

of crime anymore. We know we can turn it around. But we also know that the job is not yet done.

Therefore, to go back to what the Congresswoman said at the beginning, we fought through one partisan political battle to get this crime bill. I heard people say on the floor of Congress that the crime bill was a fraud, that it wouldn't help to lower the crime rate, that we would never get 20,000 police on the street in 6 years, and we were promising 100,000 in 6 years. Well, in one year, we're over 25,000, and we're going to make it on time, ahead of the budget, ahead of the schedule.

And we now have a consensus among the American people. I believe that we ought to keep on lowering the crime rate. I don't believe—I haven't heard the first person write me a letter and say, "Dear Mr. President, I don't like the fact that the crime rate is going down. Please stop what you're doing." [Laughter] I haven't gotten one letter saying that.

Now, in Washington the Congress is trying to balance the budget. I support that. We ought to balance the budget. We never had a permanent deficit until the 12 years before I became President. We have taken the deficit from \$290 billion a year when I took office to \$160 billion this year, more than 40 percent reduction. And I want to finish the job.

We can balance the budget, and we should. But what I want to tell you is, we do not have to destroy our commitment to the education of our young people, to the training of unemployed people, to the economic future of America. We do not have to have dramatic increases in the health care costs of elderly people when 75 percent of them are living on less than \$24,000 a year. We do not have to sacrifice the environmental and public health and safety protections that give us clean air, clean water, and safe food. We do not have to do any of this to balance the budget.

I have given the Congress a balanced budget plan which does not do any of these things. And we certainly—we certainly do not have to come off of our commitment to put 100,000 police officers on the street and have more and more stories like the ones I heard walking up and down Marvin Street

today. We owe it to America to balance the budget and to reduce the crime rate until Americans are safe in their streets, safe in their homes, safe in their schools.

So I ask you, because you are fortunate enough to live in this growing and vibrant community, because you are fortunate enough to have elected leaders that work together across party lines and know that crime is an American problem and a human problem, because you are fortunate enough to have a sheriff who has proved to you that community policing works, because you are fortunate enough to have experienced a drop in the crime rate, I ask you to join with me and say to the United States Congress, this is not about partisan politics. We are lowering the crime rate in America. If we have more jobs and lower crime, America is going to be a better place. So let's continue to do that. Let's continue to do that.

And let us say: Balance the budget, yes. But do it and still send us our police officers, because we want our children to have a healthy, safe, strong, drug-free, crime-free, violence-free future. And now we know we can do it. Let's don't stop. Let's keep on until the job's done.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:47 a.m. at the Carvill Park Community Center. In his remarks, he referred to Sheriff Nathaniel Glover of Duval County; Gov. Lawton Chiles and Lt. Gov. Buddy MacKay of Florida; Mayor John A. Delaney of Jacksonville; and Joseph Brann, Director, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), Department of Justice.

## Remarks on Departure From Jacksonville

September 19, 1995

Thank you very much. Thank you for coming out. Thank you for waiting in the hot sun. Thank you, Governor Chiles. Thank you, Lieutenant Governor MacKay. I thank your State's attorney for being here, and Congresswoman Corrine Brown, I thank you for being here. It's wonderful to see all of you.

You heard Governor Chiles say that we have just been with Sheriff Glover in one of the neighborhoods here in Jacksonville. I

want to say two or three things about being in this community. First of all, congratulations on your football team. I'm glad you got one. And I know the season got off to a rough start. But I've had a few seasons like that; it's not over. Just stay in a good humor about it.

I also want to thank the people of Jacksonville for the dramatic contribution that you have made over so many years to the national defense of the United States, so many people here serving in our military, supporting it, and we're very grateful to you for that.

And I'm sure you know that in the recent rounds of military reorganizations and base closings, Jacksonville is one of the communities in the United States that will actually gain several thousand jobs over the next few years because of the work you have done and the quality of support you have given to our military. So I thank you for that.

I want to make, if I might, just a couple of remarks, then I want to get out in the crowd and just say hello to all of you. I ran for President in 1991 and 1992 because I was afraid that our country was going in the wrong direction; that we had forgotten the basic values that make us strong, our devotion to work and family and responsibility and community; and that we were not changing to meet the demands of the 21st century.

The economy is different. You all know it. We have different challenges in holding our country together. And I made up my mind that if the people gave me a chance to serve, I was going to try to get the economy going again so we could grow the middle class and shrink the under class; I would try to make the fighting of crime a major priority so we could reduce the crime rate in America and make our streets and our schools and our homes safer; I would try to change the way the Government works, to be a genuine partner with people in their lives. And that's what we've been here celebrating today.

