

Background for Convention: Fundraisers

BACKGROUND FOR CONVENTION: FUNDRAISERS

Convention = min 50TY

last few dozen fundraisers

Print & keep

- 1/ riffs on Gore
- 2/ asking care for someone who understands privacy w/ globalism but deep
- 3/ ... understands ethical issues behind genome etc.
- 4/ "nature tested as much by how it responds to good future as to adversity"
- 5) wanted whole life to be a Democratic like we have now. now is the time.

— AFSCME — NAACP
electn
— Big deal / diff. bet. parties

NOTICE OTHER RIFFS

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

For Immediate Release

June 30, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO AMERICAN FEDERATION OF FEDERAL, STATE,
COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

Pennsylvania Convention Center
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

9:13 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well, you know, I was still a little sleepy when I got here today. I'm pumped. Thank you very much. Thank you, thank you, thank you. Mr. President McEntee, congratulations on your reelection. Your job has some advantages over mine -- no term limits, no opponents. Not bad.

I'm delighted to be here with all your officers -- Phil Lucy, it's good to see you again, and all the AFSCME officers. I do want to say a special word of appreciation to the vice presidents from Pennsylvania who are hosting you -- Edward Keller, Henry Nicholas, Dave Fillman. (Applause) And I want to acknowledge in the audience a good friend of AFSCME's down in Washington whom I brought home to Pennsylvania with me today, Congressman Joe Hoeffel -- give him a big hand. Joe, thank you for coming with me.

Let me just say at the outset, I know everything I'm going to say today will not be news to you. It's almost like preaching to the saved. But the most important thing that I can say today is a simple thank you. I am so grateful for the support you've given me and for the work we've done together. Thank you.

It is fitting that one of America's greatest labor unions is meeting here in Philadelphia in the millennial year. This city is rich in labor history. In 1774, the very first Continental Congress met in Carpenter's Hall, which was built by the very first trade guild in America. In 1792, the shoemakers here in Philadelphia formed the first local craft union for collective bargaining over 200 years ago. And just as you are in a city with deep labor roots, you are looking at a President who feels he has deep roots in AFSCME.

When I was eligible as governor, I was a dues-paying member of AFSCME. All the people who worked for me back then said it was the only check they ever saw me write. I'm grateful for the work you do every day, watching over our children and our parents, taking care of the sick and people with disabilities, helping the poor and moving millions of people from welfare to work, supporting our schools, improving our environment, making sure not just your members, but all Americans, have a better life.

And I am very grateful, as I said, that AFSCME has stood by me since early in 1992 when only my mama thought I could be elected President of the United States. In sunshine and rain, you have never backed down, you have never walked away from the good fight we have waged for the American people and their future.

And what a long way we've come in these eight years. Gerry was talking about it before I came in. But it's worth remembering, in fact, one of the biggest challenges we have in this election is that things have been so good so long, a lot of people don't remember what it was like the last time they had the ball and they carried it.

Together, we've worked hard to give this country the longest economic expansion in history -- 22 million-plus new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years.

And a lot of things that you care about -- the highest homeownership in history; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood illnesses for the first time in history; more land protected forever in the continental United States than any administration since Franklin Roosevelt; cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food -- 21 million people -- 21 million people have taken advantage of the Family and Medical Leave Law, the first law I signed, and a law that was vetoed the last time they had the White House. Five hundred thousand felons, fugitives and stalkers did not get handguns because of the Brady Bill. We have a 35 percent drop in crime rates, and in the gun crime. Not a single hunter has missed a day in the deer woods in spite of all their dire predictions. And the Brady law was another law that was vetoed the last time they had the White House.

Five million families have taken advantage of the HOPE Scholarship tax credit for the first two years of college. And when I leave office, we will have paid down almost \$400 billion on the national debt.

So the question is, what are we going to do with this? Now, I want to give a lot of whoop-de-doo lines, but I want you all to kind of listen to me now. Because you've got a lot of friends, every one of you, who are not in AFSCME, who don't belong to any labor organization -- the people you spend time with your kids with, the people you go to church with or synagogue with, maybe people you go bowling with, people you do other things with. And I want you to know what I think you ought to be telling them.

Because it isn't enough for you to show up and vote. It isn't enough even for you to get all your brothers and sisters in AFSCME to show up and vote. It isn't enough even to get all of the husbands and wives of all the AFSCME members to show up and vote. You've got to walk out of here determined to talk to every person you know and every person you run into between now and November and tell them why they ought to vote, for whom they ought to vote, and the reasons they ought to vote for them.

So this is what I think you ought to say. There are three things every American needs to know about this election. Number one, it is a big election; it is real important. Number two, there are real differences between the parties that you can see in the candidates for President, the candidates for the Senate, the candidates for Congress, and obviously the local races. Number three -- and this is a dead giveaway in terms of who people ought to vote for -- only the Democrats want you to know what those real differences are.

Now, just be patient with me while I go through this. This is a big election. One of the things that bothers me -- I had a friend from Chicago in to see me this week, and he is a businessperson, and he's been very successful the last eight years. He's 41 years old, quite a bit younger than me -- I hate it, but he is -- (laughter) -- and he said to me, he said, you know, the thing that bothers me is that I talk to all these people that I spend time with who don't have anything to do with the Democratic Party, don't have anything to do with the Republican Party. They're people I know in my work life. And they don't think there's much of a difference between Vice President Gore and Governor Bush. They don't think there's much of a difference. And they think this economy is rocking along so well, you couldn't mess it up with a case of dynamite.

Now, that's what a lot of people think. So the first thing you've got to tell people is, hey, this is a big election. You remember what it was like eight years ago and what kind of a mess the country was in. But I want to tell you something. We've got some young people here, but there's not a person listening to me today who is over 30 years old, who cannot remember at least one time in your life, either in your work life or your personal life when you made a big mistake not because things were going so badly in your life, but because things were rocking along so well, you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate.

Now, every one of us has experienced that, right? Every one of us. So the first thing we've got to do is get America's head right about this. This is a big deal. How a country handles its moment of prosperity and opportunity is just as stern a test of our vision, our judgment and our character as how we handle adversity.

And in my lifetime, there has never been a moment like this where the economy was so strong, our social conditions were improving, the nation had a lot of self-confidence, there was no internal crisis or external threat to divert us, where we really have a chance to build a future of our dreams for our kids. And we will never be forgiven if we blow this. You've got to convince people this is a big election. They've got to think about it and they've got to show up and stand up and be counted.

Now, the second thing I want to tell you is what you already know. There are big and honest differences. This doesn't have to be a negative campaign, but we've got to define what negative is. Negative is what we've seen too many times over the last 20 years where one candidate tries to convince the voters that his opponent or her opponent is just one notch above a car thief. Now, that's negative. Pointing out the honest differences between you and your opponent in terms of record and position and statements is not negative; that's informational. There's a judgment here, there are consequences to the choice. That's not negative. We can have

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an honest debate. We can assume our opponents are honorable people and say we just have honest disagreements, but they're there.

It tickles me, you know, the Republicans have given us the awfulest mugging over the last 20 years, time and time again, and their primary was the roughest primary I ever saw. The things that the Bush campaign did to Senator McCain made my hair stand up on the back of my neck. And now they're all acting like we're being mean and negative if we point out what their positions are. "If you tell the American people where we stand and what we've done and what we want to do, how dare you do that. The only way you can be positive is if you let us keep that a secret from the American people until the election." No, thank you. This election is about the differences and the choices before the American people.

You watch what I tell you. The Republicans are coming here to Philadelphia -- smart choice by them. Good politics. And you listen to them. And I mean, butter won't melt in their mouth at this -- you watch them. You'll have the awfulest time trying to figure out what the differences are. They're going to love everybody and help everybody and do everything, and it's just going to be wonderful.

But there are differences here. We're for a prescription drug benefit from Medicare that all of our seniors can afford, and they're not. We're for real enforceable patients' bill of rights, and they're not. We're for expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program, that some of you helped administer, so that the parents of those kids can have health insurance, and they're not. We're for letting people between the ages of 55 and 65 who lose their health insurance buy into Medicare, and they're not.

We're for letting families like you, whether you're in the 15 percent or in the 28 percent bracket, have a 28 percent deduction for the cost of college tuition, up to \$10,000 a year, and they're not for that. We're for it. We're for expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, for lower-income working people that have three or more kids, and they're not. We're for equal pay for equal work for working women, and they're not. We're for raising the minimum wage a buck over two years, and they're not. How can we not raise the minimum wage?

We're for building or modernizing 6,000 schools, and repairing another 5,000 a year over the next five years. We're for that, and they're not. We're for keeping on until we have 100,000 teachers to lower class sizes in the first three grades, and they're not.

On the issues that matter most, including the protection of labor rights, we are different. Honestly different. You don't have to believe they're bad people, but we ought not to hide what the differences are.

Now, you take this prescription drug issue. We think there ought to be coverage through Medicare that's available and affordable to all seniors and people with disabilities. That's what I proposed; that's what you've endorsed. We also think that in the balanced budget law, that cuts in Medicare reimbursement rates to hospitals, nursing homes, home health care agencies, were excessive, and we ought to put some more money back in there to help ensure quality care.

Now, what's their position? This is important. Now, you're going to have to talk to people who don't follow this like you do. Probably a good thing not everybody is as interested in politics as we are -- otherwise we would just be beating each other up all day, we would probably never get anything done. But what is their position?

Two nights ago, the Republican House passed a plan designed to benefit the companies that make the prescription drugs, not to people that need to take them. Theirs is a private insurance plan that most seniors can't afford. Listen to this: Their own -- the House Republicans' own Congressional Budget Office -- not me, their people -- say that more than 50 percent of the Medicare beneficiaries who need drug coverage won't be able to get coverage under their plan. They say the premiums will be 50-percent higher under their plan than ours, and the coverage will be 20 percent less.

So what do they do? They voted for it so they could say they voted for something, and the drug companies are happy. And then they hired a pollster -- listen to this, this is amazing -- they hired a pollster to tell them what words and phrases to use in Philadelphia and from now until November to convince you and the American people that they're for something they're not.

So your job is to say, no, thank you. There's a real difference here, we want the voters of this country to know what the difference is.

Now, you take this patients' bill of rights. The Republicans say they're for it. I was tickled -- you know, I've got a passing interest in this Senate race in New York. So the other day, the Democratic candidate said that she was for a real patients' bill of rights and her opponent wasn't. So you know what her opponent did? He goes on television and says, she's being negative. I voted for -- listen to this; they are so clever you've got to watch them. They call me slick? Listen to this -- Listen to this. So what did he say?

You all listen to this -- you're going to need a shovel to deal with this between now and November. Now, listen to this -- what did he say? He said, how dare her say such a mean thing. I am for a patients' bill of rights. "A" patients' bill of rights? This tie here, it's got a little red on it. That don't mean I'm wearing a red tie. What is this?

So what happens? The Republicans last night in the Senate, on a party line vote, passed "a" patients' bill of rights. It's not strong, it's not real, it is not enforceable. Now, I want to give the Republicans credit -- there were a number of good, brave Republicans who voted for a real patients' bill of rights in the House, and I appreciate what they did. And the leader -- yes, we ought to clap for them. I appreciate what they did. A number of them did. They broke with the leadership and they voted for a real patients' bill of rights. And because they helped, and all our crowd did, we got a majority in the House.

The leader of those Republicans, Representative Norwood -- here's what he says about this patients' bill of rights the Republican party supports. The Republican leader for the patients' bill of rights called their bill a "monstrosity."

Now, we want a real bill; they want to deflect the issue. They want to be able to put up these ads and say, I voted for "a" patients' bill of rights. So, you see, you've got to help people see through all this. That's your job. It's my job, but it's your job, too.

And the same thing, you know, on minimum wage. They say, well I'll be for a minimum wage if you make it a little less and drag it over three years and put it on some regressive plan that will take care of our constituents. And let me just say this -- this equal pay thing -- I loved it when you all stood up. They're not even making a pretense of that, they just want to talk about it. They'll say, if you ask them they'll say, well I'm for equal pay, everybody in the wide world's for equal pay. But when you pass a bill, you just make it complicated.

That's what they said about Family and Medical Leave -- I hope people will give it, but we couldn't possibly require it, because if we did, it would be just terrible for the economy; it would be bad for small business. Well, we had an exemption for the smallest businesses, and if it was bad for the economy, if that's what the Family and Medical Leave law was designed to do, then I did a poor job of it, because we've got 22 million people taking advantage of family leave, and over 22 million new jobs.

So you've got to tell people, this is where they stand on these issues -- on the school construction issue, on more teachers, on quality training for all of our teachers, on smaller classes and fewer trailers.

Now, we just got some good news on this school construction issue. Again, we've got a handful of Republicans in the House that are willing to buck the trend, but don't forget, partly it's because we're only five seats away from a majority. But we got the 218th and 219th co-sponsors of the Johnson-Rangel bill. And this is really good news. That means that we could pass it in the House if we could bring it to a vote. We know where the Republican leadership stands in the House, and in the Senate they're equally, if not more, vociferously opposed. So I think our kids deserve better than this.

And let me tell you something. I'm giving you this speech, but anytime they want to meet me halfway and pass this stuff that's good for America, I'd just as soon take school construction off the election-year list. I'd a lot rather have our kids out of the house trailers and out of the unsafe schools, and in school rooms that can be wired to the Internet, and out of schools that are still being heated by coal, than have a political issue in an election year. And so would you.

And there's a lot of labor issues, too. They won't be talking about where they stand and what they're going to do for the 600,000 workers that are injured every year because of poor ergonomics. That's a new economy problem and we ought to deal with it. We ought to continue to protect your health and your work site environment.

Now, look at this -- where do they stand on hate crimes? We passed the hate crimes bill in the Senate this week, and again I want to compliment the handful of Republicans that voted with us. If they hadn't done it, we wouldn't have passed it. But the leadership is still against it. I

think it's important that we pass hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation. I think it's long since time that we did that.

Let me just say one other thing about the gun legislation, because I know there are a lot of AFSCME members that are hunters and probably a lot of AFSCME members that are NRA members. I once had one of those jackets you wear in the deer woods so they won't shoot you instead of the deer that had "Lifetime Membership" on it. The NRA liked me once upon a time when we were doing training programs for kids and solving border disputes between property owners and hunters.

But you know, there is no excuse for us not trying to keep handguns out of the hands of criminals and children. We ought to do that. So we say, what's wrong with requiring child trigger locks on guns and they say, well, if they want to do that voluntarily, it's okay with us. We don't object to it. Don't object to it -- what's the matter with requiring it? They talk about gun control. I don't think it's gun control to say if you've got a background check log that applies when you buy a gun in a gun store, it ought to apply when you buy a gun at a flea market in a city, or at a gun show.

If you've got a law that bans the sale of assault weapons that are meant only to kill people, I don't think there's anything wrong with saying you ought to also ban the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips which you can put on a weapon that's not an assault weapon and turn it into an assault weapon. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. What is wrong with that?

And the only way they ever make this an issue is to scare people, mostly hunters, that we're for gun control. Now, you know, when you leave here today, if you drove here and you go home and you're in a new car, you're in a car with seatbelts, and you may live in a state with a seatbelt law. If you've got a little baby, you may live in a state with a child restraint law, and you're certainly going to drive on a road with a speed limit.

But you never hear anybody talking about car control. Car control is if I come get your car and put it in my garage. Otherwise, it's highway safety. And this is the same deal here. What are you talking about?

Now, what they're going to say is, they're for tougher enforcement of the present gun safety laws, and if we would just enforce our laws, we wouldn't have any problems. Well, first of all, we've increased enforcement over what was done in the previous administration, and I just gave them the biggest increase enforcement budget in history, and guess what? The House voted against it. So they're going to say they're for it, but they voted against it. You need to know these things, and the people need to know these things.

All right, so three points. One, it's a big election. Two, there are real differences. Three, only our side wants you to know what the differences are; what does that tell you about how you should vote.

Now, I want to thank you for the support the New Yorkers here have given to my wife. I thank you for that. And I want to thank you -- Thank you. And I want to thank all of you from the bottom of my heart for the support you have given to Al Gore. And I want you to -- (applause) -- now, here's what I think you ought to say to non-AFSCME members who ask you why they ought to vote for him. And I believe after eight years, I know him better than anybody outside his family.

And here's what I want you to say. I want you to make four points: Number one, this country has had a lot of vice presidents who were great presidents. Thomas Jefferson was a great president who was vice president. So was Theodore Roosevelt. So was -- this is a test. Now, I want you to remember this. See, a lot of people don't know. That's a big problem. People don't know about the Vice President. So was Harry Truman. Right? And Lyndon Johnson gave us Medicare and federal aid to education and all those civil rights laws. So we've got a lot of people who were vice presidents who did great things as president.

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But in the whole history of America -- and I study the history of our country closely -- there has never been, ever, a person who, as vice president, had remotely the positive impact on the welfare of the people of the United States that Al Gore has. He's the best qualified person in my lifetime to run for president.

Now, he broke the tie on the economic plan of 1993, without which we wouldn't all be sitting here cheering today, because that's what got the deficit down, the interest rates down, and the economy going. And as he says, whenever he votes, we win.

He has led our efforts to run the empowerment zone program which has brought thousands of jobs to poor people in poor places that are left behind. He has led our efforts to hook all of our schools up to the Internet and to make sure that the poorest schools got a discount rate so they could afford to log on to the Internet. That wouldn't be a law today if it weren't for Al Gore and that's a big deal.

He has led our efforts in the environmental area to prove we could grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time, and we've proved you could do that, and that's a big deal. He has managed so much of the responsibilities where I've gotten a lot of the credit. He's had -- for the first vice president ever, he's had big responsibilities for our relationships with South Africa, with Russia, with Egypt, with many other countries. And on every tough decision I ever had to make, he was always there. And the American people need to know this.

There has never been in the history of the country a vice president who has had as much responsibility, done as much with it, and had as much of a positive impact on the people as vice president. And they need to know that.

Now, here's the second reason that I think you ought to be for him and what you ought to say to people. And I admit, this is self-interested, since I'm about to become a private citizen, but I would kind of like to see this economic expansion go on a little while.

Now, you need to tell people there is a huge difference in their economic theory. The Vice President wants a tax cut, but he wants it focused on the needs of working families -- for child care, long-term care, college education, increasing the tax credit that we give to the lowest-income folks who have got a lot of kids. He wants it focused on these things. And he wants us to save enough money to invest in education, in health, in the environment and the future of the country, and to keep paying the debt down in a way that saves Medicare and saves Social Security.

Now, let me just tell you something. You need to tell people this, because the other guys have got a better-sounding argument the first time you hear it. They say, hey, you've got this huge surplus, and we'll give you a tax cut three times the size of theirs, maybe four times the size of theirs.

But here is the fact: If you add up the cost of their tax cut, the cost of their plan to partially privatize the Social Security system -- which has other problems, but just the cost of them -- you let younger people start keeping 10 percent of their payroll, all the rest of the people retiring on Social Security, who is going to make up the money? The taxpayers are. They're going to put money into the Social Security system.

So you add up the tax cut, the cost of privatizing the Social Security system, the cost of missile defense and the cost of their other promises, and it adds up to more than the on-budget surplus projected for the next 10 years. And he says, well, the economy is doing great, we're going to have all this money. Look at what they say.

Now, I ought to be saying that since we produced these surpluses, but let me ask you something. Somebody says to you, I want the bigger tax cut, you ought to say two things to them. First of all, to keep paying down the debt, interest rates will be lower, and one percent lower interest rate -- listen to this -- one percent lower interest rates over the next ten years saves the American people \$250 billion on home mortgages alone -- on home mortgages alone.

But here's the next point. If I ask you -- you don't have to answer, but you answer this question in your mind. What is your projected income over the next 10 years. You're answering the question in your mind. How confident are you that that is going to be your actual income over the next 10 years. And let's suppose you say I'm more than 50 percent confident.

Now, if I put a little desk out here and I said I want every one of you who has projected your income over the next 10 years and you're more than 50 percent confident where it is, come right up here now and sign a contract on how you're going to spend it, and you will be obligated - - you will have to spend it regardless, you will think I had lost my mind, wouldn't you? I wouldn't have many takers. I would be sitting up here at this desk, all by myself, waiting for somebody to come up here and sign a contract to sign away your income for the next 10 years.

That's what the Republican tax plan is asking you to do. You need to say, no, thank you; I like this economic expansion, I want interest rates down, I want Americans to have jobs, I want this economy to keep growing.

Okay, so the Vice President's been the best Vice President in history, he'll keep the prosperity going. The third reason: the world is changing fast, we should have a president who understands the future and can take us there. What does that mean? I'll give you a couple of examples.

We just announced the whole mapping of the human gene structure, the human genome. Man, I had to read up for a year just so I'd understand the announcement I was making. (Laughter). But you know what it means? Practically, it means that mothers will take little babies home from the hospital, and they'll have a map of what their bodies are going to work like. And they'll know if they're likely to get certain diseases, and they'll know if they raise them in a certain way, give them a certain diet, give them a certain medication, they can reduce the likelihood of that, and their kids will live longer, better lives. It means we may be able to cure Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and all kinds of cancers and diabetes.

This is a big deal. But if somebody's got a picture of your gene structure in a computer somewhere, should they be able to use it to deny you a job or a promotion or a raise, or to deny you health insurance? I don't think so. Don't you think we ought to have somebody in the Oval Office that really understands this stuff and all the complications of it? I do. I really think so.

This Internet's a great deal, man. You know, when I became President, there were only 50 sites on the whole Worldwide Web, and today there are over 10 million. The Internet alone is going to give us the capacity to bring economic opportunity to rural areas in America that have been left behind. It's great. But all your health records and all your financial records are on somebody's computer somewhere. Don't you think you ought to be able to say, yes, before somebody gets into them?

And wouldn't you like to have somebody who's President who actually helped to draft the initial legislation in Congress to spread the benefits of the Internet to the world, who understands this stuff? I think somebody ought to be President who understands this stuff.

I'll give you another example. Everybody now concedes that the planet is warming, that the polarized cap is melting too fast, that the water levels are rising; we're having more radical variations in weather events; nine of the hottest 10 years in the history -- since we've been measuring for 600 years have occurred in the last 11 years. Nine of the hottest years in history in the last 11 years.

Now, everybody just about accepts it, Even the oil companies, that put a lot of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, they say it's real, we've got to do something about it. The first lunch Al Gore and I had after we took office, in Washington, D.C., in the White House, he took out his little chart and showed me how we were putting more stuff into the atmosphere in the last 30 years than we have in the previous 500, and that was going to do things that would change our children's future forever. It could flood the sugar cane fields of Louisiana, the Everglades in Florida; it could change agriculture in the Midwest. It could change our life forever.

Now, we're trying to solve this in a way that keeps the economy going. But it's a huge deal. Don't you think we ought to have somebody in the White House that understands the importance of this, and knows how to deal with it, and still grow the economy?

Now, so he's the best Vice President; he'll keep the economy going; he understands the future. The fourth reason is, he'll take us all along for the ride. And that's a big deal to me.

The next President gets somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court. They decided 20 cases this year by one vote -- 20. And the next President's going to change the balance on the Supreme Court one way or the other. I want somebody appointing those judges that believes in individual liberties, personal rights, and wants to take us all along for the ride.

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I want somebody that believes all working families ought to have health insurance, and the ability to send their kids to college, and the ability to send their kids to schools where they have preschool and after-school programs and real commitment to standards -- that really understands this stuff, that will take us all along for the ride. And I want somebody who wants us all to go, without regard to race, religion, gender, sexual orientation -- thinks we all ought to go along for the ride.

This country is growing more diverse every day, and it will be a God-send in a global economy. Just look around here. Look at the picture of this -- I wish we could see a picture of this group 40 years ago. I bet it looked different. America looked different. This is a big deal, folks. It is the biggest deal of all.

Now, we have an unusual situation this year where both the presidential candidates speak Spanish. I'm probably the last President of the United States in the 21st century who won't speak Spanish -- and I may learn when I get out of office and have time to do it. But there's a difference here. I'll just give you one example.

There's a guy named Enrique Moreno who lives in El Paso, Texas. Anybody know who he is? He grew up in the barrio there, very modest childhood; worked hard, went to Harvard, graduated summa cum laude, did great in law school. Texas judges said he's one of the three best lawyers in West Texas. So I nominated him to the Court of Appeals. The two Republican senators from Texas wouldn't even give him a hearing. They said he wasn't qualified.

What they really meant is, he won't vote the way we want him to vote. That's what they really meant. As you know, the Governor of Texas is the Republican nominee. If he had asked them to give him a hearing they would have done it. He didn't say a word. There was no Spanish-speaking plea for Enrique Moreno, because he's not part of their America. But he is part of our America. I think we all ought to go along for the ride.

So, remember, I am so grateful to you. I will never be able to thank you enough. You were always there. You'll always be proud of the fights; even the one we lost on health care, we're looking smarter every day. I had a congressman tell me the other day, he said, you know, Mr. President, when I voted for your health care program, they said, now, if you vote for Bill

Clinton's health care program, you'll have more and more people insured by the federal government. He said, I voted for your health care program, and sure enough, more people are insured by the federal government. Why? Because private insurance keeps dropping them, and we have to pick them up.

But in spite of our best efforts, there's still an unconscionable number of people without health insurance. We were right to fight for that.

But what I want you to understand is we've come too far to turn back now. We've changed this country too much to reverse course. And I'm grateful to you, and you've been wonderful to me today. But the test is going to be, now that we've got this great big old country turned around and moving in the right direction, what are we going to do with it.

You go out there and tell everybody, big election, big differences; we want you to know what the differences are. You go out there and tell everybody, Al Gore is the best and most important Vice President we ever had; he'll keep the prosperity going; he understands the future and he can lead us there, and he'll take us all along for the ride.) (tu

Thank you and God bless you.

END 9:55 A.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

For Immediate Release

June 30, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DSCC LUNCH

Private Residence
Newark, New Jersey

2:47 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well, thank you very much, John. Thank you for running. I'm going to say more about it in a moment. I'd like to begin by thanking Hilary and Orin for having us in their home. What a beautiful, beautiful day this is. Not too hot. It's been real hot in Washington. And I want to thank all of you for coming.

Some of you, I think, are here because you're John's friends. Some of you are here because you're good, loyal supporters of the national and the New Jersey Democratic efforts. And I hope all of you are here because you believe in what's at stake.

I want to say, I've never had a chance to say this in his district before, but I am very impressed and grateful for the work that Representative Rothman is doing in the House of Representatives, and I think he's great and I thank you for doing it. And I'm glad Bob Janisczewski (phonetic) and Ray Lesniak are here. They were for me for President when my mother was the only person in America who thought I could run. And I lost my voice and couldn't even talk, and no one knew who I was. It's very hazardous to lose your voice when you have zero name recognition.

Senator Byron, thank you for being here, and Assemblyman Zisa, thank you. And, Assemblywoman Weinberg, I thought that was great about you representing Sharpe James. That was really good.

Reverend McKinney, thank you for the prayer. It got me in a good frame of mind. And I thank all of you who worked on this event. And I'd like to say, Mr. Mayor, I'm glad to be in Englewood; it's a truly beautiful city. And I'm delighted to be here. And you've got to forgive Senator Torricelli; we've got to pass that bill today. It's actually quite important, what's going on in the Senate today. We have a chance to reach a bipartisan agreement to assist the democratic movement and the antidrug movement in Colombia in a way that, contrary to what the critics say, does not in any way, shape or form involve America in the civil war down there, but gives us a chance to save the oldest democracy in Latin America.

And most of the cocaine and most of the heroin that flows into the bodies of the young people in America comes out of Colombia. They have lost control of approximately one-third of the land. And you've now got some people down there that are willing to risk their lives, and they literally have to risk their lives. We've had 500 police officers murdered in the last couple of years in Colombia by the drug-traffickers and their allies in the guerrilla movement. That's, anyway, what they're doing, and it's very, very important and I'm very grateful.

I'd like to make just a couple of points today. You know, I do have a passing interest in that Senate race in New York, and I've got a passing interest in this one in New Jersey and in Senator Robb's election in Virginia.

I think that -- people ask me all the time who is going to win. I told them, John, I thought you were going to win early. I told them that you were the nominee, I thought you would be senator. People ask me and I say I think Hillary's going to win. I do.

When Al Gore was 18 points behind in the polls, I said I thought he would win. I did then and I do now. But I want to talk about what's underneath that, because that's what's really important. Because when you leave here today, people may ask you why you came, and you could obviously say that, well, Orin harassed you and you wanted to do some event -- I've got this written down -- you were dying to do something that was devoid of social cache. That's why -- when I ran for President -- that reminds me of what President Bush said. He referred to me as a governor of a small southern state. And I was so naive I thought it was a compliment. And I still do.

So I'm glad you're doing this event, devoid of social cache. Maybe you did it because you didn't want Deborah to call you any more.

But maybe you did it just because you love John and Joanne, but somebody is going to ask you. And as grateful as we are for your money, I think it's fair that -- I believe that you can do just as much good if on every conceivable occasion between now and November you take the opportunity to talk to people you know about why you're here, why you wrote this check, why you're doing what you're doing.

And if I might, I'd just like to offer a couple of observations to build on the remarks John made. And I hope they will be taken somewhat seriously since I'm not running for anything. Most days I'm okay about it. For the first time since 1974 there is an election coming and going I'm not a part of -- except I'm becoming the surrogate-in-chief for Hillary, for her so she can campaign.

But let me just say, to build on what John said -- in 1992, when I was elected everybody knew what we had to do. The economy was in the tank; all the social trends were going in the wrong direction; Washington was divided in a pitched battle, and the Democrats and the Republicans seemed to operate according to kind of a rule of combat that went something like this: I've got an idea, you've got an idea. Let's fight, maybe we'll get on the evening news.

And it's hard -- you ask Mr. Rothman there what it's like. If he gets in a fight, he can make the news. Even the President sometimes can't get on the evening news unless you're in a pitched battle. I remember one of the most important days of my presidency to me personally was the day I signed the bill creating the national service program, AmeriCorps, for young people. And I knew it was a big deal. And we had all these kids in this volunteer program that had been a model for what we did march up there with me. And Senator Kennedy was there, and I had the pen that John Kennedy used to sign the Peace Corps Act.

And in four years, we had 150,000 young people serve their country in community service in AmeriCorps. It took the Peace Corps over 20 years to reach the same number. And yet, the visibility of the Peace Corps was greater than the visibility of AmeriCorps because the people that night decided this was a good news story, what did it belong on the evening news for. So I understand this. But it didn't make any sense to me because I thought the country was in trouble.

So we all knew what we had to do. We had to fix the economy, and we had to try to change the crime policy, the welfare policy, the education policy of the country, and we had to try to have the government work in a different way. And we had to be engaged in the rest of the world in a different way.

And so we brought this whole set of ideas there, Al Gore and I and the rest of our crowd. And lo and behold, most of them worked pretty well. And I'm very grateful for that. I am profoundly grateful that I had the chance to serve. I am so grateful that we've got over 22 million new jobs and the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded, and the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years. I'm grateful for that.

But the issue that we face is, now what? And I guess what I would like to say to you is that I believe what a nation does with its prosperity is just as stern a test of its judgment, wisdom and character as what a nation does in adversity. There's nobody here today, over 30 years old at least, who cannot recall at least one time in your life when you made a fairly significant mistake, either personally or professionally, not because things were going so badly, but because things were going so well you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate. If you live long enough you'll make one of those mistakes.

And the thing that really bothers me about this election -- I listen to people talk about this election -- I had a friend of mine from Chicago spend the night with me a couple of nights ago. He's 41 years old, he wasn't particularly political before I became President. We got to be very close. None of his friends are politicians, they're not active in the Democratic or the Republican Party. He's just tearing his hair out. He says, all these guys I run around with, they don't think there's very much difference between these two guys. And they sort of say, they seem kind of nice, maybe -- it's like your fraternity had it for eight years, maybe we should give it to their fraternity for a while.

So the first and most important thing I want to say to you is, this is a big election. I've been following this stuff since I was a boy. Not in my lifetime, not one time, have the American

people ever had this much economic progress, this much social progress, this much national self-confidence, with so little internal crisis or external threat. We don't know whether this will come along again in 50 years. We don't know if this will come along again in 100 years. And the pastor there will tell you that nothing lasts forever.

Now, when you're in a tight, and I've been in a few in my life, that kind of keeps you going -- thank God this can't last forever. But neither does anything good. Nothing lasts forever. And I submit to you that those of us who are of age will be judged and held at quite a high standard on the question of what we do with our prosperity, what we do with this magic moment. That's what this whole election ought to be about.

And I believe the reason that John has done so well is that people say, here's this guy that could be off making a gazillion dollars, and laying around three days a week, and he actually cares about whether poor kids get a decent education and whether parents have a safe place to make a home, and all that other stuff. I mean, this is a big deal.

What do you think we should do with this prosperity? Now, in elections, very often the answer depends upon what the question is. We've got a leg up if people really believe that's the question and if they understand what a very, very serious moment this is for our country -- first one I want to make.

The second thing I would like to tell you is that we don't have to run a negative campaign this year, we can just run a campaign on the issues. I think for 20 years, we've had too many of these really hateful campaigns where one candidate would be trying to convince the voters that his or her opponent was just one notch above a car thief. You've seen a lot of those. You've maybe participated in a few.

But this year, we've got a gift here. We can say, look, let's assume from the presidential candidates to the Senate candidates, to the House candidates, everybody is honorable and good. And let's just look at where we differ on what we should do with our future. And I'm just here to tell you, there are real differences, and I'll just mention a couple.

First of all, on economic policy. The Republican -- Governor Bush and the Republican congressional program ought to have a lot of appeal in New Jersey because there are a lot of wealthier people here. And, basically, what they say is, vote for me and I'll give you a \$1.5-trillion tax cut, three times what the Democrats will give you -- more than three times. And I'll partially privatize Social Security and you will do well with that. But you should know that when you do that, all of us who might take our two percent out, somebody's got to fill that up to keep this program from going broke, so that will cost another \$1 trillion over the next decade.

But it sounds good. Their message is, you couldn't mess this economy up with a stick of dynamite. Nobody's going to mess it up; it's on automatic. Information technology is surging ahead. Biomedical technology is surging ahead. This thing is rocking along. Nobody can mess this economy up. Vote for me and I'll give you your money back. That's basically their message.

Our message is, we don't think that this economy happened by accident. We think it happened by prudence and discipline and vision, and we'll give a more modest tax cut, keep paying down the debt to save Medicare and Social Security for the baby boomers, and we think we've got to invest in America.

