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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Remarks at a Breakfast With Business Leaders in Ottawa, Canada

February 24, 1995

Thank you very much, Mr. Prime Minister, Ambassador Chrétien, Ambassador Blanchard. Ladies and gentlemen, Ambassador Blanchard's introduction of me is a sterling illustration of what is known in our little circle of friends as Clinton's third law of politics, which is, whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. They'll lie about you every time. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Jim Blanchard for the wonderful job that he has done representing the United States in Canada and representing Canada to the United States. I want to say the second half of that again, Mr. Prime Minister: representing Canada to the United States. Sometimes he comes to see me in the White House and he works me over for 10 or 15 minutes about one of these rather complicated issues that we are trying to discuss between our two countries, and I look at Jim and I say, "Now, whose side are you on, anyway?" which is, I think, the best compliment I could give him in being part of the cement that holds this remarkable relationship together.

I want to welcome all the business leaders here from Canada and the United States. Thank you for coming today. I'd also like to thank you, madam, for hosting us in this magnificent, magnificent hall in this wonderful facility. It's a tribute to the vision of the people of Canada in building it for all of the citizens here and others who visit.

I ran for President of the United States primarily because I wanted to help get our country's economic policy back on track, because I felt that unless we had a strategy for moving into the 21st century in ways that would give all of our people a chance to be rewarded for their work and succeed as workers and as members of families, we were going to have a very difficult time in preserving the magic of the American dream.

And we have worked very, very hard for the last 2 years in our administration, in our country to try to do the things that, seems to me, are critical to pursuing that mission: to increase trade, to diminish the deficit, to increase the level of partnership between the public and private sectors, to advance the cause of American interests around the world, to improve our investment and the quality of our investment in the education and training of our people, to do those things, in short, which would increase the productivity of the American work force in ways that would actually generate not only more jobs but higher incomes.

Canada has almost exactly the same challenges because all the advanced economies of the world face the same challenges in the global economy of the 21st century. One key to that for us is making the most of our relationship. And Jim Blanchard mentioned that when we first met 12 years ago when we were both young Governors, I had—even though I was a long way from Canada, I was asked to be one of the Governors that promoted the interest of what subsequently became NAFTA, the first agreement between the United States and Canada, among the Governors and then tried to sell it in the Congress and especially among those who were somewhat more protectionist in our Congress. I was glad to be able to do that.

And since then, I am pleased with the progress that we have made working with Canada and NAFTA, which has increased our bilateral trade by about 15 percent last year alone; in the GATT agreement; in the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation group that we're a part of that's now agreed to open markets in Asia early in the next century, something very, very important to those of us here in the West; and of course in the Summit of the Americas, trying to open the markets in Latin America to all of us. And

Latin America, as all of you know, is the second fastest growing set of economies in the world and an enormous opportunity for all of us here, as well as an enormous responsibility in terms of what we should be doing in preserving democracy and open markets in that part of the world.

I am pleased with all of that. I'm especially pleased that a few months ago, for the first time ever in our country, there was a survey which said that more people saw trade as a source of hope than as a threat for the first time since we had been taking such public opinion surveys. That is very important. My premise is that unless all of us intend to just close our markets, we will get the downside of global trade and global economics just by living and getting up every day. And the only way we can get the upside is to aggressively push these trade agreements and then work on having the kind of arrangements necessary to expand the frontiers of opportunity. So I feel very, very strongly about all of that. And I hope that all of us can be working on that in the years ahead.

In the meanwhile, let's not forget that there's something to be said for doing more to make the most of what's right here in front of us, our own relationship. And the aviation agreement that we're going to sign in a few minutes is an example of that. It will make it easier for businesses to do business by significantly expanding passenger and cargo services between our two countries. It will mean billions of dollars in new business activity and thousands of new jobs on both sides of our border. Now, the only bad news is for those of you with frequent flier accounts; it means you'll earn fewer miles because it will be so much easier and quicker to get back and forth between Canada and the United States. That's also a high-class problem in this context. [*Laughter*]

Let me say one other thing. This summer the Prime Minister is going to host the G–7 nations in Halifax. And one of the questions we will be dealing with there is a question, it seems to me, that's central to the economic future of our nations in the 21st century. And no one at least with whom I have talked has the answer to this question, but I invite you to ponder it. What we are trying to determine is whether or not the institutions that were developed for the global economy after the Second World War, the IMF, the World Bank, all the others, can adapt within the terms in which they must now operate to the challenges of the 21st century.

We're very mindful of that here in the United States and in Canada now because of the recent financial challenges that Mexico faced and how we saw that reverberating throughout Latin America, the impact in Argentina, the impact in Brazil, the kinds of things that could happen just as we're building up democracy and free markets and real opportunities for us there.

And so, the last point I want to leave you with is this: We are getting the enormous benefits of the market, and we are pushing those benefits as aggressively as we know how. But in the end, what sustains support for democratic governments and market economics is that they work for ordinary people. That's what sustains them in the end.

Every day, whether the sun shines or not, no matter who's in the White House or giving the speeches in Ottawa, most of our folks get up every day and go to work and do the very best they can and live out their dreams as best they can and raise their children as best they can. And they must believe that if they do this, that somehow they will be rewarded; that in our system, if they work hard, if they play by the rules, if they're the best workers, the best mothers, the best fathers they can possibly be, then a good society will give them a chance. The same thing must be true in these developing countries that we're trying to bring into our way of believing about politics and economics. They have to believe that if they do the right thing, they will be able to build a better life.

And all the institutions that we developed at the end of the Second World War had certain assumptions about the way the world economy would work that are no longer accurate. They are trying to adapt to this new world. Whether they can or not is the question we will deal with in Halifax. The Prime Minister's been very active in pushing this debate. I have tried to be active in pushing this debate. We invite all of you to be a part of this debate because, after all, your interests, your future, your companies, your work-

ers, their families will be very much affected by what we do.

In the meanwhile, I am absolutely confident that our common endeavors to make the most of our own relationships may be the most important thing we can do in the near term to further the dreams of all of our people.

I'd like now to close by inviting Prime Minister Chrétien up here by telling you that, as the President of the United States, one of the most important responsibilities I have and one of the great joys of my job is getting to know a huge number of the leaders of the countries of the world. And it's no small comfort to me—I must say this 20 times a year after I have a meeting with somebody from somewhere—I say, ''You know, now that I've met him or her, I understand it's no accident that this person got to run that country.'' The selection systems in all these nations tend to produce people who have the capacity to do what they're supposed to do at the time they're required to serve. But I can tell you that in many, many years in public life I have rarely met anybody that I thought had the particular blend of strengths that Prime Minister Chrétien has, a man who cares passionately about ordinary people and the problems that they face and is also terrifically engaged in the great intellectual challenges that governing in this new time presents and that has the practical sense to build the bridges between the great challenges of the time and the ordinary concerns of real citizens. He is a very, very good leader for this time, and I am very glad to have him as our partner in trying to build our dreams for the 21st century.

Prime Minister.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:56 a.m. in the Great Hall at the National Gallery of Canada. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien; Canadian Ambassador to the United States Raymond Chrétien; U.S. Ambassador to Canada James J. Blanchard; and Shirley Thomson, director, National Gallery of Canada. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

February 25, 1995

Since I became President, I have worked hard to fulfill our responsibility in this time of dramatic change to preserve the American dream for all of our citizens and to make sure this country enters the next century still the strongest nation on Earth.

Much of what we have to do, creating jobs, raising incomes, educating all of our citizens, promoting work over welfare, much of this work is harder because in the 12 years before I became President, Government made the problem worse, promoting inequality by over-taxing the middle class and not asking the wealthiest of our citizens to pay their fair share; reducing investments in our future, things that would grow jobs and incomes; and unbelievably, quadrupling the national debt.

We have to be responsible with our tax dollars. If we don't have a responsible budget, nothing else can get done. That's why with each budget I've submitted to Congress, we've cut Government, cut the deficit, and still invested more in the American people so that they can make the most of their own lives.

Two years ago when I submitted my first budget, some argued that it was impossible to dramatically reduce the deficit, increase investment in education and training and jobs, and create economic opportunities. Well, 2 years later, the facts have silenced the naysayers. We cut the deficit by over $600 billion; our new budget cuts it another $80 billion. Our 1993 economic plan cut over 300 domestic programs; this new budget eliminates or consolidates 400 more. And still we invested more in education, training, and jobs. Since I took office, the economy has created almost 6 million new jobs.

I remain committed to cutting the deficit further and to moving toward a balanced budget. The question is, what's the best way to do it? The United States Senate is about to vote on the so-called balanced budget amendment. The amendment doesn't really balance the budget, it simply requires Congress to come up with a drastic combination of cuts and tax hikes and to cram them in

by a date certain, no matter what the other economic impacts might be, unless 60 percent of both Houses vote to continue to deficit spend. Now, there are some serious problems with this approach, and I'd like to mention three of them.

First, we're fortunate that today our economy is strong. But it won't always be, and when the economy is weak, many people need a little extra help to get back on their feet. Now, when more people are out of work, Government spending on things like job training goes up, and tax revenues go down because there aren't as many taxpayers. At a time like this, the last thing the American people need is a tax hike or a cut in job training or an arbitrary cut in our national defense. But the balanced budget amendment will force us to make just those decisions every time the economy is weak. That kind of extreme fiscal policy makes a small recession worse. In its most exaggerated form, it's what helped to turn the economic slowdown of the 1920's into the Great Depression of the 1930's. According to the Treasury Department, if a balanced budget amendment had been in effect in 1992 during the height of the last recession, another one and a half million Americans would have been out of work.

The second problem is this: The Constitution clearly establishes that budgetary choices should be made by elected representatives. But under this balanced budget amendment, budget decisions could end up being made by Federal judges, who certainly aren't elected. That's why an army of constitutional scholars from every part of the political spectrum, from conservative Robert Bork to liberal Laurence Tribe, have advised the United States Senate to defeat this amendment. We do not want budget decisions affecting tens of millions of Americans being made by unelected Federal judges.

The third problem is this: Interest payments on our debt, run up between 1981 and 1993 before I took office, are so big now that paying our interest will soon be a bigger part of the budget than the defense budget. What that means is that every time the Federal Reserve raises interest rates to hold down inflation, that increases the deficit. Since this economic recovery got going, there have been seven interest rate increases; the last few have added more than $100 billion to our deficit. Now, this balanced budget amendment, therefore, could give the unelected Federal Reserve the power not only to raise your interest rates but also to cut spending on things like Head Start, childhood immunization, and educational opportunities for all of our children. I don't think that's a very good idea.

We do need to keep reducing the deficit. We need to bring the budget into balance on a regular basis. What does this require? It requires tough decisions. Our administration has made those decisions. Except for the interest payments we're making on the debt, our administration is running a surplus for the first time in over 25 years. We are going to have a balanced budget for the first time in over 25 years next year, except for the interest payments on the debt run up just between 1993 and 1981, in the 12 years before I came here. That's because we've made tough decisions. Do we need to make some more? You bet we do.

This new Congress has been here over 50 days, but there is still no serious explanation of how the budget is going to be balanced by 2002 coming out of the new leadership, even though they support balancing the budget by then. Why is that? That's because these decisions are tough. It's not easy to make the cuts we've already made. It's not going to be easy to make the cuts we've proposed. It's not going to be easy to go beyond that. But we have to do it.

The Federal budget is a statement about our priorities as a nation. The American people have a right to know what's going to be cut, how it's going to affect them. They have a right to know that before a balanced budget amendment is adopted. They have a right to know it if we don't adopt a balanced budget amendment and we keep doing the responsible thing to reduce the deficit. Only recently has the new Republican Congress started to make its priorities clear. I want to work with them on this, but I believe some of their intentions run counter to the best traditions and the best interests of our people.

Many of these Republican leaders seem to be saying that we ought to cut programs

for children to pay for a capital gains cut for upper income people. I don't believe we should reduce the school lunch program, but some Republicans have proposed to do exactly that. Just to take that program for an example, it's done a world of good for millions of kids from all backgrounds, all across America, since Harry Truman was President. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." That used to be the conservative credo; it ought to be again.

We shouldn't dramatically increase the cost of college tuition for millions of students either. But Republicans have proposed to eliminate the student loan subsidy and start charging interest on loans to low-income students while they're still in college. That could increase the cost of their college education by more than 20 percent. We need more people going to college at lower cost, not fewer people going to college at higher cost.

And finally, we must uphold our responsibility to care for elderly Americans. It's important to me and most people in our country to do this. But Republicans are suggesting dramatic cuts in Medicare and other services to our elderly citizens.

These are some of the targets for cuts if a balanced budget amendment is adopted. I don't think they're the right choices for America. I came here to stand up for our children, for people who work hard to make the most of their lives, for people who've worked hard and played by the rules all of their lives. I don't intend to let them down.

We must continue to reduce the deficit and to strengthen our economic security. We must continue to cut Government and make it work better. But we must be careful, not careless; lean, not mean. The only way to preserve the American dream for our children is to make tough choices and hard decisions. We can't avoid our responsibility by legislating those choices away and giving them to people who were not elected to make these decisions.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Statement on the Trade Agreement With China

February 26, 1995

I am pleased that the United States and China today signed an agreement on intellectual property, culminating months of hard work by our negotiators and their Chinese counterparts.

This is a strong agreement for American companies and American workers. China will undertake immediate steps to crack down on piracy, enforce intellectual property rights, and provide more open access for U.S. exporters to the burgeoning China market. This agreement will eliminate practices that have cost Americans over $1 billion a year in high value exports. It will mean thousands of jobs for Americans in key industries, including computer software, pharmaceuticals, agricultural and chemical products, books and periodicals, and audio visual products.

U.S. action in China is part of the broader economic strategy of my administration to create high paying jobs for Americans. On behalf of U.S. workers, we have used every tool at our disposal to fight foreign barriers to competitive U.S. exports.

This new agreement also promotes broader goals in China. Greater respect for rule of law and greater access to intellectual property products both promote a more open Chinese society.

Remarks on Signing the Executive Order to Facilitate Payment of Child Support and an Exchange With Reporters

February 27, 1995

The President. I'm glad to be joined here by the members of this administration who are active in child support enforcement and by advocates of tougher child support enforcement.

Today the Executive order I have just signed is another important step in our efforts to bring the Federal Government in line with the basic values of ordinary Americans. People who bear children and bring them into this world have an absolute responsibility to do their best to take care of them. And

any parent who isn't paying child support should be required to pay.

The action I'm taking today builds on the work we've been doing for the last 2 years to step up child support enforcement. Just last week, the Department of Health and Human Services reported that we collected a record $703 million in delinquent child support enforcement in 1993 by garnishing income tax returns of parents who failed to pay. That is a 13 percent increase in child support collection. It helped almost one million families.

The Executive order I just signed will make the Federal Government a model employer in the area of child support enforcement. It will make it easier for us to find Federal employees who don't meet their obligations to their children. It will speed up our ability to garnish wages and force them to pay the child support they owe.

Any parent who is avoiding his or her child support should listen carefully: We will find you. We will catch you. We will make you pay.

Children should not suffer for their parents' mistakes. Too many children in this country do suffer because of their parents' irresponsible behavior. We can't let them be punished any longer. When parents don't provide the child support they owe, their children pay forever, and in more ways than financial.

