

according to certain rules of conduct, we should be able to do so. That is the issue for America. And it has ever been unpopular at certain critical junctures. But just remember this: A whole lot of people came to this country because they wanted a good letting alone. And that's what we ought to be able to do today.

That's it. I've already talked longer than I meant to. I'll still stay and answer the questions for the allotted time. We've got to change the direction of the country. We've got to compete in a new world we don't understand all the dimensions of. But we ought to be guided by

three simple things: How can we create opportunity; how can we require all of us to behave more responsibly; and how can we build a stronger American community. And I don't believe that the answer necessarily has a partisan tinge. And I hope we can begin tomorrow the business of going forward with what this country urgently needs to do.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:14 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Marriott Copley Place Hotel.

Question-and-Answer Session With the Newspaper Association of America in Boston

April 25, 1993

Bosnia

Q. I'm director of the School of Journalism at Northeastern University here in Boston. I apologize for not being an actual member of NAA, but I guess I'm here as your guest.

Mr. President, you did refer to Bosnia. And I must say, as we look at that situation, it is horrifying; it is so reminiscent of what happened in Europe in the Second World War. I wonder if you would be able to explain to us why the West, which is possessed of imagination and technology, can stand idly by while these horrible things go on?

The President. Suppose you tell me what you think we ought to do, what the end of it will be?

Q. Well, you know, I could speculate, but I didn't come here to foist my ideas on other people. I'd be interested to hear what you have to say. It's obviously an immensely difficult question, because it could drag you into areas that you don't want to go, a Balkan war, an expanded—but let me quit. I'd like to hear your—

The President. All right. Let me just tell you that I think that the European countries, that are much closer to this than we, would like very much to find a way to put an end to the practice and to the principle of ethnic cleansing. They are very concerned about it, just as the United States has been.

The question is not simply how to stop the Serbs from cleansing certain areas of Bosnia of all the Muslim inhabitants and killing and raping along the way, but also what the end of it is from a military and political point of view. That is, there is much more ethnic coherence, as you know, in the other republics of what used to be Yugoslavia. So the question is, what can we do that will actually achieve the objectives you seek? And secondly, who's going to live where, and how are they going to live when it's over?

Then there are all the tactical questions about whether, in fact, it could be done. Remember, in the Second War, Hitler sent tens of thousands of soldiers to that area and never was successful in subduing it, and they had people on the ground.

That does not mean that there is not anything else that we can do. I'm not prepared to announce my policy now. I can tell you I've asked myself the question you asked me a thousand times. I have spent immense amounts of time on this, talking to General Powell; talking to Reg Bartholomew, our Special Ambassador to the area; talking to the Secretaries of State and Defense and the Ambassador to the United Nations; and soliciting opinions from others in Congress and elsewhere. And I assure you that we are going to do everything we think we can to achieve those two objectives. One is to stand up against and stop the practice of ethnic cleansing. The second is to try to find some way

for the people who live in Bosnia and Herzegovina to live in peace. But I have to tell you, the more you look at it, it is by far the most difficult foreign policy problem we face, both in terms of the larger political issues and in the purely tactical questions to resolve it. I wish I could be more specific now, but if I were, I would be announcing a policy that has not been finalized.

Telecommunications

Q. My question has to do with telecommunications. Newspapers and others who wish to offer electronic information services can do so now only by using the local exchange monopolies of the telephone companies, principally the Bell operating companies. The telephone companies would like to be deregulated, and they would like to use those monopolies to offer those same services themselves. Would your administration support the establishment of competition for local exchange services before granting deregulation?

The President. I thought you'd never ask. [Laughter] I hesitate to give you the honest answer. The honest answer is, I'm not sure I still understand it well enough to give you an answer. We have a technology working group in the White House; there are about five issues that we're looking at, of which this is one. And no decision has been made yet, and I wish I could give you a more intelligent answer. I can tell you this: You have certainly rung my bell, and I will get on top of it next week. [Laughter] I didn't mean that, ring my bell. Hey, what can I tell you; it was a long week. [Laughter]

President Boris Yeltsin of Russia

Q. You mentioned the Russian election ongoing today. Could you tell us whether or not you have had any contact within the past 24 hours with President Yeltsin and, if so, what advice or counsel you may have given him?