We've got to give all our kids a world-class education, we've got to make sure we can grow the economy and preserve the environment, we've got to deal with the health and other challenges that families face. There's a whole bunch of investment issues out there.

Now, their argument is, hey, I'm trying to give you money. Have you been listening to me? This is a good economy, I'll try to give you a bunch of money. That's their argument. Our argument is, well, I'll just ask you this. Don't answer out loud, but think to yourself. What is your projected -- do you have an opinion of what your projected income is for the next 10 years? Have you thought about that, what you think you will actually make in each of the next 10 years? That's what all these proposals are based on. You need to know that. Our projected income.

So what do you think your projected income is going to be for 10 years? Now, what's your level of confidence that that's your projected income? How would you feel -- let's assume all of you have a level of confidence over 50 percent -- how would you feel if I asked you to come up here right now and sign a contract committing to spend all your projected income for the next 10 years? That's what the Republicans are asking you to do. And I don't believe I have many takers. That's what they're asking you to do.

And let me just point out this: If by continuing to practice prudence, we keep interest rates one point lower, that's worth \$250 billion in lower home mortgages alone. That's a \$250-billion tax cut. Just for home mortgages. That doesn't count student loans, car loans, business loans and all the economic benefits attendant there. So that's a huge issue.

I think John's right. I think we're right. I think -- and I think we have certain responsibilities to people who haven't fully participated in this economic recovery. We've got the biggest bunch of school kids in our country's history. They are the most diverse group ever, they're our meal ticket to the future -- if we can prove they can all get a world-class education.

These are big issues. We differ on patients' bill of rights, we differ on the Medicare drug benefit, we differ on the nature of environmental protection that we should have, we differ on so many issues. We differ on whether we should take extraordinary efforts to ensure equal pay for women for equal work -- big issue for our people. The average woman is still working 17 weeks a year longer for the same income as the average man in America, for all of the progress we've made. So there are real differences.

And the last point I want to make is this: It would be interesting to see if this is true in New Jersey. Most of the Republicans don't want you to know what the differences are, and that's a dead giveaway about who would win if the people knew what the differences were.

And so, here comes John, riding in on his horse. The guy has never run for office before -- actually committing the unpardonable sin of saying exactly what he thinks, even when it gets

him in trouble, and trusting the people to get it right. And what my experience is -- and I encouraged him once I knew he was getting a little weary from the cost as well as the strain of the primary campaign, and I said: Look, what makes democracy work? This is why this campaign finance reform issue is important -- what makes democracy work? When the people have enough time and information -- and they need both -- they nearly always get it right. Otherwise, why would we still be around here after 200 years? People nearly always get it right.

So this big election, there are real differences. If the voters know what they are, I think they will make the right decision. I just want to make two final points. I want to say a word for the Vice President; then I hope people may ask you about that. I just want you to know, I believe I know him better than anybody outside his family now after eight years.

And there are four things I want all of you to know about that -- four reasons I think he should be elected. Number one is, our Now, when you're in a -- and I've been in a few in my life, that kind of keeps you going. Thank God this can't last forever. But neither does anything good. Nothing lasts forever. And I submit to you that those of us who are of age will be judged and held at quite a high standard on the question of what we do with our prosperity, what we do with this magic moment. That's what this whole election ought to be about.

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when you do that, all of us who might take our two percent out, somebody's got to fill that up to keep this program from going broke, so that will cost another \$1 trillion over the next decade.

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And there are four things I want all of you to know about that -- four reasons I think he should be elected. Number one is, our country has had Vice Presidents who have done great things as President -- Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Lyndon Johnson gave us the civil rights legislation and the federal aid to education and Medicare. But our country has never, not in over 200 years, never had anybody who made nearly anywhere near as difference in a positive way as Vice President as Al Gore. He is by far the most positively impactful Vice President the country ever had. It's not even close.

And I've spent a lifetime studying the history of my country and the institutions of national government. From breaking the tie on the economic plan in '93, to running our employment zone programs to bring economic opportunity to people and places left behind; to ramming through a telecommunications provision to guarantee that the poorest schools in America could be hooked up to the Internet -- something I learned coming to New Jersey when I saw the benefits in some of the schools here -- to managing a lot of our relations with Russia and Egypt and South Africa. No Vice President ever had remotely as much responsibility or done as much good.

The second thing I want to say to you is he shares John's economic philosophy. We don't believe we should go to the American people and say, you guys figure out your projected net income, now let's sign it away for 10 years right now. Because it's all projected, you might get it and you might not. And we don't want to get back into deficits and high interest rates, and give away all the money we need to be investing in our future.

The third thing I want to say is this: You need somebody in office -- another argument for John -- you need somebody in office in 2000 that understands the future. Let me just give you a

couple of examples. You see where we announced the human genome sequencing last week? I had to study that stuff for a year just so I'd understand what I was saying at the press conference last week. It's the most fascinating thing I've ever studied in my life. And I really do believe that those of you who are young enough to still be having kids, I think that it won't be 10 years before American children will be born with a life expectancy of somewhere around 90 years. Within 20 years, I'm confident American children will be born with a life expectancy of 100 years. Anybody who lives to be 65 today has a life expectancy of 83.

It's going to change everything. But people will know that all this genetic information is somewhere in somebody's computer. Don't you think that you ought to have the right to say yes before somebody gets to it, and that people shouldn't be denied jobs or promotions or health insurance because of their genetic profile? And don't you think we ought to have somebody in the White House that really understands this stuff?

Or, you take the Internet. When I became President, there were 50 -- Web sites on the Worldwide Web, in 1993. There are now 10 million -- 50 to 10 million. Now, Al Gore understands this as well as anybody in American life. All of our medical and economic information is going to be on somebody's computer. Don't you think you ought to have to say yes before somebody gets your financial information or your medical records, and don't you think somebody ought to be present who understands it?

And the last thing I'll say -- and it's the thing that I really love about John, because life's been good to him, and he didn't go around being sanctimonious about being successful. I can't stand these successful people who want you to believe they were born in a log cabin they built themselves. And you've all heard a lot of that.

We need a president and we need a Congress who understand the future, who will keep the economic prosperity going, but who also want us all to go along for the ride. That's what the hate crime legislation is all about. That's what the employment nondiscrimination is about. That's what the appointments to the Supreme Court are about. Twenty cases decided this term by one vote. Twenty by one vote. Twenty. And the next president gets between two and four judges.

So whichever one of them gets elected, it's going to change the balance of the Supreme Court. For you to pretend otherwise is to be living in a dream world. And I think we ought to have a president and I think we ought to have a senator from New Jersey and New York, and a Senate and a House that think we all ought to go along for the ride. When you really strip it all away, that's basically why most of us are Democrats. We know we're lucky.

Shoot, man, people ask me, in the toughest days of my presidency, weren't there days that I regretted it. I said, regretted it? Are you kidding me? Another turn in the road and I could be home doing \$200 divorces and deeds and stuff. This is the cost of doing business. The Republicans have decided to impose a certain cost of doing business if you want to be a Democrat and be President. I wouldn't take the world for it. I've had a wonderful time.

But I'll tell you what -- on the good days and the bad days, I wanted everybody along for the ride. And that's another thing about this prosperity -- we need to take everybody along. That's what John will do; and that's what Al Gore will do.

Thank you very much.

END 3:10 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Los Angeles, California)

For Immediate Release

June 24, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT MIX AND MINGLE WITH
ASSOCIATION OF STATE DEMOCRATIC CHAIRS

Westin Century Plaza
Los Angeles, California

2:30 P.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. First, I thank you, Joan, for eight years of friendship and for the remarkable support that you and the state of Massachusetts have given to me and Al Gore and our whole team. Thank you, Governor Davis, for your friendship and for the extraordinary example you've set here in California, with your education legislation, your crime control legislation, and your devotion to our party. And we thank you and we thank you for the day you had with the Vice President up in Northern California yesterday. I liked reading about it. It was good press, and we thank you.

Thank you, Joe Andrew, for leaving their ranks and coming to ours. It's hard for me to say -- I thank Bill Daley for leaving my Cabinet. But he might take it wrong. But I thank him for his willingness to assume the chairmanship of the Vice President's campaign. And I thank you, Donna Brazile and thank you, Johnny Hayes, who is my political memorabilia partner. I thought I had a lot of it until I met Johnny.

I want to thank Maxine Waters, who had me in her home in 1992 to meet with people from Los Angeles after the riots here to deal with the economic and the social problems. And we walked down the streets together -- burned out streets -- and talked to people in a very different Los Angeles, a very different California and a very different America than we have today.

I thank Dennis Archer and Kathy Vick and Bill Lynch and Lottie Shackleford and all the rest of you, so many of you I've known a long, long time. When you were introduced, ma'am, as having been at every convention since '36, I've been at every one since 1972, and that makes me pretty creaky, I guess.

But I'd like to say a few things. First, I just got off the phone with the Vice President and he told me to tell you "hello" and to thank you. Secondly, I don't think you can possibly know how grateful I feel to all of you for your loyal support in '92 and '96 and in the all the times in

between, in the good times and the bad times. I've had a real good time doing this job. And I'm glad it has worked out so well for the American people.

But I want to have a brief, but serious, conversation with you now. We have to win. We have to win the White House; we have to win the Senate; we have to win the House; we have to win these governorships, we need to get some more of them back. And to win we have to make sure that the election is about the right subject. People ask me all the time, who's going to win this or that election? I say, it always depends on what the voters believe the election is about. Very often, the answer you get depends upon the question you ask.

And for me it is a pretty simple matter. I have worked as hard as I could to turn our country around, to get us going in the right direction. You know, you didn't have to be a genius in '92 to figure out what the election ought to be about. The economy was in the tank, all the social indicators were going in the wrong direction, Washington politics was basically a matter of lobbying rhetorical bombs -- or, as I like to say, I got an idea and you've got an idea, let's fight, maybe we'll both get on television tonight. And it often got people on television, but it didn't often change the way we were living.

This country is in good shape now. But there are some huge challenges out there still, and huge opportunities. And I would argue to you that how a country deals with its prosperity is at least as big a test of its judgment and its character as how a country deal with adversity.

For me, it's not even close, because I know that a time like this comes along maybe once every 50 years, where you have a strong economy and improving society, a lot of national self-confidence, the absence of crippling domestic or foreign threats. And those of us who have lived most of our lives have a profound obligation to make sure that this election is about building the future of our dreams for our children.

What are they going to do when all those baby boomers retire, about Social Security and Medicare? How are we going to make aging meaningful in terms of helping people to work who want to work, making sure people have affordable prescription drugs who need it? What about the largest and most diverse group of school children in our country -- will they have world-class educations, or not? Will they all be able to go on to college, or not?

What about the environment? Will we continue to improve it as we grow the economy, or will we go back to the old idea that you can't improve it and grow the economy? Will we really seriously take on this problem of global warming and climate change that Al Gore has been talking about for years and years and years now, and now everybody recognizes it's real and he was right all along? Or are we going to continue to deny that it's a real problem until we see the flooding of the sugar cane in Louisiana and the Everglades in Florida and a lot of farmland dry up and blow away?

What about all the people that have jobs but still have problems raising their children and doing their work? Are we going to do more for child care, for after-school programs, for long-term care for elderly and disabled relatives? Are we going to do more for family leave? Are we going to do more, in short, to help people balance work and family? What about people like a lot

of the people who work in this hotel, that are doing the best they can, but they need some help to reward their work so they can raise their kids, too? We're going to take account of them in the tax policy of the country, in the education policy of the country.

What about the people in places that have been left behind? Are we going to bring them into the free enterprise revolution or not? What about the digital divide? Are we going to close it or let it gape open? What about our responsibilities around the world? What about here at home, where people still get hurt and, unfortunately, sometimes killed because they're black or brown or Asian or gay or they work for the federal government or some other reason? We may never get another chance in our lifetime to take on this big stuff.

So the first thing you've got to do is to convince people back home that this is a huge election. It is just as important as the election of '92 or '96. Every bit as important. Point number two, there are real differences. Point number three, only the Democrats want you to know what they are. Now, you laugh; but it's true, isn't it? Do you ever hear them talk about their primary campaign? They want America to develop amnesia about their primary campaign - who was on what side, who said what, what commitments were made. You don't see them passing out copies of that Texas Republican platform, do you?

I was down in Texas the other night when that thing came out, with a bunch of my old friends. And one of them said it was so bad you could get rid of every fascist tract in your library if you just had a copy of the Texas Republican platform. And I noticed their leader didn't go to the convention; and he didn't repudiate it, he just said, well, he was talking about other things. I say that in a good natured way.

But let me say this. I don't believe we have to have a negative campaign this year. I don't think we should. I'm sick and tired of these cps where this vast amount of money and effort is spent to try to convince people that there's something wrong with their opponents. How many elections have we had in the last 20 years where basically the whole deal is designed to put everybody into a white heat, including our friends in the press, to convince the voters that your opponent is just one step above a car thief. Now, we don't have to do that this year. This country is in good shape.

And what we ought to do is have a real debate here. We ought to say, let's assume that everybody is honorable; let's assume that they're pretty much going to do what they say they're going to do. That's what history indicates is the case, by the way. Most Presidents do pretty much what they say they're going to do, and when they don't, we're normally glad. Aren't you glad Lincoln didn't keep his campaign promise not to free the slaves? Aren't you glad President Roosevelt didn't keep his campaign promise to balance the budget, when unemployment was 25 percent?

But basically, Presidents do what they say they're going to do. So we can have this debate. So you've got to go out and say, folks, whatever your take on this is politically, this is a huge election. We may never get another chance in our lifetime to actually vote to make the future of our dreams for our children.

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Secondly, we have real differences. I'll just mention a few. We think we ought to raise the minimum wage and they don't. We think we ought to pass a patients' bill of rights, if somebody gets hurt they ought to be able to sue, and they don't. We think we ought to have a voluntary prescription Medicare drug benefit available to everybody who needs it, and they don't. We think we ought to close the gun show loophole, require child trigger locks, and not import large-capacity ammunition clips that make a mockery of our assault weapons ban. And we don't believe anybody is going to miss a day in the deer woods if we do that. But they're not for it.

We think we ought to put 50,000 police on the street in the highest crime neighborhoods, because the 100,000

edw [we put on worked so well, and they disagree. We think we ought to build 6,000 new schools and modernize another 5,000 a year for the next five years, and they don't. We think that we ought to require schools to turn around or shut down failing schools, school districts in states, but we ought to give them enough money so that every child who needs it can be in an after-school or a summer school program, and they don't. We think we ought to put 100,000 more teachers out there in the early grades, to lower class size, because it has a direct impact on student achievement, and they don't.

We think we ought to keep trying to clean up the air and the water and deal with climate change and develop alternative sources of energy and support the development of cars that get better mileage, and they voted against that stuff every year I put it up. They just don't agree. If you're buying gasoline in Chicago and Milwaukee now, you probably wish we'd move faster to develop alternative sources of fuel and higher mileage vehicles.

So in all these things, I think we're right and I think they're not, but they ought to be given a chance to have their piece, say their piece. Most important of all, on how we're going to keep the prosperity going, they think that we ought to have a tax cut that costs over half of the projected new surplus, which is real big; and that we ought to spend the rest of it on -- the projected surplus -- on the partial privatization of Social Security, on a big national missile defense system and on whatever else they promise to spend money on, even though all that together is more than even the new surplus projections.

Now, we're taking a more politically risky position at a time when people feel kind of relaxes. The Vice President says, why don't we not spend all our projected surplus. What's your projected income for the next decade, folks? Are you ready to spend it all tomorrow? Everybody that wants to spend your entire projected income for the next decade should seriously consider changing parties, because that's their position. And everybody that doesn't, who's not in our party, should seriously consider changing parties.

So what does Al Gore say? He says, why don't we just start by saying there is at least 20 percent of this projected surplus we are not going to spend, because we're getting it from your Medicare taxes, anyway. So we'll put it over to the side and we'll pay the debt down with it, and then we'll take the money we save from doing that and put it into Medicare so when the baby

boomers retire we can keep Medicare alive, we won't bankrupt for kids. And, by the way, we're not going to spend all this projected surplus.

And why don't we have a generous tax cut that helps working people, especially at modest incomes, to set up their own retirement accounts and invest, if they want, in the stock market and generate wealth, while we don't mess up Social Security, and then help others with the cost of child care or long-term care or paying for our children to go college, so we can open the doors of college to all, and one that gives wealthy people the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America to create jobs we give them to invest in poor areas in Latin America or Asia or Africa. And why don't we do that -- And then we'll still have some money to invest in the future.

I know what I think is more likely to keep this prosperity going. People ask me all the time now that I've just got a few months left, seven months left. They say, what was the secret of your economic policy? What was the genius that Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all of them brought to Washington? And I look at them and I say, arithmetic. The Democrats brought arithmetic back to Washington. If we didn't have it, we didn't spend it; we made a commitment to cut out programs that we didn't have to have, so we'd have more to invest in education and technology and the future.

But I'm just telling you, these are big issues. And you ought to clarify them. But if the public believes that this is a big election and it's about building the future of our dreams for our children; and if the public believes that there are real differences -- and I only touched on a few of them -- there are real differences in our position on what it really means to include women and gays and people of color, people of all different backgrounds in the government and in the life of America.

The next President is going to get two to four appointments to the Supreme Court. They've made different commitments about what their heart-felt positions are on the right to choose, for example. And I think you have to assume that both these people now running for President will do what they have promised to do on this. You have to assume that they are honorable and they will. So you have big differences. And we can have a great debate.

Let me just say one other thing I want you to know. I think I know Al Gore about as well as anybody alive except his family. And I've seen him at every conceivable kind of circumstances, in good and bad times for him, good and bad times for me, good and bad times for our administration. There are three things that I think you ought to know -- or four.

Number one, this country has had a lot of Vice Presidents who made great Presidents. Thomas Jefferson was Vice President; Teddy Roosevelt was Vice President; Harry Truman was Vice President; Lyndon Johnson was Vice President. But we have never had anybody who, while he was Vice President, made so many decisions and did so many things that helped so many Americans remotely compared with Al Gore. He has been by far the most important Vice President in the history of the United States of America.

Whether it's breaking the tie on the economic plan, or leading our empowerment zone program to bring economic opportunity to poor people, or leading our efforts in technology, or our efforts to reinvent government that has given us the smallest federal government since Kennedy was President. Or our efforts to continue to improve the environment while we grow the economy. Or our efforts with Russia or South Africa, or our arms control policy, or sticking by me when I made very, very tough decisions in Haiti and Bosnia and Kosovo, if financial aid to Mexico -- a lot of them some of you didn't agree with me on. He was always there.

The second thing I want you to know is it's my opinion, based on a lifetime of experience with this economy and some fair understanding of it, that our economic policy, the one he has embodied, is far more likely to keep this economic expansion going and get the most out of it.

Thirdly, and in some ways most important of all to me, I think that we ought to have a President in a time of prosperity who is genuinely committed to helping all families participate in it; to giving all people a sense that they belong in America; and to giving everybody a chance to express their opinions and to be part of the future.

And fourthly, I think it's quite important that we have a President that really understands what the future is going to be like, that really gets it. I don't know how many people I've said -- heard tell me that Al Gore is the first person that ever talked to them about the Internet. He said when we took office that someday the whole Library of Congress would be on the Internet, and I thought it was something that would happen in 20 or 30 years and it's just about there right now.

He was the first person I ever heard talk about global warming. The first lunch we ever had, in January of '93, he was showing me his charts. Now everybody says it's real. I had to listen to eight years of some people saying it was some sort of subversive plot to undermine the American economy.

I'll give you another example, something really important in the future. We're going to have all of our medical records and all of our financial records on somebody's computer somewhere. I think it's important whether you have privacy rights. I think you ought to be able to -- you ought to have to give specific approval before somebody goes into somebody else's computer and gets your financial records or your medical records in ways that can affect your life. I think that's important. That's a big issue.

I could give you lots and lots of other examples. I'll give you one chilling one. The same things that are working in the information technology revolution that are going to give you little computers you can fit in the palm of your hand, with a screen that works just like the Internet so you can bring up things -- you'll even be able to watch CNN news or something on a little screen you're holding in your hand -- all that's going to happen in weapons systems. The biggest challenge we're going to face in the future, I think, over the next 20 years will be from the enemies from the nation state, from the terrorists, the drug runners, the weapons peddlers, and people who will have miniature weapons of mass destruction -- chemical, biological, God forbid maybe even nuclear weapons. We need somebody who understands this stuff, somebody that's worked at it for years and years, somebody that gets it.

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So that's my pitch. We've got -- our nominee is the best Vice President the country ever had. He is clearly the person who is offering an economic strategy most likely to keep the recovery going. He has a clear commitment to help all the people to make sure nobody gets left behind. And he understands the future and can lead us there.

Now, if the public understands, if the people we represent believe that this is a huge election, that it's a chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children; if they believe there are real differences; if they understand what the differences are; then he will be elected President, and Hillary will be elected to the Senate, and so will a lot of others, and we will win the House back and we will be celebrating.

Now, that's your job. You've got to make sure people understand what the deal is. That's what our job is. This is a happy job. You never have to say a bad word about a Republican. All you have to do is go out and say, here is where we are, here is where we want to go, here are the honest differences and, at least our party would like you to know exactly what they are.

Thank you and God bless you.

END 2:47 P.M. PDT

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Phoenix, Arizona)

For Immediate Release

June 22, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DNC LUNCHEON

Ritz Carlton Hotel
Phoenix, Arizona

2:10 P.M. MST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Fred. Thanks for the great work you did at the White House. Thanks for this today. Thank you, Steve. And to all of you who contributed and raised money and made this a success, I thank you.

I want to thank Mayor Rendell. Remember that old joke about W.C. Fields, he said he wanted on his tombstone, "All things considered, I'd rather be in Philadelphia"? Mayor Rendell would always rather be in Philadelphia. But he's seen a great deal of America here, and he's done a great job for us.

I also want to introduce Congressman Bob Filner and his wife, Jane, from San Diego, who's here with us today. I'm glad to see you. They're taking me to San Diego after I leave you.

I know about half of you were in the other room, and I'm loath to repeat my speech -- although I'm reminded once I went to -- I once went to a concert when I was governor of Arkansas that Tina Turner held in Little Rock. And the guy that ran the place where we had the concerts knew that I was a huge Tina Turner fan. And so was Hillary, and she was out of town and she was really steamed that she couldn't go. So I took six of our friends and I went to this Tina Turner concert.

And she was just making her big comeback, and she sang all these new songs. Then at the very end of the concert she started -- the band started playing "Proud Mary," which was her first hit, and we'd all heard it before. And so Tina Turner goes up to the microphone, everybody cheers like crazy, and she said, "You know I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it." So maybe I should just give the same speech I just gave.

I want to say to all of you how much I have loved coming here to Arizona, and working with the people here on a wide variety of issues; how grateful I am for the service of all the Arizonans in the administration, including Fred and Bruce and Hattie, and all the others; and how profoundly grateful I am that we actually won Arizona's electoral votes for the first time since Harry Truman was President.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to the Native American tribal leaders who are here. When I became President, I had spent a lot of time -- and so had Hillary, actually -- going out into Indian country, across America. And, first of all, there is no monolith there. Some of the tribes have great wealth and success because of their gaming operations, and some of them have diversified into operations. Others, including the Navajos in northern New Mexico, up near the Colorado border, the Lakota Sioux in southern South Dakota, are still so physically isolated that more than half the people are unemployed. In some places, more than half the people don't have telephones. And the relationship between our national government and the Native American tribes, in my judgment, have never really been as it should have been, and certainly has never been consistent with the promises we made in return for all the land and minerals and other things that we took so long ago.

So, shortly after I became President in 1994, I invited all the tribal leaders in America to come to the White House, for the first time since James Monroe was President in the 1820s. And we had an incredible day there. But it was very instructive for the senior members of my administration because we had people who could fly in on their private jets, and other people where the tribal members had to pass the hat to raise enough money to buy an airplane ticket.

And I just say that to you here in Arizona because we have to keep working on this. We have come a long way, we've made a lot of progress -- we've done a lot in education. I've got an economic initiative out there that I think we'll pass this year, that I believe will make a big difference. But we have a lot of work to do. And we are beginning to build -- I'm happy to say, we're beginning slowly to build some bipartisan coalition for building the right kind of commitment to empowerment and equality. And I thank you all for being here, and I think the Vice President will show up at your --

I would like to also say that a lot of people are -- when I go to these events, people say, thank you, and I look around and wonder if they're talking about somebody that's still breathing. And so -- I got a great call the other day from a very distinguished gentleman who said, "You know, Mr. President, for a lame duck you're still quacking quite loudly." I like that.

We're trying to get a lot of things done, but we're also in an election. And I just want to give you a couple of observations. First of all, insofar as we have had any success over these last seven and a half years, the real credit belongs to the people of this country for supporting us and for what they do outside the government sphere all day, every day, and to the fact that I think we had good ideas. People come up to me all the time and they say, gosh, you really brought a certain political skill to the office. And I said, what difference does it make? If we had the wrong ideas, we wouldn't be where we are. It really matters what your ideas are and whether you can turn those ideas into policy.

And Janet Napolitano said in the previous event something that I really appreciated very much. She talked about the work I did in 1990, when I had no idea that I would be here, to write a document for the Democratic Party through the Democratic Leadership Council, that said, okay, here's where we think America is, here's what our core values are, here are the specific things we would do if we had a chance to govern.

Really it's like, being President's not all that different from any other job. It matters how hard you work, and it matters whether what you're working on is right. And I say that because we're so fortunate this year to have such a good set of circumstances in the country, although we are reminded to be a little humble about it -- like the gas price rises in the Middle West, there should be a little reminder that there's no such thing as a static reality. Things are changing in this country very rapidly, and in the whole world.

But we're very fortunate. And the only thing that I really worry about is whether we kind of get lulled to sleep in the midst of our own prosperity and progress and think that there are no serious consequences to this election. This election is every bit as important as the elections of 1992 and 1996.

In '92, we all knew what we had to do; we had to change something. We not only had to change the economic and social policies of the country, we had to change the way politics works -- because Washington had virtually become paralyzed in the shouting match between the two political parties. I'd sit home in Little Rock and look at the news at night, and it appeared to me that the paradigm for how it was working was something like, I've got my idea, you've got your idea; let's fight. Because if we don't fight, neither one of us will get on the evening news. Now, we won't get anything done, but we might get on the evening news.

And I was stunned that when I became President, and I started trying to implement some of our ideas, say, for welfare reform, people would say, well you can't do that, that's supposed to be a Republican idea. And I'd say, well, what is that? And there was never any substance, it was just like a tag. And if you had the tag, whether it was crime or welfare reform, that was a Republican tag. If it was education or health care, that was a Democratic tag. And that doesn't tell you very much. That's just a category. That's a word; you have to give meaning to it.

So we've really worked very hard in the last seven and a half years to actually show up every day, have ideas, and try to implement them. And it's amazing; it's like any other kind of job, it actually yields to effort. And I say that because it's very important to me, as someone who is not a candidate for the first time in more than a quarter-century, that you understand that this is a really, really significant decision that is in your hands. And that we are very fortunate to be able to make this decision at a good time for our country.

And I hope we will make it in a very positive way -- which doesn't mean that I don't think there ought to be any fights and arguments. That's what elections are for. Then you have to do your best to govern after the election. But I've been so troubled, in the last 20 years, how many elections seem to have revolved around both sides, as I said in the other meeting, trying to convince the voters that their opponents were just one notch above a car thief. And the truth is, if you look at the whole history of American politics, presidents pretty much do what they say they're going to do when they run. And when they don't do it, we're normally glad they didn't.

I'll give you an example. Aren't you glad that Abraham Lincoln didn't keep his campaign promise in 1860 not to free the slaves? Aren't we glad that -- he basically said, my commitment is to limit slavery, but I won't try to free them. And he got in the middle of the Civil War, and he

realized that in good conscience, it was wrong. At least three times a week, I walk into the room in the White House where Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, and thank God that he changed his mind.

Aren't you glad that Roosevelt didn't keep his campaign promise in 1932? Look at Bert laughing over there -- he brought me a Roosevelt letter the last time I was here, so I could read it. And he promised in '32 that if he got elected, he'd balance the budget. Well, it was a good thing for me to promise, but a very bad thing for Roosevelt to promise, because the unemployment rate of the country was 25 percent. And if he'd balanced the budget, it would have made the economy worse. So, instead, he experimented until he found something that was working. But by and large, people do what they say they will do.

One of the nicest things that I have read -- and I have read some things about myself that weren't so nice, as you might imagine -- (laughter) -- but one of the nicest things that I've read -- way back in '95, when we were in political trouble, a distinguished presidential scholar of the presidency and the media named Thomas Patterson, did an analysis of our record and said that I had already kept a higher percentage of my campaign commitments than the previous five presidents, even though I made more of them.

I say that -- the people on our side, we took these ideas seriously. We took these policies seriously. We really worked at them. And this is -- I'm not giving you a slogan or a 30-second ad, but I'm saying how I hope you will approach this election. We can approach the election and say, okay, we've got two candidates for president that are honorable people. We have candidates for the Senate and the House that are honorable people. Let's tee it up and see what they expect to do with this magic moment.

The most important thing for the Democrats is that people understand how important the election is. We knew what the deal was in '92 and we knew it was real important. We had a huge turnout. The country was flat on its back. But I say this over and over again, but I'm going to say it again -- there's not a person in the world over 30 years old that cannot remember at least one instance when you made a personal or a professional mistake, not because things were so bad, but because things were so good that you thought there was no consequence to the failure to concentrate. There is nobody who has lived very long who can't remember at least once when that happened to you. That is what we have to avoid.

If we understand that this is like the moment of a lifetime, and then we say, okay, what are we going to do with our prosperity, I hope the answer is: big things. It's a chance to paint the future that we all want for our children.

How are we going to deal with the aging of America, when all the baby boomers like me get in the retirement system there will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security? How will we manage that? Both candidates have an idea about Social Security; the Vice President said more about Medicare. Who's right?

How are we going to grow the economy and deal with the challenges of the local environment, where you have a lot of growth, and the global environment and global warming,

which is real and can change everything about the way our children live? How are we going to be a force for peace and freedom and decency throughout the world, and minimize the new security challenges that the young people in this audience will face from chemical, biological, nuclear weapons that, like everything else, will benefit from, unfortunately, new technology and miniaturization? How are we going to give all of our kids a world-class education? How are we going to make sure everybody has got a chance to participate in this economy?

One of the things we are doing in a bipartisan fashion in Washington now is pushing this New Markets legislation of mine. I've been on two reservations lately to say that America ought to give people with money the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America we give them to invest in poor areas in Latin America and Asia and Africa -- because we'll never have a better chance to bring the benefits of free enterprise to neighborhoods that have been left behind.

See, these are big questions. These are questions -- most of these questions we couldn't even ask back in '92 because we were \$300 billion in debt.

Now, so it's a big election, ought to be about big things. As Ed said, there are real differences. I'll just mention three or four. There's a huge difference between the Democratic take on where we are and how to keep the prosperity going, and the Republican take. They think that we ought to have a tax cut that costs somewhere between \$1.3 trillion and \$1.6 trillion. And they say, well, the projected surplus is bigger than that. But if you take their Social Security proposal and other things -- the missile defense and all those other proposals -- it's way more than the projected surplus.

We think -- the Vice President said the other day -- we ought to take \$400 billion of this projected tax cut, that's going to come right out of the Medicare taxes you pay, and take it out of the budget, save it, wall it off, and use it to pay down the debt until we need it for Medicare. Now, that has two benefits. First of all, you're protecting the money and paying down the debt. Secondly, you're protecting yourself in case all that projected surplus doesn't materialize.

I think it is really a mistake to decide now to spend all of this projected surplus over the next 10 years, which may not materialize. And they say back, well, you guys want to spend a lot of it. We do. But the difference is you have to approve the spending bills every year, so if the money is not coming in, you just don't approve the bills. But if you build it all into a tax cut on the front end, it's gone.

So we want a tax cut, too, but we think it ought to be more modest in scope because the main thing we can do for the economy is to keep these interest rates down, keep paying that debt down, keep this thing going. That's a big difference.

Then what about including people? We think we ought to raise the minimum wage again; they don't. We think we ought to pass a patients' bill of rights; they don't. We think we ought to provide a Medicare prescription drug benefit to every senior at an affordable price on a voluntary basis; and their plan doesn't do that.

Now, you ought to tell your friends out here that are independents and Republicans -- you ought to listen to them, hear their side out, let them say why they differ with us. But don't pretend they don't differ. I got a big laugh in the other meeting when I said there are three things you need to know about this election: it's important; there are differences between the candidates and the parties; and only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. But there's a certain truth to that.

And I think it's important that we have a great, decent, candid, clear national debate -- without trying to impugn anybody's personality, integrity, but to say this is -- we have been given a gift here and we can talk about it, and we can chart our future. We're not bailing water out of a leaky boat anymore; now we've got a chance to really just think about where we're going.

There are lots of other issues. This country is fast becoming the most multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious democratic society in the world. How do we intend to go forward into the future, actually not just tolerating each other, but celebrating our differences, and feeling secure enough to do it because we know our common humanity is even more important than all of our differences? This is a huge question.

You think about what I have to -- how have I spent the time you gave me as President on foreign policy. I worry about Northern Ireland, I worry about the Middle East, I've worried about Kosovo, I've worried about Bosnia, I worry about the tribal wars in Africa. All over the world, in this so-called modern world, people are still out there killing each other because they're from a different tribe, a different faith, a different race, a different ethnic group. And still in America we have hate crimes where people get killed just because of their race or their religion or because they're gay.

This is a big deal. We've got to figure out -- we're not going to be able to do good around the world unless we are good here at home. And we have the opportunity to honestly discuss this. How are we going to get this done now? And you can say, well, you can say all this high-minded stuff because you're not running. In the end there will be some 15-second slogan that will pierce to the heart of this. That does not have to be the case. That does not have to be the case.

We had two guys offer, I think -- or one man offered the other day a million dollars to the presidential candidates' favorite charity, \$500,000 each, if they'd just show up and have a debate on nothing but education -- and he happens to be a Republican. And the Vice President -- I was proud of him -- said, absolutely, right now, I'll do it.

But I think the more we just sit around and treat each other like we've got half-good sense and we know what we're doing and we talk about what kind of future we want, the better off we're going to be. Now, do I believe it helps the Democrats? You bet I do. Do I think, if that's the environment of the election, Al Gore will be elected, that we'll pick up seats in the Senate, including one I hope in New York, that we'll take the House back? Yes, I do. I think that. But I might be wrong. I trust the American people. Why are we around here after 200 years? Because most of the time we get it right, if we have enough time and enough information. The sort of

internal compass of the American people, if it's not threatened, normally comes out all right. That's why we're still around here after all this time.