The toughest enforcement measures ever proposed for child support were part of the welfare reform legislation I sent to the Congress last year. Our plan said to absent parents, if you're not paying your child support, we'll garnish your wages, suspend your license, track you across State lines, and if necessary, require you to work off what you owe. Child support enforcement is essential to the welfare reform effort, and Congress should include these tough child support enforcement measures in the proposed welfare reform legislation. We should be tough on deadbeat parents, not on innocent children.

Again, I thank all the people who have helped to put together this child support enforcement order. We will proceed to aggressively implement it.

Balanced Budget Amendment

Q. Mr. President, What's your reading on the balanced budget amendment in terms of passage?

The President. I think it's a close vote.

Q. How close?

Q. Have you talked to Senator Nunn yet?

The President. I've talked all the undecided Senators, to the best of my knowledge. I've talked to several, anyway.

Q. You think Nunn will hold out?

The President. I think I should let him speak for himself.

Q. What is it going to take to defeat it tomorrow?

The President. I think it depends upon what those undecided Senators believe is the right thing to do.

Q. Are you going to be meeting with any of them today or tomorrow, Mr. President? What will you be doing to try and head this thing on?

The President. I'm not sure. I've had extensive conversations with all of them. I don't know what else I'll be doing.

Chelsea Clinton's Birthday

Q. How are you going to celebrate Chelsea's birthday? Just a little offbeat.

The President. Well, we're going to have dinner tonight. You know, it's a school day. You don't get your birthday off at school. [*Laughter*]

Q. You're not going to be a deadbeat father, are you? [*Laughter*]

The President. I got up this morning, and we had a nice visit this morning for her birthday. But we're going to have—we're going to have a dinner. We're going to have a family dinner tonight to celebrate her birthday. And then after the press of her school activities clears, we'll probably have a little party for her. But she didn't want one tonight, so we're just going to have a family dinner.

Q. Can you raise a teenager in the White House? [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, I think she's doing very well. She's doing very well.

Thank you very much.

Lincoln-Douglas Sculpture

Q. And what are you doing with Lincoln and Douglas on your desk? Does that portend something?

The President. When C-SPAN came in here and did the interview for President's Day, they gave me that. I liked it a lot. And I met the people who played Lincoln and Douglas in the Galesburg, Illinois, debate when we were out there. I just liked it. I thought it looked good on the desk. Besides that, it reminds me that this town has always been about argument. [*Laughter*]

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:14 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Executive Order 12953—Actions Required of All Executive Agencies To Facilitate Payment of Child Support

February 27, 1995

Children need and deserve the emotional and financial support of both their parents.

The Federal Government requires States and, through them, public and private employers to take actions necessary to ensure that monies in payment of child support obligations are withheld and transferred to the child's caretaker in an efficient and expeditious manner.

The Federal Government, through its civilian employees and Uniformed Services members, is the Nation's largest single employer and as such should set an example of leadership and encouragement in ensuring that all children are properly supported.

Now, Therefore, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Part I—PURPOSE

Section 101. This executive order: (a) Establishes the executive branch of the Federal Government, through its civilian employees and Uniformed Services members, as a model employer in promoting and facilitating the establishment and enforcement of child support.

(b) Requires all Federal agencies, including the Uniformed Services, to cooperate fully in efforts to establish paternity and child support orders and to enforce the collection of child and medical support in all situations where such actions may be required.

(c) Requires each Federal agency, including the Uniformed Services, to provide information to its employees and members about actions that they should take and services that are available to ensure that their children are provided the support to which they are legally entitled.

Part 2—DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this order:

Sec. 201. "Federal agency" means any authority as defined at 5 U.S.C. 105, including the Uniformed Services, as defined in section 202 of this order.

Sec. 202. "Uniformed Services" means the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the Commissioned Corps of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the Public Health Service.

Sec. 203. "Child support enforcement" means any administrative or judicial action by a court or administrative entity of a State necessary to establish paternity or establish a child support order, including a medical support order, and any actions necessary to enforce a child support or medical support order. Child support actions may be brought under the civil or criminal laws of a State and are not limited to actions brought on behalf of the State or individual by State agencies providing services under title IV–D of the Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 651 *et seq.*

Sec. 204. "State" means any of the fifty States, the District of Columbia, the territories, the possessions, and the Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and of the Mariana Islands.

Part 3—IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARE SUPPORTED BY THEIR PARENTS

Sec. 301. *Wage Withholding.* (a) Within 60 days from the date of this order, every Federal agency shall review its procedures for wage withholding under 42 U.S.C. 659 and implementing regulations to ensure that it is in full compliance with the requirements

of that section, and shall endeavor, to the extent feasible, to process wage withholding actions consistent with the requirements of 42 U.S.C. 666(b).

(b) Beginning no later than July 1, 1995, the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) shall publish annually in the *Federal Register* the list of agents (and their addresses) designated to receive service of withholding notices for Federal employees.

Sec. 302. *Service of Legal Process.* Every Federal agency shall assist in the service of legal process in civil actions pursuant to orders of courts of States to establish paternity and establish or enforce a support obligation by making Federal employees and members of the Uniformed Services stationed outside the United States available for the service of process. Each agency shall designate an official who shall be responsible for facilitating a Federal employee's or member's availability for service of process, regardless of the location of the employee's workplace or member's duty station. The OPM shall publish a list of these officials annually in the *Federal Register,* beginning no later than July 1, 1995.

Sec. 303. *Federal Parent Locator.* Every Federal agency shall cooperate with the Federal Parent Locator Service, established under 42 U.S.C. 653, by providing complete, timely and accurate information that will assist in locating noncustodial parents and their employers.

Sec. 304. *Crossmatch for Delinquent Obligors.* (a) The master file of delinquent obligors that each State child support enforcement agency submits to the Internal Revenue Service for Federal income tax refund offset purposes shall be matched at least annually with the payroll or personnel files of Federal agencies in order to determine if there are any Federal employees with child support delinquencies. The list of matches shall be forwarded to the appropriate State child support enforcement agency to determine, in each instance, whether wage withholding or other enforcement actions should be commenced. All matches will be performed in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552a(o)–(u).

(b) All Federal agencies shall inform current and prospective employees that crossmatches are routinely made between Federal personnel records and State records on individuals who owe child support, and inform employees how to initiate voluntary wage withholding requests.

Sec. 305. *Availability of Service.* All Federal agencies shall advise current and prospective employees of services authorized under title IV–D of the Social Security Act that are available through the States. At a minimum, information shall be provided annually to current employees through the Employee Assistance Program, or similar programs, and to new employees during routine orientation.

Sec. 306. *Report on Actions Taken.* Within 90 days of the date of this order, all Federal agencies shall report to the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on the actions they have taken to comply with this order and any statutory, regulatory, and administrative barriers that hinder them from complying with the requirements of part 3 of this order.

Part 4—ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

Sec. 401. *Additional Review for the Uniformed Services.*

(a) In addition to the requirements outlined above, the Secretary of the Department of Defense (DOD) will chair a task force, with participation by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Transportation, that shall conduct a full review of current policies and practices within the Uniformed Services to ensure that children of Uniformed Services personnel are provided financial and medical support in the same manner and within the same time frames as is mandated for all other children due such support. This review shall include, but not be limited to, issues related to withholding non-custodial parents' wages, service of legal process, activities to locate parents and their income and assets, release time to attend civil paternity and support proceedings, and health insurance coverage under the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS). All relevant existing statutes, including the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act of 1940, the Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act, and the Tax Equity

and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982, shall be reviewed and appropriate legislative modifications shall be identified.

(b) Within 180 days of the date of this order, DOD shall submit to OMB a report based on this review. The report shall recommend additional policy, regulatory and legislative changes that would improve and enhance the Federal Government's commitment to ensuring parental support for all children.

Sec. 402. *Additional Federal Agency Actions.* (a) OPM and HHS shall jointly study and prepare recommendations concerning additional administrative, regulatory, and legislative improvements in the policies and procedures of Federal agencies affecting child support enforcement. Other agencies shall be included in the development of recommendations for specific items as appropriate. The recommendations shall address, among other things:

(i) any changes that would be needed to ensure that Federal employees comply with child support orders that require them to provide health insurance coverage for their children;

(ii) changes needed to ensure that more accurate and up-to-date data about civilian and uniformed personnel who are being sought in conjunction with State paternity or child support actions can be obtained from Federal agencies and their payroll and personnel records, to improve efforts to locate noncustodial parents and their income and assets;

(iii) changes needed for selecting Federal agencies to test and evaluate new approaches to the establishment and enforcement of child support obligations;

(iv) proposals to improve service of process for civilian employees and members of the Uniformed Services stationed outside the United States, including the possibility of serving process by certified mail in establishment and enforcement cases or of designating an agent for service of process that would have the same effect and bind employees to the same extent as actual service upon the employees;

(v) strategies to facilitate compliance with Federal and State child support requirements by quasi-governmental agencies, advisory groups, and commissions; and

(vi) analysis of whether compliance with support orders should be a factor used in defining suitability for Federal employment.

(b) The recommendations are due within 180 days of the date of this order. The recommendations are to be submitted in writing to the Office of Management and Budget.

Sec. 501. *Internal Management.* This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch with regard to child support enforcement and shall not be interpreted to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its officers, or any other person.

Sec. 502. *Sovereignty of the United States Government.* This order is intended only to provide that the Federal Government has elected to require Federal agencies to adhere to the same standards as are applicable to all other employers in the Nation and shall not be interpreted as subjecting the Federal Government to any State law or requirement. This order should not be construed as a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the United States Government or of any existing statutory or regulatory provisions, including 42 U.S.C. 659, 662, and 665; 5 CFR Part 581; 42 CFR Part 21, Subpart C; 32 CFR Part 54; and 32 CFR Part 81.

Sec. 503. *Defense and Security.* This order is not intended to require any action that would compromise the defense or national security interest of the United States.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 27, 1995.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:23 a.m., February 27, 1995]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on February 28.

Remarks at the American Red Cross

February 27, 1995

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you, Elizabeth Dole. Thank you for your remarks, and thank you espe-

cially for the strong leadership you have given to the Red Cross. In my own experience, I have watched you give it through hurricanes and earthquakes, through fires and floods, and I am delighted to be the honorary chairman of the American Red Cross and to be here at the start of the 1995 community campaign.

You know, when I became President, I spent a great deal of time early trying to make sure that the Federal Government could do its part in dealing with natural disasters. There had been so much criticism of the Federal disaster relief program before I took office. And we worked hard, and I think that everyone in America would admit that the Federal Emergency Management Agency is doing the best job it has perhaps ever done. But I can tell you this: We never could have done what needed to be done for the American people had it not been for the Red Cross, in the floods in the Middle West, in California, all across the country.

I also can't help saying that on the way in here, Elizabeth, who never misses a chance to get you to do something else for the Red Cross—[*laughter*]—said, ''Oh, by the way, on the way out, we're a little short in our blood drive, and would you mind making a public service announcement?'' [*Laughter*] And I said, ''No, I also wouldn't mind giving blood, and I think I should catch up.'' As a matter of fact, it occurred to me that I ought to—I could really require everyone—[*laughter*]—I could really require everyone at the White House to contribute, since they give blood every day every way. [*Laughter*] They might as well give it to the Red Cross and do some good.

I want to say, again, a special word of thanks to all of you who have been involved in the work of the Red Cross. I have, for several years now, said I thought what our country needed, in thinking about how we relate to each other, is the idea of a New Covenant, that we are entitled to more opportunity but we owe, each of us, more responsibility. We've got to build this country at the grassroots level, and that means we have to do it primarily as citizens, as private citizens with public spirits. That's what the Red Cross is all about. I have seen the Red Cross workers in Florida and in California and all those terrible States that were devastated in the Middle West.

I'm reminded of the example of Debbie Blanton, the head of the Red Cross chapter in Albany, Georgia. When the floods struck last summer there, her home was literally buried by water. But she and her husband, Joe, went to work right away, and the very next morning after the floods struck, they had already opened the first shelter in their area, even though they couldn't get to their own home. When I went down to Georgia a few days later, I met a lot of people, but I didn't meet her because she was too busy working on relief work. I'm happy to report that she and her husband moved back into their home just 4 days before Christmas.

Time and again I have seen the work of the Red Cross, as I said, all across the country. I remember what I saw in the flood-devastated areas in California recently. I saw the Red Cross there feeding families from mobile kitchens, passing out blankets and emergency clothes, running shelters for displaced families.

As awful as they are, these natural disasters have a funny way of bringing out the best in us, neighbors helping neighbors to rebuild their communities and restore hope. If you go back to the beginning of our country or back to the wonderful writings of Alexis de Tocqueville, you see that the keenest observers of America have always said that our ability to associate with people different from ourselves to work for common purpose is the great strength of this country. For more than a century, the Red Cross has led the way in that endeavor. I only wish that we could find a way to do on a daily basis what the Red Cross helps us to do when disaster strikes.

For service men and women the world over, the Red Cross means a helping hand or a word from home. For hospital patients, it means the world's safest blood supply. For people in need, it means a hot meal, a warm bed, a hope for a better future. So for many others, the Red Cross is terribly important not just in times of disaster but when problems strike them or needs plague them day-in and day-out.

I want to take a moment, if I might, to recognize two young people who are here

today who represent the strong partnership in disaster response between the Red Cross and AmeriCorps, our national service program. Johnny Jones and Beverly Beyer were trained by you, the Red Cross. They've worked side by side with the Red Cross when disaster struck in Idaho during fires and Houston after the flood. I'm proud of them and the spirit of voluntarism they represent. I'd like them to raise their hands and be recognized. There they are. Thank you very much. [*Applause*]

Now I have to do what Elizabeth sent me here to do, the sales pitch. [*Laughter*] Because the truth is that for all the work the Red Cross does, none of it can happen without the generous support of the American people, without the million and a half volunteers, the millions of financial contributors, and yes, the blood donors.

So I urge all Americans to keep up your support, to give your time, to give your money, to give your blood, because, as the saying is this year, "Help Can't Wait." I hope the Americ an people will continue to live out the ideals of the Red Cross and be good neighbors every day.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:26 a.m. on the lawn at Red Cross headquarters. Following his remarks and a tour of displays, he signed the American Red Cross Month proclamation.

Proclamation 6772—American Red Cross Month, 1995

February 27, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Every day, thousands of people in need look to the American Red Cross as a banner of hope. For disaster victims here and abroad, for service men and women seeking assistance, and for everyone depending on a safe and ready supply of blood—the Red Cross stands prepared to respond. But the scope of its service extends well beyond the provision of emergency care. Its broader mission is clear: to promote compassion, to foster a spirit of generosity, and to improve the human condition everywhere.

Since Clara Barton—"The Angel of the Battlefield"—founded the American Association of the Red Cross in 1881, its members have been called upon to serve in war and in peace. Today, with more than 1 million dedicated and experienced volunteers, the American Red Cross plays a vital role in bringing physical and emotional comfort to those who need it most. Whether they are responding to an emergency or addressing the daily necessities of the homeless and elderly, Red Cross workers have always been models of community spirit.

