

and the most of their God-given abilities; and communities and families will have the ability to solve their own problems. That is the kind of America that I want to see in a world where peace and freedom and progress are always moving in the right direction.

There will never be an end to problems as long as we're on this Earth, but we need to be going in the right direction and taking advantage of these opportunities. And I am convinced that in our country at this time, when we're changing so much, there is sort of a common-sense consensus about what we ought to do that has been damaged by excessive partisanship and excessive reliance on harsh rhetoric and extreme positions to divide the American people for the political advantage of those who seek to reap it.

And in a time like this of really profound change, we all have to try to imagine the future we want and then ask how are we going to get there and what do we have to do to pull together to get there. That's essentially what we're trying to do here.

So that, for example, I find myself—I agree with the Republican majority in Congress that we ought to balance the budget. We can't afford to have a permanent deficit. But I disagree that we ought to do it in ways that will imperil the Medicare system, undermine our ability to guarantee all the young people in this country the right to go to college and get the education that they need, or undermine our ability to protect our environment and our natural heritage

and our future. So we have to get through those disagreements.

The main thing I want you to know is that this is an exciting time. On balance, it's a good time. I believe that your adult years will be lived out in America's best period in history if, but only if, we find a way to live together and work together and bridge our divisions and focus on the challenges before us.

And that really will be the great issue of your time. We're going to change regardless. The question is, what kind of change will it be? And are we going to see a country like ours, which is so diverse—well over 150 different racial and ethnic and religious groups in the United States—are we going to see that country come together and take advantage of that, or are we going to suffer from some of the same problems we've seen paralyzing the rest of the world and leading to the deaths of innocent people?

On balance, I am quite optimistic. But this is a very serious time for the United States and a very important time for you to be here. So I hope you will keep that in the back of your mind as you spend all this time here and then when you go back home next year.

Welcome, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:21 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of State for Defense Malcolm Rifkind of the United Kingdom.

Statement on Budget Rescission Legislation

July 21, 1995

The rescission bill that the Senate approved, and that I will be pleased to sign, shows how we can work together to produce good legislation.

From the start of this rescission process, I agreed with Congress on the need to cut spending. The question was, how should we do it?

I vetoed the original rescission bill because it would have cut spending the wrong way by targeting education and training, environmental protection, and other key national priorities. I then worked with Republicans and Democrats

alike to produce a better bill. I am pleased that this bill cuts \$16 billion in spending while protecting our key investments in education and training, the environment, and other priorities.

Like the earlier version, this bill also provides much-needed supplemental funds that I have sought for disaster relief activities of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Federal responses to the bombing in Oklahoma City, increased antiterrorism efforts, and debt relief to Jordan to facilitate progress toward a Middle East peace settlement.

To be sure, I do not support every provision of this bill. For instance, I still do not believe that this bill should contain any of the provisions relating to timber. But the final bill does contain changes in the language that preserve our ability to implement the current forest plans and their standards and to protect other resources such as clean water and fisheries. Therefore, after signing the rescission bill into law, I will direct

the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Interior, and all other Federal agencies to carry out timber salvage activities consistent with the spirit and intent of our forest plans and all existing environmental laws.

I am pleased that bipartisan leaders of Congress worked with me to produce a good bill. Working together, we can continue to produce good legislation for the American people.

The President's Radio Address *July 22, 1995*

Good morning. Over a month ago, Speaker Newt Gingrich and I met with a group of senior citizens in Claremont, New Hampshire. That sunlit event had a special spirit. We showed that the great debate now occurring in our country can and should be conducted with civility and a sense of common ground. Many Americans of both parties have told me since then that this is exactly the way they want their leaders to work together. And that's what I'm committed to doing.

Perhaps the most visible example of that spirit of New Hampshire came when the Speaker and I shook hands on the question of political reform, something that has divided the two parties and the Congress and the country for too long. The first question we answered was from a retired steelworker named Frank McConnell. He said that politics had become polluted by special interests and that too often the voice of the people was shut out. He said that bickering between the parties had blocked reform for too long, and he proposed that we create a blue-ribbon, bipartisan commission to write reforms to curb the power of special interests. There, in front of the entire country, the Speaker and I agreed to create this commission.

A bipartisan commission could cut the knot that is strangling change. This panel would follow the approach that has worked on other critical issues. It would be comprised of distinguished citizens and would recommend broad changes in the rules which cover lobbyists and in how we finance political campaigns. Most important of all, the Congress would have to vote within a strict deadline, up or down, on the

package as a whole, no loopholes, no amendments.

I'm happy to report that in addition to myself and Speaker Gingrich, this very idea has been strongly endorsed for some time by Senate majority leader Bob Dole, who just last February said again that this was the way we ought to approach this question.

It's clearer than ever that we need political reform. The American people believe their political system is too influenced by narrow interests, that our Government serves the powerful but not hard-working families. Even before the '94 elections, the special interests prevented passage of both campaign finance reform and lobby reform legislation that I had strongly asked the Congress to pass. When a minority in the Senate killed lobbying reform in 1994, lobbyists were standing right outside the Senate chamber cheering.

Since the New Congress came in, I'm sad to say, it's gotten worse, for even more power has been given to the lobbyists. Now this new majority lets lobbyists for polluters write legislation rolling back environmental and public health protections. They've brought them in to explain the legislation. They even gave them a room off the House floor to write the amendments and the statements the Members would have to give explaining the bills that the lobbyists had written for them.

Since things have gotten in this state, it was a real moment of hope when the Speaker and I shook hands on reform in New Hampshire. Just 5 days later, I sent Speaker Gingrich a letter laying out in detail my ideas for how to move forward. Now, 5 weeks later, I must say