Weekly Compilation of

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WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Opinion-Editorial for the Belfast Telegraph: "Why the Good Friday Agreement is Working"

October 19, 2000

In his first Inaugural Address, President Abraham Lincoln called upon Americans to heed "the better angels of our nature" to dissuade them from embarking on a long and bloody civil war.

Just over two years ago, the leaders and people of Northern Ireland summoned the better angels of their nature to negotiate, sign, and approve the Good Friday Agreement in a courageous bid to end nearly 30 years of strife and agony. The Agreement reflected more than the common humanity that unites the people of Northern Ireland, no matter their faith. It reflected their self-interest—their heartfelt conviction that the sacrifices and compromises required for peace would be far easier to bear than the burden of more violence and bloodshed.

George Mitchell said at the time that, as difficult as the Agreement was to negotiate, implementing it would prove more difficult still—and he was right. Two-and-one-half years later, the Agreement is working, but it is straining under intense criticism. I know that many in the unionist community feel deeply uncomfortable with changes relating to security and have concerns that the right to express British identity is being attacked. Nationalists and republicans have voiced concerns of their own about prospects for full equality and implementation of all aspects of the Agreement.

I believe the Good Friday Agreement is fully capable of addressing these concerns. Now is the time to reaffirm its core principles.

—The principle of consent: no decision on changing the constitutional connection linking Northern Ireland with the United Kingdom will be made without support from a majority of Northern Ireland voters. This expresses respect for British sovereignty in Northern Ireland—and also for the legitimate wish of Irish people to pursue a united Ireland.

—Self-government that is democratic, inclusive, and whose participants use exclusively peaceful means to accomplish their aims. The main institutions of government, an elected Assembly and a power-sharing Executive, contain safeguards for protecting minority interests and for excluding those who use or support violence.

—Strict protection of individual human and civil rights. On October 2, Northern Ireland and the United Kingdom as a whole incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is now consulting on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

The people of Northern Ireland support these principles. And for all of their disagreements, so do Northern Ireland's politicians.

The reason, I believe, is simple: Devolved government based on the Stormont Assembly and Executive is working. Even politicians from parties professing to be "anti-Agreement" are participating actively, delivering their constituents democratic and accountable regional government. For the first time in 30 years, Northern Ireland's politicians are producing their own budget and Programme for Government.

This means that problems in the areas of agriculture, health, the environment and education, to name a few, are now the responsibility of local ministers who must answer to local voters. Some may be uncomfortable with power-sharing, but most agree that it is better than being powerless. And foreign investors are taking note of the prospects opened up by these developments—

for example, the 900-job call centre that a Denver-based company recently announced will open in north Belfast.

What's more, the Agreement has enabled government ministers from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland to work together to benefit people throughout the island, by developing co-operation in such areas as trade, food safety and EU programmes. Sessions of the North-South Ministerial Council focus on concrete results rather than constitutional debate.

Change this profound is never easy. I applaud the people of Northern Ireland for working to set aside old animosities and to accept even the most difficult elements of the Good Friday Agreement, such as prisoner releases. Yet tough challenges remain, such as adapting the police force in Northern Ireland to earn the confidence and support of all the people, and resolving the issue of paramilitary weapons.

The Agreement offers a chance for a fresh start on policing. It established an independent commission chaired by Chris Patten with a mandate to make recommendations in this highly sensitive area. Some of the Patten Report's proposed changes have distressed those who honour the many sacrifices made by police officers in Northern Ireland.

I urge everyone to reflect on Chief Constable Ronnie Flanagan's statement that the police stand ready for the challenges proposed by Patten and that it is his "fervent hope that those in all our communities whom we exist to serve stand similarly ready for change." Everyone in Northern Ireland, including the police, deserve the chance to prove themselves anew under the Agreement. That said, for police reform to work, the entire community must take ownership of the process, taking not just the pain of the past, but more importantly the demands of the future, into account. The opportunity to achieve a police service that is broadly acceptable and fully accountable is too important and too close at hand to be lost to political brinkmanship.

On the question of paramilitary organisations, the Good Friday Agreement is both clear and unequivocal—in it, all parties commit themselves to the total disarmament of all such groups. The IRA's decision to allow independent inspectors to view arms dumps last June and to verify that the weapons are not moved or used represented unprecedented progress. The IRA also committed itself to resume contacts with the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning and to put weapons "completely and verifiably beyond use" in the context of full implementation of the Agreement.

Republican leaders say these commitments will be met. I welcome that, and look forward to further, timely progress in this vital area. I urge loyalist paramilitaries to make similar undertakings, even as courageous political leaders work to bring an end to the dangerous feuding under way in that community. All sides must work together to renew momentum toward the goal spelled out in the Agreement: total decommissioning of all paramilitary weapons.

But perhaps harder still will be what George Mitchell called the "decommissioning of mind-sets". The confidence that is the foundation of peace is all too easily eroded by distrust, defensiveness, and fear. It is almost always easier to fall back on old habits than it is to fulfil new hopes.

In making decisions that will determine Northern Ireland's future, political leaders must pause and consider whether their actions will advance the cause of durable peace and genuine reconciliation. Every political leader is subject to short-term political pressures. But in Northern Ireland, I believe it is critical for all to consider how their actions in the heat of the moment today will be felt a year, a decade, a generation from now. It is human nature to take the good for granted and to focus on our frustrations, giving in to those frustrations would be a tragic mistake, with terrible consequences.

On my last visit to Northern Ireland in 1998, I met with the families of the victims and the survivors of the Omagh bombing. That visit was a vivid reminder of the alternative to peace—and it made clear the determination of the people of Northern Ireland to overcome the sorrow and bitterness of the last 30 years and build a better future.

During the recently completed inquest into the Omagh bombing, that determination

to build was still on display—as was the profound frustration that the dissidents responsible for the attack have not been brought to justice.

For a durable peace to be achieved, both of these emotions must be harnessed effectively. And there should be no mistake about it: US law enforcement will aggressively target any effort from whatever quarter to undermine the peace process through illegal activities from the United States.

The Good Friday Agreement represents the very best hope for lasting peace in Northern Ireland. Fully implementing, it will make Northern Ireland a beacon of hope for those who struggle for reconciliation and peace in every corner of the world—from the Balkans to the Middle East.

I hope to be able to visit Northern Ireland soon, and to confirm that the will of the people is being heeded.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This opinion-editorial was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20. An original was not available for verification of the content of this item. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Memorandum on Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization

October 19, 2000

Presidential Determination No. 2001–02

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Waiver and Certification of Statutory Provisions Regarding the Palestine Liberation Organization

Pursuant to the authority and conditions contained in section 538(d) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2000, as contained in the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2000 (Public Law 106–113), and as provided for in the Joint Resolution Making Further Continuing Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2001, and for Other Purposes (Public Law 106–306), I hereby determine and certify that it is important to the national security interests of the United States to waive the provisions of section 1003 of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 1987, Public Law 100–204.

This waiver shall be effective for a period of 6 months from the date hereof. You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress and to publish it in the *Federal Register.*

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20. An original was not available for verification of the content of this memorandum. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000

October 20, 2000

Today I am very pleased to sign into law S. 2311, the "Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000," which reauthorizes and expands health care and essential support services for hundreds of thousands of Americans living with HIV and AIDS.

The broad bipartisan support in the Congress for this bill sends a clear message that together we can continue to reach out to individuals and families living with HIV and AIDS. Since its creation, the Ryan White program has provided thousands of people with HIV care and support services in their communities and access to cutting-edge therapies that would have remained beyond their reach. It has helped them stay out of the hospital and live healthier and better lives.

During my administration, funding for the Ryan White CARE Act has increased by more than 300 percent, and funding for basic AIDS research and HIV prevention has increased by over 80 percent. Our strong commitment to addressing the HIV epidemic has begun to pay dividends. The latest data show that the number of Americans diagnosed with AIDS has declined for the first time in the history of the AIDS epidemic, deaths from the disease have declined by over 40

percent, and there has been a sharp decline in new AIDS cases in infants and children.

However, we know that our battle against AIDS is far from over. As we continue to search for a cure and a vaccine to protect every American, our support for programs like the CARE Act is essential. We owe a special thanks to Senators Kennedy, Jeffords, and Frist and Representatives Waxman and Coburn, and to the many AIDS advocates and organizations, for their tireless efforts in guiding this bill to enactment.

NOTE: S. 2311, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 106–345. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on Signing the Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000

October 20, 2000

Ten years ago, shortly after Ryan White's death, the Congress chose to build a legacy in his memory. As a young man, Ryan White changed the world, and so has the program that bears his name. Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 2311, the "Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000," which reauthorizes and expands health care and essential support services to hundreds of thousands of Americans living with HIV and AIDS.

The reauthorization of the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency (CARE) Act is the cornerstone of my Administration's domestic HIV and AIDS care and treatment effort, and one of its top legislative priorities. The broad-based bipartisan support in the Congress for the reauthorization of this vital program sends a clear and strong message that together we can bring care and compassion to our fellow citizens living with HIV and AIDS. I am pleased that during my Administration, funding for the CARE Act program has increased over 300 percent. For fiscal year 2001, this landmark program will receive more than $1.7 billion.

Today, the CARE Act has become a model for health care delivery not only in the United States, but around the world. It is a shining example of the good that can come from collaboration, coordination, and concerted action. The CARE Act has brought together Republicans and Democrats, cities and States, hospitals and community-based organizations, providers, and people living with AIDS—and the results are a tribute to the power of public-private partnerships. It has created a continuum of care that is both compassionate and cost-effective—one that saves both lives and money.

When the CARE Act was originally created, we were sadly unable to do much for those who were sick, and many of the services provided were designed to help people die with dignity. Thankfully, much has changed. The CARE Act is now solidly about *living* with HIV and AIDS. Since its last reauthorization, biomedical research has brought hope and renewed optimism with the discovery of protease inhibitors and combination therapies. The CARE Act has made the promise of biomedical research a reality in the lives of people living with HIV and AIDS in every corner of this country.

Last year alone, approximately one hundred thousand people living with HIV and AIDS received access to drug therapy because of the CARE Act. This is particularly important given that half of the people served by the CARE Act have family incomes of less than $10,000 a year—and the new drug "cocktails" cost more than $12,000 annually. We know all too well that the drugs are not enough. Primary care and support services are vital to ensuring both access and adherence to these complex drug regimens. It is this comprehensive package of essential services that the CARE Act provides—and with impressive results.

The CARE Act has helped to reduce both the frequency and length of expensive inpatient hospitalizations, lowered AIDS mortality, reduced mother-to-child transmission, and enhanced both the length and quality of life for people living with AIDS. The Act has also provided a mainstay of essential health and related support services to individuals living with HIV disease and their families—crucial services in our progress against this relentless disease.

The CARE Act also serves those most in need. Nearly six out of every 10 people served by the CARE Act are poor. They are

also 5 times more likely to be uninsured than those receiving care elsewhere; nearly 3 times more likely to be African Americans; and 50 percent more likely to be women. Clearly the CARE Act has followed the path paved by this epidemic—but challenges remain as HIV and AIDS move deeper into underserved communities already plagued by poverty, homelessness, and substance abuse, and as treatment demands and costs continue to rise. It is these challenges that the reauthorization of the CARE Act is designed to address.

S. 2311 will continue the tradition of locally defined care and treatment that are the mainstay of the original CARE Act. It will also improve the programs of the CARE Act in several ways my Administration recommended, including: (1) expanding access to essential care for historically underserved individuals, including racial and ethnic minorities, women, and youth; (2) establishing a stronger link between HIV prevention, diagnosis, and treatment efforts to make sure people get the care they need once they learn they are HIV positive; (3) improving the quality of care to make sure all people with HIV get state-of-the-art treatment; and (4) reducing existing barriers within the AIDS Drug Assistance Program to ensure that more people living with HIV disease have access to lifesaving therapeutics.

I want to thank some individuals in my Administration, the Congress, and perhaps most importantly, the AIDS community for their tireless efforts and determination in guiding this bill to enactment. We all owe thanks to Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala; the Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher; Drs. Earl Fox and Joseph O'Neill of the Health Resources and Services Administration; and Sandy Thurman, Director of our White House AIDS Office. In addition, this bill clearly would not have become law without the dedication of Senators Kennedy, Jeffords, and Frist and Representatives Waxman and Coburn. Finally, I am particularly grateful for the assistance of the many and varied organizations who came together to extend this legacy of care and compassion for individuals and families living with HIV disease.

HIV and AIDS have touched communities in each and every State across this country. In big cities and rural towns, the disease continues to devastate individuals, families, and communities, leaving them impoverished, suffering, and in dire need of medical care and support. We hope that in the not-so-distant future we will have even better therapies and someday an effective vaccine. But in the meantime, we are grateful for the CARE Act, which, through its essential services, has allowed individuals to live longer and healthier lives. The programs contained in this bill are literally a lifeline for individuals with HIV disease. For this reason, I am extremely pleased to sign S. 2311.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 20, 2000.

NOTE: S. 2311, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 106–345. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Proclamation 7368—National Day of Concern About Young People and Gun Violence, 2000

October 20, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Every day in America, approximately 10 children are shot and killed. Children 15 years old and younger are murdered with firearms at a higher rate in this country than in 25 other industrialized countries combined. These tragedies are an urgent reminder that we must not waver in our national commitment to reduce gun violence and to make our society safer for our children.

We are beginning to see some progress in our efforts. Since 1992, the national violent crime rate has dropped by more than 20 percent; violent crimes committed with firearms have dropped by 35 percent; and the firearms homicide rate has fallen over 40 percent. We have achieved much of this

progress by embracing a collaborative, community-based approach to gun crime prevention and reduction.

Gun violence issues differ in each community, and no single program or approach works everywhere. In response to a directive I issued last year to help reduce gun violence and save lives, United States Attorneys and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Field Division Directors for each of our Nation's 94 Federal judicial districts have developed locally coordinated gun violence reduction strategies. Working closely with local law enforcement, elected officials, and other community leaders, they are tailoring plans to local needs and developing strategies to prevent gun crimes from occurring and crack down on gun criminals.

A major goal of our strategy to reduce gun violence and ensure the safety of our children is to keep guns out of the wrong hands. We passed the Brady Act to help accomplish this goal by requiring that every person who purchases a firearm from a federally licensed dealer submit to a background check. To date, Brady background checks have prevented more than 536,000 felons and other prohibited individuals from acquiring firearms. We also succeeded in banning assault weapons, making "zero tolerance" for guns in schools the law of the land, and passing legislation that prohibits juveniles from possessing handguns. However, our determination to reduce gun violence must not stop there. I have called on the Congress to build on these measures by passing legislation that closes the gun show loophole, mandates child safety locks with every handgun sold, and bans large-capacity ammunition clips.

We have also provided funding for more than 100,000 community police officers; for the Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative to reduce youth violence through collaborative, community-based efforts; and for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers—safe places where students can go after school to participate in constructive activities and avoid the dangers of guns, gangs, and drugs.

But none of these efforts can succeed without the commitment of America's youth. It takes courage to resist negative peer pressure; it takes character to settle disputes without resorting to violence; and it takes a sense of personal responsibility to tell an adult when others fail to live up to these standards. On this National Day of Concern, I ask every young American to sign a Student Pledge Against Gun Violence, which contains a solemn oath never to bring a gun to school, never to use a gun to settle a dispute, and to use their influence to keep others from using guns. By doing so, they will take an important, life-affirming step toward a brighter and safer future.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 21, 2000, as a National Day of Concern About Young People and Gun Violence. On this day, I call upon young people in classrooms and communities across the United States to voluntarily sign the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence. I also call upon all Americans to commit themselves anew to helping our Nation's young people reject violence and to make our schools and neighborhoods safe places for learning and recreation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 24, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 25. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Martin T. Meehan in Lowell, Massachusetts

October 20, 2000

Thank you for that wonderful welcome. Thank you for coming out to help Marty tonight. I told him that now that he had all this support and has raised all this money, we needed to go find him an opponent. [*Laughter*] Seems a shame to waste all this

energy and support and enthusiasm, you know. [*Laughter*] It's a good thing there aren't many more votes he can cast against me. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first, how honored I am to be here. I want to say more about Marty in a moment, but I also want to thank Richie Neal for being here and for representing Massachusetts so well—he's a wonderful man—and for supporting the efforts that we made with the Irish peace process, which, in the beginning, to put it mildly, were somewhat controversial.

I want to thank Senator Kennedy. We've spent most of the day together. We flew here today. In an uncommon act of sensitivity, he flew to Missouri today for the funeral of the Governor of Missouri, who was our nominee for the United States Senate. You probably know he died tragically in a plane crash with his son and one of his closest aides. He was my neighbor and my very close friend. When I looked out today and I saw Ted and Vickie at the funeral, I thought, "What a great thing to do." I say this every chance I get. But whatever I have accomplished as President, so much of it would never have been possible if Ted Kennedy hadn't been there with me every single step of the way, and I cannot thank him enough.

You know, we have a lot of fun together. Today I taught him a new card game so I could beat him. [*Laughter*] And he was convinced I didn't play fair, just because I won and he lost. [*Laughter*] You know, he's going to get the last laugh, though, because when he came to the Senate, I was in junior high school—[*laughter*]—and when I leave the White House, he'll still be in the Senate, thank goodness for our country's sake.

I would also like to thank someone in this audience for coming here tonight. I was particularly glad to see Niki Tsongas. Where are you? Niki, are you here? She was in the other room when I was here. I was really delighted she was here.

And I want to thank Marty's family for coming tonight at a difficult time, beginning with his wonderful mother. Mrs. Meehan, thank you for being here. Thank you. Bless you for coming tonight.

Marty and Ellen and their beautiful baby and Marty's mom and the whole Meehan clan met me outside, and I understood how he had been elected. [*Laughter*] Frankly, there are so many of them, he doesn't really need you. [*Laughter*] But I'm delighted that you're helping him anyway.

I wanted to come here—as Senator Kennedy said, I've been to a lot of different communities in Massachusetts. I've tried to, in this course of my service as President, beginning in the '92 campaign, I've tried to make the whole State, to really spend time out in the State of Massachusetts to see every part of it and to have a chance to thank the people of this State. No State has been better to Bill Clinton and Al Gore than the State of Massachusetts, and I am very grateful to you.

You heard Marty say that when I became President, unemployment here was 7.5 percent. Last month it was 2.4 percent, the lowest in 30 years, down two-thirds from 1992. So, I want to have a serious talk here, just for a minute, about this election coming up, what it means to you, your children, your grandchildren, and the future of our country. I want to ask you to take some time, a little time every day, to talk to other people about it.

I know that Vice President Gore and Joe Lieberman are well ahead in the polls in Massachusetts. But you can help them in New Hampshire. You may know some people in—if we win this time in New Hampshire, I think it may be the first time the Democrats have ever won it three times in a row. But they ought to be with us. New Hampshire is a lot better off than it was in 1992. It's a lot better off. And they've been very good to me, too.

You might have some friends in Pennsylvania, one of the battleground States, or Ohio, a lot of the other places where this election could go either way.

I had the opportunity—gosh, when was it—yesterday—to appear before the Senate and House Democrats, and I said that we should view ourselves from here until election day as the "Weather Caucus," because if we make things clear, that is, if people understand with clarity the choice before them and the consequences of the choice, we will win. If they make things cloudy, we'll have a hard time winning. So they will be for cloudy; we'll be for clear. What does that say

about who you ought to vote for right there? [*Laughter*]

So I just want to take a minute or two, because everybody here has friends who will never come to an event like this. Isn't that right? Every one of you has friends that will never come to an event like this, but they will show up on election day. You have friends in other States where the election could go either way who will never come to an event like this, but they will show up on election day.

