

obligations that the Government has already incurred.

Nevertheless, Republicans in the Congress have resorted to extraordinary tactics to try to force their extreme budget and priorities into law. In essence, they have said they will not pass legislation to let the Government pay its bills unless I accept their extreme, misguided priorities.

This is an unacceptable choice, and I must veto this legislation.

The Administration also strongly opposes the addition of extraneous provisions on this bill. Items like habeas corpus and regulatory reform

are matters that should be considered and debated separately. Extraneous issues of this kind have no place in this bill.

The Congress should pass a clean bill that I can sign. With that in mind, I am sending the Congress a measure to raise the permanent debt limit to \$5.5 trillion as the Congress called for in the budget resolution, without any extraneous provisions.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House
November 13, 1995.

Message to the Congress Transmitting Proposed Temporary Public Debt Limit Increase Legislation

November 13, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

In disapproving H.R. 2586, a bill that would have, among other things, provided for a temporary increase in the public debt, I stated my desire to approve promptly a simple increase in the debt limit. Accordingly, I am forwarding the enclosed legislation that would provide for such an increase.

I urge the Congress to act on this legislation promptly and to return it to me for signing.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
November 13, 1995.

Remarks to the Democratic Leadership Council

November 13, 1995

Thank you very much, Senator Lieberman, for your work, your example, and your wonderful introduction. You know, I knew 25 years ago when I worked for that guy that I'd have a big payoff some day. [Laughter] Thank you, Al From, for your long and devoted work for the DLC, to you and all the other staff members, to the other leaders of the DLC who are here, my good friends Senator Robb and Governor Romer. I see Congressman McCurdy and others in the crowd who have worked so hard for this organization for so many years.

A week ago today I was in Israel, representing America at the funeral of Prime Minister Rabin. As I reflected on the terrible events that took his life, it was clear to me, again, how in the

world of the global village, the post-cold-war world, the information technology age, we are both coming together and coming apart. Precisely because Prime Minister Rabin tried to unite his portion of the world in peace, an assassin took his life.

Last night I went to Ford's Theatre for its annual benefit performance. And as I looked at the balcony where President Lincoln lost his life to an assassin, because he was determined to preserve the Union and end slavery, I was struck by the fact that the entire history of our great land has been dominated by three great ideas: love of liberty, belief in progress, and the struggle to find common ground.

We have worked throughout this entire life of our country to make our motto, *E Pluribus Unum*, from many, one, more than a slogan; instead, a driving force of unity and of strength. We have now to face the fact that we cannot achieve the first two objectives, liberty and freedom or progress and prosperity, unless we can achieve the third, common ground.

We established in our country a Constitution and a rule of laws, limitations of powers, separation of powers, authority at the State and local level. All these things were designed to give us a way to resolve our differences in a lawful, reconciling manner so that we could preserve our liberty and always make progress. It's worked pretty well for us for well over 200 years now.

If you look at the world and the problems it faces and you look at home and the problems we face, it is clear that the responsibility of the United States today is to lead the world away from division, to show the world that the center can hold, that a free and diverse people, through democratic means, can form a lasting union. This is the challenge of our time and our responsibility as Americans.

That is, in a larger sense, why you and I joined the Democratic Leadership Council. We knew that to keep America strong, the old ways of governing would have to be abandoned. We wanted a Government committed to standing up for the values and interests of ordinary Americans, a Government that offers more opportunity with less bureaucracy, that insists on responsibility from all its citizens, that strengthens our sense of community, the idea that we are all in this together and that everyone counts.

I ran for President in 1992 to restore the American dream for all our people, to bring the American people together, and to assure that America would remain the world's strongest force for peace and freedom, democracy and prosperity, into the 21st century. I have pressed that vision with a simple strategy rooted in economic growth, commonsense Government, and mainstream values. And my fellow Americans, this country is in better shape than it was 3 years ago.

Of course, we still have formidable challenges. But America is on the move. We passed our economic plan, and when we did, our critics said it would bring on a deep recession. But they were wrong. Today the economy is growing. The American people have produced 7½

million new jobs, a 15-year high in home ownership, an all-time high in new business formation, and the lowest combined rates of inflation and unemployment in 25 years. It is a good thing for the country.

A child born today has a better chance of going to college and getting a good job. It's a little easier for people to be good parents and good workers. The infant mortality rate is at an all-time low. Every day there are more opportunities for more Americans to tap into the technological marvels of the information economy and to build a prosperous future.

Commonsense Government is moving forward, thanks in no small measure to the DLC members who have come to work at the White House. According to the Office of Management and Budget this morning, there are now 200,000 fewer people working for the United States Government than on the day I became President. And I might say, almost no Americans have noticed that for two very good reasons. One is, as an employer the United States treated the Federal employees with dignity and respect, with genuinely good severance packages and early retirement packages. And I am proud of that. We didn't just throw those people into the street. The second is that the Federal employees who stayed behind working for you are doing more with less, and they deserve our respect and appreciation. If no one noticed that 200,000 are gone, it's because those who are left are doing their jobs better. And I'm proud of that.

