

through the Medicaid program, and our obligations to the environment and to technology and to the things that will make our economy grow—we can both meet our objectives. And if we do it in good faith, we might wind up with a budget that is better than either one of us proposed. That's what I hope will happen, and I'm going to leave the door open for that. But meanwhile, my job is to protect the American people if something happens that I think is very wrong. And I think the Medicare budget is wrong for America.

#### **Presidential Commission on Race**

**Q.** Mr. President, the University of Texas speech included several challenges on race to blacks and whites, alike. How do you plan to further the conversation? Are there any next steps? What are your thoughts about a Presidential commission on race?

**The President.** Well, as you know, I received a letter signed by a number of House Members asking for that. And I have that and a number of other ideas under consideration. After I spoke at the University of Texas, and after so many came here to Washington in that march in what I thought was such a profoundly moving spirit, an open spirit and is clearly a manifestation of a desire to assume more responsibilities for themselves, for their families, their communities, and to reach out to the white community and their fellow Americans and to try to figure out how we can work together, I think that there is a big responsibility on me and on others to carry forward with that. And as you know, in the last few days I've been quite active with previously scheduled events. But we are turning our attention now very carefully to what should be done to follow up. I think we owe the country a followup, and I'm going to do my best to do it right.

I'll take one more question. Mara [Mara Liasson, National Public Radio].

#### **Budget Negotiations**

**Q.** Mr. President, just to follow up. This, I believe, is the first time you've said that you think you can reach a balanced budget in 7 years. How would the Republicans' plans need to alter so that you could reach that goal and still meet your—

**The President.** Well, I think we could reach it in 7 years; I think we could reach it in 8 years; I think we could reach it in 9 years. Our budget has moved forward from 10 to 9 years just because of the improvements in the economy and our deficit reduction package since we started. So we're between 7 and 9 now.

So I think it's obvious—what would have to happen is that we would have to find a formula in which we would monitor the reduction of the deficit as we go toward balance because under either of these programs, no one can predict with any exactitude—I mean, no American corporation has a 7-year budget. They may have a 7-year plan or a 10-year plan or a 5-year plan, but they don't have budgets in that sense, because you can't project what all will happen.

So we have to have sort of checks along the way to make sure we're on our downward target. And then we'd have to find a way to take care of these concerns that I have repeatedly expressed. I do not want us to make education less available. I don't want us to have retrenchment on technology and research. I do not want us to burden, unnecessarily, people who barely have enough money to get by on, who depend on Medicare and Medicaid. I don't want to damage the university hospitals, the children's hospitals, and the urban and rural hospital network of this country with what I think the Medicare budget will do. I don't want to damage the environment. And I do not want to tolerate a \$48-billion tax increase on working families with incomes under \$30,000. That's wrong.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 103d news conference began at 11:29 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

#### **Message to the Congress Transmitting Budget Deferrals October 19, 1995**

*To the Congress of the United States:*

In accordance with the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report three deferrals of budgetary resources, totaling \$122.8 million.

These deferrals affect the International Security Assistance program, and the Departments of Health and Human Services and State.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
October 19, 1995.

**Letter to Senator Edward M. Kennedy on the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act"**

*October 19, 1995*

*Dear Ted:*

I am writing in regard to the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which you and Senator Jeffords have reintroduced in the current session of Congress.

As you know, discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation is currently legal in 41 states. Men and women in those states may be fired from their jobs solely because of their sexual orientation, even when it has no bearing on their job performance. Those who face this kind of job discrimination have no legal recourse, in either our state or federal courts. This is wrong.

Individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work. Sadly, as the Labor and Human Resources Committee documented last year, this kind of job discrimination is not rare. Cases of job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation are seen in every area of our country.

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act, however, is careful to apply some exemptions in certain areas. I understand that your bill provides an exemption for small businesses, the Armed Forces, and religious organizations, including schools and other educational institutions that are substantially controlled or supported by religious organizations. This provision, which I believe is essential, respects the deeply held religious beliefs of many Americans.

Moreover, your bill specifically prohibits preferential treatment on the basis of sexual orientation, including quotas. It also does not require employers to provide special benefits.

The bill, therefore, appears to answer all the legitimate objections previously raised against it, while ensuring that Americans, regardless of their sexual orientation, can find and keep their jobs based on their ability and the quality of their work. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act is designed to protect the rights of all Americans to participate in the job market without fear of unfair discrimination. I support it.

Sincerely,

**Bill Clinton**

**Executive Order 12977—  
Interagency Security Committee**

*October 19, 1995*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to enhance the quality and effectiveness of security in and protection of buildings and facilities in the United States occupied by Federal employees for nonmilitary activities ("Federal facilities"), and to provide a permanent body to address continuing government-wide security for Federal facilities, it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1. Establishment.** There is hereby established within the executive branch the Interagency Security Committee ("Committee"). The Committee shall consist of: (a) the Administrator of General Services ("Administrator");

(b) representatives from the following agencies, appointed by the agency heads:

- (1) Department of State;
- (2) Department of the Treasury;
- (3) Department of Defense;
- (4) Department of Justice;
- (5) Department of the Interior;
- (6) Department of Agriculture;
- (7) Department of Commerce;
- (8) Department of Labor;
- (9) Department of Health and Human Services;
- (10) Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- (11) Department of Transportation;
- (12) Department of Energy;
- (13) Department of Education;
- (14) Department of Veterans Affairs;