And I just wanted to tell you, we've now heard all the debates, and the candidates are kind of going into the homestretch, and sometimes it's easy to lose the forest for the trees. And you know, I care passionately about this election, not just because of my more than passing interest in the Senate race in New York. [*Laughter*] And I might add another kind thing Ted did—he went to Buffalo with Hillary the other day and spoke to an Irish group, and he practically had her with a brogue by the time he got through. It was fabulous. [*Laughter*] And not just because I'm so devoted to Al Gore and all that he's done, and not just because Joe Lieberman has been a friend of mine for 30 years; but because when the Vice President says, "We've come a long way in the last 8 years, but you ain't seen nothin' yet," I actually believe that.

And I'm not running for anything. That's not just political rhetoric. I've worked as hard as I know how to turn this country around and pull this country together and move us forward, to fight off the most bitter partisan attacks in modern American history and just keep on going. And it's worked pretty well. And I think you will all agree with that.

But never—never in my lifetime have we had at the same time so much economic prosperity, social progress, national self-confidence, with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security. It has not happened in our lifetime.

Now, when you get a situation like that, you have an obligation as a free society to build for the future, to seize the big opportunities, to deal with the big challenges, to make the most of them. And I'm telling you, the only thing that ever bothers me is when I see, well, people think that they kind of like both these candidates, and maybe there is not much difference, and maybe we should give the other guy a chance or this, that, or the other thing, and after all—and things are going along fine. Who could mess this up? [*Laughter*] You know, you hear a lot of this talk, don't you? Don't you hear this talk—people talking—and what I want to say to you is that we ought to be happy about this election, because you have two people we can posit: They're good people; they love their families; they love their country; and they will pretty well do what they say they'll do if they get elected.

But make no mistake about it, there are great differences in the candidates for President and Vice President, for the Senate and for the House, that will have profound consequences. And you've got to decide. And I'll just tell you a few of them.

First of all, I've listened to all these debates, so let me tell you what this election is not about. This election is certainly not about one of us being—one of our candidates being for big Government, the other one being for less Government.

Let me tell you what the facts are. Now, we had a hard time getting those facts into these debates, because they're so inconvenient for the other side. And I admire that about the Republicans: The evidence does not faze them. [*Laughter*] They are not bothered at all by the facts. And you've got to kind of give it to them. Ask Richie or Marty or Ted. Don't take my word for it. The evidence doesn't faze them. They just sort of show up and do it anyway. They know what they're for.

But here are the facts. Under this Democratic administration, Government spending is the lowest percentage of national income it's been since 1966. Tax burden on average, middle-income Americans is the lowest it's been in more than 20 years. Now, the size of the Government is the lowest it's been since 1960, Dwight Eisenhower's last year in the White House, the year you elected John Kennedy President of the United States. That is the size of the Federal Government. Those are facts. So when you hear our Republican friends talking about how we're for big Government, ask them, where have they

been the last 8 years? And if you hear somebody who acts like they believe it, fill them in on the facts.

This election is also not about how our side can't get bipartisan action done in Washington, so we need a Republican to rescue us to give us bipartisan action. Let me just run through a little of the bipartisan action. Once we made it clear to them that we weren't going to let them shut the Government down, abolish the Department of Education, and have the biggest education and health care and environmental cuts in history, and once you made it clear to them that you wouldn't support them if they kept doing that—we got a bipartisan welfare reform bill, a bipartisan balanced budget bill that had the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest expansion of children's health care since Medicaid in 1965. We got a telecommunications bill that's created hundreds of thousands of jobs in America. We got an extension of our bill to put 100,000 police on the street; we're now working on 150,000. We got a bill to put 100,000 teachers in the schools; we're already a third of the way home there—all in a bipartisan majority.

So if somebody says to you, "I've got to vote for the other guys because they're against big Government, or they're for bipartisan solutions," you say, "Hello. Stop. Facts." Do a fact check here. It tickles me. The Republicans are seeking to be rewarded for the harsh partisan atmosphere they created. [*Laughter*] "We made a mess of this. The Democrats will work with us. Give us the White House, and we'll behave." That's their argument.

You should say, "I don't think so. That's not necessary." We get plenty of stuff done on a bipartisan basis. Ted Kennedy works every day. Marty Meehan's got this campaign finance reform bill with Chris Shays. Our problems is not bipartisanship. Our problem is that the Republican leadership in the United States Senate and in the campaign for the White House are against campaign finance reform. One hundred percent of the Democrats and a lot of the Republicans are for campaign finance reform. Isn't that right?

So that's what it's not about. Here's what it is about. One other thing it's not about. It's not about change versus the status quo. Al Gore is not the candidate of the status quo. If anybody running this year ran on the following platform, "Vote for me, and I'll do everything Bill Clinton did," I would vote against that person. Why? Because the world is changing dramatically.

So the issue is not whether we're going to change; it is how we're going to change. Are we going to keep the prosperity going and build on the changes in the last 8 years that are working, or are we going to reverse course? That is the question. And that's the way you've got to frame it. It's not whether, but how, we're going to change.

Now, look, here's the deal on this economic business. Our tax cut, I admit, is only a third the size of theirs—our candidate's tax cut. But most people making under $100,000 do better under ours than theirs. Now, why is ours only a third the size of theirs? Because we learned the hard way in the 12 years before we got here that if you give it all away before it comes in, you may wind up with a lot of red ink on your hands, and you don't want to do that again.

So, we say, "Let's have a tax cut we can afford for college tuition deduction, for long-term care for the elderly and the disabled, for child care, for retirement savings, for giving people incentives to invest in poor areas in America. But let's save a little money for education and health care and the environment, and let's keep paying this debt down, because this is a case where fiscal conservatism is socially progressive."

If you keep interest rates down, the average family is already saving a couple thousand dollars on home mortgages because we've kept interest rates lower by getting rid of this deficit. If their plan passes, because the tax cut is so big—$1½ trillion, and on top of that, they've got a trillion dollar plan to partially privatize Social Security—you're already in deficit once you do that, by the way—then, they're going to spend several hundred billion dollars over and above that—and I can tell you, their estimate of the surplus is too big—we're going back into deficit. That means higher interest rates.

Our tax cut for everybody is lower interest rates. If you take Gore's plan and you keep paying the debt down, interest rates will be

a point lower for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this: For a decade, $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loan payments, means more jobs, more business expansion, higher incomes, a better stock market. Our tax cuts for everybody, in addition to the specifics, is lower interest rates and getting rid of the debt.

Now, I'll tell you something else. The third-biggest item in the Federal budget is interest on the debt. Every last dollar you pay to the Federal Government, it begins with 12 cents going out for interest going out for the debt, because when they had the White House, they quadrupled the debt in 12 years. We quadrupled the debt in 12 years over the previous 200-year history of this country. And I'm getting rid of it—thanks to them and their voting for me—and we want to keep getting rid of it.

Now, so here's another interesting thing. If you have 8 years of a Gore/Lieberman administration, Government spending will be an even smaller percentage of income than it will be if you get the Republicans in. Why? Oh, yes, we'll spend more on education. We'll spend more on health care. We'll spend more on the environment. But we're going to get rid of that 12 cents on the dollar you're paying on interest on the debt. They're going to keep paying that, and you're going to have higher interest rates.

Now, look, we tried it their way for 12 years, and they want to go try it that way again. They want to say, "Look, the Democrats have got things in real good shape now, so let's go on a real tax-cutting binge and try it our way one more time and see if it works better the second time around." That's what this election is about.

Listen, this is a big deal. People have to understand this plainly. It's not like we haven't tried it. You've tried it our way for 8 years, and you tried it their way for 12 years before that. And that's all this is. You cannot make a $1½ trillion tax cut, several hundred billion dollars' worth of spending and a $1 trillion Social Security privatization plan fit into the money that's there. We're going back to deficits, high interest rates, less investment in our future, less economic growth. Ask people if they really want to take that chance.

If you want to keep the prosperity going, you better stay with Gore and Lieberman and Kennedy and Meehan and Neal and our crowd, because that's where we're going. This is a big deal.

Now, I won't go into as much detail on the rest of this, but the same thing on every issue. On education, both sides say they're for accountability. The difference is, we believe if you're going to hold schools accountable for the performance of their children, you ought to help them succeed with preschool and after-school programs and more qualified teachers in the early grades and modernized schools.

And they say, "We don't need to do that. Let's just test the kids and see what happens and take the money away if they don't do well." We think we ought to help empower the schools to do well. We know how to turn around failing schools now. There's no excuse not to do it now. All we have to do is to develop the system, invest in it, reward it. Big difference. They're not for any of those specific things I just said.

On health care, we say we ought to have a Patients' Bill of Rights that's real, and we ought to have a Medicare prescription drug program, because if we were creating Medicare today, we would never have it without drugs.

In 1965, when Ted voted for Medicare, medical care was about doctors and hospitals. Today, anybody that lives to be 65 in America has a life expectancy of 82. The young women in this audience that are still in their childbearing years, thanks to the human genome project, will soon be bringing home from the hospital babies with a life expectancy of 90 years.

Now, that's the good news. But it means you're going to have to totally reimagine the aging process. Within a few years, 80 won't be all that old. We will think of it as, you know, sort of late middle age. [*Laughter*] But it also means we've got to keep people healthy. We've got to keep people strong, and pharmaceuticals are an important part of that. So we have the money now, if we don't squander it, to take care of the pharmaceutical needs of our senior citizens, not only

to lengthen life but to improve the quality of life, to keep people out of hospitals, to minimize their institutional time in life.

This is a big deal. And we are for a Medicare program that does that. Why? Because Medicare is simply a financing mechanism that has a low administrative cost and can serve everybody. They're for serving about half the people that need it and telling everybody else they've got to get private insurance.

The insurance companies—you know, Ted and I, we've had a lot of fights with the health insurance companies. They ought to get a gold star for this. They keep telling us, "You can't write a health insurance policy for this." The health insurance policy—this is another case where the Republicans are not fazed by the evidence. The insurance companies, which are usually with them on everything, have told them, "Hey guys, you can't write an insurance policy that people can afford that's worth having."

So why don't they want to do it? What in the wide world is wrong with giving all the seniors access to the medicine they need? Did you ever meet a politician that didn't want more votes? Did you ever meet a business person that didn't want more customers? Why do the drug companies not want more customers?

See, you never hear this in the debate because they don't have time to go into it, but you need to know this. This is a huge deal, the difference in the Democratic and the Republican prescription drug plan. The drug companies spend a lot of money developing the drugs and advertising them. And every country but the United States where they sell the drugs has price controls. So they've got to get 100 percent of the cost of developing the drugs and advertising them from you when you buy them. And then it's real cheap just to make another pill, so then they can sell them in Canada or Europe or wherever and make a lot of money.

Now, I am not demonizing the drug companies. I would still rather have them in America. Wouldn't you? I mean, they're great. They uncover all these medical miracles, and they provide tens of thousands of wonderful jobs. And they've got a problem, because they think if Medicare is buying for all the seniors, they'll have so much market power, they can get drugs made in America for Americans almost as cheap as Canadians can buy drugs made in America. And they're afraid it will cut them so low that they won't have the money to make new drugs and to advertise them.

Surely, the answer is not what they posit—to leave half the seniors who need the medicine behind. That's not the American way. This is a big deal now. This is a huge deal, a big difference between Gore/Lieberman, Meehan, Neal, Kennedy, our crowd, and their crowd.

My view is, let's solve the problems of America's seniors. We've got the money to do it. And the drug companies have plenty of money and good lobbyists, and they can come down to Washington, and we'll figure out how to solve their problems. But we've got the cart before the horse if we say, "I'm sorry, here's half the seniors that need medicine. We can't give it to them because the drug companies are afraid they won't get enough money for their advertising and development costs." Let's take care of the seniors, then take care of the drug companies. That's our position. It's the right position. It is the moral position. It's the right thing for America.

Now, you can go through every other issue—crime, the environment, every single other issue—and there are significant differences. But you ought to be able to tell people now what the economic differences are, what the health care differences are, what the education differences are. You ought to be able to tell them. It will affect you, your children, your grandchildren, and the future of this country.

I can also tell you, having worked with him for 8 years and having had some experience now with the Presidency, it is fundamentally a deciding job. Oh, there's a lot of work. Harry Truman said—I felt like this in the Middle East the last couple of days—Harry Truman said that his job largely consisted of trying to talk people into doing things they should do without him having to ask them in the first place. [*Laughter*] And to some extent, that's right.

But the President also has to decide: Who are you going to put on the Supreme Court? Who are you going to make Secretary of

State? Who are you going to make Secretary of Defense? Who will be Secretary of Education? Who will be Secretary of Health and Human Services? What will you send to the Congress? How will you deal with the first major foreign crisis you have? What is the future of arms control? How will we deal with terrorism and biological and chemical warfare? This is a deciding job. And that's the last point I want to make.

Al Gore makes good decisions. He is smart. He knows what he's doing. He's tough. He has good values. He makes good decisions. So I'm just asking you to take a little time every day between now and the election. This thing is tight, and it is tight partly because things are going well, and it's easy to blur the distinctions.

I'll close with the thing that's most important to me. If somebody said to me that my time on Earth was over and I got to leave America with one wish, what would my one wish for America be? Believe it or not, it wouldn't be for continued prosperity. After what I've been through with the Middle East and Northern Ireland and the Balkans, growing up in the South that was segregated, as I did, what I would wish for America is that we could be one country, united across all the various differences in this country.

This is such an interesting place to live now. America is getting more interesting every day as we grow more racially and religiously diverse. But it's really important. The only way it's interesting is if we think we respect our differences, but we think our common humanity is even more important.

And there are all kinds of issues that come up all the time where these values are at stake. I think campaign finance reform is one of them. Why? Because it basically will equalize the power of people's votes. I think stronger enforcement of equal pay laws for women is one of them, because it gives equality to the dignity of work.

I think the hate crimes legislation is important for obvious reasons. And you know, the truth is—you kind of got a little of that in the last debate—the truth is, we're on one side of those issues, and they're on the other. And I think that we're on the side of one America. And in a world that's getting smaller and smaller, I think we're on the right side.

So I want to say to you, I'm very—I'm so grateful for what you've done for me, for my family and my administration. Nobody's been better to us than the people of Massachusetts. I am grateful. I am grateful for the chance I've had to serve. I am profoundly grateful that there are wonderful people like Marty Meehan who are willing to present themselves for public office and serve and do what they do. I'm grateful for that.

But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow. And the tomorrow that counts now is election day, November 7th. Now, you just remember: Clarity is our friend, if the American people clearly understand what are the differences in economic policy, in education policy, in health care policy, in the environment, in crime, and in one America.

How will it affect me, my family, my community, my children, my grandchildren? How can I build the future of my dreams for our kids? If they really are clear on that, we're going to have an enormous celebration on election night. But a lot of this work now will be done by word of mouth, one by one.

So you just remember that every day between now and the election. Most of the people you know who will show up and vote will never, ever, ever come to an event like this. So you tell them a little bit about what you heard tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at a DoubleTree Riverfront Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Niki Tsongas, widow of late Senator Paul Tsongas; Senator Ted Kennedy's wife, Vicki; and Representative Meehan's mother, Alice, his wife, Ellen T. Murphy, and their son, Robert. Representative Meehan is a candidate for reelection in Massachusetts' Fifth Congressional District. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Democratic Senate Campaign Committee Dinner in Boston, Massachusetts

October 20, 2000

When we were in Lowell—first of all, I told Tom Daschle, I said, "Don't you think it's amazing Ted Kennedy knows every town I have been to in Massachusetts—[*laughter*]—since I ran for President in 1992?" And at Lowell, he went through every single place, every single stop I had made in 8 years. I didn't remember all the places. [*Laughter*]

I asked Tom Daschle, I said, "Do you remember every town in South Dakota I've been to?" He said, "Yes, Sioux Falls." [*Laughter*] And I make a lot of fun of Senator Kennedy, and he makes a lot of fun of me, and our families have become close. We've had some wonderful times together. But he's going to get his revenge in the end. And as I tell everybody, you know, I was in junior high school when Ted Kennedy went to the Senate. [*Laughter*] But when I leave the White House, he will still be there. Thank God for that, I must say. [*Laughter*]

I love all these folks that were here tonight. Senator Reed I see is still back there. And Senator Daschle has been a magnificent leader. I talked to Senator Kerry. I know that he had a gathering to talk about technology to the Democratic Party tonight, and I saw the Senators who were here earlier. But one of the things I'm going to miss most about being President is the time I've had to work with them and the friendships I've made with them. One of the things I look forward to most, if the good people of New York send Hillary to the Senate, is, I also get to hang around with them. [*Laughter*] I will still be the object of their occasional abuse, but I'll be able to leave it when I want to. [*Laughter*]

You know, it's really not fair for Ted to talk about Tom Daschle that way on the 22d amendment, because I can promise you that the guys that lead the Senate in the other party will be very glad to see me go. [*Laughter*]

But we've had a great time together. And I know everybody else has talked. I just want to make a couple of very brief points. One is about politics, but the other, more importantly, is about the long-term direction of the country.

I've always felt that Al Gore would win this election, and I still do. I have never wavered in that. When he was 18 points behind a year ago, I kept telling everybody, just relax, go on. And I went around here—Alan will verify that—he had all these events, and we were waving the flag, and I believe that for two simple reasons.

One is, the issue before the American people is not whether the country will change, so it's not change versus the status quo. The country is changing. America is changing. The world's changing. The issue is, what kind of change and whether we should keep changing in the right direction or go back and try what we tried for 12 years before. It didn't work out very well for us. It may be packaged a little differently, but it's basically the same deal. And I think people will get that in the end. I think the undecided voters will come to terms with that and decide they want to keep the prosperity going, they want to—and they want to keep doing what works.

The second reason is, I think that they will decide that we have a more unifying vision of our country, our relationship to the world, and our future, and they will want to embrace it. And that will happen. That's what I think is going to happen.

But in order for that to happen, we have to clarify the differences. And in order for that not to happen, they have to blur the differences. And that really explains more than any other kind of psychobabble I've read the different strategies of the two candidates in the debates.

You know, I read all that stuff. Most of it's just—everybody's got to say something. [*Laughter*] But the truth is that—and it's harder for us than it is for them. It's a lot easier—it's easier to muddy things up than it is to clarify them.

But you watch this thing unfold now the last 3 weeks, and you remember what I told you. Clarity is our friend. Cloudiness is their friend, right? So we had—just go through the last debate. We wanted clarity on a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they didn't, because if there's clarity, we win. We want clarity on

the difference on the Medicare drug program, and they don't, because if there's clarity, we win.

And so I think that that's something you should all keep in mind. And to whatever extent any of you can influence anybody anywhere in any State that's still up for grabs one way or the other, that's really worth doing.

And I know that this has already been said, but I just want to give just you two examples, if I might. This economic issue is very serious. People ask me all the time. I was with a bunch of people last night who identified themselves as friends of Bob Rubin, and they were telling me how great Bob Rubin was. We were up in Connecticut, had a deal for Hillary. It reminded me that people come up to me from time to time and they say, "What did you guys do, really, in the economy?"

By the way, I thought Al Gore's best line in the first debate was, the economic line when—George Bush actually had a good line. He said, you know, "I think Clinton/Gore got more out of the economy than the economy got out of Clinton/Gore." That's pretty cute, isn't it? I mean, I thought that was pretty good. [*Laughter*] Because he said the American people did that. Now, this is from—their crowd took credit when the Sun came up in the morning when they were in. Do you remember that? "It's morning in America. Reelect us." I mean, they did. They took credit for the Sun coming up in the morning. It was unbelievable. [*Laughter*] And then they—but everything else, once they got out, it all was an accident. [*Laughter*]

So he said that. He said it was really the hard work of the American people and we just sort of were along for the ride, and Al Gore said, "You know, the American people do deserve most of the credit for this, but they were working real hard in 1992, also." But I thought it was—see, that's clarity. That's good.