It is not only true that we are now moving quickly to the smallest Federal Government we have had since President Kennedy was here, but listen to this: Today, Federal employees are a smaller percentage of the civilian work force than at any time since 1933, before the New Deal. That is an astonishing statistic. Does it mean that Government still never does anything it shouldn't or that there's never a regulation that doesn't make sense? No, it doesn't, but it means that the Democrats have taken the lead in reducing the deficit and reducing the burden of unnecessary Government, while keeping a Government strong enough to advance our values and our interests. That is our mission, and we are achieving it, and you should be proud of it.

This country is stronger and safer. For the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, there is not a single nuclear missile pointed at

an American child. And from Northern Ireland to Haiti to the Middle East, the United States is leading the world to peace.

Now, we are working for peace in Bosnia, to stop the slaughter of innocents, to prevent the war from spreading, to bring real peace to Europe. Our military might, through NATO, stopped the Bosnian-Serb attacks on the safe areas. Our mediators helped the parties to reach a cease-fire and agree on principles of a settlement and now to come to Dayton, Ohio, to forge a lasting peace. If this peace is achieved, my fellow Americans, our responsibility does not end, for NATO must help to secure it, and as NATO's leader, the United States must participate.

The war of ethnic and religious hatred in Bosnia strikes at the heart of our ideal. It's the sort of thing that led to hatred in the hearts of people in the Middle East and cost Prime Minister Rabin his life. It's the sort of thing that cost Abraham Lincoln his life. We have to, we have to, stand against this.

It's convenient now to forget, but there was a time when Bosnia, too, found unity in its diversity, when Sarajevo was one of the most beautiful and peaceful multiethnic cities in all of Europe. It can happen again if we stand up for our principles and stand up for our interests, if we are willing to be leaders for peace.

That responsibility extends to the other threats in the world today that are related to racial and ethnic and religious divisions, especially to terrorism. Just this morning, the terrorist attacks against American citizens in Saudi Arabia provided a brutal reminder that our people are not immune, not immune here at home as we learned at the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City and not immune abroad.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims and their loved ones at this time of their loss. We owe it to them and to all of our citizens to increase our efforts to deter terrorism, to make sure that those responsible for this hideous act are brought to justice, to intensify and pressure the isolation of countries that support terrorism. And we must spare no effort to make sure our own law enforcement officials have what they need to protect our citizens. That's why, even before Oklahoma City, I sent legislation to Capitol Hill asking for additional resources to deal with the threat of terrorism. The Senate passed the bill quickly, but the bill has stalled for months and months in the House.

I ask again for the House of Representatives to pass the antiterrorism legislation.

Just as we try to advance our principles abroad, we know we have, first and more importantly, to stand by them at home. Our Nation is coming together around traditional values even as we move forward economically and try to bring more common sense to our Government. All across America though they are still too high, the American people should know that the crime rate is down, the welfare rolls and food stamp rolls are down, teen pregnancy has dropped for 2 years in a row, and for the first time in more than a decade, the poverty rate is down.

We still have a lot to do; you know that better than anyone. And I encourage the development of the new ideas that you are pushing, how you are going beyond what we are advocating now in the "GI bill" of rights and tax benefits for childrearing and education. I encourage this project.

There are still too many people who are in trouble. There are too many young people without parents or others to teach them right from wrong who are turning to drugs and to violence. There are too many places in our country that still have both too little opportunity and too little responsibility. But we are coming together.

And I'm proud of what we did in the administration with welfare reform efforts to support 35 States, with the crime bill that Senator Lieberman mentioned, with a 40 percent increase in child support collections, and a cut in the student loan default rate by 50 percent since this administration took office. I am proud of that.

My fellow Americans, we have to see this debate about the budget in the context of the remarks I have just made. This is a very great country. No one is so well-positioned for the 21st century as the United States, as long as we stick to our strategy of economic growth, commonsense Government, and mainstream values. There is no country so well-positioned.

But we now have to make a fundamental choice. In 1992, most voters believed the choice was between an active approach to our problems and a more passive one. Today in the budget debate you see two very different active approaches to America's challenges. We face a choice that will be a test of our values, a test of our vision, a choice that goes to the very

heart of our identity as a nation and to the very core of the future we will chart.

What is the vision of the congressional Republicans as manifest in their budget? Their budget would render our Government incapable of supporting our values and advancing our common interests. It is bereft of the simple understanding that we rise or fall together. They would support policies that would make us far more a divided, winner-take-all society, a community with fewer connections and less common purpose, in which we say to all Americans without regard to opportunity or obligation, fend for yourselves.