So that's what I'd like to ask you all to think about. I'd like to ask you to go out and talk to people about it, because there is a lot more consensus on a lot of these issues than I think we think, number one; number two, there are a lot of these issues that nobody has got the answer to, that we need debates on.

I mentioned in the other room -- I want to mention again -- i was thrilled when I found out that your Republican governor and the whole Democratic legislature, all the Democratic legislators were pushing an education initiative to lower class size, raise teacher pay and improve the quality of education. That's a great thing. Because I can tell you this -- if we can't provide a world-class education to all of our kids, then we will never be the country we ought to be.

And I can also tell you that we can do it. I was in a public school in Spanish Harlem in New York the other day. Two years ago, 80 percent of those kids were reading below grade level and doing math below grade level. Two years ago. Today, 74 percent of them are at or above grade level. In two years.

I was in a little school in Kentucky the other day where way over the half the kids are on free or reduced lunch. They were identified as a failing school that had to do better. They were going to have to shut down or turn around. And in three years, they went from 12 percent of their kids reading at or above grade level to 57 percent. They went from 5 percent of their kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent. They went from zero percent of their kids doing science at or above grade level to two-thirds of them. And it's one of the 20 best grade schools in Kentucky today -- over half the kids from very poor homes.

So we can do this. That's another thing. I'd like to see this debated. I've been working on this school reform business for 20 years. And when we started -- when Hillary and I started with the schools at home, we kind of thought we knew what needed to be done, and some of the stuff was obvious. But now, we actually know. Now there are a remarkable number of success stories like this about educating our children. We know how to do it now. There's not a state in America where you can't identify a cluster of schools that were in the tank that are performing at very high levels now. Not a one. So, what's our excuse for the others? That ought to be a big source of debate in this election.

How are we going to close the digital divide? What about the Indian reservations, where half the people don't have phones? I was introduced the other day, on the Navajo reservation, by a 13-year-old girl that won a contest -- and she was very brilliant -- and she won a contest, she won a computer. And she couldn't get on the Internet because there was no phone line in her home.

So who's got the best ideas about what to do with that? The point I'm trying to make is, there's plenty of stuff to debate. And I don't think the American people would be bored if we had an honest, civil, explicit discussion about the big challenges out there. Now, do I think we would

win? You bet I do, in a heartbeat. I believe that. But I might be wrong. We ought to suit up and find out.

And I'll just say this about Al Gore: I think I now know Al Gore better than anybody outside his family. We had lunch once a week, the whole time we've been there together, except when he had something more pressing to do -- when he started running for president. And I picked him not only because we shared a certain orientation toward the challenges of the 1990s, but because he had experience in Washington I didn't have, and he knew things about technology and the environment and arms control and foreign policy I didn't know.

And it has been one of the best decisions I ever made in my entire life about anything. And I can tell you, on every tough decision that I had to make -- and we made some tough ones -- when we decided to help Mexico, something that would have a big effect on Arizona -- the Mexican economy, it collapsed a few years ago -- the day we did it, there was a poll that said by 81 to 15, you, the American people, thought I shouldn't do it. That was a real tester.

But we did it, because I knew it was the right thing to do. And I figured, a poll is like a horse race, it's not over yet. People pay you to win and to do the right thing for the country, and if it comes out all right, it's all right.

But Al Gore was for that. When we went into Bosnia and Kosovo, Al Gore was for that. When we went in to save democracy in Haiti, Al Gore was for that. He broke the tie on the economic plan of '93, where we had no votes from the other party. And if it hadn't been for that economic plan passing, the rest of us -- we wouldn't be sitting here in this nice hotel having this lunch today.

So he as a person of extraordinary intelligence, extraordinary energy, and like me, he loves all these issues. He also knows a lot about these technological issues that we're going to have to face. For example, we've got to close the digital divide. Wouldn't you like to have somebody as President who knew how to do it, and who had been working on it for six or seven years?

We've got to deal with the privacy issues. We're all going to have all our records on computers, all our financial records, all our health care records. If you had to put up health care records to get health insurance, don't you think there ought to be some limit to who gets access to them? Shouldn't you have to give your own permission before you give them up? Do you think you ought to be denied a job because somebody can log onto the Internet and find out something about you your first cousin may not know? These are big issues.

So, anyway, I realize this is not a traditional political speech, this is a conversation. But you just remember what I told you. It's a real big election, real big issues, honest differences -- not bad guys and good guys, honest differences. And if people know what they are, we'll win. That's what you have to help us do.

Thank you and God bless you.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Diego, California)

For Immediate Release

June 22, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DNC DINNER

Bertrand at Mr. A's Restaurant
San Diego, California

8:37 P.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Let me say, first of all, Mike, you gave a wonderful talk and you gave a wonderful toast. And I like it either way. And I want to thank you and Carol and all of you for the work you did to make this a success tonight. I'd like to thank California's First Lady, Sharon Davis, for being here. I'd like to thank Representative Bob Filner and his wife, Jane, who are here. Thank you for being here. Former Representative and Chief of Staff to the Governor Lynn Shank, thank you for being here.

And I also would like to thank the leaders of the Barona and Viejas tribes for their support and for the example they're setting. We had a great talk around the table tonight about the differences among the tribes in terms of economic circumstances and potential in Indian country throughout America. And it's one of the great honors of my presidency has been the opportunity I've had to spend more time with more people from the Native American tribes and the Tribal government than any President probably in history. I invited all the Tribal leaders to meet me at the White House, for the first time since James Monroe was President in the 1820 that happened. It was quite wonderful. So it's been a great thing.

I would like to thank Bertrand, the owner of Mr. A's Restaurant, for a wonderful dinner tonight. Was this great, or what? When I used to do these back home and we didn't eat like this - (laughter) -- I feel pretty great about it.

I'd like to thank Mayor Rendell who I did -- he was looking forward to a fairly peaceful retirement of a year or so, and then he was going to ascend to the governorship of Pennsylvania, which I still hope he will do. So I told him I had this little part-time job I was interested in him doing. And he has part-timed himself all across America, exhausting himself, trying to make sure that we preserve the progress in this country and preserve the prosperity. And I'm very, very grateful to him. He's been a great leader for our party. And all these young people that work on these events, I'm grateful to them.

I'll tell you a story -- I don't know about a joke, but I'll tell you a story. You gave the Irish blessing so -- my people are from a place called Fermanagh. They were Irish Protestants living on the border -- Fermanagh is a little village literally on the border of Northern Ireland and Ireland, in the west. And my mother was a Cassidy. So we found the Protestant Cassidys, we traced them all the way back to a farmhouse built in the 1750s. And I went to Ireland in '95, they actually gave me a watercolor of the farmhouse, which is the only -- the oldest known residence of relatives of mine -- at least, any relative that's willing to admit it still.

And you know I've had this remarkable love affair with Ireland, because I got the United States involved in the peace process and it's worked out in a remarkable way. I went to Dublin in '95, we had 100,000 people in the street, it was really one of the great days of my life. I turned on the Christmas lights in Belfast, and there were 50,000 people there. It's just been unbelievable.

What happens, especially when you're not running anymore, you tend to get a little free with what you say. Sometimes you actually commit the sin of saying exactly what you think. I can say this because we've had a happy ending now. You may remember, for a while we got the institutions of self-government up to Northern Ireland and everybody is working along together, and then all of a sudden it all gets taken down because they can't agree on the decommissioning issue. And it was maddening. And all these people had been working for years, many of them a lot longer than I had, though that after we had actually ended the Irish civil war and we had got it all done, it was all going to pieces again.

And I said -- not thinking about stereotyping the Irish, of which I am one -- I said, this reminds me -- I said these two sides in Northern Ireland remind me of two guys that are kind of drunk and they decide they're going to quit drinking. And they walk out of the bar together, arm in arm, and right as they get to the swinging door they say, no, and they turn around and go back.

So I was blasted all over Ireland. Clinton let us down. He's stereotyping the Irish. And I was really worried about it until about three days later I got in the mail a copy of a letter to the editor from the Irish Times saying I see all this criticism of President Clinton for comparing us, and all those things he said. And he said, it is terrible what he said; I've been a drunk all my adult life, and I resent being compared to those people. So sometimes when you're uptight, you've just got to tell a joke and laugh it off and go on.

But, anyway, I'm delighted to be here and I'm delighted that -- I sort of thought there would come a time this year when I'd show up at one of these dinners and no one would be there. And so I'm very grateful to you. I'm grateful to the people of California and I'm very grateful to the people of San Diego. I've had a special relationship with this community from the beginning. I love it here. My family and I have had a wonderful set of experiences here. We had a wonderful vacation here one year around -- a springtime vacation. And I'm particularly glad that I came here tonight and somebody showed up.

I got a call last week from a very distinguished citizen of the world who said, "Well, Mr. President, for a lame duck, you're still quacking rather loudly." So that's what I'm trying to do.

I would like to just say a couple of things to follow up on what Mayor Rendell said. I thank you for coming here and we'll do our best to invest the funds you have given us wisely. But we need your help in telling people why you feel this way. People ask me all the time, they come up to me and they say, who do you think is going to get elected? And I always say, I think the Vice President is going to win. I do. I said it a year and a half ago when he was 18 points behind in the polls.

Then they kind of say, do you think Hillary is going to win? I say, of course -- I mean, what do you expect me to say? But I actually believe it. But let me say what I think the real issue is in all these Senate and the House and the President's race. And I do think we're going to win. But the issue is, what do the voters think the election is about? This is one of those deals -- we've got a lot of trial lawyers in this room. Sometimes the answers people give depends upon the way the question is asked. Or what you think the real question is. And this election -- really, the outcome of this election is going to be determined, by and large, by what people think this election is about.

And I think if we can demonstrated, number one, that we've been working here for eight years with a core set of ideas designed to give opportunity to every responsible citizen and to create a community in which any American can be a part; and that we've tried to be a force for peace and freedom and prosperity and decency around the world; and that what we need to do is to build on that, not undo it -- if we can make that point.

Then the second point we need to make is that we have to decide, we need to make a conscious decision about what to do with our prosperity. I mean, sometimes I feel like a broken record but I will say this over and over and over again. Anybody who is over 30 years old can remember at least one time in his or her life when you have a made a whopping mistake, not because you were faced with adverse circumstances but because things were rocking along so well you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Anybody who is over 30 years old can remember at least one time in your personal life or in your work life when a mistake has been made because it seemed that there were no consequences to the failure to concentrate because everything was rolling alone.

And if you really listen to the two sides, the other side really seems to be saying, look, we need to just take this thing while it's coming because nobody can mess up this economy if they try. And I don't believe that. I think we need to make a conscious decision as a people that we have an obligation, a solemn obligation to our children's generation, to use this magic moment to deal with the big issues out there, the big challenges, the big opportunities of this century.

Now, if you get that far, then you have to say what are those challenges, what do you think they ought to do, and are there any real differences between the parties? And I have to tell you that I think it's obvious what we ought to be doing. We need to figure out how to keep this prosperity going and spread its benefits to people and places who have been left behind.

We need to figure out how to make people who have jobs better able to balance their responsibilities at work and their responsibilities at home -- something America still has not done

enough on. Child care, preschool, after school, health care for the families that are working out there that don't have it yet. All of those things.

We need to figure out how to continue to grow the economy and do even better at preserving and improving the environment, and especially dealing with the problem of climate change. We've proved that we can get the crime rate down. We ought to commit ourselves to making this the safest big country in the world. We can do that in five years, if we made up our mind to do it. We ought to commit ourselves to paying America's debt off. We're not running deficits anymore, we're running surpluses. I think it ought to be a national policy goal to pay off the public debt. That's what I believe.

Now, I have to tell you, that's a very controversial position among Democrats, because we also want to spend more money to educate people, to provide health care to poor people. But here's why I'm for that. If we keep paying the debt down, we'll keep interest rates down. It'll be easier for people to borrow money. It will be easier to invest. There will be more jobs. There will be higher incomes. And we'll keep the expansion going along. And the best social program any government can provide is a good private sector jobs. You've got to have a growing economy first.

We wouldn't be here having this conversation -- this election wouldn't even be about all this stuff. We're sitting here arguing about how to spend the surplus, and is it \$1 or \$2 trillion over the next 10 years?

If I had told you '92, if I had to come to California and I said, I want you to vote for me and I'll get rid of this deficit -- we'd been running a deficit for 30 years and we quadrupled the national debt in the last 12 years -- now vote for me and I'll get rid of it. And before I'm gone we'll have three different surpluses and we'll know that we can pay off our debt in the first decade of the 21st century. Do you know what you would have said? You would have said, he seems like such a nice man, but he's slightly daft and we better send him home.

But it happened. People ask me all the time, what magical new idea did we bring to Washington in the economic area? And I always say, in one word, arithmetic. That is we stopped playing games with the numbers. We stopped promising people something we couldn't deliver. We said if we're going to spend the money we've got to have the money.

And we made hard choices. I got rid of hundreds of programs so that we could double our investment in education while we were cutting the deficit. And those things had to be done.

Now, what's all this got to do with where we are? So here we are now -- if you believe these big challenges ought to be faced, then you have to say, well, are there consequences to the decision of who gets to be President? Are there consequences to the decision who gets elected to the Senate, who gets elected to the Congress? And I would argue that there are big differences between these candidates, and if you'll listen very closely to the debate, the Democrats are a lot more interested in you knowing what the differences are than the Republicans are. Because they know if you really understand the differences, two-thirds of the people agree with us.

For example, should we say, okay, now we have the surplus at \$2 trillion over 10 years, estimated, projected, over the next 10 years. So their policy is to spend over half of it on a tax cut, \$1.3 trillion, and then to partially privatize Social Security, which -- and guarantee the benefits of everybody still in the system, which will cost about another \$800 billion. So there's \$2 billion there. And then to pay for Star Wars and school vouchers and some other promises, so that we'll be back into deficits sooner or later in the next decade if we get the whole \$2 trillion.

Our policy, as reflected in the Vice President's position, is we may not get the \$2 trillion. That great line from Gerry McGuire -- show me the money. The problem with all this tax cut stuff, it sounds great and most of you would be better off in the short run with their policy. But I emphasize, in the short run, because if we have a big tax cut with 4 percent unemployment, it will be perceived as inflationary; interest rates will go up more than they've already gone up; it will slow the economy; it will cut the profitability of your investments; and therefore, the projected surplus will not materialize and we'll be right back in the deficit suit.

So we're put in a position of telling you things you may not want to hear, like the Vice President said the other day, why don't we just start by saying we're going to save 20 percent of this projected surplus, because \$400 billion of this projected surplus are taxes you're paying for Medicare. So let's just wall it off, use it to pay down the debt until we need it, and then Medicare will last a lot longer.

Why don't we have a tax cut, but less than -- and a sizable one, but still less than half the one they propose, so we can focus on wealth creation for people that can't do it otherwise, help them establish their own savings account; child care; sending kids to college; long-term care when you've got an elderly or disabled relative who is sick. And then save some money to invest in our future -- in education, in science and technology, in new environmental technologies, in health care, and the things that will change our future.

Now, there's a huge difference. What do you propose to do with the surplus? What do you propose to do with this moment of prosperity? It will affect economic policy; it will affect social policy. What are the other differences?

Well, we think we ought to bend over backwards and let everybody participate. We think the people that served this food tonight, if they're working hard and obeying the law, have just as much right as we do to benefit from this new economy. That's what we think. And so we think we ought to raise the minimum wage; they don't. We think we also ought to have a tax cut for working people that have modest wages with children at home. We think that we ought to pass the patients' bill of rights; and they don't. We think we ought to have a Medicare-based, broad-based prescription program for seniors so that people can get medicine that can't afford it today; and they don't.

If we were creating Medicare today we'd never create Medicare without a drug program today. It was a doctor and hospital program in 1965 because that's what medicine was. Now anybody that lives to be 65 years old has got a life expectancy of 82. And if they take care of themselves and they have access to good health care, they could live longer.

In a few days we'll have an announcement that the human genome project is essentially completed, its basic mapping. You will then see in the next couple of years this breath-taking explosion of discoveries about the pattern and genes that make you more likely to get certain kinds of cancer or Parkinson's or Alzheimer's, or become over-weight, or have a heart attack, or whatever. You'll see all this stuff. And you will begin to see kind of individualized plans develop for little babies when the mothers bring them home from the hospital that will change the whole landscape of health care. And it wouldn't surprise me a bit to see children being born within the next 10 years in our country and other developed countries that are being born with a life expectancy of 90 years. That is going to change everything.

So if you're going to live that long, it seems to me that the society's obligation is for people not only to live as long, but to live as well as possible. One thing the Congress did on the bipartisan fashion -- and I applaud everybody who did, including the Republicans, and take the earnings limit off Social Security. We need to do that. You can't have -- if a huge percentage of your population is over 65 and a bunch of them are healthy as can be and they want to work, you don't want to have an economic incentive for them not to work when you're going to have a ratio of people on Social Security to not of only two to one.

So we have to think of all these things. Now, why am I for Al Gore for President? Not just on all these issues. I could go through -- let me just talk about crime a minute. I want to talk about crime. I want to talk about welfare. We got a bipartisan welfare reform bill through, but I had to veto two bills. Why? Because I agreed with the Republicans that people who were able-bodied on welfare who could work should work, but what I did not agree with is that we should abandon the national guarantee of health care and nutrition to their children.

So we finally got a bill. And I said we've got work requirements in here. This is not going to be a disincentive. But we've got to take care of these children. So I vetoed two bills, and we finally got one we agreed on. I signed it, and they were saying, well, maybe it was too weak. All I know is, since I became President we've got the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years and they're less than half the size they were in '93.

On the crime bill, the first time I ever did an event with Ed Rendell when he was mayor was on an anti-drug, anti-crime, anti-gang event. Ed and I were so dumb, we didn't know crime was a Republican issue; we thought it was an American issue. All this idea that it's a Republican issue is like that's what the matter with Washington; it's all about words and stuff instead of what are you really producing.

So we had a crime program: put more cops in the streets, do more things to keep kids off the street and out of trouble, and take steps to get guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. It wasn't rocket science. Yes, the improving economy helped the crime rate. Yes, the aging population in some places helped the crime rate. Yes, the sort of waning of the crack epidemic helped the crime rate. But put more police on the streets, giving the kids something positive to do, and doing more to take guns out of the hands of criminals and children also had something to do with it.

Now, I realize that it was a political risk. We lost a dozen members of our caucus in the '94 election because they had the guts to vote for the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban, because the NRA convinced people we were going to come and take their guns away. A dozen gave up their careers so that your kids could be safer. And these people are still talking about -- now they say if Governor Bush wins they'll have an office in the White House. And, figuratively, they will because they've made their commitments and they'll have to honor them.

But, look here, not a single hunter has missed a day in the deer woods because of the Brady Bill or the assault weapons ban. And when we banned those cop-killer bullets, they still haven't found the first deer wearing a kevlar vest. I mean, there are no problems here. What is the deal here? I mean, what is this about? I mean, I can say it. One of the reasons that they dislike me so intensely is that I grew up in one of the all-time hunting cultures of the world.

But this is crazy. You can't have a society where you take no sensible steps to keep criminals and little children from having access to guns. So the Brady Bill has kept a half million felons, fugitives and stalkers from getting guns. We've got a 35-year low on gun crime.

So what do we want to do? Well, we want to close the gun show loophole. That means if somebody goes to a gun show we think we ought to do a background check. We want child trigger locks on the guns. We want not to import large capacity ammunition clips which can be used by people in America to get around the assault weapons ban.

Now, there is still not anybody going to miss a day in the deer woods. All this rhetoric about gun control is crazy. You know, in America, we have a constitutional right to travel, too. The Supreme Court says there is a constitutional right to travel. But if you leave here and you get in your car and you go home, you'll have seatbelts, you'll have a speed limit. If you've got a little baby, you'd have a child restraint law. And you don't ever hear anybody griping about car control, do you? Car control, it's a threat to the constitutional rights of travel. Car control is if I come get your car and put it in my garage. Otherwise, it's highway safety.

So there is a big difference between our two parties in this. And I think it's a huge issue. I'm glad we've got a lower crime rate, but this country is nowhere near as safe as it needs to be. And I don't think we ought to quit until we're the safest big country in the world. Just like I don't think we ought to quit paying down the debt until we're out of debt. And these are big ideas. You get the drift here. And we're different on these issues.

So the last thing I want to say is, I hope this election will be an honest, open debate where we posit the fact that the candidates for President and Senate and Congress are basically honorable people who intend to keep their commitments and talk about their differences and have an honest debate. I think if we do that, I think Al Gore will be elected President. I think that all these great candidates we've got in California, we've got a chance to pick up several House seats here. I think we'll win all of the ones we've got a chance to win because they're good candidates and because the voters will agree with us. Because we've got a record that proves that in the areas where we're different we've gotten results, and because we've got new ideas.

And I just want to say one word about the Vice President. I think I probably know him better than anybody outside his family now. There are three reasons that I'd be for him if he weren't my Vice President, and I didn't feel obligated in a profound and wonderful sense. One is, I agree with the economic policy he's articulated. I don't think we ought to risk giving away the whole projected surplus on tax cuts and long-term spending commitments. I think it's a risky strategy and it's not worth it and you wouldn't run your family business that way and you wouldn't run your business that way. And we shouldn't run our government that way. We worked a long time to turn this thing around and we don't want to just squander it again.

Number two, I think he'll work harder to extend the benefits of this prosperity to people in places that aren't part of it now; and to help average families balance work and child rearing, open the doors of college to everybody.

Number three, I think he understands the future. This is a big deal. Al Gore was talking about global warming before most people even knew the two words went together. I'm talking years and years and years ago he was talking about. Now, even the major oil companies admit that it's real. The first time we ever had lunch together he showed me this chart he's got about greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere and how much they've gone up. And in the eight years we've been here in the White House, seven of them were seven of the ten hottest years recorded since 1400.

Al Gore was talking about the Internet before other people in Congress. He's been falsely accused of claiming he created it. That's not true. That's like another one of those bum raps. Once somebody says something in the press, they just keep on playing it. It doesn't matter if it's not true any more; it sort of acquires it.

What he said was that he introduced legislation which helped to create it, and it did create it as a phenomenon that went beyond a small private government research project. Do you know how many sites there were on the worldwide web when I became President? Fifty. How many are there now, everyone? Fifty million? Fifty, and now fifty million. He understood that.

He understands that there is all these fabulous possibilities to close the digital divide and to do things that we haven't even imagined, but we also are going to have to work hard to protect our old-fashioned values. For example, if all of our health records and all of our financial records are on somebody's computer somewhere, I think that you ought to have some privacy protection. And there are some things I don't think other people ought to be able to get unless you say okay. And somebody that understands all the competing the considerations, it would be a good things to have a President that understood that.

So I think his economic policy is right. I think he'll do more to try to help everybody benefit from the things that are going on. And I think he really understands the future. And I think that's what you want.

So what I'd like to ask you to do is to go out and tell people who want to know why you came here tonight -- not to hear me tell Irish jokes -- that, well, California is a better place than it was eight years ago. They had some ideas and they turned out to be pretty good. That you agree

with Gore's economic policy and you think we ought to spread the benefits to more people and build one American community. And you want somebody who understands the future and can lead us there.

And on the critical issues, there really are differences between the parties and it's important that they be clarified and uplifted. But if the people believe that this election is about whether we can build the future of our dreams for our children, we'll be just fine.

Thank you.

END 9:06 P.M. PDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Austin, Texas)

For Immediate Release

June 19, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DSCC RECEPTION

Private Residence
Austin, Texas

4:53 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: I'm glad to see this place in the daytime. Well, first, I want to thank Roy and Mary for letting me come back to their home; I love this place. And it's Exhibit A for the proposition that if you want to live like a Republican you should vote Democrat.

Mr. Benson, thanks for the music. And I want to thank Governor Richards for being here, because now I know I'll get at least one new joke before I get on the plane tonight to go home. And Governor Briscoe, thank you, sir, and thanks for being so nice to Hillary all these years. And my good friend, Jake Pickle, I miss you and I'm delighted to see you.

I want to say to all of you who had anything to do with this, I'm very grateful. I was looking tonight at Roy and Judy and Garry Mauro, and we all started out together 28 years ago. They don't have any gray hair; I'm practically broken down. I don't know how this happened. But Mauro and Spence and I, we were 30 percent of the white male vote McGovern got in Texas. We could dominate the whole -- it was kind of a kick, it was the ultimate case of being a big fish in a small pond. That's not quite fair, there's several of you in here I met 28 years ago; and I've loved my relationships with this state and with these people a long time.

And I want to thank Senator Torricelli for all the hard work he's done for the Democrats in the Senate. And, Senator Wyden, thank you for coming all the way from Oregon.

And my great long-time friend, Chuck Robb, who in many ways would qualify for the title of the bravest person in the Senate. He's the guy that always stands up and votes exactly what he thinks is right and to heck with the consequences, and then goes out and really believes he can convince the people of Virginia he's right. He had to run for re-election against Ollie North in 1994, the worst year the Democrats have had in 40 years. And he survived. And now he's got to run against a man who's a very popular former governor and he's going to win again. And he's going to win again because he's brave, and good, and you should be very proud of him and his Texas size. And I thank you very much.

Now, I also want to thank those of you who helped Hillary when she was down here. She was also here with us in Texas in 1972, and I just talked to her before I came here. And she

spoke to the Merchant Marine Academy commencement on Long Island today. And she was regaling me with tales of the Merchant Marine -- it made me want to join again. I wish I was 20 years old, and I could start -- when you said I was your 28-year-old friend, I thought, you know, if somebody would let me be 28, I'd let them be President, and take my chances. I could do it again. I'd take my chances.

Let me -- I'll be brief. I always wonder whether I'm preaching to the saved at these meetings. But I want to say just a couple of words here. First of all, I'm grateful for the chance I've had to serve, and I've loved it. Secondly, I've had a good team. And I say this, and I want to say a little more about this in a minute, but there's never been, in the history of America -- and I'm a pretty good student of American history -- a Vice President who's had remotely the positive impact on this country as Vice President than Al Gore has had. I've had a great Cabinet, I've had a great staff. My wife has played a marvelous role in a lot of different ways in helping move the country forward. And we've had a good time.

And lo and behold, it worked out pretty well. And what I would like to say, I'd just like to make a couple of points, because somebody might ask you tomorrow why you came, and I don't want you to say you just wanted to see Roy's house one more time. A lot of the things that happened that were good I think happened because we had a set of ideas about how the country should be run and how we should work. That is much more like you work in your daily lives than the way Washington worked when I got there and the way, unfortunately, it still works too much today.

I basically believe that there was something wrong when you had a political system where everybody said, it's just terrible, we're up to our ears in debt, and then kept voting to run the debt up every year. I thought there was something wrong with a system that said that if you were pro-labor you couldn't be pro-business; if you wanted a clean environment, you couldn't be pro-growth; and that the Republicans and the Democrats just spend all their time trading insults instead of figuring out how to get work done. Because I can tell you -- and I think we're going to get a lot of stuff done in the seven months I've got left to be President. And if we do everything we could conceivably get done, as the Senators here will tell you, there will still be plenty that we disagree about in the election.

And so we began to work on getting the economy together and on trying to figure out how to pull people together to actually solve problems. And we had an economic strategy that said get the debt down; invest more in education, even if you have to cut out a lot of other things the government is doing, and in science and technology; figure out a way to deal with a lot of these big, long-term challenges; and try to pull the country together across all the lines that divide us, because we're growing ever more diverse.

Steve Ricchetti is here with me, he's my Deputy Chief of Staff, he grew up in Ohio. We went to Houston, we were at a lunch in Houston today. We had Muslims, Sikhs, East Asians, obviously, African Americans, Hispanics, the old rednecks like me there. It was an amazing thing. Ricchetti looked around this crowd, he said, this is not your typical Houston, cowboy crowd, is it? And I said, no, but it's tomorrow's Texas. It is tomorrow's Texas. And it's tomorrow's America. So it's working.

Now, I think the way elections come out often depend on what people think the question is. So what do you think the issue is in this election? In the President's race, in the Congress races, in the Senate and the House? I think it is, what are we going to do with this moment of prosperity? Eight years ago the country took a chance on me, but we were in trouble. Everybody felt like we were in trouble. They thought we were drifting, they thought there was too much fighting going on, they thought we needed to take a new direction. And they decided to take a chance on us.

So now we've got the ship of state turned around. We've got the longest economic expansion in history; the lowest crime rate in a quarter century; the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years; the relative absence of crisis at home and abroad; our country has been a real force for peace and freedom throughout the world. So what are we going to do with it?

And if you think that's the question, then you have to answer it. My belief is, since I'm now old enough to remember the last time we had the longest economic expansion in history, is that we've got to work like crazy to deal with the big challenges and seize the big opportunities our country has. Because nothing lasts forever. If you've been through any tough times in your life, you thank God it doesn't last forever. But nothing lasts forever. The world is not static, it's changing very rapidly. And we have this little moment in time and we can make something really big and beautiful and wonderful out of it.

I've done everything I could to leave this country in good shape. And my only desire now is that when I'm not President anymore, that everybody is trying to make the most of it, instead of just squandering it.

So, for me, what does that mean? It means we ought to keep the economy going; we ought to extend its benefits to everybody that's willing to work for it; we ought to help families meet the challenge of the new world, like how to balance work and child rearing. And we ought to think about the major issues of the future: putting a human face on the global economy; expanding trade and lifting people's lives; dealing with this problem of climate change, which the young people here may find to be one of the three biggest problems they'll face in the next 20 to 30 years unless we face it now.

How are we going to deal with all this diversity at home? Unless we can deal with it at home, we can't really, over the long run, deal with all the problems around the world. It's a big deal. How are we going to deal with the aging of America?

So, number one, I think this election is as important as the ones in '92 and '96. It's just different. And I think it ought to be about, what are we going to do with our prosperity. First one. Number two, this does not have to be one of these elections -- and we've had all too many over the last 20 years -- where the candidates just try to bludgeon each other about, you know, this one's a crook, and this one's no good, and all this kind of stuff. We don't need any politics of personal destruction here. We just need an honest debate on the honest differences.

But pointing out the differences is not negative. It's healthy -- you've got to understand, there are choices, and all your choices have consequences, whether it's in the presidential race, the Senate races, or the House race. And so, point one, it's an important election; point two, there are big differences.

Point three -- and this is very important, you watch this -- the most interesting thing about this election is only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. It's very interesting this year. And I suppose I should take that as a compliment.

But, I can tell you, if you just go through -- let me just --- and this is why the Senate's so important. And, you know, everybody that has studied Civics 101 knows that the Congress is important. But I think no one -- I think maybe a President understands more than anyone else how profoundly important it is, every single Senate seat. They vote on who goes on the Supreme Court -- big deal, huge consequences in the next election. There will be two to four new members of the Supreme Court in the next four years.

They vote on treaties. They vote on other important appointments. And the way their system works, one Senator can virtually either shut the whole show down, or change the whole future of the country, for good or ill. And unless you've actually been there and seen it, you can minimize it.

So I'll just give you a few examples. And, again, I feel this way about the President's race. I think we ought to say, okay, we got two good people here; there's no point in running anybody down; they have real differences; here they are; here are the consequences of your decision. Just don't pretend that there aren't any consequences, and be willing to live with them, whichever you do. Because there's a lot of surveys which show that, notwithstanding people's tendency to believe that all of us politicians never keep our word -- that most Presidents pretty much do what they say. And when they don't, we're glad they didn't. Like Abraham Lincoln promised not to free the slaves. Franklin Roosevelt said he'd balance the budget, and with 25 percent of the people out of work, it would have been the worst thing he could have possibly done.

But people normally do what they say they're going to do when they run for the Senate, when they run for the House. And when they run for President. Now in the Senate -- I'll just give you a couple of examples. We're going to face a big question early next year. And I'm battling the preliminaries now. You'll see the skirmishes unfolding over the next seven months.

What's the best way to keep the economy going? Our side says the best way to keep the economy going -- when there's so much growth and unemployment is so low, when everybody is looking at inflation, the Federal Reserve has already raised interest rates -- the best thing we can do is keep paying this debt down to keep interest rates as low as possible.

We can afford a reasonable tax cut that helps people educate their kids, pay for child care expenses, gives people with money the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America we now give you to invest in poor areas in Latin America and Asia and Africa. But we've got to have a -- there's got to be a limit to it, because we've got to keep paying the debt down. And

because we've got to save enough money to deal with Social Security and Medicare when the baby boomers retire.

They believe that because the -- the Republicans believe that because the estimates of the surplus are so large over the next 10 years, we should go ahead and plan to spend it all on a tax cut and the other commitments that have been made. Well, it would be self-serving for me to say that the surplus would materialize, because it happened on my watch. But I don't really believe you can bank on \$2 trillion showing up over the next 10 years. There are lots of turns in the road between here and there. So I think we're right, and I don't think they are.

But you have to make a decision. And the Senate elections will have a lot to do with that. I'll give you another example.

We're going to be more and more involved with the rest of the world, whether we like it or not. I'm trying to pass this bill to normalize trade relations with China. I think it's very important. I think it may keep us out of another war in East Asia in the 21st century. It's important. It's more important than the money involved to me, and it's a good economic deal for us, is that we fought three wars in Asia in the last 50 years and I don't want my kids or my grandkids to be involved in one in the next 50 if there's anything I can do to help it.

It's not a guarantee, but we'll dramatically increase the chances of a peaceful future if we have a constructive relationship and try to bring Chinese society into a rule-based, law-abiding, get along with your neighbors, try to find some way to work it out system.

So what are the differences there? Well, I've worked real hard to work with other countries to reduce the threat of nuclear, chemical and biological war. I was the first world leader to sign the comprehensive test ban treaty. The Republicans voted it down -- the first time an arms treaty has been voted down, an international treaty like that, since the Republican Senate voted against the League of Nations in 1919. And Governor Bush said he agreed with that.

They just don't believe that. They think we don't have to be part of that, we should just take care of our own defense, and if we've got to keep testing -- if 25 other countries start nuclear tests, that's okay. So we have big differences there. And you have to decide whether you think the Democratic senators are right, or the Republican senators are right.

And it could have real consequences for how these children have to live. And you should hear their argument. I think they're wrong, but they can tell you why they think it's time for us to change 50 years of our efforts to work with others to reduce the arms issue.