But—so people ask me all the time, "Well, what did you and Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and all, what did you do? What new great idea did you bring to Washington?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] You know, I mean, here I am in the shadow of Harvard. I hate to say anything so pedestrian—[*laughter*]—and mundane, but that's basically what it was. It was arithmetic, you know.

I just—I thought 2 and 2 still made 4 even in the digital age. Now, I'm not kidding. I am not kidding. I believed that fiscal conservatism would make social progressive's progress possible. That's what I believed. It turned out to be right. I thought if we got rid of the deficit and got interest rates down, the economy would boom; we would have the money to give modest tax cuts and invest in education and technology and the environment and health care and get rid of the deficit and eventually start paying the debt down.

Now, if I had come here 8 years ago and said, "Vote for me. By the time I leave office, we'll be paying down the national debt," you would have not voted for me. You would have said, "He's a very nice young man, but he's delusional, and we can't afford to have a delusional person as President, so"—[*laughter*]—"we'll send him home." Isn't that right? Nobody would have believed me if I had come here in 1992 and said, "Vote for me, and by the time I leave office, we'll be paying down the national debt. Vote for me, and by the time I leave office, the Democratic Party, Ted Kennedy, will be the fiscal conservative, and all the so-called conservatives in the Republican Party will be the radicals."

Now, that's what you've got here. And you know—so, you need to tell people this between now and November 7th. This is about arithmetic all over again. Yes, our tax cut is just a third of the size of theirs, and most of you would get a lot more out of theirs than ours.

But here's the problem. If you do ours, then you can invest the money into education and health care and still pay the country out of debt by 2012, which means that in a global economy where money is highly fungible and something like a trillion dollars crosses national borders every day, you can keep interest rates down and grow the economy.

It also means you can get rid of the third-biggest item in the Federal budget, by the way, which nobody ever talks about. Interest on the debt is the third-biggest item in the Federal budget, 12 cents of every dollar you

pay. It was about 14 cents when I took office, headed to 15 or 16. And we're paying the debt down.

But, now, this is arithmetic. So if—you know, there is a big debate about whether the projected surplus is $1.8 trillion and $2.2 trillion, and it sounds like a lot of money, and who can keep up with all of that? But it's still just simple arithmetic. Their tax cut's about $1.5 trillion, conservatively. Their Social Security privatization program is a trillion dollars. They admitted that. Their nominee admitted that in the first debate. Their spending programs are already over $300 billion, and they're lower than we are on defense and haven't said what Star Wars would cost yet. Now, you're back in deficit. This is arithmetic. And it means higher interest rates, and it means you don't free up money to invest, and it means the economy will be weaker. Everybody will get a tax cut.

In addition to the tax cut that the Vice President proposes, if interest rates are lower, and we reckon interest rates—the Council of Economic Advisers says interest rates will be about a point lower a year for a decade under the Gore plan. Do you know what that is? That's $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower student loan payments. It's also lower credit card payments, lower business loan payments, so that means every one of you in this room would benefit from it but so would all the people who served you tonight. It would be a big, huge, across-the-board tax cut that would keep the American economy strong. It is arithmetic. And every single American ought to understand if they want to keep this prosperity going in a global economy, we need to stay in harness with what works. We shouldn't be for no change, but we should be changing in the direction of what works.

The second point I want to make is, we have a different view of how we should relate to each other and the rest of the world. I think America is becoming a more and more interesting place as we become more racially and ethnically and religiously diverse. I think that—I think it's been a good thing for us that America is kind of coming to terms with the whole gay rights movement, and it's not something people have to hide anymore. That's what I believe. A lot of people don't believe that, but I do. I think it's been good for us.

I think we—so we have to define what our responsibilities to one another are. Ted Kennedy and I earlier were with Marty Meehan—Congressman Meehan in Lowell. We have different ideas about the kinds of things we ought to do to bind each other together, and I'll just give you three or four. But every one of them, there is a big difference between our Presidential nominee and our party.

Campaign finance reform, I think, is a good example. You know, one reason we'll never get campaign finance reform is—no offense to the people that are covering this, but they have to say, "A plague on both your houses," because otherwise, they won't feel that they're doing the right thing. They've got to tell everybody none of the politicians are any good.

But the truth is, 100 percent of the Democrats in the Congress will vote for the Shays-Meehan-McCain-Feingold bill—every one of them. We've got them all. And we've got a majority in both Houses. And the reason we can't get it there is because the leadership of the other party in the Congress and in the race for the President are against it. Now, that is the truth.

Now, why are we for it? I enjoy coming to these dinners. If I were running, I would still be glad to have dinner, even if we could relieve you of the burden of financing the Democratic Party, because I'd learn something. But it's part of the idea of one America. It equalizes the power of people's votes. And that's important, so we're for it, and they're not. It's different.

Hate crimes legislation. You got that in the last debate, but they didn't go all the way. I wish that the moderator had actually fleshed out what the real issue was in the hate crimes bill. You just kind of saw them dancing around it. Look, when you strip it all away, here's the deal: We're for hate crimes legislation that includes protection against gays. Matthew Shepard got stretched on a rack and killed in Wyoming, and if there's a Federal hate crimes bill, it means the Federal Government can come in and help a severely financially strapped local law

enforcement jurisdiction to investigate and prosecute the crime. In other words, there is a serious, substantive law enforcement reason.

So to answer that—James Byrd's killers are going to get executed, or something—it totally blows by the two big issues. Number one, the Republicans aren't for it because it protects gays as well as racial and religious minorities and people with disabilities, and number two, they don't recognize the legitimate Federal law enforcement issue here. So we're for this hate crimes bill, and they're not. That's a big deal. I think it's part of one America.

We're for strengthening the equal pay laws to protect the women who do equal work and ought to get equal pay, and they're not. It's a huge deal, not just to women but to men who live with women who don't get paid enough, and therefore, their family incomes are lower. It's a big deal.

Now, those are just three issues, but they have a lot to say about who we are—the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act." I could give you lots of other examples.

But my idea here has always been that we should be for two things: opportunity for every responsible citizen and a community of all Americans who are willing to play by the rules. If you have that, if you can create a structure of opportunity for every responsible citizen and a community of all Americans who play by the rules, you always fix the rest of it.

If we can build one America and the conditions and tools are there for people to do pretty well, the American people will figure out what to do with all these other problems. I mean, we could have a lot of esoteric arguments about the implication of the human genome project or how we're going to protect the privacy of medical and financial records on the Internet. And I've got a lot of feelings about all that.

But I'm just telling you, the two big things we need are a system of opportunity for responsible people and a country where everybody counts, and we all do better when we help each other. That's what I believe. And when you strip it all away, that's why you ought to be for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and that's why these people ought to be in the majority in the U.S. Senate, and that's why we've had some success in the last 8 years. That's why we've had some success.

So I will just say to you what I say to everybody. This race is tight as Dick's hatband, as we used to say at home. [*Laughter*] And it's going to be, because they have more money than we do, and it's easier to confuse than to clarify.

That's really what's going on here. I mean, you can get all these other explanations. I'm just telling you, I've been doing this a long time, and I'm not running for anything. [*Laughter*] This thing is tight because they've got more money than we do, and it's easier to confuse than it is to clarify. So anything you can do, particularly with people who live in States like New Hampshire to the north, where we could win—and if we win, I think it would be the first time ever that a Democrat carried it three times in a row, I believe. I don't think Roosevelt carried it three times in a row. But if you know anybody in any of these States—and one of you and I were talking about Louisiana tonight, a State I still believe we can win.

But in order to do it, we have to energize and clarify. People have got to understand this is a huge deal, and that's the other point I should have made. In addition to this kind of favoring confusion, they're also dramatically advantaged if most people feel sort of comfortable and think this doesn't matter very much, because I can tell you, their right-wing is highly energized. They're looking forward to getting off course and reversing our crime policy and reversing a lot of our other policies.

One of the specific commitments they've made is to reverse my order setting aside 43 million acres of roadless land in the national forests. That's a specific commitment they've made. They're going to reverse that. The Audubon Society says it's the most significant conservation move in 40 years. So they're really energized, because they know where the goodies are, and they know what the payoff will be.

So you can't let people think that this is not a significant election. And if you can just clarify the economic choice and the choices we make in order to be one nation, including those environmental things I mentioned, I

think it would make a great deal of difference. And you should not minimize your ability to have an impact on this election. Every one of you would talk to 200 people that never would come to an event like this, on their bet between now and the election—you may talk to 300 people. And clarity is our friend. If people understand the choices and the consequences, we win. If the decision is uncertain, then it's more difficult for us.

If you want to keep the prosperity going and you want to keep us coming together instead of being divided, you've got to be for Gore/Lieberman and our crowd of Senators here. And believe me, that's why I think we've had some success the last 8 years. And I really think it's a mistake to reverse the economic policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the environmental policy, the crime policy of this country.

It's not like we don't have a test run here. We've tried it our way; we've tried it their way. Things were better our way. They're just never deterred by evidence. I admire that about them. [*Laughter*] They're driven by ideology and the money, and they know what they believe, and the evidence is irrelevant. But it's not irrelevant to the voters that will determine the outcome of this election.

But you can help. In addition to your contributions, in addition to your presence here tonight, you ought to take it on yourself to turn some votes between now and November in the States that will make a difference. I'm telling you, you can do it. And just remember: Clarity is always harder than confusion, and therefore, we carry the burden. But we've also got, by far, the better side of the argument. So when you get away the clouds, we win.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to former Treasury Secretaries Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Indianapolis, Indiana

October 21, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, when Bren was up here talking, I thought to myself, that pretty well covers it, why should I speak? [*Laughter*] Thank you for your incredible generosity and support and friendship to me and to Hillary. And thank you, Mel. I want to thank Cindy and Paul for hosting this in their beautiful home in this beautiful yard. And I think I should say that today is Mel's 74th birthday, and we ought to be among the first to wish him a happy birthday.

You know, we're going to have to redefine our definition of aging, by the way. Anybody—today, Americans who live to be 65, on average, have a life expectancy of 82. Americans who live to be 74 have a life expectancy of over 85. And the fastest growing group of people by percentage in the whole country are Americans over 80. Pretty soon, because of the human genome project, young women will come home with babies from the hospital that will be born with a life expectancy of 90 years, which means that in the context of the 21st century, Mel is just entering middle age. [*Laughter*] And we wish you a long and happy life. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank my friend and supporter and Representative Julia Carson. I'm glad to be able to come back here and also do some events for her this morning. She is unbelievable in Congress. Everybody up there loves her. And she's—I told somebody that she may be an African-American woman, but she has the political skills of an Arkansas Ozark sheriff when she's working the Congress. [*Laughter*] She sort of sidles into a room. When she leaves she's got what she wants and nobody knows what they gave away until it's too late. [*Laughter*] It's great. Thank you, Julia Carson, for doing a great job.

And I want to thank Bart Peterson. I was so thrilled when he got elected, and I'm glad he and Amy are here today. And I want to say a personal word of appreciation to Frank and Judy O'Bannon. I have enjoyed my friendship with them. They have visited with Hillary and me at the White House. I want you to make sure that this election goes very

well for the Governor, because he has done very well by Indiana. You can be really proud of him. And I'm delighted to be here with him today.

And finally, I want to thank Joe Andrew, who has been a great chair of the DNC. Joe, I have to tell you, when I woke up this morning and I looked outside on this beautiful piece of land and the trees are all turning and I realized how close we are to a golf course—[*laughter*]—I questioned your judgment in leaving Indiana and moving to Washington to deal with the sharks to be head of the DNC. But I'm real glad you did. You've done a great job, and I thank you and the Indiana people should be very proud of Joe Andrew. Thank you.

Now, I will be brief. I enjoyed visiting with all of you inside. I just wanted to say a couple of things. This election is very important—the election—Hillary's election for the Senate, in which you have helped immensely today, because she's doing well up there, I think she's going to win, but I don't want her to be outspent three to one in the last 2½ weeks. And obviously, the people who opposed us all along are trying to give it one last shot before they give up and Hillary wins the Senate and I'm not in the White House. So we've had a pretty brisk fundraising opposition to deal with, too. So I'm very, very grateful to you for that.

But I also wanted to say that I think that as we come into the homestretch of this election, the only thing that concerns me about it is the repeated number of articles I keep reading which say that the undecided voters and the people who might decide not to vote are not quite sure whether this election makes a difference and what the differences between the candidates are for the various races they're considering.

And all I can tell you is that I think the election makes a huge difference, and I can hardly remember a time when the differences between the candidates on the issues that will affect our families, our communities, and our children's futures were any more sharp. It is absolutely clear to me that if the American people—the people in Indiana, just starting in your Governor's race here—if you understand the differences between the candidates and the consequences to families, communities, and the future, we win. If people are uncertain about the differences and the significance, then we're in trouble.

I met with my Democratic colleagues in the Senate and the House at the early part of this week, and I said, "You know, you ought to look at yourselves as sort of a weather patrol: Clear, we win; cloudy, they do well. We've got to try to make the skies clear for people. They have to understand the choices."

And I would just say just two or three things this morning. Number one, Bren talked about the condition of the economy. And people ask me all the time, "Why is the economy doing so well, and what did you do when you got in? What new idea did you bring to Washington?" And the truth is we did have some new ideas about how to make the most of technology and speed up the retraining of the American work force. We had some new ideas, but the main thing we brought to Washington was an old idea, arithmetic.

People ask me all the time, "What's your new idea?" "Arithmetic." Washington didn't practice arithmetic. They quadrupled the debt of America in the 12 years before I took office, because they pretended that you could take 2 and 2, make it add up to 6. And it never has, and it never will.

Now, in some ways, this may be the most significant difference to all of you in this race. It's a difference in the race for the Senate in New York. It is certainly a difference in the race for the Presidency and the Vice Presidency. If you look at the leadership of Frank O'Bannon here and Evan Bayh before him, one of the reasons I think the Democratic Party came back in Indiana is that they proved that you could be fiscally responsible, live within your means, run a good government, grow the economy, and also invest in education and in helping people. That's basically what we do; that's what we Democrats do.

And when I became President, the deficit was $295 billion. Do you know what it was supposed to be this year—$455 billion. Instead we've got a $230 billion surplus. When I leave office, we will have paid down over

$300 billion of the national debt. When I became President, we were spending over 13 cents of every dollar you pay in taxes just paying interest on the debt. When I leave, we'll be down at or below 12 cents. We were going to be at 15 cents. And if you vote for Vice President Gore, we pay the debt off; you get rid of the third biggest item in the Federal budget.

And that's why we can pay for more health care, more education, a more modest tax cut, and still get rid of that debt. Arithmetic.

Now, the biggest difference here—and it affects every one of you, from the wealthiest person here to the people who have served this wonderful meal this morning—the biggest difference is their tax plan is 3 times bigger than ours. Actually, people who make under $100,000 a year almost all do better under ours. But theirs is 3 times bigger. So what difference does that make? If you spend—if you have—these numbers boggle the imagination, but if you think you're going to have about $2 trillion to spend, if you spend $1.5 trillion on a tax cut and then you promise people you're going to give young people some of their Social Security payroll tax back to put in the stock market, but you're going to protect old people who are already drawing their Social Security and they won't lose anything, that costs another trillion dollars. And then you promise people several hundred billion dollars worth of spending, you know if you just take out all the zeroes you can add it up. If you've got two to spend and you spend three—that's the Republican proposal—you're back in deficit. And that means higher interest rates and lower growth.

The Democratic plan will keep interest rates about a percent lower over a decade, every year. And let me just tell you what that means. You hear people talking about tax cuts these last 2 weeks—one percent lower interest rates every year for a decade saves the American people $390 billion in home mortgage payments, $30 billion in car payments, $15 billion in college loan payments. That doesn't even count how much lower your credit cards will be or the fact that you will have lower cost business loans, which will mean more expansion, a stronger economy, and a better stock market.

So we have a tax cut, all right. It's concentrated on helping people get tax relief to pay for college education, long-term care, child care, retirement savings, and to give people incentives to invest in the poor areas that aren't part of our prosperity yet. It isn't as big as theirs. We freely admit it. But the reason is we want to get rid of the debt. We think it's important. And we think low interest rates and a strong economy is the best tax cut we can give all Americans.

Now, that is a clear choice. People need to understand that. And it is a huge deal. I've worked as hard as I know how to turn this country around, pull this country together, and move this Nation forward. And that is the single most important difference. Don't let anybody tell you there is no significant difference between these two economic plans.

And I know here in Indiana, where there are a lot of conservative people, they say, "Well, but Gore wants to spend more money than Bush." He does. But if you get rid of interest on the debt, you get rid of the third biggest item in the budget, and you quit paying interest payments on the debt. You can spend more money on education and health care and the environment and scientific research and still have a tax cut because you're not—you get rid of the third biggest item in the Federal budget.

This is real important. People have got to understand this. All the work we have done in the last 8 years can be reversed if you go back to big deficits. And I think if people understood that, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman would win. Don't you? So you need to talk to people about it. It's a big deal. It's one of the biggest issues in the New York Senate race and all over the country, because we have proven that fiscal conservatism and social progress go hand in hand.

So we've cut the welfare rolls in half, partly because we have good welfare reform but partly because we have a strong economy. And we have the number of people without health insurance going down, for the first time in a dozen years, partly because we have a program that helps insure children that the State runs and we send them the money to do it but partly because we have a strong economy. We have a lower dropout rate in

high school and a higher college-going rate than ever before in history, and test scores are going up, and there's a movement of more and more kids to take advance placement courses—a huge increase in it—partly because the education reforms are going in the right direction but partly because we have a strong economy, which rewards higher levels of skill.

So I just would say to all of you, I think this is profoundly important. And if you don't explain anything else to any of your neighbors and friends before they vote, tell them this is still about arithmetic. And the numbers have got to add up. Our numbers will, and theirs won't.

The second thing I want to say is I believe, in addition to economic policy, the central thing that we have done these last 8 years that has helped move our country forward is to have an inclusive philosophy that everybody ought to be part of America's community, that everybody counts, everybody ought to have a chance, we all do better when we help each other, and we can't afford to let anyone be either left behind or abused and be the kind of country we want.

America is growing more diverse. It's getting more interesting, but as you see all around the world today, most of the troubles in the world come from people who can't get along with other folks who are different from them, because they think their differences are more important than their common humanity. So I have worked very hard on things I thought would even the scales in America and bring us together. And in each of these instances, our party is in one place, and their party is in another. And I'll just give you a couple of examples.

We're for raising the minimum wage, and they're not. We're for strengthening laws guaranteeing equal pay for women for equal work, and they're not. We're for a hate crimes bill that protects people against hate crimes and allows the Federal Government to come in and help local law enforcement when there have been crimes of hate against people, like we saw in the case of James Byrd or Matthew Shepard or these other highly publicized cases around the country. And it's a big problem, and you see it in your part of the country.

So I just give you these examples. If you could see what I have seen around the world in the last 8 years, you would know how important it is for us to learn to live together, across the lines that divide us. When I flew to Egypt earlier this week to try to help put an end to the violence in the Middle East, all the way over there I was just aching for these people, whom I know. And I was thinking about the former Prime Minister of Israel, Yitzhak Rabin, who was killed because he was working for peace. And I thought how all these people have worked together for 7 years, and it can just be thrown away in a day or two because things happen that raise all their old demons again.