Ours is a vastly different vision. We know Government cannot do everything. We know there is not a program for every problem. We know we should not ask Government to do for people what they ought to be doing for themselves. We know more must be done at the State and local level and in partnership with private citizens. But we know our Government has fundamental responsibilities to lead, to act, to move forward.

We know that the Government of the 21st century must be a constant challenge to our people to seize opportunities and assume responsibilities. We know that, above all, we must give people the tools, the skills, the opportunities they need to make the most of their own lives, not through a one-size-fits-all, old-style bureaucracy but by liberating the creative energies of millions and millions of Americans in their homes, their businesses, their schools, and their communities. This must be the vision that animates our Nation. We don't want a winner-take-all society. We want a society in which all have a chance to win together.

I think it is very important that you understand that this great debate in Washington is not, is not, about balancing the budget. It is about balancing our values as a people. The American people want and deserve a balanced budget. Since I took the oath of office, we have cut the Federal deficit in half. And listen to this: When I became President, we had the highest deficit we've had ever. And the prospect was for it getting larger. Today, today, the United States of America has the smallest deficit of any industrialized country in the world except Norway. Every other country has a deficit that is a larger percentage of its income than we do. You should be proud of that, my fellow Democrats, and I am, too.

Five months ago, I proposed a balanced budget that eliminates the deficit, cuts hundreds of wasteful and outdated programs, but preserves Medicare and Medicaid, invests in education, technology, and research, protects the environment, and defends and strengthens working families. And it maintains the ability of the United States to lead the world toward peace and freedom and democracy and prosperity. My budget reflects those values and fulfills our interests. The Republican congressional budget simply does not.

I believe we have a duty to care for our parents so that they can live their lives in dignity. That duty includes securing Medicare, slowing the rate of growth of inflation, protecting our senior citizens and giving them every opportunity to maximize the options that are out there.

But the Republican budget rests on massive cuts, 3 times bigger than any previous ones in our history, designed apparently to let the system wither away. We believe our children should have the opportunity to make the most of their own lives. We think schools should be run by teachers and principals, not by bureaucrats in the central office or in Washington, DC. But the Republican budget slashes college scholarships and college loans, funds to cut class size and provide computers, and rewards schools which agree to be held accountable for meeting the highest standards, in direct contradiction to the work that Democrats and Republicans have done to establish national education goals, high standards, and more accountability, the things that Governor Romer has led this country in for 5 or 6 years. The last Congress was supporting that direction; this budget would undermine it.

We believe we have a duty to preserve God's Earth for future generations. We are committed to reform so that environmental protection doesn't trap business in a tangle of redtape. And indeed, we are now reducing by 25 percent the time businesses have to spend in filling out compliance forms with the EPA. But we must not, we must not, abandon our commitment to clean air, clean water, safe drinking water, safe food. These things are at the core of the quality of life we owe to ourselves and, most important, to our future.

And we believe, as Senator Lieberman says, that we should not tax working people into poverty. The working family tax cut is something

the DLC supported for years. But I want to make it clear that we were building on an idea supported by Republicans at least as much as Democrats.

President Ford signed the earned-income tax credit into law. President Reagan said it was the best antipoverty program ever designed because it rewarded work. It was increased under President Bush. The DLC idea was simple. We would simply double it so we could say to everybody in America, "If you are willing to work 40 hours a week and you have children in the home, you will not be in poverty. Therefore, there is no incentive to be on welfare. Move to work. Your tax system will not put you in poverty; it will lift you out of it." That is what we did, and it was the right thing to do.

Now, the Republican budget would cut the tax credit by even more than we raised it, raising taxes on 17 million working families, rising to an average of \$574 a year for families with two or more children. If you've got a breadwinner out there trying to feed two children on \$12,000 a year or \$13,000 a year, \$574 is a lot of money. And it is wrong, and I will fight it.

I support a balanced budget, but I oppose the Republican budget plan. I had looked forward to working with this Congress to achieve a balanced budget consistent with our values and consistent with our obligation to keep this economy growing. This week, instead of following a path of reconciliation, they have gone their own way and brought the Government to the brink of two serious problems.

They're following a strategy announced by the Speaker last April. In an unprecedented move, they have passed one bill and sent it to me and apparently are about to send another that say that we will keep the Government going and we will raise the debt limit so America can meet its financial obligations, if and only if, we can in this interim legislation increase Medicare premiums on all senior citizens by 25 percent, have deep cuts in education and the environment, and repeal 30 years of bipartisan Republican and Democratic commitments to protect the environment and the public health in ways that will increase pollution and decrease support for clean air, clean water, and safe food. This is irresponsible, and it is wrong.