On climate change, I think that it's finally possible in this high-tech age, that Austin is one of the centers of, to grow the economy and reduce damage to the environment. Basically, most of the folks in their party don't believe that. They still think if you want to get rich and stay rich, you've got to put more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. You need to decide whether you think they're right or we're right.

And I could just go through issue after issue after issue. On health care, we're for the patients' bill of rights, they're not. We want a Medicare program that has prescription drugs that seniors can buy, because I think if we were creating Medicare again today we'd never have a Medicare program without a drug component. Thirty-five years ago it was about hospitals and doctors; now it's about keeping people out of the hospital. Anybody who lives to be 65 today has a life expectancy of 82. These children here have got a better than 50 percent chance of living to be 90, once the human genome is completely mapped, and you see all of these things are going to come forward.

You have to just decide. And they have their arguments. They say, well, it might cost too much. My argument is it won't cost near as much as giving the surplus away on a tax cut. But you ought to listen to them. But I'm just telling you, I think that -- the thing that bothers me is that things are going along so well in the country, people might be too casual about this election. And what you do with the good times is as stern a test of your judgment, your vision, and maybe even our national character, as what we do in adversity. And there are real differences with real consequences.

Obviously, I think a lot of these ideas have been tested and we turned out to be right. We're in this huge fight over what I think is self-evident -- I don't think I'm going to keep anybody out of the deer woods by passing legislation that says if a crook tries to buy a gun at a gun show, we ought to have time to do a background check and stop the crook from getting the gun. That's what we did with the Brady Bill. Half a million criminals didn't get guns. We've got the lowest gun crime in a decade or 20 years; dropped 35 percent since I've been in office, hasn't been a single hunter missed a day in the woods.

And every time I say this, oh, they all squalled, and Charleton Heston, looks like I'm trying to end the American way of life. And the Republicans agree with them, and the Democrats in the Senate basically agree with me. And I come from a -- I had my first .22 when I was 12. But I think there's evidence here, in the lower crime rate and the less violence, and I don't think this country is safe enough. But I just want you to remember that.

It's a big election, just as important as '92 and '96. I think the question is, what are we going to do with our prosperity. There are real differences with real consequences. But only one party really wants you to know what the differences are. I think that's a pretty good argument for our side.

Thank you very much.

END 5:10 P.M. CDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 13, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DCCC HISPANIC CAUCUS RECEPTION

The Mayflower Hotel
Washington, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for being here. Thank you for your support for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. I want to thank Patrick Kennedy for his heroic work in raising money for all our congressional candidates. Thank you, Lucille, for your leadership.

Unlike Congressman Kennedy, I am going to introduce the members of the Hispanic Caucus here -- (applause) -- because, unlike Congressman Kennedy, I need them to vote for me several more times this year. So since we're all standing up already, I'd like to ask them to raise their hands as I call their names. If I miss anyone, don't be bashful.

Solomon Ortiz, from Texas, there he is. Xavier Becerra, from Los Angeles, up there. Ed Pastor, from Arizona. (Applause). Nydia Velazquez, from New York. (Applause). Bob Menendez, from New Jersey, Bob. Carlos Romero-Barcelo, from Puerto Rico. Ruben Hinojosa, from South Texas, there he is. Silvestre Reyes, from El Paso, there he is. Ciro Rodriguez, from Texas -- Ciro, where are you? Charlie Gonzalez, from San Antonio. Grace Napolitano, from California, there she is back there.

And for me, at this particular moment, most important of all, because day before yesterday he had his first hole in one, Representative Joe Baca, from California. And he is so shameless about it, that if you doubt it, he is carrying the authentic certificate, proving that he is.

Ladies and gentlemen, I will be brief, members have to go to a vote in a few minutes. I want to first of all thank all of them, because without them, nothing that we have accomplished -- the Vice President and I -- in our administration, would have been possible. We carried an economic plan in 1993 by one vote, which set off this economic explosion we've enjoyed in the last eight years. It would not have been possible without the Hispanic Caucus.

And whether it was on our welfare policy, where we said we are for work, but we're also for family; require people to work who can work, but don't take the food stamps and the medical care away from the poor children -- the Hispanic Caucus made it possible for us to hammer out that compromise.

On crime, on education, on every single issue, they were there. And we do -- we have the lowest Hispanic unemployment every recorded; the lowest poverty rate among Hispanics in a

generation; a 250 percent increase in SBA loans to Hispanic-owned businesses; and, as it's already been said, the largest number of Hispanics in high positions in our administration and in our courts in history.

Now, what I want to say to you is elections are always about tomorrow, not about yesterday. If we did a good job, after all, it's just what you hired us to do. I remember once I was asking a guy to vote for me for reelection as governor of Arkansas. And I said, well, don't you think I've done a good job? He said, sure you have, but you got a paycheck every two weeks too, didn't you? He said, that's what I hired you to do.

What I want to say to you is that I think the outcome of these elections for Congress and the outcome of the election for the President are every bit as important as the elections of 1992 and 1996. I worked very hard when this country was in trouble to turn it around; to put the economy, to put the people in this country first; to, in the words of my '96 campaign, build a bridge to the 21st century.

Now the great test the American people face is what is it we intend to do with our good fortune, with this moment of possibility. I think we ought to use it to meet the big challenges of the country. I think we ought to use it to keep paying down the debt, to keep the prosperity going; but to extend the prosperity to people and places who have been left behind. I think we ought to give tax incentives to investors who invest in the poor areas of America the same incentives we give them to invest in poor areas in Africa and Asia and Latin America. I think that's important.

I think we ought to make after-school care and preschool universal for all of our children who need it. I think we ought to have -- I think we ought to modernize our schools and ensure they're all hooked up to the Internet. I think we ought to provide more options for working families to get health care. We ought to pass the patients' bill of rights. We ought to allow working families whose children are in our Children's Health Insurance Program to buy into it themselves. We ought to have middle-class tax relief for long-term care, for child care, and to help all families pay for a college education. I think we ought to take on these big challenges.

And while it is now fashionable for both parties to court the Hispanic vote -- indeed, both candidates speak Spanish, and love to do it -- I hope very much that I am the last President in American history who can't speak Spanish. I think from now on everyone will have to speak Spanish. And within a year or two, when I get a little private time, I may be able to speak Spanish, too. I'm going to work on it.

But what I want to say to you is that there is a difference. There is a difference in the Congress, and there is a difference in the race for the White House. One party supports the patients' bill of rights, and the other opposes it. One party is for raising the minimum wage, and the other is not. One party is trying to expand health insurance coverage to poor working families, and the other has not endorsed it. One party wants a big tax cut that will keep us from paying down the debt; the other party -- ours -- we want an affordable, middle-class tax cut that will enable us to continue to pay down the debt and invest in the education and health care and future of our children.

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We all say that we favor broad participation, but I'll just give you one example. I named an Hispanic lawyer from El Paso, named Enrique Moreno, to the Federal Court of Appeals. He graduated summa cum laude from his university. He graduated near the top of his class in law school. A panel of state judges in Texas said he was one of the three best lawyers in his part of the state. He got the highest rating from the American Bar Association. But the two Republican judges from Texas -- Senators from Texas -- said he wasn't qualified to sit on the Court of Appeals. And I haven't heard a peep, I might add, out of any of the other elected Republicans in Texas about this.

So I say to you, there's a difference. There is a difference. And sometimes it can be as stern a test of a country's character and judgment, how it handles its prosperity, as how it handles its adversity. After all, when the American people took a chance on me in 1992, we had our backs to the wall, we were in trouble. And people were willing to let us make a few changes. Now, the danger is that people will think, oh, well, this economy has been so good, so long, nobody can mess it up. Or that everybody seems so nice, nobody can do anything too bad. There is a difference. These people should be in the majority in the House. We should hold the White House. We should win the Senate.

And you can go and tell people, look, it's not as if they're taking a big chance -- you've got evidence now. We were divided all the way along on economic policy, on crime policy, on welfare policy, on education policy, on environmental policy. And the evidence is in. And the ideas are out there. The best days of this country are still ahead. The best days for Hispanic America are still ahead. But we have got to make the right choices.

You made a good investment coming here tonight, and I want you now to make your investment good by taking every opportunity, every day, between now and November, to make the same arguments, in your own way, I made to you tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Northfield, Minnesota)

For Immediate Release

June 10, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DNC LUNCHEON

Key Investment
Minneapolis, Minnesota

2:30 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Vance. Thank you, Darren. And thanks for being my friend for such a long time, and thank you for giving us a little walk through Memory Lane. I'm still proud I was a child of the '60s.

I never have known what I was supposed to be embarrassed about. I remember President Bush used to refer to me as the governor of a small southern state. I was so dumb, I thought it was a compliment. I still feel that way.

I want to thank my friend of more than two decades, Joan Mondale, for being here, and for all the years that we've shared together. I'd also like to thank your former Secretary of State, Joan Grove, for being here. Thank you, Joan. Sandy Novak, thank you. And I'd like to thank the people here from the Minnesota Teachers Group for their leadership in this event, and for sticking with the Democratic Party and for their support of education reform.

Let me say, first of all, I am glad to be standing here, because in the last week I have been to Portugal, Germany, Russia, Ukraine. I came back to the United States to meet with the King of Jordan, and then I flew to Japan to the funeral of Prime Minister Obuchi, then came back to meet with the President of Mexico. And now I'm here. I feel like a character in that H.G. Wells novel, The Time Machine.

But if by some chance I should slip a word or two here, you'll just have to make some allowances for me. I would also like to thank Mayor Rendell. He didn't really plan on leaving the mayoralty of Philadelphia and taking this little part-time job that I talked him into.

One other, just -- thing I want to say preliminarily, I've been to Minnesota three times in the last five weeks -- (laughter) -- and it's really funny, because I was screaming to the point of irritability at my scheduling staff for months before that. I said, look, here's three places that I have not been in two years, and I'm really upset -- and one of them was Minnesota. I said, I really want to go.

So then, they said, all right, you know. So Fritz Mondale and I went to a farm in David Minge's district to talk about the China vote, and then I went to St. Paul on my education tour, to the first charter school in the United States; there are now over 1,700 thanks to our administration pushing that and they're working well.

And today, I got to speak at Carleton about the importance of opening the doors of college to everyone. It's been a really rewarding thing. The people of Minnesota have been so good to me and to Al Gore and to Hillary. You know, I still remember when we rolled into Minneapolis on the bus tour in '92, we were about an hour and a half or two hours late, and there were over 25,000 people in the streets. And I think Vice President Mondale kept the crowd there -- (laughter) -- by hook or crook. So I'm very grateful to you.

I just want to say a couple of things briefly -- one other thing -- I want to thank Vance for helping Hillary, too. She's doing well -- you'd be proud of her. I think she's going to win that race. And I'm very, very proud of her.

When we took office seven and a half years ago -- Al Gore and I and our whole team -- we were animated by some fairly basic ideas. One is that we could have good economics and good social policy, but to do it, we'd have to get rid of the deficit, and have to go through the fire of doing that.

The second was that we could grow the economy and improve the environment. The third was that we had to stop the politics of personal destruction and the kind of old rhetoric that had paralyzed Washington, and try to find some way to bring the American people together as a community.

And the fourth was that we had to abolish the distinction between domestic and foreign policy -- that in the 21st century, in a globalized society, it really wasn't going to be as -- there are some things that are clearly, discretely foreign policy-oriented, like what we did -- this is the one-year anniversary of our victory in Kosovo over ethnic cleansing, something I'm very proud of. But, by and large, we needed to begin to look at the world more in terms of how it affected us here at home, and look at how we were -- what we were doing at home in terms of its impact around the world.

So, for example, I think that it helps America that we're trying to relieve the debts of the poorest people in the world; that we now treat AIDS as a national security problem. I know Senator Lott made fun of me the other day when our administration announced that we considered the AIDS problem to be a national security problem, but I think it is. Seventy percent of the AIDS cases are in sub-Saharan Africa. There are countries there that are now routinely hiring two people when there is a job vacancy because they expect one of them to die within a few months. And this could wreck whole societies, wreak havoc on the continent, just at the very time when Africa offers the promise of new partnership to so many of us.

Anyway, we had these ideas, and so we set about trying to make them work. And lo and behold, they did. And I'm grateful for that, and I thank you. But I just want to make a couple of

points very briefly, because somebody might ask you why you were here. And you say, well, I wanted to shake hands with Bill Clinton; that's a good answer, but that won't get any votes for us.

The first thing I would like to say is that ideas matter in politics, and they have consequences. And while we have had our fair share of good fortune, it flowed from a set of ideas and policies that we implemented. The second thing I want to say is, there was -- eight years ago there was, four years ago, and there is today -- a significant and honest difference between the two parties. It is not necessary for us to do to them what they worked so hard to do to us -- to convince the American people they're bad people and they're no good and we should tar and feather them and run them out of town. There are differences.

The previous administration vetoed the Family and Medical Leave law as being bad for the small business economy. I signed it and said it would be good for the small business economy if parents weren't all agitated all day every day about whether their kids were sick at home. And now, in each of the last seven years, we've set new records for small business formation. The debate's over, but the American people may not know it.

The previous administration vetoed the Brady Bill on the grounds that it was an infringement on the constitutional right to keep and bear arms, and wouldn't do any good because crooks didn't buy guns at gun stores, they bought them at gun shows. That's what they said. Now they say they don't buy them at gun shows, but anyway -- (laughter) -- back then they said they did -- and that it was an incredibly burdensome thing, and so they vetoed it.

We passed it and signed it, and it turned out 500,000 people who were felons, fugitives and stalkers did buy guns in gun stores, and we stopped them. And gun crime is down 35 percent; homicide is at a 30-year low; overall crime is at a 25-year low; and not a single hunter has missed a day in the deer woods. So the debate is over. We won that debate, we were right and they weren't.

And we raised the standards for air quality, for water quality, for land conservation. We set aside more land permanently in protected areas than any administration except those of the two Roosevelts. And I think we've proved you can grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time.

I say that not to be self-serving, but to say that they were ideas, they have consequences. We need to tell people this. And if you look at the debate today, you see the same sort of debate unfold. That's the first thing I want to say.

So what are the issues today? Well, first of all, there's a big issue, huge issue -- what do you think we ought to do with this situation we've got in America today?

Now, in my lifetime, we have never had at the same time an economy this strong, so much progress on the social issues, and the absence of domestic crisis or external threat. The last time we had an economy this strong and a lot of the social indicators were beginning to look good with the 1960s and it came apart because of the civil rights challenge at home and the

Vietnam War abroad. So I'm not sure it's ever happened in the history of America; but in our lifetimes, it had never happened before.

The last longest economic expansion in history, the one that consumed the 1960s from '61 to '69, and it ended because we couldn't reconcile our external problems over Vietnam, our internal problems over civil rights, the economics associated with it and the social fabric came apart, and I remember how it ended.

I graduated from high school nine weeks after Martin Luther King was killed, two days after Bobby Kennedy was killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for President anymore because the country was too divided. A few months after I graduated from college, the last longest economic expansion in history ended.

So these things don't last forever. This is highly unusual. So the big question in this election year is, overshadowing everything else: What do you propose to do with this. I have done everything I could do to turn this country around, to prepare this country for a new century, a new millennium. And it's your turn now. You get to decide. That's what this election is about.

What are we going to do with all this prosperity? Ideas have consequences. It matters. What I think we should be doing is taking on the big challenges and the big opportunities. I think we ought to say, if we could create the future of our dreams for our kids, what will we do? I can only tell you what I think. I think we ought to extend opportunity to the people and places that aren't part of the recovery. I think we ought to make a commitment to ending child poverty, and giving every family the time and tools it needs to succeed at home and at work.

I think we ought to make a commitment to giving every kid a world-class education in the public schools and opening the doors of college to all Americans. I think we ought to have a commitment to roll back the tide of climate change and the environment, and to deal with the challenge of the aging of America, so we baby boomers don't burden our children and our grandchildren.

I think we ought to commit to stay on the cutting edge of science and technology not only to reap the benefits, but to deal with the most troubling potential burdens that are coming up, including the invasion of our privacy by the explosion of information technology.

I think we ought to commit to continuing to work for one America across all the lines that divide us, and I think we ought to be more involved, not less involved, in all kinds of nonmilitary ways with the rest of the world. I think the trade agreements we made with Africa, with the Caribbean Basin, with China, trying to alleviate the debt of poor countries, the money we're trying to raise to develop vaccines for AIDS, TB and malaria. These things are all good, and they would directly benefit the United States by giving us a more peaceful, more free, more decent world to live in. That's what I think we ought to be doing.

Now, how do you tell what to do in an election, if you've decided that? So you've got to decide what you think of, that's what I think. Because I don't know if this will ever happen again

in my lifetime, and I'd like to see America not relax, not lay down; but say this is an unbelievable gift, and we're going to make the most of it.

So what does that mean? That means that you've got to decide who's going to be the President, who's going to get elected to these Senate seats, who's going to get elected to the House seats. What are you going to do -- if you decide that that's what you want.

Now, there are the following almost certain consequences to the election, based on the differences and ideas. And you don't have to believe that the two candidates for President are anything other than good people. Yes, I think you should believe they're both going to do what they say they're going to do. But you have to believe they're going to do what they said they would do in the primary as well as the general election.

But there's a lot of studies on this, by the way, which show that by and large -- even though our friends in the press try to convince you that we're all a bunch of slugs in politics -- that Presidents historically have a pretty good record of doing what they say they're going to do. And when they don't, we're usually glad they didn't. I mean, aren't we glad Franklin Roosevelt didn't balance the budget in the Depression? Aren't we glad Abraham Lincoln didn't keep his promise not to free the slaves? I mean, once in a while, it doesn't happen. But, mostly, people do.

An historian did an analysis that said I'd kept a higher percentage of my commitments than the last five Presidents. I was proud of that. But people do that.

Okay, so what will happen? What is the difference in the economic policy? Well, there will be a difference. Al Gore will be for a tax cut that still enables us to invest in education, and health care and science and technology, and keep paying the debt down to take care of the aging of America. And if you both have a big tax cut and privatize a part of Social Security, and guarantee the benefits to all the people that are older, you spend all the surplus and then some right there, before you spend a nickel on anything else. So we're going to have a different economic policy. We're going to go back to see if we can do without these surpluses and balanced budgets. And if you believe both candidates are honorable, that's what's going to happen. And I do.

There will be a dramatic difference in environmental policy, if you believe that both candidates will do what they've been doing. In the primary, the nominee of the other party promised to reverse my designation of over 40 million acres of roadless areas in the national forests, which the Audubon Society says is the most significant conservation move in the last 50 years. So there will be a real difference there in their attitudes in clean air, clean water, how do you reconcile these conflicts.

There will be a huge difference in the crime policy. You saw what Mr. LaPierre, at the NRA convention, said -- that if they could just get us out of the White House and the Republicans won, they'd have an office in the White House. Now, I don't know if literally he will. They would probably be a little too red-faced to do that. But that's what will happen. You can book it, that will happen.

And it's not like we don't have any evidence here. You've got evidence. You put more police on the street, you do things to keep kids off the street, you keep the economy strong, you try to keep going into these neighborhoods that are in trouble trying to change the texture of them, and do more to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids, the crime rate goes down and more people live. This is not complicated.

And they keep talking to me about gun control. I get tickled -- I was at a debate the other day; I said, you know there was a constitutional right to keep and bear arms. I said I don't think you interpreted it right, but let's just assume you did. I said, there's also a constitutional right to travel. And I've exercised it.

I said, now, when I travel around, I look and I see there's speed limit laws, seatbelt laws, child safety restraint laws. I never hear anybody talking about car control. Do you? Now, if I go get your car and put it in my garage, that's car control. But otherwise, it's highway safety.

There's a huge consequence here. You've got to think about this. There are consequences. In health care there are consequences. We're for the patients' bill of rights, and they're not. And I've been for managed care. My record on this is pretty clear. I've said that we couldn't sustain what we were doing in the health care system, we'd have to manage the system better. But I still think the critical decisions ought to be made by the professionals and the patients.

And the court system will change dramatically, because there will be somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court. And if you think Roe against Wade should be repealed and that's an important issue for you, then you should vote for them, because that's what's going to happen. And if you don't, and that's an important issue for you, then you should vote for us. So there are consequences.

The last thing I want to say is this, to follow up on what Vance said. I know Al Gore better than anybody but his wife, I believe -- maybe his mother, who will chide me if I claim to know him better than her. She is an astonishing woman. Once practiced law in Arkansas 70 years ago. An amazing woman. Here are some facts you need to know. He supported me on every hard decision I had to make, whether it was going into Bosnia or Kosovo or Haiti, or helping Mexico when they were about to go bankrupt -- and we had a poll that morning that said by 81 to 15, of the American people didn't want me to do it -- there was a real winner. But I knew it was the right thing to do; we had to do it.

He cast the deciding vote on the economic program, without which we wouldn't all be standing around here today. Then, he cast the tie-breaking vote on the -- to close the gun show loophole and put child safety locks and ban large-capacity ammunition clips when the Senate voted on that. And in between, he's done a lot of other things.

He ran our reinventing government program, giving us the smallest federal establishment since 1958. The Democrats did that, not the Republicans -- eliminated more positions and more programs. And I'll give anybody here \$5 who can name three of the programs I eliminated.

over

There are hundreds of them. We put the money and we doubled investment in education with the money.

He's managed our environmental programs, including our partnership for a new generation of vehicles. He ran our very successful program to establish empowerment zones in poor areas which have created thousands and thousands of jobs. Ask Mayor Rendell; one of them is in Philadelphia.

He managed a big part of our foreign relations with Russia, with South Africa, with Egypt, with a number of other countries. And you heard what Ed said about the vice presidency -- I've actually done a study of this. Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale were the first two people that ever took the office systematically seriously, in the whole history of America. I love Franklin Roosevelt, but as sick as he was, it's unbelievable he didn't take any more time picking Harry Truman and didn't tell him anything. Harry Truman didn't even know about the bomb when he became President. Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale were the first two people who ever took the job systematically seriously.

If you look at the whole history of the office, Vice President Nixon and Vice President Johnson had more influence than their predecessors. And then here's Mondale up here -- and to President Reagan's credit, he gave Vice President Bush a lot to do and they had more of a systematic relationship. And then when -- and Al Gore and I actually made a study of this, what had happened throughout history. And I decided that this was crazy; that, first of all, this guy might be President any day now, especially with the kind of mail I've been getting the last -- (laughter) -- and secondly, why have a person with a lot of energy and intelligence just hanging around waiting to go cut ribbons.

And so, I put him to work. And I nearly broke him a couple times. I never saw anybody work any harder; he's the only guy I ever met who worked harder than me. But you need to know that there has never been anybody in that job who had more of an impact on more issues across a broader range of areas -- and that a lot of the success we enjoy today would not have been possible if it hadn't been for him. So there's nobody that's any better prepared, not only by virtue of past service, but by virtue of future orientation.

So I realize this is not a big campaign speech, but you need to think about this. If somebody says tomorrow, why did you go there? Say, well, but first, I'm really concerned about what we're going to do with this prosperity. It's just as stern a test for the country's character, what you do with good times as what you do with bad times. It's not as if you've got a lot of options -- Second, ideas matter, and there are honest differences between the candidates and the parties. Third, I think based on the evidence and the argument, I agree with the Democrats, and here are some examples.

Now, I hope you can all do that, because this is going to be a close election. And part of it -- in a funny way, we're almost disadvantaged by how well things have gone. There are young people who are voting in this election who can never remember a bad stock market, never remember high unemployment, never remember the kind of social discord and rising crime and those kinds of things. They just think it happened. It didn't just happen.

And I don't mean by any stretch that I am solely responsible; that's not what I mean. America changed in the '90s. We became more community-oriented; we became more civically responsible; we became more interested in opportunity for other people as well as for ourselves; and we began to think about tomorrow as well as today. It wasn't just me, I was just a part of it.

But you need to really keep that in your mind between now and November. This is a big election. It's about what we're going to do with our prosperity. It's a stern test, ideas matter, and you think we're right -- if you can sell that, I'll feel pretty good about the outcome.

Thank you very much.

END 2:55 P.M. CDT

2000 election + Gore unique ability

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 17, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DNC DINNER

Private Residence
Greenwich, CT

THE PRESIDENT: Scott, we ought to take this act on the road. I may do another video, with you in it.

I want to say first of all, I loved that introduction. And it meant more to me than you know. I hope most people do think I'm their kind of guy -- but especially young people like him.

And I want to thank the Richmans for opening their beautiful, beautiful home to us. And I thank all the co-chairs of this event -- Ronni, Braith, Peter, Bob and the others who worked on it. Thank you very much.

I thank Mayor Rendell for taking on this little part-time job of heading the Democratic Committee -- (laughter) -- and my old law school classmate Dick Blumenthal, I thank him for being here; and Mayor Malloy, Senator McDermott, and Barbara Kennelly, who now works in our administration at the Social Security Administration. You might want to talk to her about Social Security reform -- (laughter) -- give her all your ideas. And I thank Ed Marcus and the other folks who have come who've been active in Connecticut Democratic politics for a long time.

I would like to just make a few brief points. I know the hour is late, and I got to visit with a lot of you coming through.

Number one, whenever I'm anywhere now, I try not to miss a chance to say thank you. The people of Connecticut have been very good to me, and to Al Gore, Hillary and Tipper. They gave us their electoral votes -- you did twice, by a good margin the first time, and a bigger one the second time. And I'm very, very grateful for that.

The second thing I would like to say is, believe it or not, even though things are going well, it's my opinion that the 2000 election is at least as important as the elections in 1992 and 1996, because in 2000 people will make a very great decision, which is what to do about our

which
2000
is it

good fortune, and whether to ratify the policies that got us to this point, and build on them in the future. It's a huge decision.

And if you listen to the debate, it's obvious that our friends in the other party, from the top down, hope that the American people don't think that's what they're supposed to do in this election. So they want to blur all these decisions, you know, and turn it into sort of a feel-good deal -- and I mean, things are going along so well, who could mess it up, right? So just kind of, let's just, you know, a little bit of this, a little bit of that, a little bit of the other thing.

So I'm glad you're here, and I thank you for your money, and we'll try to spend it well. But you're not done, because you've got to be good citizens between now and November, because I'm telling you, this election is just as important as the last two were.

I spent so much of the last seven and a half years trying to turn the ship of state around -- trying to build our bridge to the new century, trying to make sure things were going in the right direction. Well, now they are. And when I leave office, we will have paid off about \$355 billion of the national debt. And it was projected, when I took office, that this year the deficit would be about \$400 billion a year.

If I told you in 1992, vote for me, and before I get out of here I'll give you at least three years of surpluses and pay off over \$350 billion of the debt, and I'll double investment in education and training at the same time, you would have said, he seems like such a nice man, but he's slightly -- (laughter) -- deranged, and we'd better send him home.

So I'm grateful for what's going right. But it's just the beginning. And I go back to what I said in the State of the Union address: it is a stern test of a free people, not just how they behave when they're under the gun, in depression and war, but how they behave when all things seem possible, and things are going very well. And the easiest thing to do is to let down and be distracted, and be diverted, and take the easy way out. This is the chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children.

But to do it, we have to make a lot of big decisions. I think we have to decide to keep paying down the debt; to make extraordinary efforts to bring the benefits of the new economy to people and places that have been left behind, through incentives to invest in those places; to give every child a world-class education and access to college, and to those who need it, preschool and after-school programs; to give working families access to affordable health care; to do more to help people balance work and family; to prove that you can grow the economy and improve the environment, not undermine it -- and you can, by the way, in the new information age; to prove that we can be the safest big country in the world; to prove that we can build a country that brings us together instead of divides us at election time.

Now, I think this is important. This is big. I've worked real hard so you guys could do this when I was gone.

I'm not running for anything. Most days I'm okay about that. I had a great time at Hillary's nomination last night. She was great, and thank you, those of you that are helping her, I'm very grateful.

But you've got to think about this. That's what this election is about. Whether people think that's what it's about enough is another thing altogether, but I'm telling you that's what this election is about. And 50 years from now, when people look back and write about this time, this is how this election year will be judged: what did we do with our prosperity? What did we do with a declining crime rate, welfare rolls cut in half, other social problems getting better? What did we do with this enormous period of good fortune, with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security?

fix roof
while
sun
shines

What in the wide world did we do with it, with all these big challenges and opportunities sitting there right before our eyes? It's not like we have to look around the corner -- as the Irish say some people can do, can see around corners. You don't have to see around corners. You know what the big challenges and opportunities facing this country are. That's the whole deal. That's the first thing I want to say.

The second thing I want to tell you is, I think that Vice President Gore is uniquely qualified to lead this country at this moment, because he understands the future and knows how to get us there. And I've listened very carefully to all the things that have been said, pro and con, in the last several weeks. And one of the most amazing things I have ever heard is people saying, well, you know, this guy won't take a tough position. He broke the tie in the budget -- it passed by one vote. The Republicans, every one of them, was against it, 100 percent of them. They said we were going to bankrupt the country, and we were going to wreck the economy. Now they say, oh, so what if we were wrong? So what if we quadrupled the debt? Please put us in control again. We won by a vote.

6-12

He broke the tie on gun control. We won by one vote. In the Senate, we voted to close the gun show loophole. We voted to have a ban on large-capacity ammunition clips being imported into this country. We voted to require child trigger locks in the Senate -- by one vote.

He supported me when I gave financial aid to Mexico. You know what the poll was on that? Eighty-one to 15, don't do it.

He supported me when we went into Bosnia. He supported me when we went into Kosovo. He supported me when we went into Haiti. He supported me when no administration had ever consistently taken on either the gun lobby or the tobacco lobby before.

So that's the first thing you need to know. Every tough decision I had to make that was unpopular in the short run, but was right for the long run, he was there early in the do-it camp.

The second thing I want to say is, I'm a little bit of an amateur historian of this country. I know a little bit about other presidencies, and the institution of the Vice President. And you should know this. I work at night in a private office on President Grant's cabinet table. Now, when Grant was President, when Lincoln was President, there were only seven Cabinet

departments. And they actually had a form of Cabinet government: the Cabinet met two or three times a week.

And there are eight drawers around this table. It tickles me; they could all keep their important papers on one little old drawer. Everybody had a key to a little drawer -- (laughter) -- and you know.

There wasn't even a place for the Vice President. Not even a place. Even after Abraham Lincoln was assassinated -- and before that William Henry Harrison died of a bad cold, because he spoke for three hours and a half at his inaugural without a coat -- people didn't even think about it.

We were just lucky that Theodore Roosevelt turned out to be a great President, after William McKinley was assassinated. And though I love him very much, President Roosevelt, we were just lucky that Harry Truman turned out to be a very great President indeed, because he did not even know about the existence of the atomic bomb when he became the President of the United States in the springtime of 1945.

Now, after that happened, people began to take this job a little more seriously. Before that, people -- guys that were running for President just picked somebody for Vice President they thought would balance the ticket, geographically or politically or agewise or some other-wise.

And if you think about it, it was a crazy waste of potential, right? How would you like to be able to hire somebody, give them a good job, a nice staff, and tell them what to do? And if they had a lot of talent, give them a lot of power, and they'd make you look good? I think these other guys didn't know what they were missing. But I'm just telling you, it didn't happen.

Now, President Eisenhower gave Richard Nixon a little more responsibility. Then President Kennedy gave Lyndon Johnson still more responsibility. He had been the Senate Majority Leader; he was a man of great experience and knowledge. And Hubert Humphrey had more or less the same role that Lyndon Johnson did.

Then, to be fair, the first big breakthrough came with Jimmy Carter, who made Walter Mondale a genuine partner in the Vice Presidency. They had lunch every week; Walter Mondale could come to any meeting. Vice President Mondale had been in the Senate and worked in Washington; Governor Carter, then, before he was President, had never done that. And they had a fabulous partnership. And to give credit where credit is due, President Reagan followed that model when George Bush, President Bush, became Vice President. And he had about as much of a role in the Reagan-Bush years -- often they were doing things I didn't agree with -- but the point is, it was a responsible decision. Ronald Reagan made a responsible decision to let George Bush be a part of that.

So in the whole history of the country, you've got everybody else -- Johnson and Nixon, Mondale and Bush, okay? And then here's Gore. This is a matter of historic fact: there has never been a Vice President who has had so much positive impact on the American people as Vice President.

For one thing, as he points out, whenever he votes in the Senate, we win. But far beyond that, let me just tell you a few things. He ran our reinventing government program; we have the smallest federal government in 40 years, and I'll give you \$100 if you can name five programs that were eliminated. We eliminated hundreds of them. You haven't missed them, have you? Why? Because we doubled our investment in education, we continued to increase our investment in science and technology and medical research.

He ran our empowerment zone program, that has brought thousands upon thousands of jobs to people and places that were left behind, by creating special tax-incentive zones with special public investments to create more economic opportunity.

He was our principal advisor in telecommunications and technology. And we had a lot to do with the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Since then, there have been hundreds of thousands of jobs created in the high-tech industry. I went to a dinner the other night in New York City with 40 executives of companies that did not exist in 1996, before the telecom bill was signed.

And he fought for the E-rate, which is now giving \$2.2 billion in discounts to school districts, the poorest school districts in this country, to make sure that all of our schools can be hooked up to the Internet. In '94, when we started, we had 16 percent of the classrooms and three percent -- I mean, 16 percent of the schools and three percent of the classrooms with an Internet connection. Today, we have 95 percent of the schools, and 75 percent of the classrooms, because of the E-rate that Al Gore fought for.

He has managed a lot of our environmental policies, and being criticized by the Republicans for doing that. If we had not demonstrated that you can have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, and set aside more land than anybody but the Roosevelts, and still grow the economy, I don't know what it would take to convince people that you can have a strong economy and a good environment. And he deserves a lot of credit for that.

He managed big chunks of our relationship with Russia, our relationship with Egypt, our relationship with South Africa. A lot of the initiatives we took in arms control.

There has never, ever, ever, in the history of the United States, been a person who, as Vice President, had remotely the range of responsibility or positive impact that he has had. There has, therefore, never been a person who was Vice President who, because of that service, was remotely as well-qualified to be President as he is. Now, you need to know that.

And you also need to know that, in my opinion, he really does understand the future. And he knows how to lead us there. 95 percent of the scientists say the climate's warming, and now all the big oil companies accept it, just about. And a lot of the big companies that emit a lot of greenhouse gases are saying, we've got to do something about climate change, or otherwise it's going to wreck the whole environment of the world, and flood island countries, and destroy economies. In 1992, Al Gore was showing me his little chart -- (laughter) -- saying the same thing that everybody else now takes as the conventional wisdom.

6-6-96

Gore
Understand

If you want to make the most of prosperity in a time of rapid change, you'd better hire somebody who understands the future and knows how to get us there.