Four or 5 years ago, we had this horrible ethnic slaughter in Rwanda, in Africa, where the two tribal groups who had literally shared the same land that is Rwanda for 500 years, and on and off they'd had trouble, but they'd always managed it. And it wasn't like a lot of African countries where 100 years ago the lines of the nations were redrawn artificially and all these people that weren't used to living together were thrown together. These people had been living together on the same land for 500 years. And within 100 days, over 700,000 people were killed—without weapons. Basically, they did it all with machetes. Why? Because something set off this spark of fear and loathing among people who were different.

So that's the last point I want to make today. I know this is all kind of heavy for Saturday morning, but you need to think about it. If I were told—if God came down tonight and said to me, "You have to go. Your time is up, but I'll give you one wish for America," believe it or not, I would not wish to continue our economic prosperity if I only had one wish. If I had one wish, I would wish for us to all get along together as one America, to be one community, to see our differences as interesting and fascinating, but not nearly as important as our common humanity, because the American people are smart and they're innovative, and the fact that we're growing more diverse is a gold mine of potential for us in a global society. But all over the world I see it over and over and over again—whether it's in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, or the Balkans

or Africa, you name it, most of the world's troubles stem from the fact that people are determined to see their differences as more important than their common humanity. And then they slip from that into distrust and hatred and dehumanization and violence. And it's a little, easy slope to fall down.

And one of the things that I think is important about being a Democrat in the 21st century is that we do believe everybody counts. We think the people who are serving us here ought to have the same chance to send our kids to college as we do—their kids to college as we do. We think everybody should have a chance. We think the role of Government is to give people the tools to make the most of their own lives. And we really believe that we all do better when we help each other.

We can only secure the independence of people which our Constitution guarantees if we recognize that we live in a world where we are increasingly interdependent, and life is going to be more interesting but only if we can see our common humanity as more important than all those interesting differences.

So you just go out and tell people that. Tell people our program adds up, and theirs doesn't, and ours will pull people together, and theirs won't. Those are two good reasons to stick with our side and to show up on election day.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Cindy Simon Skjodt and Paul Skjodt and Mrs. Skjodt's parents, cohosts Bren and Melvin Simon; Mayor Bart Peterson of Indianapolis; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana and his wife, Judy; and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee.

The President's Radio Address

October 21, 2000

Good morning. By any standard, this fall is something special. Today New York hosts the first game of the first "subway series" since 1956. We're about to hold the first Presidential election of the 21st century. And this school year features the biggest class of students in our Nation's history.

Fall is also budget season in Washington, time for Congress to put everything else aside, step up to the plate, and complete its work on behalf of our students and all Americans. Instead, we're 3 weeks into the new fiscal year and still running the Government on a week-by-week basis and still fighting to get a budget that reflects the priorities of our people. Today I want to talk about what's at stake, starting with education, because in the last days of this Congress, our first priority should be the future of our children.

Al Gore and I came to Washington almost 8 years ago now with a strategy of fiscal discipline, targeted tax cuts, and investment in our people. Our determination to live within our means has brought our country out of an age of deficits into an era of surpluses. We're actually paying down the national debt, and Government spending is the smallest percentage of national income it's been since 1966. And our education strategy—higher standards, accountability, greater investment—is being embraced all across America, and it's working.

The dropout rate is down; test scores and graduation rates are up. The percentage of kids going on to college is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the largest expansion of college aid since the GI bill.

This past February I submitted a balanced budget that would sustain America's prosperity by maintaining our fiscal discipline and investing in our future. The budget strengthens Social Security and Medicare, adds a Medicare prescription drug benefit, keeps us on track to pay down the debt by 2012, and invests in education, technology, the environment, and health care.

Unfortunately, while we've been working to save money for our Nation's future, the Republican majority in Congress has been focusing on ways to spend it, loading up the spending bills with record amounts of pork-barrel spending. So again this week I'm asking Congress to bring its priorities back into line with the Nation's, and there's no better place to start than education.

We can't lift our children up in schools that are simply falling down. Congress should approve my plan to help communities build new schools and repair old ones. Every day

they fail to act is another day too many children attend class in drafty trailers, crowded classrooms, and crumbling buildings. There's a bipartisan majority ready to pass tax credits for school construction. It's time for the Republican leadership to stop blocking it, schedule a vote, and let it happen.

We've also made a bipartisan commitment to hire 100,000 new teachers to reduce class sizes in the early grades and proposed an initiative to improve teacher quality. We've hired about 30,000 of those teachers. But now, the Republican leadership is trying to back out of our commitment. Instead, we should follow through. I've also proposed doubling our funding for after-school programs to cover 1.6 million children.

We know after-school programs result in higher test scores, lower juvenile crime rates, and fewer drug problems. We ought to do it. And we're still waiting for Congress to show that it supports holding our schools accountable by providing the resources to turn around failing schools or shut them down and reopen them under new management.

Congress also needs to finish the rest of its work, passing a real Patients' Bill of Rights, strong hate crimes legislation, and a raise in the minimum wage. Now, in all these cases, there is a bipartisan majority in both Houses for these bills. But the majority party's leadership again is blocking progress.

Congress should also act to ensure equal treatment for immigrants and equal pay for women. And it should pass the right kind of tax cuts for middle-class Americans, targeted tax cuts that preserve our fiscal discipline, allow us to get this country out of debt, and still give Americans tax relief to save for retirement and meet the costs of long-term care, child care, and college tuition, and tax credits that support investments in our inner cities, rural areas, Native American reservations, and other places our prosperity has not yet reached.

These priorities deserve attention now, not later. If I were a Member of Congress, I wouldn't want to go home and ask people to send me back to Washington so I could finish last year's work next year.

Yesterday I signed a fourth continuing resolution to keep the Government open until next Wednesday. But I told the leadership that if they fail to meet yet another deadline, we're going to have to take the continuing resolutions one day at a time until we get the job done. So I urge them: Come back next week, and let's finish work on the budget, so the benefits can start flowing to students and families who need them most.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:25 p.m. on October 20 at a private residence in Lowell, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 21. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 20 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at a Rally for Representative Julia Carson in Indianapolis

October 21, 2000

The President. Wow! I'll tell you why I came here: Because Julia Carson asked me, and I always do whatever she asks me to do—[*laughter*]—because I learned very early I could do it right away or I could just wait and let her grind on me until I finally broke down and said yes. So I just say yes right away to Julia now—[*laughter*]—and it solves a lot of my problems.

Mr. Mayor, I'm glad to be back here in your city, and I'm very proud that you are now the mayor of this great city. And I want to thank my longtime friend Jeff Smulyan for helping Julia Carson. We were friends before I ran for President. Before I knew I was going to run for President, I met him. He was just—I was just what President Bush used to refer to as the Governor of a small southern State—[*laughter*]—when we became friends. And I thank you for helping Julia.

Joe Andrew, I am so proud of you. He's got that riff down, doesn't he, old Joe does. I kind of wanted to run down here along the side and pass the plate when he was up there preaching. [*Laughter*] We knew he was preaching to the saved, and so I thought we ought to take up an offering here. [*Laughter*]

Let me say, I'm really proud of what the Democrats have done in Indiana. I'm proud of your great Governor, and I want you to make sure he gets reelected. He deserves to

be reelected. And I am very, very proud of your former Governor, Senator Evan Bayh, and what a great job he has done. We have also been friends for many, many years.

So this is a great day for me, to come here to thank the people from Indiana who have sent such fine people into public office——

Audience member. We love you, Mr. President!

The President. ——and who have given us Julia Carson, who is truly one of a kind. Have you ever met anybody like Julia before in your whole life?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. I tell this joke—she's talking about what a unifying force the Democratic Party is—Julia has got it all inside her. I told somebody, she may be an African-American woman, but she reminds me of a redneck county judge when she works the room. [*Laughter*] She kind of sidles into these rooms in Washington, and all these self-important people are there in their expensive suits, using these big words. And then Julia sort of sidles out, and she's got whatever it is she came in for, and they still don't know what happened. [*Laughter*] I mean, it's amazing, you know. She's like a stealth bomber for Indiana in Washington. She's got more moves than Larry Bird and Isaiah Thomas put together. She's got moves. Man, people don't see that stuff.

So, yes, I wanted to come here. I'm sorry I couldn't come before. You know what I was doing. I was working on the peace process. [*Applause*] But now—wait a minute—I want to say a couple of things seriously. We're all having a good time, but we all agree with each other, or you wouldn't be here. And here's what I want to say to you.

First, thank you. Thank you for helping me have a chance to serve the country for the last 8 years. I'm grateful to you. Second, I have been reading as much as I could while I've been running around the world and trying to get the Congress out of town, too—I've been reading what I could about what the experts are saying about this election. And they say it's tight as a tick, and they say that there are a lot of undecided voters, and they say that there are a lot of voters who aren't sure what the differences are and what the consequences are to them, so maybe it doesn't matter for whom they vote or whether they vote.

Now, let me tell you something. I've done everything I could do for 8 years to turn this country around, pull this country together, and move the country forward—everything I could do. But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow. Always about—that's why we're still around here after 224 years, because we're always thinking about tomorrow. Now, look at where we were 8 years ago and where we are now, and ask yourselves where we're going to go. I'm telling you, this is a huge election. You cannot afford for anybody to think that there aren't any differences, and it doesn't matter whether they vote or for whom they vote.

And the interesting thing about this election to me is, from the elections for President and Vice President to the United States Senate—and you know I've got a passing interest in that Senate race up in New York; I know something about that—[*laughter*]—to the races for Governor and for Congress, all over the country you see the same things. There are big differences. The differences will have real consequences, and only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. What does that tell you about who you ought to vote for? I see it everywhere.

So you've got the other side trying to cloud the differences and blur them, and we have to clarify them. And I just want to say, look, 8 years ago the country was in the ditch economically. Eight years later we've got the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, 22 million new jobs, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment ever measured, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the biggest drop in child poverty in 34 years.

Now, I got tickled—you know, when our Republican friends were in, they took credit for everything that happened in America. They took credit when the Sun came up. [*Laughter*] One of their campaigns was, "It's morning in America. The Sun came up in the morning. Give it to us. We did it." [*Laughter*] Now, everything that happens, happens by accident. Did you listen to these debates? I thought Al Gore's best moment in the first debate was when his opponent said, "I think Clinton/Gore got more out of

the economy than the economy got out of Clinton/Gore. The American people did this," you know. We just sort of were there. And Al Gore said, "Well, you know, the American people did do this, but they were working hard 8 years ago, too, and they weren't doing nearly as well."

So the first big question is, do you want to continue the prosperity, build on it, expand it to people and places that have been left behind, and lift up this whole country? Now, you've got to talk to people, because how could anybody not see this? Look, they're offering a tax cut that's 3 times the size of the one that we're offering. But most people making under $100,000 are better off under our proposal than theirs—tax cuts to pay for college education, long-term care, child care, retirement savings, to get people to invest in the communities that have been left behind.

Now, but theirs is 3 times bigger. And then they want to partially privatize Social Security, which means—forget about whether you think it's a good idea or not; let's just talk about the arithmetic. There are a lot of problems with the idea, but forget about that, talk about the arithmetic. Everybody here under 40—let's say, under 45—can take 2 percent of your Social Security payroll tax, keep it, and put it in an investment account. Everybody like me, starting next year, who will be 55 or over, gets a guarantee we're going to get it, just like they always promised it. Now, where's the money going to come from if you take away the money that they're going to pay my guarantee with? They've got to take that out of the surplus, too.

So they've got a tax cut 3 times bigger than ours, a trillion dollar promise in Social Security to pay for the privatization, hundreds of billions of dollars in other promises. Look, folks, you need to tell people—they want to know why we did well in America. Because we brought arithmetic back to Washington. We made the numbers add up. These numbers don't add up.

And look, this is a big deal. If you vote for a tax cut that big and you privatize Social Security at a trillion dollars, you spend several hundred billion dollars of it, you're back in deficit. And do you know what that means? High interest rates. If you vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, Julia Carson and our whole crowd, do you know what it means? You'll have interest rates about one percent lower a year for a decade.

Let me tell you what that amounts to in a tax cut. Listen to this, one percent lower interest rates: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans—means higher profits, more folks getting hired, more pay raises, and a higher stock market. Our tax cut for all is low interest rates that keep this economy going and pay the debt off.

Now, this is very important. Did you watch the debate where their guy says, our guy is for big Government? We're for big Government? There's a real problem with that argument, besides the fact that it's not true—it's manifestly not true. What do I mean by that? The size of the Federal Government today is the smallest it's been since 1960, when Dwight Eisenhower was President and John Kennedy was running for President. The Federal Government spending as a percentage of our economy is the smallest it's been since 1966. Why is that? We're paying down the debt.

The third biggest item in the budget for your tax money is the debt. After Social Security and defense, the debt is the third highest sum in the budget. So we get rid of that, we can spend more on education, more on health care, pay for a tax cut, and still shrink the size of Government. Vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Julia Carson, get the country out of debt, keep interest rates down, keep the economy going, keep moving forward—that's the issue.

Now, that's clear. But don't all of you know a lot of people who never will come to a rally like this? You do, don't you? You know, every one of you, you know a lot of people who love their country, and they're going to vote on election day, but they'll never come to a rally like this. You need to tell them just what I told you.

The first thing is, if you like the prosperity and you want to keep it going and you don't want us to go back into deficit, you've got to vote with us. We tried it their way for 12 years. We tried it our way for 8 years.

Our way works better than their way. We've got to keep going.

And now, the second thing I want to say is this. If you look at every other area of our national life, you'll find the same thing. Welfare: The rolls have been cut in half. Yes, if you're able-bodied and you can work, you've got to go to work. But we don't want you to hurt your kids, so we want more for child care, for education and training, for transportation. And it works. Our deal works. Helping people be good parents and good workers makes good sense. That's why we were for the family and medical leave law. We think it ought to be expanded. Work and family—our way works.

Crime: What was our position on crime? Not what they say. They say we're weak on enforcement, and all we want to do is take hunters' guns away. What a load of hooey. [*Laughter*] You know, that's just a bunch of bull. [*Laughter*] It might stir people up and get them some votes, but it has a real burden of being untrue.

What are the facts? What was our approach? Our approach was, put more cops on the street to prevent crime in the first place. Do more to take guns out of the hands of children and criminals. You can do that without interfering with the hunters and the sport shooters. Give kids something to say yes to, give them an after-school program, summer school program, and then punish the people that ought to be punished. Now, that's been our—do you know what—now, look at the record. We have the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the lowest murder rate in 33 years. That is the record.

So what do they want to do? They want to stop our efforts to keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children. They want to—this is an explicit commitment—they want to repeal our efforts to put over 100,000 police on our streets. And they just want to go back to talking tough again.

Well, look, we tried it their way. We tried it our way. Our way works. And not a single Indiana hunter has missed a day in the deer woods, not a sports person has missed a single sporting event, but a half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers couldn't get a handgun because of the Brady bill. It's a safer country. We're a better country. Our way works. We tried it their way. We tried it our way. Our way works.

You look at education. Compared to 8 years ago, test scores are up; the dropout rate is down; the high school graduation rate is up; the college-going rate is at an all-time high. We went from 14 States to 49 States with strong academic standards that would be applied to all students in all schools. All States now have to identify schools that are failing and try to find some way to turn them around. So standards, accountability, and resources to help people meet the standards—it's working. The teachers and the principals know how to turn around failing schools now.

Now, we know how to do this. We're finally moving this thing. We've had a two-thirds increase in the number of kids taking advance placement tests, a 300 percent increase for Latino kids, a 500 percent increase for African-American kids taking advanced placement tests to go to college. Now, we know what we're doing here.

So what is Al Gore's program? What's the Democratic program? High standards and accountability, identify schools that are failing, and within 2 years turn them around or shut them down and reopen them under new management. But help them: 100,000 more teachers; funds to build or modernize or repair schools; funds to train the teachers in the subjects that they're supposed to be teaching; and making sure that kids get a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition; and after-school and preschool programs for all the kids who need it.

Why? Not because we're against accountability and standards, but because if you're going to lay standards on somebody, they've got to have a chance to meet the standards.

Now, what is their program? Their program is, accountability and block grants to States, and if they spend the money, fine; if they don't, fine; if they don't spend it well, we'll take it away from them. So if the schools get in trouble, our answer is, spend even less on them. That's their side.

I think accountability-plus is better than accountability-minus. And we've had 8 years of experience. We're moving in the right direction. Our way works better than theirs. The American people have to choose that.

The same thing is true with every other issue. On the environment, we've got cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food; 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time in history. We have proved you can grow the economy and clean up the environment. And we set aside more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt in permanent trust for the American people.

Al Gore says, "Vote for me, and I'll build on that." His opponent says, "Vote for me, and we'll relax some of their regulations. We'll get rid of the President's order protecting 40 million acres in national forests. We'll reduce some of these other things he's done, because you simply can't do this much and grow the economy."

Now, look, we tried it their way, didn't we? And then they came in and tried to weaken the economy again. I vetoed it every time they tried it the last 5 years. [*Applause*] And wait a minute. And you know, if I were trying to hurt the economy, I've done a poor job of it. [*Laughter*]

So this is a serious deal. You can grow the economy and improve the environment. And believe me, in the future, the challenges will be bigger than the ones I've faced. You can't turn around on this. This is a big deal. This is a big deal. So you've got to go tell people this. You've got to say, "Look, look at where we were 8 years ago. Look at where we are today. The economy, crime, welfare, education, the environment, health care—we've got people without insurance, that number, going down for the first time in a dozen years, because of the Children's Health Insurance Program that we have proposed and gotten out there and implemented." Now, the country is going in the right direction.

Now, here's the last point I want to make. You all were clapping when Joe Andrew did his shtick. You know, we don't care whether you're old or young, whether you walked in or wheeled in, and all that. That's really who we are. And it's the only thing about us that's more important than the economic policy, is that we think everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; we all do better when we help each other. That's what we believe.

Now, it's what I call one America But there are lots of these one America issues out there where there are real differences. You can go to your friends and neighbors and ask them with whom they agree. Our side, we're for raising the minimum wage. Their side isn't. Our side, we're for stronger enforcement of equal pay laws for women, and their side isn't. Our side, we're for a Medicare prescription drug program so that every senior who needs access to affordable medicine can get it, and their side isn't. Our side, we're for hate crimes legislation that protects people on the basis of race, gender, disability, or sexual orientation from hate crimes. Nobody ought to be beat up, mauled, dragged, or killed in this country because of who they are, if they're obeying the law. And their side isn't.

Now, that's it. So here's the deal. You can't let anybody not vote or sort of stray away because they think there's no consequence here, they think there are no differences here. We've actually had quite a nice election, free of personal recrimination, where we're positive that both these candidates for President and for Vice President are good, honorable, patriotic Americans who love their families and love their country, and they're going to do what they say they're going to do.

And I can tell you this—you know, the press likes to say that these politicians are always breaking their word, but the truth is, every study shows that most Presidents pretty well do what they say they're going to do. Once in a while they break their word, and usually we're thankful they did. [*Laughter*] Why? Roosevelt said he'd balance the budget, and that was a bad idea with 25 percent unemployment. And we're thankful that he gave us the New Deal instead. Lincoln, to get elected, said he wouldn't free the slaves, and we're awful glad he broke that promise.

So once in a great while a guy gets elected President and has to break a promise, and it makes—but more often than not, Presidents do what they say they're going to do. You're going to have a very different Supreme Court, depending on which one of them gets elected. And it's not just about the right to choose, although it is about that. That will change, depending on what happens. It is also about the ability of the Congress of the United States to protect working people. There are all these—and ordinary citizens,

for all kinds of things. There's a revolution here, a debate, going on on the Supreme Court, and some of them want to go back to where they were in the 1930's.