Dangers to the health and safety of our people have changed radically during the past hundred years, and the Red Cross has adapted to meet these needs. Its commitment to caring for others enables us to restore hope in the lives of injured citizens, and its example challenges us to revitalize the covenant of American citizenship. The long-term strength of our Nation depends upon our willingness to live out the ideals long embodied by the American Red Cross. To celebrate our past and to safeguard our future, I am proud to commend the countless individuals whose courage and selflessness have sustained this organization for more than a century.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America and Honorary Chairman of the American Red Cross, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim March 1995 as "American Red Cross Month." I urge all Americans to show support for the more than 2,000 Red Cross chapters nationwide, and I challenge each of you to become active participants in advancing the noble mission of the Red Cross.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William Jefferson Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:17 a.m., February 28, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 2.

Remarks Commemorating the First Anniversary of the Brady Law and an Exchange With Reporters

February 28, 1995

The President. Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, Mr. Secretary, Madam Attorney General, Commissioner Lovitt, and my friend Jim, congratulations. Happy anniversary.

You know, I'd like to begin by saying a special word about Jim Brady. He dedicated his life to public service. In no small measure because of that dedication, 14 years ago his life was in danger and his life changed forever. In spite of all the hardship and the pain that followed, he never looked back but instead decided he should fight on, determined to do his part to prevent the tragedy that struck him from striking other people. More than any other person in the United States, we celebrate today the courage and determination of Jim Brady, and we are in his debt.

Thank you, sir.

James Brady. Thank you, sir.

The President. You know, Jim and Sarah Brady represent in so many ways the kind of citizen action I talked about in the State of the Union Address, the New Covenant: moral responsibility along with more opportunity and people sparking grassroots movements across this country. I am committed to this law and committed to what it represents. You know, our big problems here in Washington often stem from the fact that we don't think about what promotes responsibility and what creates opportunity and what enables people to make the most of their own lives. The Brady bill does all that.

A crucial part of our job here in Washington is to help arm the American people, through our police officers, to fight crime and violence. The Brady law, in that sense, is one of the things that I'm proudest of that has happened since I have been President. We put an end to 7 years of politics-as-usual, of people saying one thing and doing another, when the Brady law passed. It's not a complex piece of legislation, but it took 7 years, 7 years to pass the Congress.

And all the naysayers talked about how terrible it would be. Well, now we know that, as the Secretary said, over 40,000 convicted felons, fugitives, drug dealers, gang members, stalkers, were prevented from purchasing handguns in the Brady law's first 11 months. I should point out that the real national number is bigger than that because, as you know, there are some States that have companion laws that go along with that, and the estimates are that, nationwide in the States with Brady-like laws and the Brady law, the total is more like 70,000.

A recent study says that, as the Secretary said, that that's only 3.5 percent of all the people who buy handguns. And as he said, it's kind of like airport metal detectors. I think 97 percent of us should be willing to wait a while, so that the 3 percent of us who are trying to buy guns for the wrong reasons can be stopped. Three percent of the American people buying guns for the wrong reasons can do a phenomenal amount of damage, and stopping them can do a phenomenal amount of good, can keep a lot of citizens alive, and it can keep an awful lot of law enforcement officials alive.

There are thousands of examples around the country, but let me just cite one or two. In March of 1994, the Brady law stopped a handgun purchase by a man in Kansas under a restraining order for allegedly stalking his wife and threatening to kill her. In April, the law led to the arrest of a suspected drug dealer in Texas with outstanding warrants for possession of cocaine and heroin with intent to distribute. In November, it helped to catch two gang members, both convicted felons, who traveled all the way from California to Nevada to purchase weapons.

These are the people the law was meant to stop. Law-abiding people are those the law was meant to protect. The test was simple: Will it save a life? Will it protect one child walking home from school, so he or she could feel a little safer? Will it spare one woman from abuse? If it could, we all thought the law would be a success. Now we know that it has done that thousands of times over in

just one year. The Brady bill has become the Brady law with flying colors.

After years of the same old politics-as-usual, the last Congress stood up to the special interests and stood up for the American people. They heard the pleas of the victims, and they thought through to the end, past all the rhetoric that was in their way. When they passed this bill and when they banned 19 deadly assault weapons and their copies, many of them paid a terrible price. Some of them laid down their seats in Congress to stand up with the law enforcement officials of this country and with Jim Brady. But America is safer because of their courage. And I think now, after one year of the Brady law's impact, the entire American electorate will see that those who attacked it were wrong and those who stood up for it were right.

You know, today there's a lot of concern in our country and a lot of interest in the news media about the balanced budget. And next week there will be another issue, and the week after that there will be another issue, and 6 months after that there will be another issue. And people may forget what Jim Brady went through for 7 years, and people may forget why some of those Members of Congress lost their seats last November. But from now until the end of this country's existence, every year there will be more people alive because of Jim Brady and because of what the Congress did.

And so I just want to say this: For all the other things that will be debated, you can mark my words, the Brady law and the assault weapons bill are here to stay. They will not be repealed.

Thank you, Jim, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Republican Crime Bill

Q. Mr. President, does that mean you're reaffirming your veto threat for the Republican crime bill and the——

Mr. President. I will stay with what I said all along. We ought not to repeal the Brady bill, we ought not to repeal the assault weapons ban, and we certainly ought not to back off the 100,000 police commitment. And I will do everything I can to protect that.

But let me be fair to this new Congress. Remember, there are two Houses in this new Congress. The Senate has not yet acted on the crime bill or any of these other bills. And I'm confident that we have at least a chance of working out a better bill in the Senate and in the conference process.

I have made clear my veto position on 100,000 police, and I reaffirm it. But I want to emphasize that I still am committed to trying to make good things happen in this Congress, and I have not in any way or shape given up on that. The bill has still got to go to the Senate, and we'll see what happens.

Q. Why do you have so much faith?

The President. I'm just a cockeyed optimist and always have been. [*Laughter*]

Balanced Budget Amendment

Q. Mr. President, does that extend to what's coming on the balanced budget amendment today? Do you have anything that you'd like to say to the Senate as they approach that?

The President. Well, I have two things. I made a little note here. I asked somebody to give me this. Obviously, I don't support it. But I support the impulses that are giving rise to it, that is, the American people understand that something went terribly wrong about 14 years ago. In the 12 years before I got here, we quadrupled the national debt. And before that, in almost 200 years as a country, we didn't have permanent deficits. We've raised the debt when we needed to, and we ran a surplus when we needed to.

Now, I don't believe we need to change the Constitution to overcome the 12 years before I got here and the mistakes that were made. We've already lowered the deficit for 3 years in a row, and we can do more. But I want to say this. You know what I think is wrong with it. What I think is wrong with it is that it may give a little extra impetus to our reducing the deficit, but it also runs the risk of turning recessions into near depressions and of turning Federal judges into budgeteers—they're not elected—and of giving the Federal Reserve the power, in effect, to wipe out all of our education programs, because when they raise interest rates, they'll raise the deficit. So there are a lot of problems with this automatic mechanism.

But let me say this: Whatever happens today, the real question should be, what are we going to do tomorrow? What are we going to do tomorrow? You know, I'm very proud of the fact that my budgets are the first budgets in 30 years which run surpluses, exclusive of interest on the debt. That is, no President since the Johnson years has introduced a budget and passed a budget through Congress which runs a surplus with all the operating programs of the Government, exclusive of interest on the debt. I'm proud of that. That shows that we've done what we could to bring down unnecessary spending, to reinvent Government under the Vice President's leadership, and to move in the right direction.

Now, I have been here now waiting for 770 days—770 days—for the members of now the majority party in Congress to both propose and vote for a budget that actually reduces the deficit. And I am willing to work with them. But this balanced budget amendment does not reduce any spending. And the American people still don't know what's going to happen to Social Security. They still don't know what's going to happen to education. They still don't know what's going to happen to Medicare. They still don't know anything about what the details are.

So the real question is: Whatever happens today—and it's obviously in the hands of the sponsors in the Senate, because they know what they have to do to get the votes to pass. They have to make it less bad; they have to fix at least the judicial—they have to fix the idea of giving the Federal judges the power to raise taxes and cut spending. And what are we going to do tomorrow? That's what I want them to think about. I'm willing to work to do more, to cut more of the deficit, but we need a partnership here, and we need to go beyond posturing.

So I do not think it's a good idea, but that decision is in the hands of the Congress, and we'll just have to see what they do. But whatever happens today, the real question is, what are we going to do here tomorrow?

Q. It sounds like you're throwing in the towel.

The President. No, I'm not. No, I think——

Q. You sound very——

The President. I have worked—it's just that I know where those five people are that are undecided, and I know that there are changes that the majority could make in the Senate to get the votes. You know, if they would—for example, they plainly could pass it if they said that they weren't going to give Federal judges the power to raise taxes and cut spending and they weren't going to use Social Security in trying to resolve this, they weren't going to put Social Security into the balanced budget calculation. Then the thing would clearly pass.

The only point I'm trying to make is, it's up to them now whether it passes or not, because I've talked to all five of those folks. Others have talked to them. They've made their positions public. They've made it clear where they stand. Those five Democrats are all people who, like me, have worked hard to try to bring down the deficit. So we'll just have to see what happens.

No, I'm not sure it's going to pass, see, because I don't know what's in their minds. Some of the cynics believe that they want it to lose so they can continue to blame the Democrats.

Q. You don't seem to have put much energy in it.

The President. That's not—I have made my position very clear. I don't have a veto, as you know, in this process. I've made my position clear. I've had extensive talks with undecided Members. I've done everything I could. Our administration has testified on it. But what I think happens is that a lot of the Members of Congress are frustrated because of what's happened in the previous 12 years before we showed up here, and they see this mountain of debt that's piled up. But I don't believe the amendment is the way to solve it, because I think of the whole history of America. I know we could fix this without a constitutional amendment.

And if we fix the big structural deficit and we're stuck with this amendment, then what happens the next time we have a recession? Are we going to make it worse? In a recession, are we going to be raising taxes and cutting job training programs? What happens the next time the Federal Reserve has to raise interest rates? Are we going to come back and cut Head Start and college loans?

So we need to continue to work on this. We need strong action. I'm just afraid that the American people have not been told the full implications of this for Social Security, for education, and for the economy. And I think that it's regrettable, but understandable, that the supporters did not want to comply with the right-to-know suggestion. But they're going to have to, anyway. They're going to have to before the States vote on it. They're going to have to tell people what the consequences are.

Q. Is there anything they could change to make you go along with it with this point of view that it's such a bad idea to change the Constitution?

The President. I think that changing—I think if you change the Constitution without some sort of an economic emergency—that's my problem. That is, my problem is, if you read Senator Moynihan's three lectures on this, three speeches in the Senate, he did a wonderful job, Moynihan did, of laying out the whole history of our budgeting and pointing out how this problem that we're saddled with is a new problem in American history. It arose from 1981 to 1993. It did not exist before in our country. And the point he made is, we can fix it without amending the Constitution if we have the will to do it and if we'll work together in a bipartisan fashion.

And if we amend the Constitution and we fix it, then the next time it takes effect, it'll be destructive, because we'll be in a recession and it will make the recession worse. That's what I'm worried about. I don't know how they could fix that. I understand one of the Senators had some sort of an economic emergency amendment that would fix that. But that's what I see as the real problem.

You know, I guess when you come down to it, the best argument for it is the drunk in the liquor store argument: Every time I drive by, I'm going to go in and buy a fifth; you better board it up. I mean, near as I can tell, that's the argument for it. And I just think that we should have a bipartisan determination to keep bringing that rascal down without amending the Constitution in ways that 10, 15 years from now are likely to hurt our children and our grandchildren.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:32 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin; Jerry Lovitt, Kentucky State police commissioner; former White House Press Secretary James Brady, who was wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan; and Mr. Brady's wife, Sarah, who is head of Hand Gun Control, Inc. Public Law 103–159, "To provide for a waiting period before the purchase of a handgun, and for the establishment of a national instant criminal background check system to be contacted by firearms dealers before the transfer of any firearm," approved November 30, 1993, took effect on February 28, 1994.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Wim Kok of The Netherlands

February 28, 1995

Iran

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned about Iran placing anti-aircraft missiles at the mouth of the Persian Gulf?

The President. I think that I'll wait until later to answer any questions.

Q. Even the ones—the Republicans saying that they're willing to change the balanced budget amendment so that the courts cannot raise taxes or cut spending?

The Netherlands

Q. And about The Netherlands—[*laughter*]——

The President. It's a great country and a great ally of the United States.

[*At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.*]

"Apache" Helicopters

Q. Mr. President, how will you react if the Dutch Government decides not to buy *Apache* helicopters?

The President. Well, that's a decision for the Dutch Government to make. Obviously, I hope that that will be the decision because I think on the merits, it's the best product. But that's a decision that the Government has to make.

Q. Mr. President, are you trying to sell the Prime Minister on the benefits of the *Apache* helicopter?

The President. I've already done that. I've already made my pitch, if you will.

Prime Minister Kok. And Mr. President, if we don't buy them, we remain a great country.

The President. That's right. We have—you know, our relationship with the Dutch, it's a very—it's a deep and broad and complex one. There are a lot of things involved in it, and this is just one part of it. We are allies in every sense of the word, in so many ways. And we have to continue to work together. There are a lot of problems in Europe and beyond that require our cooperation and our mutual support. And of course, we have a terrific commercial relationship as well. So we have a lot riding on this relationship, and no single element of it can be allowed to define it.

U.N. Peacekeeping Forces

Q. [*Inaudible*]—about U.N. peacekeeping forces that may be in jeopardy because of the attitude of the Republican Party?

The President. Well, I don't agree with the attitude of the party with regard to the peacekeeping forces in Bosnia and with regard to at least some of what I've seen in the House of Representatives on peacekeeping generally. I believe the United States should participate in peacekeeping. I think we should pay our way. I think we should continue to be a strong force there.

With regard to Bosnia, I think we should—the United States should support the Contact Group and should support those countries that do have their soldiers on the ground and at risk there. And we have said, for example, if we had to withdraw, if UNPROFOR collapsed, we would try to do our part to help people get out of Bosnia safely. But I think it would be a mistake for the United States to go off on its own and start making independent Bosnia policy. We don't have our soldiers there. The Europeans do have soldiers there; the Canadians have soldiers there. They have put their lives at risk. We have spent a lot of money in Bosnia, and we have supported from air and sea and from our hospital in Croatia, and a lot of other ways we've supported the operation of the U.N. in Bosnia.

Q. So you're with our Prime Minister and against the Republicans in this matter?

The President. That's correct. That's essentially——

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. [*Inaudible*]—Constitution——

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. There has to be a difference of opinion in the United States or you're on the long end of it—you're in the right position. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:27 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With Prime Minister Kok of The Netherlands

February 28, 1995

The President. Please be seated. Welcome. It's indeed a pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Kok to the White House. Since the days of our Revolutionary War when The Netherlands gave shelter to John Paul Jones' ships, The Netherlands has consistently been one of our most valued and trusted allies.

I also have warm personal recognition, Mr. Prime Minister, of your country. I last visited it a few years ago when I was Governor of Arkansas, and I hope I have a chance to visit it again. In the meanwhile, I'm glad we had the opportunity to return the hospitality today.

