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PRESIDENTIAL RADIO TALK: BORK, SHEVARDNADZE, AND THE BUDGET
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My fellow Americans: A great deal happened in Washington this past week, and I'd like to take a moment this afternoon to discuss with you three of the most important events.

First, the Senate opened the confirmation hearings on Judge Robert Bork, my nominee to the Supreme Court. Before these hearings began, there had been a lot of talk to the effect that Judge Bork was some kind of political ideologue. In truth, Judge Bork's philosophy of judging is neither conservative nor liberal. He simply believes that a judge should keep his own views from interfering with an interpretation of the laws and the Constitution according to the intentions of those who enacted them, consistent with established precedent. One place this judicial philosophy will help is in the fight against crime.

On Tuesday, Judge Bork was introduced by no less distinguished a figure than former President Ford. And on Wednesday, President Carter's White House Counsel, a prominent Democrat named Lloyd Cutler, published a newspaper article endorsing Judge Bork. Mr. Cutler wrote of Judge Bork, and I quote, "...his views were and are widely shared by justices and academics who are in the moderate center."

The hearings themselves have already made it perfectly clear that Judge Bork is a man of reason -- indeed, a brilliant legal scholar. I'm confident that when these hearings conclude, the Senate will confirm this fine judge, referred to by The Wall

Street Journal as -- and again, I quote -- "...the most qualified American alive to serve on the Supreme Court."

The second of the week's big events was the visit of Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze. In 3 full days of talks, important progress was made. The United States and the Soviet Union have now agreed in principle to completing a truly historic treaty that will eliminate an entire class of U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range missiles. I expect to sign this treaty later this fall at a summit. We agreed to begin formal negotiations on verifying existing nuclear testing treaties -- and to forge ahead toward another historic objective -- cutting our strategic nuclear arsenals in half.

I'm proud that these were American proposals, which the Soviets have come around to accept.

But I made it clear to the Soviet Foreign Minister that I will not sacrifice our S.D.I. program. Indeed, ^{YESTERDAY} ~~today~~ we announced that we're moving forward on S.D.I. to demonstrate and validate six promising technologies. Nor will we let up on our insistence on better Soviet performance on human rights and regional conflicts like Afghanistan. Our agenda is both peace and freedom, and when I meet Mr. Gorbachev again later this year, that is the agenda I will pursue.

This brings me to the third item I'd like to discuss with you: the Federal budget. This week, the House Leadership worked out a bipartisan plan to continue providing humanitarian aid to the democratic resistance in Nicaragua. But I'm afraid I have to tell you that, when it comes to the Federal budget process

itself, the news is not good. In less than 2 weeks, the Federal Government begins a new fiscal year. But has Congress even sent me so much as one of the 13 appropriations bills? The answer is no -- even though the passage of these bills on time was required by law.

Instead, this week the Congress began to put together a "continuing resolution." In plain terms, this means that since Congress can't get its act together on controlling spending, Congress simply keeps overspending at last year's pace for a few more weeks. After that, Congress will have to face the spending problem all over again -- perhaps only passing yet another continuing resolution.

Now, when Congress passes one of these continuing resolutions, it puts appropriated Federal funding into a huge lump. And when one of these massive continuing resolutions comes to my desk, it's a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. Sign the bill and, with it, accept the inability to get wasteful spending under some level of control; or reject it, and watch the United States Government run out of money and grind to a halt.

I have felt for some time that no President should be placed in that position.

Our Administration has proposed reforms that would fix the budget process -- the line-item veto and a balanced budget amendment. But if we are going to run the Federal Government by continuing resolutions, then the very least Congress can do is this: Break them into separate parts -- with each part dealing with a specific area of Federal funding. Doing so would provide

me with at least some opportunity to exercise my rightful judgment as President -- an opportunity I intend to insist on.

Until next week, thanks for listening and God bless you.