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Mr. Maggio. All here.

The President. And a lot of grandchildren there?

Mr. Maggio. I got grandchildren and a great-grandchild here. It's the fifth generation.

The President. That's great.

Mr. Maggio. They come from Fort Lauderdale just to celebrate my birthday.

The President. I bet you're proud of that.

Mr. Maggio. I sure am.

The President. You've been very fortunate, haven't you?

Mr. Maggio. I've been very fortunate with my family. Got a beautiful family. And all—all of the boys that were servicemen—ex-servicemen—all have been servicemen.

The President. I know you're proud of them.

Mr. Maggio. And I'm proud of them. The whole six of them.

The President. Well, I just wanted to wish you a happy birthday, and I wanted to tell you that I'm proud of you, and I'm very grateful that our country has had someone like you——

Mr. Maggio. Thank you.

The President. ——living here throughout the 20th century, seeing all the changes you've seen, and making the sacrifices you've made so that we could stay a free country and——

Mr. Maggio. I've seen plenty.

The President. You have seen a lot, haven't you.

Mr. Maggio. Yes, good and bad.

The President. Yes. But we can still bring immigrants to our shores and give them a shot at a better life because of people like you. And I really thank you for it.

Mr. Maggio. Thank you.

The President. And you have a wonderful day.

Mr. Maggio. Have a beautiful day, too. Thank you.

The President. Tell your family I said hello.

Mr. Maggio. Mr. President says hello to the family.

The Maggio Family. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. [*Laughter*] They sound great!

Thank you, sir, and God bless you.

Mr. Maggio. Thank you, sir.

The President. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the Dedication of the World War II Memorial Site

November 11, 1995

Thank you, Dr. Encinias, for that introduction and for your truly remarkable service to our Nation. General Woerner, Governor Carey, Chairman Wheeler, Congresswoman Kaptur, I thank you all for what you have done to bring us to this day. I want to thank Mr. Durbin for his idea and for the triumph of his idea today, and the triumph of the idea that an American citizen can have a good idea and take it to the proper authorities and actually get something done. To all the members of Congress, and especially to Congressman Montgomery on his retirement, for all of his service to our veterans; to Mrs. Boyajian, thank you for your wonderful remarks today; General Shalikashvili, Secretary Perry, Secretary Brown, my fellow Americans.

I would like to begin by asking on the occasion of this last observance of the 50th anniversary of World War II that all of us express our appreciation to those who served on the World War II Commemorative Commission, and especially to its leader, General Kicklighter, for a magnificent job. Thank you all, and thank you, General.

On this Veterans Day we gather in special memory of World War II, and we dedicate this site to ensure that we will never forget. That war claimed 55 million lives, soldiers and civilians, children, the millions murdered in the death camps. It engulfed more of the Earth than any war before it or any war since. It was, as Governor Carey said, the coming of age not only for many Americans but for America, the moment that we understood that we could save the world for freedom and only we could save the world for freedom, and so we had to do it.

Today, we honor those who did just that, the fighting men and women who wore our uniform all around the world, and the millions of civilians on our Nation's homefront

who did the remarkable things embodied by Mrs. Boyajian. For all they did for our troops and for all they did without, all the sacrificing at home to help the cause abroad, we thank them, too.

My fellow Americans, the World War II generation emerged from the darkness of global war to strengthen our economy, to enlighten our society, and to lead our world to greater heights. More than 16 million women worked in our factories and cared for our soldiers. After the war, they began to play a larger role in our economy and, over time, a remarkable role in our military.

Many thousands of African-Americans served their country with courage and distinction as Tuskegee airmen and Triple Nickel paratroopers, and Sherman tank drivers and Navy Seabees. After the war, we began slowly to act on a truth too long denied, that if people of different races could serve as brothers abroad, surely—surely they could live as neighbors at home.

I cannot let this moment pass without expressing my gratitude to all those of other ethnic and racial groups who, themselves, knew discrimination who also served in World War II, and the especially brave and heroic Japanese-Americans who served in World War II, many of them with their own relatives in internment camps.

All these people took a fuller and larger and more meaningful role in American life after the war, and we were stronger for it. And instead of turning its back on the world the way the previous generation did after World War I, the World War II generation stood with its allies and reached out to its former adversaries to cement the partnerships and create the institutions that secured a half-century of unparalleled prosperity in the West, no return of world war, and victory in the cold war. We owe that generation a very great deal. And this monument will tell us we must never forget that, either.