The Prime Minister comes here at a very important time, when we are seeking to work together to meet the challenges of the post-cold-war era. One of the most vital issues we discussed is the effort to build a more integrated, more secure Europe, to ensure that democracy and prosperity grow strong in the years ahead. We reaffirmed our intention to press ahead with the enlargement of NATO to include Europe's new democracies.

The Netherlands is playing a leading role in building bridges to these new democracies. It was the first NATO nation to host a Partnership For Peace exercise on its own

soil, something for which we are very appreciative.

We also agreed that in parallel with this expansion NATO must develop close and strong ties with Russia. We share a vision of European security that embraces a democratic Russia.

The Prime Minister and I discussed a broad range of issues, including our interest in continuing to expand trade between our two nations. Not many people know just how rich our partnership is. The Netherlands is our eighth largest trading partner. And the Dutch people obviously think the American economy is a good bet because they have invested more in the United States than anyone except Britain and Japan. I hope this trading relationship will continue to grow with our friendship in the years ahead.

During our talks, we also agreed on the importance of indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. We reviewed our joint efforts in the Caribbean where we are working together to combat narcotics trafficking.

I want to thank the Prime Minister and all the people of The Netherlands, especially, for the support they have given to our common efforts to restore democracy in Haiti, a truly remarkable success story to date. No other European nation has been as forthcoming at every stage of this endeavor, from sending ships for sanctions enforcement, to the police monitors in the multinational force, to the Dutch Marines, who are part of the U.N. mission. Like their involvement in the peacekeeping in the former Yugoslavia, this vital help to the people of Haiti writes yet another chapter in the great Dutch tradition of supporting humanitarian relief efforts in human rights around the world.

When I spoke 2 weeks ago at the Iwo Jima Memorial commemoration, I admired once again the wonderful gift that The Netherlands gave us in thanks in part for our part in liberating their country in World War II, the wonderful Netherlands Carillon. Today, I want to thank the Prime Minister and the people of The Netherlands for renovating and updating the Carillon, which is now receiving a 50th bell. This is the gift that I have here. Now, as the Prime Minister reminded me, some of the bells are as big as he and I are. But this 50th bell, which I assure you, it's been over in the Oval Office for a day or so, and we have all lifted it, it's quite heavy and quite wonderful, and we thank him for this.

Bells have rung out the news of victory and liberty for centuries. As we move forward to meet the challenges of this new century, it is fitting that we and our Dutch friends will be reminded of the common cause we shared 50 years ago by the sound of this beautiful new bell. May it also be sounding 50 years from now and even beyond.

Mr. Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Kok. Thank you very much, Mr. President. Let me, first of all, express my gratitude and, too, the gratitude of Minister for Foreign Affairs Van Mierlo to be here. Having been here at this official working visit, this visit underlined once and again the close links and the excellent cooperation and relation between our two countries, both on a bilateral basis and also in the international framework. And so I want to thank you for that occasion.

You said three words about this bell. Indeed, this is one of the smallest ones we have. But it's number 50; number 50 in a row. And this symbolizes, with the words ''Freedom'' and ''Friendship'' on it, it symbolizes how grateful we still are and have remained, for the way in which the United States and the United States' soldiers participated in liberating our continent, liberating our country. And I will be proud to see and to hear from far away, from in The Netherlands when, on the 5th of May of this year——

The President. We will ring——

Prime Minister Kok. —the day where, 50 years ago, The Netherlands were freed, that the bells will ring. All the bells will ring, and that symbolizes then, again, our friendship.

Coming back to the main purpose of our talks and our visit, the President indicated the subjects that have been discussed. I think we live in a world where cooperation, partnership, and leadership is more necessary than ever before. In this world, we in The Netherlands participate in European cooperation. We want to strengthen the European Union. We want to expand the European Union. We want to offer perspective

to the peoples of the Central and Eastern European countries that they can be part of our integrated European Union. And we want to work on the security architecture together with the United States.

We are convinced—Europeans—but I'm even more convinced that without transatlantic cooperation, European integration at the end will not be successful. So we need each other. We need the United States in that role, and we want to strengthen our identity in Europe also in this field, foreign policy, security policy, but together with the United States.

And I want to end by saying that especially in this time, the role in which you, Mr. President, use the word "leadership," the way in which you are prepared to take the lead in going the way into the right direction in the universal context is impressive and encouraging because we need each other. We need strong and good cooperation between Europe and the United States. We need leadership.

Sometimes I'm a little bit concerned about tendencies in American society where you get the impression—but I'm only here for a few days—you get the impression that there is a certain tendency towards isolationism, stepping somewhat back from the international scene. And that would be very riskful, to put it mildly. That would be very riskful, because responsibility and leadership is a necessity now and forever.

Thank you very much.

The President. We'll begin with one question from an American journalist, and then we'll alternate between the American and the Dutch journalists who are here.

Iran

Q. Mr. President, what can you tell us about the presence, or non-presence of missiles at the—of the Persian Gulf?

The President. I can tell you that basically what General Shalikashvili said is accurate, and it's a situation that we're monitoring very closely. The missiles are rather old. As you know, they've been here for some time, in the possession of the Iranians. And we are monitoring them, trying to evaluate exactly everything we need to know about them. But we're on top of the situation, and we think there is no undue cause for concern at this moment.

United Nations Peacekeeping

Q. I have a question for the Prime Minister and the President. First, the President. The Prime Minister has expressed deep concern about the debate in this city of scaling down the American contribution to U.N. peacekeeping operations. Especially the Republicans are pushing hard this idea. But when it comes to this point, who is responsible, though, the Republicans on Capitol Hill, or the President of the United States?

And to the Prime Minister: Which Washington did you like the best, the Washington of Dole, who you met yesterday, or the Washington of President Bill Clinton?

Prime Minister Kok. I will have to think about my answer. So, first, perhaps the President. [*Laughter*]

The President. You asked him the right question in the wrong way, so I'll try to fill up some time so he thinks of a clever answer. [*Laughter*]

Well, let me say our Congress has voted already. It's a matter of American law to reduce our peacekeeping contribution from 31 percent down to 25 percent, more in line with our world share of GDP, although it's smaller than that.

Nonetheless—and that was done before the last elections. And it was a part of an agreement I reached with the Congress that at least secured the money that we owed when I became President in back debts to the U.N. The United States was the biggest debtor to the U.N. We owed money, and I was trying to get the money and trying to move forward.

Now, we have been very active in supporting reforms of U.N. practices, in which I think we are in accord with, with The Netherlands on that. And we wanted to pay our dues, and we want to stay active in peacekeeping—at least our administration does. I appreciated what the Prime Minister said. A lot of Americans are, understandably, concerned about their own problems in the economic and other challenges we have here at home. But we cannot afford to walk away from not only the obligations but the opportunities to work together with other countries

to solve problems before they get more severe and before the United States could be dragged in at greater costs in treasure and in human life.

So I very much support the comments the Prime Minister made. I have tried to keep the United States actively engaged with Europe, with Asia, with Latin America, and indeed with the entire globe in pursuing an aggressive strategy of promoting democracy and freedom and peace and prosperity. And that will continue to be my policy. It is a policy that under our Constitution I can pursue as long as I am the President. But the Congress does have the ability to appropriate or fail to appropriate money. That is their job under our Constitution.

So that will answer most of your questions when you think about these conflicts coming up and what the United States can and cannot do. If I have a difference of opinion with them, if it relates to the appropriation of money, that's their first job. If it relates to the conduct of foreign policy under the Constitution, that's my primary job.

U.S. Debate on Foreign Involvement

Prime Minister Kok. Now comes a difficult question. Well, let me tell you this. I'm not here to compare. I'm here to listen and to debate. And I'm grateful that the President of the United States explains his policies and his position in the way he did in our meeting.

In addition to this, I want to say this: We, to a certain extent, also see in other parts of the world, including The Netherlands, these tendencies of—in the period where the old enemy, communism, is not there anymore, after the cold war—certain tendency where perhaps a responsibility for international solutions of international problems is not always put high enough on the agenda. So it's not just an American discussion. Of course, in America, the discussion is more important than elsewhere because of the size of your country, you're a continent in itself, and because of the consequences if the United States would abstain from playing that active and prominent role.

So the lesson I draw from this short visit, and also from the short meeting yesterday with Senator Dole, is that we have to discuss and debate much more also with the Republicans, because I could imagine that quite some Senators and Members of the House are just a little bit unaware of the responsibility that has to be taken in order to solve the number of huge international problems.

Perhaps some Senators and Members of the House are not fully aware of what is the real situation in former Yugoslavia, what the situation, for example, of Dutch troops, Blue Helmets, is, and what the consequences would be of a unilateral arms embargo lift where, of course, we here again today heard that the American President would not agree with.

But I think this type of debate, of debate with the Americans, also the Americans from the Republican side, is necessary. And I'm ready with my government to invest also in that type of contact, because the wrongest solution for problems is drawing your back to each other. We have to discuss—and I'm glad, as I said before, that between the President of the U.S. and the Dutch Government there's a close similarity in view, vision, and perspective.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. One, two, three. I'll get to all of you. Go ahead. [*Laughter*]

Balanced Budget Amendment

Q. Virtually every major economist, with the exception of Milton Friedman, has said, in effect, that the balanced budget amendment is, in effect, a crackpot idea that could bring back the kinds of policies that triggered the Great Depression. Yet it seems to be benefiting from a political stampede on Capitol Hill. How do you account——

The President. Not yet—hasn't passed yet. It's hanging in the balance.

Q. If it does pass in the Senate later today, will you lead a campaign to block ratification by the States?

The President. Well, first of all, I will say—I will keep on saying what I've been saying. The only argument for it is the argument that many people who helped to create the problem we've got are making, which is that we can't help ourselves unless the Constitution makes us make a change.

We never had a chronic deficit problem before 1981. Our country was not into the

business of permanent deficits, although we slipped into—we were undisciplined in the seventies, but not chronically so. Then in '81 and '82, and then again in '86 we made a series of decisions which gave us a permanent deficit. That needs to be corrected. We've made major steps in the last 2 years in correcting it.

The American people are right to want it corrected. But if we solve the so-called structural deficit problem, the permanent deficit problem, with the balanced budget amendment, then the next time we have a recession, it could make it much worse. That's why all the economists of all political stripes are against it.

And I'll just keep making that point and keep urging the Republicans—tomorrow, what happens tomorrow, however this vote comes out today? I've been here 770 days, and I want the members of the other party to propose and vote for something that will reduce the deficit. That has not happened yet. And I want them to work with me. I will work with them in good faith to do more. That's what we ought—that's what the people hired us to do. They want us to make the decisions. If we do that, we can demonstrate that the amendment is not needed, but that we must get rid of this sort of permanent deficit that we built into our economy starting in the early eighties.

Balanced Budget and the United Nations

Q. Mr. President, I have a question on balanced budget of the United Nations. The obvious question of your leadership in foreign policy will be whether you will veto that nation that will diminish contribution to a U.N. peacekeeping. Will you do that?

The President. First of all, it's already in our law that we cannot—that we must ratchet down our contributions on a regular basis. Now, we also do other things, like what we did in Haiti with the multinational force, that we don't believe should be counted against that. But I will do everything I can to keep the United States involved in the United Nations in peacekeeping and to keep us supporting an active role in the world.

I believe the American people understand that we're better off having these burdens shared with all the nations of the world, trying to nip these problems in the bud and that if we walk away, as some suggest we should in our Congress, and don't spend any money on this, all we're going to do is make the world's problems worse, make other countries behave in a more irresponsible way, and wind up dragging American soldiers and American wealth into deeper and deeper problems that could be avoided if we have a responsible, disciplined approach to burden sharing and peacekeeping. So that's what I'm going to try to do.

Iraq

Q. I wonder if you've had a chance to talk about sanctions against Iraq and whether or not—there's a sense out there that the international community is willing to stand with the U.S. to keep them in place, especially because of what we're hearing from Russia and France on pulling back.

The President. Actually, we did not discuss that today. You know what my position is. My position is that there are a whole set of rules that Iraq must comply with before the sanctions could be lifted, and they haven't been. They shouldn't be lifted. That's what my position is.

"Apache" Helicopters

Q. Mr. President, did you convince the Dutch Prime Minister that The Netherlands should buy the *Apache* helicopter? [*Laughter*] And, Prime Minister, have you already made a decision after you talked with the President?

The President. Well, maybe I can let him off the hook. He said that the decision had not been made, and I reaffirmed my conviction about two things: one, the high quality of the American helicopters, and second, the importance of having very good and interoperable equipment for NATO allies generally. I made the appropriate points in the appropriate way. The Prime Minister listened, made some good responses and made it clear that no decision had been made yet.

Bosnia and Croatia

Q. Did you assure the Prime Minister that the U.S. would take part in any possible withdrawal of U.N. peacekeepers from Croatia, if necessary?

The President. Croatia and what?

Q. Croatia with U.S. troops? Would U.S. troops help bring them out, if necessary?

The President. Let me, first of all, say, we did not discuss that explicitly. You know, the United States has—I guess we ought to get this clear—the United States has committed explicitly and has a plan for helping on the troops in Bosnia. And one of the reasons that the Dutch have been so strong in believing we should not unilaterally lift the arms embargo is that they have troops in and around Srebrenica, I think——

Prime Minister Kok. Right.

The President. And perhaps the most vulnerable of all of the United Nations troops are the Dutch. They have really been brave. They've stuck their necks out. They have prevented much more bloodshed and saved a lot of lives. And that's why they're against the unilateral lift of the arms embargo, because they know what could happen not only to their own troops but, if they are compelled to withdraw, what could happen in that fragile area. And we all remember it wasn't so long ago when that whole area was given up for lost and now hasn't been.

Now, we have gone through that. We're still doing our best to preserve the U.N. mission and presence in Croatia. We may not be able to persuade President Tudjman and his government to do that. We have, therefore, not articulated a clear position. Obviously, we feel a great obligation to all of our allies who are in UNPROFOR who are in vulnerable positions. But I want to say that we have not at this moment explicitly embraced a plan, consulted with the congressional leadership, and ratified it. But obviously, we are just as concerned about the U.N. forces in Croatia as those in Bosnia, but the decisionmaking process is at a different point.

U.S. Debate on Foreign Involvement

Q. The Prime Minister is very concerned about what he perceives as isolationist tendencies in American society. Do you share those concerns? Do you think there is a danger that the United States may abdicate its role as a world leader?

The President. Yes, I share the concerns. No, I don't think the United States will abdicate its role as a world leader. I share the concerns because—for two reasons: One is, a lot of our people here know that the cold war is over, know that most Americans have worked hard for more than a decade now without any appreciable increase in their living standards, and would like to see us focus on our problems here at home in ways that make progress on our economic and social problems.

I believe that we have to make progress on our economic and social problems, but I don't believe that over the long run we can really solve our own problems at home unless we are also operating in a world that's more peaceful, more democratic, and more prosperous. The only way a wealthy country like The Netherlands or the United States grows wealthier is if there is growth in the world, and we trade into it, and we work our way into it.