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Now, you've got to decide. But don't you let anybody tell you that there are no differences. And I just came out here to say, you know, if Indiana can elect Evan Bayh and Frank O'Bannon back to back, if Indianapolis can elect Bart Peterson, the first Democratic mayor in a month of Sundays, if Indiana can send me Julia Carson to drive me crazy until I say yes to whatever she's asking, if Indiana can provide us Joe Andrew, the sparkplug of our national revival of the Democratic Party, all of you, between now and election day, can find some people to talk to.

Look at all the people in this crowd here. This is a big crowd. This crowd will talk to, collectively, 30,000–50,000–100,000 people between now and election day. Look around here. There are lots of folks here. Most of the people you will talk to will never come to an event like this. But they will vote, if they think it matters. And you need to go tell them—your friends in Illinois, your friends in Michigan, your friends in Kentucky and all the States around here, all those States are big battleground States —look, if you want to keep the prosperity going, their deal won't pass the arithmetic test. It doesn't add up. You've got to stick with us. Look at where we were 8 years ago and where we are now on welfare, crime, the environment, education, health care. We're moving in the right direction. Let's keep moving in the right direction.

Look at where we are on building one America, on hate crimes, on equal pay for women, on all these other issues. Look at this. If you want one America, if you want to move in the right direction, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you've got one choice. You've got to be for our crowd: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Frank O'Bannon, Julia Carson, the people that helped to bring America back. You can do it, Indiana.

Thank you, and God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:48 a.m. in Edy's Grand Hall at the Indianapolis State Fairgrounds. In his remarks, he referred to Jeff Smulyan, chairman and chief executive officer, Emmis Communications Corp.; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Gov. Frank O'Bannon of Indiana; National Basketball Association Hall of Fame members Larry Bird and Isaiah Thomas; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush. Julia Carson is a candidate for reelection in Indiana's 10th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Brunch for Hillary Clinton in Johnson City, New York

October 22, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. I'm sorry to keep you waiting, but I'm sure glad you waited. I'm delighted to see you. Thank you.

Thank you, Margaret. Thank you, Barbara. I want to thank all the people who are here. Do you want to sit down? I want to thank the people of Broome County for voting for me in 1996, the first time a Democrat has carried this county in over 30 years. Thank you very much.

I also want to tell you how very much I admire your Representative in Congress, Maurice Hinchey. What a great friend he's been to me and to you and to the people of the State of New York. He's done a wonderful job for you.

More than anything else, I want to say thank you. The people of this State have been wonderful for 8 years to me and to Al Gore. Last year—I mean, in 1996 we carried 52 of New York's 62 counties, and I was so gratified by the support that you gave us, so thank you; thank you very, very much.

I came here today in my capacity as Presidential spouse—[*laughter*]—to ask for your help for Hillary in this race for the United States Senate and to ask you, in the closing days of this election season, to go out across this community, out across this country, out across this State and talk to all of your friends and neighbors about the race for Senate, about the race for President, about what is at stake in this election.

I try to say this now at every event I can, but I'm so gratified to see you here. But most of you have tons of friends and relatives and co-workers who will vote on election day but

have never come to an event like this. Isn't that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And therefore, all they may know about the election is either what they see on television or what someone says to them or what kind of discussions they enter into. So while this is a rally and we'd all like to spend all our time just shouting, on this Sunday, I think it's fair to say that—in my tradition we often say, I realize that I am here preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*]

And so what I would like to ask you to do is to think about, just for a moment, the points I'd like to make, and then make a little pledge to yourself that every day between now and election you will share these thoughts with your friends, your neighbors, your family members, your co-workers who have never come to an event like this, because you can make the difference.

First of all, I want to say a few things about my wife. In the 30 years, almost, that we have known each other, I have seen her passion, her energy, and her activism devoted to the causes of children and family, health care and education, economic opportunity for people who have been left out or left behind. In the 8 years we have been in the White House, she has been a leading force for all those causes: for the family and medical leave law, the very first bill I signed—now, 22 million Americans have taken some time off without losing their jobs when a baby is born or a family member is sick, a profoundly important thing—for expanding our support of child care for working families, so that people can succeed at home and at work; for expanding our efforts to have more preschool and after-school opportunities and mentoring programs for our children; for doing more for early childhood development.

From the time we served before I became President, Hillary has always been passionately interested in what could be done to bring job opportunities to people who want to work and don't have them, what can be done to put businesses in areas where businesses have left.

And one of the things that I'm proudest of, to celebrate the millennium, she created a project, America's Millennium Project, to "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future." It is now the largest single historic preservation effort in the history of America, and a lot of the places that were preserved are here in New York State, from George Washington's revolutionary headquarters to Harriet Tubman's home, places that will increase tourism as well as community pride.

Of all the people I've ever known in public life, I've never known anyone who had quite the combination of brains and heart and ability to get things done and consistent caring that she does. She will be a magnificent United States Senator for the people of New York.

Now, what I want to ask you—it's also important to recognize, however, that this Senate race inevitably is playing out against the background of the national election and the great questions all Americans must decide, for they, too, will affect the people of New York. And I believe there are three great questions in this election, and I just want to tell you what they are. They affect the Senate race, but they also clearly affect the race for President and Vice President and for all the races for Congress and all the races for Senate throughout the United States.

First of all, let me say just looking at the debates, let me tell you a couple of the things that aren't at issue, that aren't questions in this election. Number one, this election is not about change versus the status quo. If someone said, "Vote for me. I'll do everything President Clinton did," I would not vote for that person. Why? Because America is changing. The world is changing. You will live in a time of very rapid change for at least another 10, maybe 20 years. The issue is not whether we're going to change. It is how we're going to change.

Are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years or go back to a failed policy we already tried in the past? That is the issue in this election. The issue is not whether the Democrats should be rejected because of the partisanship in Washington. Let me just say this—I've heard a lot of that talk. It wasn't we who decided that no Republicans would vote to bring down the deficit they created. [*Laughter*]

And when we could work with them, we did. We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill. We had a bipartisan Balanced Budget Act

of '97. We had a bipartisan telecommunications law that has created hundreds of thousands of good jobs and thousands and thousands of businesses. We got bipartisan agreement on 100,000 police, 100,000 teachers, and many other things. When we could make a bipartisan agreement, we did.

Last week we were trying to get a bipartisan agreement to put more money into Medicare, to help the hospitals in rural areas, to help the teaching hospitals, to help the in-home providers, to help the nursing homes to deal with some of their problems. They walked away from the bipartisan agreement and have come up with the Republicans' only solution that gives a disproportionate amount of money to the HMO's. That's not our decision. Now, I'll hang tough and eventually we'll come back, and we'll get a bipartisan agreement again. This is not about bipartisanship. The Democrats favor bipartisanship, and our record is that.

The one last thing they say this election is about that it most assuredly isn't, is whether you should be for their side because they trust the people, and we're for big Government. You might hear some of that up here. [*Laughter*] So let me just give you a little evidence.

It was this Democratic administration that has reduced the size of the Federal Government to its smallest point since 1960, when Dwight Eisenhower was President and John Kennedy came here looking for your vote. It was this administration that eliminated 16,000 pages of Federal regulations, that enabled the Small Business Administration to cut its applications for small business people from an inch thick to one page and give people an answer in 72 hours. It was this administration that got rid of two-thirds of the regulations that the Federal Government, under the previous Republican administration, was imposing on States and local school districts. If you're for smaller Government, our candidates are your candidates. We're for better Government and smaller Government. That's not the issue.

Here are the three great questions the American people will decide in this election. Number one: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to people and places who aren't yet fully a part of it? That's the first question. Our candidates favor a tax cut we can afford, that helps more middle class families than theirs does, with deductibility for college tuition, for long-term care costs for the elderly and disabled family members, for retirement savings, for child care, things that will help—and for extra incentives for people to invest in areas that aren't yet growing in the economy.

It is admittedly only one-third the size of their tax cut. Why is that? Because we know, number one, we've got to have some money to invest in education, in health care, in the future of the country. And number two, we've got to keep paying this debt down until we make America debt-free for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President.

Now, why is that? Because their tax cut is 3 times bigger, and they want to partially privatize Social Security. That costs another trillion dollars. And then they've got several hundred billion dollars they want to spend. When you add it all up, we're back in deficits, and we can't pay the debt off. And what does that mean? Higher interest rates, about a percent a year over a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? If you take the Al Gore/Joe Lieberman/Hillary plan, you get a percent lower interest rate.

Do you know what that's worth to the American people? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loan interest rates; more businesses; more jobs; higher raises; a stronger stock market—that's a tax cut for all Americans. Get this country out of debt and keep those interest rates down.

Now, that's a real question. Do you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind? We tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way for 12 years before. Our way works better than their way. We need to keep changing in the right direction to keep the prosperity going in America.

Here is the second question: Do you want to build on the progress in our society of the last 8 years, or do you want to return to policies that we know don't work? And let me just give you a couple of examples. The welfare rolls have been cut in half. They're the

lowest in 30 years. The crime rate has gone down every year. It's the lowest in 26 years. We have the lowest poverty rate in 20 years. We have—as I said earlier, Government spending as a percent of our economy is the lowest it has been in 34 years. We have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, 90 percent of our children immunized. We have more land set aside in public trust for all time than under any administration except that of Theodore Roosevelt, almost 100 years ago.

What is the point of this? The point of this is, we have proved you can grow the economy and improve the environment. We have the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in 12 years, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program. We have supported local school districts with our strategy of higher standards, accountability, and more investment. Test scores are up. The dropout rate is down. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. There has been a huge increase in the number of our children taking advanced placement tests, and more and more failing schools are turning around.

Now, the question you have to ask yourself is, are we going to build on this progress or go back and adopt policies that have been proven not to work? In every single one of these areas there is a disagreement.

They have committed to relax our environmental commitment. They have committed to end our commitment to 100,000 teachers. They are not for our school construction program to help the schools build or repair facilities that are either outdated or grievously overcrowded. They do not approve of our crime policy, and they have committed to abolish our commitment to 100,000 police and not to go for mandatory child trigger locks and real background checks and other things that are profoundly important.

Now, it's not like we had a test here. We've tried it our way, and we tried it their way. Our way works better. You have to decide if you're going to build on the progress of the last 8 years.

So, question one, are we going to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind? Question two, are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years? Question three, are we going to keep trying to bring this country together, across all the lines that divide us to build one America, fair for every responsible citizen with opportunity for every responsible citizen?

Now, what are those questions? We're for hate crimes legislation. I mean real hate crimes legislation that protects all people who are singled out because of who they are for abuse and criminal conduct. We are for legislation to strengthen the equal pay law, so that women who are doing the same kind of work get equal pay for it. We believe the immigrants that are in this country legally ought to be treated fairly and not discriminated against. If they're working, if they're paying taxes, they ought to be eligible to be treated in a fair way.

We're for an increase in the minimum wage. And we don't believe—we do not demonize any interest groups, but we think no interest group should keep us from pursuing the public interest. They say they're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, but theirs is weaker than ours because the HMO's don't want it to be stronger. They say they want to help older people get drugs, but they're not for a Medicare drug program that gives all seniors who need it access to affordable medicine, because the drug companies aren't for it.

They say they're against hate crimes, but they won't support hate crimes legislation that covers everybody, because their extreme right doesn't believe gays should get protection in hate crimes legislation, but we believe all people should be protected.

Now, you have to decide. You have to decide what you believe. But make no mistake about it, there are big differences here: in our economic approach to keep the prosperity going; in our social approaches, whether it's on education or health care or the environment or crime; and on what we think it takes to build one America. And there are so many more issues I could mention. Campaign finance reform: They say they're for it, but they're not really for it because they don't want to be for it because they raise more money than we do. [*Laughter*] You've got to decide whether you care about that.

But we've got 100 percent of the Democratic caucus and enough Republicans to pass it, for the Shays-Meehan bill in the House or the McCain-Feingold, that's called after

Senator McCain and Senator Feingold in the Senate, and it hasn't passed because their leadership is not for it. I think that's a part of one America. Why? Because the more we can balance out the financing in the country, the more everybody's vote counts the same.

So this is a big deal here. You have to decide. And your friends and neighbors, with their votes, will decide, the people who will never come to a meeting like this but will vote because it is the patriotic, good thing to do, or people who may not vote because they think, well, there is no real difference here. There are differences.

Now, one of the reasons the people have had a hard time finding out differences is, the other side has been quite adroit at trying to blur them, and you can't blame them, because if people figure out the differences, our crowd will win. [*Laughter*] I told Maurice and his colleagues a couple of days ago that we Democrats should see ourselves as America's weather corps for 2 weeks, and if can make it clear, we'll win. [*Laughter*] They want cloudy. We want clear.

So I'll say it one more time: I'm grateful for your support for Hillary. And I want you to go out and tell people that she has given a lifetime to this. One of the things that has kind of hurt my feelings is, sometimes the people that aren't for us say, "Well, she wouldn't even be doing this if she weren't the First Lady." Let me tell you something, for 30 years all she has done is help other people. She never asked anybody ever—ever—to do anything for her until she started running for the United States Senate, when Members of the New York House delegation—as Maurice will tell you—came to her and asked her to consider this race.

If she hadn't been married to me, if she hadn't spent all of her years joining honest, honorable causes all over this country and all over the world, she could have been running for office years ago on her own. Now she is, and I want you to help her.

But the main thing you need to tell—you've got to go out there and ask the people of New York to think about this. You have a candidate for the Senate who cares about and knows about and has a proven record of achievement in the things you care most about. But secondly, these three big questions should inform the peoples' votes on every one of these races. If you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people left behind, you've got to have a budget that keeps paying this debt down and that invests in the things that we know work. Their numbers don't add up. You simply cannot have a tax cut that big and partially privatize Social Security and spend the money you promise to spend and put us back into deficits and expect anything other than what will happen, higher interest rates and an economic slowdown. We brought arithmetic back to Washington, and we ought to keep arithmetic in the classroom of Congress and the White House.

When it comes to health care, education, the environment, and crime, we've got to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years, not walk away from it. And maybe most important of all, we've got to keep doing those things that bring us together across the lines that divide us. If we are one America, if we are working together, if there is opportunity for every responsible citizen, if no one is singled out for discrimination, if we act like we're one community, there is nothing America can't do. The best is still out there. It's up to you to convince your fellow citizens of that.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:25 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Fountains Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Margaret Coffey, chair, Broome County Democratic Committee, and Barbara J. Fiala, Broome County clerk.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Alexandria Bay, New York

October 22, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Wow! First of all, I want to thank Mike Schell and all the Democratic chairs and the candidates who are here. I want to thank the people of northern New York for voting for me and Al Gore in 1996. I must say, I was in the Lake Placid area a few weeks ago—Stuart and I played golf—and I was looking at the voting records of the counties in northern New York in the '96 election, and it just took my breath away.

But I'll tell you this—and you ought to think about this 2 weeks from now and talk to your friends about it—people say, "Well, is Hillary really interested in rural New York? Does she really know anything about it?" Let me tell you, I was Governor of a State for 12 years where half the people lived in communities of less than 5,000. And Al Gore grew up in Carthage, Tennessee, as well as Washington, DC, and Carthage, Tennessee, is about the same size as the community where we're having this meeting in Alexandria Bay today. Don't forget who cares about the people of upstate New York.

Now, someone told me when I pulled up today that the last President to visit here was Franklin Roosevelt in 1938. And all I can say is, just from looking around, the others didn't know what they were missing. I'm glad to be here.

Audience member. The fishing is good, too. [*Laughter*]

The President. Well, the fishing may be good, but we've got to reel in some votes, first, then I'll come back and fish. [*Laughter*]

You know, this is an interesting time for me. It's the first time since 1974 they've had an election when I haven't been on the ballot somewhere. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate, and I'm sort of the Surrogate in Chief. [*Laughter*] And I'm glad to be here.

I want to talk to you for a moment. You know, we're all cheering, and we're happy. But I want to say something serious today, just for a moment, because in just a little more than 2 weeks we're going to have the first national election of the 21st century. And New York will pick a Senator to hold the seat held by Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Robert Kennedy. And it will have, this election, a profound impact on how the people of northern New York, this entire State, and our whole country live for quite a long while.

I want to talk to you about it seriously and from the heart, because I'm so grateful to the people of New York for being so good to me for these last 8 years, because I've done everything I know to turn the country around, pull it together and move it forward. But everything is on the line here. And what I want to say to you—and I want you all to think about this—every one of you knows scores and scores of people who are your friends, your family members, your co-workers, who will vote on election day because they love their country, but who will never come to an event like this. Isn't that right?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Not for a Democrat, not for a Republican. They've never been to an event like this of any kind. But they're inclined to vote because they're good citizens. And yet, we see story after story after story which says that people aren't really sure what the differences are, and does it make a difference?

What I want to do is talk to you for a few moments about what I, personally, believe about my wife, first of all, and about this election. I'd like for you to know a few things.

From the moment I met Hillary nearly 30 years ago, she was consumed with public interest, to advance the cause of children and families, child care, health care, and education. From the time we began our married life together and we were working in public policy, she also became very interested in bringing economic opportunity—starting businesses, creating jobs in areas which had been left out or left behind.

So a lot of what we did together before I became President is highly relevant to the needs of all of New York but especially the people of upstate New York, where the economic prosperity has not fully reached. We have spent years working together on the things that you need someone in the United States Senate to concentrate on today. She understands what has to be done.

In the last 8 years, since we've been in Washington and in the White House, she has been certainly the most active First Lady since Eleanor Roosevelt. She started by lobbying hard for the first bill I signed, the family and medical leave law, which has allowed over 20 million Americans to take some time off from work when a baby is born or a parent is sick without losing their job.

And she's worked constantly on a whole breathtaking range of issues: early childhood development, more preschool and after-school programs; dealing with health care issues, allowing people to keep their health insurance when someone in their family gets

sick or they change jobs; more breast cancer preventive work, mammographies for people on Medicare; more work to try to help Gulf war veterans who have undiagnosed illnesses. She's worked so hard on so many things it's hard to remember.

But one I think is interesting, worth mentioning, and that is that when we decided how we wanted to celebrate the millennium, she conceived of this idea that we should celebrate and honor the past and imagine the future. And to honor the past, she developed what's called the Millennium Treasures Program, which is now the largest single historic preservation effort in the history of the United States. And a lot of the sites which have been preserved, with $100 million of public and private money, are in New York, George Washington's first revolutionary headquarters, Harriet Tubman's home, the underground railroad sites.

Over and over again I've seen this. And all these things are going to help tourism in areas that are kind of not doing so well economically. They make a big difference. And it just came out of her head to do this. And it is literally the biggest historic preservation movement in the history of the country. That's the kind of thing she does. She thinks about what to do, and then she goes and does it.

And I have to tell you, in all the years I've been in public life—first of all, I have a much higher opinion of politics and public service than is conventional. I will leave the White House more idealistic, optimistic, and hopeful about America than I entered the White House 8 years ago. And I'll say this. I think, on balance, the people in public life are more honest, more committed, and work harder and try harder to do what they believe in—people in both parties—than they get credit for today.

But I'm telling you, in all the years I've been in public life, I've never known anybody that had the same combination of intelligence and compassion and constant drive and the capacity to imagine, lead, and organize that Hillary has. She will be a worthy successor to the State and to Moynihan and a good partner for Senator Schumer if you elect her 2 weeks from now.

There is something else I want to say to you, and I hope you'll listen carefully to this. This election is being played out against the national election, and it is very much a part of the national debate. And the national issues are things you have to consider here, because the decisions that will be made on the things that are being debated at the Presidential levels, on which the next Senator will have to vote, will also affect you here.

