

skepticism being the excuse for inaction and paralysis.

This is a very great country. And when you travel abroad and you see the problems that these other nations are having and you see all these other rich countries with higher unemployment than we have, you know that there is nothing before us that we cannot deal with if we simply have the vision and the will to do it. We are being given a chance now to demonstrate that vision and that will. It is consistent with everything the Urban League has ever stood for or done.

I ask for your prayers, your support, and your memory that—President Kennedy once said it better than I ever could, “Here on Earth, God’s work must truly be our own.” Our work is before us. I’m trying to do my part. I hope you will do yours.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. at the Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Reginald K. Brock, Jr., chairman and chief executive officer, Time, Inc.; John Jacob, president and chief executive officer, National Urban League, Inc.; and John W. Mack, president, Los Angeles Urban League. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Signing Executive Orders on Budget Control and Deficit Reduction and an Exchange With Reporters

August 4, 1993

The President. Before I sign these orders, I’d like to make a brief statement, if I might. Nothing has done more to erode the confidence of the American people in our Government than our chronic failure to manage our finances and to stabilize the economy so that it can create jobs. Year after year, the public has been told that sustained economic growth and deficit reduction would come from actions taken here. And as deficits have grown larger and incomes have shrunk, the people have become more and more skeptical, even cynical, about everything that is said and done here even with the best of intentions.

We have a budget deficit, we have an investment deficit, and we clearly have a trust deficit in America. I am determined to do something about all three. I know the American people are doubtful about any claim by our Government, and I know they wonder if the cuts that we are proposing are real and if the taxes will really be used to pay down the deficit. That’s why I want to go the extra mile to ensure that this plan is fundamentally different from what has been done in the past.

This plan is based on conservative revenue estimates of future revenues, with year-by-year, line-by-line specific spending cuts; new incentives to expand the private sector’s contribution to economic growth; minimizes the burdens on the middle class; and now creates two safeguards to keep a watchful eye on future spending, especially in entitlements, while protecting the savings produced by the plan.

We owe the Executive orders I am about to sign to the hard work of the Members of Congress who are here today. The House included both provisions in its version of the reconciliation bill. The Senate would have done the same with similar amendments supported by Senator DeConcini, Senator Feingold, recommended publicly by Senator Bradley and others, but for the procedural maneuvering by people who feed the public cynicism by talking about deficit reduction on the one hand and nonetheless have prepared to block action for these needed reforms on the other.

The fact that the Senate required these Executive orders today, that we could not do it by statute, is something that should be debated at a later time. But I want to make it clear that the Senators who are here and others, strongly support what is being done.

These orders are almost completely identical to the provisions adopted by the House and approved by a majority in the Senate. The deficit reduction order creates a deficit reduction trust fund, an account in the Treasury that guarantees that the savings from the reconciliation bill are dedicated exclusively to reducing the deficit. This locks in deficit reduction and mandates all members of the executive branch to follow these procedures.

The entitlement and review order requires that entitlement spending be limited to the estimated levels included in the reconciliation bill. If those levels are exceeded, I will present recommendations to Congress on corrective action. No longer can we permit entitlement spending to soar out of control without some concrete action being taken to restrain it.

These Executive orders are the product of years of hard work by the men and women represented here today. I am grateful to them for their inspiration and their tenacity in getting this work done.

As important as this plan is for reducing the budget and investment deficits, these Executive orders deal also with the trust deficit. They are the assurance to the American people that our good words about deficit reduction and economic growth will be matched by good works as well.

[At this point, the President signed the Executive orders. Senator Dennis DeConcini then made remarks.]

Economic Program

Q. Mr. President, what have you offered—

The President. Good Government. *[Laughter]*

Q. Can you have the—will you have the vote without him?

The President. I guess I ought to say one other thing about this. I still think these things should be adopted in the law. And I would be prepared to support, as quickly as we can get it up and voted on, a separate piece of legislation to do these things. And I do want to emphasize that.

These Executive orders are identical, virtually identical, word for word, for what the Congress, the majority in the Congress, wanted. They clearly bind the executive branch just as much as an act of Congress. But I think it would be better, from the point of view of the public trust and also more binding on Congress, if we can pass a separate piece of legislation.

So I do want to make it clear that while I support these ideas strongly and I will faithfully adhere to them in the Executive order, I have also told the Members of Congress

who care about this that I am prepared to strongly support a separate legislation to achieve these objectives in the law. And I'd like to see it brought up just as quickly as we can after the August recess is over.

Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, did you know it before now that Senator DeConcini had not made up his mind yet?

The President. Senator DeConcini and I agreed that this press conference would be about this, and not—

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:39 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Executive Order 12857—Budget Control

August 4, 1993

By the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of this order is to create a mechanism to monitor total costs of direct spending programs, and, in the event that actual or projected costs exceed targeted levels, to require that the budget address adjustments in direct spending.

Sec. 2. Establishment of Direct Spending Targets. (a) *In General.* The initial direct spending targets for each of fiscal years 1994 through 1997 shall equal total outlays for all direct spending except net interest and deposit insurance as determined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (Director) under subsection (b).

(b) *Initial Report by Director.* (1) Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (OBRA), the Director shall submit a report to the Congress setting forth projected direct spending targets for each of fiscal years 1994 through 1997.

(2) The Director's projections shall be based on legislation enacted as of 5 days before the report is submitted under paragraph