

Exchange With Reporters During a Meeting With Boy Scouts February 9, 1993

White House Staff Reduction

Q. Mr. President, are you going to share in the sacrifice, giving up perks?

Q. Mr. President, will you raise the corporate tax rate to 36 percent?

Q. Were you a Boy Scout, Mr. President?

The President. I gave up 350 staff members, a remarkable accomplishment. And Mr. McLarty answered the other question.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:14 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Meeting With Cabinet Members February 10, 1993

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm going to sign these Executive orders, and then I will go over to the microphone and make a statement about each one.

The first order requires by attrition a reduction in Federal positions of 100,000. The second order is a reduction in the administrative costs of the present Federal Government by 3 percent per year on average leading up to 5 percent in the 4th year of this 4-year term and abolishing several boards and commissions. The third order deals with the commissions.

These are memoranda to the Department heads. One deals with perks; one deals with Government vehicles; one deals with aircraft.

[At this point, the President signed the documents.]

Members of the Cabinet and staff, tonight I will be going to Michigan and the Vice President will be going to California to hold town meetings with American citizens to talk to them about the economic problems and the budget mess that we have inherited and the priorities and principles we intend to bring to our efforts to change the country and bring about recovery.

The people demand and deserve an active Government on their side. But they don't want a Government that wastes money, a Government that costs more and does less. They voted for change. They wanted a literal revolution in the way Government operates, and now you and I must deliver.

Yesterday I announced the reorganization of the White House staff that will reduce our staff by 25 percent and cut costs by \$10 million per

year. Today I have called you, the Members of the Cabinet, together to take the next step, to begin the overhaul of Government as a whole. The steps we're taking today will save the American taxpayer \$9 billion. They won't be easy, but they will make a difference. We have an obligation and an opportunity to change the way Government works and to show that Government can do more with less.

Our Government needs change. For the last dozen years I've heard our leaders call loudly for less Government while giving people more Government and, perhaps more importantly, while giving almost no attention to better or different Government, to new ways in which partnerships could be made with people in the private sector and in State and local governments. Too often in the last decade people have rushed to defend the power of the few at the top and privileges of the elite, not just in the private sector but also in Government. Too often when economic security of ordinary Americans has been threatened, Government has sat still, refused to lead; not even follow, just get in the way. That era has come to an end with our coming to office.

Today the Cabinet and I are taking several steps to show that we intend to change the way that Government works. But I want to make it clear this is only a beginning, not the end of the process.

First, I am ordering a reduction of the Federal bureaucracy by at least 100,000 positions over the next 4 years. At least 10 percent of these cuts must come from senior management. The cuts can come from attrition; I see no need