

Statement on the Crash Landing of American Airlines Flight 1420 at Little Rock National Airport

June 2, 1999

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the terrible crash landing of American Airlines Flight 1420 at Little Rock National Airport late last night. We join the American people in extending our deepest sympathies to the families of those who died or were injured.

Our Government is doing everything possible to aid the victims and help determine the cause

of this tragedy. Family assistance counselors and other personnel from the National Transportation Safety Board are already on the ground in Little Rock, and FAA inspectors are assisting the NTSB. I have asked my staff to update me on our efforts throughout the day. I ask all Americans to remember in their prayers the passengers and their families.

Remarks Following a Cabinet Meeting

June 3, 1999

Good afternoon. I have just completed a very good meeting with the Cabinet. We discussed many issues; three in particular I would like to discuss with you.

Situation in the Balkans

First, with regard to Kosovo: As you know, we have been working closely with President Ahtisaari and Mr. Chernomyrdin to try to achieve an agreement that would allow the refugees to go home with security, safety, and self-government. Movement by the Serbian leadership to accept these conditions established by NATO and the international community is, of course, welcome, but based on our past experience, we must also be cautious.

First, we must have clarity that the Serbian leadership has fully accepted these conditions and intends to fully implement them. Until then and until Serb forces begin a verifiable withdrawal from Kosovo, we will continue to pursue diplomacy, but we will also continue the military effort that has brought us to this point.

In a few moments, I will meet with the Joint Chiefs of Staff to speak about the progress of our campaign and our planning for the force that would enter Kosovo when NATO's conditions are met. NATO and our military have been working hard to ensure that we can sustain our campaign and deploy KFOR quickly and effectively when that is necessary. We have worked to ensure that we can do this while maintaining our overall military posture around the world.

They have my complete confidence and support as we move forward.

Legislative Agenda

The second thing we discussed today was the budget and the importance of maintaining fiscal discipline, which has helped our Nation reach historic levels of prosperity, honored our values of opportunity, responsibility, and community, and enabled us to begin to meet the challenges of America in the 21st century.

Last fall my Cabinet and I worked very hard to put together a budget that reduces the publicly held debt to its lowest point since before World War I, safeguards the solvency of Social Security and Medicare and makes improvements in both programs, offers targeted tax cuts for long-term retirement savings, stays within the budget caps, and makes substantial new investments in the benefit of the American people, from education to the environment to new technology.

Unfortunately, the Republican majority in Congress is moving ahead with a budget plan that, in the end, may do none of these things. It fails to extend the solvency of Social Security and Medicare. It fails to make new, crucial investments. It requires deep cuts in areas of great national need, from law enforcement to education to the environment. These cuts would be so damaging that Congress, itself, to date has been unwilling and unable to move some