

Statement on the Gun-Free Schools Act October 26, 1995

A year ago I launched a national effort to get guns out of America's schools. Today, almost one year after I signed the Gun-Free Schools Act, I'm very pleased to announce that our message of zero tolerance has been made a reality around the country. The Gun-Free Schools Act is working and working well.

Guns have no place in our schools, and this directive ensures that any student in America who brings a gun to school will be expelled for at least a year. Our message is clear: We

will not tolerate threats to the safety of America's students and teachers. Period. Parents have a right to expect that their children will be safe when they go to school in the morning.

We still need more good parents and strong communities if we are to win the fight against crime in America. But through efforts like this one, my administration is committed to doing its part to protect our children and ensure that they can learn in safety, free from fear and violence.

Exchange With Reporters Following the Departure of President Soeharto of Indonesia October 27, 1995

Gross Domestic Product Report

Q. [Inaudible]—growth figures?

The President. Well, the growth figures clearly show that the economy of the United States is moving, that we're on the right track. Today we have this very high growth figure. Just a few days ago we got the good news that the deficit has dropped dramatically now for 3 years in a row. We need to build on this. We do not need to reverse our economic course. That's the message I have for the Congress on the deficit reduction. We should balance the budget. We should continue to reduce the size of the Federal Government. But we need to do it in a prudent way that continues to invest in our people, in our education, our technology, for the health care of our seniors and the future of our children and our environment.

We are moving in the right direction. This is the right direction. Why would we reverse course? We now have virtually 3 years of complete economic data showing that this policy that we have followed with great discipline and determination is good for the American people. So I hope we can stay right with it.

Budget Legislation

Q. Mr. President, some liberal Democrats are afraid that as part of the end game, after the veto and after the real negotiations begin, they

may be left alone out there, that you'll make a deal in the center somewhere with some moderate Republicans that would be enough to see a compromise go through.

The President. Well, first of all, my goal would be to have a budget that would be—get a huge bipartisan vote. And my principles have been clear. If there are those even in my own party who do not favor a balanced budget at all, then there will come a time when we'll be on different sides of the fence on that.

But I would ask you to remember, look how much the liberal Democrats have done to move to a dynamic center in the last 3 years: They voted for deficit reduction; they voted for a very tough crime bill; they voted for an education reform bill that had high standards and let us let all kinds of States and school districts get out from under Federal regulations. They are moving. And I think most of the traditional liberal Democrats are trying to create a dynamic future. I believe they will vote for a balanced budget if it's the right kind of one.

You know, the Republicans' leaders say they have certain principles. And they are—what are those principles? Balance the budget, secure the Medicare Trust Fund—excuse me—balance the budget, secure the Medicare Trust Fund, have a tax cut, and have more authority being given to the States and the local governments. I have