So we have a very clear personal interest that does not permit us to be isolationists. And if we—we could get away with being isolationists for a couple of years, and then pretty soon, we'd be spending even more of our money on military involvement, cleaning up foreign problems, and dealing with the consequences of our neglect.

So I believe that we will resolve these tensions and debates by reaffirming America's leadership in the world. And that is my determination. That is what I'm committed to doing and why I'm so grateful for the Prime Minister's presence here in the United States and for his words and for the leadership and the example that The Netherlands have set in this area.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 87th news conference began at 12:55 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Franco Tudjman of the Republic of Croatia.

Memorandum on Narcotics Producing and Transit Countries

February 28, 1995

Presidential Determination No. 95–15

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Certifications for Major Narcotics Producing and Transit Countries

By virtue of the authority vested in me by section 490(b)(1)(A) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, ("the Act"), I hereby determine and certify that the following major drug producing and/or major drug transit countries/dependent territories have cooperated fully with the United States, or taken adequate steps on their own, to achieve full compliance with the goals and objectives of the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances:

The Bahamas, Brazil, China, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Hong Kong, India, Jamaica, Laos, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Taiwan, Thailand, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

By virtue of the authority vested in me by section 490(b)(1)(B) of the Act, I hereby determine that it is in the vital national interests of the United States to certify the following countries:

Bolivia, Colombia, Lebanon, Pakistan, Paraguay, and Peru.

Information on these countries, as required under section 490(b)(3) of the Act, is attached.

I have determined that the following major producing and/or major transit countries do not meet the standards set forth in section 490(b):

Afghanistan, Burma, Iran, Nigeria, and Syria.

I have made these determinations, taking into account the factors set forth in section 490 of the Act, and based on the information contained in the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report of 1995. Because the performance of these countries varies, I have attached an explanatory statement in each case.

You are hereby authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to publish it in the *Federal Register*.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 1.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on National Security Strategy

February 28, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 603 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, I am transmitting a report on the National Security Strategy of the United States.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 28, 1995.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 1.

Statement on the Food Stamp Program Antifraud Initiative

March 1, 1995

I am very pleased that USDA is presenting this comprehensive proposal to Congress today.

With this package, we are saying to the Congress that we expect the Food Stamp Program to continue to get food to people who need it but that we will not tolerate criminals who defraud the system and seek to profit from the hunger of others.

Over the past 2 years, this administration has made restoring public trust in Government a top priority. As part of our comprehensive strategy to reinvent the Food Stamp Program, we are today asking Congress for broad new powers, comprised of 13 specific items, to counterattack those who have exploited the program.

This administration has made clear our opposition to block grants for our nutrition programs. With this tough, workable antifraud initiative, we are ensuring that the Food Stamp Program will earn the public trust, and continue to help people who need it.

Proclamation 6773—Women's History Month, 1995

March 1, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Women have made inestimable contributions to our country throughout our Nation's history. Some have names we recognize. Clara Barton. Harriet Tubman. Susan B. Anthony. Eleanor Roosevelt. And Rosa Parks. But women's history is also about the countless women whose names we do not know—the millions of women of courage and commitment who have served this society as doctors and scientists, teachers and factory workers, marathoners and mothers. At home and in schools, in offices and congregations, in our Armed Forces and our communities, women have helped to build this Nation and keep it strong. It is in their honor that we pause to celebrate Women's History Month each year.

The story of women's accomplishments in America is long and proud. Patriots such as Dolly Madison and Harriet Beecher Stowe put their concern for country ahead of their own well-being in order to advance the principles of justice and freedom upon which this Nation was founded. Writers and artists such as Emily Dickinson, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Martha Graham enlivened our culture, extended our horizons, and expanded our appreciation of the world around us. And in recent decades, women have made enormous strides. The pioneers such as Jane Addams, founder of Chicago's Hull House and our first woman Nobel Prize winner, and Frances Perkins, our first woman Cabinet Officer, have paved the way for ever growing numbers of women running businesses and universities, serving as governors and diplomats, conducting orchestras and exploring space, helping to lead our land toward a new century.

Yet barriers remain. Women now work for pay in greater numbers, in more occupations, and for more years of their lives than ever before, but too many must still settle for compensation far below what it should be, and too many still find their potential curbed by glass ceilings. And women still struggle every day, in tests of resourcefulness and devotion, to balance the demands of work and family. If freedom and opportunity are truly to be the law of the land, we must sustain and renew our commitment to the principle of equality that is our American heritage and work to remove the obstacles that stand in the way.

Women's History Month offers us an opportunity to celebrate the contributions of all of the women who have enriched our Nation. I encourage Americans to learn about women's history—this month and throughout the year. Only by studying the history of America's women—their triumphs and their struggles—can we understand the history of America.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim the month of March 1995 as ''Women's History Month.'' I ask all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and to remember year-round the many and varied contributions that women make each day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:18 a.m., March 2, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 3.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Department of Transportation

March 1, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with section 308 of Public Law 97–449 (49 U.S.C. 308(a)), I transmit herewith the Twenty-seventh Annual Report

of the Department of Transportation, which covers fiscal year 1993.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 1, 1995.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the Department of Energy

March 1, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the requirements of section 657 of the Department of Energy Organization Act (Public Law 95–91; 42 U.S.C. 7267), I transmit herewith the 13th Annual Report of the Department of Energy, which covers the years 1992 and 1993.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 1, 1995.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Somalia

March 1, 1995

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

On February 27, 1995, at approximately 3:00 p.m. e.s.t., 1,800 combat-equipped U.S. Armed Forces personnel began deployment into Mogadishu, Somalia, to assist in the withdrawal of U.N. forces assigned to the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). The U.S. forces were accompanied by approximately 500 Italian marines. A total of 14,000 multinational personnel are participating in this operation. The U.S. forces include the USS *Essex* Amphibious Readiness Group, the USS *Belleau Wood*, the Special Marine Air-to-Ground Task Force, and Special Operations forces including four AC–130 gunships.

The U.S. Armed Forces entered Somalia in December 1992, pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 794, with the mission of establishing a secure environment for humanitarian relief operations. Upon completion of this mission in 1993, responsibility for maintaining the environment created by the U.S.-led operation was transferred to UNOSOM II. Almost all U.S. military forces were withdrawn from Somalia on March 31, 1994, and the few remaining U.S. forces were subsequently withdrawn on September 15, 1994.

The U.S. forces have returned to Somalia to support the U.N. withdrawal as part of the U.S. long-standing commitment to U.N. humanitarian efforts in Somalia. The withdrawal operation is a coalition effort consisting of forces from Italy, the United Kingdom, France, Pakistan, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and the United States. We do not intend that U.S. Armed Forces deployed to Somalia become involved in hostilities. Nonetheless, these forces are equipped and ready to take such measures as may be needed to accomplish their mission and defend themselves, if necessary; they also will have the support of any additional U.S. Armed Forces necessary to ensure their safety and the accomplishment of their mission. It is my intention that this will be an operation of short duration whose only purpose is to assist in the withdrawal of UNOSOM II forces.

Over the course of the U.N. operations in Somalia, various items of U.S. equipment (helicopters, tanks, and armored personnel carriers) were leased to the United Nations to support operations in Somalia. It is our intention to assist the United Nations in withdrawing this equipment, to prevent its falling into the hands of those who might use it to cause further harm to the Somali people.

I have taken this action pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

I remain committed to ensuring that the Congress is kept fully informed regarding significant employments of the U.S. Armed Forces. Accordingly, and consistent with the War Powers Resolution, I am providing this report on the U.S. military actions described above. I appreciate your continued support as we complete this operation.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

Remarks to the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom Policy Conference

March 1, 1995

To Tricia and John Taylor and all the people from the Nixon Center; our distinguished guests from Germany and from Russia; of course, to Henry Kissinger—I was thinking when he said we both spoke with accents, judging from the results of the last election, his native country is still claiming him more than mine is claiming me. [*Laughter*] But I'm a big one for reconciliation—[*laughter*]—and there's plenty of time to achieve it.

I am honored to be here tonight. Just a month before he passed away, President Nixon wrote me the last letter I received from him about his last trip to Russia. I told some people at the time that it was the best piece of foreign policy writing I had received, which angered my staff but happened to be the truth. [*Laughter*] And as with all of our correspondence and conversations, I was struck by the rigor of his analysis, the energy of his convictions, and the wisdom of the practical suggestions that he made to me.

But more than the specifics of the letter, which basically argued for the imperative of the United States continuing to support political and economic reform in Russia, I was moved by the letter's larger message, a message that ran throughout Richard Nixon's entire public life and all of his prolific writings. President Nixon believed deeply that the United States simply could not be strong at home unless we were strong and prepared to lead abroad.

And that made a big impression on me. When I was running for President in 1992, even though there was this little sticker up on the wall of my campaign headquarters that said, ''It's the economy, stupid,'' I always said in every speech that we had to have two objectives. We had to restore the American dream for all of our people, but we also had to make sure that we move into the next century still the strongest nation in the world, and the world's greatest force for peace and freedom and democracy.

Tonight I want to talk about the vital tradition of American leadership and our responsibilities, those which Henry Kissinger mentioned and those which President Nixon recognized so well. Our mission especially I want to discuss: to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons.

Today if we are going to be strong at home and lead abroad, we have to overcome what we all recognize I think is a dangerous and growing temptation here in our own land to focus solely on the problems we face here in America. I want to focus on the problems we face here in America. I've tried to do it for the last 2 years. I look forward to working with this new Republican-led Congress in the next 2. But not solely.

There is a struggle now going on between those of us who want to carry on the tradition of American leadership and those who would advocate a new form of American isolationism. A struggle which cuts curiously across both party and ideological lines. If we're going to continue to improve the security and prosperity of all our people, then the tradition of American leadership must prevail.

We live in a moment of hope. We all know that. The implosion of communism and the explosion of the global economy have brought new freedoms to countries on every continent. Free markets are on the rise. Democracy is ascendant. The slogan says, ''after victory.'' Today, more than ever before, people across the globe do have the opportunity to reach their God-given potential. And because they do, Americans have new opportunities to reach theirs as well.

At the same time, the post-cold-war world has revealed a whole web of problems that defy quick or painless solutions: aggression of rogue states, transnational threats like overpopulation and environmental degradation, terrible ethnic conflicts and economic dislocation. But at the heart of all these complex challenges, I believe, lies an age-old battle for power over human lives, the battle between the forces of freedom and tyranny, tolerance and repression, hope and fear. The same idea that was under attack by fascism and then by communism remains under attack today in different ways all across the world, the idea of the open society of free people.

American leadership is necessary for the tide of history to keep running our way, and for our children to have the future they de-

serve. Yet, there are some who would choose escapism over engagement. The new isolationists oppose our efforts to expand free trade through GATT or NAFTA, through APEC and the Summit of the Americas. They reject our conviction that democracy must be nurtured with investment and support, a conviction that we are acting on from the former Soviet Union to South Africa. And some of them, being hypocritical, say that we must trumpet the rhetoric of American strength, and then at the same time, they argue against the resources we need to bring stability to the Persian Gulf or to restore democracy to Haiti or to control the spread of drugs and organized crime around the world or even to meet our most elemental obligations to the United Nations and its peacekeeping work.

The new isolationists both on the left and the right would radically revise the fundamentals of our foreign policy that have earned bipartisan support since the end of World War II. They would eliminate any meaningful role for the United Nations which has achieved, for all of its problems, real progress around the world, from the Middle East to Africa. They would deny resources to our peacekeepers and even to our troops and, instead, squander them on Star Wars. And they would refuse aid to the fledgling democracies and to all those fighting poverty and environmental problems that can literally destroy hopes for a more democratic, more prosperous, more safe world.

The new isolationists are wrong. They would have us face the future alone. Their approach would weaken this country, and we must not let the ripple of isolationism that has been generated build into a tidal wave.

If we withdraw from the world today, mark my words, we'll have to contend with the consequences of our neglect tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow. This is a moment of decision for all of us without regard to our party, our background, or our accent. This is a moment of decision.

The extraordinary trend toward democracy and free markets is not inevitable. And as we have seen recently, it will not proceed easily in an even, uninterrupted course. This is hard work. And at the very time when more and more countries than ever before are working to establish or shore up their own freedom in their fragile democracies, they look to us for support. At this time, the new isolationists must not be allowed to pull America out of the game after just a few hours of debate because there is a modest price attached to our leadership.

We know now, as President Nixon recognized, that there must also be limits to America's involvement in the world's problems, limits imposed by clear-headed evaluation of our fundamental interests. We cannot be the world's policemen. We cannot become involved in every problem we really care about. But the choices we make must be rooted in the conviction that America cannot walk away from its interests or its responsibilities.

That's why, from our first day in office, this administration has chosen to reach out, not retreat. From our efforts to open markets for America to support democracy around the world, to reduce the threat posed by devastating weapons and terrorists, to maintaining the most effective fighting force in the world, we have worked to seize the opportunities and meet the obligations of this moment.

None of this could have happened without a coalition of realists, people in both Houses of Congress and, importantly, people from both parties; people from coast to coast in our towns and cities and communities who know that the wealth and well-being of the United States depends upon our leadership abroad. Even the early leaders of our Republic who went to great pains to avoid involvement in great power conflicts recognize not only the potential benefits but the absolute necessity of engaging with the world.

Before Abraham Lincoln was elected President, our farmers were selling their crops overseas, we had dispatched the trade mission all the way to Japan trying to open new markets—some problems don't go away—[*laughter*]—and our Navy had already sailed every ocean. By the dawn of this century, our growing political and economic power already imposed a special duty on America to lead, a duty that was crystallized in our involvement in World War I. But after that war, we and the other great powers abandoned our responsibilities and the forces

of tyranny and hatred filled the vacuum, as is well-known.

After the Second World War, our wise leaders did not repeat that mistake. With the dawn of the nuclear age and the cold war, and with the economies of Europe and Japan in shambles, President Truman persuaded an uncertain and weary Nation, yearning to shift its energies from the frontlines to the homefront, to lead the world again.

A remarkable generation of Americans created and sustained alliances and institutions, the Marshall Plan, NATO, the United Nations, the World Bank, the IMF, the things that brought half a century of security and prosperity to America, to Europe, to Japan, and to other countries all around the world. Those efforts and the special resolve and military strength of our own Nation held tyranny in check until the power of democracy, the failures of communism, and the heroic determination of people to be free, consigned the cold war to history. Those successes would not have been possible without a strong, bipartisan commitment to America's leadership.

Senator Arthur Vandenburg's call to unite our official voice at the water's edge joined Republicans to Truman's doctrine. His impact was all the more powerful for his own past as an isolationist. But as Vandenburg himself said, Pearl Harbor ended isolationism for any realist.

Today, it is Vandenburg's spirit that should drive our foreign policy and our politics. The practical determination of Senators Nunn and Lugar to help Russia reduce its nuclear arsenal safely and securely, the support from Speaker Gingrich and Leader Gephardt, from Chairman Livingston and Representative Obey for aid to Russia and the newly independent states, the work of Senators Hatfield, Leahy, and McConnell, and Chairman Gilman, and Representative Hamilton for peace in the Middle East; the efforts of Senator Warner to restructure our intelligence: all these provide strong evidence of the continuing benefits and vitality of leadership with bipartisanship.