And again I want to say, the reason I'm saying this in some detail is, you get a chance to talk to other people between now and the election. And you should promise yourself that every day you're going to talk to somebody who will never come to an event like this but who will vote if they understand what's at stake and what the differences are. So I want to talk to you about that.

In my opinion—and I've listened to it all. I've read very carefully, obviously, what the Vice President and Senator Lieberman have said, but I've carefully studied what their adversaries have said, their opponents. I listened very carefully to all the debates. And what I want you to know is that I'm kind of concerned when I read in the press that people can't quite understand what the differences are, and maybe they're not clear. And so I want you to know what I think the three big questions of this election are.

First, let's start with what they aren't, because I've heard that in these debates, too. There is the argument that this is an election about change versus the status quo. I disagree with that. If somebody said, "Vote for me. I'll do just what Bill Clinton did," I wouldn't be for him. Why? Because America is changing. The world is changing. The way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world is changing. Change will speed up in the next few years. But don't be fooled. The issue is not that. The issue is not whether we're going to change; it is how we're going to change. Are we going to build on the progress of the last 8 years or reverse it? That is the issue.

Secondly, there was all this talk about whether the issue is, "Do you trust Government or the American people?" I heard that. You heard that. Let's just look at the facts here. Here are the facts. The Government

of the United States, the civilian Government, is smaller by 300,000 than it was when I took office. It's the smallest Federal Government we've had since 1960, when John Kennedy was running for President. It's a fact.

The second fact: This Democratic administration got rid of 16,000 pages of Government regulations and changed dramatically the way a lot of these agencies work. For example, if you apply for a small business loan in upstate New York, 8 years ago you had to fill out a form that was one inch thick and wait for months to get an answer. Today, you fill out a form that's one page on either side, and you get an answer within 72 hours. There is a big difference here. That's not what this is about.

You heard them talking about—the other side talking about how the Federal Government is so burdensome on our local schools and all their paperwork. Let me just tell you something. Fact: the paperwork, regulatory burdens, the number of regulations imposed by the Federal Government on States and local school districts has been reduced by two-thirds under this Democratic administration, below what it was in the previous Republican administration. That's what it is not about.

So that's what the election is not about. It's not about that. It's about, number one, big issue, do you want to keep the longest economic expansion in history going and build on it until it reaches the people and places who have not reached their full prosperity potential? Huge issue. What are the differences? One, our side—Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary—we favor a tax cut we can afford, that focuses on what middle class people need most: long-term care tax credit, when they're taking care of a sick or disabled family member; college tuition tax deduction; child care help; help for saving for retirement. And we propose extra tax incentives to get people to invest in the places which aren't yet prospering economically.

And we propose a tax cut that we admit is only one-third as big as theirs—actually, less than one-third, just barely over a fourth as big as theirs. Why? Because we've got to have some money to invest in education, in health care and the environment, in science and technology and because we have to keep paying down the national debt until we make America debt-free for the first time since 1835.

What's their proposal? Their proposal is a tax cut that's more than 3 times as big as ours, when you add all the interest costs; a partial privatization of Social Security, which costs another trillion dollars, by their own admission; and several hundred billion dollars of their own spending. And what's the problem with that? It doesn't add up. When you add it all up, you're back into deficits again. And if you have deficits, what does that mean? It means you have higher interest rates and lower economic growth, and upstate New York never catches up. You've got to have tight labor markets to get investment into the areas that have not participated in this recovery. Now think about that.

I had an analysis done which indicates that if the Vice President's program is enacted and the one Hillary supports, interest rates would be about a percent a year lower for a decade than if you go back to deficits under the other program. Plus which, nearly everybody in this room would be better off under our proposal anyway.

But think about this: one percent a year in lower interest rates. Do you know what that means to America? Just listen: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, a bigger stock market. Our tax cut does go to everybody because there is lower interest rates, and everybody in America will benefit from that.

That's real reason number one. You want to keep the prosperity going until it reaches up here, and you can't get it done if you go back to deficits. Their numbers don't add up. Number two, you should be for our crowd because we want to build on the other progress of the last 8 years. And what is that other progress? Welfare rolls cut in half; lowest crime rate in 26 years; lowest poverty rate in 20 years; cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food; the first reduction in the number of uninsured people without health insurance

in 12 years; 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood diseases for the first time in the history of the country—we're doing better in all these areas.

And they want to reverse them. And let's just take education. We have a lower dropout rate, a higher graduation rate, higher test scores, a record college-going rate, a huge increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement classes, and systematically, for the first time ever all over the country, people are proving they can turn around failing schools and do it in no time. Now that is what is going on. It's not an education recession. It's an education revival.

Now, do we still have a lot to do? We do. The question is, how do you want to change?

They have a different crime policy. They would get rid of our commitment to 150,000 police on the street and abolish that program. They have a different education policy. They would abolish our commitment to 100,000 teachers. And they don't support putting funds in to help school construction, to help build or modernize schools where we've got too many old schools and too many overcrowded schools. They have a different environmental program. They would relax some of our environmental standards and get rid of some of the land that I have protected in perpetuity and stop doing that.

So there is a different crime program, a different education program, a different environmental program. There is a very different health program. We're for a strong Patients' Bill of Rights, but they're not, because the HMO's aren't. We're for all seniors who need it being able to buy drugs under a Medicare program. They're not, because the drug companies aren't. And you know up here you can go to Canada and get them cheaper. And we think everybody ought to have access to them. And if it's uncomfortable for the drug companies, then they can come to Washington, and we'll fix their problem. But first, we ought to fix the health care problems of the seniors of the United States.

So reason number two, you want to keep going in the right direction; you want a lower crime rate; you want higher education performance; you want more people with health insurance and seniors with access to medicine. You want to continue to make progress in all these areas. You want to build on the progress.

Now, if you look at the economy, we tried it our way for 8 years. Before that, we tried it their way for 12 years, the deficit way. Our way works better, you know? You just need to say that. If you look at crime, education, health care, and environmental policy, we tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way before. In every area, we made more progress. Our way works better. That is the issue.

The third thing I would like to say—maybe even most important of all to me—we have to continue to build one America, to build one American community where no one is discriminated against because of who they are, where everybody has a chance who is willing to work, where everybody counts, where we recognize we should help each other by creating the conditions and giving people the tools to make the most of their own lives. And in all these areas there is a big difference. And I'll just give you a few.

We're for hate crimes legislation that protects everybody, and they're not. We believe if immigrants come here legally to this country and they work and they have to pay taxes if they work, they should be treated like everybody else; they should be treated fairly. We feel that way. We believe there ought to be stronger equal pay laws for women, because there are still too many women doing work that aren't getting equally paid. These are some of the things that define one America. And we're different.

So if someone says to you, "Does this election make a difference?" You say, "You bet it does. It makes a huge difference." If you want to keep the prosperity going and extend it to every place in upstate New York that hasn't felt it yet, you better keep paying down the debt, investing in our future, to keep interest rates down, and you can't do it if you do what they want because it doesn't add up. Number two, if you want to keep making progress with better schools, more people with health insurance, a lower crime rate, and a cleaner environment, you better keep changing in this direction, because what they want to do is to reverse the policies we've had which are making a difference. And

number three, if you want us all to go forward together, if you believe in hate crimes legislation, equal pay for equal work, if you think that all of us count and nobody should be left out or left behind, you better stick with the Democrats. Those are the three big issues in this election, and don't you mistake it.

And just tell people—you know, this is not rocket science. We tried it both ways. Our way works better. We did try it both ways. We've had a test run here.

Now, let me just close with this. When Al Gore says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," when a person running for office says that, it may sound like a campaign slogan. I'm not running for anything, and I believe that. I believe that. I believe with all my heart. I believe we can bring economic opportunity to the people and places that have been left behind. I believe we can give every child in this country excellence in education. I believe we can create a system in which there is affordable access to health care for every working family. I believe we can open the doors to college—4 years of it, like we have already for 2—for 100 percent of the people who are willing to work hard enough to go. I believe we can do this. And I know we can do this and get this country out of debt.

And I know we can do it and still continue to be involved in the world, as a leading source of peace and freedom. And I'm thinking of that today, you know, because we have a lot to celebrate. The dictator in Belgrade has finally been deposed, who caused so much trouble in Bosnia and Kosovo. We've made a lot of progress towards peace in Northern Ireland. And we have worked hard in Latin America to turn back the drug warriors that want to overtake democracy in Colombia. We've worked hard in Africa. And today, of course, we're keeping our fingers crossed that we can restore calm and end violence in the Middle East and resume the process towards peace there. And I hope you'll all pray for that.

That's the last thing I'd like to tell you. My wife has been to more countries and touched more people around the world, sticking up for the rights of children and women, talking about the need of America not only to have a strong defense but to be a strong partner in educating people and giving them a better future, and working on challenges together, than any person, clearly, since Eleanor Roosevelt, who has been in the White House as First Lady.

So I will say again, I just want you to use every day between now and the election—not only here, but if you have any friends in other States—to try to get them to understand why it's so important not only for Hillary to win, but for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to win. Keep the prosperity going. Keep the progress going. Build one America. We'll have a big celebration on election night.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:52 p.m. in the Hall of Stars Room at the Bonnie Castle Resort. In his remarks, he referred to Michael W. Schell, executive chair, New York State Democratic Party executive committee; and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Remarks at a Dinner for Hillary Clinton in Hempstead, New York

October 22, 2000

Thank you very much. You know, I have been on a tour of New York today. I've been to Binghamton and Watertown—actually, to Alex Bay—and here I am with you at Hofstra. And I hear the sound of victory everywhere I go. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to thank Carolyn McCarthy for representing you and representing everyone in America who wants to build a sane, safe society. She is a brave and good woman, and I am honored to serve with her. I want to thank Congressman Gary Ackerman for being with us today. He has been my friend and ally for 8 years, and he represents all of you so well. But what all of you should know is, he has quite a global reach. I took him with me on my trip to India, and all these people kept coming up to him in India saying, "Gary, who is that tall, gray-headed fellow with you?" [*Laughter*] It was amazing. India has 900 million people. Strangers were walking up to him on the street saying, "Hello, Gary. How are you?" [*Laughter*] I loved it.

I want to thank Carl McCall, who has been a great leader for New York and a great friend of ours. Thank you. And thank you, Judith Hope, for being a great chair of the State Democratic Party. Some of you may know that Judith Hope, like me, was also born in Arkansas, proving that we can be accepted in New York. [*Laughter*] That makes me feel good.

I want to thank the Nassau County chair, Tom DiNapoli, for being such a wonderful leader and for sticking with Hillary and helping us to win. And I think one of our congressional candidates, Steve Israel, is here tonight. I thank the president of Hofstra University, Dr. James Shuart, and all the people from Hofstra who have made us feel so welcome.

And now, here's what I want to say. Thank you. Look, we're all having a good time tonight, but the truth is that this is Sunday, and so if you'll forgive me a little religious reference, I'm quite well aware that in the terms, the words of my tradition, I'm here preaching to the saved. [*Laughter*] And so I want to ask you, just for a moment, amidst all the good time and all the cheering we're doing, to let me say a few things seriously, because every one of you know lots and lots of people, your friends, your family members, your co-students, your co-workers, people in this State, and people in other States who will never come to an event like this, don't you? You know people who have never been to an event like this, never heard a President speak, a First Lady speak, a Member of Congress speak, but who will show up on election day if they understand what the stakes are because they're good citizens.

And what bothers me about this election is that I keep reading that there are all these sort of undecided voters who don't think there is much difference between the two candidates for President, aren't sure there is much difference between the two parties, may not show up, or may show up and make the wrong decision because they don't know. So before I introduce Hillary, I just want to say a few things that I hope you will say to somebody every single day between now and the election.

I want to begin by saying thank you. New York has been wonderful to me and to Al Gore for 8 years. In 1996 we won a great victory in New York. Even in Nassau County we won and won big, and I thank you for that. But I'm concerned, and here's why. If people know what is at stake, if they understand the differences, the nature of the choice, and the impact on you, your families, your community, and your Nation, we'll do fine. So what we want is clarity.

Now, what the other guys want—because we win if you understand—is cloudiness. And it's easier to be cloudy than clear, so you've got to be Hillary and Al and Joe's weather patrol between now and the election, to make it clear.

There are three great questions in this election, nationally and as they affect New York, and I'll come back to New York when I introduce Hillary. But there are three great questions that affect every American and, therefore, that affect the people of New York. Let me begin by some of the questions that have been raised in the debate and in the statics around the campaign that this election is not about.

This election is not about a choice between change and the status quo. America is changing too fast. Look around here. And we're going to be rapidly changing every year for at least 10 years, probably 20, in dramatic ways we can't even perceive. The question is not whether we're going to change. It is how. What will the direction of change be? Are we going to build on the success of the last 8 years or take a U-turn and go back? That is the question. But it's not change versus the status quo.

The other thing I heard from the debates from the other side is that this election is supposed to be about whether you're for big Government making all your decisions or whether you trust the people. Let me tell you something—and the implication is, of course, that the Democrats are the big Government, and the Republicans are the people. That's just not so. And if anybody asks you that, let me just point out a couple of things.

Number one, our Democratic administration has reduced the size of the Federal civil Government to the lowest level since 1960, when John Kennedy sought the Presidency and Dwight Eisenhower was President.

Don't put up with that. That's not true. Number two, we got rid of 16,000 pages of Federal regulations that were on the books when they were in. Number three, I heard them talking about all the burdens we put on the school districts. Have you heard that in all the debates now? The Federal Government just wants to burden the school district. Number three, under the leadership of our Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, States and school districts have had their paperwork burden from the Federal Government cut by two-thirds below what it was when they were in office.

So this is not about big Government versus the people. We have reduced the burden of Government. We've just increased the ability of Government to help ordinary people live better lives. That's what the real truth is.

Another thing I heard is how we needed somebody to swoop in from outside Washington to end the partisan atmosphere so we could have bipartisan solutions. [*Laughter*] In other words, they would like to be rewarded for the problem they created. [*Laughter*]

Now, let's look at the facts here. We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill, a bipartisan Balanced Budget Act of '97, a bipartisan Children's Health Insurance Program. Yes, we initiated it, but we got the Republicans to vote for it, and we worked with them. We had a bipartisan telecommunications law that has created thousands of businesses and hundreds of thousands of jobs, a bipartisan vote to create 100,000 teachers and 100,000 police—a bipartisan vote. The partisanship has come from the other side.

Don't you worry about Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary being willing to work in a bipartisan fashion. We are willing to work in a bipartisan fashion. We're just not willing to be run over. And that's what the issue is.

Let me say one other thing. Now, I might get in some trouble for saying this, but I'm going to say it, anyway. I hear that on Long Island and all across the country in the Middle West, there are people taking off work to go to work for the NRA, to work against our candidates because they say we're trying to take their guns away. And they're spending a fortune doing that.

Now why in the wide world would they do that? One possibility is, it's true. But it isn't. It's a lie. I want every hunter and sportsman within the sound of my voice who missed a day of any hunting season, because of any proposal I made, to vote for the other guy. But if you didn't, they're lying to you, and you should get even. [*Laughter*]

Now, what did we do? What did we do? Let me tell you what I plead guilty to doing. We did pass the Brady law. We did that. And we asked people to undergo a background check before they got a handgun, to prove they weren't a felon, a fugitive, or a stalker. We did that. And you know, a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers didn't get handguns. Gun crime is down by 35 percent. The crime rate is at a 26-year low. The murder rate is at a 33-year low. I think we were right. Who can defend the other side of that? And we banned assault weapons, and I think we were right. And God knows, as the experience of Carolyn McCarthy's life shows, we were right.

Now, listen, what is it that we really want to do? Well, we think that the background check law worked well, but there are a lot of gun show sales that it doesn't apply to, and we think it should. We think that child trigger locks should be mandatory when new handguns are sold. And we think that large-scale ammunition clips should not be able to be imported in America, because if you allowed that, then you can just rejigger the guns that are already here and turn them into assault weapons.

And most of us believe that you ought to get a license when you buy a handgun, like you do when you buy a car, showing you're not a crook and you know how to use it safely. Now, will that cause anybody to miss a day in the deer woods? Will it cause anybody to miss a sport shooting contest? Does it confiscate weapons—constitute weapons confiscation? No. That is not what this election is about. So if you hear somebody on Long Island say that, you just tell them it's not true.

You know, it is a crying shame, as hard as we have worked to get this crime rate down, to run the risk of turning it right around and sending it up again by people who not only want to control the criminal policy in this country as it relates to this but

have also promised—listen to this—promised to repeal the law we passed putting now 150,000 police on the street. They're wrong. We're right. You've got to fight. Don't take this laying down, and don't put this stuff out there. Don't do it. Don't put up with people saying things that aren't true.

Now, what is the election really about? Number one, it's about whether we're going to keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places left behind. That's the first thing. How are we going to do that? How are we going to do that? We're going to do that by giving people a tax cut we can afford, not one we can't afford, a tax cut that benefits more middle class families than theirs does—even though it's much smaller; a deduction for college tuition; a credit for long-term care for the elderly and disabled; extra help for child care; extra help for lower income workers with lots of kids; help to save for retirement; and extra incentives to invest in people and places that have been left behind.

Now, why do we have a tax cut that is smaller than theirs? Because we save money to invest in education and health care and the environment and national defense and to get this country out of debt over the next 12 years so we can keep interest rates down and the economy growing.

What is their deal? What's the difference? Their tax cut is at least 3 times as big as ours. I admit it is. And a few of you might do better under it, but it's 3 times bigger. What's the problem with that? Well, that's 75 percent of the surplus. And then they've got a trillion dollar cost on their partial privatization of Social Security and then several hundred billion dollars of spending they've promised. And the problem with that is, it doesn't add up. By the time you spend all that money, you're back in deficits, which means higher interest rates and slower growth.

I had some people analyze this for me, and they say that if the Gore/Lieberman/Hillary tax cut is adopted, we'll probably have—and we stay on the path to pay the debt off—we could leave interest rates a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Listen to this, lower interest rates: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; and lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, more raises, a higher stock market.

Look, we tried it our way; we tried it their way. Our way is better. You want to keep the prosperity going, you've got to vote for the Democrats.

Point number two: If you want to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years in the non-economic areas, you've got to vote with us. The crime rate is down. I already talked about that. We reversed the increase in the number of uninsured. The number of people with health insurance is going down for the first time in a dozen years. The environment is cleaner—cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, safer drinking water, more land set aside in permanent protection than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago. And the economy has gotten better.

So we've got a better crime policy, a better health policy, a better environmental policy, welfare rolls cut in half. And we have a better education policy. Listen to this. In the last 8 years, we've gone from 14 States to 49 States with standards for a core curriculum. We have seen a decline in the dropout rate, an increase in the graduation rate. College-going is at an all-time high. We have a 50 percent increase in the number of kids taking advanced placement in high school, a 300 percent increase in Latino kids doing it, a 500 percent increase in African-American kids doing it. We've already opened the doors of college completely for the first 2 years, and if we pass this college tax deduction that Senator Schumer and Hillary are pushing so hard, we'll open the doors of college for 4 years for every young person in the entire United States of America.

In every single one of these areas you've got to decide whether you're going to build on the progress or go back to another policy. In crime, it's not just about guns. They want to repeal our commitment to putting 150,000 police on the street. In education, everybody can be for accountability. We think we've got to help the States meet it. We're for doubling the number of kids in preschool and after-school programs. They're not. We're for funds to help local school districts build or

modernize schools, because they're overcrowded or broken down, and we know that the property tax can't carry the whole burden. They're not. We're for 100,000 teachers qualified in smaller classes. They don't want to do that—huge difference.

