

Exchange With Reporters During a Luncheon With Business Leaders

May 26, 1993

White House Travel Office

Q. [*Inaudible*—members of your staff in the Travel Office scandal? Is part of this inquiry going to consider—going to be a chance of shakeups because of the event?

The President. Well, I would like it on the record that one of the things they did was to figure out how to save—how to do the same work with less than half as many people and save you 25 percent on your first flight. I keep hoping I'll read that somewhere in these accounts. I think that ought to be accounted for. I was—the press complained to me repeatedly about being gouged by the White House Travel Office. I kept hearing it everywhere. So we put it out on a competitive bid and saved you 25 percent.

Now, if it wasn't handled right, we'll get to the bottom of it, and we'll straighten that out, and it will be handled right. That's what Mr. McLarty worked on yesterday. And we will do what is appropriate, follow the "do-right rule," and go forward. I don't have anything else to say about it.

Ross Perot

Q. Mr. President, as you meet with these CEO's, your—I put this in quotes—one of your "favorite business guys," Mr. Perot, has been sniping at you again. He told David Frost that you don't have the background or the experience for the most difficult job in the world. How do you deal with this kind of talk from him?

The President. You deal with it. [*Laughter*]

Q. He said you were doing things the Arkansas way.

The President. Well, we know he doesn't like my State. But he spent several million dollars to bad-mouth it last—and it doesn't have much to do with America. We're going to just keep working.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:25 p.m. in the Old Family Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Announcement of White House Fellows

May 26, 1993

The President today appointed 17 men and women from a variety of backgrounds and across the country to be the 1993–94 class of White House fellows.

White House fellows are a select group of men and women who spend a year early in their career serving as paid assistants to the President, Vice President, or Cabinet-level officials. This class will begin their fellowship year in September. They were selected by a commission appointed earlier this month by the President. It was chaired by Nancy Bekavac, the president of Scripps College.

"This is a group of people of exceptional abilities, strong motivation, and a commitment to serve their country," said the President. "I look forward to their service and am confident they will join the successful ranks of such White House fellowship alumni as General Colin Powell and Secretary Henry Cisneros."

The individuals chosen for this year's fellowships are:

Paul T. Anthony, Washington, DC
 Suzanne Rose Becker, Bolton, MA
 Christopher Frank Chyba, Ellicott City, MD
 Jami Floyd, Oakland, CA
 W. Scott Gould, Topsfield, MA
 Kevin Vincent Grimes, Mountain View, CA
 Suzan Denise Johnson Cook, Bronx, NY
 Michael Nathaniel Levy, Washington, DC
 Gaynor McCown, New York, NY
 Barbara Paige, New York, NY
 Raul Perea-Henze, New York, NY
 Leslie Ramirez, Evans, GA
 Maj. David Rhodes, USAF, Glendale, AZ
 Reginald L. Robinson, Lawrence, KS
 Martha E. Stark, Brooklyn, NY
 Todd Ulmer, San Francisco, CA
 Maj. Roderick Von Lipsey, USMC, Philadelphia, PA

NOTE: Biographies of the White House fellows were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks in the “CBS This Morning” Town Meeting

May 27, 1993

Budget Proposal

Paula Zahn. Here comes President Clinton, cup of coffee in hand—decaf coffee.

The President. Good morning.

Ms. Zahn. We wanted to start off by talking about the late night you kept last night. Word of an agreement that was struck between Democratic leaders and conservative members of your party on your economic plan. Do you think you now have the votes to carry this plan through in the House?

The President. I think it will help. This is an agreement that I have wanted for a long time, because I think that the people are entitled to know that if we pass these budget cuts that they’re actually going to be made. I’ve been concerned that someone who was a Governor who came from a State with a very tough balanced budget law, I’ve been very concerned—can you hear me? Can we start again?

Q. You have two mikes on you now, Mr. President.

The President. There was an agreement made last night that I had been supporting for a good long while sponsored by the conservative Democrats essentially to put a mechanism in the budget to force us every year to make the budget cuts that we say we’re making in this 5-year budget. That is, obviously it’s very hard to predict what will happen in every year for the next 5 years. If you had to do a family budget for 5 years, it might not be possible, or a business budget or a farm budget.

So these numbers are as good as we can make them, but this amendment actually says that every year, if we miss the deficit reduction target, the President has to bring in a plan to meet it and the Congress has to vote on it. And if they want to change it some, they can, but we’ve got to meet the deficit reduction target.

We have been working for days to get this done. And finally, yesterday afternoon they gave up. So I called the folks that had given up, and I said, go back to the table. We’ve got to have some discipline in this budget, so that if we tell people we’re going to make

the cuts, we do it. And that’s what this amendment says.

Ms. Zahn. What happens if you don’t get this through in the House today?

The President. We keep working until we get a budget through. The real problem is, I think, that—there are two problems: One is that the details of the plan have been lost in the rhetoric; the second is that a lot of the Republicans who might otherwise want to vote with us got into a position where they said they wouldn’t vote for any tax.

Over 60 percent of this money, of the tax money, over 60 percent comes from people with incomes over \$200,000. Seventy-four percent of it comes from people with incomes over \$100,000, people whose taxes went down in the eighties while their incomes went up. People with incomes under \$30,000 are protected even from the Btu tax. And next year people in the middle will pay about \$1 a month, and it goes to \$7 a month and then about \$15 a month.

I think that a lot of—we have to get all of our votes apparently from the Democrats this time. I hope it won’t happen anymore.

Ms. Zahn. No help from the Republicans?

The President. Well, with the Senate we might get some Republican votes. We’re working on it.

[At this point, the network took a commercial break.]

Accomplishments

Harry Smith. We are live in the Rose Garden with over 200 people from many States around the country, a couple of foreign countries as well. We’re here with President Clinton. We thank you, first, for inviting us in to do this town meeting.

I know you don’t pay attention to this sort of stuff: polls. You never pay attention probably, right? The negatives are now higher than the positives in the polls. And I want to tap into something here, because there’s a feeling in the country, and I think the people here reflect it. I think people in America want to see you succeed, but I just want to see a raise of hands this morning, and don’t be intimidated just because you’re in the Rose Garden. [Laughter] Do you feel like he could be doing a better job? Raise your hand if you think so. Don’t be intimidated.