

When we leave here today, we ought to say: This voting rights bill and the others will not be in vain. Every year from now on, we're going to have more registered voters and more people voting. We're going to make the system work. The law empowers us to do it. It's now up to us to assume the responsibility to see that it gets done.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joel Shulkin, University of New Hampshire junior who was instrumental in achieving reform of that State's voter registration laws and who introduced the President. H.R. 2, approved May 20, was assigned Public Law No. 103-31.

Exchange With Reporters After Signing the National Voter Registration Act of 1993

May 20, 1993

Senator Boren's Budget Proposal

Q. Mr. President, can you talk to us?

Q. Can you accept Senator Boren's entitlement cuts?

Q. What's your reaction to Senator Boren's compromise with Danforth?

The President. Well, my first reaction was that it was a huge shift in lowering taxes on people with incomes above \$100,000 and hurting people, both elderly people and working people just barely above the poverty line. It's basically a \$40 billion shift away from wealthy Americans right onto people just above the poverty line, the elderly and the working poor. So I don't support that. I think that's a mistake.

Q. Would you rule out that kind of compromise to get rid of the energy tax?

The President. I think that that is not a good thing to do if you read the details of it. Obviously, the main purpose of some of them is to do away with the BTU tax, but the mechanics shift over \$40 billion away from people with incomes above \$135,000 down to elderly and working people just barely above the poverty line. I don't think that's good. There is also another provision which, if it's implemented in the way they

propose, would continue to shift health care costs onto private citizens and private employers, which would hurt the economy and hurt jobs. So those are the two things which concern me.

Otherwise, I'm glad to have people talking and coming up with new ideas. But those are bad things.

Q. —have you essentially heard enough—

The President. I can just tell you what—I've given you my answer. Look, we had 12 years where we made this economy more unequal and unfair. And to move \$40 billion off of upper income people to people barely above the poverty line, it seems to me, is not a good way to go.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks on Cuban Independence Day

May 20, 1993

Before I say anything else, I want to acknowledge the presence here of some very special friends of mine, Jorge Perez, Jorge Bolano, and Willie Braceras, who helped me in Miami last year when I hardly knew anyone who lived in south Florida and when I needed to learn a lot about the issues affecting Cuban-Americans. I want to say a special word of thanks, too, to Simon Ferro who helped me to organize this event.

We join all Cubans today in celebrating this, the 91st anniversary of Cuban independence. Just as Cubans struggled for independence nearly a century ago today, a new generation of Cubans in our country and our time are struggling for freedom and democracy. And the American people stand by them and their brothers and sisters in Cuba as they struggle for freedom and democracy.

The people of Cuba deserve to be free and to determine their own future through free elections. They deserve to be free of political abuse and dictatorship. Our administration

seeks a rapid and peaceful transition to democracy so that all Cubans can enjoy the fruits of freedom as Cuban-Americans do today. That is why, last year, I was proud to join in supporting the Cuban Democracy Act and why as President I still support it.

I also want to recognize the accomplishments here in the United States of more than one million Cuban-Americans for all they have done not only to rebuild their lives and the lives of their families but to make America a richer, stronger country through what they have done. As I look out on you and I see the great community you represent, I see a real mirror of the American dream. Like others from all over the world you came to our country, or you or your grandparents or parents did, fleeing from oppression, looking for a better life. America offered, in some way, all of us or our ancestors the gift of freedom and opportunity if we would but seize it and exercise it responsibly.

When you came to America, you rolled up your sleeves; you went to work. Many of you work from dawn to dusk, or some of you had to work from dusk to dawn. You were resourceful and talented. You started businesses, entered the ranks of our legal and medical and other professionals. You sent people to Congress and others became artists and athletes and entertainers. You helped to transform the economy of southern Florida so that it now produces more than all of Cuba does under Castro's communism. You've produced musicians like Gloria Estefan, Arturo Sandoval, Celia Cruz, Paquito Rivero; writers, like Herberto Padilla, Liz Balmaseda, Christiana Garcia; prominent citizens like Ramon and Polita Grau, Bishop Augustin Roman, Josefina Carbonell, Orestes Lorenzo; political leaders—and we have in Congress now three Cuban-Americans—Bob Menendez, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and Lincoln Diaz-Balart; business leaders, like the distinguished leader of Coca Cola, Roberto Guizueta, and Marcelino Miyares; and educators, like Eduardo Padron. I know you have never forgotten Cuba, any of you, but you have made America a much better place in which to live. And as President of this country, I thank you on this Cuban Independence Day not only for your continuing dreams for the independence of your homeland but your

continuing additions to the vitality of the independence and freedom of the United States.

