

and will want to question the First Lady. It's my understanding that typically in the past it's been done in a different way. I mean, I will cooperate with him in whatever way he decides is appropriate.

Similarly, if Congress wants any information direct from us, we will, of course, provide it to them in whatever way seems most appropriate. Again, I understand there are certain protocols which have been followed in the past which I would expect would be followed here. But I intend to be fully cooperative so that I can go back to work doing what I was hired to do.

Thank you very much.

Welfare Reform

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—welfare reform?*

The President. What did you say about—

Q. What about welfare reform?

The President. What about it?

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—going to tax—*

The President. No. What I said, I made a joke about that. I said I was going to try to tax anybody who bet against my team in the basketball finals.

But I have made no decision on the financing of welfare reform. I can tell you this, it's a tough issue because we have to pay for anything we do. And there are all kinds of proposals out there. I know that the Republican welfare reform proposal has a lot of things in it that I like. But I think it's way too hard on financing things from savings from immigrants. I think it goes too far there. So there are no real easy answers.

But I can say categorically that I have been briefed on a very wide range of options and that nobody in this administration has made any decision, and no one will make a decision except me, about how to fund it. That decision has not been made. We will come forward with that plan. We do think it offers the real promise of ending welfare as we know it, of moving people from welfare to work if we can also guarantee these welfare parents that when they go to work their children will not lose the health care that they have on welfare, so they won't be punished for going to work. That's the key issue.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 54th news conference began at 7:30 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. Gary E. Luck, USA, Commanding General, XVIII Corps, and Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the South African Inkatha Freedom Party.

Statement on the Assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio

March 24, 1994

I am profoundly saddened to learn of the brutal assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the Presidential candidate of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in Mexico. I deeply deplore this senseless act of violence and have conveyed my deepest sympathies to the Mexican people and to the family of Mr. Colosio, his wife, and two young children.

Mr. Colosio dedicated his life to public service and to the betterment of his nation. It is particularly tragic when an assassin's bullet slays a man who still had so much to contribute to history. It is a great loss not only for Mexico but for all of North America.

I telephoned President Carlos Salinas de Gortari shortly after midnight last night to express my sorrow and that of the American people and to offer my condolences to the Colosio family. I told President Salinas that the United States stands ready to assist Mexico in the coming days in any way we can.

Exchange With Reporters on Departure for Fort Bragg, North Carolina

March 25, 1994

Air Collision at Pope Air Force Base

Q. Mr. President, why are you going to Fort Bragg?

The President. I'm going down there because it was a very, very serious accident. A lot of our service people lost their lives; many, many others were quite seriously injured. And I just want to go down there and visit the hospital and express my concerns to the people who are still hospitalized and to their families and all the people at Fort Bragg for the losses they suffered. I think it's an appropriate thing to do.