interest.

I come here tonight on two missions: First and obviously, I want to support this fundraising effort. I want more Democrats to win in '94. I need every one of you. I want all of you to be reelected. And I know that in major part—[applause]—yes, that's worth clapping for. I'm in a little better position than a lot of Presidents; I got elected because I wanted to do something. If you don't want to do anything, you don't really need the Congress. If you want to do something, you have to have a partnership, an unprecedented one, to get things done and move things forward.

But this is about more than winning elections. It's about what the elections themselves are for. Today I had a wonderful experience, I invited the man who brought me into the Congress the first time when I was a college student, Senator J. William Fulbright, who will be 88 tomorrow, I invited him to come have lunch with me at the White House today. And he told me he had not been there since President Nixon was in office. It was wonderful. We had lunch there, and then we went up to the Oval Office and sat around. And we started talking about some of the great people who served our party and our country, and we got to talking about Senator Mike Mansfield, who as you probably know is 90 and walks 5 miles every day; one of our most distinguished Ambassadors to Japan ever. And he told me he had dinner with Senator Mansfield about a month ago. And Mike looked at him and he said, "Now, Bill, how old are you?" He said,

"I'm 87." And he said, "Oh, to be 87 again." [Laughter]

I say this to try to give some perspective beyond the moment, to the work we are about. I ran for this job not just for the privilege of living in the White House and even for the wonderful privilege of being with all of you on a regular basis, but because I thought together we could make a difference in the history of this country. If we live to be 87, 88, or 90, and we look back on our lives, we will doubtless measure the quality of those lives by whether we did something with the jobs we hold, or whether, if we are in the private sector, we did something to help affect and shape the public interest.

No one ever said this was going to be easy, but I think it is clear that, fundamentally, we have changed the direction of the Government. A few days ago there was a remarkable article in the Wall Street Journal by the political columnist who said that, beyond all the smoke and fight, look at what's happened in the last 100 days. The question used to be, will the Democrats ever really lower the Government deficit? Now the question is, how much and how fast? The question used to be, would we ever do anything about health care? And now the question is, what and how quickly? The question used to be whether the Government really had a role working with the private sector to help revitalize the economy in a tough global economy. Now the issue is, what is the nature of the partnership between Government and business to create jobs and help Americans compete again? The question used to be, the columnist went on, whether Government was intrinsically bad or whether it could be made to work for people. And this crowd believes you can make Government work, believes it can be different, believes it can lead us into the future, believes we can work together. Now, I don't know about you, but I think that's a pretty good start.

And it is very easy, my fellow Americans, to say you want to put Government on the side of the middle class, and you want to reward the values of work and family, that you want to offer opportunity and demand responsibility and reestablish the bonds of American community. But I'll tell you some-

thing: It's a lot easier to say it than it is to do it.

Everybody knows the broad outlines of the last dozen years, that most working-class people have worked longer hours for lower pay to pay higher taxes; that there has been a dramatic increase in inequality; that there have been almost no private sector jobs created for the last 3 years; that even when we have increases in productivity, they don't yet manifest themselves in higher employment. Everybody knows that we had this gaping deficit that was caused by big tax cuts, big spending increases, first in defense and then when defense went down, exploding health care costs and costs to maintain interest on the debt.

The question is, will we do anything about it? Will we really move to deal with the enormous debt, to invest in our future and create jobs, to make the Government work again for ordinary people? Well, in the first 100 days, we've shown both the up and the down sides of that. We've shown what happens when the President and the Congress work together, and we've also seen a little bit of the hazards of gridlock.

I'm proud and grateful for those of you who stood with me in our efforts to change, because I think the people prefer action over inaction, innovation over inertia, and decision over delay. I believe more than anything else, two-thirds of the American people want us to do what I saw on a sign when I was on my way with Senator Moynihan up to Hyde Park to Franklin Roosevelt's home a few weeks ago. There was a guy standing out in the road—it was 8 degrees and several hundred people standing alongside the road—one guy had a sign that said, "Just do something." I believe the people want us to do something. I believe they're tired of do-nothing Government.

