

Statement on House of Representatives Inaction on Political Reform *October 2, 1995*

The American people have made it clear that they want political reform. It is plain that lobbyists have too much influence in the Halls of power and that reforms are needed to change the way we finance campaigns. I believe that a bipartisan consensus exists to enact reform. By an overwhelming margin, the Senate passed legislation that would require lobbyists to fully disclose their activities and that ended the practice of lobbyists giving lawmakers expensive gifts, meals, and travel.

However, this past weekend, in an abrupt reversal of a previous commitment, the House Republican leadership announced that it would refuse to schedule a vote on lobby reform this year. This may please Washington's professional lobbyists, but it will only deepen the American people's cynicism about the way Government works. There can be no excuse for delay.

This is the starkest indication yet that the new congressional majority simply is not serious about political reform. But it is not the first such indication. It is now nearly 4 months since Speaker Gingrich and I agreed to create a bipartisan commission on political reform. I have sought in good faith to move forward on this

proposal. I asked two distinguished Americans, John Gardner and Doris Kearns Goodwin, to reach out to the congressional leadership to make this commission a reality. Mr. Gardner made repeated attempts to contact the Speaker, but the Speaker did not even show him the courtesy of a direct reply. In light of this extraordinary unresponsiveness, Mr. Gardner has indicated that he does not believe the commission has any chance of success.

We must move forward with rapid action on reform that is bipartisan and real. Congress should quickly enact lobby reform, gift reform, and campaign finance reform legislation. In the meantime, I am not waiting. In my first days in office, I barred senior officials from lobbying their agencies for 5 years after leaving office and from ever lobbying for foreign governments. We repealed the tax loophole that let lobbyists deduct their expenses. We have fought for tough lobby reform and campaign reform legislation. And now, my administration is moving forward with an Executive order that will require lobbyists who contact the executive branch to fully disclose their activities.

Message on the Observance of Yom Kippur *October 2, 1995*

Warm greetings to all who are observing the holy day of Yom Kippur.

Jews around the world mark this solemn Day of Atonement with stringent fasting for the body and careful examination of the soul. Yom Kippur is a deeply personal holiday, inviting worshippers to confess transgressions and to make reparation for sins, striving in this way to reaffirm their bonds with God and to repair and renew human relationships.

Yom Kippur teaches us all that peace and reconciliation can come only through committed human effort and humility before God. The conclusion of the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement, signed at the White House September 28, is a shining example of such resolve. Two

peoples, divided for generations by conflict, have now taken another courageous step toward peace. In this season of renewal, there is more reason than ever before to hope that one day soon there will be safety in Israel's house and that the clash of arms will be banished from God's Holy Land. Let us treasure this lesson in our hearts and work to bring healing and harmony to our nation and our world.

Best wishes for a meaningful and rewarding holiday.

BILL CLINTON