

States, that doing the right thing for the American people is the best politics.

They have decided that the right thing to do is to spend money that goes beyond the budget caps of '97, which is certainly understandable, particularly in the Medicare area, that they are too tight and that it would go beyond what the non-Social Security surplus is. As I said yesterday, that has been the case at least since 1983 when the last Social Security reform was done and the revenues of Social Security came in, but no one really noticed it because we were always running a deficit.

Then the Congress decided, and I agreed, that it would be a good thing, since we now project surpluses, to segregate out these two. That's a good thing. But they found out that they had committed to do it a year before they could do that and meet their spending goals.

So, there are three choices here. Either really do harm to the country by not making some of these investments, which they don't want to do and I don't either; or cut some things that I think would be a big mistake, like education or our responsibilities around the world; or find reasonable offsets; or otherwise make a principled agreement and tell the American people what we're doing; or look for the gimmicks.

And I think they've got to move away from the—they chose the third alternative, gimmicks plus television ads, to try to blame us for doing what they are, in fact, doing. And I just think that's a mistake. I am perfectly willing to work with them and talk with them and tell the American people, whatever decision we wind up making, what we did and why if we can reach a principled agreement.

Yesterday, at least, it looked to me like they wanted to stick with the course they're on. I think it's a big mistake, and I think eventually we'll get where we need to go and do the right thing. And they will find when we do, that politically it's almost always the best politics to do the right by the country.

### **Florida A&M Bombings**

**Q.** You've been sounding out against terrorism and there is a quiet story coming out of Florida, Florida A&M—have you heard about the bombings at Florida A&M? And

there is supposedly a conclusion today to that situation. What are your thoughts? There have been several bombings at Florida A&M.

**The President.** Well, I would like to know more about the source of them, whether they're racially motivated, whether they're politically motivated. When I do, then I think I should make a statement. Obviously we deplore violence of any kind and bombings, by their very nature, are terroristic. But I would like to know more about what the roots of it are or what we believe they are, and then I will be glad to say more.

**Q.** Were you made aware of the incidents before this week?

**The President.** Just in the general way that you've described them, but no more.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:59 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan; former Senator John C. Danforth, Special Counsel investigating the Justice Department's role in the 1993 siege in Waco, TX; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. A portion of this news conference could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

### **Statement on Rental Assistance Vouchers**

*October 1, 1999*

The Department of Housing and Urban Development yesterday released \$280 million in rental assistance vouchers to help 50,000 families in 35 States move from welfare to work. These housing vouchers are an integral part of our efforts to reform welfare, reward work, and provide affordable housing for low-income families. They will help families move close to a job, reduce a long commute, or secure more stable housing that will help them get or keep a job.

Today, our economy is strong, incomes are up, and poverty is at the lowest rate in 20 years. But there are still more than 5 million low-income families who need affordable housing. That is why I have asked Congress for an additional 100,000 rental assistance vouchers to meet the critical housing needs of families moving from welfare to work, the homeless, and the elderly. As Members of

the House and Senate meet in conference to debate this year's budget for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, I want to underscore my strong commitment to this initiative. Congress should not turn its back on families that are playing by the rules and moving from welfare to work. A budget without new vouchers would short-change the American dream.

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### **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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#### **September 25**

In the morning, the President went to the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, for his annual physical.

#### **September 27**

In the morning, the President traveled to New Orleans, LA, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Frank H. Cruz and Ernest J. Wilson III to be members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard H. Brown as a member of the Advisory Committee on Trade and Policy Negotiations.

The President announced his intention to appoint Sara Castro-Klaren, Hoyt H. Purvis, and Lee Williams to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Canada on October 8, to address the Forum of Federations in Mont Tremblant and to meet with Prime Minister Jean Chretien in Ottawa.

The White House announced that the President will attend the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Summit in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 18–19, vis-

iting Bulgaria before the summit and Italy and Greece after the summit.

#### **September 28**

The President announced his intention to nominate Charles Manatt to be Ambassador to the Dominican Republic.

The President announced his intention to nominate Avis Thayer Bohlen to be Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Arms Control at the Department of State.

The President announced his intention to nominate Alan C. Kessler and LeGree S. Daniels to be members of the U.S. Postal Service Board of Governors.

The President announced his intention to appoint Ronnie Fern Liebowitz as a member of the U.S. Naval Academy Board of Visitors.

#### **September 29**

The President announced his intention to appoint Richard N. Zare as Chair and Sandra M. Faber and Jay Patel as members of the President's Committee on the National Medal of Science.

The President announced his intention to appoint Marvin E. Johnson and John G. Wofford as members of the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

#### **September 30**

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Palisades, NY, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Joseph R. Crapa to be Assistant Administrator for Legislative and Public Affairs for the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The President announced his intention to appoint John Gage, Nancy E. Pfund, and Susan R. Collins as members of the Web-Based Education Commission.

The President announced his intention to appoint Martin E. Marty as a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

#### **October 1**

In the morning, the President traveled to Las Vegas, NV, and in the afternoon, he traveled to Palo Alto, CA.