Thanks to the leadership of this Congress, just 17 days into this administration, after 8 years of gridlock and vetoes, we made the family and medical leave law the law of the land. That's something to be proud of. Because of innovations in the executive branch with people who never have their opinions asked before, just 44 days into this administration, when we extended unemployment benefits, we did it for the first time with a

program that provided new opportunities for job training for the unemployed. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of paying people to be out of work. I want to invest in putting them back to work. And that's what we're trying to do.

In record time and for the first time in 17 years, within the legally mandated time, the Democratic leadership in the Congress passed a blueprint of our budget which, I want to remind you and all the American people tonight, reduces the deficit by over \$500 billion over the next 5 years, with over 200 specific budget cuts—over 200 specific budget cuts—and tax increases, the overwhelming of which fall on people like us in this room, because we're Democrats and we want to relieve the middle class and the working people of the burdens of the last 12 years.

And you know, when I hear all this talk from the people who hear our adversaries talking about taxes, they say, no taxes without the spending cuts. I say, I agree, but that's what we're going to do. The Democrats are not about to raise taxes unless we cut spending. That's what we're about. But the difference between us and the other side is we asked them for their spending cuts and we're still waiting. We're the ones that are cutting unnecessary Government spending, and we're going to bring this deficit down. And it's time to tell the American people the truth.

The Vice President already mentioned it, but you look at what's happened to interest rates just since the election. And we made clear that we were going to bring this deficit down. I don't know that they can get a lot lower than they are. The economists estimate that if we can keep interest rates at their present level for a year, that will put over \$110 billion back into this economy as people refinance their homes and their businesses and are able to get credit who couldn't get it before. Just think of that.

Now, the other guys talked about it for 12 years, and they took our national debt from \$1 trillion to \$4 trillion. We've had 100 days, and we've done something about it. And if we can keep these interest rates down and be serious about this budget, it's going to put \$100 billion back into the pockets of

ordinary Americans to invest in this economy and grow it.

We also are working hard to deal with the health care crisis without which we will never bring our budget into balance, we will never make our American industries fully competitive, and we will never restore real security to America's families. How can we, any of us, tolerate going on 1 more year, 2 more years, 3 more years with a health care system that costs a third more than any other system in the world, leaves 37 million of our people without insurance, and strikes terror into the hearts of millions of people who have health insurance but are so scared they're going to lose it because of problems with their business or because someone in their family will be sick and they'll never again be able to change jobs without losing their health insurance.

I believe we can do better. This is a problem others have solved. We are up to the task, and the time has come to do it, to liberate this country's economy and restore security to America's families.

This administration has proposed an education bill that will establish the national education goals as the law of the land, establish tough new standards for our schools, and give flexibility for people all over the country to try new experiments to see what can be done to make these schools work better. We're not just talking about it; we're trying to do it. We are trying to open the doors of college education to all Americans by making it possible for anybody to borrow money and pay it back as a small percentage of their income and by letting thousands and tens of thousands of young people do national service to pay off a part of their college loan or earn credit to go to college. That will be the best program we could ever pass for this country.

When I have heard the rhetoric of family values for years and years and years now, I see every year more pressure on families, less evidence we're valuing families. That's what the family and medical leave law was all about. You think people who have to work ought to be good parents. Give them the right to do it. And that's what we want to do. That's why our welfare reform program will move people from dependence to independence. That's why we want the earned

income tax credit to be increased, so we can say a simple thing to America's families: If you work 40 hours a week and you've got a child in your house, you shouldn't live in poverty. Your country is better than that, and the tax system ought to reflect it.

Now, you know it's a lot easier to talk about than it is to do, because we have to do in ways that require all of us to change. And now the United States Congress is getting to the hard part. They are going to be called upon to make the decisions on the budget to make good that commitment to reduce the deficit by over \$500 billion without throwing large numbers of Americans out of work, because we have to continue to invest in education and technology and the things that will make us competitive in the future. That is the test. We know how to do it. It is hard to get from here to there. There will always be those who really don't have much of a stake in change and love to complain; who will say, well, we should do it this, that, or the other way. There will be those who sing the siren's song that there is somehow a painless way to change. I don't know about you folks, but I'm 46 years old; I've been trying to lose 15 pounds for 2 months. There's no painless way to do that. [*Laughter*] There is no painless way to do that.