If we continue to lead abroad and work together at home, we can take advantage of these turbulent times. But if we retreat, we risk squandering all these opportunities and abandoning our obligations which others have entrusted to us and paid a very dear price to bring to us in this moment in history.

I know that the choice to go forward in a lot of these areas is not easy in democracies at this time. Many of the decisions that America's leaders have to make are not popular when they're made. But imagine the alternative. Imagine, for example, the tariffs and barriers that would still cripple the world trading system for years into the future if internationalists coming together across party lines had not passed GATT and NAFTA. Imagine what the Persian Gulf region would look like today if the United States had not stepped up with its allies to stop Iraqi aggression. Imagine the ongoing reign of terror and the flood of refugees at our borders had we not helped to give democracy a second chance in Haiti. Imagine the chaos that might have ensued if we had not moved to help stabilize Mexico's economy. In each case, there was substantial and sometimes overwhelming majority opinion against what needed to be done at the moment. But because we did it, the world has a better chance at peace and freedom.

But above all now, I ask you to imagine the dangers that our children and grandchildren, even after the cold war is over, still can face if we do not do everything we can to reduce the threat of nuclear arms, to curb the terrible chemical and biological weapons spreading around the world, to counter the terrorists and criminals who would put these weapons into the service of evil.

As Arthur Vandenburg asked at the dawn of the nuclear age, after a German V–1 attack had left London in flames and its people in fear, ''How can there be isolation when men can devise weapons like that?''

President Nixon understood the wisdom of those words. His life spanned an era of stunning increases in humankind's destructive capacity, from the biplane to ballistic missiles, from mustard gas to mushroom clouds. He knew that the atomic age could never be won but could be lost. On any list of his foreign policy accomplishments, the giant steps he took toward reducing the nuclear threat must stand among his greatest achievements. As President, I have acted on that same imperative.

Over the past 2 years, the United States has made real progress in lifting the threat of nuclear weapons. Now, in 1995, we face a year of particular decision in this era, a year in which the United States will pursue the most ambitious agenda to dismantle and fight the spread of weapons of mass destruction since the atom was split.

We know that ours is an enormously complex and difficult challenge. There is no single policy, no silver bullet, that will prevent or reverse the spread of weapons of mass destruction. But we have no more important task. Arms control makes us not only safer, it makes us stronger. It is a source of strength. It is one of the most effective insurance policies we can write for the future of our children.

Our administration has focused on two distinct but closely connected areas, decreasing and dismantling existing weapons and preventing nations or groups from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. We've made progress on both fronts.

As the result of an agreement President Yeltsin and I reached, for the first time in a generation Russian missiles are not pointed at our cities or our citizens. We've greatly reduced the lingering fear of an accidental nuclear launch. We put into force the START I treaty with Russia that will eliminate from both our countries delivery systems that carry more than 9,000 nuclear warheads, each with the capacity to incinerate a city the size of Atlanta.

START I, negotiated by two Republican administrations and put into force by this Democratic administration, is the first treaty that requires the nuclear powers actually to reduce their strategic arsenal. Both our countries are dismantling the weapons as fast as we can. And thanks to a far-reaching verification system, including on-site inspections which began in Russia and the United States today, each of us knows exactly what the other is doing.

And again, through the far-sighted program devised by Senators Nunn and Lugar, we are helping Russia and the other newly independent states to eliminate nuclear forces in transport, safeguard and destroy nuclear weapons and materiel.

Ironically, some of the changes that have allowed us to reduce the world's stockpile of nuclear weapons have made our nonproliferation efforts harder. The breakup of the Soviet Union left nuclear materials dispersed throughout the newly independent states. The potential for theft of nuclear materials, therefore, increased. We face the prospect of organized criminals entering the nuclear smuggling business. Add to this the volatile mix, the fact that a lump of plutonium the size of a soda can is enough to build a bomb and the urgency of the effort to stop the spread of nuclear materials should be clear to all of us.

That's why from our first day in office we have launched an aggressive, coordinated campaign against international terrorism and nuclear smuggling. We are cooperating closely with our allies, working with Russia and the other newly independent states, improving security at nuclear facilities, and strengthening multilateral export controls.

One striking example of our success is Operation Sapphire, the airlift of nearly 600 kilograms of highly enriched uranium, enough to make dozens of bombs from Kazakhstan to the United States for disposal. We've also secured agreements with Russia to reduce the uranium and plutonium available for nuclear weapons, and we're seeking a global treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Our patient, determined diplomacy also succeeded in convincing Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and give up the nuclear weapons left on their territory when the Soviet Union dissolved. One of our administration's top priorities was to assure that these new countries would become non-nuclear nations, and now we are also achieving that goal.

Because of these efforts, four potential suppliers of ballistic missiles, Russia, Ukraine, China, and South Africa, have all agreed to control the transfer of these missiles and related technology, pulling back from the nuclear precipice has allowed us to cut United States defense expenditures for strategic weapons by almost two-thirds, a savings of about $20 billion a year, savings which can be shifted to vital needs such as boosting

the readiness of our Armed Forces, reducing the deficit, putting more police on our own streets. By spending millions to keep or take weapons out of the hands of our potential adversaries, we are saving billions in arms costs and putting it to better use.

Now, in this year of decision, our ambition for the future must be even more ambitious. If our people are to know real lasting security, we have to redouble our arms control, nonproliferation, and antiterrorism efforts. We have to do everything we can to avoid living with the 21st century version of fallout shelters and duck-and-cover exercises to prevent another World Trade Center tragedy.

In just 4 days we mark the 25th anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Nothing is more important to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons than extending the treaty indefinitely and unconditionally. And that's why I've asked the Vice President to lead our delegation to the NPT conference this April and to work as hard as we can to make sure we succeed in getting that indefinite extension.

The NPT is the principal reason why scores of nations do not now possess nuclear weapons, why the doomsayers were wrong. One hundred and seventy-two nations have made NPT the most widely subscribed arms limitation treaty in history for one overriding reason: it's in their self-interest to do so. Non-nuclear-weapon states that sign on to the treaty pledge never to acquire them. Nuclear-weapon states vow not to help others obtain nuclear weapons, to facilitate the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and to pursue nuclear arms control and disarmament, commitments I strongly reaffirm, along with our determination to attain universal membership in the treaty.

Failure to extend NPT infinitely could open the door to a world of nuclear trouble. Pariah nations with rigid ideologies and expansionist ambitions would have an easier time acquiring terrible weapons, and countries that have chosen to forgo the nuclear option would then rethink their position. They would certainly be tempted to reconsider that decision.

To further demonstrate our commitment to the goals of the treaty, today I have ordered that 200 tons of fissile material, enough for thousands of nuclear weapons, be permanently withdrawn from the United States nuclear stockpile. Two hundred tons of fissile material that will never again be used to build a nuclear weapon.

A second key goal of ours is ratifying START II. Once in effect, that treaty will eliminate delivery systems from Russian and American arsenals that carry more than 5,000 weapons. The major reductions under START I, together with START II, will enable us to reduce by two-thirds the number of strategic warheads deployed at the height of the cold war. At my urging, the Senate has already begun hearings on START II, and I am encouraged by the interest of the Senators from both parties in seeking quick action. I commend the Senate for the action taken so far, and I urge again the approval of the treaty as soon as possible.

President Yeltsin and I have already instructed our experts to begin considering the possibility after START II is ratified of additional reductions and limitations on remaining nuclear forces. We have a chance to further lift the nuclear cloud, and we dare not miss it.

To stop the development of new generations of nuclear weapons, we must also quickly complete negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty. Last month I extended a nuclear testing moratorium that I put into effect when I took office. And we revised our negotiating position to speed the conclusion of the treaty while reaffirming our determination to maintain a safe and reliable nuclear stockpile.

We will also continue to work with our allies to fully implement the agreement we reached with North Korea, first to freeze then to dismantle its nuclear program, all under international monitoring. The critics of this agreement, I believe, are wrong. The deal does stop North Korea's nuclear program, and it does commit Pyongyang to roll it back in the years to come.

I have not heard another alternative proposal that isn't either unworkable or foolhardy, or one that our allies in the Republic of Korea and Japan, the nations most directly affected, would fail to support.

If North Korea fulfills its commitment, the Korean Peninsula and the entire world will

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

perhaps the easiest and most effective way that we can protect our sight is with comprehensive eye examinations. Early eye tests can help secure good vision for our children from the start. And with regular eye exams, the threat of vision loss does not have to be a normal part of aging.

For Americans at special risk, preventive care takes on added importance. The 14 million individuals nationwide who have diabetes face the possibility of developing diabetic eye diseases, the leading cause of blindness among working-aged Americans. This condition may show no symptoms—even in advanced stages—and it must be detected as soon as possible to prevent vision loss.

Glaucoma, another potentially blinding eye disease, can be controlled when detected early. Approximately 3 million Americans suffer from this disease, which strikes silently often without pain or noticeable symptoms. Especially at risk are African Americans age 40 and older and all people age 60 and older.

To remind Americans of how they can protect their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning March 5, 1995, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations committed to the goals of sight preservation, to join in activities that will make Americans more aware of the steps they can take to preserve their vision.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this second day of March, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:38 a.m., March 6, 1995]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on March 7.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Child Support Enforcement

March 2, 1995

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to reiterate my firm belief that Congress must pass tough child support enforcement measures as part of welfare reform. When absent parents don't provide support, the inevitable result is more welfare, more poverty, and more difficult times for our children. It is essential that all Americans understand that if they parent a child, they will be held responsible for nurturing and providing for that child.

I am doing everything in my power to crack down on child support enforcement. In 1993, we collected a record $9 billion in child support—a 12 percent increase over the previous year. Last week, I signed an Executive Order to ensure that federal employees who owe child support live up to their responsibilities as parents, and that the federal government will do its utmost to help find parents with delinquent child support claims. Our welfare reform plan included the toughest child support measures ever proposed. If absent parents aren't paying child support, we will garnish their wages, suspend their licenses, track them across state lines, and if necessary, make them work off what they owe.

Parental responsibility should not become a partisan issue. At the bipartisan national Working Session on Welfare Reform that I hosted at Blair House, Republican and Democratic leaders from around the country and every level of government agreed that we should enact the toughest child support enforcement measures possible.

I hope the committee will not shy away from its responsibilities on this issue. A number of bills similar to our plan could serve as the foundation for any effort to reform child support—including the one offered by Representatives Barbara Kennelly, Nancy Johnson, and others. Critical elements include denying welfare benefits to any unwed mother who does not cooperate fully in identifying the father, powerful measures for

tracking interstate cases, and serious penalties—including license suspension, and if necessary, requiring work—for parents who refuse to pay what they owe. We must also include both the performance incentives and resources states need to do the job right.

It is time to get serious about child support in this country. I look forward to working with Congress to get it done.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Bill Archer, chairman, and Sam Gibbons, ranking member, House Committee on Ways and Means. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

The President's News Conference

March 3, 1995

The President. Good afternoon. Ladies and gentlemen, now that the vote on the balanced budget amendment has passed, it is time for Congress to go forward to write a disciplined budget that brings the deficit down, cuts unnecessary Government spending, and continues to invest in our future.

Two years ago, 27 days after I became President, I presented such a budget to the Congress. It has succeeded in reducing our deficit by over $600 billion, while still increasing our investment in our children, in education, and in our economic growth.

As of today it has been 58 days since the new Republican majority took office. Congress has a deadline for passing a budget resolution of April the 15th. The American people now are entitled to see this work go forward. When the Congress proposes their budget and passes their resolution, of course, I will work with them. As I have said repeatedly, we can get more deficit reduction in responsible health care reform, but I learned last year that that is clearly something we must do working together with both parties.

The debate that is going on in Washington today is about more, obviously, than simply the deficit and the budget. It is also about the role of Government. And you can see it running through every issue, from the laws being debated now in the Congress to the question of the rescission legislation before the Congress. The old Washington view, I think it's fair to say, is that the Federal Government could provide solutions to America's problems. The Republican contract view reflects in many cases an outright hostility to governmental action, although in some cases a curious willingness to increase the Federal Government's control over our daily lives.

My view, what has loosely been called the new Democratic view or the New Covenant view, is to be skeptical of Government but to recognize that it has a role in our lives and a partnership role to play.

We have made the Government smaller. We have given more power to States and localities and to private citizens. Our proposals would further accelerate those trends. We have, as you learned here in this room just a few days ago, been working for months on a serious effort to reduce the burden of unnecessary regulation.

But we believe Government has important work to do, to expand opportunity, to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, to enhance our security. That's why we support adding 100,000 police. That's why we support more affordable college loans. That's why we supported the family leave bill. That's why I support the minimum wage legislation now before Congress and why I do not want to reduce our investment in education in our future.

The Republicans now have proposed to cut education, nutritional help for mothers and schoolchildren, antidrug efforts in our schools, and other things which, to me, appear to target children in order to pay for tax cuts for upper income Americans. I do not believe that that is consistent with our interests as we build America into the 21st century and we move into this new global economy.

So my job, it seems to me, is to continue to push my view, what I believe is the essence of the New Covenant: more opportunity, more responsibility; reform welfare but don't punish people, require work. This is the sort of thing we need more of. And I look forward to this debate. I think it's healthy. I think it's good for the American people.

And I would like to begin now by answering your questions. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International].

Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell

Q. Mr. President, did you try to talk Senator Campbell out of jumping ship? What does it portend for the Democratic Party, and what does it mean in terms of your leadership?

The President. Well, I talked to him this morning because he called the White House and said he wanted to talk to me. And so I called him. And we had a good conversation, and he pointed out that he had voted with me over 80 percent of the time in the last 2 years, that he essentially supported our economic policies, our education policies, and our social policies, and that he would not change that. It was obvious to me that there were some Colorado-specific factors at work. I wish he hadn't done it. I think it was a mistake. But I hope he will continue to vote in the way he has in the past.

Q. Do you think there will be more defectors?

The President. No. I have no reason to believe it. He'd been talking about this for some time, we had heard, because of—apparently because of some things that happened out there that I'm not fully familiar with. I wish he hadn't done it, but it's done. All I can do now is hope that he'll keep voting the way he has the last 2 years. If he does, it will make a contribution to moving the country forward.

Russia

Q. Mr. President, there are growing strains in relations with Russia over the crackdown in Chechnya and the planned sale of nuclear technology to Iran. Does U.S. aid to Moscow give us any leverage on these problems? Is it time to consider an alternative to Boris Yeltsin, as Bob Dole says that you've got too much invested in? And have you finally decided on the timing of a summit with Mr. Yeltsin?

The President. The answer to the last question is, no, we have not determined the exact date. As you know, we committed to meet with each other on a rotating and regular basis, so I have to sustain that commitment in the first part of this year. He asked me to come at the time they are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. There are some scheduling complications here. We're working through it. It shouldn't be long before you have an answer.

Let me respond to the second set of questions. First of all, I don't think it's fair to say the United States or that our administration has a Yeltsin-centered policy, or that it is time for the United States to determine to deal with someone else. What we want is a democratic Russia which continues to support reform within the country and respects the borders of its neighbors. That is what we want. We want a Russia that helps us to reduce further the nuclear threat in the world. Those are our fundamental interests.