The President. I haven't had any contact with him in the last 24 hours. And I haven't done it because he had no business talking to me because I couldn't vote for him. [Laughter] He needed to be out there stirring around. I also was, frankly, quite sensitive to the delicate tight-rope that Yeltsin walks in our relationships together. That is, apparently the Russian people believe that it is, on balance, a good thing that we met in Canada and that we came forward with the aid package and that all of us in the

G-7 are trying to help them in ways that will be more real than the last aid package. And that's not a criticism of the previous administration so much as a criticism of the process which made Russia ineligible for a lot of the things that we said, the nations of the world said they were going to do for them. All that's been a plus.

On the other hand, the enemies of reform and the enemies of Yeltsin just beat him to death with me all the time. I don't know if you saw in one of the newspapers—maybe it was the Wall Street Journal that had a quote in the last day or two in Yeltsin's campaign where one of his enemies were saying: The only person for him is Bill Clinton. [Laughter] And so I have on purpose not had any personal and direct contact with him in the last few days because I didn't want to hurt him in the election. But I can tell you this: I think he's going to do pretty well today, and we need to be in this for the long term with him. And I intend to call him as soon as it's appropriate, when we have some sense of which way things are going.

Education Financing

Q. I'm a student at University of Massachusetts at Amherst. And I, with a lot of other students, because of tuition fees, may not be coming back next year. And I was wondering how your administration is going to try and step in and help public state colleges, help us students afford it, basically.

The President. We're trying to do two things. First of all, one of the things I attempted to do in the jobs program which didn't have anything to do with jobs—it was sort of like unemployment—was to deal with the problem left on the table last year, which is to replenish the Pell grant program, to try to get it ginned up.

And then, what I want to do with this national service proposal—it really has two components that are distinct but related. The one would make available, to all Americans who go to college, income-contingent loan repayment. Now, that's a brain-breaker of a phrase; I'm trying to think of some clever way to say that that makes common sense. But the idea is that any young American, or not-so-young American would be able to borrow the money to finance a college education and then pay the loan back, not based on so much just on how much you

borrowed but also on a percentage of your income so that it would be affordable for everyone. And we could do it for a lower cost because we are proposing to cut the administrative costs of the program and to make people pay the loan back with some connection to the tax system so you can't beat the loan. An enormous number of college loans now are not repaid at all, putting enormous burdens on those who do repay. If we set this up the way we're trying to, that would mean no one would ever have to fear a loan again, because you would not start to repay it until you were employed. And your ability to repay would be secured by having the formula for repayment tied to your own salary. So if you made less, even though you borrowed more, you'd just pay at a smaller rate over a longer period of time.

The second thing we want to do is to give more young people like you the chance to actually earn your way through college through rendering service to your country, either before you go to college, after you get out, or while you're going, under the national service program. And if we could do those two things, I think we could lift the crushing burden of college costs off millions of young people. And we're going to introduce the national service program to do that on the 100th day of this administration. And I hope you will support it.

Media Credibility

Q. Mr. President, I'm a student at Boston College and a communications major. I'd like to ask you, do you think the news media today is too concerned with gossip and sensationalism?

The President. I don't know that I'm the one to answer that. [Laughter] I think the answer to that is, you can't generalize about it. I must say, I am stunned from time to time at the stuff I read in the papers now about things in the National Government that are just purely based on gossip. I mean, I think you can get a rumor into print a little too easy now, I do, and even in the news magazines, some of them, although there seem to be different standards for different ones. But I wouldn't generalize. I think, by and large, there are still quite high standards of proof and fact that most people in journalism require before they go with stories. But I am kind of amazed, actually, of the stuff—most of it doesn't affect me at all—but the things that will get into print if you just say it is a rumor or "it's alleged that" or "somebody

said that." I think there's a little too much of that in some places, but it would be unfair to generalize about it. And by and large, it occurs either in the tabloids, which are a different class, or in journalistic media that basically live and breathe with political gossip, where there's more pressure to do that all the time.

