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clearly be less threatened and more secure. The NPT, START II, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the North Korean Agreement, they top our agenda for the year ahead. There are other critical tasks we also face if we want to make every American more secure, including winning Senate ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention, negotiating legally binding measures to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, clarifying the ABM Treaty so as to secure its viability while permitting highly effective defenses against theater missile attacks, continuing to support regional arms control efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere and pushing for the ratification of the Convention on Conventional Weapons which, among other things, would help us to reduce the suffering caused by the tens of millions of anti-personnel mines which are plaguing millions of people all across this world.

My friends, this is a full and challenging agenda. There are many obstacles ahead. We cannot achieve it if we give in to a new isolationism. But I believe we can do no less than make every effort to complete it.

Tonight, let us remember what President Nixon told the joint session of Congress when he returned from his historic trip to Moscow in 1972. He said, ''We have begun to check the wasteful and dangerous spiral of nuclear arms. Let us seize the moment so that our children and the world's children can live free of the fears and free of the hatreds that have been the lot of mankind through the centuries.''

Now it is within our power to realize the dream that Richard Nixon described over 20 years ago. We cannot let history record that our generation of Americans refused to rise to this challenge, that we withdrew from the world and abandoned our responsibilities when we knew better than to do it, that we lacked the energy, the vision, and the will to carry this struggle forward, the age-old struggle between hope and fear.

So let us find inspiration in the great tradition of Harry Truman and Arthur Vandenburg, a tradition that builds bridges of cooperation, not walls of isolation; that opens the arms of Americans to change instead of throwing up our hands in despair; that casts aside partisanship and brings together Republicans and Democrats for the good of the American people and the world. That is the tradition that made the most of this land, won the great battles of this century against tyranny, and secured our freedom and our prosperity.

Above all, let's not forget that these efforts begin and end with the American people. Every time we reduce the threat that has hung over our heads since the dawn of the nuclear age, we help to ensure that from the far stretches of the Aleutians to the tip of the Florida Keys, the American people are more secure. That is our most serious task and our most solemn obligation. The challenge of this moment is matched only by its possibility. So let us do our duty.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Tricia Nixon Cox, daughter of Richard Nixon; John Taylor, director, Richard Nixon Library and Birthplace; and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

Remarks on the Senate Vote on the Balanced Budget Amendment

March 2, 1995

Good afternoon. I have a statement I'd like to make about the vote on the balanced budget amendment and what happens now. And I look forward to taking your questions tomorrow. We're going to have a press conference then, and so I'll just read the statement now.

The balanced budget amendment has been defeated because Republicans could not provide enough Democratic Senators with the simple guarantee that Social Security would be protected in any balanced budget amendment procedures.

Let me begin by simply congratulating the people on both sides of this issue who argued with great depth of conviction and sincerity and people on both sides who want to bring down the deficit and eliminate unnecessary spending but who differed on the consequences and the necessity of using an amendment to the Constitution to do it.

The question we must all face now is, what happens tomorrow? We all know that there is no real requirement of a constitutional amendment to reduce unnecessary Government spending and to reduce the deficit. For 12 years before I took office, Washington allowed the deficit to explode. Organized interests did well, but the public interest and the future suffered. Washington, during this entire period, spent too much time on rhetoric and gimmicks and too little time making hard, smart, specific budgetary decisions.

Then, just 2 years ago, Democrats acting alone had the courage to pass the largest deficit reduction package in the history of the United States, now over $600 billion. Our annual deficit at that time was about 5 percent of our income. It has now dropped to just over half that and is scheduled to go down much lower.

A month ago, we added to that historic deficit reduction with a budget that cuts spending, cuts the deficit even more, and provides for modest tax cuts to the middle class for education and child-rearing. I am as ready as ever to work with the Congress to make further reductions in the deficit. As I have said repeatedly, it must come in the context of responsible health care reform because it is only the health care costs of the country that are going up in our budget. All other costs are flat or declining.

Now the process of reducing the deficit while investing in our future must go forward. There is a legal process for doing just that. In 1993, though I had never before been a part of Government in Washington, we presented our budget plan only 27 days into our administration. It has now been 57 days since the Republicans took control of the Congress. And even though their leadership has been here many, many more years, they have still not presented their budget. We passed the budget resolution for our plan before the legal deadline of April 15th. Now they must follow that process as well, telling the American people how they are going to keep the promises of their contract on balancing the budget and paying for their tax cuts by the legal deadline of April 15th.

When the Republicans do present their budget plan, we will carefully consider it. We owe them that, and we must. I have shown my commitment to reducing the deficit and to investing in our future. And I will continue to do that. I believe we can reduce the deficit without compromising our commitment to education and to our children and without undermining our commitment to our seniors in Social Security and basic Medicare needs. I believe we can do that. I believe we can do it while continuing our commitment to provide 100,000 police officers for this country, a program that is already fully paid for by spending cuts. We do not need to allow any of those things to be used as a bank to cut taxes for upper income Americans.

There are other things we can do right now, things that I agree with the Republican leadership on, and let me just close with this one. Let us now immediately take up in the Senate the line-item veto, and let's pass it. We can cut millions, tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars in spending with the line-item veto. So I urge the Senate to proceed immediately to take that up. And I will work as hard as I can to persuade members of both parties to support it and to continue the important work of reducing the deficit.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:17 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

Proclamation 6774—Save Your Vision Week, 1995

March 2, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Sight is a precious gift—one that we cannot afford to take for granted. To ensure that we enjoy a healthy view of the world for many years to come, all of us must make certain our eyes receive good care and attention throughout our lives.

Americans can take steps to guard their vision on a daily basis, while at home and on the job. Using face masks, goggles, or safety glasses can protect our eyes from the dangers of potentially harmful chemicals or machinery, and the appropriate protective eyewear is critical while playing sports. But