Gene gets it

Now, I want to make one last point. There will be consequences to these decisions. I think you would all admit there were a few consequences to the decision the American people had to give the Congress to the Republicans in 1994.

There will be consequences. The public will either choose to continue paying down the debt, and to stay with the economic policy that has given us 21 million new jobs and the longest economic expansion in history, or to revert to a policy that risks running deficits and drastically under-investing in education, science and technology, and other things. That's going to happen. Whether people are aware of it when the decision is made or not is up to you, but it will happen.

There will be a decision, which will either lead to continued improvements in the environment, or people who believe that the federal government's got no business doing half of what we've done. And they'll try to undo some of what we've done. A couple of you told me how great you thought that 40 million roadless acres was, that we set aside in the national forests. The Audubon Society says it's one of the most significant things done in the 20th century. It will be history, if the other side wins the White House and the Congress, because they've characterized it as a vast land grab. I don't know how you can grab what already belongs to you -- these are federal lands -- but they have.

There will be vast consequences in whether we continue to make America the safest big country in the world. You saw where the gentleman from the NRA said the other day that if we lost the White House and they won, the NRA would have an office in the White House. Now, since he's said that, they probably won't do it. That would probably be too embarrassing. But they will have a veto over policy.

You will -- you know, I've got to say something about this gun control business. Progressives lose on labels and win on facts. So don't you let anybody talk to you about "gun control" and all that -- you know, they act like -- you know, you practically hear vampire music in the background when the other guys talk about this. They talk about the Second Amendment and its right to keep and bear arms.

And I just want to -- next time somebody talks to you about that, say, listen. The Supreme Court has also given us the right to travel. But when we have seat belt laws, child safety laws, speed limit laws, and you have to get a driver's license to drive your car, nobody talks about "car control." As if it's some -- now, if I come get your car and put it in my garage, that's car control. Otherwise, it's highway safety.

This is a huge deal. We can make this country the safest big country in the world, and not keep a hunter out of the deer woods, or keep anybody from sports shooting. But we have to do sensible, preventive things to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. If it's important to you, you better manifest that in your election. You better make sure that everybody you know understands that, because there are huge consequences. There are huge consequences.

If you believe that the Supreme Court ought to protect individual liberties, including a woman's right to choose, you need to know that that's at stake in this election. It will stay if the Democrats win. It will go if the Republicans do. That's what I believe, with all my heart. Within 24 months, it's goodbye; it's gone. And I'm old enough to remember what it was like before.

So for all the happy talk, you need to understand that number one, we owe it to the American people to say, set your sights high, aim for the future, build the future of our dreams for our children. Number two, we've got a candidate who's the best-qualified person I can imagine, and by far the best Vice President in the history of the country. And number three, there are huge differences -- in economic policy, crime policy, social policy, environmental policy -- that will shape America's future.

And I haven't even mentioned national security. We're for a Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban treaty, like most everybody else in the world. They're not for it. They want to get rid of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. They think all this arms control is an idle -- you know, why worry about that? We've got more bombs than anybody else, and the Russians can't afford to build any more right now, so just go on.

So, I'm just telling you folks, this is a big deal. The voters have not yet begun to focus on this. They will begin to think more and more about it. They will draw their own conclusions.

But my experience over many years, now, has been that the person who wins the election may be determined by what the people think the election is about. What is the subject of the election? If the people of this country believe it's whether we should be building the future of our dreams for these kids, and the millions like them, and the millions that are still living in poverty, without regard to race, religion, sexual orientation or anything else -- if that's what they think, we win.

You know, if they think this is a stroll in the park, this economy's on automatic, nobody could mess it up if they tried, and people say all kinds of things in an election, make promises to these radical interest groups, but maybe they won't happen, and so let's just kind of feel our way through this -- who knows what's going to happen?

Clarity, facts, specifics, issues, evidence -- those things are our friends. You've got to start asking everybody you know, what do you think this election is about?

So maybe this is too severe a thing for me to say to you after a nice dinner and a funny introduction, and I won twice in Connecticut. And I don't want you to think I'm an ingrate. But I went to all this trouble, and I worked and I loved every day of it -- and I'm not done; I'm going to get a lot of stuff done before I have to leave --

But I want you to understand, this is a millennial election in more than calendar years. This is a profoundly important decision about where we're going as a people. And you can't let anybody think that it's just some ordinary event, or that there are no consequences.

I'll close with this. When we celebrated the longest economic expansion in American history last February, I asked my advisors, I said, well, when was the last longest economic expansion in history?

You know when it was? Nineteen sixty-one to 1969. Scott's 17 years old; when I graduated from high school, I was 17 years old, in the springtime of 1964, in the full bloom of the last longest economic expansion in history. You know what I thought? I thought the sucker would go on forever.

Ah, we knew we had civil rights challenges. I thought they'd be settled in the courts and in Congress, not in the streets. I knew we had a few people in Vietnam. I never dreamed that we would have trouble prevailing, and that the agony of it would someday tear our country apart and tear my generation apart. We just thought everything was fine.

Four years later, when I was a senior in college, and I was fixing to graduate from college, passes like this, it was two days after Robert Kennedy was killed, two months after Martin Luther King was killed, nine weeks after my President, Lyndon Johnson, could not even run for re-election because this country was torn half in two over Vietnam. And just a couple of months after that, the last longest economic expansion in American history was itself history.

Now, those of us who are old enough to have memories have responsibilities. And I'm here to tell you I've been waiting for 35 years for another chance to do right by our future. And now we have no domestic civil rights struggle that puts millions in the street. Instead we have a million moms that just want our kids to be safe.

We have no Vietnam War to divide us and distract us. And if we make the wrong decisions, we have only ourselves to blame. I'm telling you, this can be the best time in human history.

But this election decision, for the presidency and for Congress, will determine what the shape of this country is for decades to come. That's why, if somebody tomorrow asks you why you came here, tell them that's why you came here. And tell them some of the things I've told you tonight. And whatever happens between now and November, don't you get tired. I've been waiting 35 years for this, and I'm not going to see us blow it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Atlanta, Georgia)

For Immediate Release

April 14, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT RECEPTION FOR REPRESENTATIVE CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

Private Residence
Atlanta, Georgia

1:40 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I'm glad to see you. And I'm glad to see you in such good spirits. And I want to thank you for being here for Cynthia, and thank her for giving me a chance to come here and be with you.

I think we ought to give another hand to our hosts, the Sadris, for letting us come into their beautiful home today. Beautiful. I appreciated Governor and Mrs. Barnes and Mayor Campbell for being here -- they had to leave. And as Roy and Bill said on the way out, we've got to go, and besides, we've heard this speech before.

That reminds me of something Tina Turner said once. Tina Turner is my favorite political philosopher. I went to a concert of hers and she sang all of these new songs. And at the very end, she started singing "Proud Mary." It was her first hit. And the whole crowd just went nuts, you know, clapping for her. So she didn't start singing. She just waited until they quit clapping. She said, you know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, and it gets better every time I do it. So I thank the rest of you for hanging around.

I want to acknowledge in the audience, we have Mayor Jack Ellis of Macon, and Mayor Patsy Jo Hilliard (phonetic) of East Point, and Representative Tyrone Brooks, thanks for being here. And my old friend and '92 co-chairman, Calvin Smyre; Representative Robert Brown. And Billy McKinney is here, Cynthia's daddy. And Senator Butler, thank you for coming. And there may be other members of the legislature here we've missed. State Representative Vernon Jorres -- Jones -- I can read Cynthia's handwriting; she can't read mine.

And Dikembe, I want to thank you for coming. He came to the White House once with his whole family. And I went out to meet him. And you know, I'm not a small man. I felt like a total shrimp standing there. You know, all these members of the other party, they've been trying for eight years to humiliate me. If they'd just gotten the Mutombo family standing around -- (laughter) -- they could have done it in a day. It would have been no problem.

Let me say to all of you, I am here basically for three reasons. One is, I wanted to thank Cynthia McKinney, in front of her constituents, for the support that she has given to our efforts to make America a better place -- with a stronger economy, a stronger social fabric, greater equality and opportunity for people; an America that is truly one America across all racial, religious and other lines that divide us. And you can see by the crowd today that that's the kind of person she's been and that's the kind of America I've tried to build. And I thank her for that.

The second reason that I'm here is to thank all of you for the work you do here and the example you set. I was listening as the -- I saw Iranian Americans, Chinese Americans, Pakistani Americans, Sikhs introduced. I was glad to see so many members of the Muslim community here. I think I am the first President ever to consistently give messages on the Eid to the Muslim community around the world, to have Muslim Americans come into the White House and meet with us.

I look around the world -- and I'll just start -- the third reason I came here is to tell you what I think this election this year is about. And I feel free to say it since it's the first time in 25 years I'm not running for anything. And I'm okay about it most days. I'm okay.

But let me begin by saying this. Everybody knows what's going well today, and I won't go back over it except to just briefly say that we not only have the longest economic expansion in our history, and the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, highest home ownership in history, the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates ever recorded -- we also have a sense, I think, of optimism and that we can do certain things. And as Cynthia said, we've tried to be a force for peace and freedom around the world.

But since we've got all these folks here, let me say, I think it's very interesting that in this most modern of ages, where we're thrilled that our kids are on the Internet and they can go to school with people of different cultures and backgrounds, and we're about to decode the mysteries of the human gene -- just in the next few weeks we'll be able to announce the whole gene sequence that's been completed -- and after that happens, it won't be long before we'll be able to block the genetic flaws that cause Alzheimer's or Parkinson's, we'll be able to identify certain kinds of cancers when they're -- just a few cells congeal. We may even find out early in the next century what's in those black holes in the universe. It will be the most modern of ages.

No country can be isolated from it. Two years ago there were 2 million Internet users in China; last year there were 9 million; this year there will be over 20 million; within two years there will be over 100 million, and the country will never be the same again.

I just came back from the Indian subcontinent -- I went to Bangladesh and Pakistan and India. And I was in this -- and in India, the per capita income is \$450 a year. And I was in this little village -- I mean, a little village -- you may have seen the pictures on the television of me dancing with the village women and they were pelting me with flowers. It's better than other things I could be pelted with. I was delighted. But anyway, let me say, so here I am in this little, remote village. And in the sole public building in the village, I met with the city council -- 11

men and 4 women, representing 10 different tribes and castes. And I saw the village's computer. And this new mother comes into the village computer. And it was in Hindi, although they have these in all the various languages spoken in India.

So she calls up the health department's web page. And she's just had a baby, and she runs it out to the instructions for what the best care for a newborn is for the first three months of his life. And then she hits the print button, and they have this fabulous software, and this beautiful program printed right out on a world-class printer. And she took home information as good as you could take home from any obstetrician in Atlanta. So it's wonderful. This is a very modern world.

I went to another city where they give 18 government services on the Internet -- nobody buys a driver's license in a revenue office anymore. I told Governor Barnes if he did that here, there would be no term limits and he could stay until he was 95.

So that's the sort of picture we imagine for these children. And it's all modern, it's about science and technology, and we're relating to each other and how interesting it is. Don't you think it's also interesting that the biggest problems the world faces are rooted in the oldest difficulties of humankind? That we're still basically scared of people that aren't like us?

I mean, I see these Sikhs here, I thank them for coming here. The most heartbreaking thing that happened on my trip to the Indian subcontinent is that about 40 Sikhs were murdered in Kashmir. And I'm sure they were murdered because I was there. Those people lost their lives because I went to India and to Pakistan. And people who don't want their turmoil to be eased used my trip there as a pretext to highlight the difficulties. And somebody, we don't know who, killed 40 perfectly innocent people -- who, I might add, had never before been targeted in all the conflicts in Kashmir.

In Rwanda -- Cynthia talked about Rwanda -- Rwanda's not like a lot of other African countries that were formed in 1885 by European powers. It's basically been a coherent country for 500 years, with two dominant tribes, the Hutus and the Tutsis. For 500 years. And they fought from now and then, but they basically worked it out to get along. And in 100 days, 800,000 people were killed, almost with no guns.

In the Middle East, we still are seeing these tensions between the Israelis and their neighbors. In the Balkans, a million Islamic Albanians were driven from their homes like cattle, driven from their countries, in a matter of weeks, until we stopped it and turned it around in Kosovo. Even in Northern Ireland, where the people voted overwhelmingly for peace, the leaders are still so in the grip of their problems they can't get along.

Well, we know about India. We know that -- I said before, I think the situation -- here's an interesting story. The situation in Kashmir is interesting from an American's point of view for the following reason. Indian Americans and Pakistani Americans, of the 200 ethnic groups that exist in America today, both rank in the top 10 in per capita income and education. Obviously, if the difficulties over Kashmir could be resolved, people from South Asia would explode. There is literally no limit to the potential of the life that could be had there.

But they are sort of kept back from the modern world by this ancient tension -- or at least the tension that grew out of the founding of the nations of India and Pakistan. I say that to make this point only -- I'm basically, you know, a very optimistic person. And I always have been, and I remain so today.

But let's take it closer to home. Isn't it interesting that here is Atlanta, the home of more international companies than any other American city, and we're still fighting in the South about whether there ought to be a Confederate flag on our flag. So there's something wrong with this picture here, you know? At least we can put it on a web site.

What's the point of all -- here's the point of all this: not to get you down, but to get you back up -- but to remind you that our progress and our good fortune is the product of constant effort, good values, good people, good ideas, hard work. It is not an accident, nor is it inevitable, nor can you depend on it to last forever.

A time like this for any country comes along once in a blue moon. And so the election is not about whether Cynthia McKinney had a good voting record, or Bill Clinton was a good President. The real issue is, what are we going to do with this moment?

And you know, I feel very strongly that the American people should be humbled by this good fortune. And I think we should say, we're going to take on the big challenges facing our country. One, we've got to keep the economy going, because if we don't, the wheels will start to run off, and then we'll not be able to think about big things. That's why I want to keep paying the debt down -- we can be debt-free for the first time since 1835. I want to do that.

Number two, we ought to bring economic opportunity to people and places that have been left behind in this country. That's why I want to give people the same incentives to invest in poor areas in America they have to invest around the world. That's why I want to close the digital divide and bring computer opportunities to schools and work places and entrepreneurs in distant rural places, Indian reservations, inner-city neighborhoods.

Number three, we ought to give a world-class education to every one of our children. We know how to do it now, so we don't have an excuse.

Number four, we ought to help people whose parents work to better balance the demands of work and family -- equal pay for women and men; improved tax treatment for lower-income working people; more health care coverage for children and for their parents if they can't afford it now -- we have a program I want to expand; a long-term care tax credit for people that are caring for their elderly relatives or disabled relatives -- a lot of people are doing that now, and it's a terrible burden on them. And we want to keep families together, but we ought to help them do that. We ought to help them balance work and family.

Number five, we ought to make America the safest big country in the world. You know, Georgia and my home state of Arkansas are states with a strong hunting culture. But there's no

excuse for not doing a background check every time somebody buys a handgun. There's no excuse.

The law we've had has kept half a million felons, fugitives and stalkers from getting handguns, and we got gun crime down 35 percent to a 30-year low in the last seven years. But we can make America the safest big country in the world if we work at it.

Number six, we ought to prove we can improve our environment and the world's, and grow the economy. If we don't do that, we will never -- 50 years from now, the children of the children in this audience will be living on a planet that will be much more difficult to navigate, if we do not meet the environmental challenges of our time. And we don't have to mess up the economy to do it. Number seven, we ought to keep in the lead in science and technology.

Number eight, we ought to do more to be good citizens in the world. I've been trying to pass a bill to buy more products from Africa and our neighbors in the Caribbean basin. We can afford it in America, and a little bit of effort here does a phenomenal amount of good there.

And I want to relieve the debts of the world's poorest nations. I want to head a global effort to develop vaccines for AIDS and malaria and TB. It could save millions of lives. You know what the number one killer in poor countries still is?

Q I believe it's malaria, no?

THE PRESIDENT: No -- well, malaria is second. It's basically problems related to the absence of clean water. Still, problems related, including total dehydration, which kills a lot of kids.

I think we ought to do these things. I think we ought to keep trying to help people solve their racial and ethnic and religious problems. I think it is worth it. I also believe we ought to bring China into the world's trading system, because if we don't, they'll think we're isolating them and there's a greater likelihood of a war there.

I just finished reading President Woodrow Wilson's private secretary's memoirs of the end of World War I, and how the Congress ran off and left him and they stiffed all of our opponents, and how it made World War II inevitable. Somebody asked me the other day, what have you learned about foreign policy since you've been President. And I said, I've learned it's a whole lot more like life than I thought it was. What do I mean by that? That people everywhere, across all different cultures are far more likely to respond to the outstretched hand than they are to respond to the clenched fist.

Now, there are some people who do things that I think require us to clench our fist. When Mr. Milosovic did what he did in Bosnia and Kosovo, we clenched our fist. But on the whole, we ought to encourage the positive developments around the world and try to help people get together. I think this is important.

And the last point I want to say is what I started with -- if we want to do good around the world, we've got to be good at home. We've got to keep working. You know, we haven't solved all of our problems here. We still have racial prejudice; we still have religious prejudice; we still have people who are shot because of their race or because they're gay or for some other reason. And we have to keep working on this.

If I received a message from God tonight and He said, you can't finish your term, I'm checking you out tomorrow, and you get one wish -- I'm not a genie, you don't get three wishes, you get one -- I would not even wish for continued prosperity. I would wish for us to be truly one community, one nation, because -- (applause) -- because just look around this room here. Look at all the intelligence, the experience, the understanding, the energy in this room, from the youngest to the eldest and all in between. If we can just keep our bearings, if we can keep our spirits, if we can keep centered, there is no limit to what we can do.

And what I want you to understand is, that means that we have to pay very close attention in this election. That is the last thing I will say to you -- you have to pay very close attention. People get in a lot of trouble when times are good because they think there are no consequences to what they do. Sometimes you can get in more trouble in good times than you can in bad times because you break your attention. You've worked so hard, you've labored, you've worked and you think, gosh, I just want to forget about this now.

And I was just talking to Tyrone Brooks. He was at Selma when I was there, celebrating the 35th anniversary of the march over the Pettus Bridge, and it put me to thinking -- I will close with this point -- when we celebrated the longest economic expansion in American history in February, I got all my advisors together and I said, now, when was the last longest economic expansion in history? When many of you weren't here -- it was between 1961 and 1969. You either weren't born or you were in another country. I was here.

Now, let me tell you what happened. Let me tell you what happened. In the full bloom of this expansion in 1964, I graduated from high school. And, yes, we were sort of peripherally involved in Vietnam, and, yes, we did have a big civil rights challenge. But unemployment was low, inflation was low, growth was high, productivity was high. Most everybody then thought that our new President, Lyndon Johnson, with the great sympathy the country had after President Kennedy had been killed, would solve the civil rights problems of America and the Congress, and those that wouldn't be solved in the Congress would be solved in the courts. And no one believed Vietnam would tear the country up. And we all thought in the course of time we would win the Cold War, and we would always just be prosperous.

Clinton's
past

Now, four years later, I graduated from college in Washington, D.C. -- four years. Two days after Senator Kennedy was killed, two months after Martin Luther King was killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson couldn't run for reelection because the country was split down the middle. And within just a few weeks, the longest economic expansion in American history was itself history.

What's the point? Not to be down, but to be determined. To realize it makes a difference who is in the Congress; to realize it makes a difference who is the President; to realize it makes a

difference what people think the subject of this election is. The subject of this election is, what are we going to do with this magic moment in our history?

I've done the best I could to turn this country around and to get us moving in the right direction. But the best is still out there. That's what I want you to believe And forget about me being President; as a citizen, I have waited 35 years for my country again to be in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And it is a so much more interesting country now because so many of you are here. And the world is more interesting, and the potential is so great. But whether we seize it depends upon whether we understand what the issue is about, whether we work and vote, and whether people like Cynthia are in the United States Congress.

Thank you very much.

END

2:04 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 13, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
DURING DSCC HIGH TECH DINNER

The Phoenix Park Hotel
Washington, D.C.

8:21 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. First of all, I want to thank Bob Torricelli for his leadership of this committee, and I see Senator Wyden, Senator Murray, Senator Bingaman, Senator Leahy, Senator Rockefeller, Senator Robb -- is that everybody who is here? We almost have a quorum.

I would like to say, first of all, I want to welcome all of you here, and I want to thank you for meeting with our senators, and I want to thank them for meeting with you. Just a few days ago, our leader in the House, Dick Gephardt, announced a five- or six-part program of support for the high-tech sector of our economy, which I thought was very good.

I'm very pleased to see the Senate committee trying to establish a systematic, ongoing relationship with members of the community that I think has powered a great deal of our growth.

In the last seven years since I've been President, the high-tech sector has accounted for about 8 percent of our employment, but about 30 percent of our growth. And in a larger sense, the rifling of technology through traditional work environments has had a far bigger impact, because we know that the reason that we have the longest and strongest economic expansion in history is because of an unusual rise in productivity growth, after decades of stagnant productivity.

And what we've tried to do in Washington, essentially, is to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives, including you. So what we've tried to do that directly affects you is get rid of the deficit, keep interest rates down, make capital more available, invest in the education and training of our people, and continue to do basic research in science and technology, expand trade in American goods and services and to try to open new markets continually. We've negotiated well over 270 different trade agreements in the last seven years, and deal specifically with the institutional barriers to growth. And I might just mention one.

I think that the way the Telecommunications Act finally came down with a significant contributor to the growth, to the creation of new companies and to the flourishing high technology in our country. I say that because I believe that our party, beginning with the Vice President and me and the support played a very important role in the competitive elements in the Telecommunications act of 1996. So I hope we have been supportive, and I hope we can do more together.

I would just like to repeat something I said today to the American Society of Newspaper Editors. The great question before the American people now is not how did we get here; the question is, where are we going and how do we propose to get there. And in a larger sense, what is it that we intend to do with this magic moment of possibility.

I think, notwithstanding the churning of the NASDAQ in the last few days, there are many people, I think, who believe that, somehow, the prosperity of the last few years will inevitably be projected into the next few, and perhaps for an indefinite period of time. I think it could happen for an indefinite period of time, but not inevitably.

I think that the real question I have, as I see the debate we're having with the Republicans over the budget now, are we going to continue to pay down the debt, are we going to continue to invest in education and technology, are we going to prepare now for the aging of the baby boom generation, and then take what's left and give it in a tax cut instead of have a big tax cut first, and then figure out what we're going to do, which means we're either going to cut back on our investments in the future, not deal with the aging of America, or go back to running deficits.

In a larger sense, these questions are: What kind of country do we want to be? I feel very strongly that we should continue to change rapidly, but in the direction of the last seven years. I feel very strongly it would be a serious error for us to go back to the way we changed in the 12 years before, and go back to running big deficits. I think that would be a mistake.

I think that if we make our minds up, we can get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835 and guarantee a generation of new investment at lower interest rates. I think if we're determined to do it, we can close the digital divide, and not only have this technology be the source of vast new centers of wealth and employment, but actually help us to reduce poverty for more people more quickly in the United States and throughout the world than ever before in all of human history.

I think if we believe in the promise of science and technology, we can grow the economy and solve our environmental problems, including climate change. I think we can use the power of technology to make our country the safest big country in the world for things like safe gun technology, where handguns can only be fired by their lawful owner. If we think about how to make the most of this moment. And so, that's what I'd like to talk to you about.

You know, I'm not running for anything. And most days, I'm okay about it. But I am old enough, unlike some of you in this room I am old enough to remember the last, the previous longest economic expansion in history. It encompassed virtually the entire decade of the 1960s.

future

When I graduated from high school, we had low unemployment, low inflation, high growth, high productivity. We had a civil rights challenge that people thought then would be handled in the courts and in the Congress. We were sort of involved in Vietnam. Nobody thought it was very serious and everybody thought we would win the Cold War as a matter of course -- 1964.

Four years later, when I finished college in '68 -- we had riots in our cities, it was two days after Senator Kennedy was killed, two months after Martin Luther King was killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for reelection because the country was divided on Vietnam. And before you knew it, the longest expansion in American history was over and we had failed to meet the large, long-term challenges of America.

Actually, I think we have fewer internal and external crises now than we did then. But the challenge is the same, and because we have fewer crises, the responsibility is greater. I believe our parties had a solid economic policy, a solid technology policy, a solid education policy, a good crime policy, a good welfare reform policy. But we need you. We need more and more partnerships. We need to keep working to create the conditions and give people the tools to do more and better. But we've got to be guided by the right vision. And the right vision is not a tax cut so big that it either puts us back in a deficit or keeps us from meeting our long-term objectives.

The right vision is to have a tax cut we can afford, targeted to purposes that are needed in the context of meeting the big, long-term challenges of America. That's what I stand for. I believe that's what our party stands for. And I hope that it's one of the reasons that you're here tonight.

Thank you very much.

END 8:29 P.M. EDT

Clinton
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New Orleans, Louisiana)

For Immediate Release

April 8, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DNC LUNCH

Private Residence
New Orleans, Louisiana

1:05 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well, thank you very much, Arnold. And, Celia, thank you. We would have all come here today just to see your beautiful home. And unless you're lucky, half of us may take a swim before we leave. But I thank you so much for opening your home and for reminding me of that speech that I gave. It seems like a long time ago in one way, and another just like yesterday.

I want to thank my good friend, Sheriff Henry Lee, who proved to me that you could get bad press and the people would stay with you. So I simply decided to test the theory. And it got a little out of hand. Now, that's a crack I probably wouldn't make anyplace in America -- (laughter) -- outside of Louisiana.

I got tickled when Mayor Rendell said he'd never met anybody like Ray Reggie. I thought, that's true, but if you stayed down here long enough -- (laughter -- you'll meet 400-500 people you never met like before and never will again.

So, Ray, thank you. Thank you, David Young. Thank you, Mary Lou Winters. I want to congratulate our young state representative, Karen Carter. Her father has been a friend of mine forever, and once Karen came up and accosted me and chewed me out over something she thought I was wrong about, and then she later thought maybe she'd gone too far. And I told her Daddy that I'd be proud if my daughter could talk to the President that way. Not because -- because she wasn't disrespectful, she was just aggressive and articulate. And I'm glad to see her being so successful.

And, Mrs. Morealis (phonetic), nice to see you. I want to say a special word of thanks to Bill and Andrea Jefferson for being here. Bill Jefferson was for me when only my mother thought I could be elected President. In our immediate household, it was a close call -- (laughter). So I thank him for all of his friendship and support over the years.

And I thank all of you who worked so hard to raise these funds for our party. I want to thank all the young people who worked on this event. And my friend, Mayor Rendell. You know, when I first met Ed Rendell we went to Philadelphia -- I was running for President and he

took me to a neighborhood where he had worked to eradicate gangs and drugs, in a very poor neighborhood. And we walked down the street and I could see his evident pride that he had helped to change the lives of people who were very often overlooked by other public officials.

And then we got to the end of the street and he challenged me to shoot baskets -- there was a little park there. And even though he knew I might become President, he beat me anyway -- (laughter) -- which I sort of respected. And we've been friends ever since. And I have been waiting for eight years for a chance to get even. And when I talked him into becoming Chairman of the Democratic Party I said, you know, it's just a little part-time job, it won't take much work. He had a full head of hair when he took this job.

But he's really been wonderful. And I think it's a great thing to have our party headed by someone who's actually been elected to something, served people at the grass-roots level, understands the problems and the promise of all different kinds of people. And Philadelphia is a magnificent city, that's been very good to me and to the Vice President, so I want to thank him.

I've been to Louisiana a lot since I've been President, about half as many times as I would have liked to have been. And I want to thank you all, and through you and the media here, to all the people of this state for voting for me twice for President, and for giving me the chance to serve.

I am a little perplexed some days that this is the first time since 1974 they've held an election and my name hasn't been on a ballot. I like to joke that most days I'm all right about that. So today I'd like to talk to you from the perspective of someone who is not a candidate, but is profoundly grateful for what this country has given to me and for what this state has done for me. I'm grateful that I had the chance to serve at a very crucial moment in American history, when we were in need of making some difficult decisions about what kind of country we were going to be and how we were going to prepare for a new century.

And I guess I want to make just two or three brief points, because when you come to a deal like this I'm sure maybe for a few days afterward people say, well, what was it like and what did the President say and was it really worth all the money it cost you to go, and why did you do such a stupid thing. I'm sure you get asked all those questions. So I'd just like you to think about a few things.

First of all, this country is in a lot better shape than it was in 1992. We had high unemployment, high interest rates, low growth, almost no new jobs, our social problems like crime and welfare were getting worse, and we didn't seem to have any governing vision for taking us into the new century. And I think ideas matter a lot.

You mentioned -- Ed Rendell made the remark about what a diverse group we have here, and he made a remark about the contributions of people who have brought lawsuits on behalf of injured people that I agree with, but I -- sometimes I get criticized from the other side because I want to pay America's debt off. One columnist, a couple of weeks ago, who is a friend of mine, a man I admire very much, accused me of embracing Calvin Coolidge economics. I'll explain why, I'm going to do it in a minute.

But the point is, when I ran in '92, I had been, as President Bush said, the governor of a small southern state, somewhere to the north of here. And I was so dumb, I thought he was complimenting me when he said that. I was kind of proud of it, myself. I still am, to tell the truth. And the way Washington worked didn't make a lick of sense to me. I mean, there was a liberal position and a conservative position; there was a Democratic position and there was a Republican position. And the one thing that you couldn't do without being accused of heresy is try to unlock the differences, or come out with a third position that would go beyond both of them. And it looked to me like it was a very serviceable setup for politicians who needed to get on the news for 15 seconds every night because only conflict will guarantee you a place on the airways. But it wasn't doing very much good for the American people.

And so I asked the people to give me a chance to try a different way. I really believed we could have a country that could get rid of the deficit and still increase our investment in education and our children and their future. I believed we could grow the economy and improve the environment. I thought we could be pro-business and pro-labor. I thought we could get rid of unnecessary government bureaucracy and still be more vigorous in the pursuit of those things we saw to be pursued. I believed all that.

And I remember when I first started giving these talks, the people who had been covering politics for years looked at me as if I were some sort of heretic or it was just political gobbledygook. The first thing I want to say is ideas matter. Because after eight years we have, instead of record deficits and a debt that was quadrupled under the previous administrations and their theories, we've got the first back-to-back surpluses in 42 years, and the longest economic expansion in history, and the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded, and the lowest overall unemployment in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years.

So we did it by being pro-business and pro-labor. We did it by getting rid of the deficit, and we've about doubled our investment in education and training for our children, and dramatically increased access to college and raised the standards for education. So you can do these things.

The air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, the food is safer. We've tripled the number of toxic waste dumps we cleaned up over the previous two administrations. And the economy is stronger. So it makes sense. We've got a stronger federal government, but it's the smallest government since 1960. We've eliminated hundreds of programs, and I will give anyone here the ticket price here, I'll give you your money back if you can stand up right now and name three of them. Any takers?

I say that because I didn't think it was anti-Democratic or anti-progressive to recognize that we had programs on the book that were no longer serviceable, that just kept getting funded because people couldn't think of anything better to do with the money. And we were up to our ears in debt and we had to get out. And we needed the money for education; we needed the money for health care; we needed the money for the environment; we needed the money for helping poor people move from welfare to work.

So that's the first thing I want to say to you. Ideas really matter. I've learned that in over 20 years of public life and over seven years of being your President. One of the reasons that I support the Vice President is that he understands the future, he understands the importance of ideas, he knows how to get us there. These things aren't just slogans to him. I've spent too many hours with him doing too much work, making too many difficult decisions.

gore

The second thing I want to tell you is, our adversaries are smart and they want back in in the world's worst way. And they figured out the way to do it is to try to blur the differences within the party, until they get in and they start appointing their judges and passing their bills and doing their thing. But, in the meanwhile, they'd like to blur the differences.

So I want to tell you there are differences. Let me just cite a few. We worked hard to turn this deficit around and start running these surpluses. And we're paying off the debt at a rapid rate. Now, I'm not against a tax cut -- I'm actually for a tax cut if it's small enough to enable us to save Social Security, reform Medicare and add a prescription drug benefit to the 70 percent of our seniors that can't afford it today; continue to invest in education, health care and the environment and science and technology and research; and pay the debt off. We can get out of debt for the first time since 1835, in 12 years.

And I think we ought to do it, not just because it sounds good, but because if we keep paying the debt down we'll keep interest rates down and there will be more money for people to borrow to start businesses, to hire people, to invest in their equipment, to move the economy along. That's what I think.

Now, in spite of all that, I still have offered a tax cut, and the Vice President has offered one, I think, in the campaign, in the same range. We could give people a \$3,000 tax credit for long-term care costs for their parents or disabled relatives; let people deduct the cost of college tuition for their kids, up to \$10,000 a year; increase the child care tax credit; increase the earned income tax credit for lower-income working people. Nobody who works for a living and has kids at home should be in poverty. The tax system ought to take them out. That's what I believe.

We still have a sizeable tax system -- we could even give them some relief on the marriage penalty, an issue where our Republican friends say they're interested. But I don't think we ought to do that at the expense of what got us here. We've got the longest economic expansion in history because we said we're going to get rid of the deficit, invest in education and technology, and sell more American products around the world. That's how we got here. And so there's a big difference.

What's the difference? The other party wants a tax cut even bigger than the one I vetoed last year. Even bigger. Now, they'll tell you they're for education, they're for the environment, they're for this, that, and the other thing. The truth is they're not going to have any money. They promised this huge tax cut and even bigger increases in defense than I've advocated, and the money won't be there. Or if they do spend this money, it means that we won't be able to save Social Security for the baby boom generation's retirement. Or it means we go back and start running a deficit again, and we'll have all the same problems we had the last time we did that.

difference
between
parties

Now, so I would say to you, I don't think this is rocket science. What they're running on - now, they're using different words and blurring the distinctions, but what they're running on is the exact same economic program they pursued for the last 12 years the last time -- and so the American people -- when they ask you why you're here, you say, well, I think we're better off than we were eight years ago, and we've got a choice that's the same choice we had before about which economic strategy we're going to follow. Except in 1992, you took a chance on me, but in 2000, you now have evidence about how their system works and how ours works. And you need to tell people about this.

Because every day all these folks are going to be saying different things -- all the ones running for Senate and Congress and President, they're going to be emphasizing this issue and that. But I'm telling you, I've been there. You can make promises until the cows come home, but if you're going to deliver the promises there is a price tag on it and it all has to add up in the end. Or if it doesn't add up, you're going to cut something else or start running deficits again.