Boris Yeltsin has been elected the President of a country that has a Constitution and a democratic system. He has a term of office. He is fulfilling that term of office. I think it would be curious, indeed, if the United States were to say that we have a separate set of rules for these new democracies: When things don't go the way we want, or they follow some policy we don't like, well, then, we decide that we should invest ourselves in some other person.

We should support the elected representatives of the people, who are duly produced by constitutional judgments in a democracy. That's what I believe, and that's what I'm doing. When we differ with Russia, we say so. When they differ with us, they say so. But on the whole, let's not forget that a remarkable amount of progress has been made in that country and a remarkable amount of progress has been made in our relationship. They have no troops in Eastern Europe. They have no troops in the Baltics. They have helped us to implement START I. We are working on ratification of START II. We are working across a whole range of issues.

Do we have differences with them? Of course, we do. But on balance, this relationship is one that is in the interest of the United States to continue to support.

Brit [Brit Hume, ABC News].

Q. You indicated yesterday agreement with the Democratic Senators who balked on the balanced budget amendment because of

their objections to the current and continuing practice of borrowing surplus Social Security funds to offset the deficit. In light of your attitude on that, sir, I wonder if you're prepared to take a lead on that issue by proposing that that practice be stopped and by revising, if necessary, your budget and your budget projections to take account of the change.

The President. Well, wait a minute, there are two issues in which that works. There are two ways in which the Social Security thing works. The first is that we clearly have been using payroll taxes for 12 years now, long before I ever came here, to minimize the size of the deficit exclusive of the payroll tax, so that from 1983 forward, previous Democratic Congresses and Republican Presidents made judgments that it was better and politically more palatable to tax payroll than income, even though it's a burden on working people and small businesses.

The other issue, however, Brit, to be fair, was that were we going to cut Social Security benefits to reduce the deficit and count that against deficit reduction. And that's what I have been emphasizing. That is, if Social Security is producing a surplus today as it is and if it's going to have to be reformed on its own terms for the 21st century when all the baby boomers retire, then I did not believe it was right for us to effect cuts in Social Security simply to reduce the deficit. I do not think that is right. I think that is wrong. So that was my position.

I have presented my budget. I stand behind my budget. I see that there are some specific cuts the Republicans have suggested that I also would think about, I see in their rescission package. But I am going to wait now until they do their constitutional duty, which is to present a budget which is something that has not happened. Then I will work with them.

The key on this is not to reduce Social Security benefits. The key is to reduce health care costs.

John [John Palmer, NBC News]. Welcome back.

Affirmative Action

Q. Thank you, sir. I'd like to ask you a question, if I might, about affirmative action. I know your administration is now reviewing all of those affirmative action regulations, but there's some concern that this might be the prelude to a backing off of those policies. In fact, Jesse Jackson earlier this week expressed the opinion that maybe if you did, he might even run against you. But my question, really, on that issue is, what about the many Americans who really feel they have been punished by affirmative action? And I'd like to get your comments on that.

The President. Let me tell you about the review I've ordered and comment on the affirmative action thing. First of all, our administration is against quotas and guaranteed results, and I have been throughout my public career. I have always been for trying to help people develop their capacities so they could fully participate. And I have supported things—when I was a Governor, I supported, for example, minority scholarship programs—in my public life, I have done that.

I want to make a couple of comments here. First, I have asked for a review of all the Federal Government's so-called affirmative action programs because I think it's important that we analyze, number one, what they do and what—a lot of times people mean different things when they use affirmative action. For example, I take it there is virtually no opposition to the affirmative action programs that are the most successful in our country, which are the ones adopted by the United States military, which have not resulted in people of inferior quality or ability getting preferential treatment but have resulted in an intense effort to develop the capacities of everybody who joins the military so they can fully participate and contribute as much as possible and has resulted in the most integrated institution in our society.

So I want to know what these programs are, exactly. I want to know whether they are working. I want to know whether there is some other way we can reach any objective without giving a preference by race or gender in some of these programs. Those are the three questions we need to ask.

And let me make a general observation. I asked myself when this debate started, what have we done since I've been President that has most helped minorities. And I think that—I would say that the things we have

done that have most helped are things that have benefited all people who needed them: expanding the Head Start program; expanding the college loan program; expanding the earned-income tax credit, the working families tax credit which has given an average tax cut of $1,000 to families with incomes under $25,000; the empowerment zones. And one of them, one of the empowerment zones went to an all-white area in Kentucky. But the disproportionate impact was on people who'd been left behind in our cities. And one thing that the rescission package would take away, the community development banks, which I think would be a terrible mistake, which is designed to empower people through the free enterprise system to make the most of their own lives.

So I would say to you, where we can move ahead based on need we ought to move forward, and we shouldn't move backward. There's still a lot of people who aren't living up to their capacity in this country, and it's hurting the rest of us. And so, I want this analysis to finish. I will then make a decision in a prompt way, and I'll tell the American people what I think, and I will proceed to act in the context of the Government.

Meanwhile, I urge all of you to read the history, in light of the other, the political comments you made—to read the history of how these affirmative action programs got started and who was on what side when they began. It's very interesting to go back through the last 25 years and see all the twists and turns.

The American people want an end to discrimination. They want discrimination, where it exists, to be punished. They don't want people to have an unfair break that is unwarranted. We can work this out, and I'm determined to do it.

Rita [Rita Braver, CBS News].

Balanced Budget Amendment and the 1996 Election

Q. Mr. President, it seems like every day another Republican is jumping into the Presidential race. It also seems like every day we are reading about your election campaign and who is in and who is out. I wonder if you could tell us a little bit about the kind of organization that you're putting together.

And I also wanted to ask you about a comment that Senator Dole made yesterday when he was asked about why he didn't meet the Democrats' demands to take Social Security out of the fight over the balanced budget amendment. He said, "You have a President who has abdicated his responsibility. If you had a real President down there, we might think about it." What's your response to that in the context of his Presidential aspirations?

The President. My response to that is that Senator Dole's been part of Washington for 30 years, and he hasn't always been in the minority. And when I got here, policies supported by his Presidents and deficits run up under Republican administrations—remember, they had this town 20 of the last 26 years; they were making all of these proposals—had given this country a $4-trillion debt, quadrupled—quadrupled—in the 12 years of the Republican ascendancy.

And since I've been President, we've got a lower deficit, a lower unemployment rate, a lower inflation rate, a higher growth rate. We have cut the size of the Federal Government, something they did not do, and still found a way to invest more in the education of our children. And I might add, we have expanded trade more than they did, supported democracy, and supported a reduction of the nuclear threat. So we've got a safer world and a stronger economy. Now, I think that's a pretty good record, and I'll be glad to put it up against all that kind of name-calling and all of the stuff they want to do.

But you know what I really want to say is, we've got to stop all this. It's March of 1995. I mean, I was a Governor, and I was at a severe disadvantage, and I didn't even announce for President until October of '91. I mean, we can't have everybody all torn up and upset about playing politics here for the next 6, 7 months. We've got a lot of work to do, and I think we should relax and do it.

I will, in an appropriate way, organize and proceed with my own efforts, but I've already given you my speech. We've got more peace, more prosperity, and fewer problems than we had when I showed up. And meanwhile, I'd like to work with them to continue to make progress. We can do things together.

And I think that that Social Security remark is—you know, they could have had the balanced budget amendment if they had done what the Democrats wanted on Social Security, and they chose the political issue instead. That was their judgment. They made their judgment, so they shouldn't blame someone else for a decision that they made. It was a decision they made, not me.

Q. Are you putting together an organization, though, yourself now?

The President. Well, I'm not actively involved as they are, but I will organize and proceed. As I told you, I intend to run for reelection. But I think—I can see right now, every day, everybody that wants to run for this job is going to be trying to make some remark or some move that runs everybody else halfway up the flag pole. And we've got enough politics in this town on a regular basis without injecting that into it. I wish—I want everybody to relax, take a deep breath, and go back to work. Let's try to do something for the American people for a year, and then we can have an election. We'll have plenty of time for the politics.

Go ahead.

Decline of the Dollar

Q. Mr. President, are you concerned that the value of dollars is falling again? And would you like to see the Fed do more to boost it?

The President. You know, one of the things I've learned since I've been here is that anything I say on this subject is wrong. [*Laughter*] So the Treasury Department is taking appropriate action today, and I don't think I should say anything else.

Go ahead, Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

Affirmative Action

Q. Just another question on affirmative action, Mr. President. When you announced your review you said, we have to stop defending things that are not defensible. Do you think that rules that mandate a certain percentage of Federal contracts be set aside for minority firms—are those still necessary and isn't that guaranteeing results, the kind of thing you say you're now opposed to?

The President. Well, I want to look at how they're implemented. For one thing, if you look at the rules and what they mean, it's difficult to draw a conclusion about whether they even do what they were supposed to do in the first place. But I want—I will make comments. I am almost done with this review, and I will make comments when I finish about what I think we should do, and then I will do whatever it is that I can do within my executive authority to go forward.

I do not—I want to continue to fight discrimination where it exists. I want to continue to give people a chance to develop their capacities where they need help. I want us to emphasize need-based programs where we can because they work better and have a bigger impact and generate broader support. But let me finish what we're doing here, and then I will try to answer all the details.

Q. Mr. President——

The President. Yes, Sarah [Sarah McClendon, McClendon News].

Teen Pregnancy

Q. Sir, we hear a lot of talk these days about these teenage pregnant women. Most of them are poor and black and that sort of thing. Well, that's peanuts, the cost of that program, compared to what we are spending on arms sales around the world, making wars and then we have to go out and clean up when the famines that came along afterwards. And we've buying untested weapons. Why don't we work on the billions of war and have a little peace?

The President. Well, we should do that, but we should also work on reducing teen pregnancy.

Go ahead.

Mexico

Q. Mr. President, Mexico is going through very difficult times. The Republicans are asking for more and more information from you on the Mexican crisis. How do you see the election situation right now? And do you think things are working there or——

The President. Well, I think—first of all, it seems that President Zedillo is working very hard to try to develop a program, an economic program that will balance two interests: his desire to continue to be able to

make Mexico attractive to investors outside the country, which is necessary for the long-term growth, and the need to keep Mexico strong enough and responsive enough to the domestic business interests and the working people of the country.

This is a difficult period. I think everyone would admit who has worked on this that the problems turned out to be more difficult and of long—more duration, more thorny than had originally been thought back in December and January. But I believe that he's moving in the right direction. And Mexico plainly has moved toward more democracy, more openness, and more market economics. And I did what I did because I thought it was good for America's jobs and America's long-term interest. I still believe that. And I believe it's in our interest to support that movement toward democracy and openness throughout Latin America, beginning with Mexico.

Deborah [Deborah Mathis, Gannett News Service].

Affirmative Action

Q. Mr. President, forgive me for pressing you on this, but if I'm not mistaken, you've always been in favor of affirmative action, and in fact, you have practiced it. Why now the hesitation?

The President. I have always—that's right. I'm glad you asked. I have always practiced it. But let's look at how I practiced it. Look at my appointments to the Federal bench, ones for which, I might add, I've been regularly and roundly attacked for trying to achieve diversity here in this community. I read something in the paper about once a month, people jumping on me because I've appointed more women and more minorities to the Federal bench than my predecessors combined at this point in our terms—my last three predecessors combined. And oh, by the way, they sometimes say, his appointees also have the highest rating from the American Bar Association of the last three Presidents.

I have practiced affirmative action here the way that I perceive the United States military has practiced it. I have made an extra effort to look for qualified candidates who could serve with distinction and make a contribution to this country and make the Federal bench reflective of the American population. I have not done it with any quota system in mind, and I have not guaranteed anybody a job. I have made an extra effort to do that.

The military starts before that. They have made an extra effort to develop the capacities of people who come to them with great raw ability, but maybe a disadvantaged background. Is that wrong? I don't think it is. And I'm not backing off of that.

The question is—here is the narrow question—the question is: If we're not for quotas in results, and we are for developing everybody's capacities, what do we do with all those rules and regulations and laws that really are in a gray area, that are really in a gray area where there is, let's say, a minority scholarship or a contracting set-aside that Mara asked about, that really is often got around because of the way they are written? I want to review those. I do not want to see us stop trying to develop the abilities of all Americans. I do not want to see us move away from trying to concentrate our resources in the areas of greatest need.

But I would say again, I think most minorities have been helped most by the programs in this country that have been targeted toward broad-based needs. And ironically, if you go back to the beginning of this whole affirmative action debate, it started in the late sixties and many civil rights leaders at the time argued against affirmative action programs because they thought we'd wind up in the debate we are now having 25 years later.

I think we need to look at the programs, look at the facts, and ask the questions I just asked: How does this work? Is it fair? Is it necessary? Is there an alternative way to achieve the objective? But in terms of taking aggressive initiatives to develop the capacities of people, should we keep doing that? You bet we should. How should we do it in the law? That's the question.

Illegal Immigration

George [George Condon, Copley News Service].

Q. Mr. President, in the past you have bragged on Operation Gatekeeper. Governor Pete Wilson last week said that was a failure,

and the numbers from the INS seem to back that up. Are you rethinking in any way your approach to——

The President. How can you say that? Because ——

Q. In the first 5 months.

The President. Yes, but what happened was, we had big problems in immigration when the Mexican economy started to go down, as I told everyone. But we have a lot of evidence, too, from what has been done in El Paso and in other places that we are stopping more people.

I think the key is—my answer is, we need even more border guards, we need to accelerate the deportation of people who have been found through the criminal justice system or otherwise who are illegal aliens, and we need to accelerate our ability to find people primarily in the workplace. And if we do that—that's part of the budget that I have submitted to the Congress. And if we do that, we will reduce the number of illegal immigrants, and we will accelerate rapidly the pace by which we are deporting those who have come here illegally.

So my answer to Governor Wilson is, the problem got bigger during the last 5 months because of the problems in Mexico, but we have made a difference. That's my first answer. My second answer is, it's a lot more than was done before I got here by the previous administration and by the United States Senate when he was a part of it. So I want him, instead of criticizing me for doing more than they did, he ought to keep working with us so we can do even more. That's what my budget does, I hope the Congress will adopt it. Yes.

Administration Ethics

Q. Mr. President, you have an independent counsel investigating yourself and your wife. You have another independent counsel investigating your former Agriculture Secretary. The Justice Department is soon about to make decisions on whether independent counsels should investigate your Secretaries of Commerce, Housing, and Transportation.

Two questions: One, if any of those three are going to be subject to an independent counsel investigation, would you like to see them resign to take care of that? And two, combining the independent counsels with those others, like Webster Hubbell and Roger Altman, who have resigned after some ethical problems, how can you explain what's happened to your administration after you came into office promising the most ethical administration in history?

The President: Well, first of all, let's look at each one of them. The only people—Roger Altman resigned even though the finding was that he had violated no law and no rule of ethics. And he made a major contribution to this country. Let's just look at that.

Secondly, all the other examples—Secretary Espy was the single person who resigned because the subject of his activity involved things he had done as Secretary of Agriculture, which, I might add, in the aggregate, amounted to a few thousand dollars, all of which he has reimbursed, in return for which he got a special counsel with 33 lawyers and a historian.

