

think we have an excellent chance of saving these programs because they work; they're good; they're grassroots oriented; they're not Federal bureaucracies.

Q. Mr. President, if you're to avoid the train wreck that you—[inaudible]—earlier, some in Congress have suggested that a budget summit of some kind may be the only way to work out these very stark differences between you and the Republican leadership. Is that something that you'd be willing to agree to?

The President. Well, I think the discussion of the summit is premature at this time. I do believe, as I said earlier today, I've seen in some of the comments of some of the Republican leaders the prospect that we might be able to bridge these differences. I'm willing to reach across the bridge, but it takes two people to reach across a bridge to meet in the middle somewhere. So I think we can do it. We're just going to have to work at it.

But the first thing we ought to do, and what I'm trying to do here today and what I'm trying to do this whole week with this back-to-school theme, is to try to lift this issue beyond politics, beyond partisan politics and beyond Washington politics. That is, why are we balancing the budget? Because we want to lift debt off our children, and we want to reduce borrowing now so we'll have more money available in the private sector to generate jobs and incomes. That's why we're doing it.

Why did they propose a tax cut? Why do I propose a tax cut, even though we're very different? Because we think it will make family

life better; it will make childrearing stronger; it will make the economy stronger; it will make America a more solid, stronger country.

If those are our objectives, then we have to pursue balancing the budget and reducing taxes in a way consistent with our objectives, not a partisan deal, not a political deal. Education, if you take it out of the equation, the objectives will fail. That's the point I'm trying to make. That's the point I want us to focus on. And it is not necessary to make these education cuts to balance the budget. I think we've got a real chance to make that case, and I'm very, very hopeful.

Bomb Plot in Austin, Texas

Q. Mr. President, word is starting to come out about the aborted bomb plot against the IRS center in Austin, Texas. Have you been briefed on that, sir?

The President. No.

Thank you.

Budget Debate

Q. Do you think you're going to get a continuing resolution while this debate goes on?

The President. I certainly hope so. I think that's the responsible thing to do. And I think that—my guess is that there's a good chance that will occur.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:25 p.m. from the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

September 12, 1995

The President. Let me—first of all, I want to welcome the leadership of the Congress here and thank them for coming down to the White House for the meeting today. I'm looking forward to having a chance to discuss a number of things, including the present situation in Bosnia, the status of the welfare reform legislation, the budget—progress toward a balanced budget, and a number of other issues, including the lobby reform measure passed by the Senate and the line-item veto and anything else that might

be on the minds of the congressional Members who are here.

I have said before, I will say again, I'm very hopeful that we can achieve common ground on this budget. This is a truly historic moment. We do have some different priorities, but I think we can reach an agreement if we work at it. It seems clear now that such cannot be the case by the time this fiscal year ends on October 1st, so I'm hopeful that we can, for a limited period of time, pass a continuing resolution. It

would be a straightforward resolution, appropriate for the reduction of spending to meet the overall budget targets, and I look forward to working on that.

I believe that the American people want us to work together and get something done, and I think most of us want the same thing, so that's what we're going to talk about.

Bosnia

Q. President Clinton, can you give us a—[inaudible]—the way you see the situation in Bosnia right now and what you plan to talk about?

The President. Well, I think the agreement signed in Geneva by the three parties is very, very hopeful—the Bosnian Government, the Croatian Government, the Serbian Government. I think the negotiations should continue. I'm sending Ambassador Holbrooke back there tonight. In terms of the bombing, that's really up to the Serbs. The U.N. Security Council resolution is clear, and the conditions laid out by our committee on the ground are clear, and we'll just have to see what happens there.

Q. Mr. President, Russia is comparing the bombings to genocide. Other than the traditional ties to the Serbs, what do you think is behind Yeltsin's sterner and sterner opposition to bombings?

The President. Well, I think you have to ask them that. Let's just make it clear—if you look at the facts of the bombing attacks, they are clearly not that. First of all, they were authorized by the United Nations; secondly, they came only after extreme provocation, after the killings, the shelling—resulting from the shelling of Sarajevo, the killing of innocent civilians; and thirdly, they have been very, very carefully targeted and carried out with great discipline and skill by the United States pilots and the NATO allies. There has been no genocide there. There has been an extraordinary amount of care and discipline but firmness and strength. They were appropriately done. And I want to say in the presence of these Members here how much I appreciate the comments that Senator Dole and others have made on that.

The United States, I think, is united in being opposed to resumption of the killing of innocent civilians in protected areas. They said we wouldn't do it, we wouldn't tolerate it, and we can't.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:42 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House, prior to a meeting with congressional leaders. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Commission on Immigration Reform *September 12, 1995*

I reiterate my earlier congratulation to the Commission on Immigration Reform for its hard work on legal immigration reform. The Commission has provided the Congress and the Nation with an excellent framework to achieve gradual reductions in the level of legal immigration. This is a goal and objective I share.

The Commission's first report on illegal immigration endorsed many of the activities my ad-

ministration has initiated. This report on legal immigration also shares many of my principles to guide reform. Our legal immigration system must be based on principles that are pro-family, pro-work, and pro-naturalization. I anticipate working with Congress in a spirit of bipartisanship to craft the specific legislation that will put these principles in practice.