

*1996 Presidential Election*

*Q.* Mr. President, the New Hampshire primary is now only about 6 weeks away. Do you plan to formally announce that you intend to run for reelection and name a campaign manager and a campaign chairman? And if so, when?

*The President.* Well, I think people know what my intentions are, but I—in due course I will make those announcements.

I do believe, and I have said this repeatedly, that I think this process going on 4 years is too long. Indeed, when I announced for President as a virtual unknown in 1991, I didn't do it until October of 1991. And I just think that the process is too long. And I have a lot of work to do here as President. I'm trying to work with Senator Dole and Mr. Gingrich and Mr. Arney and others to get an agreement on the balanced budget. I am very concerned about making sure that things are going as they should in Bosnia. And I want to do my job as long as I can. But there will be plenty of time for politics this year. I imagine that everybody will be glad when the next election is done.

*Debt Limit*

*Q.* Mr. President, no budget deal could well mean no increase in the Government's borrowing authority. And I'm wondering whether you are willing to risk default as one of the costs of having no deal, or whether you're willing to invoke some emergency powers to increase that authority, even though the Treasury has been concerned that they may not have the legal basis to do that?

*The President.* Well, the Secretary of the Treasury has done a very good job in managing that so far and has not done anything that he has not been told he's on solid ground in doing. I think it would be wrong and almost inconceivable for the United States to default on its debt. It was bad enough to shut the Government down. It was harmful to the American people and to the good people who work for the Federal Government. That was wrong as part of some sort of strategy. And this would be wrong. We have never refused to pay our debts. We are a great nation, and I don't believe we'll do that.

*Q.* Mr. President, following up on that, with the debt limit so close at hand, it's not one

of the issues that can be put off until November. Secretary Rubin, for example, says in a few weeks we may face another crunch. Are you actively negotiating anything on the debt limit that could resolve it well ahead of some of the other budget issues that might be delayed until November?

*The President.* Well, we have had very serious discussions within the context of the budget talks. And obviously, if there is a budget agreement, everyone assumes it will be resolved. But I believe it will be resolved regardless, because it would be wrong not to do it. It would be simply wrong.

*Federal Reserve Board Chairman*

*Q.* Mr. President, a question about Alan Greenspan. As you know, his term is due to expire in a couple of months. Can you tell us when you plan to make a decision about whether you will nominate him for another term, what factors you are going to consider, and whether one of those factors would be the potential instability in the financial markets if you decided to nominate someone else?

*The President.* I have to make that decision within a couple of months, as you pointed out, and I'm going to follow my standard practice and tell you that I will make that decision in an appropriate way and announce it at the appropriate time. Obviously, I have done what I could to show the American people that we have a responsible Government. We are bringing the deficit down. We are looking out for the long-term health of the American economy, and we've had, I believe, the appropriate relationship with the Federal Reserve. And that's why we're still growing the economy without inflation.

*Budget Negotiations*

*Q.* Mr. President, do you see any danger to the economy if there is no budget deal this year at all, such as a recession?

*The President.* There should not be. We have the lowest combined rates of inflation and unemployment in 27 years now. We have worked very hard to keep unemployment going down, keep it well down under 6 percent, and to keep the inflation low. The underlying fundamentals are good. And our economic analysts say that they expect continued growth with no inflation in 1996.