

In recognition of the need for all Americans to become involved in the ongoing fight against cardiovascular diseases, the Congress, by Joint Resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 843; 36 U.S.C. 169b), has requested that the President issue an annual proclamation designating February as "American Heart Month."

**Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of February 1993 as American Heart Month. I invite the Governors of the States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, and the American people to join me in reaffirming our commitment to combatting cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventeenth.

**William J. Clinton**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:11 a.m., February 16, 1993]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 15, and was published in the Federal Register on February 17.

### **Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Democratic Congressional Leaders**

*February 15, 1993*

#### **Economic Program Presentation**

**Q.** Are you going to appear before Congress, Mr. President, in parliamentary-style Q&A?

**The President.** That hasn't been resolved yet. I'm interested, but we haven't finalized—

**Q.** What would determine it?

**The President.** We just haven't resolved it yet. We'll probably know by the end of the day.

**Q.** Is Wednesday night's speech shaping up as the most important of your life?

**The President.** Well, I don't [*inaudible*]. In the sense that every one—the ones that are ahead are more important than the ones that are behind. [*Laughter*]

I think tonight is important. I think Wednesday night is important. But you know, we're trying to change a direction of 12 years and take a new course. I'm going to offer a program that will create half a million or more jobs in the short run; that is highly progressive; that is very well balanced; that is faithful to the great middle class of this country and good for the things that we care about, jobs and education and health care. But I think it's going to be very important that I sell it to the Congress and to the American people and that we have a partnership here. So yes, [*inaudible*].

NOTE: The exchange began at 11:22 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

### **Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With Democratic Congressional Leaders**

*February 15, 1993*

#### **Energy Tax**

**Q.** Mr. President, if I could ask a specific question. What is—

**The President.** —I thought specific— [*laughter*].

**Q.** You don't have to get into too much detail, but from your perspective what's more progressive, a broad-based energy tax based on BTU's or an ad valorem-type of energy tax? What would be more progressive for the middle class?

**The President.** Well, I think, first of all, it's hard to—you can't evaluate one of these things without seeing the whole package. But I think a BTU tax is, because an ad valorem tax reinforces price changes. In other words, if you have an ad valorem tax and the price of one fuel goes up, then the tax rate goes up. So, it would aggravate whatever price changes are out there in the market, and that would hurt the consumers more.

**Q.** Have you settled on a BTU tax?

**The President.** I answered a very specific question in a photo op. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:45 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

## Address to the Nation on the Economic Program

February 15, 1993

Good evening. I have chosen this day on which we honor two great Presidents to talk with you about the serious problems and the great promise of our country and the absolute necessity for change if we're to secure a better future for ourselves and for our children. On Wednesday evening I'll address the Congress about the specifics of my plan, but first I turn to you for your strength and support, to enlist you in the cause of changing our course.

This is a momentous time for our Nation. We stand at the end of the cold war and on the edge of the 21st century. For two decades we've moved steadily toward a global economy in which we must compete with people around the world, a world which requires us to work hard and smart, a world in which putting people first is more than a political slogan; it's a philosophy of governing and the only path to prosperity.

For 12 years we've followed a very different philosophy. It declared that Government is the problem, that fairness to the middle class is less important than keeping taxes low on the wealthy, that Government can do nothing about our deepest problems: lost jobs, declining wages, increasing inequality, inadequate educational opportunity, and a health care system that costs a fortune but does too little.

During those 12 years as Governor of Arkansas, I followed a very different course, more like what you've done at home and at work. I invested in the future of our people and balanced a State budget with honesty and fairness and without gimmicks. It's just common sense. But in the 26 days I've been your President, I've already learned that here in Washington, common sense isn't too common. And you've paid a lot for that loss of common sense.

The typical middle class family is working harder for less. Despite the talk of a recovery, more than 9 million of our fellow citizens are still out of work. And as this chart indicates, if this were a real, normal recovery, 3 million more Americans would already be back at work by now. In fact, there are more jobless people now than there were at what the experts call the bottom of this recession.

All during this last 12 years the Federal deficit has roared out of control. Look at this: the big tax cuts for the wealthy, the growth in Government spending, and soaring health care costs all caused the Federal deficit to explode. Our debt is now 4 times as big as it was in 1980. That's right. In the last 12 years we piled up 4 times as much debt as in the previous 200.

Now, if all that debt had been invested in strengthening our economy, we'd at least have something to show for our money: more jobs, better educated people, a health care system that works. But as you can see, while the deficit went up, investments in the things that make us stronger and smarter, richer and safer, were neglected: less invested in education, less in our children's future, less in transportation, less in local law enforcement. An awful lot of that money was just wasted.

This matters. When you don't invest in jobs and education and economic opportunity, unemployment goes up and our incomes go down. And when the deficit gets bigger and bigger and bigger, the Government takes more of your money just for interest payments. And then it's harder for you to borrow money for your own business or to afford a new home or to send a child to college.

That's exactly what's been happening. Once our living standards doubled every 25 years. But at the rate we're going today our living standard won't double for another 100 years, until our grandchildren's grandchildren are born. That's too long. We must act now to restore the American dream.

Despite the enormity of this crisis, believe it or not, the status quo still has its defenders, people who point to hopeful statistics, like the recent increase in productivity and