

In recent days I've heard from Americans all across our country about the real impact this will have on the lives of our people. One of my friends called to tell me about a woman he knows with a disabled child. This woman rides an hour a day to work on subsidized transportation. And she works for barely above the minimum wage. She comes home to care for her child. Under their budget she loses three ways: Her transportation to work is going to be more costly because we're cutting aid to transportation in cities under their budget; her ability to help her disabled child will be less because the disabled child will lose Federal assistance; and unbelievably, at her low income with her child at home, she gets a tax increase under their plan so that people in my income group can get a tax cut. It doesn't make sense.

Another friend of mine, the chairman of the board of a technical college, wrote to say how important it is that we help our young people get scholarships to go on to college today. My friend remembers that in the 1960's he got help from Government to pay for his college education. And because all of us took a risk in lending him the money for college, today he pays a lot more in taxes every year than the total he borrowed. He asked a very simple question: If we can't invest in our people, how can we ensure the future of our country?

My fellow Americans, none of these extreme cuts, not one of them, are necessary to balance the budget. This extreme budget reflects not economic necessity but a philosophy that would strip the ability of our National Government to be an instrument of meeting our national goals. It would make us a more divided, winner-take-all society, a community with fewer connections and less common purpose. Its economic assumptions operate on the premise that our country will not grow very much if their plan is passed, that our best days are behind us.

I have proposed a balanced budget rooted in our fundamental values, providing opportunity but expecting responsibility from people, honoring our obligations to our parents and our children, helping our families to be stronger and to stay together, and making sure our country is the strongest force for

peace and freedom, democracy, and prosperity in the world.

My budget cuts hundreds of wasteful programs. We have already reduced the size of the Federal Government by 200,000. It's the smallest it's been in 30 years and, as a percentage of the civilian work force, the smallest it's been since 1933. But my budget also invests in our people and our future. It secures Medicare and Medicaid into the future. It invests in education. It ensures the protection of the environment. It gives working families a tax cut targeted at education and childrearing. Now, that's the right way to balance the budget.

I'll say again, I want to balance the budget. But any budget that cuts funding for disabled children and school lunches, for Head Start for our youngest children, for college scholarships and loans, that doubles Medicare premiums and undermines the entire Medicaid program that provides for nursing home care and home health care for the elderly, the disabled, and health care for poor children—this budget's dead on arrival when it comes to the White House. And if the price of any deal are cuts like these, my message is, no deal.

The effort to make the American people swallow a budget that will hurt our country is over. Let's get back to work, together, to balance the budget without unbalancing our values.

To the Republicans in Congress, I say, listen to the American people. Let's all say yes to a balanced budget and no to extremism in cuts in health care, education, and the environment. If we do that, America will be strong and true to its values and its vision as we enter the 21st century. Now let's get the job done.

Thanks for listening.

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

Statement on Action To Reopen the Federal Government *November 19, 1995*

Today I took concrete steps to put the Government back to work for the American people.

I have signed the Treasury-Postal and Legislative Branch appropriations bills. In addition, the Department of Defense is recalling to work the people who staff Armed Forces Recruiting Centers. And the Department of Housing and Urban Development is recalling employees who process public housing funds.

Last Friday, I took steps that resulted in furloughed employees being recalled to work to process Social Security and Medicare claims and accept applications for veterans benefits. Earlier in the week, I signed the funding bill for the Department of Transportation. All told, these actions bring back to work over 200,000 of the 800,000 Federal employees who were furloughed last week.

These bipartisan bills mark real progress in our efforts to fully reopen the Government so it can serve the American people. I am determined that we should fully reopen the Government. Then we can openly and fairly decide the best way to balance the Federal budget while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment.

Statement on the National Crime Rates

November 19, 1995

The continued decline in our national crime rate shows that the efforts by citizens and their police are making a difference. My 1994 crime bill's putting 100,000 cops on the street, taking assault weapons off the street, and cracking down on violent drug crimes. Today, all Americans must double their efforts to eliminate the scourge of juvenile violence from our communities. This will only be accomplished by more parents teaching their children right from wrong.

Remarks Announcing an Agreement To Reopen the Federal Government and an Exchange With Reporters

November 19, 1995

The President. Good evening. As you know, an agreement has been reached to reopen our Government beginning tomorrow. The bill I have agreed to sign will allow our Government to once again begin to serve the American people while broader discussions

about how best to balance the budget take place.

I have made clear from the beginning my principles in this budget debate. We must balance the budget, but we must do it in a way that is good for our economy and that maintains our values. That means we have to do it without devastating cuts in Medicare and Medicaid, in education and the environment. And we have to do it without raising taxes on working families.

This agreement reflects my principles. And for the first time, the Republican leaders in Congress have acknowledged the importance of those principles. As I have said throughout this debate, I could only agree to move forward if that occurred.

Tonight represents the first sign of their willingness to move forward without forcing unacceptable cuts in health care, education, and the environment on the American people. The Republican budget which was passed just yesterday clearly does not come close to meeting that test; as I have said repeatedly, therefore I will veto that budget.

As you know, I have expressed strong doubts that the budget can be balanced in 7 years if we use the current Republican congressional budget assumptions. But I am nevertheless committed to working in the coming weeks to see if we can reach common ground on balancing the budget. The key is that nothing will be agreed to unless all elements are agreed to. I simply cannot sign a budget that devastates Medicare to the elderly or Medicaid to senior citizens and disabled people and poor children, that robs educational opportunity or educational standards from our children in the future, or that hurts our environment. And I can't support a tax increase on working families.

Well, tomorrow the Government will go back to work. And now the debate will begin in earnest on how to balance the budget in a way that is consistent with the interests and the values of the American people.

I appreciate the work that was done by both Democrats and Republicans tonight. I applaud the leadership. I applaud the leaders of the budget committee. I applaud all of them for the work that they did. This is the way our Government ought to work. We ought to be able to find common ground,