

Week Ending Friday, January 18, 2002

The President's Radio Address

January 12, 2002

Good morning. We have entered a busy season here in Washington. Soon, Congress will be back in session. I will go to the Capitol to report on the State of our Union, and I will present a budget that sets the priorities of our Government for fiscal year 2003.

Our highest priorities are clear to all. We must give our military every tool and weapon it needs to prevail in the war against terror. We must strengthen our country's defenses against further attack with a comprehensive program of homeland security. And we must get our country's economy growing and creating jobs once again.

The economy is a concern for all Americans, especially for those out of work. These Americans need extra help. My economic plan proposes an additional 13 weeks of unemployment insurance benefits for workers who have lost their jobs and direct assistance to protect their health insurance.

My plan is based on the simple truth that people out of work need an unemployment check, but what they need even more is a steady paycheck. So I have joined with Republicans and Democrats in proposing concrete steps to create more jobs and help spur more growth in the economy. The House passed this plan; the Senate needs to act on it.

Difficult economic times brings hardship to many other Americans, as well, single moms or disadvantaged young people trying to get into the workforce. My budget seeks to help them, too, by adding resources to vital programs that have proven their value. One of our Government's most effective services is the Women, Infants, and Children program, which counsels mothers on nutrition and health care for their children. In my budget for the coming fiscal year, I will propose an increase of \$364 million for the WIC

program. This will be enough to serve nearly 8 million women and children each month.

Another vital program is the Job Corps, which provides employment training to more than 72,000 disadvantaged young Americans. In my budget, I will ask Congress for an additional \$73 million to expand the good work of the Job Corps. This will help to pay for new residential training centers. We will also secure high school accreditation for Job Corps training so that more young people can have the advantage of a high school diploma.

These are some of the elements of the budget I will be sending to Congress. My budget focuses on the pressing needs of our country and on the basic needs of our citizens. I am committed to building a strong economy that spreads its benefits to everyone. This goal reaches beyond politics or party, and I'm confident that Congress will join me in the work ahead.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 3:20 p.m. on January 11 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on January 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on January 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks on Departure for East Moline, Illinois, and an Exchange With Reporters

January 14, 2002

President's Health

The President. My mother always said when you're eating pretzels, chew before you swallow. Listen to your mother. I feel great—looking forward to a good trip.

Q. What happened?

The President. I hit the deck and woke up, and there was Barney and Spot showing

a lot of concern. I didn't realize what happened until I looked in the mirror and my glasses cut my side of my face.

I feel great. I had good blood pressure last night, good blood pressure this morning.

Q. *[Inaudible].*

The President. Yes, yes. Anyway, going to have a great trip. Good to see you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks to Employees of John Deere Harvester Works in East Moline, Illinois

January 14, 2002

Thank you all very much. Thank you all. I thought for a while, when they told me that I was going to receive a gift here, that old Chuck was going to bring a pretzel—*[laughter]*—those kind that are easy to chew. *[Laughter]* If my mother is listening, Mother, I should have listened to you. Always chew your pretzels before you swallow. *[Laughter]* When I work the ropelines, people bring their children, and I always turn to the child, especially the teenagers, and say, “Listen to your mother. It’s the best advice I can give you.” I obviously needed to do the same thing last night.

But I’m feeling great and so honored to be here. Thank you very much for letting me come to this fantastic plant. I’m impressed by the size of these monsters. *[Laughter]* It kind of makes me think I need a bigger ranch. *[Laughter]*

I’m also impressed by the quality of the work. It’s a great tribute to the men and women who work the floor here, which is a great tribute to the country, that we’ve got such good workers, such an entrepreneurial spirit. And part of my job is to make sure we preserve that spirit.

It’s also an honor to be here on the Mississippi River. The river really links our country together, and so I’m going to start here, and then I’m going to go down to Missouri to talk to some farmers. And then I’m going to go down to New Orleans, to the Port of New Orleans, from whence your product and the products you help harvest leave our country for foreign markets.

It’s my way of doing a couple of things: one, reminding America about how important the food and fiber system is to our economy; reminding America that those who grow food and those who help the farmers harvest that food are an incredibly important part to the future of our country. The food and fiber industry represents \$1.3 trillion of gross domestic product in the year 2000. It employed over 24 million people.

I’m also here not only to remind people about the importance of food and fiber but to remind people that we need to make sure we create jobs in this country. And I’ve got some ideas I want to share with you on how we do just that. There’s no better place to do this than on the mighty Mississippi River.

I appreciate members of my Cabinet traveling with me, Secretary Evans and Secretary Veneman, both of whom are doing a fine job representing all segments of our society. I want to thank Members of the United States Congress who are here: Senator Harkin from Iowa, Senator Fitzgerald from Illinois, thank you both for being here. I appreciate a Member of the United States House, Lane Evans, who represents this district. And they must have changed the immigration laws because they let two Congressmen from Iowa in here. *[Laughter]* Congressman Gansky and Congressman Leach, thank you both for coming.

I appreciate the mayor of East Moline and the mayor of Moline for greeting me here today. Thank you both for coming. I want to thank the officers of John Deere. I want to thank Bob Lane and John Gault. And I want to thank Chuck Thompson and all the hard-working folks here at this plant. Thank you for greeting me. It’s my honor to be here.

The role of Government is not to create wealth; the role of Government is to create conditions in which jobs are created, in which people can find work. And I want to share with you some of my thoughts about how best to do that.

The first condition to make sure that people can find work is to make sure our Nation is secure, secure against an enemy that wants to attack us. That starts with having a robust, active, strong homeland security for our country.