In the environment, they say our clean air rules are too tough. They say that my order setting aside tens of millions of acres in the national forest as roadless acres is wrong. They say they ought to revisit all these areas I've protected in perpetuity. They say it's too burdensome on the economy. If I were trying to hurt the economy, I didn't do a very good job. [*Laughter*] You have to decide.

But you've got to tell people. If you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary. You don't have an option here. It's clear.

And the third thing I want to say—the third thing I want to say—and maybe most important of all—is that we have got to keep working to build one America across all the lines that divide us, across all the racial and ethnic and religious and gender and sexual orientation lines that divide us. We've got to do it.

Now, this is a big deal. And I can only tell you what it means to me. And I'll only take the issues where there is a difference. We believe a big part of building one America is equal pay for equal work. We want to strengthen the equal pay laws for women, and they're against it. We believe a big part of building one America is a strong and comprehensive hate crimes law, and they're not for it.

And I really regret that in the debate we didn't get into the details of this as much. You got a feeling that we were for it, and they weren't. But they're not for it because they're conservative wing does not want to vote for a national hate crimes bill that protects gays against hate crimes. Now, that's the truth. I've been there trying to pass this for 2 years. I know what's going on. And I'm telling you, we need it.

I wish you could all hear the police commissioner from Wyoming that had to supervise the Matthew Shepard murder case. He was always against hate crimes. He had mixed feelings. He didn't know how he felt about gays. And then he saw that little boy stretched out on a rack to die. And he needed the Federal Government to come in and help him deal with the cost of dealing with that crime. And he has become perhaps our most articulate advocate for hate crimes. This is a big deal, going way beyond the number of people that will be victimized by hate crimes. It talks about what kind of people we are and whether we're committed to one America.

We have big differences on what kind of court system we ought to have and whether we will preserve a woman's right to choose or get rid of it and throw it back to the States, the way it used to be. It only takes one vote, and the next President will get to appoint at least two judges to the Supreme Court. And then there will be all these other appointments.

And everybody who studies this knows that there is the most radical reassessment since the 1930's of the ability of the National Government to protect the American people, not just the right to choose, going way beyond that into all kinds of health and safety and education and other areas, or whether the courts will start to say the Congress can't do this anymore. They even threw out a provision of the Violence Against Women Act.

Now, I'm telling you, you've got to think about this. This is a big deal. And I believe it would be a mistake to return to the constitutional theory which existed in the 1930's that said, basically, the Federal Government can't do anything if the States don't like it. Now, think about this. If somebody asks you what the difference is, somebody says, "Oh, there's not much difference," or, "I don't like this, that or the other thing that Al Gore or Joe Lieberman or Hillary said," you say, "Wait a minute. You want to keep this prosperity going? Do you like the fact that we've got a cleaner environment, that the number of people without health insurance is going down, that the number of people going to college is going up, that the schools that were failing are turning around, that the crime rate is going down? Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? And do you want to keep building one America?"

That's what I want you to do. I want you to promise yourself that every day, sometime

between now and the election, every day you're going to say to somebody, "Vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary to keep the prosperity going, to build on the social progress, and to build one America."

That brings me to my appointed duty—[*laughter*]—as the spouse and Cheerleader in Chief in America. [*Laughter*] I want to make a couple of points that I hope you will share with the voters, particularly on Long Island, in the days ahead before the election.

I met Hillary almost 30 years ago, and for 30 years I have watched her devote her heart and soul to the interests of children and families, education and health care. For more than 20 years, I have watched her work on bringing economic opportunity to people and places who were left behind, something that's very important to upstate New York.

For the last 8 years, since we've been in the White House, she has been the most active First Lady, if not in history, certainly since Eleanor Roosevelt. She was an advocate for the first bill I signed as President, the family and medical leave law. Over 22 million Americans have now taken some time off, when a baby is born or a parent is sick, without losing their job.

She held the first White House conference ever held on early childhood and brain development. She worked hard to get mammograms for women under Medicare and to do other things in the way of preventive care. She led an effort in the Federal Government to examine the problems that veterans of the Gulf war were having that might have been associated with their service in the Persian Gulf a decade ago.

She has represented our country all over the world, traveling to more countries than any other First Lady in history, talking about women's rights and children's rights, reminding people that the national security of the United States depends not just on our military strength but on our ability to help ordinary people with economic opportunity and education and health care.

She has helped me in our endless efforts to make peace in Northern Ireland. She has gone to the Balkans and in the Middle East, where we have worked so hard for the cause of peace. When Mrs. Barak asked her to come, she went again. She has been there—we've gone I don't know how many times to the Middle East or to Northern Ireland or to see our troops in the Balkans, to try to advance the cause of peace and stick up for our friends in Israel, in Bosnia, in Ireland.

And you will never know—because I don't have the words to say—how hard she has worked or how deeply she cares. But I want to tell you this, this is the first time in 26 years they're having an election and I'm not on the ballot. [*Laughter*] But I care more about this election than any one I've ever been involved in. I care about what happens in the Presidential race because everything we've worked for is on the line, and all the progress America has made is still out there.

And I care about this Senate race because of the hundreds and hundreds of people I've known in public life. And I can tell you, on balance, they're better than they get credit for being, the Republicans and the Democrats. On balance, they work harder; they're more honest, and they try harder to do what they believe in than most people know.

But I have never known anybody else in public life who had the combination of brains and heart and caring and tenacity and ability to imagine solutions and get people together to get things done than Hillary has. She would be a worthy successor to Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to Robert Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Please welcome the next United States Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. in Lowenfeld Hall at Hofstra University. In his remarks, he referred to Steve Israel, candidate for New York's Second Congressional District; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; Thomas P. DiNapoli, chair, Nassau County Democratic Party; and Nava Barak, wife of Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in New York City

October 22, 2000

Thank you very much. I want to thank Susie who has been such a wonderful friend to Hillary and me for so many years now. And I want to thank Amy and Jeffrey and Harvey and all the others who spearheaded

this event tonight. It's a beautiful testimonial to Hillary, and I'm delighted that it could be in this wonderful old theater.

I want to thank Sir Elton John for being good enough to come and be with us tonight and congratulate him on his smashing success in the last few days. This will be the second time he has performed during the Clinton administration; the first was at the state dinner for his Prime Minister, Tony Blair, where he and Stevie Wonder commemorated a truly historic night of Anglo-American partnership.

I want to say, too, very briefly, because we are all here basically to have a good time and see each other—and I hope that Hillary and I can visit with all the rest of you before you leave—because there are so many of you here who have been not only important political supporters of ours but very good friends over the last 8 years and, in some cases, from long before.

Hillary and I are delighted that her mother and Chelsea could be here tonight. This is sort of a family day we've had in New York, and I have been to Binghamton and Watertown and Alex Bay today in my capacity as Cheerleader in Chief in this election. [*Laughter*]

And I just want to tell you a couple of things very briefly. First of all, I believe on November the 7th, Hillary will be elected, and I believe Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will be elected. And I think a lot of you are asking me what you're supposed to say, and I think you should say three things about the national election.

First of all, if you want to keep the prosperity going, you only have one choice, because our team wants to give the folks a tax cut they can afford, keep investing in education and health care, and get rid of the national debt, which will get interest rates down. Their side is promising everybody the Moon: a huge tax cut, a huge privatization of Social Security, and a lot of spending, and it doesn't add up. The numbers don't add up. And if we go back into debt, we tried it their way for 12 years. You remember that? We quadrupled the national debt. That's why I got elected President.

So if we give them one more chance, they might give us a whole generation of Democratic Presidents, but it's not worth it to do to the country. And you need to tell people this. We tried it our way for 8 years. We tried it their way for 12 years. Our way works better. If you want to keep it going, you better vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary.

The second thing you ought to say is, "If you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary." What do I mean by that? The crime rate is at a 26-year low; the murder rate is at a 33-year low; the gun violence rate is down by 35 percent because of the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, putting 100,000 police on the street.

Now, you all know where they are on the Brady bill and the waiting period. That's why Charlton Heston has a starring role in this election. Did you hear what he said yesterday? The most important election for gun owners since the Civil War. Some guy said they ought to lynch Gore. He said he'll supply the rope. Look, this is serious. It isn't true that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman want to take anybody's guns away, but they don't want kids and criminals to have guns. That's what this is about. It's also about, they want to get rid of 100,000 police. We're trying to put 100,000 teachers in the classrooms. They want to get rid of them.

We have given the American people cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, more land set aside than in any administration except for Theodore Roosevelt. They want to weaken the air rules and relax the protections I've given to public lands. See, it's not like you don't have a clear choice here. We proved you can clean up the environment and improve the economy. They want to reverse that policy.

Same thing in health care, and Hillary will talk a little more about that. We've got a decline in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in a dozen years because of our Children's Health Insurance Program. But all the things that we want to do to build on that, they're not for.

So if you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years, if you like the fact that we're a safer country, that we're an environmentally cleaner country, that education is improving, that health care is getting better,

you don't have any choice, you've got to vote for Gore/Lieberman and Hillary.

And the third thing, and the most important thing to me, is if you believe as I do that the most important mission of any society is to build a unity, an affirmation of our common humanity, beneath all the lines that divide us, all the diversity in this society that makes it an interesting place to live, you really have to vote for Gore/Lieberman and Hillary. Whether it's equal pay for women or the hate crimes bill or the employment nondiscrimination bill or preserving a woman's right to choose or just preserving a philosophy on the Supreme Court that the National Government ought to be able to protect the basic health and welfare of the American people.

The next President is going to get two appointments. *Roe* v. *Wade* is hanging by one vote. And a majority on this court has already voted to invalidate the ability of Congress to pass the Violence Against Women Act if it requires the States to do anything. That's a theory that prevailed 70 years ago in the 1930's.

Now, you've got to go out and talk to people and make sure they understand this. If you want the economy to keep growing, if you want this society to keep making progress and if you want America to keep coming together instead of being driven apart, you only have one choice.

And this should be a very happy election. The country's in good shape, and the best stuff is still out there. Yes, we have problems. There will never be a time on Earth when people are around that we don't have problems, because we all have imperfections, so there will be problems. But we will never have another chance in our lifetime like this.

Which brings me to my appointed duty. When Hillary was approached—when Senator Moynihan said he would not seek reelection, and Hillary was approached by a number of members of the New York congressional delegation over a year ago now to think about running for the Senate seat once held not only by Senator Moynihan but by Robert Kennedy, and then a lot of other people in New York started to call her, she said, "Do you think we ought to consider doing this?"

And so first I gave—we went through the same drill that I go through when a young person comes to me and says, "I want to run for State legislature," or something. I said, "Can you stand losing? Are you prepared to win, to do what it takes to win? And do you know why you want the job, for some reason or another bigger than yourself?" And she had good answers to that. And then I said, "Well, are you prepared to give up what could be our last—what will be our last year in the White House, when we could have a good time, we could take all these trips together? We could do all these things together—memories of a lifetime." And "Get up to upstate New York and find out what's wrong with the economy. Get out to Long Island and find out why they're worried about some of their health care problems."

And we debated it, and I said, "I think you should not think about how you'll feel the day we leave the White House. You ought to think about how you'll feel a year after we're gone," because public service has been her life.

And one other point I would like to make, a lot of you who have known her a long time will identify with this. I don't get—you know, I feel nothing anymore when somebody attacks me. I'm sort of callused over. I can even stand it, normally, when somebody attacks Hillary now. But I am enraged when I hear somebody say that she wouldn't be up here running for Senator for New York if she weren't First Lady. If she hadn't spent the last 30 years of her life working for children and families and charitable causes and other candidates, mostly me, she could have been doing this 20 years ago.

And what I want to say to you is, I am very proud of the race she has run. I am proud what she has done in the White House, to advocate for children, for families, for women's health, to build the largest historic preservation movement in our country's history around the millennium celebration, to visit more countries, to work for peace in the Middle East, peace in Northern Ireland, to support our troops in the Balkans when they stood up against ethnic cleansing and took the first critical steps that were pivotal to the eventual elimination of Mr. Milosevic

from the political scene over there. I am very proud of all that.

Of all the people I have known, the hundreds and hundreds of people I have known in public life, she has the best combination of brains and heart and consistent dedication and the ability to get things done of any person I have ever known, anywhere in public life. She will be a worthy successor to Senator Moynihan, Senator Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Come on up, Hillary, and give them a speech. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:36 p.m. at the Hudson Theatre. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Susie Tompkins Buell; entertainers Elton John and Stevie Wonder; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; Dorothy Rodham, the President's mother-in-law; Charlton Heston, president, National Rifle Association; and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Interview With Chris Bull of the Advocate

September 27, 2000

Hate Crimes Legislation

Mr. Bull. Thank you for agreeing to this interview. I thought we'd jump ahead in the questions a little bit, because I noticed this morning at the press briefing you talked about the hate crimes legislation and opposition to including sexual orientation in it.

There was the front page of the Washington Post today, a man walks into a gay bar in Virginia and starts shooting. With all the evidence about this particular aspect of hate crimes, why is there still so much opposition in Congress?

The President. First, let's talk about the good news here. There's 57 votes for it in the Senate, and about 240 votes for it in the House. Virtually all the Democrats, but four or five of them, are for it. And we've got 41 Republicans on a motion to instruct the conferees to leave it in the defense bill. So there's no question that we now have a majority for it.

How would it not be included in? The leadership of the Congress and the leadership of the Republican Party is still well to the right of the country on this issue. Same thing in Texas, you know, they could have had a hate crimes bill after James Byrd was killed, if Governor Bush had just lifted a finger for it. But he was unwilling to take on the rightwing in his own party, and so it died.

And it's the same thing in Washington. If the leaders of the House and the Senate can be persuaded to instruct their conferees to follow the will of the majority, it will prevail. If it doesn't prevail, it's because the leadership of the Congress and the leadership of the Republicans is still to the right of the country on the issue.

Matthew Shepard

Mr. Bull. As you may remember, the murder of Matthew Shepard, the student in Wyoming——

The President. I remember it vividly.

Mr. Bull. ——really changed the way Americans see hate crimes against gay people. What was your initial reaction to that murder?

The President. Well, I think it was particularly horrifying and heartbreaking because he was so young and so small and the way they killed him was so graphic. But it did galvanize the country. You know, the American people are fundamentally decent. But like human beings everywhere, since the dawn of time, they're afraid of something that's profoundly different from the life they know and the experiences they've had.

Usually, the way civilization progresses is something happens that forces people to see things in a different way, in a more human way. And that's what Matthew Shepard's death did. I think the fact that his parents, who are obviously not leftwing activists, just mainstream, hardworking Americans, became advocates for the hate crimes legislation and the fact that that police commissioner there, O'Malley, was so eloquent in saying that the experience of dealing with Matthew's death and dealing with his family and his friends had changed his life, as well as his attitudes.

I think those three people deserve an enormous amount of credit for the way the country has moved.

Mr. Bull. With the depth of the problem that you've just described, people's psychological response to difference, is hate crimes legislation really the best way to deal with the problem? Does it really get at the roots of it?

The President. Well, I think it's just one piece of it. I think it's really important to pass ENDA, and there are big majorities for ENDA in the country, too. And it hasn't passed for the same reason.

The other thing I think that's important—and ENDA would really feed into this—is that we just need people, all the American people, to have the opportunity to interact on a human level, in the workplace, in social settings, with gays and lesbians and know that they're interacting with them. Personal contact, it may sound old-fashioned and naive—it's not a substitute for laws—but it will change attitudes.

I'll never forget in the administration's early debate over gays in the military, there was a national poll published which showed that Americans, who knew a gay person and knew they knew a gay person, were 2-1 in favor of changing the policy. So if you believe that most people have goodness in them and will, other things being equal, treat their fellow human beings in a decent and fair way, then you have to overcome ignorance and fear. And it takes time, and it takes contact.

President's Background on Gay Rights

Mr. Bull. One of the things for which your administration will be remembered is, early on, you talked a lot about gay people in a way that Americans hadn't heard from that level of government, which is in terms of tolerance, inclusiveness, a place at the table, having no one to waste. How did you come across that approach to including gay people in, sort of, the rhetoric of the civil rights movement?

The President. Personal contact. In 1977, when I was attorney general, there was an attempt to make—we had just adopted a new criminal code, and the criminal code had gotten rid of all the status offenses, including homosexuality. I imagine those old laws are still on the books in some States.

And one of our legislators went home, and he lived in a very conservative district, and he was roundly abused by the religious right at the time. And that's just when they were getting up and going there, in the midseventies. So he came back and introduced a bill, essentially, to make homosexuality a crime again but turning it from a status offense into an act. And I tried to kill it then. It just struck me as wrong.

And I remember, it was the first thing that sort of, I don't know, brought me to the attention of some of the gay community in my home State. It was never a big issue. And I failed. I thought I had it done, and I failed. Literally in the last 30 minutes of the last day of the legislative session, they voted it out. And we knew we had to kill it in committee because the legislators would be afraid to vote against it back then.

I knew from the time I was a boy growing up that I knew people who were gay, even though they didn't talk about it. So I always felt that. And then when I started running for President and people who were active in the gay rights cause started to talk to me—starting with David Mixner, who had been a friend of mine for, by then, way over 20 years—I just decided that it was one thing I was going to try to make a difference in. And I started actively seeking out members of the gay community. Marty Rouse helped me a lot in New York, took me to a big meeting there I never will forget.

I know it seems sort of—it probably seems strange to everybody. I was running on a New Democratic platform. I was a Governor of a southern State, and on issues like fiscal responsibility and some foreign policy issues I was, I suppose, to the right of where most activist Democrats were. But it just struck me as a human rights issue from the beginning, and a personal issue.

Future of Gay Rights

Mr. Bull. Having set that tone in the White House, is there—how do we maintain it after you're in office? How do we make sure it doesn't go back to pitting groups against one another?

The President. Well, first of all, I think that it will never be quite the same. I think we have to give—you can't give me too much credit and give the gay community too little, or give the American people too little credit. I mean, I don't think it will ever be fashionable for people in national life to demonize gays again.

But I think the extent to which we continue to progress will depend entirely on who's elected. Al Gore is for the hate crimes legislation and the "Employment and Non-Discrimination Act" and has been at least as open, if not more open, than me in pursuing this cause. This is something that he really, really feels strongly about.

And I don't believe Governor Bush is a bad person, with a bad heart. I think he basically has a good heart. But I think that—you know, he passed on the hate crimes bill in Texas, and I don't think he'll be for the "Employment and Non-Discrimination Act." And if he wins and he keeps his majority in Congress, I just don't think we'll get very far legislatively. And there won't be nearly as many appointments, and I don't think the approach to AIDS, both at home and abroad, will be nearly as aggressive.

Legislative Agenda/Gays in the Military

Mr. Bull. With all your success in setting a different tone on the gay rights debate, the legislative and policy related areas have been more challenging. How do you think—I mean, what needs to be done to actually make concrete legislative gains in terms of the military policy, et cetera?

The President. Well, I think two things. I think, first of all, on the concrete legislative gains, I think the most important thing is to change the composition of Congress. It doesn't have to change a lot—you know, 10 or 12 seats in the House, even if the Democrats didn't win a majority in the Senate—if we picked up three or four seats, so that it was effectively a split, I think it would change the landscape dramatically.

So I think if you had a President who was committed and some changes in the Congress, even modest changes, I think it would make a huge difference on the legislative front.

On the gays in the military issue, I think it's important to remember——

Mr. Bull. That was a case I'm sure a lot of Democrats who opposed an initiative——

The President. Oh, we got killed. I think a lot of people forget—and I don't want to be too defensive about this—but a lot of people forget that I did not accept General Powell's proposed compromise until the Senate had voted 68-32 in a resolution against my position. The House, we knew there were over 300 votes against us, so we knew they had a veto-proof majority. But we thought we might be able to sustain a veto of an attempt to ratify the old policy, until the Senate voted 68-32 against it. So that meant they had a veto-proof majority in both Houses.

