

## Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With House Democratic Leaders

May 25, 1993

### *White House Travel Office*

*Q.* Mr. President, we haven't actually been able to get your view on the dealings the White House had with the FBI on all this travel stuff. Could you tell us what your view of all that is? Was it appropriate? Did you know about it?

*The President.* The only thing I know is that we made a decision to save the taxpayers and the press money. That's all I know. We saved 25 percent on the first plane ride and saved the taxpayers a bunch of money. Any other questions, I'll just refer you to Mr. McLarty—

*Q.* Was it your decision to go around the Attorney General and have the FBI issue a very rare statement?

*The President.* I had nothing to do with any decision, except to try to save the taxpayers and the press money. The press has been complaining for years that they were overcharged by the way the thing was done before. The first trip out we saved 25 percent for the press, and the taxpayers saved a lot of money. That's all I know about it.

NOTE: The exchange began at 8:45 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## Remarks at the "Drive American Quality" Presentation

May 25, 1993

Thank you very much, Mr. Bieber, and to all of you who are here. I want to say a special word of thanks to Mr. Smith and Mr. Poling, Mr. Eaton and Secretary Brown and Secretary Reich. I see Mr. Bieber just gave Secretary Reich a nightshirt. I also want to thank all the Members of the Congress who are here and for their support of the auto industry in this country.

I grew up as a boy, starting from the time I was about 6 years old, in the back of a Buick dealership. I have been interested in the automobile business all my life. I watched with sadness when it was down, and I feel great elation now that I see it coming back. These cars are what is best about America: increasing productivity, increasing quality, and gaining market share back. The people who make them are the people who deserve our support, and this administration is determined to give it to them. Last year the auto industry production was 5.6 percent of our gross national product. In 1992, vehicle and parts manufacturing directly accounted for 4.6 percent of our manufacturing employment. During the first quarter of this year, the Big Three accounted for two out of

three auto sales in the United States, with the American cars gaining market share in 1993. This did not happen by accident. It required investment, it required reorganization, it required some reductions in spending. Over the last 3 years, \$73 billion have been invested by the Big Three. Since 1981, quality has dramatically improved. The number of customer-reported defects is down by 80 percent. And many of our American cars, by any quality measure, are better than their foreign competitors today. They are also more fuel-efficient and increasingly so.

Our great challenge now is to produce cars of high quality at affordable costs that are environmentally responsible and that preserve good jobs here in America for those who can compete and win. In order to do that, we have to begin by getting our house in order. In the next few days, the United States Congress will have a chance to adopt the biggest deficit-reduction package in the history of this country, one that asks wealthier Americans—who, I might add, have overwhelmingly been supportive of this—to pay most of the burden of the new taxes, which exempts lower middle income Americans

from any burden and which asks the Congress to impose unprecedented cuts, including reducing the Federal work force by 150,000 over the next 4 years and cutting over 200 specific Government programs. This is a balanced program. We also invest in jobs, in technology, and education and training. If we can get our house in order, if we can bring our deficit under control, reduce it, make some room for targeted investments in jobs and people, we can turn this country around.

I think that the auto industry has showed us what it takes. You've seen reduction in spending, you've seen painful cuts, you've seen dramatic increases in investment, you've seen American workers not just working harder but smarter, and you have seen years and years and

years of disciplined effort rewarded by something 5 years ago or 6 years ago most people would tell you would never happen: American-made cars winning the quality race and regaining market share. That's what we're going to do with our country.

Thank you and bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:55 p.m. at the National Air and Space Museum. In his remarks, he referred to Owen Bieber, president, United Auto Workers; John F. Smith, Jr., president, General Motors Corp.; Harold A. Poling, chairman and chief executive officer, Ford Motor Co.; Robert J. Eaton, chairman and chief executive officer, Chrysler Corp.

## Exchange With Reporters on the Economic Program

May 25, 1993

Q. Mr. President, is the House going to pass your tax bill?

*The President.* I think they're going to pass the budget bill, yes, which has a lot of cuts in it, and it also has some good things for these folks, good for manufacturing, good for small business. Good bill.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2 p.m. at the National Air and Space Museum. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

## Remarks on Signing the Older Americans Month Proclamation

May 25, 1993

Thank you very much, Senator Pryor and Secretary Shalala. Let me also acknowledge in the audience the presence of Senator Bill Cohen from Maine, Congressman Marty Martinez, and Congressman William Hughes. We're glad to see them. And I also want to pay a special word of respect to my good friend, our Vice President's mother, Mrs. Pauline Gore. She's a little too young to be here, but I'm glad to see her here anyway.

You know, Senator Pryor told that story about the 100-year-old man who had been against all the changes he'd seen. One of the things I think that age does for all of us is it gives us the ability to laugh at things that once we would have cried about, something I've needed more and more as I've taken this job. *[Laughter]*

But David told this story. It reminded me, there's a town in Arkansas that has my name, called Clinton, and I was invited there once to a nursing home to celebrate the 107th birthday of this lovely woman. And I showed up, and she had a beautiful pink dress on. And I said, "Gosh, you're pretty today." And she said, "Don't you go flirting with me. I'm not looking for a husband." *[Laughter]* And so I said, "Well, I appreciate that." I said, "You know, I already have one wife. Don't you think that's enough?" And she said, "I guess so, hard as times are." *[Laughter]* Sometimes I think about that.

This is the 30th anniversary of Older Ameri-