All these other things—including mine—I would remind you, I am the first President in history ever to have a special counsel involving activities that have nothing to do with my work as President, nothing to do with the campaign for President, that all predated that, and that arose when there had not been a single, solitary serious assertion that I had done anything illegal. But I said, ''Fine, we'll look into it. If it makes people feel better and to have more confidence, I'll be glad to do it.''

We live in a time now where, the first thing people call for is a special counsel. I don't know if you saw Susan Estrich's article in USA Today yesterday, but I commend it to all of you to read. I mean, we really have to ask ourselves whether we are creating a climate here in which a lot of people will be reluctant to serve. I saw the U.S. News essay on Dr. Foster. I commend them for that. It was a—I was quite moved by it. Now that I say it, the rest of you will probably jump on them since I said it. [*Laughter*]

But I'm just telling you, I think—no one has accused me of abusing my authority here as President. Everybody knows that I have tougher ethics rules than any previous President. For example, when we had the controversy where the Speaker misspoke about the drug usage in the White House and we

found out that it was absolutely wrong, we found out that I have much, much tougher rules than the Congress does on random drug testing for employees, for example. So if you look at the rules and you look at the facts instead of the number of investigations, then there's no way to control that under that new law. All you've got to do is have certain number of Members of Congress ask, and then it triggers this prospect.

I want to just point out, again, if you look at the work that people have done in their public capacity since I have been President, you would be hard-pressed to cite examples that constitute abuse of authority.

Secondly, I have continued to argue for lobbying reform and campaign finance reform, two things which I see are still apparently very low on the priority list of the new Congress. If you want to clean Washington up, what we ought to do is to reform the lobbying rules. That's the best thing we can do.

START II

Q. Earlier this week, the Central Intelligence Agency went up to the Hill and said that the prospects for the START II, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, in the Russian Duma are getting dimmer every day. Number one, I'd like to know if you agree with that intelligence estimate. Number two, have you conferred with President Yeltsin about what could be done to salvage the treaty in Russia, or what President Yeltsin could do to salvage it, if, in fact, it fails on the initial vote?

The President. Well, first of all, ever since we started dealing with the former Communist countries with elected Parliaments, both they and we have been hearing how our Congress or their Parliaments wouldn't take the next step, whatever the next step was. I remember all the people who said there was no way in the world we'd get the Ukrainian Rada to ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty. And there have been all these sort of gloomy predictions about what this Congress would do. But in the end, the democracies normally wind up doing the right thing and moving forward on these issues.

Therefore, do I believe that eventually the Duma will adopt START II? I do. And that's one of the reasons that I think it's important that we continue to engage with Russia and I continue to work with the Yeltsin administration and with President Yeltsin to try to get things like that done.

But look, look at all the things that have happened here in the last 2 years. It's not predictable what parliamentary bodies are going to do in these tumultuous times. But do I think we'll prevail on that? I do.

Karen [Karen Ball, New York Daily News].

Whitewater

Q. Following on what you said about independent counsels, Newt Gingrich has called for Democrats attacking him on ethics to pay his legal bills and reimburse the Government if the charges prove groundless. You face $2 million in legal bills. Whitewater is probably going to cost taxpayers at least $5 million. Following on what Gingrich says, do you think Republicans should have to pay for this if Whitewater is groundless?

The President. You know, I don't want to personalize it. I really tried to just cooperate and go along with this thing and not talk about it at all. I've told the American people I didn't do anything wrong, and I've told the truth. We'll just see what happens. But I don't want to personalize it.

What I meant to say is that, looking forward, what I think we should ask ourselves is, is this really the way we should be running a democracy, the way this operates. But I don't want to—anything I say about my own situation I think is not helpful. I think that I should be treated—I don't want to be involved in it that way. I want to think about what's good for America after the Whitewater investigation is over. Let's look forward. Forget about me. Let's let this thing unfold that involves me in an established way.

Yes.

Bosnia and Croatia

Q. Mr. President, if we could come back to foreign policy. Are you prepared to send American troops to Croatia at the end of the month to help in the withdrawal of U.N. peacekeepers if President Tudjman sticks to his deadline? And can you foresee beyond that any circumstances in which you would

keep those troops there or expand the number of American ground troops in the region to help avert the wider war that so many people fear?

The President. Well, the United States has sent troops, as you know, to Macedonia as part of the United Nations effort to try to limit the scope of the Bosnian War. And we have committed to help get the U.N. peacekeepers out of Bosnia if the UNPROFOR mission in Bosnia collapses. We have done everything we could do to persuade President Tudjman not to suspend the U.N. mission in Croatia because we fear that it will lead to a wider war there. We feel a strong responsibility to our U.N. and, many of them our NATO allies as well, to try to help them, and we are trying to work through whatever plans would be appropriate to give that sort of assistance. But I do not foresee—I have worked very hard to avoid the long-term commitment of American ground troops in that region, and I will continue to do that.

I think that this is something that has to be handled through the United Nations. I have offered NATO support, and I have been willing to work with our allies who were willing to put their troops on the ground there because they thought it was an area in which Europe ought to take the lead. And that's generally the system I think we should continue to observe.

Yes.

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. President, you mentioned health care reform yesterday and again today as one way you could achieve deficit reduction. I wonder if we're going to see any concrete proposals from you in this legislative session on health care reform.

The President. Yes, I think you will see concrete proposals in this legislative session.

Q. From you?

The President. From me, yes. But I want to do it insofar as I can, with the Congress. As I said in the State of the Union Address, I think last time I bit off more than I could chew. They saw that and then they decided to back away from their proposals and just take the political position they would kill anything we propose. And I think I made a mistake, but I think they did, too. And what I hope we ought to do now—what I think we ought to do now, is to figure out a way to help Americans get more affordable health care and to solve this problem. And if we do it in the right way, we will continue to substantially lower the costs of Medicare and Medicaid in the out-years.

Let me say something that almost nobody has noticed in this budget I presented, and that is that this budget reflects $94 billion less in health care costs over the next 5 years than last year's budget. Why? Because of the increasing use of managed care in the Medicare program, because more seniors are voluntarily going into managed care programs in Medicaid, and because of the general efforts in both the private and in the public sector to bring down health care costs. Now, the reason it hasn't reduced the deficit $94 billion is that interest rate increases have added to the cost of carrying the debt.

But we are lowering the cost of health care from what it was when I took office. And we can do that some more in a responsible, fair way. But we've got to do that together. I mean, we just—you know the Congress is a Republican majority Congress; I can't pass a health care bill unless they want to work with me on it.

Q. Are you saying you'll only do it with them then? I mean, are you inviting them to work on——

The President. No, what I'm saying is, I've been talking to Senators and Congressmen—House Members—in both parties for some weeks, and I'm very flexible about when to put what out and all that, but the point is, unless we have some agreement about how we're going to proceed, we won't pass a bill. If we do pass a bill, we can both help to make progress on health care for the American people, which is a thing they really want, and we can lower our future costs in health care.

First Lady's Travel

Q. Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton is about to visit a number of foreign countries, and I wonder, is there a diplomatic element to this at your behest, or what is the purpose of her visits, particularly to the South Asian nations?

The President. Well, she has been invited to go there, number one. And number two, I believe that the United States has given insufficient attention for some years now to South Asia. India has the biggest middle class in the world, for example. And there are two reasons for this. One is our historic ties to India were strained during the cold war because of what the geopolitics of that area did to their foreign policy. And secondly, there are these thorny problems between India and Pakistan which we have sought to help resolve through several administrations and without success. And it's not something that I can do right now. But we had a number of Cabinet members going there. She was invited, and I thought she ought to go. I encouraged her to go.

The trip to Copenhagen, she was invited to speak to the nongovernmental organizations about issues being dealt with at Copenhagen that she's been involved with for 25 years, and I was very glad she did that.

Wolf [Wolf Blitzer, Cable News Network].

Debate on Foreign Involvement

Q. Mr. President, a two-part question on international issues. When you attack the new isolationists, specifically, who do you have in mind, by name? [*Laughter*]. And the second part of the question, as you know, the French Government has accused five CIA agents listed as diplomats in France of activities incompatible with their diplomatic status, which is a euphemism for espionage. Are they telling the truth? What does this mean?

The President. Let me take the second question first. I believe that we have resolved this matter with France, and as a practical matter, I have followed the policy of every President not to publicly discuss intelligence-related questions.

Secondly, I just got through saying, I think we're getting into too much name-calling in Washington, and I don't want to exacerbate that. I made it very clear what I said in my speech at the Nixon Center the other night. There are understandable tendencies all across the world—the gentleman just asked me the question about the Russian Duma—there are understandable tendencies all across the world to look inward in these democracies and in all countries where popular pressure is saying, ''Let's shut the world out. This is a complicated world. We don't have control over all this. We've got enough problems here at home. We've got to walk away from them.'' And they are working on people, everywhere in the world. They are working on people here in the United States.

I do not want us to become either economically or politically isolated. That's what I mean by isolationist. Therefore, as you know, I believe that since we have no intention of just closing our borders—we're getting all the downside of global trade in terms of having people in vulnerable jobs being dislocated. Expanding trade gives us the upside, gives us the chance to win, to promote democracy and stability abroad and to get more high-wage jobs here. I think it would be a bad mistake for us to restrict the power of me—this President or any future President in peacekeeping, in all those areas.

So you know who's on what side on all these issues, and you know how I feel about it. And I don't think that us getting into name-calling will further that.

Peter [Peter Maer, Westwood One] and then Anne [Anne Compton, ABC News].

Russia

Q. Mr. President, returning to the issue of Russia, given the continued fighting in Chechnya and the apparent stall in Russian reforms, can you give us some measure of your confidence level in Boris Yeltsin or your lack of confidence? And how do you read his failure to conclude this situation in Chechnya?

The President. I think it's obviously a very difficult problem for him. And I think that—I hesitate to comment on it in great detail because I'm not sure I know everything there is to know about it. We and every other country in the world outside Russia and all of his allies—I know Chancellor Kohl and many others in Europe have said, ''You ought to slow down the fighting. You ought to bring an end to the violence. You ought to bring the OSCE in there to be observers, to make sure there are no human rights violations, and this thing ought to be negotiated.''

And so, the ambivalence between the military solution and the political solution, and

the fact that you obviously have 1.2 million or however many there are of very determined people in Chechnya with a decades-long history of resentment against the central government makes this thing just sort of hanging there. It's like a thorn in their flesh.

Now, I believe that he has made the major policy decisions there. I think he is in control of the policy there. And I have dealt directly with him in urging a change and a moderation of policy there, and I will continue to do that. My confidence level in him is strong. If you ask me do I think he is still the effective President of Russia, and is he making those decisions, yes, that's what I believe is the case.

I'll take one more. Anne, and then I'll go.

1996 Election

Q. Back on politics, you say it's too early for you to become consumed by reelection talk. It might not be too early for someone within the Democratic Party who might choose to challenge you. Do you expect a challenge from within your own party, and do you think that would be destructive for Democrats?

The President. I don't expect it. I don't not expect it. I don't know what will happen. I hope there won't be one. I think it would be a mistake for the Democratic Party. And again, I would say what would the issue be? What would the issue be? The unemployment rate is lower. The inflation rate is lower. The growth rate is higher. The world is more peaceful. We have a slew of problems out there. We can stay here for 3 or 4 hours and talk about it. There are a bunch of problems out there. The country is in better shape than it was 2 years ago.

I get tickled—I laugh every time I see one of the Republican—when the Republicans have a big fundraiser, and they give them a bunch of money because a lot of them are angry that we raised income taxes on the top 1.2 percent of people to bring the deficit down. But I'll bet you almost everybody going to those fundraisers for those Republicans is doing better under our economic policies in the last 2 years than they were before.

So my job is just to do the best job I can, reward work, support families and communities, offer opportunity, demand responsibility in these changes, and keep moving forward. That's what I'm going to do. And this is a difficult, tumultuous time, but this country is doing better. And I am determined to keep fighting for the interests and the values of middle-class people. And I'm going to let the election take care of itself, as I believe it will.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President's 88th news conference began at 1 p.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson; Henry Foster, Surgeon General-Designate; President Franco Tudjman of the Republic of Croatia; President Boris Yeltsin of Russia; and Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany.

Statement on the Death of Howard Hunter

March 3, 1995

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Howard Hunter and we extend our deepest sympathy to his family. President Hunter provided great moral and spiritual leadership to all Mormons as well as the entire country. His message of the need for greater kindness, gentleness, tolerance, and forgiveness is an important one for all of us.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

February 27

The President announced his intention to appoint Hector Villa III as the U.S. Representative to the Pecos River Commission.

February 28

The President announced his intention to appoint Harvey Gantt as a member and Chair and Robert Gaines as a member of the National Capital Planning Commission.

March 2

In the morning, the President met with Prince Saud, Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia. Later in the morning, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel.

In the afternoon, the President had lunch with Members of Congress in the President's West Wing Dining Room.

The White House announced the President has invited President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana for an official working visit at the White House on March 9.

The President announced the appointment of the following individuals to be members of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council:

—Allen I. Bildner;
—Stanley M. Chesley;
—Michael C. Gelman;
—John F. Kordek;
—Leo Melamed;
—Ruth R. Miller; and
—Set Charles Momjian.

March 3

In the evening, the President and Hillary Clinton attended the National Public Radio performance and reception on the State Floor.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted February 26

Edmundo A. Gonzales,
of Colorado, to be Chief Financial Officer, Department of Labor (new position).

John D. Kemp,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 1997, vice Mary Matthews Raether, term expired.

Submitted February 27

Josue Robles, Jr.,
of Texas, to be a member of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission for a term expiring at the end of the first session of the 104th Congress, vice Robert D. Stuart, Jr., term expired.

Submitted February 28

Henry W. Foster, Jr.,
of Tennessee, to be Medical Director in the Regular Corps of the Public Health Service, subject to qualifications therefor as provided by law and regulations, and to be Surgeon General of the Public Health Service, for a term of 4 years, vice M. Joycelyn Elders, resigned.

Peter C. Economus,
of Ohio, to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio, vice Frank J. Battisti, resigned.

Joseph Robert Goodwin,
of West Virginia, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of West Virginia, vice Robert J. Staker, retired.

Submitted March 3

Charles William Burton,
of Texas, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Enrichment Corporation for the remainder of the term expiring February 24, 1996, vice Frank G. Zarb, resigned.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released February 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Released February 28

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the Albanian-American Enterprise Fund

Announcement of nomination for two U.S. District Judges

Announcement of the nomination of Jose (Joe) Robles, Jr., to the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission

March 1

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the appointment of Susan E. Rice as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Tony Lake on the President's speech to the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom Policy Conference

Excerpts from the President's speech to the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom Policy Conference

Advance text of the President's speech to the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom Policy Conference

Transcript of remarks by the First Lady at the Child Welfare League 75th anniversary dinner

March 2

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Mike McCurry

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the Vice President's and the First Lady's attendance at the United Nations World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the Presidential Business Development Mission to Haiti

Statement by Press Secretary Mike McCurry on the President's letter to congressional leaders on child support enforcement

Acts Approved by the President

NOTE: No acts approved by the President were received by the Office of the Federal Register during the period covered by this issue.