This is a time not just for vision but for discipline and for maturity and for understanding, that if we are going to turn this country around, as I have said so many times, we are not going to be able to ask what's in it for me, we're going to have to say, what is in it for us? How can we all give something so we can all get something? How we can give today to get tomorrow? That is the test before us. So I ask all of you to support the Members of Congress with the budget cuts, with the revenue increases, with the targeted investments that will change this country and lift up this economy and keep going what has happened that is good already. We have got to have the courage to do it.

And finally, let me say that I think it is important that we do our best to reconnect people to the political process who voted in record numbers in November, could never afford to come to a dinner like this, but desperately care about their country. You would not believe the volume of letters we are get-

ting in the White House. We've already gotten as much mail in the first 3 months, somebody told me yesterday, as my predecessor did in a whole year. And I say that not to criticize him or to laud myself. That has nothing to do with it. A lot of it's critical; that's good. We've opened the doors of possibility to people, and they think, maybe, just maybe their Government is going to listen to them again.

That's why I feel so strongly about all these political empowerment bills. That's why I believe in the motor voter bill—I'm glad we got a conference report on it—because it will say to kids, we want you to vote. That's why I believe in the work the Vice President is doing to literally not just save money but change the whole way Government operates and make it more friendly to people who want to access it. That's why I feel so strongly that the House did the right thing in passing that enhanced rescission bill. That's why I believe we ought to pass a campaign finance reform bill, not because I don't want you to give but because I want them to be able to give, too. And I want people to believe that everybody has got a stake in the system. Because if we can reconnect those people to the system, then they will understand that change is a long and hard road.

In 1918, the famous German sociologist, Max Weber, said that politics is the long and slow boring of hard bores. We have come to the hard part. Mario Cuomo used to say, "You campaign in poetry, and you have to govern in prose." The time has come for the prose. And people need to read it straight and clean and clear from the shoulder, with all the varnish off, as honestly as we can.

We are being called upon now to see whether we have the courage and the discipline and the will and the vision to change. I believe we do. And I came here tonight not only because I want you to keep your jobs but because I hope if we can live to be 88 or 90 years old, like Bill Fulbright and Mike Mansfield, we can look back and say, this was a time when we lifted America to new heights, we met our challenges, and we did our jobs.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:50 p.m. at the Washington Hilton. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Welcoming Home Military Personnel from Somalia

May 5, 1993

To all of our distinguished guests from all the services, to General Powell and the Joint Chiefs, Secretary Aspin, Mr. Vice President, ladies and gentlemen, and especially to General Johnston and the men and women of the Unified Task Force in Somalia.

General Johnston has just reported to me: Mission accomplished. And so, on behalf of all the American people, I say to you, General, and to all whom you brought with you: Welcome home, and thank you for a job very, very well done.

You represent the thousands who served in this crucial operation, in the First Marine Expeditionary Force, in the Army 10th Mountain Division, aboard the Navy's Tripoli Amphibious Ready Group, in the Air Force and Air National Guard airlift squadrons, and in other units in each of our services. Over 30,000 American military personnel served at sometime in these last 5 months in Somalia. And serving alongside you were thousands of others from 20 nations.

Although your mission was humanitarian and not combat, you nonetheless faced difficult and dangerous conditions. You sometimes were subjected to abuse and forced to dodge rocks and even bullets. You saw firsthand the horror of hunger, disease, and death. But you pressed on with what you set out to do, and you were successful. You have served in the best tradition of the Armed Forces of the United States, and you have made the American people very, very proud.

In the weeks to come, we will formally recognize the contributions of those who participated in Operation Restore Hope. But earlier today, to honor their accomplishments and that of all who supported that effort, I awarded to General Johnston the Defense Distinguished Service Medal in recognition not only of his extraordinary service but also of