

Exchange with Reporters During a Meeting With Goodwill Industries National Graduate of the Year

May 6, 1993

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. Clinton, has your health care program slipped into June?

The President. No. What do you mean "slipped into June"?

Q. The announcement of it.

The President. I don't know when we're going to announce it. We haven't decided exactly. But we're working on it. The most important thing is we're going to finish, outline the details on time. Then we're going to—and one more round of extensive consultations. When we come forward with it depends in part on how we're doing with the consultations. You know, I had lunch today with leading Republican Senators and Members of Congress. We'll just see what happens.

But the critical thing is, we want to introduce it and reveal it in time to make sure it is considered this year. The American people need health security. We need to control the cost of the health care system. We need to be able to guarantee that the American people are not going to lose their health coverage if some misfortune befalls them. And we're going to give the American people that kind of plan. It will be exciting, and it will be dealt with this year.

Q. Do you want to make sure it doesn't get caught up in reconciliation?

The President. Well, I think it's going to be caught up to some extent in it regardless. But I think there is a limit to—I don't think Congress can consider it until they consider the reconciliation. The real issue—it's really almost a technical one—it is at what point in the calendar must a bill be introduced in order to go through all the processes to be considered and voted on by the end of the year. No one thinks it will be considered at the time reconciliation is. The only question is, how quickly do we have to get it in so that it could actually be voted on if we can persuade the Congress to vote on it in this calendar year. That's the issue. And it's almost a mechanical question as much as any-

thing else. But we're going to have a good program. I'm encouraged.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:25 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Presenting the Commander in Chief Trophy to the U.S. Air Force Academy Football Team

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The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. I want to say what a great pleasure it is for me to welcome the seniors from the United States Air Force Academy football team to the White House to receive the 1992 Commander in Chief's Trophy. With me to honor the Falcons are the Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin, the acting Secretary of the Air Force, Michael Donnelly, General McPeak, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, Congressman Martin Lancaster, and of course, the Commander of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell. I'm also the—Chairman—I said the wrong word, didn't I? It's been a long day, folks. We were inside looking at cartoons, making fun of the President. That's what General Powell and Secretary Aspin and I were doing. [Laughter] It's all I can do to regain my composure here. I also want to welcome the Air Force Academy Superintendent, Lt. General Bradley Hosmer, and the Academy athletic director, Colonel Ken Schweitzer.

This is my first chance to present the Commander in Chief's Trophy, but I know it's the Air Force's eighth trip to claim it and the fourth year in a row—something no other team has done.

Now, I know the Falcons are smart football players, the epitome of student athletes. But they don't seem to understand the concept of a traveling trophy. I mean the idea is the trophy should travel among the service academies, not for the Air Force to travel with it between Colorado and Washington every year. [Laughter]