

June 25 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

actually raises taxes overall by some \$50 billion over 5 years. Why is this, in an era of surpluses?

*The President.* Well, now, what are they counting? They're counting all the money from the tobacco tax that we used to pay for the—

Q. All of it.

*The President.* I believe that you have to have a very generous interpretation to reach that conclusion. You look, we're giving 11 percent of the surplus on the USA accounts as a whole—11 percent. We have, in addition to that, you've got the long-term care tax credit; you've got the child care tax credit; you've got the continuing funding of all the education and child tax credits that we had in the previous budgets. And my guess is to get to that, they have to not count the continuing funding of the tax cuts but count the continued extension of tax increases that have to have extenders as new revenues. I can't imagine how they got it otherwise.

We did have a large cigarette tax increase in there because we were trying to depress teen smoking, and we were trying to get funds to use to deal with the health consequences of what is a virtual epidemic among young people.

But I am for the tax cuts, and I will go back to the answer before. I've got new tax cuts in this budget, and I will work with the Republicans on it. But we should not—we should not—pass up this chance to save Social Security, to save Medicare, to give the prescription drug benefits, to pay the debt down, which will keep the economy stronger and keep people with more jobs and higher incomes. Then we

can talk about the tax cuts. And if Mr. King is right and we have some more money, then we can talk about that. But let's deal with first things first. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 176th news conference began at 3:47 p.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Hashim Thaci, leader, Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA); Christopher Edley, consultant, One America; the President's Advisory Board on Race; Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Speechwriting James (Terry) Edmonds; Presidential scholar Danielle Huff, who introduced the President at Georgetown University earlier in the day; former Senator Warren B. Rudman, Chairman, President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board; dismissed Los Alamos National Laboratory scientist Wen Ho Lee; Holocaust survivor, author, and Nobel laureate Elie Wiesel; civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jacques Chirac of France; Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan; Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). The President also referred to the Kosovo International Security Force (KFOR) and the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-127). A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Radio Remarks on House Action on Foster Care Independence Legislation June 25, 1999

I am very pleased the House of Representatives has just approved, by an overwhelming bipartisan margin, the "Foster Care Independence Act." This legislation would expand access to health care, education, housing, and counseling for young people who leave foster care upon their 18th birthday. I am very grateful to the bill's sponsors, Nancy Johnson and Ben Cardin. I also want to thank my wife for her early, early alert about the importance of this issue. I look forward to working with members of both parties to pass similar legislation in the Senate.

Together, we must help all our foster children make the transition to independence. We can't leave them out there alone. Instead, we must support them in living up to their full, God-given potential.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 6:10 p.m. on June 25 in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast. These remarks were also made available on the White House Press Office Radio Actuality Line.