This memorial whose site we dedicate today will be a permanent reminder of just how much we Americans can do when we work together, instead of fighting among ourselves. It will honor those who served and those who made the ultimate sacrifice. It will pay tribute to the millions of civilians who supported the war effort in spirit and action. It will stand as a monument to the values that joined us in common cause, that are worth defending and that make our life worth living. All these things we must never forget.

Here in the company of President Lincoln and President Jefferson, the White House in which every President but George Washington has lived, and the monument to George Washington just behind you, with the stately Capitol dome beyond, the World War II Memorial will join the ranks of our greatest landmarks because it was one of the greatest and most important periods in our history.

We will seal this plaque soon with the earth of 16 World War II cemeteries, and so, in our small way, infuse this place with the spirit and the souls of those who died for freedom.

I want to thank all of those who have worked to so hard to raise the funds for this project, including my good friend, Jess Haye, from Dallas. I want to thank Secretary Perry and the Department of Defense for making an initial contribution. And to all of you in the future who will give to make sure that this project is done and done right, I thank you.

America must never forget the debt we owe the World War II generation. It is a small down payment on that debt to build this monument as magnificently as we can.

From this day forward, this place belongs to the World War II generation and to their families. Let us honor their achievements by upholding always the ideals they defended and by guarding always the dreams they fought and died for, for our children and our children's children.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. on The Mall. In his remarks, he referred to Miguel Encinias, World War II veteran and prisoner of war; Gen. Fred Woerner, USA (Ret.), chairman, and Hugh L. Carey, vice chairman, American Battle Monuments Commission; Peter Wheeler, chairman, World War II Memorial Advisory Board; Roger Durbin, World War II veteran and activist for the memorial; and Helen Boyajian, Home Front Representative. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the "Weapons Offenses and Offenders" Report

November 11, 1995

These statistics are a chilling reminder to all of us—parents, teachers, police officers and elected leaders—that juvenile violence remains the number one crime problem in America.

I am proud of the landmark legislation we have passed to fight the scourge of youth violence, such as the juvenile handgun ban and zero-tolerance for guns in schools. But if we are to win this fight against crime and violence, more parents must begin to teach their children right from wrong.

And to anyone who would undo the steps I have taken to fight crime and violence in America's streets and on her schoolyards, I say: Look at the facts. Now is not the time to weaken our laws.

NOTE: This statement was embargoed for release by the Office of the Press Secretary until 5:01 p.m. on November 12.

Statement on the Balkan Peace Process

November 12, 1995

Today's agreement between the Government of Croatia and the leaders of the local Serbian community on the region of Eastern Slavonia is a major step toward the achievement of an overall peace settlement in the Balkans. This agreement provides for the peaceful reintegration of the region under Croatian sovereignty, following a period of transitional administration by the United Nations.

I congratulate the parties for the wisdom they have shown in entering into this agreement and avoiding renewed conflict. I also congratulate Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who played a direct role in assisting the parties to arrive at this agreement, along with Ambassador Richard Holbrooke and the U.S. and UN mediators, Ambassador Peter Galbraith and Thorvald Stoltenberg.

Remarks on Returning Without Approval Temporary Public Debt Limit Increase Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

November 13, 1995

The President. Good morning. Today I am vetoing H.R. 2586, which the congressional leadership sent to me last night. It would allow the United States to pay its debts for another month but only at a price too high for the American people to pay. Here are the reasons why.

First, the bill actually increases the likelihood of a default on America's obligations for the first time in our history by taking away from the Secretary of the Treasury the tools he now has to avoid default under extraordinary circumstances.

Second, the bill obligates the Government—Congress and the President—to pass the Republican congressional budget plan with its huge cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, education and technology, the environment, and its tax increases on working families.

Third, the bill implements the Republican congressional proposal to reverse a 30-year bipartisan commitment to environmental protection and public health. It would increase pollution and decrease the purity and safety of our air, water, and food.

This legislation is part of an overall backdoor effort by the congressional Republicans to impose their priorities on our Nation. Here is what is really going on.

Last spring, Speaker Gingrich said he and his new Republican congressional majority would force me, the congressional Democrats, and the American people to accept their budget and their contract by bringing about a crisis in the fall, by shutting down the Government and pushing America into default, unless I accepted their extreme proposals. In this way, the congressional Republicans sought to get around the United States Constitution which gives the President the power to veto measures not in the public interest.

They are now implementing the strategy Speaker Gingrich told us about last spring. And because I refuse to go along with it, they say I am refusing with them to solve these short-term problems.