

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on

Foreign Relations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 10.

## Remarks on the Budget Debate

*November 10, 1995*

Good afternoon. The budget debate we are now engaged in is a serious and critical moment for this country. The debate is about whether we will balance this budget in a way that is consistent with our fundamental values: our responsibility to our parents and to our children; our determination to provide opportunity for all Americans to make the most of their own lives through good jobs and education and technology; our obligation to protect the environment and to maintain America's ability to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom, for democracy and prosperity.

In a larger sense, I believe this budget debate is about two very different futures for America: about whether we will continue to go forward under our motto, *E Pluribus Unum*, out of many, one; whether we will continue to unite and grow; or whether we will become a more divided, winner-take-all society.

I recognize that the Republican Congress has a very different view. The American people deserve a serious debate over these two approaches to balancing the budget. But we cannot have that serious debate under the threat of a Government default or shutdown. And we cannot cut Medicare, education, and the environment as a condition of keeping the Government open.

The bills Congress voted on last night are not ordinary measures designed simply to keep the Government open while we continue the debate over how to balance the budget. Instead,

last night Republicans in Congress voted to raise Medicare premiums; they voted to cut education and to cut it deeply; and they voted to overturn three decades of bipartisan environmental safeguards.

Beyond that, these measures would make a Government default almost inevitable, for the first time in our history, because they take away from the Secretary of the Treasury the tools now available to avoid default under extraordinary circumstances. This is deeply irresponsible. It has never happened before, and it should not happen now.

Republicans in Congress have a responsibility to keep the Government running without cutting Medicare and increasing premiums, without cutting education and undercutting the environment. I want to work with Congress to resolve these differences and to keep the Government running in the interest of the American people. After all, we have shown we can work together on this. Just last September we agreed on an appropriate measure to keep the Government running while we finish the job of balancing the budget. We should simply do now what was done in September so that the Government and the budget debate can go on. And I believe Congress should stay in this weekend and finish this work.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

## The President's Radio Address

*November 11, 1995*

Good morning. At midnight this Monday night, unless Congress passes legislation to keep the Government running, the Federal Govern-

ment will be required by law to begin shutting down. For months, the congressional Republicans have made a consistent threat: If I don't