

with Mexico, and we're worried about them, when they want to buy more of our products?

Look, the people that are against this have legitimate fears and resentments and anger. There were a lot of workers that were thrown in the streets over the last 15 or 20 years. We have gone through two decades when a lot of hourly workers never got a pay raise. We are having a tough time creating jobs and income. But we don't want to cut off our nose to spite our face. We can't let this trade agreement become the flypaper that catches all those fears, because it will make it better not worse.

So I say, if you believe that, because you know what the experience of this company is, I want you to sit down and write a letter, not a pressure letter but a nice letter. Really, just two lines, to the Senators, to the Congressmen, or collect them all up and send them here and let them send them in. But they need to know that there's somebody out here in Massachusetts, somebody out here in south Boston, somebody in the entire United States that's going to make a living out of this deal, that understands that we're going to get more jobs and higher incomes and more opportunities if we do this. Because if we turn it away, it's really going to be a terrible thing.

You know, we actually get a trade advantage over the Japanese and the Europeans in Mexico if this passes? And if it fails and they still need the money to develop their country, what are we going to do, what's Gillette going to do in Mexico if they turn around and give that trade advantage to somebody else? If they offer this same deal to somebody else, I'll guarantee you the Japanese, the European Community would take this deal in a heartbeat. This is a good deal. It is no accident that the Ministry of Trade in Japan has come out against this deal. It is a good thing for us.

So I ask you to talk to your friends and neighbors, talk to the people who are worried about it, tell them their fears are well-founded, but they don't have anything to do with this agreement. This agreement will make it better. And meanwhile, we will keep working to build the security that Americans need.

We've already had more private sector jobs come into this economy in 9 months than

in the previous 4 years. We're tackling the health care issue. We're tackling the deficit issue. Interest rates are at a 30-year low. We are moving in the right direction. But I'm telling you, nothing I do as your President within the borders of the United States can create more jobs and higher incomes unless somebody buys the stuff we produce. And that requires us to expand our market. Help us to do that by personally telling the Members of Congress you'd appreciate it if they vote for the NAFTA agreement.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:20 p.m. on the factory floor. In his remarks, he referred to Alfred M. Zeien, CEO, Gillette Co. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Teleconference Remarks on the California Fires

October 30, 1993

The President. Hello?

James Lee Witt. Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Have we got James Lee?

Mr. Witt. Yes, sir. I have Roger Johnson with me, the Administrator of GSA, at the disaster field office here in Pasadena. Secretary Espy is also on, who is at the Oak Grove fire camp in southern California.

Secretary Espy. Hello, Mr. President.

The President. Hello, Secretary Espy. How are you?

Secretary Espy. How are you doing, sir? I'm at the Oak Grove fire camp near Altadena, California.

Mr. Witt. Also, Mr. President, we have Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer on, and Dick Andrews, the California director of emergency service is here in the disaster field office with Roger and I.

[At this point, Mr. Witt, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, reported on conditions in California and discussed Federal, State, and private efforts to deal with the disaster.]

The President. That's good. That's very good.

[Mr. Andrews discussed the improvement in weather conditions which helped in fighting the fires, the number of fires still burning, and deployment of State and Federal resources to fight the fires.]

Mr. Witt then asked if the President had any questions.]

The President. No. I want to say before I go on to Secretary Espy that I have just been terribly impressed by the work of the people who have been out there fighting the fires. I know that we have provided from the Federal Government a lot of the firefighters. And of course, there have been the folks here at the local level. But it's been really amazing to me just to watch and see how hard they've worked.

As you know, Mack McLarty, who is here with me now, has been coordinating this from our end, so I've been pretty well briefed all along. I also want to say I'm very pleased that the Insurance Association is going to have people in the disaster assistance area. That's something, as you well know, James Lee, all of us could have used for years. And that's a very, very good sign, and I thank them.

Maybe I should hear from Secretary Espy and Roger Johnson and Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein, and maybe then I'll see if we've got any questions.

[Secretary Espy reported to the President on the Kinneloa fire, the highest priority fire at that time, and the efforts of firefighters.]

The President. How much Federal land have we lost out there?

Secretary Espy. Oh, gosh. We've got 150,000 or so acres already burned.

The President. But a lot of it belongs to the Federal Government, doesn't it?

Secretary Espy. Yes, sir.

The President. Twenty thousand or thirty thousand acres, something like that?

Secretary Espy. We've got two major national forests out here, and it's under pretty good attack here. The problem in the future, of course, once the fires have receded, is re-vegetating and reseeded, making sure that in the Forest Service area, we can do a lot of rehabilitation. And so that's what we've got to turn our attention once the immediate situation abates.