For example, if Congress forces the Government to default on its obligations and interest costs rise, they will rise for Government, thereby undermining the ability of the Republicans to

meet their balanced budget targets. One-tenth of one percent interest rate increase adds \$42 billion to the deficit over a 10-year period. But interest rates would also rise for businesses and for the 10 million American homeowners whose variable mortgage rates are tied to Federal interests rates and for consumers.

Here we are trying to drive interest rates down so we can keep the economic recovery going. That is what we should be doing, not putting a ball and chain on every American who is trying to soar in the global economy.

The Republican Congress has said to me with brutal simplicity, "You will sign our cuts in Medicare, education, the environment, or we will shut the Government down. You will agree to support our budget and all of its major elements. You will agree to support what we have called regulatory reform, repealing 30 years of bipartisan commitment to a clean environment and a safe food supply or we will push the Government into default."

Well, America doesn't respond very well to those kind of pressure tactics. It's no way to find common ground. So this morning, just before I came here, I vetoed their bill on the debt ceiling. [Applause] Thank you very much. I did not relish doing this. My job as President is to take care of the American people. And I have done my best to take good care of this country. We are safer. We are more secure. We are more prosperous. We have a Government that helps more and costs less in the last 3 years. That is what I am for America.

But in the end, what we stand for, the values we embrace, and the things we fight for will shape the future that we will all live with. I will do everything I can to minimize disruption in these next several days. There are limits to what we can do until Congress does its job and allows us to resolve our budget differences in a forthright manner.

But I was elected President to restore the American dream for all of our people, to keep our Nation the strongest in the world and to bring our people together. I cannot and will not under pressure sign a budget that will rob the American dream for millions of Americans, divide our people instead of uniting them, and undermine our ability to remain the strongest Nation in the world and the greatest force for those things we believe in.

You have to understand what is going on here. The strategy that was adopted and announced

last April was to precipitate this crisis in the hope of forcing me to accept the budget and the other priorities in their contract. They have not done the normal work of budgeting.

Here we are, 6 weeks into the new budget year, 6 weeks into the new budget year, and this Congress has only passed 3 of the 13 required budget bills. The Senate and the House have each passed balanced budget plans, which I find objectionable but which are different from one another, and they have not met, resolved their differences, and sent it to me.

The Founding Fathers set up a system to deal with this. The Congress passes bills. The President signs or vetoes them. Then the Congress can either override the veto or work with the President to find a bill that either the President will sign or they can get two-thirds of the Congress to support so they can override the veto. That is the wisdom of the Founding Fathers. This strategy is nothing more or less than an attempt to evade that system.

As long as they insist on plunging ahead with a budget that violates our values in a process that is characterized more by pressure than constitutional practice, I will fight it. I am fighting it today. I will fight it tomorrow. I will fight it next week and next month. I will fight it until we get a budget that is fair to all Americans. [*Applause*] Thank you.

And let me say to you that I am honored to have been given the opportunity to wage this contest, to stand up for the values and the interests of ordinary Americans. And I ask you to think about this, as I close, in two ways. This struggle is about things that the Founding Fathers knew we would always have to face, so it is as old as our history. It is also about our challenge as Americans and as leaders in the world moving to the 21st century.

Our Founding Fathers had this dream that people of different religious backgrounds and beliefs could build a strong nation together. They knew it was flawed. Thomas Jefferson knew it was flawed on slavery. But they set up a system where we could just keep working on it, year-in and year-out, decade-in a decade-out, as we work through the problems and became better and fashioned a life that was a purer and purer example of the values which they enshrined.

We are now called upon to be faithful to the vision of our Founders, the vision that Andrew Jackson had that true and lasting prosperity rests on equal opportunity for all and special privileges for none; the wisdom of Abraham Lincoln that a house divided against itself cannot stand; the wisdom of Theodore Roosevelt that the heritage of America is in no small measure the heritage of the natural resources and bounty that God gifted us with here in our own land.

This is also the challenge of the modern times. The forces of integration which offer so much hope are pitted against the forces of disintegration: the people who killed Americans in Iraq; the fanatic who killed that brave and good Prime Minister in Israel, our partner for peace; the people who everywhere would sow discord over harmony.

At the end of this month, I hope I will be going to Great Britain and to Ireland to do what I can to continue to further the peace process there. How many people have died in Ireland in the 20th century because of hatred and division—religious hatred and division? In his great poem, “The Second Coming,” about the Irish civil war, William Butler Yeats said this: Things fall apart. The center cannot hold. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere the ceremony of innocence is drowned. The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity.

My fellow Americans, we have worked too hard for too long to bring our country to this point. If we have our convictions and we stand for them firmly, reasonably, responsibly, if we hold out our hands in cooperation but always stand up for what we know is right, this country's future will be even brighter than its brilliant past. It is our responsibility to make that happen.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Senator Joseph Lieberman, chairman, and Al From, president, Democratic Leadership Council.