I'd also like to make one final remark. Freedom carries with it not only liberties but responsibilities. And when we neglect our responsibilities as a people, our freedoms erode. That has happened to us in significant measure here in the United States as we have seen, over the last 12 years, our national debt go from \$1 to \$4 trillion, while our investment in the future and our ability to compete in many areas has declined. I believe I was elected to try to turn that around. I'm doing the best I can to achieve those goals. I hope that all of you will support the efforts that this administration is making to bring our deficit down, to invest in education and technology in the future, and to gain control of our economic destiny again. It can no longer be in the hands of others because we don't have the discipline to control our own direction. I'm very concerned that in the days and weeks ahead the easy path may once again be taken.

Today I heard people talking about an alternative budget that sounded so good. It said less taxes and more spending cuts. Who in the world could be against that? No one. Except when you strip it away there are two things that ought to concern you as Americans first, and second, many of you as business people who have your own health insurance. I'd like to point out what happens when you get into this. Point number one, this so-called alternative proposal today takes \$40 billion in tax breaks that it gives to people with incomes above \$135,000 and imposes \$40 billion in extra burdens on the elderly and working people just above the poverty line. It sounds great to call one a tax cut and the other to call a budget cut, but when you strip all the rhetoric away there's \$40 billion worth of burdens on people just above the poverty line and \$40 billion less on those of us like me who can afford to do a little more for our country.

The other thing that this alternative budget today presented was a so-called cap on entitlements. Well, in American terms that means one thing: We're going to try to control health care costs. Who could be against that? The problem is that in this proposal

we would only control the Government's health care costs. What happens if that happens? If you have private insurance, you know what's happened, you've been paying more than your fair share because if you have health insurance you have to pay for the people who don't have any insurance when they show up and get health care, and they're not paid for, and you have to pay because your Government does not reimburse Medicare and Medicaid at appropriate levels. So if we control the costs of Medicare and Medicaid but we don't reform the health insurance system, that will force the doctors and the hospitals and the health care providers of this country to explode your health insurance premiums even more in the years ahead than you've experienced in the last 12 years. And that's wrong.

I say let's do it right. Let's control health care costs by doing it for the whole system, reforming the American health care system and reforming the American budget and moving this country forward in a fair and balanced way.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

Now wait a minute, I want to introduce the First Lady for a moment, and let her introduce our wonderful Cuban-American sister-in-law and my brother-in-law, her brother.

[At this point, Hillary Clinton welcomed everyone to the White House and introduced Hugh and Maria Rodham.]

I want to close by acknowledging, in general, the presence in the audience of several members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus who are not Cuban-Americans but who are here, and other Members of Congress who are here. Could we have all the Members of Congress raise your hand. Senator Connie Mack over there from Florida, thank you for coming. Come on up, Robert. Here's a guy who came from the farthest away. Come up Bill. Okay, all the Members of Congress come up here. We'll give you a little publicity here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks,

he referred to Jorge Perez, president and CEO, Related Group; Jorge L. Bolanos, president, Nova Home Health Corp.; Wilfrido Braceras, president, Med-Care Home Health Agency; and Simon Ferro, attorney, Beckers & Poliakoffa, and former Chair of the Florida Democratic Party.

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Mexico-United States Convention and Protocol on Taxation

May 20, 1993

To The Senate of The United States:

I transmit herewith for Senate advice and consent to ratification the Convention Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income, together with a related Protocol, signed at Washington on September 18, 1992. Also transmitted for the information of the Senate is the report of the Department of State with respect to the Convention.

The income tax Convention, the first between the two countries, is intended to reduce the distortions (double taxation or excessive taxation) that can arise when two countries tax the same income, thereby enabling United States firms to compete on a more equitable basis in Mexico and enhancing the attractiveness of the United States to Mexican investors. The Convention is generally based on the Model Treaty of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and recent income tax conventions of both parties.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Convention and related Protocol and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
May 20, 1993.