Congressional Budget Cuts

Q. Mr. President, I think many of us were very pleased to hear you say today that Vice President Gore has been put in charge of looking at ways of streamlining the budget. Of course, we all know that the Congress is in charge of the financial spending of the United States. Will there be any looking by Vice President Gore of the way Congress has increased its spending many times over the last few decades?

The President. Well, let me say two things. Number one, I think Congress has made a commendable beginning in cutting back its staff expenses, too. They've, I think, adopted a 12 percent cut, absolute cut target over the next couple of years, not quite as much as the administration has but not insignificant. And they deserve credit for that. Secondly, there's been a lot of pressure, because of the publicity that's been brought to bear on Congress, to scale down on some of the committee and subcommittee work for select committees that were recently abolished by the Congress. And let me just say this: There are a lot of Members of Congress who believe that they're on too many committees or subcommittees. There are a lot of them who don't feel they can do their best work. I don't think it is for the executive branch to tell the legislative branch how it should reorganize itself. We have a separation of powers clause in the Constitution which I think has a good purpose.

I think the best thing you could do, since you need to know—there are a lot of people in the Congress who are honestly asking these questions—the best thing you can do is to give the issues that you care about, all of you, in terms of congressional organization, a high level of visibility and make your suggestions about what should be done and go at them directly, because they are not reform averse. Now, I can tell you that the freshman legislators are certainly not. But believe me, I've got plenty to do reorganizing the executive branch, and there's more money there. And I think it would

be inappropriate for me to tell them how to do it. I think it's better for you to tell them how to do it.

Stimulus Package

Q. Mr. President, some recent indicators suggest that the economic recovery may be slowing down. If that continues, will you take another run at a stimulus package? And what would have to be different about it this time?

The President. Well, I don't know. As I said in my press conference a couple of days ago, we've sat down at the White House, and we've tried to really reexamine how this whole thing was handled and what I could have done differently, how I could have done a better job in presenting this, because I'm sure that there were some mistakes made on our side, too, in terms of how it was done.

I can tell you this: There are people in the Republican Party, for example, in the Senate, who are generally sympathetic to this sort of thing—people who voted for these kind of supplemental appropriations over 25 times in the last 12 years—who voted against it because they basically thought that even if it wasn't increasing the deficit, this was another way certainly to reduce it—if you don't spend the money—and that we were in a recovery.

I think what I'm going to do is to just examine, with people who care about this, what we did that wasn't right the last time and how we could do it better and what our options are. Because as I said, I live in a State with perhaps the toughest balanced budget law in the country. I'm appalled by the size of the deficit. I can't stand it. I wouldn't spend a nickel to see the cow jump over the Moon if I didn't think it needed to be done. So the reason I asked for this package was because I saw it as a part of a big overall deficit reduction package that would maybe jumpstart this economy right now. And we're just going to have to revisit it.

Let me say that we had a huge increase in productivity in the fourth quarter, as all of you who follow this know, I know, and that's wonderful work. It means output per worker is escalating dramatically. The difference is that in the past when productivity went way up, it normally meant a reinvestment in the business which would lead to more people being hired.

Today—and I'll bet you a lot of newspapers can identify with this, I'll bet you a lot of you have gone through this—today, when you have

an increase in productivity, you may turn around and put it right back into what produced the productivity, which is new technology which may reduce the pressure to hire people. And small businesses, which hired almost all the new workers net in the eighties, have slowed down not only because they too are reaping the gains of technology and productivity but also because of the incredible extra costs it takes to hire a new worker in terms of health care costs, Social Security, workers' comp, and all the rest of it.