The central thing you need to know about the economic differences between the parties is, after I vetoed that huge tax cut last year to keep the economy going -- and I might add, after I did it, the economic growth in the last quarter of last year was 7.3 percent, the biggest in a coon's age. Nobody can remember when that was -- For ever and ever. Nobody can remember that.

Now, they come back and say, that tax cut he vetoed wasn't big enough, we want a bigger one. And let me tell you what's on the other side. The number of people over 65 in this country is going to double in the next 30 years -- I hope to be one of them. There will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. The baby boom generation -- that's anybody here between the ages of 54 and 36 -- and I can only tell you about the older baby boomers, because I was born in the first generation of them -- we are panicked about the prospect that our retirement might undermine our children's ability to raise our grandchildren.

Now, we've got the money right now, if we don't throw it away we have the money right now to pledge the interest savings from paying down the debt to the Social Security trust fund and take it out to 2054 -- 54 years from today -- beyond the life of all but the most fortunate baby boomers. We ought to do it. And it's more important to your long-term financial health than a tax cut we can't afford.

If we were starting Medicare again today -- now, we're for that; they're not -- if we were starting Medicare again today we would never design a Medicare program without a prescription drug component. When Medicare was set up 35 years ago, it was basically a critical care program, the fund covered doctor and hospital bills. Now, anybody that lives to be 65 years old has got a life expectancy of 83 years and it's going to keep going up.

There needs to be more attention to preventive care, to chronic problems, to all kinds of things that medicine can have a big impact on. And, literally, almost three-quarters of our seniors either don't have any or don't have an adequate and affordable prescription drug coverage. It's a big deal. You overdo the tax cut, you can't cover enough people. And we have differences on how many people we want to cover with them.

In education, it's fine to say you want to have higher standards for our schools and all these other good programs, but you've still got to pay for them. They've still got to be paid for. Our program is, repair our schools that need repairing, build thousands of new schools, hook them all up to the Internet, put another 100,000 teachers out there -- 2 million teachers are going to retire in the next few years, and more kids in the schools than ever before. So I think we ought to help put more teachers in the early grades. Have higher standards, but give schools the help they need for after-school, for summer school, for the reading, the mentoring program, so that you don't blame kids for the failure of the system.

I've got no problem with ending social promotion and having higher standards, but if you're going to do it, you've got to give the kids a chance to succeed. And I think most people believe that. So there are differences. And it all starts on the economic front with this.

There are also differences on a lot of other issues. I'm trying to raise the minimum wage, a buck a year over two years. And they won't just pass a clean minimum wage bill, they're trying to get a humongous tax cut out of it. But, you know, the last time we raised the minimum wage, about six years ago, they said, oh, boy, this will drive up unemployment. Twenty-one million jobs later, we know that if you've got a good economic policy and a strong economy, paying people a decent wage who are working hard does not hurt the economy.

And it's time to raise it again. And do you know if we raise it again, it would still be, in real dollar terms, we'd still only be back where we were about 30 years ago, in terms of the purchasing power. So we ought to raise it. We're for it; they're not.

On the gun issue -- I grew up down here, I grew up in a culture that valued hunting, sport shooting. When I signed the Brady Bill there was the awfulest commotion you ever heard in the assault weapons ban. People said, oh, they were going to lose their guns and all that. We heard all that stuff. Well, nobody has missed an hour in the deer woods. But seven years later, 500,000 people -- felons, fugitives and stalkers -- have not gotten handguns, and it could be a reason why we have a 30-year low in gun death rate.

So now the issue is, should there be child trigger locks on the guns, should we ban the import of large-capacity ammunition clips -- which make a mockery of the assault weapons ban because you just import the clips, then you adjust the gun to take the new clip -- and should we do a background check at the gun shows.

Now, when we passed the Brady Bill, the people that were against it said, it won't do you any good to do a background check of people who buy guns from gun stores because all the criminals buy their guns at the gun shows. I said, oh, surely some buy their guns at the gun stores, and sure enough, a half-million did anyway. So now I go back to the same people and I say, you remember when you told me seven years ago all these people were buying their guns at the gun shows. Well, we have the technology to do these background checks now, they're not particularly burdensome, let's do them. They said, oh, my goodness, we couldn't do that. It would be the end of civilization as we know it.

And all I can tell you is I think it will keep kids alive. And I have never done anything, to the best of my knowledge, not one thing in my public life that interfered with the legitimate rights of hunters and other lawful gun owners. That is not what this is about. It's not about scare tactics and slogans.

Somebody asked me the other day what I thought about all the mean things Charlton Heston has said about me. I said, I like his movies very much. And I actually -- he came to the White House a couple of years ago for the Kennedy Center Honors -- I liked him very much. This is just a difference of opinion here.

I think it's really unfair to even say the Republicans are sort of in the pocket of the NRA, as if they're doing something they don't believe. I think they believe that. We think differently about this. This is a difference of opinion.

They believe that basically this is the one area of our national life -- guns -- where there should be no prevention. All punishment. They do say -- and I've increased gun prosecutions and want to increase them some more, and they're going to support me on that, I think -- give us more prosecutors and all that. But they believe the only answer is wait until somebody breaks the law and throw the book at them. But this is the one area of our national life where we can't have prevention.

Well, you think about that. We have prevention everywhere else. We've got cross-walks for walking across the street, trying to keep people from getting run over. We put seatbelts on when we get in the car, trying to keep our heads from going through the dashboard. We put our kids in these child safety seats, trying to keep them from flying around if we have to slam on the brake. We've got speed limits. We have airport metal detectors. Why do we have all this stuff? Most people are law-abiding, sensible, careful and safe. In every endeavor. But you still do what you can to stop bad things from happening in the first place.

Right? I mean, that's what you do. When it's your family and your life and your kids, that's what you do. And that's what smart societies do. All this is about is whether we're going to do sensible things to prevent bad things from happening.

I said it in my press conference the other day -- I don't know if any of you saw it -- I said, what do you think the country would think of me if I said, you know, I'm really worried about how many people are crowding in our airports and how hot they are and tired they are and pushed together they are; and 99.9 percent of them are the best people you ever want to meet in your life, they're totally law-abiding, they would never think of doing anything; and it drives them nuts to be late for an airplane and go through one of these metal detectors; and they've got a rodeo belt on or a big, old, heavy money clip and they go bing, bing, bing, bing, bing, bing -- they have to go out and you take everything out of your pockets, you go through it, it goes off again, and you have to go out and do it again -- it just drives them nuts. And I just think it's so burdensome, and since almost all of them are law-abiding, let's just take them all out. And the next time a plane blows up, we'll throw the book at them.

Now, that is the logic -- that is the logic behind not doing these background checks. But, man, this has got nothing to do with the deer season. It's got nothing to do with the gun shows. It's got nothing to do with anything. It's a question of whether you believe there should be prevention in this area of our national life.

See, I believe America could be the safest big country in the world. When I got elected President, nobody even thought the crime rate could go down. I did because I'd been out to places like Philadelphia, I'd seen this. I believe America can be the safest big country in the world now. And if I were running the NRA I would have a whole different take on this. I'd say, I'd like to prove that you can have the safest big country in the world and still have people who like to go hunting, go to these shooting contests and have a good time, own guns lawfully, be trained carefully that use them -- I'd like to prove that. I wouldn't be against all this prevention stuff. I think prevention is an important part of life.

But there are differences here. And you know what the other differences are. So the first thing I want to say is, the country is in better shape. Ideas matter. We've tested our, we've tested theirs. On the economy, they want to do what they did before. And if you do it, you'll get the same consequences you got before. And all the other things they talk about, all of them running for all these offices, you have to view in view of their commitment to a tax cut even bigger than the one I vetoed.

The second thing I want to say is, I think these other issues matter: what you do in education; what you do with the environment; what you do with crime and how you do it.

The last thing I want to say is this. The Democrats have lost some votes since I've been in here, I'm quite sure because we take a very inclusive view of society, and we don't believe that people ought to be discriminated against just because they're female, just because of their race, just because they're handicapped, or even if they're gay -- in the workplace --subject to hate crimes or anything else. That's what we believe. And some people are threatened by that and they don't think we're good Americans and they won't vote for us. But I think most people are with us on this.

My view of this is real simple: I think if you get up every day and you show up for work, and you go about your business, you obey the law, you pay your taxes, you're a good citizen, you ought to have a chance to live in this country and live up to the fullest of your ability, and nobody ought to get in your way doing it. That's what I believe. That's what I believe.

And I believe that -- I think that we define our sense of community in terms of how we live. They, I think, believe we define our sense of community more in terms of whether we say we believe the same things. And all I can tell you is, if you think about the time I've spent since I've been President working on peace around the world, what's the problem in the Middle East, in Northern Ireland, in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in the tribal wars in Africa, all these places? People killing each other because they're different -- racial, ethnic, tribal groups, or religious groups. Different, right?

Why did that guy in Los Angeles shoot those kids at the Jewish community center and kill that Filipino postman? Why did that guy in the middle West, who said he belonged to a church that didn't believe in God, but did believe in white supremacy, shoot the black former basketball coach at Northwestern and the Korean Christian when he was coming out of church, and three or four other people? Why was young Matthew Shepard stretched out on a rack in Wyoming? And why was James Byrd dragged to death in Texas? And what has all this got to do with us?

I really believe one of the great challenges every person's life faces -- every person, even person who themselves have been discriminated against -- is figuring out how to get it right when it comes to how to deal with people who are different from you. And how to find a way to appreciate other people's differences, enjoy them, and still somehow feel that what we have in common is more important than what is different about it. And that's hard to do. And the more I try to make peace around the world, the more I understand how much progress we've made in this country, for all of our problems. It's hard to do.

And all over the world, people are raised to believe that they can identify themselves as good by having somebody else to look down on; that their religion only has meaning if somebody else's doesn't. They were raised to have pride insofar as it's set off against, in conflict with somebody else. It's not just American -- this is everywhere. And in this most modern of worlds, we are bedeviled by this old conflict.

So I just want you to think about that. If somebody gave me one wish today, they said, "I'm sorry you can't finish your term, you've got to check out tomorrow" -- and God came down to me and said, "I'm no genie. You're not getting three wishes. I'll give you one" -- I would not wish for prosperity or even a Democratic victory in November. I would wish that this country could truly be one America, across all the lines that divide it. Because we're smart people, we're good people, we work hard; if we could ever get our hearts and minds right about this stuff, the rest of it would work out. That's what I believe.

And I'll just leave you with this thought. The most important question of all in this election is, what are we going to do with our prosperity? Are we going to make one America? Are we going to give everybody a chance to be a part of it? And are we going to meet our big, long-term challenges? The biggest danger for the Democrats in this race is that people will do what they often do when things are going along well, they'll get relaxed. They won't concentrate, they won't feel a sense of urgency. And they'll either stay home or they won't be sharply focused on what this could be about.

How many times -- everybody here over 30, how many times have you ever made a mistake in your life, not because you were under the gun, but because things were going along so well you didn't think there were any consequences to what you did today? Now, that's the big question here. What will we do with this unique moment of prosperity?

In other words, all these differences only matter, that I just went through to you, if we're going to do something about it. And the only thing I'd like to tell you about that is, the older I get, the more my friends pass away, the faster time goes, and the more I realize nothing lasts

forever. And I say that not to be morbid -- I'm the most optimistic person you'll ever meet. I believe in the promise of America. I believe no one is irreplaceable. I believe in our country only freedom is irreplaceable. I don't believe there is anybody, including me, who's irreplaceable. But I believe moments come and go.

And the last time we had an expansion like this was in the 1960s. It was the last time we had the longest economic expansion in history. And it's when I graduated from high school, in 1964, where everybody thought the economy would go on forever, we would never get mired down in Vietnam, the Cold War would be over before you knew it because we were good and strong, and civil rights would be solved in the courts and in the Congress -- 1964, middle of the big expansion.

When I graduated from college four years after that, it was two days after Robert Kennedy had been killed, two months after Martin Luther King had been killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for President because the country was too divided over the Vietnam War. Mr. Nixon got elected President -- he was a very able man, but he got elected President on one of these "us" and "them" divisive campaigns. He represented the Silent Majority, and those of us that were on the other side, we were in the loud minority, we were kind of out of the club there. And a few months later, the longest expansion in American history was over, boom. And we blew a chance to solve a lot of our problems in a wholesome, peaceful way.

Now, I'm not running for anything, but as an American citizen, I want to tell you, I've waited 35 years for that opportunity to roll around again for my country. Where we could build the future of our dreams for our children. Ideas matter, there are differences. We've got to do this together.

The most important thing right now is that we focus on the importance of this election. Do not take our prosperity for granted. Do not take our social progress for granted. Do not take your ability to even come to something like this for granted. We've got to make the most of this. If we do, we'll be proud for the rest of our lives. If we don't, we'll never forgive ourselves. This is a moment for making tomorrow. That's why you came today. If somebody asks, you tell them that.

Thank you very much.

END 1:37 P.M. CDT

Clinton's
past

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Jose, California)

For Immediate Release

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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP COUNCIL CONFERENCE
ON "NEW CHALLENGES OF THE NEW ECONOMY"

Tech Museum of Innovation
San Jose, California

11:25 A.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much. You saw me do this with my eyes. The lights are so bright in here that we only know when you applaud at the right times that we're talking to a DLC audience. Let me say, first of all, how delighted I am to be at the Tech Museum of Innovation. And I want to thank all the people from the Museum who have made us feel welcome here -- a lot of them are sitting over here. But this is a very appropriate place for us to be meeting, and I think we ought to give them a big hand for welcoming us here.

I want to thank Mayor Ron Gonzalez for welcoming us here and for reminding me of that historic meeting 10 years ago when Al From and I came out here. Some of you here were there then, in addition to Ron. I see Larry Stone and Tony Casey out here, and Steve Wesley wasn't there then, he was there shortly after. There were many others there. I'm delighted to see, because we started something profoundly important then.

I want to thank the members of Congress who are here. In addition to Zoe Lofgren, Cal Dooley and Anna Eshoo, and I think Representative Martin Frost may be here. Someone said he was -- from Texas. He was one of our early members. I want to thank State Controller Kathleen Connell, who is here; and California Board of Education member Reed Hastings. I want to thank all the CEOs who have come today. I see my friend, Dr. Irwin Jacobs, and Meg Whitman and Eric Benhamou -- there are many others here. And I want to thank one of the people who was the architect of the economic policy that got so many kudos here, Laura Tyson. I think she's sitting in the second row there, although it's very bright.

I also want to thank the young people from City Year who are sitting in the back. When the San Jose contingent came in, I just happened to be coming into San Jose that night, and I welcomed them here. But they are the manifestation of our commitment to citizen service that grew out of one of our DLC projects. We really believed we could build an American community that was stronger and relished its diversity, and still extolled its common values, if we could get more people involved in citizen service. And that's what AmeriCorps and City Year are all about, and I'm delighted that San Jose has such a strong representation. They're

actually having their national conference out here in a few weeks, and I hope all of you will support them in every way you can.

Let me say, most of what needs to be said has been said. I do want to say a special word of appreciation, too, to Governor Davis. He has done so well on education; he has done so well on the economy; he has done so well on crime. But actually, Gray, I was even coming to California before you got elected and Chelsea came to Stanford. Actually, I think I've been here more than any President in history. I think, you know, something like 35 or 40 times.

But one of the things that I really appreciate is that when you say, and when Zoe Lofgren says, we can govern from the center, I think it's very important that everyone understand that we define that as a dynamic, not a static, term; that we get people together, and find a common approach that is oriented toward change, not the status quo. It would be difficult to look at a period of American history that has had more consistent, constructive change in the private, as well as in the public sector than we have seen in the last few years. So I think that that's something I want to emphasize.

And while I'm here, because I don't know when I'll have a chance to come back and say this -- I want to thank Governor Davis for the work he's done in education, to prove that if you have high standards and genuine accountability, and you put your money where your mouth is, all our children can learn. I believe that.

I want to thank him and all of you, particularly in Silicon Valley, for your support of the charter school movement. When I became President, there was one charter school in America; there are now over 2,000, and I think we'll make our goal of 3,000 by the end of the year. And I hope we will continue to see it grow and flourish.

I want to thank you for being on the cutting edge of change on the issue of gun safety as well, Governor. Last year, California passed laws to ban junk guns, limit handgun sales to one a month, and to stiffen the assault weapons ban. Since then, we've seen similar state action all across America. Today, just today, Massachusetts is beginning to enforce tougher consumer product safety rules for guns, banning junk guns, requiring trigger locks, and the Maryland legislature is considering legislation, as we speak, on child safety locks.

Next week, I'm going to Colorado to support a citizen ballot initiative in a state that, by registration, has become more and more Republican in the last seven years. But they've got a citizens' ballot initiative out there in the aftermath of Columbine that would close the gun show loophole and require background checks on all gun sales. So I'm pleased about that.

We also announced a landmark agreement with Smith and Wesson, the large gun manufacturer, to change for the better the way guns are manufactured, marketed and sold. And already ten California cities and counties, including San Matteo County, your neighbor, have pledged, when they buy weapons for their police forces, to support manufacturers who have high standards for gun safety and dealer responsibility.

This is a huge deal, and it is appalling, the abuse that Smith and Wesson has taken, from people who don't want to have sensible safety measures, for recognizing the fact, which is, an enormous percentage of crimes are committed with guns, are committed with guns that come from a very small percentage of dealers. And all they've said is, we're going to try to manufacture safer guns, and we're going to try to use more responsible dealers. And for their trouble, they have been subject to enormous abuse. Smith and Wesson's almost up there with me in the abuse we're getting from that crowd.

But I just want to say -- you know, somebody asked me the other day what I thought about all those mean things Charlton Heston said about me. And I said, I still like to watch his movies. And I still think he's a nice fellow. But I think the American people have decided that we can have our hunting and our sports shooting, and still have sensible prevention. And this should not be the only area of our life where we don't prevent bad things from happening in the first place.

Once again, I hope the United States will be following the lead of California, and I hope that we can pass our sensible gun safety legislation before the anniversary of the Columbine tragedy on April the 20th. But I wanted to thank Governor Davis for that as well.

And finally, let me say by way of introduction, I don't know if Al From will ever get the credit he deserves for the political revolution which has been wrought in America over the last decade. But whatever contribution I have made through the DLC -- and I love being in the DLC. You know, I love ideas, and I'm sort of a -- they used to make fun of me for being a policy wonk when I ran for President. But we believed ideas mattered.

He, however, was willing to devote his life to creating an organization that got people together who believed ideas mattered. He believed that the center should be vital, not stale. He thought the polarizing politics of Washington was nuts, and destructive to America's future. And he gave people like Cal Dooley and Anna Eshoo, and Zoe Lofgren and Gray Davis and me, a place from which we could work, and proudly embrace our party and its heritage. And I just want to thank you, Al, for now over 16 years of service to your country, by preserving its oldest political party's heritage and ideas and ideals. Thank you very much.

Ten years ago, when Al From and I came out here, we figured that if the Democratic Party had a future, it had to be hooked into the future, and that you were making the future. It wasn't very complicated. We did not believe that America could be what it ought to be unless we had sustained economic growth. We didn't think that we could tolerate a situation where we had these huge deficits. But we also knew we had to be for things, not just against things, and we wanted to see the future being made. So we showed up out here and we just started listening and talking to people and trying to figure out what implications for the way government works, we could find in the way the most successful companies here were working.

We also were trying to figure out whether there was some way we could actually get by the ideological debates that were paralyzing Washington, and what was then -- it's amazing, but then, the Democrats were still identifying with the position that the government was a solution to the problem, and the Republicans were identified with the position that the government was the

cause of every problem. I thought both were, frankly, somewhat arrogant, since we have a big, complicated country in which governments interrelations with the other sectors and actors of our society are important.

So, anyway, we worked on this. And then, in 1992, Al Gore and I went to the American people and asked them to give us a chance to create opportunity for all and responsibility from all and community of all Americans. We asked them to give us a chance to create a government which was neither the satan nor the savior of America, but a catalyst for new ideas to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. And the American people gave us a chance. I think the results speak for themselves.

The core of it all in the beginning was trying to get our relationship to the new economy right, and then trying to bring more people into it. We, first of all, recognized that in a global economy, whether you were doing something new or traditional, there had to be an availability of capital at affordable interest rates. We had to do something about the deficits. And so we did it, with our crowd alone.

I told a group last night, I never will forget all those guys saying -- in the Republican Party -- when they were saying my economic plan would be a disaster for America and they were not to be held responsible for any of the consequences.

To be fair to them, they did come back in '97, and we had a Balanced Budget Act that passed overwhelmingly, with both parties and both Houses. It was one of the high-water marks of the last seven years because it proved that when we get off our high horse we can work together to move forward to make America a better place. But we had to first get the deficit in order. And now we've got the first back-to-back surpluses in 42 years, and the consequences are obvious.

The second thing we had to do was expand trade. All this has been said before, but America has got 22 percent of the world's income and 4 percent of the world's population. You don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out somehow, some way, you have to sell something to somebody else. And I think it's, in a larger sense, the world is becoming a different place, and if you want America to have a positive impact for peace and freedom and security and prosperity, we have to be involved in the kind of networking of the world that you have made a living off of both in America and beyond our borders. It's very important.

The third thing we had to do was to make sure we were investing in the education and training of our people, and our scientific and technological capacity, so that we could stay on the cutting edge of change and make sure we were preparing more people to participate in it. And in that connection, there have been some allusions -- Zoe made some allusion to this, but we also worked very hard to kind of fix the government's relationship to the emerging high-tech economy. We worked so hard in the administration on the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to make sure it was a pro-competition bill that would give people a chance to get into business, not squeeze them out; that would give new ideas and new approaches a chance to flourish, not be

shriveled by people who were stepping on that. And I think the fight -- it was a huge fight; it was very much a fight worth making. And I think if you look at all the new firms and all the new successes that have flown out of the '96 Telecom Act, and the developments in the global economy, I think it was worth doing.

We have worked hard to make the other adjustments, some of which I'll mention in a minute, including being more flexible about exports and other things. But we have tried very hard, because 30 percent of the growth of America in the last few years has come out of the high-tech sector, to get this right. And a lot of you have played a major role in that, and I thank you for that.

So, after seven years, I think we can say that this approach works. And we've had the highest percentage of jobs created in the private sector of any modern economic recovery. We have the smallest government in 40 years -- since 1960. We have about 21 million new jobs, and as all of you know, the longest economic expansion in the history of the country. And the social fabric is getting better -- the crime rate is down to a 25-year low; the welfare roll has been cut in half, to a 30-year low. Teen pregnancy is down, adoptions are up. Test scores are up, college-going is up. The country is moving in the right direction.

And as I said in my State of the Union address, I just want to say again today, I think the main issue in this year's election ought to be, now what? What are you going to do with this prosperity?

And I want to come back to the point we're here about today, but why are we doing all this? And it seems to me that the most important thing the American people have to decide is, do they want to use this moment to have a good time, or would they like to have a good time by meeting the big, long-term challenges that are still manifestly out there?

You know, you know what I think. I think it's a time for dreaming big dreams, and for bridging big divides, and for dealing with big challenges. And I think that we have now the resources to do things as a nation we've never had before.

I think we ought to make America debt-free for the first time since 1835. I think we ought to prove that we can bring free enterprise and the information economy to the poorest nooks and crannies of America that have been left behind. I think we ought to make America the safest big nation on earth. I think we ought to prove we can provide affordable, quality health care to all Americans. I think we ought to prove we can provide world-class education to our children, that every child can start school ready to learn, graduate ready to succeed, and go on to college, because the means are there.

I think we ought to prove that we can meet the challenge of the aging of America, and take Social Security out beyond the life of the baby boomers, reform Medicare, add a prescription drug coverage -- which we never would have left out if Medicare were created today instead of in 1965.

I think we ought to prove we can reverse the course of climate change while we grow the economy -- that you, the information economy, broke the iron chain between economic growth and putting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. It is no longer necessary to do that. It is scientifically provable it is no longer necessary to do that. And we're crazy if we don't get about the business of preserving the global environment, as well as dealing with our local environmental challenges.

I think we ought to prove that we can lead the world toward greater shared peace and security, and that we can build one America at home and be an example abroad for people to let go of their ethnic, their religious, their racial, their tribal and other hatreds. That's what I think this election ought to be about, because that's what I think the future ought to be about.

You know, in my lifetime we've never had this kind of opportunity. But the point I want to make about all of this for today is that we will not be able to have an election about that or a future that's about that unless we can keep the economy growing. And you would be amazed how much time we have spent over the last several years figuring out: How do you keep this going? Because even though I think you have changed the nature of the economy, I don't believe that the silicon chip has repealed all the economic laws that govern nations. I'm not sure that you've repealed the laws of supply and demand or even totally abolished the business cycle, but I am quite sure you have made them more elastic, less predictable, and that there is more potential for sustained growth.

So we spent a lot of time thinking about, what is it that we have to do now to keep this thing going. And if I could, I'd say -- the first thing I think we need to do is go back over the elements of the strategy. We cannot abandon our fiscal discipline. Now, this is an idea that will be tested in this election debate, because the Republicans now favor a tax cut bigger than the one I vetoed. And I believe that if it passes, they won't be able to keep their own promises on education and furthermore, they will have to have massive cuts in all these things and we'll go back to running deficits. But it will be very popular in the short run, and we're doing so well, a lot of people will want to believe we can do this. So it's a big issue the Americans will have to face. And I hate to sound like the sort of crotchety old schoolmarm, but we ought to stick with what brought us to the dance here.

And the increasing value of the NASDAQ is more important than the decreasing burden of taxes if the impact of the decreasing burden of taxes is to go back to deficits, high interest rates, an uneducated citizenry, and lower wealth creation. And we need to -- this is an issue that the American people will just have to deal with.

The second thing we have to do, it seems to me, is to redouble our commitment to education, and training our own work force. And I will just say -- Gray Davis has already said a great deal about this -- but it seems to me the key is, we have to have a relentless focus on results.

We have learned -- back in the early '80s when I started this, and Hillary and I redid the education laws in Arkansas, we had some pretty good ideas about what would work. But we weren't sure. And now there's really no excuse. There's lots and lots of research which shows

what works in education. And we need a relentless focus on results, on standards, on accountability. I'm trying to get the Congress to completely change the way we give out federal money, and only support things that we know work, and stop supporting things we know don't work.

I think social promotion should be ended, but not in a way that blames the kids for the failure of the system. Therefore, I think our proposal would have universal access for every kid in every troubled school in America to after-school and summer school programs, to mentoring programs, because I think it's important that we believe and prove that every child can learn. I think these things really matter.

I think that schools that are failing ought to be turned around or shut down. But I think we ought to help them be turned around, because we know, as a practical matter, they can be. You heard Gray Davis talk about this incentive program he's giving. When you give a lot -- once he's given out a number of these bonuses, then people will go out and start studying the circumstances that these children were in when they started. And it's going to take your breath away when you see the adversity that a lot of these classrooms and schools have overcome. And it will reaffirm the notion that I think is broadly shared in this room, that intelligence is pretty well universally distributed, and that there's a role to be played here in this.

I also want to say, we shouldn't forget the importance of technology. We have gone, now, from about, oh, 11 percent of our classrooms connected to the Internet -- schools -- to over 90 percent of our schools connected to the Internet today, well over half of our classrooms -- thanks to a lot of you in this room and the program that we've been working on with the Vice President since '94. We shouldn't forget that.

But I just want to say to you -- I believed this before I got here. I believe it, more importantly, today. I have spent an enormous amount of time in our schools over the last 21 years. These schools can be turned around, and all of our kids can learn. But you have to have high standards and genuine accountability, and the right kind of support. That's what California represents. That's what I believe our national policy represents. And I hope you will continue to support them.

I also think that we're kidding ourselves if we think we can continue to move this economy forward unless we educate our people to a far higher degree, with much more flexibility. But also, as all of you know, and as you have been banging on me for years, what do we do with the shortages that exist right now? Our high-tech industries do face temporary labor shortages, and they have repeatedly, at least during my experience. So we've tried to balance the short-term need to increase visas for high-skilled workers with the long-term goal of actually educating our people so that more of them from untraditional backgrounds can fill these high-wage positions.

Again, I want to thank Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren's leadership. It's been quite imaginative here. She helped our nation to strike that balance in the past with legislation that dealt with the short-term crisis and set aside funds for education and training. And now, we've got a similar dilemma, and she and Anna Eshoo and Ellen Tauscher, representing this area, have

all taken a real leadership role in trying to help us get a bipartisan solution to have more workers here, to improve the INS, to insure that our children benefit from the technological innovation of the new economy.

I know you're all interested in this and I wanted to talk about this, because we will get a solution here. We will work together, we will come up with sound legislation, we will find the high-tech workers you need so that we can keep growing this economy, and we will continue to prepare our children and our workers for the Information Age. So, thank you, Zoe, and thank you, Anna, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

Meanwhile, you need to keep helping Governor Davis on this education project. Now, let me talk briefly about the China issue and trade. We've had over 270 trade agreements in the last seven years. They have clearly boosted economic growth. Until the Asian financial crisis, 30 percent of our growth was attributed to the expansion of exports. But they have, as Zoe Lofgren said so eloquently in her remarks, the trade issue has become symbolic of people's general unease about globalization and their sense that the world is not about economics alone, it's about the fair distribution of gain, it's also about the preservation of other values, like our values opposing child labor or abusive labor conditions or our desire to see the standing of the entire global economy improve. And somehow, these trade agreements have become a lightening rod for everybody's dissatisfaction with everything, although the evidence is, the more we trade with countries and the more wealth they get, the more likely they are to elevate labor standards and improve the environment.

And I have really tried to be out there on the forefront of arguing for global efforts to integrate an approach to a global society that included labor and the environment along with economic agreements. Now, having said that, none of that is an argument for opposing China's entry into the WTO, and even more specifically, for opposing the Congress in granting permanent normal trade relations to China.

I think it's very important that everyone understand exactly what this is. I still talk to members who are a little bit, I think, uncertain about exactly what this legislation does. We reached an agreement with China for the terms of their entry into the WTO. When China concludes similar agreements with other countries, it will join the WTO. But for us to benefit from the agreement that we negotiated, China must first be granted permanent normal trading status by Congress. It's the same arrangement we have with other countries in the WTO.

Now, there is a lot of controversy in Congress about this vote. And I've heard all the arguments. But I think that, I have to tell you first of all just on the trade terms, in the entire history of trade agreements, I don't believe there's ever been one this weighted in our favor, for one simple reason. This is not really a trade agreement, it's a membership agreement. It's very important that you understand. This is a membership agreement. This is China saying we don't have a modern, open economy, we'd like to be in this modern, open trading system. If you will let us in, here are the changes we are prepared to make. That's what this is about.

Therefore, this vote by Congress is on an agreement that lowers no American trade barriers, lowers no American tariffs, grants no greater access to China to any part of the

American economy -- nothing, zip, zilch, nada, zero. On the other hand, Chinese tariffs will fall by more than half over five years in every sector -- from telecommunications to automobiles, to agriculture.

For the first time, American companies will be able to sell and distribute products in China without having to transfer technological know-how to Chinese firms, or put manufacturing facilities overseas. For the first time, China will agree to play by the same trading rules that we follow.

Accordingly, the narrow, or broad, economic consequences are 100-0 in our favor. But I believe the moral and national security arguments also favor this decision. There is no denying, as some of the opponents of this agreement assert, that China is a one-party state, that it does not tolerate opposition, that it still denies its citizens fundamental rights of free speech and religious expression that we hold very dear. That is not the question.

The question is, what is the most intelligent thing we can do to increase the chances that China will become more open, more democratic, and a constructive member of the global community in the 21st century. I think the answer is to allow them in and to let liberty spread from within.

Under this agreement, China will slash the tariffs that protect its inefficient state-run industries, industries which the communist party has long used to exercise day to day control over people's lives. China's leaders feel this step is essential to maintaining their competitiveness. And they're not foolish people. They know it may unleash forces that the leaders, themselves, cannot control. The late Chief Justice Earl Warren, from California -- a former governor of California -- said that liberty is the most contagious force in the world.

In the new century, liberty will spread, in part, by cell phone and cable modem. In the past year, the number of Internet addresses in China in one year has gone from 2 million to 9 million. This year the number is expected to grow to over 20 million. There are 1.2 billion people in China. When China joins the WTO, by 2005, it will eliminate tariffs on information technology products, making the tools of communication even cheaper, better, more widely available.

American telecommunications firms and service providers are perfectly poised to fill this enormous market.

We know how much the Internet has changed America, and we're already an open society. Imagine how much it will change China. Of course, there's no question China has been trying to crack down on the Internet -- good luck. That's like that EDS ad. You remember that ad where these cowboys are trying to herd cats? That's the best ad I saw on television last year.

The very fact that the Chinese government is trying to herd these cats shows you how real the changes are and how much they threaten the old order. They are proof that we should keep going in this direction, not that we should hold back.

Now, of course, I recognize that bringing China into the WTO is not a human rights policy in and of itself, and we have to continue to push China in every way we can to improve and observe human rights. We're pressing for a resolution at the U.N. to condemn human rights abuses in China that we object to. We urge other nations to join us.

But I think it is quite significant that the people with the greatest interest in seeing China change agree with our efforts to bring China into the world trading system. There's something almost patronizing in the opposition of some elements in the United States to China coming into the WTO, when the people they say they're trying to help believe they'll be helped if China does come into the WTO. The citizens of Taiwan, despite all their tensions with Beijing, by and large want to see China in the WTO. And so does Taiwan's newly elected leader. It's a very important point. So does Taiwan's newly elected leader.

Most evangelical Christians who have missions in China want China in the WTO. Most human rights organizations want China in the WTO. I think the more the American people learn about our agreement with China, the more they will support it. I think the more elected representatives learn about it, the more they'll get behind it. Support is building based on the evidence.

And we have signs of that today. You heard the Governor mention the letter he's signing. Now we have over 40 of our nation's governors, Republicans and Democrats, in favor of granting China permanent normal trading status. And they say it will create tremendous opportunities for their companies and farmers and more high-wage American workers. In addition to Governor Davis, I want to thank Governor Locke of Washington and Governor Schafer of North Dakota for their efforts.

We've got more members of Congress coming on board, and I thank Zoe Lofgren for the brave announcement she made today. And today, I'm pleased to announce that the CEOs of over 200 high-tech firms from across our country have also signed a letter urging members of Congress to support this legislation.

In their letter, the CEOs say, this vote is an absolute priority for high-tech companies, and the most critical vote Congress will take on high technology this year. Now, here's the clincher I want to explain that I think a lot of people don't understand. If we don't vote for permanent normal trading status, and China makes its agreement with Europe, they still get in the WTO. The only difference is Europe and Japan get the benefits of the deal that we negotiated.

