

Remarks on Reduction and Reorganization of the White House Staff *February 9, 1993*

Good morning. Next week I will outline our new economic plan to create jobs, to raise incomes, to reduce the deficit, and to lay the foundation for long-term economic growth for this country. Twelve years of denial and delay have left a legacy that will take years to overcome. Economic renewal will require tough choices from every American. But we have to ask the most of those who got the most and gave the least during the last decade, those at the top of the ladder, and those who have the levers of Government.

We in Government cannot ask the American people to change if we will not do the same. Most families in this country have had to adjust their priorities and tighten their belts in the last decade. Just about every American business from the smallest hardware store to the largest conglomerate has had to change to meet increased competition. And so, too, the Government must do more and make do with less.

During the recent campaign I pledged to reduce the White House staff by 25 percent below the size left by my predecessor. Today I am announcing a reorganization of the White House that keeps that commitment to the American people. Our White House will be leaner but more effective, and designed to work both hard and smart for the changes we seek in America.

These cuts come as part of a quite significant reorganization of the Office of the President. The reorganization will reduce the size of the President's Office including the White House and the Executive Office of the President by some 350 people from its staffing at the end of the Bush administration, not counting, of course, OMB and the Trade Representative's Office, nor part of the Cabinet.

This reduction will be implemented in the next fiscal year—that is, the one that begins with the new budget—not at some distant date in the future. And these cuts will come at all levels of our operations. I should point out that this is one of the few times in this century that any President has actually shrunk the size of the White House staff.

In addition, we'll be cutting back on some of the perks that can too often delude public servants into thinking that the people work for them instead of the other way around. And the salaries of many top White House staff have been reduced also.

I take these steps not simply to save the taxpayers' money but also because I believe this smaller White House will actually work better and serve the American people better. We have begun a process of revitalization and reorganization that must consume our entire Government and not simply its most visible symbol here on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Over the past decade the best American businesses have had to reorder themselves and revitalize themselves. They've had to reduce layers of bureaucracy, give people on the front lines the freedom to innovate, and do more with less to better serve their customers. Well, the taxpayers of this country are our customers, and we intend to follow those methods of modernization to increase our services to them and to do it at an affordable cost so that this money can be put to more productive purposes.

Millions of dollars will be saved by this reorganization. But we will do more in the other Cabinet Departments, throughout the Government, and not just in this year but in the years ahead. Too often in recent years our Government has been on automatic pilot. People do things today just because that's the way they were done yesterday. It has grown to satisfy not only the needs of the people but its own needs. America has changed, but Washington hasn't. Now, as have so many businesses before, our Government must reform itself to regain the people's trust and to be able to take the lead in the challenging decisions which lie ahead of us.

Now Mr. McLarty, my Chief of Staff, will explain the details of the reorganization.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:34 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.