So, I know I haven't answered your question, but the short answer is this: If the economy slows down, we'll go back and try something different. And I don't know what it is, but we'll keep trying things that are different. Because keep in mind, one of the reasons the economy may be slowing down is that the economic growth rate is so low in Europe and that our friends in Japan are having a tough time. That's another reason: I thought if we could get this small stimulus out now, that the Japanese job stimulus package which is much larger would begin to bite about 6 or 7 months from now and that we might have some movement in Europe because the Germans continue to lower their interest rates, hoping, I think, trying to make an effort to stave off this slow growth. So what we do will depend on what happens in Europe, what happens in Japan, and what my options are if it becomes clear that the economy's really slowing down.

Moderator. Mr. President, unfortunately I'm going to have to interrupt and say we have time for just one more question. And there's a smile back on that lady's face. And I'd like all of you please to stay in place when the President is finished. You're going to do more than that, did you say?

The President. We ought to let those two young people back there—

Moderator. All right, fine. We're going to—

The President. You qualify—

Moderator. There's no question you're in charge here, so—[laughter]

The President. Nearly everybody looks young to me these days. Go ahead.

The First 100 Days

Q. Over the past week or so, I've been taking a poll for my radio class about your favorability with your first 100 days in office. It seems that you've started to fall out of grace with a lot of college students. And they were citing that

you didn't keep the campaign promises. What would you say to boost the morale of our generation?

The President. Well, give me an example. One thing I'd say, you can't expect instant results. It took 12 years to get in the situation that I found when I took office. One of the things I would say to college students is you need to have a realistic expectation about what kind of time it takes to get anything done.

The second thing I would say is that what I promised college students was a national service bill, and we're introducing it on the 100th day. We're doing it. And we're also going to release a report which shows how many of my campaign commitments that I have kept. To the best of my knowledge, the only one I haven't been able to keep was to give some tax relief to the middle class because the deficit, the week after the election, was announced at being \$50 billion bigger than I thought it was. And I can't responsibly offer to cut anybody's taxes when the deficit is going up instead of down. That's not right, and I can't do it. But the budget that was adopted by the Congress, in general, is completely consistent with my campaign commitments. I've got a national service program going, a health care program going. We're changing the way the Government operates—all the things that I promised to do. I have imposed tougher ethics guidelines than anybody else has ever imposed. I'm going to offer a campaign finance reform and a lobby restriction bill. Everything I talked about in the campaign is being done.

Now, if people thought that I'd be President and 90 days later every campaign commitment I made would be written into the law and everybody's life would be changed, I think that's just not realistic. You have to have a realistic feeling about how much time it takes to change and how long it takes to have an impact on it.

Another thing is, when you're not in a campaign, when you have to stay there and go to work, you're at the—and this is not a criticism of you, this is a fact—you are at the mercy of the press coverage. The defeat of the \$16 billion stimulus package got 50 times the press coverage of the passage of the multitrillion-dollar budget resolution. Why? Because we won, and we won in record time and in short order. Again, I'm not being critical; that's just the way this whole deal works. And if somebody stands

up and criticizes me, that's good news. And I welcome that.

But I'm just telling you, I think that if you look at what's actually been done in this 100-day period and compare it to what has previously been done within 100 days, in a long time, I think you'll have a very difficult time saying that the actual accomplishments were, number one, not consistent with my campaign commitments—they were—and, number two, that they're not quite considerable. So what I've got to do is a better job communicating to the students you represent what has been done and what we're going to do and how much I need their help to fight for it. That's why you get a 4-year term, not a 3-month term.