The President. Well, we should be able to help California with that.

Secretary Espy. Yes, sir.

The President. We know how to do that.

Secretary Espy. We are. The Soil Conservation Service will be taking the lead in the rehabilitation exercises out here.

The President. Is Jim Lyons out there with you?

Secretary Espy. Jim Lyons is here. He's been here for a couple of days. Now, he's a little bleary-eyed, he had to get up this morning to do a bunch of things, but—

The President. He used to be a firefighter, didn't he?

Secretary Espy. Yes, he said he did. We're in a place that looks like a—

The President. We just thought he ought to have a little continuing education. [Laughter]

Secretary Espy. That's right. We need those pale guys to get their hands dirty every now and then.

The President. I really appreciate you, Mike. Thank you.

Secretary Espy. Well, thank you. Thank you. I just can't say enough about the good work. It's very prompt, very vigorous, effective. And you know, they've been out here from day one, many without sleep, without rest, and it's just incredible to be here. It's great.

The President. Is Roger Johnson on?

Roger Johnson. He's here, Mr. President. Good morning.

The President. You saved your home, didn't you?

Mr. Johnson. Yes, sir. They saved it.

The President. Congratulations.

[Mr. Johnson gave a brief description of the efforts of the General Services Administration's efforts to respond to the disaster and a personal view of the losses and firefighting efforts.]

The President. That's great. How many homes were lost, 350 in Laguna alone?

Mr. Johnson. Yes. About 700 overall, I think. Jumped into an area, Emerald Bay, where we used to live. So there were a lot of our friends there, and I think the home we used to live in is gone as well.

[At this point, Mr. Witt reported on plans for Federal and State authorities to meet with California insurance associations to provide for special needs in the application centers.]

The President. Thank you very much.

Senator Feinstein, Senator Boxer?

Senator Feinstein. Good morning, Mr. President. How are you?

The President. I'm fine.

[Senator Feinstein described the mobilization and organization of State firefighting strike teams and described Firescope, a unified command of Federal, State, and local authorities for dealing with the disaster.]

The President. Thank you. Thank you, Senator.

James Lee, I think you and Mike—

Senator Boxer. Do you have room for one more Senator?

The President. Yes. I'm going to call in just a minute. I just wanted to say to James Lee and Mike Espy, I think you ought to make a recommendation to me on what we should do on this unified command issue after you get back.

Senator Boxer, the floor is yours.

[Senator Boxer described the devastation, commended FEMA for its response to the disaster, and expressed her thanks to the President.]

The President. Thank you, Senator. I want to thank both the Senators. And, Dick Andrews, I thank you, and through you Governor Wilson, you tell him that if there's anything else we can do, you just pick up the phone and call.

And, to Roger Johnson and Secretary Espy and to James Lee Witt, I thank you all for your quick response, and I can't wait to talk to you some more in person after the fire dies down some more and we make sure that we don't forget them when the fire's gone. We'll be there for the followup.

I thank you all, and I hope you have a good day and keep those winds away out there. Thank you. Goodbye.

[At this point, the teleconference ended.]

Q. Are you going to California?

The President. I don't know that yet. We're going to monitor the winds today. That's the big issue. I don't want to be in

the way out there. They've got a lot of work to do. The thing, I think, is pretty well in hand now if they don't have a resurgence of the winds. So we're all basically going to—it's quite early there, it's still 7 a.m. in the morning. And we're just going to spend the next 4 or 5 hours waiting for the weather reports.

I've got to do the radio address, folks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. A portion of this item could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

The President's Radio Address

October 30, 1993

Good morning. In the next few days, you'll have the chance to pick up what may be the most important book of information you'll read for yourself, your children, your parents, and others you care about. It's a book that's also very important for the future of our Nation. The book is called "Health Security: The President's Report to the American People." And while it deals with a very complex issue, the overhaul and reform of our health care system, it does so in straightforward, very human terms.

The book describes our plan to solve the Nation's health care crisis by guaranteeing every working American comprehensive health care that's always there, that can never be taken away. While many people worked hard on this book, especially the First Lady and her task force on health care reform, in many ways, the book was written by you, the American people. For a long time, since I was the Governor of my State, I've been talking with Americans who, against their will, become all too familiar with the failings of our health care system, Americans caught without insurance or with inadequate insurance when they or a loved one became ill and when they needed the coverage the most, people who had their bank accounts emptied, their trust in the system betrayed, and too often their hearts broken.

Many of you listening today know someone who has fallen through the cracks of our