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Group and Soap Box Trading Co., and Arnold Hiatt, CEO of the Stride-Rite Foundation.

Exchange With Reporters on Health Care Reform

October 21, 1993

Q. Mr. President, why is it taking you so long to draft the health care legislation?

The President. The legislation has been drafted. What we have to do—and let me say we're doing something that no administration, as far as I know, has ever done before. But the reason that we had to delay introducing it is to go back and do two more runs at higher inflation rates, because most people believe that inflation will be a little bit higher because economic growth has come back into the economy.

So we originally ran all the numbers at a 2.7 inflation rate, which was what we were asked to do, what was recommended by the Congressional Budget Office. We now went back, after consulting with our folks, and ran it at a 3.5 percent inflation rate, and then we went back and doublechecked all the numbers with all the actuaries. So unlike a lot of the other bills, we actually have, you will see when the bill comes up, extremely detailed budgetary estimates about which part will cost how much and how it all works.

So essentially, there were no problems in drafting or the policy so much as it was trying to make sure that we had the numbers right. Also, the proposal will increase the reserve fund as a hedge in case, for example, the small business discounts cost more than we thought. We decided to go back to make the Congress and the country feel better about the costs to increase the reserve fund. So just working out the dollars is what has taken all the time, because we wanted to have good numbers ready for them when we came back.

Q. When will it be ready? When will it be ready?

The President. Oh, I think they're going to put it in early next week sometime.

Q. Next week?

The President. Yes.

Q. The 75-cent cigarette tax is final?

The President. That's what will be in the bill.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 11:54 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Proclamation 6617—National Consumers Week, 1993

October 21, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than ever, as a Nation and as individual consumers, we need to make every dollar count. Yet, despite the consumer-oriented quality of the U.S. marketplace and the concerted efforts of our law enforcement agencies, marketplace fraud drains at least $100 billion from the economy every year. The loss is not just in dollars, but in consumer confidence—the driving force behind a strong economy.

Fraud has the greatest impact on the most vulnerable consumers. No one, rich or poor, young or old, literate or illiterate, English-speaking or foreign-speaking, able-bodied or disabled, is exempt. What's more, in this electronic global marketplace, fraud has become a ''borderless crime'' that affects consumers around the world.

Since 1982, the President has designated one week of the year to spotlight consumer education as a vital tool in helping consumers make smart shopping decisions. This year, during ''National Consumers Week,'' the focus is on fraud. Consumers can protect their resources and end the costly drain on the economy by knowing how to spot the signs of fraud and where to turn when they suspect fraud.

If you believe that you have been defrauded, the Better Business Bureau, representatives of Federal, State, and local governments, and even the media can help you. Exposing fraud not only helps you, but it can help prevent others from becoming victims in the future.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United

States, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 24, 1993, as National Consumers Week. I urge business leaders, educators, professionals, public officials, consumer leaders, and members of the media to observe this week with appropriate activities that emphasize the important role smart consumers play in keeping our markets open, competitive, fair, and honest.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of October, 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 eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 5:01 p.m., October 21, 1993]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on October 26.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Poland-United States Fishery Agreement

October 21, 1993

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94–265; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of Poland Extending the Agreement of August 1, 1985, Concerning Fisheries off the Coasts of the United States. The agreement, which was effected by an exchange of notes at Washington June 8 and July 29, 1993, extends the 1985 agreement for an additional 2 years, from December 31, 1993, to December 31, 1995. The exchange of notes together with the 1985 agreement constitute a governing international fishery agreement within the requirements of section 201(c) of the Act.

I urge that the Congress give favorable consideration to this agreement at an early date.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 21, 1993.

Remarks at a Dinner of the Executive Leadership Council

October 21, 1993

Thank you very much, Earl, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I actually wanted to hear him talk. I thought I've heard the speech the guy behind him has to make.

I am delighted to be here with the ELC, with Earl Washington and Buddy James and with all the rest of you. I thank you for your achievements in life, and I thank you for the work you have done. The board of this organization met at the White House, I know, last spring, and we have developed a very special relationship.

I was honored to be invited to come by the reception for a moment. I wish I could stay for dinner, but before you asked me to eat I got invited somewhere else, and it's not polite to cancel. At least that's what my mama always taught me.

I want to congratulate your honorees tonight: Suzanne de Passe, and Corning Corporation, and my friend, Dr. Leon Sullivan. And I want to thank all of you for the efforts you're making to make America a better place.

I'd like to also say a special word of appreciation to two very important members of my team who are here tonight, a former board member and officer of this organization and your evening speaker, Hazel O'Leary, the distinguished Energy Secretary—when I saw Hazel tonight I thought nobody would be disappointed that I'm not speaking—and also the Special Assistant to the President for Public Liaison and the highest ranking African-American ever to serve in the White House, Ms. Alexis Herman. I thank her for being here.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ran for President in 1991 and 1992 because I was convinced that our country needed to change its direction and because I thought we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together.

I have always believed that the obligation of a public servant is to try to give every person he or she represents a chance to live up to their God-given capacity and the challenge