Stimulus Package

Q. I don't know if I should be up here or not, but just to make sure that you're not guilty of age discrimination—[laughter]—I guess that I was ahead of the gentleman behind me. I have a question for you about what you refer to as gridlock in Congress, because it seemed to me that for the first time Congress did say no to some very good programs because of the fact that they would add to the deficit, and that this was in fact breaking a previous gridlock which existed when Congress, when they had good programs, would simply say, well, we've got to add to the deficit. And you campaigned on reducing the deficit. And why couldn't you—admittedly, that you have some very good programs in the stimulus bill—why couldn't you, say, cut tobacco subsidies or any of a number of other programs that weren't as necessary as what's in your stimulus package?

The President. I will answer that. First of all, I had 200 such cuts, 200 that were not adopted by the previous administration or the previous Congress in the previous budget, 200. I did not ask that stimulus bill to be voted on until the Congress had adopted the budget resolution committing itself to more than \$500 billion of deficit reduction in the next 5 years, more than \$500 billion, including this \$16 billion. It was paid for by those budget cuts.

Secondly, as I said, even if it hadn't been paid for, all of the spending was under the spending limits that Congress had already adopted. It was paid for. And you know, I must tell you that I find it—I will say one more time, a majority of the Republican Senators voted under Presidents Reagan and Bush—not

the Democrats, the Republicans—28 times for over \$100 billion of exactly the same kind of spending, usually for foreign aid purposes, without blinking an eye. And so, do I think that it was a mistake that they didn't vote for it? I do.

Now, if I had just come up and said, how about adding \$16 billion to the deficit this year, they should have voted against that. But I didn't ask them to vote on it until we had adopted a budget resolution in the Congress that reduced the deficit \$514 billion over the next 5 years, including the \$16 billion. I did not ask them to vote to spend until they had voted to cut. Now, I concede that I didn't do a great job of painting that picture, but that is a fact. And you ought to write those fellows and ask them how they'd feel about just the suggestion that you made. Tell them to come up with that program. We'll see what we can do with it.

Q. Thank you.

Law Enforcement

Q. Thank you for waiting, Mr. President. I'm a student journalist from Boston University. And you've mentioned so far, in a couple different contexts, that you're interested in putting more police officers on the streets. I was also concerned and wondering that, in the same notion, are you willing to create some kind of, I don't know—do you have a task force now that would look into community relations between police officers and the public? Because I'm from a city and a neighborhood where some people might feel safer with more police in the streets, but a lot of people would actually be terrified with more police in the streets.

The President. Well, I accept that. The answer to your question is no, I haven't thought about that. Maybe I should think about it, but I haven't. But let me answer you in this way: When I have talked about putting more police officers on the street, I've always talked about

it with two things in mind. First of all, keep in mind that in the last 30 years, there has been a dramatic worsening in the ratio of police to crime. Thirty-five years ago there were approximately three policemen for every serious crime, every felony reported. Now there are three felonies for every police officer. That puts enormous pressure on those police officers. I'm not justifying abuse. I'm just talking about the kinds of pressures in the day-to-day work of the cops on the beat, out there on the front line living with all this. So I believe that if you had more police officers who were well-trained, you would have a reduction in tensions.

But secondly and more importantly, I believe it's important to go to community based policing, where you have the same group of police officers, unless they're misbehaving, working in the communities month in and month out, year in and year out, establishing relationships with people in the communities so that you dramatically reduce the likelihood of abuse or fear, because people know each other. They've got people walking the beats. They know the first names of the police officers. They see them as friends. In the cities where I have seen that happen, I have seen not only a decline in crime but also an increase in mutual trust and understanding between folks in a community and folks in the uniforms.

So I think you've made a very good point. It's not just important that we have more police officers, but the structure of policing, in my judgment, has to be more rooted in particular communities. And I think if we did that, the crime rate would go down significantly. And by the way, there is a lot of evidence, probably in a lot of the cities in which you live here, that that would in fact occur.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:56 p.m. at the Marriott Copley Place Hotel.

Statement to Participants in the March for Lesbian, Gay, and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation

April 25, 1993

Welcome to Washington, DC, your Nation's Capital.

During my campaign and since my election, I have said that America does not have a person