Opposition to this -- it reminds me of that old Cajun joke I learned when I was a boy -- I shouldn't be telling this story, but I'm going to. But, I mean, really. This guy, Pierre, comes up to his friend, Jean, and he says, "Jean, why do you have dynamite in your suit pocket? Usually you got those big expensive cigars." He said, "Yeah, but every time I do that, Raymond, he comes up to me and he says, hey, Jean, and he hits me in the pocket. He destroys my cigars." He said, "Now you got dynamite? When you do it now you will kill yourself." He said, "I know, but I blow his hand off." You think about it.

We made this deal, and now we say, we take it back, we don't want it, we're going to give it to you. We made this incredible agreement, we've been working on all these problems with China for years, we can't get in the markets, we can't distribute our automobiles, we can't distribute our auto parts, we've got to have manufacturing and technology transfer. It's all gone, and now we say, we don't want any of that, we're going to give it to the Europeans and the Japanese. Let's see if they can do a good job with the deal we negotiated.

It's very important that you understand this. The main consequence of this will be to hurt America economically and to dramatically strain our relations with China at a time when we need to maintain a positive ability to impact their conduct -- to reduce strains along the Taiwan Straits, and to get the leaders in that country to imagine the greatness of their country in future terms, not yesterday's terms. This is a big deal.

It isn't like we can stop the modernization, but we can turn it into a very dark direction. Or we can run a much bigger risk. You all think about that story I told you. How many times have you done that in your life?

Now that I am in the last year of my presidency and I'm not running for anything, I can tell you, perhaps with some greater credibility, that I think we in America generally tend to overestimate the influence we have by stifling people, and we generally tend to under-estimate the influence we have by reaching out a hand of cooperation. Not in a naive way, not in a blind way, never abandoning our values. But just -- what was this DLC all about in the beginning? We were sick of these partisan, rhetorical bombshells that dominated Washington politics. We thought there had to be a way to get underneath and beyond that, to join people together in constructive endeavors. And lo and behold, it worked. And it's not different in the rest of the world.

Now, all I can tell you is I believe that if we do this, 20 years from now we will wonder why we ever had a serious debate about it. If we don't do it, 20 years from now we'll still be kicking ourselves for being so dumb. That's what I really believe. And there is no point in my being delicate about this -- I think this is a big deal. And our country and my successors in office, and their ability to do the right thing by you and by our values, will turn in no small measure on how we vote on this. So I realize that in the crowd I'm preaching to the saved -- (laughter) -- but if you want America's economy to continue to grow, and if you want your country to continue to be a force for peace and freedom and prosperity and to have an influence on people, to get them to give up their irrational attachment to the animosities of yesterday, we have to be willing to shoulder our burden for the future. This is part of it, and ironically, we will be one of the greatest beneficiaries by doing what is right for China and for the rest of the world.

Thank you very much.

END

12:05 P.M. PDT

WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Jose, California)

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April 2, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT RECEPTION FOR THE DCCC

Private Residence

Palo Alto, California

10:10 P.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I must say, when Dick was talking about all those fights we've taken on, and I got to thinking about some more -- when I helped Mexico. The morning we gave them financial aid, there was a poll in the paper that said, by 81 to 15, the people thought it was a mistake. So he kept talking about that. I thought, Mr. Gephardt is up there describing a fool, and now I have to get up and speak.

I want to thank Jim and Bridget for having us here. It is truly beautiful, and I always like to have an excuse to come back. And I want to thank my daughter for showing up tonight. Those of you -- we were just talking around the table about newborns. When your children grow up, you're always mildly surprised when they want to spend time with you. It's actually quite wonderful. So this is quite nice for us.

I want to thank the Flying Other Brothers. I wonder how many young people here are Dead Heads in the crowd. But they were great. And I apologize, they caught me by surprise. They invited me to play with them, and I thought, well, these poor men don't know that that saxophone mouthpiece has no reed on it. And then after he went back up I realized they had actually pickled me some reeds in a jar there. So you guys will have to give me a rain check; I'll do it some other time. We'll have another chance to do it.

BAND MEMBER: We'll hold you to it.

THE PRESIDENT: I want to tell you how grateful I am to the members who are here, to Patrick Kennedy and Bob Menendez, to my good friend, Charlie Rangel, and to

Zoe Lofgren and Nancy Pelosi, Anna Eshoo. California has a marvelous combination of women there. We also have Martin Frost from Texas here, and David Woo from Oregon. We're glad to have them.

And I want to thank -- and maybe others -- I want to thank Mike Honda and Adam Schiff for being willing to run for the House of Representatives and I, too, believe they will win. I want to also thank all of you, not only for being here, but for the work that we have done together actually since I started coming out here in 1991. I wanted the Democratic Party in the 1992 election to be the party of the future in America. And it was quite obvious to me and to anyone who was paying attention that we couldn't be the party of the future unless we came to those of you who are making the future.

And I want to thank you for all the things we've worked on -- to pass a pro-competition Telecommunications Act in 1996; to change some of the laws on exports and deal with the visa issues and a whole range of other issues. I want to especially thank -- there are many people here, but I see John Dorr and Harry Schmidt within my line of sight, who have called me on your behalf and badgered me at all hours of the day and night to move the government faster. They said, we realize that the government is not in the Internet age, but at least we ought to be out of the Stone age. Please move.

I thank them and all the rest of you who have done that over the last seven years. Dick Gephardt's talked about the issues and the stakes, and you're well aware of them. But I would like to say just a few things to you.

First of all, there is a huge difference in these two parties. And there is no doubt, as Mr. Gephardt said, that the Democrats are in the minority in the House of Representatives today because in 1993 and in 1994, they had the courage to vote alone, without a single Republican vote, to bridle the enormous deficit that has quadrupled the American debt in 12 years -- it was \$290 billion a year when I took office, slated to be about \$400 billion this year. And we just decided we had to do something about it; that if we didn't do it, we'd never get interest rates down, we'd never get investment up, we'd never get growth going in the American economy. We had a little bit of a recovery; we were going to slip out of it. We just knew that we had to do it.

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And from the moment I announced our plan in December of '92, things really took off. And then we had the vote, and I'll never forget this -- in August of 1993, when all these members were having to walk the plank and go down and vote -- and not a single Republican was going in -- all the Republicans were saying, you know, this is going to be a disaster, it's going to be horrible; we're not responsible for anything that happens after this. And they're not. That's what they said, and they were right.

And then we got into the gun business. We passed the Brady Bill, and we passed the assault weapons ban -- (applause) -- which Senator Feinstein was especially active in passing. And, oh, they said, the world was going to come to an end. And we lost -- I'm telling you, we lost a lot of members of the House of Representatives on the budget bill because the people hadn't felt the benefit of the improving economy by '94 and on the gun issue. I'll never forget, when I went back to New Hampshire, which is a state like my home state of Arkansas, where more than half the people have a hunting license, and I said, I want to go into the middle of a bunch of hunters -- and I went back in '96, because they beat a congressman up there because he voted for the assault weapons ban and the Brady Bill.

And I told those guys -- I remember, there were just all these guys in their plaid shirts just looking at me kind of sullen up, and I said, you know, if any of you missed a day, even an hour in the deer woods on account of the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban, I want to vote against me, too, because that congressman lost his job because of me. But if you didn't, they lied to you and you need to get even. And they did.

I say that because one of the things that I wanted to do when I ran in '92 was to change the whole way people thought about politics in Washington. Everything was either/or. You know, there was a liberal position and a conservative position. There was a Democratic position and there was a Republican position. Everybody was supposed to hunker down and fight and get their 15 seconds on the evening news. And as a result, not very much got done, and we kept getting deeper and deeper and deeper in the ditch. And I believed that you could be, for example, pro-business and pro-labor. I thought you could be pro-growth and pro-environment. I thought you could be pro-work and pro-family.

I thought we could balance the budget, still invest more in education and technology and scientific research. And lo and behold, it worked. And I want you to understand this. These people here, who have served with me, under the most relentless pressure imagined, have stood up for a politics that will both unify this country and move us forward.

You know, I'm not running for anything this year. And most days, I'm okay about it. I do have a mild interest in the Senate race in New York that I'm -- (applause) -- but I come here tonight as much as President as an American citizen who has had a unique vantage point on this last seven and a half years. And I will say again: There is a huge difference.

This party -- I want to thank Congressman Gephardt. I know you probably all saw the big press he got when he came out for a five- or six-point plan directed specifically at our high-tech future, or a permanent extension of the research and experimentation tax credit -- a number of other issues that the Democratic caucus has embraced to move us forward. But there is a big difference.

Now, we're in Washington today fighting for some things that I think are important. We believe that we ought to stop giving out education money to projects that don't work, and only fund those things which do. We believe that there ought to be high standards. We think there ought to be an end to social promotion. But we think that every child ought to have a chance to learn. Children shouldn't be blamed when the system fails.

I thank Governor Davis for his championing the charter school movement, and all of you who have helped that. But we also need to have after-school programs and summer school programs in these schools. We need to close the digital divide, and finish the work of hooking up all the classrooms to the Internet. And a lot of you have helped us with that, and I thank you for that.

We need to reform the health care system and add prescription drugs to Medicare coverage. We need to save Social Security and take it out way beyond the life of the baby boom

generation -- and we can do that if we don't have a tax cut that's too big. And that's going to be a big deal, when all of us baby boomers retire.

We need to have a tax cut we can afford, and it ought to be targeted toward helping people send their kids to college, care for their parents and disabled family members and long-term care, and to help working people on modest incomes afford their child care and other expenses.

We need to carry, I think to a much greater degree than we have, a commitment to the notion that we can improve the environment while we grow the economy. That's what this whole global warming issue is about. All over the world, there are people who just don't believe that you can get rich unless you put more stuff in the air that heats up the earth. They think you've got to burn more coal and more oil, and in the digital economy that is not true. It is not true.

Pretty soon, we'll all be driving cars that get 80 miles a gallon, and if we can crack the last little chemical barrier, we'll be able to have biofuels where you can make eight gallons of ethanol, for example, with only one gallon of gasoline. And then we'll all be effectively getting 550 miles a gallon.

Pretty soon everybody will be building their houses with glass that keeps out more heat and cold, and lets in more light. We saved \$100,000 a year on the White House power bills just by changing the lights in one place. I've ordered the whole federal government to do what we did when we greened the White House. It will be the equivalent of taking 1.7 million cars off the road. And it's just the beginning.

These are some of the things where we actually differ with the other party. And Dick was talking about the gun issue. Somebody asked me what I thought about Charlton Heston the other day saying all those mean things about me, and I said, I still like his movies. And I do. And I actually like him -- he came to the White House, to the Kennedy Center Honors a couple of years ago. And I know that that's the way they think. But you have to understand the difference between the two parties.

The Republicans who follow the NRA believe that guns are the only area of our national life where we should deal with problems only with punishment and no prevention. They say, just throw the book at somebody if they violate one of these existing laws, but for goodness sakes, don't inconvenience anybody else by closing the gun show loophole, by requiring child trigger locks, by banning the importation of large-capacity ammunition clips which make a mockery of our assault weapons ban. This is a big deal because it shows you how they define community.

How would you feel if I said, you know, nearly everybody who goes in an airport is a good, honest citizen, 99.9 percent of them are, and those metal detectors when it's crowded and you're late for your plane are a real pain, you know, especially if you've got a big money clip or something that keeps going off. It just drives you crazy. So I want to take all of the metal

detectors out of the airports, and the next time somebody blows up a plane, I'm going to throw the book at them.

You think about it. That is the logic that the other party has in blocking this common-sense gun legislation. This is a big deal. And it will carry over into other issues. It does carry over into the tobacco issue and many others. So there is a huge difference.

But maybe most important of all, there is a difference about how we define our community. We're for the hate crimes legislation. We're for the employment nondiscrimination act. We believe that everybody ought to be a part of America if they're willing to obey the law and work hard, then everybody ought to have a chance. We think everyone matters, we think we all do better when we help each other. That's what we believe.

I think that's even more important than our commitment to high technology and scientific research. One of the unbelievable ironies of this world in which we live is that we think about now, in the next few years, not only these energy advances I mentioned, but just in a couple of months, I will be able to announce the sequencing of the human genome, that it will be finished. And then before you know it, we'll figure out how to block the genes that cause Alzheimer's or Parkinson's.

Before you know it, we'll be able to find cancers when there are just a few cells. There will be unbelievable advances in biochemistry, and a lot of you have been a part of that. We'll find out what's in the black holes in the universe in the next two or three decades. It's an amazing time.

Now, isn't it interesting, since all of you are in the .com world, that for all the wonders of the modern world, the biggest problem people face is the oldest problem of human society -- the fear of the other, people who are different. And, therefore, the most dangerous thing in a society are people who seek to exploit that fear of the other and that difference.

I just got back from India and Pakistan and Bangladesh. Now, I was in a little Indian village -- you may have seen it, I was dancing with the village women and they were throwing flowers and everything -- a very poor village, but they have a computer with software sufficient to give the poorest villagers, in Hindi or English, our good visuals, if they don't read very well, all of the information available from every national and state agency in India in a little village, and they have a printer.

So I watched a woman with a newborn baby come in and get the web page for the health department on the line, and she had it on her screen and exactly what she was supposed to do in the first few months of her baby's life, and then she printed it out and she took it home, and she had information in this remote rural village in India, just as good as anybody could get here in Northern California.

I went to Hyderabad, where I met with the chief government minister. They have 18 government services on the Internet now. If you're there, you can get a car licensed on the

Internet. Nobody goes to the revenue office anymore. Governor, if you do that, you'll be elected until the end of your life. This is an amazing thing.

If you look at America, there are 750 companies in Silicon Valley alone headed by Indian Americans. There are 200 ethnic groups in America; Indians and Pakistanis both rank in the top five in per capita income and per capita education. And yet, they are sitting there staring at each other across the divide of Kashmir with nuclear weapons. And they can't let it go, and they can't get beyond it.

Can you imagine what would happen to the Middle East in no time, if we could actually resolve the remaining differences? It's no accident that Ireland has the fastest-growing economy in Europe, because they finally started to make peace with one another. And yet, everywhere we see these demons.

It's very important that the governing part in Washington believe that we can be one America, and be committed to the future, and a unifying vision of the future. I want Al Gore to be President, not just because I'm grateful to him for being what everybody knows is the most influential Vice President in history, but because he understands the future, and he has the ideas, the experience, and the will, the strength, to lead us there.

I want these people to get in the majority, not just because I feel terrible that they fell on the sword for me when we had to get this economy moving again, and we had to take a stand for sensible gun safety laws, but because I know they can represent that kind of future. I can look at every member here and imagine some -- remember some conversation I've had with them over the years that just made me proud that they were members of my party.

I just want to leave you with this thought. Most of you who have done real well here are younger than I am. And I never thought -- you know, the older you get, young is always defined as somebody who's a year younger than you are.

But I want to tell you a story about this moment, because I want you to understand, this is a terribly important election. I have worked as hard as I could to turn our country around and get us moving in the right direction. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years; the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded; the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years. That's the good news. But there's still people in places left behind.

We've got the lowest crime rate in 25 years, but the country's still too dangerous. We still haven't stepped up to our environmental responsibilities. And there are still a lot of dangers out there in the world. One of the reasons that I hope so much that this China-MFN bill will pass, then getting China into the WTO is that I think it will reduce the tensions across the Taiwan Strait, and I don't want a conflict there that will totally set back all of East Asia for a generation. I want them to keep moving forward, and I think it's important.

So let me say this. I want you all to listen to this -- especially those of you who are younger than me. In February, we celebrated the longest economic expansion in American

history. So I got all my little team together and we were laughing, probably being a little too self-congratulatory, because you had as much to do with it as we did. All I did was try to create the conditions and give people the tools to make the most of their own lives.

But I asked them, I said, when was the last longest economic expansion in history? And it was between 1961 and 1969, when we grew up. So let me tell you a story about that. And I'm not telling you this to get anybody down. There's no more optimistic person in this tent tonight than me. But I want you to listen to this -- 1964, at the high-water mark of the last longest economic expansion in history, I graduated from high school. Lyndon Johnson was President, uniting the country after President Kennedy's tragic assassination. We had low unemployment, low inflation, high growth, and everybody thought it was just going to go on and on and on.

We had a civil rights challenge, but everyone thought it was going to be handled in the Congress and the courts, not in the streets, because we had a president and a congress who believed in them. No one believed that what was then a sort of simmering conflict in Vietnam would rip the heart out of America. And so we just rolled along. We thought it would go on.

Then, what happened. Four years later, in 1968 I graduated from college. Two days after Robert Kennedy was killed. Two months after Martin Luther King was killed. Nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for president. A few weeks before Richard Nixon was elected president, claiming that he represented the silent majority, which means that those of us who were on the other side were outcasts. We were in the loud minority. And it was the first of many elections where we attempted to divide America between us and them. And those that weren't us were by definition them. They weren't our crowd, and they didn't have a place at our table.

And just a few weeks after that, in early 1969, the last longest economic expansion in American history came to an end. Now, what I want to say to you as a citizen was that I have waited for 35 years, since I was a little boy, starting out in life, to see my country have a chance to build a future of our dreams for our children. We are free of internal crisis. The threats we have in the world, while serious, are not paralyzing.

You have created a whole new economy that hasn't repealed the laws of supply and demand, but has made them infinitely more elastic with infinitely more possibilities.

This is the kind of chance that comes along once in a lifetime. Don't let this election be about little things, and don't let this election be about divisive things. This is a time for building tomorrows. It comes along once in a great, long while. You have helped to make it so. And you can make sure that we make the most of this election.

These people should be elected because they represent the future and they represent unity, and they believe we can go forward together. It is a precious gift. We have fought for it and worked for it and stood for it in strong winds. But now, it must be ratified in this election.

Clinton's
past

If somebody asked you tomorrow why you came here tonight, tell them that. Tell them we've got the chance of a lifetime to build a future of our dreams for our children, and you believe that these Democrats can give it to you.

Thank you and God bless you.

END

10:27 P.M. PDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Las Vegas, Nevada)

For Immediate Release

April 2, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT RECEPTION FOR THE DNC AND
THE NEVADA STATE DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Private Residence
Las Vegas, Nevada

1:06 P.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Well, first, let me say I am delighted to be here. When I got up this morning -- a little early, because we had this shift to Daylight Savings Time -- it was cloudy in Washington. And I think I made a good swap. I just talked to Hillary on the phone, and I'm on my way to Northern California to do an event and see our daughter tonight, and I think I made a good decision to travel West today. I love coming back to Las Vegas.

I will say -- you know, Jan was kind of joshing with me on the way in -- I said, gosh, I love this house. And she said, well, you know, I'll give you a lot of variety because I move every year. And I think she ought to give this place at least 18 months. This is a wonderful place, and I'm delighted to be here, and I think we all are.

I want to thank Senator Bryan, as he retires. I want to wish him well and thank him for all that he did as senator, governor and attorney general. I'm so old and creaky, I served with both Dick Bryan and Bob Miller, and I thank you, sir, for everything you did.

I want to thank Harry Reid, and I want to thank you, Representative Berkley, for helping to get the votes that will guarantee that when I veto that nuclear waste bill, the veto will be sustained, and I thank you for that.

I told the people of Nevada in November of 1998 in no uncertain terms that if they wanted to have the law observed instead of short-circuited, they had to reelect Harry Reid, and we that we needed a member of Congress from our party who had agreed with us here, and you won, and you won. And Harry was like Jack Kennedy in 1960 -- he didn't buy a single vote he didn't need.

And I want to be heard again publicly on this. If it hadn't been for your delegation, working the Congress, explaining the issue, we would never have gotten enough votes on our side -- and we did better this time -- to sustain the President's veto. And I would hope the people of Nevada will think about this in this coming presidential race. Because I'm not on the ballot

and I won't be here next time, and I'll guarantee it, it is an absolute certainty, 100 percent certainty, that there is a difference in position between the candidates on this issue.

Keep in mind, when the study was originally done, there were two sides that were thought to be appropriate, possibly. One was in Nevada; the other was in rural Texas. So I'll leave it to you. I know you can figure this out.

I want to thank Governor Miller, too, for being my great friend and for all the things that we've done together. We even took a trip to the Balkans together recently, and we had a good time, in Bulgaria. I want to thank you, Ed Bernstein, for running for the United States Senate. It's a hard thing to do as a private citizen, and I thank you.

And thank you, Rory Reid, for being the chair of this party. I want to thank all the members of the legislature and the City Council, the county commissioners -- Mayor Gibson from Henderson -- for being here. I want to thank Ed Rendell, my great friend who when he retired as mayor of Philadelphia, I said I had a little part-time job I wanted him to do. And he's embraced it with gusto.

Thank you, Janice Griffin. There was a couple here who have not been introduced that I'd like to acknowledge. They've come from Chicago, and Lou Weisbach and his wife Ruth -- he's the head of our Jefferson Trust Program for the Democratic Party, and I want to welcome them to Las Vegas, and thank you for coming out here with me. And I want to thank former Congressman Bilbray for being here.

Let me say one thing about him, as well, I said earlier. We celebrated -- I will begin and end with this fact -- we celebrated the longest economic expansion in the history of America in February. It happened because when Al Gore and I were elected, we, first of all, said, even before we took office, that we were going to do something about the crippling deficit and the debt of our country, which had quadrupled in the 12 years before I took office. The deficit was \$290 billion, projected to be about \$400 billion this year. And we said we would do something about it.

And interest rates immediately started to drop. Then I presented a program; they started to drop again. Then, in August of '93, came decision time. Were we finally, after 12 years of irresponsibility, going to actually do something about the deficit that was gripping our country?

Now, don't forget what America was like in 1992. High unemployment; high interest rates; low growth; every time we'd get out of a recession, we'd fall right back in; social problems getting worse; Washington full of name-calling and political division, not much going on. That's what was happening.

And the Republicans made a decision that they would not give us a single, solitary vote on the deficit reduction package in 1993. Not one. And the leadership put the word out: no one could budge. And they told everybody this was nothing but a tax increase -- in spite of the fact that we cut thousands of programs and eliminated hundreds -- and they said it would wreck the

American economy. And they washed their hands of it. They said, we're not responsible for what happens. And they certainly aren't.

And this man, Jim Bilbray, voted with me. And he gave up his seat in Congress because of it, because by 1994 the American people had not yet felt that the economy was doing better. They had not felt it. And the Republicans could come out and say, well, they all voted for tax increases. Well, a few of you may have had your taxes increased -- about 1.2 percent of the American people did. The rest either had no tax increase or an income tax cut.

But we lost a lot of good people in the Congress, and he was one. But I want you to know, if he hadn't cast that vote, we didn't -- we passed that budget by one vote. And everything that has happened since, right down to the longest economic expansion in history, would not have happened if we hadn't gone from deficits to surpluses, and gone from high interest rates to low interest rates. And I thank you, Mr. Bilbray, for what you did.

Now, let me say -- I want to just get out and say hello to you, and it's a warm day, and I don't want you to have to stand a long time in the sun. But I want you to think about this: if I were to ask you, what's this election about? -- what would you answer?

This is my answer. Seven years and a few months ago, Al Gore and I took office. And we said we were going to put the people of this country first by going beyond the politics of division to try to create a country in which there was opportunity for every responsible citizen; in which we had one community across all the racial, religious and other lines that divide us; in which we're the leading force in the world for peace and freedom and prosperity, and that anybody who wanted to be a part of that should have a chance.

And we have now worked for over seven years. We not only have the longest economic expansion in history and 21 million new jobs, we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years, the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years, the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the highest home ownership in the history of the country. Now, that is the record.

We have also downsized the government to the point -- it's now the size it was when Dwight Eisenhower was President, and that was a year or two ago. And yet, we're doing more. So there's not a real debate here. What we have stood for works. And what we have to decide now is what are we going to do with this moment of prosperity. Are we going to give in to our fears, or are we going to act on our hopes? Are we going to take the easy way because there seemed to be no adverse consequence, or are we going to sort of lift our visions and take on the big challenges of the future.

The real issue is here not what we've done for the last seven years, but now that we have this moment, what are we going to do with it. And my answer to you is quite simple. You get a chance like this once in a lifetime -- a country does. And we have got to sue this moment to take care of the big challenges that our children are going to face when they grow up. And I'll just mention a few.

We could create 21st century schools with world-class education for all of our kids. But we've got to have high standards, accountability and support -- from after-school and summer school programs, to computers, to modernized facilities in a lot of the cities like Philadelphia where the average school building is 65 years old, and in New York, where many of the schools, believe it or not, are still heated by coal-fired furnaces built in the 19th century. We can build those 21st century schools.

We can deal with the 21st century family. We have to help people balance work and family. What does that mean? It means, among other things, I think people ought to get a tax deduction for college tuition. I think they ought to get a tax credit for long-term care, because more and more families are taking care of their elderly parents or members with disability. I think that we ought to have a tax incentive for child care for working families. Those are the kinds of tax breaks I favor.

I think we ought to raise the minimum wage again. The last time I raised it they said it would increase unemployment. Since then we've had record job growth. People ought to make a decent living. I think these are the kinds of things that we ought to do.

I think that we ought to recognize that when we baby boomers retire there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security, and we should move now -- now -- not then, now, to lengthen the life of Social Security to 2053 -- that's my proposal -- out beyond the lifespan of the baby boom generation; to save Medicare; to add a prescription drug benefit. Sixty percent of the seniors in this country today can't afford the prescription drugs they need. We ought to do it now.

We ought to act now to prove we can grow the economy and preserve the environment and deal with the problem of climate change and all the other environmental challenges we face. It's not necessary to hurt the economy to do that.

You get the idea. I remember one of the members of the other party criticized me for going to India and Pakistan because we didn't so-called "get anything." I think we got a lot of going to India and Pakistan. I don't want them to have a war, and I think that we should do it. I believe America should be a force for peace and against discrimination and hatred -- from Kosovo and Bosnia to the Middle East and Northern Ireland, to Africa and India and Pakistan. That's what I believe.

Now, all of this is at issue. I'm for Al Gore for President not just because I'm devoted to him and I feel loyalty because he's been the finest Vice President in history, but because I know - (applause) -- because I know he understands the future and he has the experience, the ability and the will to lead us in this direction.

And I came here to help these folks in Nevada who are running for Congress because I think it's important. Let me tell you something -- it really matters who is in the Senate. They're going to vote on a comprehensive test ban treaty; the Republicans just voted it down. The first time since the dawn of the nuclear age the United States walked away from its responsibility to a

safer world. But he would vote for the comprehensive test ban treaty. It's a big deal. The world these children are going to live in will have all kinds of people trying to build small-scale nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. You can't say it doesn't matter just because we're out here and things are prosperous today. It does matter.

It matters who -- the next President is going to appoint between two and four members of the Supreme Court. Who do you want voting to confirm them? You need to think about these things. And I will say again, this nuclear waste issue, it will not go away. So you need to reelect this fine woman to Congress, and you need to vote for a senator who will fight with us, and you need to remember that if you make the wrong decision in the White House, you can forget it, it's history. You need to remember these things.

Let me just say again -- this is the longest economic expansion in history, and I'm proud of it, and I'm grateful I've had a chance to be a part of it, and I'm delighted that I have had an opportunity to be President, and I love this job. I never would quit if I weren't term-limited, I don't think.

But I say this to you as a citizen. The last time we had an expansion this long was in the '60s. And when I -- I grew up in it. I graduated from high school in it in 1964, and I did think it would go on forever. Low unemployment, low inflation, high growth. I thought all of the civil rights problems of the country would be solved in the Congress and the courts. I had a President, Lyndon Johnson, who was going to do it. I never dreamed the country would be divided over Vietnam in 1964. By the time I graduated from college, Robert Kennedy had been killed two days before, Martin Luther King had been killed two months before, Lyndon Johnson, nine weeks before had to get out of the president's race because our country was divided over Vietnam.

Richard Nixon got elected on a campaign saying he was for the silent majority, which means those of us who weren't for him were outcast in the loud minority, launching whole decades of divisive politics. And just a few months afterward, the longest expansion in American history was gone -- history. It was over.

Now, it's a pretty warm day and we're all in a good humor, and there's not a more optimistic person out here by this pool than me. But, I'm telling you, this is the chance of a lifetime. That's what you're here for. Are we going to take on the big challenges, or go back to the easy way out. Are we going to pull together across the lines that divide us with things like the hate crimes bill and the unemployment nondiscrimination bill, or are we going to go back to us and them politics?

I've been waiting for 35 years for this to roll around again -- 35 years since my country had a chance to build the future of its dreams for its children. I'm a Democrat by heritage, instinct and conviction. I'm proud of what we've done. But the best is yet to be. You go out and tell people that and we'll win in November.

Thank you and God bless you. Thank you.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 30, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DNC DINNER

The Waldorf-Astoria Hotel
New York, New York

9:30 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Mark. Thank you, Jeff. And thank you for coming, all of you.

And I wanted to say a special word of appreciation to all of our musicians here. Thank you for playing tonight. You did such a wonderful job. And I want to thank Luther Vandross. We've never had a conversation about "Evergreen," but I think it's the best love song of the last 25 years. And so I was very happy when he sang it tonight.

I want to thank all of you for coming here. And I will be quite brief, because I want to spend time visiting with you and letting you say whatever you want to say to me, or ask questions, or whatever.

But you know, I'm not running for anything this year. And most days, I'm okay about it. I am campaigning to become a member of the Senate Spouses' Club, however. And I'm feeling better about that.

But I want to say just a couple things to you, to amplify what my good friend Ed Rendell said. When I came to Washington in January of 1993, our country was, I thought, in quite a bit of trouble. We had high unemployment, we had high interest rates, we had quadrupled the debt of the country in four years. We had no real, serious technology policy; no real, serious environmental policy; no real, serious long-term economic policy. We certainly had no health care policy.

And our elections were basically -- I thought it almost turned into caricature affairs, where basically for several years, even decades, the Republicans had succeeded in convincing enough Americans that the Democrats were weak on defense, weak on the economy, weak on the budget, weak on welfare, weak on crime, weak on this, that and the other thing. We couldn't be trusted with the White House. And the wheels had to practically come off before any of us could win. And I happened to be standing there when the wheels ran off.

It wasn't quite that simple. But I guess what I would like to say to you is that all of you here in your different ways have been immensely successful, or you wouldn't be here tonight.

All of you, also, are capable of looking beyond your immediate self-interest, or you wouldn't be here tonight, because the other guys would give you a bigger tax cut quicker. And yet you're here.

So the first thing I want to say to you is that all these elections are for people to hold jobs. They're not to posture; they're to hold jobs. It matters what your vision of the country is. It matters what your vision of the job is. It matters what you know, and how you go about your business, and whether you care. In other words, it's a job, the presidency.

You know, I want Al Gore to be elected because I know him better than anybody in this room, and most people in the world. And I think he's a good man, and I know he's a courageous person. And I'm devoted to him, and he's been loyal to me -- yes, that's all true. But I also want him to be elected because I think he understands the future, and has not only the ideas, but the experience and the work habits to get us there.

gore

This is a job. It's not a place just of rhetorical or political posturing.

And the same thing is true of the Congress. And I go about doing as much work as I can to try to help all these folks raise enough money to be competitive -- they're all going to be outspent. You know, our candidate for President is going to be outspent. Hillary's going to be outspent. They're all -- no matter how much money we raise, they're all going to be outspent.

But in 1998, we were outspent by \$100 million, and we gained seats in the House of Representatives in the sixth year of a President's for the first time since 1822. Why? Because we had ideas, we had a message. People thought we were interested in them, and they thought the Republicans were interested in themselves, and playing Washington power games. And it didn't matter that they had more money; all that mattered was, we had enough.

So I thank you for being here. But I hope that in addition to being here, you'll be able to manifest this commitment throughout this year. Because this is a profoundly important election, this millennial election. And there are real differences between us. The differences that we have, from our nominees for President to the nominees for Congress, including the big Senate race here in New York, over the budget alone, should determine the outcome of the election.

We want a tax cut, all right, but we think it ought to be small enough and targeted enough to help families like those who served us tonight and entertained us tonight to raise their kids, provide long-term care for their parents, get a tax deduction for college tuition, afford better child care, induce people like you to invest your money in poor areas in America so everybody can be part of this economic recovery -- and still have enough money left over to pay this country out of debt for the first time since 1835; to save Social Security and Medicare when all the baby boomers retire and there will only be two people working for every one person retired; to invest in world-class education and stop investing in things that don't work; to make major commitments to science and technology, and to basic research.

So many of you tonight are here because of your achievements in health care, or in the information revolution, the telecommunications revolution, or a combination of both. And I

think you share my conviction that we need to continue basic research -- to enable us to build a new energy future for America. This is a huge deal -- you know, this global warming is not a canard. It's not a false threat. It's a reality. And the good news is that for the last several years, it is no longer true that you have to put more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere to grow an economy. In fact, if we were more diligent about building a different energy future, we'd be generating even more jobs, by far. And I won't bore you with a long wonkish solution why, but if you want to talk about it I'd be glad to. It is stunning to me, the prospects that we have.

You know, in a few weeks I'll have the privilege of announcing that the sequencing of the human genome has been completed. What this means is that, I think, within ten years, the practice of medicine will be totally unrecognizable, as we know it. And a lot of you who have been on the forefront of trying to get us to live healthier lifestyles and take more preventive action, it will be a joyous treasure trove of opportunity that will lead to a lengthening of our lives and the quality of life.

So what I'm trying to say to you is there's big, big opportunities out there. But there are not big guarantees out there. Are we going to continue this economic policy, that has brought us to this point, and continue to pay our debt down and continue to be responsible? Or not? Are we going to invest in education and health care, and science and technology, and a different energy future? Or not?

Are we going to assume our responsibilities around the world to try to take the world away from a dangerous future of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction? Or are we going to agree with the Republican Senate, their presidential nominee and their nominee here, that we shouldn't adopt the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty -- a historic abandonment by the Republican Party of their normal bipartisan commitment to disarmament? These are big questions.

So I hope that you will embrace this. You know, a lot of you here who have done very well are younger than I am by a good stretch. So I just want to -- I'll close with this story. I try to tell this story every time I have a meeting like this.

We celebrated in February the longest economic expansion in American history -- 21 million new jobs, a 30-year low in unemployment, a 30-year low in welfare, a 20-year low in poverty, a 25-year low in crime. And I was happy as a clam.

But I -- I always try to study the history of my country, as well as to think about the future. So I -- we had the Council of Economic Advisors in there, and I said, well, when was the last longest expansion in American history? And they said, Mr. President, it was the 1960s, 1961 to 1969.