Florida is creating jobs at 3 times the rate it was when I became President. We have lowered the deficit. We have increased investment. We have a plan for a balanced budget. We're moving forward economically. The crime rate is down; the murder rate is down. All across America we are proving that we can lower the rate of crime in America

if we work together and put more police officers on the street under the plan that was enacted in the 1994 crime bill. I'm proud of that. People used to tell me we will never lower the crime rate. They were wrong. We can do it, and we can do it all over America.

We're now trying to reform the welfare system. I just want to say a word about that. I've worked with Governor Chiles on this for years. I'm all for reforming welfare if what we mean by reforming welfare is moving people from welfare to work and giving them a chance to be good parents and good workers. I am not for punishing poor children just because they were born poor. We ought to be reforming welfare in a way that liberates people. I'm all for having tough standards and tough requirements on people to go to school and go to work if they've got a chance to do it and to take care of their children. So when you watch this welfare reform debate in Washington ask yourself: Is this going to produce good workers and good parents? Is this going to make families stronger and children better? That is the test.

So I want to say to all of you, now I'm going on down to south Florida and then I'm going on across the country to Colorado, and I'm going to be talking with Americans all across the country about the debate in Washington about balancing the budget. And I want to say to all of you, Florida has a lot of interest in that debate. Every American should want the budget balanced. We never had a permanent deficit until the 12 years before I became President, and we've taken that deficit from \$290 billion a year down to \$160 billion in just 3 years. I'm proud of that. We should keep doing that.

But we also have responsibilities. You see it here in Jacksonville, We have responsibilities to the national defense. We have responsibilities to the children and the schools. We have responsibilities to lower the crime rate. We have responsibilities to the elderly who depend on Medicare and Medicaid for their health care. And I say to you, we can balance the budget without undermining the national defense, without cutting our commitment to put 100,000 police on the street, without cutting the number of children in Head Start and the number of young people who are getting college loans, and without burdening

older people. Seventy-five percent of the people in this country who get the benefits of Medicare and Medicaid live on less than \$24,000 a year. We can fix Medicare without burdening them.

That is my commitment: Fix the Medicare system. You don't have to stick it to the older people in this country who barely have enough money to live on. So let's balance the budget and do it right so we can grow the economy, reduce the crime rate, and bring this country together. That is my commitment, and I think it's yours.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. at Jacksonville International Airport.

### **Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion With Senior Citizens in North Miami Beach, Florida**

*September 19, 1995*

**The President.** Thank you for taking a little time to meet with me and the Governor today. I wanted to just say a few words. First of all, let me thank Governor Chiles for being here. You know, when he was a Senator, he was the chairman of the Budget Committee, so he knows a lot about what we're going through in Washington.

**Gov. Lawton Chiles.** These people knew me when I had the Aging Committee, before I had the pleasure to know you. [*Laughter*]

**The President.** That's right. Before you were aging. [*Laughter*]

I'd like to just talk for a couple of minutes and then spend the rest of the time listening to you, trying to answer your questions or at least hearing your concerns about this. You all know we're in a major debate in Washington about balancing the budget, and we're trying to balance the budget. I think that's a good thing to do. Our country never had a permanent deficit in our Government accounts until the 12 years before I became President, and I've tried to change that.

When I became President, the annual deficit was \$290 billion a year; we've now got it down to \$160 billion a year. That's a huge decrease in only 3 years, and I'm proud of that. But we have to ask ourselves now that we're going to go all the way and balance

this budget: Why are we doing it, and how are we going to do it in a way that reflects our basic values as Americans, our sense of personal responsibility, our sense of family responsibility, our responsibility to our communities? And maybe most important, what are the obligations we owe to each other across generational lines and across income lines in America? How can we balance the budget in a way that permits us to honor these values and these obligations?

We want to balance the budget because we'd like to take this debt off of our children and grandchildren, because we would like not to spend so much money every year paying off interest on the debt so we'd have more money to invest in things like education and health care and the economy, but we have to do it in the right way.

Now, I have offered the Congress a balanced budget that increases our investment in education, because I think we owe the next generation quite a lot—in a global economy they'll need more education and because so many of our children, particularly poorer children, need the tools to work themselves into the middle class. I have offered a balanced budget that continues our fundamental obligations to clean air, clean water, safe food, public health, and the environment. And I have offered a balanced budget that deals with the need to slow the rate of growth in medical expenses so that health care does not consume the entire budget and does not take more and more of our income and more and more of your income.

Now, in addition to that, there is this issue with the Medicare Trust Fund, which the congressional majority, the Republican majority, has made a great deal of. But I'd like to talk a little about the Medicare Trust Fund and what its relationship is to the budget, and then we can hear from you.

The Congress has proposed to balance the budget in 7 years and to pay for a \$250 billion tax cut and to cut Medicare by about \$270 billion over that 7-year period and to cut Medicaid by about \$180 billion over that 7-year period.

My proposals, which balance the budget in 10 years with a much smaller tax cut, have a Medicare reduction that's less than half of theirs and a Medicaid reduction that's about