So for those of you who are my age or older, take a walk down memory lane. And for those of you who are younger than me, listen to this. This is a magical moment of opportunity in this country. And most of you are completely immersed in the future, and imagining all these possibilities. And so am I.

responding
to
good
fortune

But when the last longest economic expansion occurred in the 1960s -- I can tell you; I graduated from high school in 1964. We thought it would go on forever. And we thought it was on automatic. We thought -- we had low inflation, we had low unemployment, we had high growth. We had a civil rights challenge, but we thought it would be solved in the Congress and the courts, not in the street. We thought we would win the Cold War because of our innate and self-evident superiority, and never dreamed the country would be divided over Vietnam. We thought it would just happen -- 1964, when I finished high school.

Within two years, there were riots in the streets over civil rights. Within four years, when I graduated from college, it was two days after Robert Kennedy was killed, two months after Martin Luther King was killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson couldn't run for re-election because the country was split right down the middle over the war in Vietnam.

A couple months later, President Nixon was elected on a campaign of representing the "silent majority" -- which means if you weren't for him, you were in the loud minority, beginning the construct we saw all the way through the 1980s, right to the '92 election, to the '96 election; that you will see in 2000, where the other party tries to divide the American people between us versus them. And I'm supposed to be one of "them" because I believe things like we shouldn't discriminate against gay people, if they're good, God-fearing, taxpaying citizens and they show up and do their duty. I'm for hate crimes legislation. I'm for the employment non-discrimination legislation. So that makes me one of "them" instead of one of "us"? I don't think so.

But that was the portrait of what happened between 1964 and 1968. And within four months after that, the longest expansion in American history was history.

And what I want you to know, you young people here, is, I have waited for 35 years for my country to have the chance to build the future of our dreams for our children. And I am determined to see the politics of America focused on, how can we make the most of the sequencing of the human genome? How can we build a different energy future? How can we bring economic opportunity to the people and places that have been left behind? How can we be a force for peace and prosperity and unity in troubled places around the world?

How can we build one America? That's what I think politics is about.

If somebody asks you tomorrow morning why you were here tonight, I hope you'll give them that answer. This is the best chance you will ever have to build the future of your dreams for your children.

Thank you very much.

END 9:47 P.M. EST

past

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 30, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT

AT

DNC DINNER

Private Residence
New York, New York

7:42 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: You know what I want to do? I want to tell you this is Michael -- birthday It's also -- George, where are you? Is that your name, George? It's his birthday, also, and he came all the way from Alaska to be here. So I'm trying to think about what I should do when I leave office, and I think I'll do birthday parties. Birthday parties -- no, this is good.

John and Margo have been so good to us, and this is going to be such a long, arduous campaign. And Brian Snyder said to me when Ed Rendell was talking about how we just had this wonderful party here -- Brian said, well, why don't you just stand up and suggest to Margo that she just leave the table settings out -- (laughter) -- and we'll be back several more times.

Let me say to all of you, I'm grateful for your presence here, but I'm particularly grateful to John and Margo for being so good to me and to the Vice President and to the DNC, and also to Hillary. It means a lot to me. And their son, I'm grateful to him, because he keeps me in Pokemon cards -- (laughter) -- which I give to my nephew, which raises my status within our family. Far more important than being President is being able to give your nephew Pokemon cards. So I am profoundly grateful for that as well.

Let me say to all of you, this is my speech -- see, I made my big speech here. I know that many of you have come to a lot of these; others may be at your first one. But I wanted to tell you that I'm working very hard in this election, and not only because I like and admire and am grateful to my Vice President, but because I think he understands the future and has the knowledge and experience to lead us there -- not only because I want desperately to become a member of the Senate Spouses' Club -- (laughter) -- but because I believe in what we've done in the last seven years.

I didn't run for president the first time I had a chance to run, because I didn't think I was ready to run. And I had been governor for quite a long time. In 1988, when the election was open and it looked like we had a good chance to win, and I almost ran and I realized that no one should run for president who does not have a very clear idea, not only of what the conditions of

the country are and the challenges facing it, but of what you would do on the day after the inauguration, across a whole broad range of issues.

All of you, in your own ways, have been quite successful in life or you wouldn't be here tonight. And one of the things that I always tell people when they ask me about this job is, I say, well, I think a lot of folks get in trouble because they forget it is a job. I mean, it's a job like other jobs. And the only difference is, you have to completely define to some extent what it is for you. That is, how you will allocate your time, what you believe the priorities are, and what you intend to do.

So I speak to you tonight as someone who is not on the ballot. For the first time in nearly a quarter century or more, I won't be an active participant in an election as a candidate. Most days, I'm okay with it. So I'm here -- as much as I'm here as President, I'm here as a citizen of this country who desperately loves America, who is grateful for the good fortune that we enjoy at this moment, but who has had the unique perspective, I believe, to know a few things about where we are and where we're going and what's really at stake here.

So I just want to make a couple of points. Point number one is, there are real differences between these two parties. And they're not the differences people used to believe existed. One of the things I promised myself when I got elected is, when I left, nobody would ever be able to say that the Democrats were weak on spending, weak on deficits, weak on taxes, weak on defense, weak on crime, weak on welfare, couldn't be trusted to run the country. Well, you don't hear anybody even talking about that in this election.

But -- so what are the real differences? And I would just like to talk to you about them. And I know you understand it, but I think it's worth focusing on. First of all, we have real differences on the budget, what we do with your money. We believe that we can afford a tax cut, but that it has to be targeted and limited so that there is enough money left to keep paying down the debt, to save Social Security and Medicare when the baby boomers retire, and to continue to invest in what works in education, in science and technology, in health care, in the environment and the other things we have to go forward with together as a people. That's what we believe.

They believe that we should have a tax cut bigger than the one I vetoed last year, one which would, frankly it speaks well of you that you're here, because all of you would come out better with their deal in the short run. But what would happen is, I mean, I think -- give yourself a few points here for being here. You would all come out better with their deal in the short run.

But what would happen is, we would go back to the bad old days of deficits and then they would have to have big cuts in education, in health care, in the environment, science and technology, a lot of which is powering this economic boom we're in. And, in addition to that, they would not have the funds to guarantee that when all the baby boomers retire, we wouldn't impose an unconscionable burden on our children and grandchildren, through the cost of medical care, Medicaid, Social Security.

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Now, this is a huge thing. And let me say, I think it's important because it's not like we don't have any evidence. We tried it their way for 12 years, and we had high interest rates, high unemployment, low growth, we quadrupled the debt, and we were in a terrible fix.

Now, we have the longest economic expansion in history, 21 million new jobs, a 30-year low in unemployment and welfare, 20-year low in poverty, a 25-year low in crime. So it's not like there's not evidence here, and yet, that is the issue. That is the issue in the presidential race, that is the issue in the Senate race in New York. That is the issue. Who is right on the economy and the budget? Are they right or are we right?

To pretend that there are no consequences because things are going well would be the height of folly. It's a huge issue. Now, there are other issues. We have a different view about America's role in the world. We agree on some things, my administration and the Republican leaders; I'll give them credit for that. They're trying to help me pass the bill that would permit China to become a member of the World Trade Organization.

I think it's important to our national security and real important to our economy, and one of the things I want all of you to understand, since you may not have been thinking about it is, we have to lower no tariffs, we have to lower no trade barriers. This entire bill involves our letting China into the WTO in a way that they lower tariffs, they lower trade barriers, they let us sell things like automobiles and automobile parts and have distributorships in China, they didn't used to do, and we don't have to agree to transfer our technology or put manufacturing plants up there or anything.

It's a one-way street. It's 100 percent in our favor. The only reason they do it is that in turn, they get full membership in the World Trade Organization -- which is good for us, because that means if they violate their trade obligations, we have an international body to take it to.

So the Speaker of the House is trying to help me pass a bill that literally could save democracy in Colombia by increasing their capacity to fight the drug-traffickers and the guerrillas and reducing their ability to import drugs into this country and helping the farmers to find something besides coca to grow.

But on other areas, we're very different. I think we ought to support the U.N. and get people to share our burdens more than they do. I believe in the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and they don't. That's a big issue in the Senate race here, a big issue in the presidential race. I think it would be folly for us to walk away from arms control after the United States has led the way not just in my administration, but in previous administrations, Republicans and Democrats.

This is a departure for the Republicans. To walk away from the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and say we'll just always be able to build bigger, more sophisticated bombs, and instead of just a few countries with nuclear weapons, there turn out to be a few dozen, who cares? I care. And I think it's a big issue. And you ought to care. You shouldn't assume that there will never be another nuclear weapon exploded, no matter what, if, instead of a few countries with nuclear weapons, you have a few dozen. So there are big issues here.

I think we ought to raise the minimum wage. They don't. I think we ought to pass a patients' bill of rights for the 190 million Americans in a managed care system. And at least so far, they don't. I believe that we ought to pass common-sense gun safety legislation to protect more kids from violence. And I believe we can do it without, in any way, interfering with the rights of sportspeople and hunters.

But I got asked in my press conference what I thought about all the mean things Charlton Heston's saying about me. And I said I still liked his movies. I still liked his movies, and I liked him. You know, he came to the White House a couple of years go, and I thought he was a delightful man.

I don't care what they say about me. That's part of the cost of doing business and being President, this being attacked by people who disagree with you. This is not about me and the NRA, this is about whether people stay alive or not. This is a big issue. Huge issue in the presidential race.

Their position, the Republican position in Washington is that guns are the only thing in our national life where there should be no prevention, it should all be punishment. Now, if you raised your children on the theory that there should never be any prevention, there should only be punishment, your kids wouldn't turn out so good, even if they had welts across their back from being punished.

Or, as I never tire of saying -- they always say, just enforce the laws on the books. Just punish people when they violate them. Well, we have increased gun law enforcement over what the previous administrations have done. And in my budget, I've asked for a lot more people to help us enforce the gun laws more strongly. And there's something to be said for that. You would be amazed what a small number of gun dealers are responsible for selling guns to such a large number of criminals. So there's something to be said for enforcement.

But one of the reasons that gun crime is at a 30-year low is that the Brady Bill has kept a half a million felons, fugitives and stalkers from getting handguns. And they were against that as a party. We only had a handful of Republicans supporting us in Washington, and Governor Bush and the Republican Congressional Leadership, they've been against closing the gun show loophole, against banning the importation of large-scale ammunition clips, which makes a mockery of our law against assault weapons, because you just bring them in, those clips, and then modify the guns. And this has a lot to do with whether your kids are safe.

And again, it's the difference in the way they think than we think. Suppose I said that I agree with the Republican philosophy we should abandon all prevention and only do punishment. For example, I've been in a lot of airports in my life and nearly everybody I've ever met is honest in an airport -- 99.9 percent of the people in airports are perfectly honest, they bear me no ill will, and they're overcrowded anyway, and people are frustrated and they're often late, and if you walk through one of those metal detectors and you've got a big, heavy money clip or an elaborate belt or something, you're liable to set it off three or four times, and you're angry and frustrated, and I'm just sick of it, and so I just think we ought to take those metal detectors out of

the airport, and the next time somebody blows up an airplane, we ought to throw the book at them. That's the philosophy.

This is a big deal here. It's a different way of thinking. I do not believe it is necessary to demonize them the way some of us have been demonized in the past and still are. I don't want us to have our counterpart of Richard Viguary, who represents the hard-core far right and does Mayor Giuliani's fundraising letters. You know, thinks my wife -- basically up there with a communist brigade or something.

We don't have to do that. We can talk about the honest differences. But I'm telling you, there are big differences here. And it's not like we don't have any evidence. What they're saying is, don't bother me with the evidence; we know where the money is, we know where the votes are, we know where the intensity is. Don't bother me with the evidence. And to be fair, they just disagree. I'm not willing to let another child die for their theory. I think we ought to have a safer country.

And so -- and I think it would be a disaster for us to give up the fiscal responsibility that has brought us this far when we can take this country out of debt in a dozen years for the first time since 1835, and guarantee all the young people another generation of prosperity. And I could give you lots of other examples.

But the point I want to make is, there are big differences, and the record is clear. The evidence is in. And I hope you will share that with people. And I just want to make one other point, which I try to say at every turn. In February, we had this big celebration of beating the longest economic expansion in history. Now, we've got the longest economic expansion in history, and there was not a war in it, which I'm especially proud of.

So, when this happened, being kind of obsessive about American history, I asked my Council of Economic Advisors, we were in there talking about it, and I said, when was the last longest economic expansion in history? And they said 1961 to 1969, which many of you in this room remember well and participated in.

Now, I want to tell you something about that, why this election is so important. I graduated from high school in 1964 at the highwater mark of that economic expansion. President Kennedy had just been killed and the country was heartbroken, but we united behind President Johnson. He was wildly popular, won an historic victory in 1964, inflation was low, unemployment was low, growth was high, optimism was rampant about the ability of Congress and the courts to resolve the civil rights challenge of the country in a peaceful manner, everybody thought we were going to win the Cold War as a result of the superiority of our system, and nobody would have believed that Vietnam would tear the heart out of the country -- 1964. And so, we all just went merrily along our way.

Now, within a year, there was the terrible incident in Selma, Alabama, at Bloody Sunday, which I just celebrated the 35th anniversary of. Within two years, there were riots in our cities and the country began to split apart over Vietnam. Four years later, in 1968, I graduated from college, two days after Robert Kennedy was killed, two months after Martin Luther King was

killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson couldn't run for president anymore because the country was split right down the middle over Vietnam.

Then, President Nixon won the election on one of those divisive campaigns. He said he represented the silent majority, which, by definition, meant that the rest of us were in the loud minority. And so it was one of those things of us versus them. And that's something the Republican Party was very good at. They demonized us real well and quite effectively all during the '80s, and they still make a lot of votes making people think that we somehow don't share their values because I'm for things like the hate crimes bill and employment nondiscrimination act, and I don't think gay people ought to be bashed if they're good citizens.

But that happened. And then, shortly after that election in early 1969, the longest economic expansion in American history vanished. And we went on to the oil price shocks, the inflation of the '70s, the stagflation of the late '80s, and everything that's happened ever since. What's the point of all this? The point is that I've lived long enough to know nothing lasts forever, nothing can be taken for granted, and I have waited for 35 years for my country to be in a position to build the future of our dreams for our children.

This is a big election. And you cannot let people believe that this is something that they can approach casually, just because times are good. When times are good, you have to look to the next generation. We can take this country out of debt, we can save Social Security and Medicare for the baby boom generation, we can dramatically reform our schools, we can provide opportunities in areas that haven't participated in this recovery, we can lead the world toward greater peace and freedom, but we cannot do it unless we have leadership who understands the future, has the knowledge and experience to take us there, and is committed to it.

We dare not risk by our inaction or our cavalier attitudes blowing what is, I know, the chance of a lifetime. I've worked as hard as I could as president to turn this country around. I am grateful for the chance I've had to serve. But I really think as a country, we should view this as the beginning, not the end, that we've sort of turned this thing around. And now, we have a chance to paint on a canvas our dreams for tomorrow. That's what this whole deal is about.

So if somebody asks you tomorrow why you were here tonight, say there's a difference between the parties, I think the last seven years were right, and the stakes could hardly be higher. And those of you that are about my age, you just think about it. We've waited for 35 years, and we need to seize the chance.

Thank you and God bless you.

END 8:07 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New York, New York)

For Immediate Release March 30, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT DURING DNC LUNCHEON

Private Residence
New York, New York

1:27 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well, thank you, Denice. If I come here one more time - (laughter) -- we should allocate part of the property tax assessment to me. I love coming here to this beautiful, beautiful place. I want to thank you and I want to thank all the people who served us today and provided this wonderful meal. I want to thank the WLF -- Laura, Betsy, Sharon, Susan and Agnes, particularly. I want to thank Judith Hope, who has proved that someone from Arkansas can make it in New York. Which is becoming an increasingly important precedent in my mind.

Thank you, Mayor Rendell, and thank you Carol Penske. I was trying to think of what I could possibly say, since most of you have heard me give this speech 100 times. And I was remembering, oh, 12-13 years ago, maybe a little longer -- Tina Turner came to Little Rock when she -- you know, she went away for a long time and she was abused in her marriage and she had a lot of really tough times.

And then she made an album after many years of being silent, called "Private Dancer," which made her a big international star again. So she was taking and making her tours around, and so she came to Arkansas, to this place where we always had concerts. And the guy who ran the place knew that I just loved her. So Hillary was out of time, I remember, and he gave me like eight tickets on the front row, and I took all my pals and sat on the front row.

So she sings all her new songs, everybody goes nuts. At the end, she starts to -- the band starts to play "Proud Mary," which was her first hit. So she comes up to the microphone, and everybody cheers -- she backs away. And she comes up again, everybody cheers again and she said, you know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it. Anyway -- I've got to do it. Very instructive, I'll never forget it.

I want to tell you, we're in this beautiful surrounding -- I want you to know where I was last night. Last night, I was in the Bishop John Adams Hall of Allen University, an African Methodist Episcopal, AME college in Columbia, South Carolina. That's where I was last night -- at a dinner, sponsored by the state Democratic Party, with the new Democratic Governor there, Inez Tenenbaum -- some of you may know her, she's the Commissioner of Education now for South Carolina -- longtime active in American Jewish colleges, a friend of mine for many, many

years, and many others, in honor of the African-American Congressman Jim Clyburn from that district. It was a real picture of a new South, a different place than we have been treated to for the last several years in national politics. It was fascinating.

And I was talking to them about going to Selma a few weeks ago for the 35th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, and walking over the Edmund Pettus Bridge with John Lewis and Hosea Williams and Dick Gregory and Coretta Scott King and Jesse Jackson -- all the people that were in Selma 35 years ago. And this whole issue of the Confederate flag being on a flagpole in South Carolina was there. And I said, I can't say anything better to you than when the waving symbol of one American's pride is the shameful symbol of another American's pain, we still have another bridge to cross. And the crowd exploded, and said, we're going to take that flag off the flagpole. And it really made me feel proud to be an American, proud to be a Democrat, and proud to be a Southerner.

And to see that the old -- what we know now about South Carolina, most Americans who aren't from there, is that President Bush went to Bob Jones -- I mean, Governor Bush went to Bob Jones University. President Bush went there, too. And President Reagan went there, too. Bob Dole went there, too -- and I let him get away with it because I didn't know it. If I had known it, I wouldn't have.

You can't imagine what a big deal this was to a Southerner. Anybody that went through the civil rights revolution was more offended by that, I think, than anything else -- because -- it's okay. I'm sure there are a lot of -- you know, there are good people everywhere. But if you're going to go there, you should say, I don't agree with your racial and religious policies.

But what I want you to know is, there's a whole other group of people down there. And they're involved in a struggle, mano a mano, with the Republicans for defining the future of that state, and how they define it might have a lot to do with what America looks like in the future. And this is the struggle that's going on throughout the country.

I would also tell you that the second-biggest hand that anything got in the evening was when the Congressman said that he certainly hoped Hillary would be elected to the Senate from New York. And that South Carolina crowd erupted.

I say that to tell you that the reason I love being a member of this party, and the reason that I am so grateful that I have had this chance to serve our country, is that we really are, now, the only available national vehicle for the common aspirations of all Americans. People can come to a wonderful lunch like this; people who serve the lunch that could never afford to come to one; all kinds of people in between.

And I just want to say, tell you very briefly -- because I'm not on the ballot. I'm not running for anything. Most days I'm okay with it. Some days I'm not so sure. But what I thought I would do today is to try to just give you a little ammunition in an organized fashion -- based on what's now going on in Washington right now, and what certainly will be at issue in this election -- about what the differences are, the practical differences, and what the evidence is in terms of what works. And I'll start with an interesting thing, particularly -- it always amazes

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me at these events. You could all be at one of their events and get a bigger tax cut. So let's start with their tax policy.

What's our tax policy? Our tax policy is, we've got a surplus, we can afford a modest tax cut as long as it doesn't interfere with our ability to balance the budget, keep paying down the debt, and save Social Security and Medicare, and have enough money to invest in education, health care and the environment, science and technology and medical research. And if we've got any -- but we can have one.

But we think it ought to be concentrated on increasing the earned income tax credit, which is what low-income working families get so they can support their kids. We think we need a much bigger child care tax credit, and it ought to be refundable, because paying child care costs is still one of the biggest challenges that working families face.

With more and more people living longer, the number of people over 65 slated to double in the next 30 years, and I hope to be one of them -- (laughter) -- more and more families making the loving, but expensive choice to care for their relatives, we want a \$3,000 a year tax credit for long-term care.

We want a tax reduction that will extend all the way to upper middle class people for up to \$10,000 for the costs of college tuition. We have made with our tax credits, effectively, we've made two years of college, at least at the community college level, universal in America, one of the major achievements of the Clinton-Gore administration. If this passes, we'll make four years of college access universal. It's very important.

So those are the kinds of tax cuts we want. We want to give people who have money big tax breaks if they will invest in the poor areas in America that are not part of our prosperity yet. I believe that you ought to have the same tax incentive to invest in inner-city neighborhoods in New York or Chicago or the Mississippi Delta, or Appalachia or the Rio Grande Valley, or the Native American reservations where unemployment rates still run as high as 70 percent on some of them -- you ought to have the same tax incentives to invest in those areas that we will give you today to invest in Latin America or Africa, or Asia -- not that I want to take the others away, I just want the same incentives here in our country.

Their tax program, under the guise of marriage penalty relief, is to get rid of the estate tax entirely and have other things that are concentrated overwhelmingly toward upper income people. There's a difference, a real difference. And it says a lot about most of you that you're here, because most of you would benefit more in the short run if you were there with them.

So what does that tell you about the Democrats? When I ran in '92, I said that I had a vision of 21st century America in which every responsible citizen had an opportunity, in which we would be a community of all people, and in which we would continue to lead the world for peace and freedom. And I think that we think that way because, basically, we believe everybody counts, that everybody should have a chance, that everybody should have a role to play, and we all do better when we work together. That's what we really believe.

And it matters. You should know, there's a huge, gaping difference on tax policy. Now, am I right or are they right? We've had a lot of tax cuts since I've been President. Hope Scholarship tax credit, we've doubled the earned income tax credit, we gave a \$500 per child tax credit, and there was a survey that came out the last day of my trip when I was gone that said that on ordinary Americans, the income tax burden in America, the percentage of income going to income tax -- now, that's not Social Security or Medicare, but just income tax, is the lowest it's been in 40 years.

So I think we're right. And I'm not running -- I can't make that case. But you can and you must. What about the budget? What's our budget policy? I want us to pay down the debt for the first time since 1835. And I think it's a liberal thing to do, not a conservative thing to do. Why? Because if we do that in a global economy, interest rates will stay down and ordinary people will be able to make their money go further. They'll be able to buy cars. They'll be able to take college loans. They'll be able to buy homes. And we'll have more money available for businesses to borrow at lower interest rates, because the government won't be doing it, which means more jobs will be created. I think it's the right thing to do.

And I want to also save enough money so that when the baby boomers all retire, we'll be able to preserve Social Security and Medicare, and we'll have enough money to invest in education. We've got -- this administration has done more work in more areas in education, I think, than anyone in history. And I've got a big program up there now, designed to help school districts turn around failing schools or shut them down; to provide after-school programs and other remediation programs to every kid in every troubled school in America; to finish our work of hooking all the schools up to the Internet; to repair 5,000 schools a year for the next five years, and to build 6,000 new ones. And this is important.

Now, what's their program? Their program is -- their nominee, just as recently as last week, has reaffirmed that he supports a tax cut even bigger than the one I vetoed last year. And I can tell you what will happen if it passed. Here's what will happen. If it passes, we will go back to either running government deficits, or there will be vast cuts in education -- where Governor Bush says a lot of things, virtually endorsed our program in education, to only give out federal money to the schools if they support what works. The problem is, he can't keep his commitments, because he's for a tax cut that will mean they'll have to cut education. And not just a little bit; I'm talking a lot. They won't have any money to help Social Security and Medicare when the baby boomers retire, but that's okay with them, because they want to privatize both of them. And I think it's a mistake.

They can't support our plan to provide a prescription drug benefit with Medicare -- which 60 percent of the people on Medicare need, by the way. Not just poor people on Medicare; there are a lot of people who have middle-class incomes, who have huge medical bills, that are severely distressed by them. And they cannot get affordable coverage for medicine when they get older.

They can't support our program to let the parents of poor children that are in our children's health program buy into health insurance -- because they don't have the money;

because they're going to give it all away in a tax cut. And we'll still have a deficit. Now, there's a big difference there.

And it's not like we don't have any evidence here. Our economic policies -- we have doubled our investment in education; we've got the first back-to-back surpluses in 42 years. And I think the economic performance speaks for itself. The longest expansion in history and 21 million new jobs. So why are we even having this argument? Because we really have honest differences here.

If you look at other issues -- I could just mention two or three more. Our view of the world -- I got tickled the other day. I just got back from India and Pakistan and Bangladesh, and I stopped in Switzerland to try to make another effort on the Middle East peace. And I noticed a member of the other party in the Senate was criticizing me for going to India and Pakistan, because I didn't "get anything for it." That is, they didn't agree to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, or to the other efforts that I'm making to try to stop them from building up nuclear weapons.

Well, they didn't. What he didn't point out is that I lost all the leverage I had when the Republican Senate defeated the ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. I thought, that is real gall. Man, for a guy -- (laughter) -- to stand up and say that. That requires a lot of moxie, you know. One of their great strengths is, by the way, they have no guilt and no shame. I mean, they'll say anything. You know, you'll never see them blink about it.

But I want to say, there are differences in that. And we do have some things in common. I compliment the Republicans that are trying to help me help Colombia, to reduce the drug flow into America and to shore up a brave democratic government's fight there. And the people who are criticizing this, saying it's another Vietnam, are just wrong. We're not sending soldiers there. All we're doing is supporting the police and other efforts to build a civil society and give those farmers some reason to stop growing coca and grow something else. I support -- I thank the Republicans who have helped me with the China agreement, because I think it's very important to bring China into the World Trade Organization.

But we have big differences. You know, I want to support the U.N. more, most of them want to support it less. I think we were right to go into Kosovo, and save the lives and the livelihoods of a million Muslims. Most of them thought it wasn't worth the trouble -- not all of them, but most of them.

And so there are real differences here. And the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is the most stunning one. I mean, I cannot imagine a reason for the United States not to sign on to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty unless you believe that we will be more secure because you think we can always win any arms race, so it's okay if everybody else starts to get in the nuclear business as well. These are differences.

I'll just give you two or three others of these things we're fighting. The patients' bill of rights -- about 190 million Americans in these managed care plans. I believe they ought to have

access to a patients' bill of rights that's really strong and enforceable. And we're still fighting that. We may get it, but we're not there yet.

I think we ought to raise the minimum wage a buck over two years. You know, the last time I did it, they said it would wreck the economy. Since then, the economy's grown even faster than it did before we raised the minimum wage. It's not like there's an argument here that has any evidence behind it. The gun safety legislation -- you all know about that. I mean -- they asked me in my press conference yesterday what I thought about all these terrible things Charlton Heston is saying about me, and I said, I still like his movies and I watch them every chance I get.

But if you look at it -- forget about the NRA, here. If you look at this view -- should we close the gun show loophole and doing background checks. Well, when I signed the Brady Bill, they all said, oh, it was the end of the world as we knew it. The hunters would be bereft, because they would be -- their lives would be messed up. Nobody's missed an hour in the deer woods yet, and a half a million people who were felons, fugitives or stalkers, haven't gotten handguns. And gun crime is at a 30-year low in America because of that.

But a lot of them still pick up these guns at urban flea markets and at these gun shows. And the technology is there to do the background check. You know, people thought the assault weapons ban was terrible. But, frankly, it's not as effective as it ought to be, because you can still import large-capacity ammunition clips and then adapt the guns. And we ought to ban them.

We ought to have child trigger locks. We ought to be investing in safe gun technology so if somebody buys a handgun, you can equip it in a way that you have to show your fingerprints on the gun before it will fire. These things are worth doing. And the difference I have -- and the Republicans say, well, but you just ought to enforce the existing laws now.

And a lot of you have heard me say this, but I want to hammer this home. It's a big issue. We have enforced the gun laws more than they were before. Prosecutions are up. I've asked for another 1,000 prosecutors and more investigators to enforce the existing gun laws, to get -- the surprising number of guns used in crimes come out of just a few dealers. There's something to that. But their position is that guns are the only area of our national life where there should be no prevention.

I said this in the press conference the other day, but I want to say it again: If I gave you the following speech, you would think I was crazy. If I said, you know, I've been flying on airplanes all my life. And most people who fly on airplanes are really good people. And it's a real pain, especially when you're late and airports are crowded to have to go through these airport metal detectors. And if you've got a big old buckle or a highly metallic money clip, you may have to go through two or three times. You empty your pockets and everything. And 99.99 percent of the people in those airports are good, honest people.

Let's just rip those metal detectors out there, and the next time somebody blows up an airplane, we'll throw the book at them. Now, you think about that. That's the argument, right? But most people believe that you should prevent as many bad things from happening as possible

in life. And it's far better to prevent bad things from happening, and then if something does happen bad, then you do what's appropriate.

But these are huge differences. The choice issue is going to be huge. The next president will appoint somewhere between two and four justices in the Supreme Court. And their nominees have said repeatedly that Roe v. Wade was a bad decision, he'd like to see it repealed, he'd like to see it changed, and I can tell you, I've seen those guys work up there. This is -- I'll put in a little plug for Hillary -- (laughter) -- no matter whether a Republican senator says he's pro-choice or not, they will make their lives miserable, should they win the White House if they don't back the White House.

And if you can't imagine -- I have seen them dance -- I have seen these things happen where I've had these Republicans come up to me in virtual tears and apologize for the way they were voting on first one thing and then another, and just say they had to do it because they didn't want to lose their committee position, or they didn't want to lose this, that or the other thing that was being done.

Now, I don't think we're going to have a Republican President, I think Al Gore's going to be elected. But if you care about this issue, you should work harder for Al Gore and for people in the Senate that would support that position.

Now -- and I'll just give you one other example -- Ed Rendell was talking about the log cabin Republicans. I know that there have been a lot of people in America who won't support me because of the position I have taken on gay rights. But I have to tell you, I just don't see how you can run a democracy if you say that certain people -- no matter how law-abiding they are, no matter how honorable they are, no matter how talented they are -- ought to be discriminated against. I just think it's wrong.

I don't think it's really complicated, and I think we ought to pass the employment nondiscrimination act and the hate crimes bill. And I stood on the tarmac -- let me just say this -- I stood on the tarmac in Austin, Texas at the airport, and embraced the weeping daughter of James Bird, who was dragged to death in Texas, who came all the way back from Hawaii to lobby for the hate crimes bill, pleading with the Governor to meet with her. He refused. Finally, he did, because it was a pretty hard case to make, why he wouldn't meet with her. And all he had to do was lift his hand, and they would have had a hate crimes bill. And it did not pass because they did not want it to pass. Because they did not believe that gays and lesbians should be protected by hate crimes legislation.

Now these are facts. And the American people can simply make up their own mind. But what you need to know is: when it comes to taxes, when it comes to the budget, when it comes to these other specific issues -- there are huge differences.

And I don't have to condemn them and engage in the kind of politics of personal destruction that others find so helpful. I think most of them are good people who really just disagree with us. I don't think that somebody with a different political view is an evil person. I

think our country's really been hurt by all this sort of attempt to believe if you don't destroy your opponent, there's something wrong with you.

I don't believe, by the way, that John McCain is against breast cancer research, either, which was the main thing I heard about in the New York Primary. And I might tell you, that program was supported by me; it was in the defense budget. But that was a total misrepresentation of what was going on. It was completely unfair. And that's the most charitable word I can think of to characterize it.

But you need to understand here, I'm not running for anything, but I care a lot about what happens to my country. Yes, I want Al Gore to be president, because he's been the best Vice President in history, and because I love him; but also, more important, because he understands the future, and he's strong enough and experienced enough and smart enough, and he cares enough about the policy issues, to lead us there.

] *gore*

I'll just leave you with this thought: when we celebrated in February the longest economic expansion in American history, and all my economic advisors came in and said that, and they were all jumping up and down. I said, well, when was the last longest expansion in American history? For a long time, it had been the longest peacetime expansion in history. I said, when was the longest expansion of any kind in American history? You know when it was? Nineteen sixty-one to 1969.

Now, here's what I want to tell you about this. A few of you are around my age, anyway. I graduated from high school in 1964. John Kennedy had just been assassinated. But the country had united behind President Johnson -- and I was very proud of him. You know, he was from my neighboring state, passionately committed to civil rights.

And when I finished, in 1964, in high school, every kid my age was full of optimism. Unemployment was low, inflation was low, growth was high. We believed that all the civil rights problems would be solved by the Congress and in the courts, peacefully. We believed we would win the Cold War because of America's values. And no one thought that there would ever be any trauma coming out of Vietnam. In other words, we were pretty relaxed about being, then, at the high point of the longest economic expansion in American history. We thought things were just going to take care of themselves.

Now, a year later there was Bloody Sunday in Selma. Two years later, there were riots in the streets. Four years later, when I graduated from college, it was two days after Robert Kennedy was killed, two months after Martin Luther King was killed, nine weeks after Lyndon Johnson couldn't run for re-election because the country was split right down the middle.

And a few months later, Richard Nixon was elected President on the first of what became a whole series of what I called "us-and-them campaigns." You remember what his slogan was? He represented the silent majority. You remember that? Which meant that those of us who weren't for him were in the Loud Minority. And it was a very clever slogan for the time.

But the point is: it was us versus them. And we've been "us-ing and them-ing" for a long time ever since. And I have done my best to end that, here and around the world. Because I think it is dumb, counterproductive, wrong, and I haven't yet met a person who was genuinely happy demonizing other people.

But I'm telling you this to make this point: I have waited 35 years for my country to be in the position that we now enjoy today. Where we can literally build the future of our dreams for our children, where we can be a force for good around the world, where we can take on all these challenges.

But what I want you to know is: I have lived long enough to know that the worst thing we can do is take all this for granted. To believe that no matter what we could do, that there are no consequences to this election, there are no consequences to how we behave in our lives and in our communities, that this thing is somehow on automatic, and everything's just going to be hunky-dory. That's what I thought in 1964, and I have waited 35 years for my country to be in this position again.

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So if somebody asks you why you came here today, you tell them what I told you. And you tell them we don't want to blow this chance. We have fewer crises abroad, fewer crises at home, and a greater opportunity to do right. And we're Democrats, and we need to do it.

Thank you.

END

1:55 P.M. EST