So my guess is that what the next move should be is to try to get the Congress to restore to the military and the executive branch discretion to make this decision and then to try to explore—because I think there have been some changes in attitudes to the military, too—whether there is—you know, what kind of steps could be taken from there.

I don't think that the Congress would be willing to legislatively reverse it and adopt the policy that I favor. But they might be willing to give the policy back to the executive branch and to the military on the condition that the President pledge to kind of work through this thing with the military. And I do believe there has been some progress there. There's still a lot of resistance, too, as you know, but I think there has been some progress.

Mr. Bull. You were pilloried on both sides of that issue in '93.

The President. The worst of all worlds, everybody was mad at me.

Mr. Bull. Because you had your friend David Mixner—was protesting. And you said at the time that you had spilt a lot of blood on the issue. What did you mean by that?

The President. Well, just that. I mean, I cared a lot about it. I thought I was right. I didn't agree to compromise until I was beat. One of the things I learned the first 2 years is that—I don't think it was apparent to 90 percent of the people in the gay community who cared about this that we were beat. That is, I don't think that we made enough of the Senate vote, and maybe what I should have

done, if I just was concerned about my own standing and clarity, is just let them pass it and veto it. Then they'd override the veto. We'd be back where we were.

But the way they implemented the changes that we announced in the first few years were just about as bad as it was before. Now, it's gotten a little better now. Bill Cohen has gotten on it and changed a lot of the training. There is no question that as a practical matter, even though it's unsatisfying as a matter of principle, that if the policy as I announced it or implemented it, it would be better than the policy before. But for years there was a lot of resistance to that.

I think it is going to get better now if the next Secretary of Defense hews to the line that Secretary Cohen has set out.

Gay Community Leadership

Mr. Bull. The gay rights movement I think eventually came to see that it, itself, had failed to provide you a certain amount of political cover to create the conditions in America in which people supported such a change. You've experienced gay rights leaders for a long time now. How do you think it could become a more effective, mainstream political force in the long run?

The President. Well, first of all, I don't think that they failed any more than I did. Look, I fight a lot of fights I don't win. The NRA beats me more than I beat them in Congress. The insurance companies beat me on health care, and so far, they're beating us on the Patients' Bill of Rights. The drug companies, so far, are beating us on adding a Medicare drug benefit.

So it shouldn't be surprising or, I would argue, discouraging that the first time you come out of the box on some of these issues you don't win. America has always been, like all societies, a place where organized, entrenched interests initially have more power than even popular causes that are not equally well organized, particularly when the issue may not be a voting issue yet with the American people.

There are lots of issues where a majority, maybe even two-thirds, agree with me, and I still can't pass it in Congress because to the people who are against it, it's a voting issue or a contribution issue, and to people who are for it, it isn't.

Now, I think the gay community has come a long way just since I've been here, both in terms of the sophistication of it's arguments and the quality of its organization and its active participation in the political process, including contributing to campaigns of the people you agree with and believe in. So I think all that is to the good.

But I still say, I think the most important thing—I was just looking over the people that are going to be at this lunch that we're going to and what they do for a living. They have normal jobs in big companies that are important, and they're in a position to exercise influence over people with whom they work. The thing I think is important is to try to get more non-gay supporters of these issues who see it as civil rights issues and see it as a voting issue, an important political priority. And I think that it's going that way.

Same-Sex Marriage

Mr. Bull. In '96—I think I actually had the year wrong—you signed the Defense of Marriage Act. Do you think Americans—and, politically, that was a hard issue for everyone in Congress, as well as you. Do you think Americans will ever come to the point where they can find same-sex marriage acceptable?

The President. I don't know the answer to that. But again, I think that under the law, gay couples who have manifested a genuine commitment should have all the legal options that others do, whether it's how they leave their estates or cover their partners with health insurance on the job or such simple things as the right to visit hospital beds during family visiting hours, you know, the whole panoply of things.

And then I think that when people come to respect that, and people will put their own words to whatever the relationship is and it will—the main thing is that we recognize the integrity of commitments and the right citizens have to leave their property and take care of the health of people they love and all the things that people do.

Also, I think one of the things that may impact this debate in the future is the parallel debate that's going on in some places still over adoptions, because you see more and

more gay couples adopting kids. Very often, they're children who wouldn't be taken by other people or who haven't been. And I think that's going to have an impact on people.

I've always felt that all those anti-adoption laws were wrong. I think that the present law is the right—the historical, almost common law standard in America, although it's in statute now and our country is—these decisions should be made based on what's best for the child. I think that responsible childrearing is the most important work of any society. And insofar as people see it being done by gay couples, I think that will add to a bill's support for fair treatment.

Mr. Bull. Have your own views on same-sex marriage, itself—not on civil union or domestic partnership legislation—changed since '96?

The President. My views were and are that people who have a relationship ought to be able to call it whatever they want. And insofar as it's sanctified by a religious ceremony, that's up to the churches involved. And I always thought that.

I think what happened in the Congress was that a lot of people who didn't want to be anti-gay didn't feel that they should be saying that as a matter of law, without regard to what various churches or religions or others thought, that the United States policy was that all unions that call themselves marriages are, as a matter of law, marriages. I don't think we're there yet.

But I think that what we ought to do is to get the legal rights straightened out and let time take it's course, and we'll see what happens.

Gay Support

Mr. Bull. Just two or three more questions. With your political troubles with the GOP and the House, polls showed that gays and lesbians, along with African-Americans, were among your staunchest supporters. They really rallied to your cause and thought it was very, by and large—you know, there are certainly gay Republicans who would disagree—felt that you were being treated unfairly, your private life being used against you.

How do you feel about that support that you got from——

The President. First of all, I was honored to have it. And secondly, I think that partly it came out of the same wellspring of experience that prompted so many African-Americans to stick with me. They've been there. The people who've been targeted, who've been publicly humiliated and abused, I think, identified with what was going on, because they knew, the whole world, if anybody had been paying attention, knew by then that the whole Whitewater thing was a fraud—it never amounted to anything, which has now been acknowledged—that the civil lawsuit against me was also totally unmeritorious, as even the judge said.

So they knew that basically the whole thing was just a vehicle to try to find some last, desperate way to undermine the result of two elections and what I was trying to do for the America people and the fact that I tried to be a President for people who had been left out, left behind, ignored, and kicked, as well as for the vast majority of the American people that just needed somebody to do the right things in Washington.

So I think that there were a lot of people that knew what it was like to take a bullet, and they saw it for what it was.

Religious Right

Mr. Bull. Gays and lesbians are often the target of really unrelenting attacks from the right wing, especially religious conservatives like Falwell and Robertson. They've sometimes turned their focus on you, as well. Does that enhance your empathy for the plight that gays and lesbians sometimes experience?

The President. Yes, although I always——

Mr. Bull. I mean, has it surprised you, the——

The President. ——my empathy level was pretty high. Does it surprise me that they hated me as much as they did? A little bit. But I think there are two things. First of all, for all their railing against entitlements on behalf of poor people, a lot of those people have a sense of entitlement to cultural superiority and political power. And they don't think anybody that's not part of their crowd has a right to cultural legitimacy or political

power. And before '92, I think most of them thought no Democrat would ever win again. They thought they had this little proven formula, you know, to sort of portray us as enemies of ordinary Americans—to use a phrase that Newt Gingrich used against me and my wife. I think that was part of it.

And I think the other thing is, I think that one of the reasons they disliked me especially is that they see me as an apostate because I'm a southern white male Protestant, and southern white male Protestants have been the backbone of their political and social power, because we tend to be more politically and socially conservative.

So I think those are the two things that prompted it. Maybe they just don't like me. You know that old joke about the guy that falls off the mountain? He said, "God, why me?" And He said, "Son, there's just something about you I don't like." [*Laughter*] So maybe that's it. I don't know. [*Laughter*]

Boy Scouts

Mr. Bull. Boy Scouts of America, the Supreme Court decision upholding the Scouts' right to determine their own membership criteria and exclude gay Scouts. Members of Congress have asked you to resign your honorary position. Would you be willing to do that?

The President. Let me ask you a fact question, first. The Girl Scouts have a different policy, don't they?

Mr. Bull. Yes, they have no policy.

The President. Well, I can tell you that my present inclination is that I shouldn't do it, because I think the Scouts do a world of good and because I think they can be persuaded to change. I think the policy is wrong, and I've made it quite clear that I think their policy is wrong. And they certainly know where I stand on it. I believe they'll change, and I think we should keep working on them.

But I don't know that it wouldn't do more harm than good, especially now, at the end of my tenure, for me just to do what would be a symbolic act of resignation. I also really appreciate a lot of the good they've done, especially with inner-city kids and poor kids, and I don't think we should negate the good they've done or we try to change what's wrong.

I think they're afraid. And I think there are all these, sort of, preconceptions—that I think are totally wrong—that gay adults are more likely to abuse children than straight adults. And if you look at the evidence every year in cases of child abuse that have a sexual component, there's just no evidence to support that. But I think there's a fear factor there.

Mr. Bull. But aren't those kids that you're talking about, that are being helped by the Scouts, being taught that they can mistreat gay kids, gay kids are second class?

The President. If I thought they were doing that—you know, one of the things that bothered me about the military situation is I thought there was an affirmative, anti-gay bias in the military. And there still is in some places. But as I said, I'm convinced Secretary Cohen is making an aggressive effort to deal with that now. If I thought they were, that would have some impact on me. I don't—if that's going on, I don't know about it. It may, but nobody——

Mr. Bull. Just the policy of exclusion would imply——

The President. ——nobody has ever given me information about that. I think it's much more a function of their buying into the presumption that, particularly, gay Scout leaders would be more likely to have some sort of improper influence on the kids, rather than being inherently anti-gay.

AIDS

Mr. Bull. Can I just throw in one question, because we haven't addressed AIDS?

The President. Sure. Yes, do that.

Mr. Bull. We probably should get that in; I'm sorry. Because of the advances of AIDS treatment and the decline in death rates, it's hard to maintain the sense of urgency about ending this disease. You've worked on it a lot during your two administrations. How can we maintain that sense of urgency to conquer it?

The President. The first thing I think we have to do is to keep in mind, keep the public in mind that there are 40,000 new cases every year, and that more than half of them affect children and young people under 25. That's a lot.

The second thing I would say is, I do believe there is overwhelming bipartisan consensus in the Congress and in the country to continue looking for a cure and to continue investing in that.

And thirdly, there is overwhelming bipartisan consensus to continue, I think, the very large funding levels that we've achieved in CARE. So I think we're in reasonably good shape on that.

The next big step that I think will keep a sense of urgency is to really internationalize the struggle, to recognize America's responsibility to deal with the global AIDS crisis and to understand that the relationship between AIDS at home and AIDS abroad is quite a close one, especially with borders being as open as they are now, a lot of immigrants coming here every year, and our responsibilities and the rest of the world and our hopes for the rest of the world—particularly in our outreach to Africa, to the Indian subcontinent, and increasingly to the states of the former Soviet Union, where the AIDS rates are growing very rapidly—our ability to do what we're trying to do in those areas will turn, in no small part, on our ability to work with them, to help them reverse the epidemic.

You're going to have African countries—I've had an unprecedented outreach to Africa, and we just passed this big trade bill with Africa, and we're trying to get debt relief for the poorest African countries that are being well run. But there are countries over there that last year had very high growth rates, that within 10 years to 15 years will have more people in their sixties than in their thirties in those countries because of the AIDS epidemic. Their economies, their societies are very likely to become largely dysfunctional, along with their political systems, unless we can do something to turn the AIDS epidemic.

I think we can keep more edge on the fight against AIDS at home if we marry it more closely to the fight against AIDS around the world.

Mr. Bull. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

The President. I enjoyed the visit.

Mr. Bull. I appreciate it very much.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview began at 12:47 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route from Andrews Air Force Base, MD, to Dallas, TX, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 23. In his remarks, the President referred to Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; Dennis and Judy Shepard, parents of murder victim Matthew Shepard; Commander David O'Malley, Laramie, WY, Police Department, who investigated Shepard's murder; gay activist and author David Mixner; and Marty Rouse, assistant to the Secretary of Health and Human Services. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks on the Establishment of a National Drunk Driving Standard

October 23, 2000

Good morning. I really believe that everything that needs to be said about this has just been said. I want to thank Millie Webb for sharing her story and for her crusading leadership. I want to thank another person who is here today, Brenda Frazier, who came to the White House in 1998 to talk about the tragic death of her 9-year-old daughter, Ashley, by a drunk driver.

And I want to thank all the members of Mothers Against Drunk Driving for the grassroots campaign that has galvanized our Nation and changed the way we think and now, thank goodness, the way policymakers behave when it comes to this issue.

I thank you, Secretary Slater. And I thank all the Members of Congress who have worked on this. We did have strong bipartisan support. It finally was able to overcome the lobbying pressure that Millie described.

But I want to say a special word of appreciation to Representative Nita Lowey from New York, who is here to my right, and to Senator Frank Lautenberg. They have worked for more than 5 years on this legislation, and we wouldn't be here today without their leadership.

And let me say a special word of good wishes to Senator Lautenberg. He is retiring after 18 years in the Senate. And he is leaving a true legacy as a champion for the children, the families, and the economy of this Nation, and we wish him well. Thank you, Frank.

I'd also like to thank the other members of the administration who are here, who

worked on this legislation, including Admiral Loy, the Commander of the Coast Guard, and others from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Defense. And I'd like to welcome the mayor of Chicago, Richard Daley, here and congratulate him on the things that Chicago has in this transportation bill—[*laughter*]—once again showing that his influence reaches beyond the city limits of the Windy City.

Let me say to all of you that, for me, this is a very good day for the United States. This .08 standard is the biggest step to toughen drunk driving laws and reduce alcohol related crashes since a national minimum drinking age was established a generation ago. It is estimated by the experts that have studied it that it will save at least 500 lives every year. How often do we get a chance to begin a good morning and a good week by saving 500 lives a year?

I appreciate what Millie said, that we sounded the call here at the White House for a .08 standard in all 50 States over 2½ years ago. It has been an uphill battle. But the victory came because there were Members of Congress in both parties who worked with a collation of health and safety organizations to do the right thing. It came because young people, parents, and communities recognized the problem and decided to do something about it. But mostly, let's face it, it came because people like Millie Webb and Brenda Frazier and their families decided to take their grief and make something good happen for the rest of America. No point in our kidding ourselves, the rest of us would have never defeated the lobbying interests that were against this legislation if it hadn't been for the people who were willing to honor their loved ones by standing up and being counted and fighting until this day came to pass.

We have been working for years now to increase awareness, strengthen laws, toughen enforcement. Five years ago I signed a zero-tolerance law for underage drinking and driving. [*Applause*] I'm glad you like that. You know, the surveys always tell you, if you talk about something that happened more than a year ago, it has a limited public response. [*Laughter*] And I always pointed out, it may be limited, but it's enthusiastic. [*Laughter*]

Two years ago I took executive action to make .08 the limit on Federal property, and we launched a public education campaign on drunk driving. This year the Departments of Transportation and Justice have released about $60 million to help communities combat drunk driving and underage drinking and to increase seatbelt use.

And Secretary Slater, I just want to say at this moment how much I appreciate what you have done. You know, this man and I have worked together for 18 years now. I've aged quite a lot, and he looks just about like he did 18 years ago. [*Laughter*] He was a very young man when he came to work for me, and I have seen him grow and mature. And I think you'd be hard-pressed to name another person who served as Secretary of Transportation with greater distinction and who has not only tried to get more money for roads and bridges, more money for airports, more money for rail and mass transit—and we're still working on high-speed rail—but he's also tried to humanize the face of transportation and save lives. And I am very grateful to him, as well.

Thanks to all these folks' efforts, we are making progress. Last year people killed in alcohol-related crashes dropped to an all-time low. But that low figure was a shocking 15,700 people, including more than 2,200 children. Now, I think we all know that as many people as we have driving our Nation's highways and all the countless miles that are driven, there will never be a year when no one will lose their life on the highway because of a mechanical failure or because an exhausted driver trying to reach a family emergency falls asleep or because something else happens. But if you could just take away the alcohol-related deaths, the number would drop to a breathtaking low.

Alcohol is still the single greatest factor in motor vehicle deaths and injuries. This law, .08, is simply a commonsense way to help stop that. The science has been clear for a long time. People that have that much alcohol in their blood are too impaired to drive safely. Judgment, reaction times, and other critical driving skills are severely diminished. When a driver with a .08 blood level turns the ignition, that driver is turning a car into a lethal weapon.

The law is effective. The National Transportation Safety Administration study found that Illinois, after adopting the .08 standard, reduced the number of drinking drivers involved in fatal crashes by about 14 percent. The law is reasonable. It is not, contrary to what some of the propaganda against this said, about just having a drink or two after dinner. There is more involved here. Lowering the limit will make responsible Americans take even greater care when they drink alcohol in any amounts, if they intend to drive, and it should, in any amounts.

Today's success is just one more example of what we do when we come together to meet common challenges, to help our children's future and make our communities stronger. We have to keep working together, because there are still too many drunk drivers, and there will still be too many after this law passes.

So I urge the American people to take notice of this day and, mostly, to take notice of the stories of the Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Talk with your friends, your coworkers, your neighbors, your family members. Make sure there is a designated driver, and teach children about the dangers of drunk driving.

This .08 measure, as I said, is part of a larger transportation bill that I signed that will also improve roads and bridges and airports and mass transit. It will also enhance the safety and performance of the transportation system itself in the new century. But I can't let this day go without saying that we're now in the fourth week of November and the work of the budget was supposed to be completed on October the 30th. I mean, we're in the fourth week of October. The work of the budget is supposed to be completed September 30th. [*Laughter*] I'm still not over flying to Egypt and back in 3 days. I'm sorry.

But anyway, you get the point. We're 3 weeks late, and we don't have a budget. Last week I signed another continuing resolution to keep the Government open until Wednesday, but I told the leadership that if we don't make this deadline, we're going to have to go forward on a day-by-day basis because Congress expects us to get the job done.

I must say, this is the most unusual thing I've ever seen. I would have thought that Congress would want to get the job done so they could go home and run for reelection. And I say that not in a negative way. I think that's an honorable part of our system. We need to finish our business here. We need especially to get an education budget that is worthy of our children, that builds on what works, continues to hire 100,000 teachers, helps communities build or modernize schools, expands the after-school programs and college opportunities, and helps to put a qualified, certified teacher in every classroom.

This is Monday morning, and the children are at school. The parents are at work, and Congress comes back tonight to go to work. Today we have celebrated the best of the American political system. Citizens came together, told their stories, overcame obstacles, and after years of fighting, made America a safer, more humane, more decent place. This proves that our system can work. And what we need to do is to bring these values and this kind of effort to the remaining few days of Congress, so that we can together do more things that are worthy of the great people we serve and the great system we're privileged to be a part of.

Thank you very much, and good morning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Millie Webb, national president, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. Prior to his remarks, the President signed H.R. 4475, the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, in the Oval Office. H.R. 4475, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 106–346.

Statement on Signing the Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001

October 23, 2000

I am pleased to sign into law today H.R. 4475, the "Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001." The Act provides over $58 billion in funding for the Nation's vital transportation

safety and infrastructure investment needs. The transportation safety improvements contained in this legislation will save lives on our highways and other transportation systems, and the record level of infrastructure investment will help improve the conditions and performance of the Nation's transportation system in support of a strong economy.

The legislation provides critical transportation safety funding and also contains related legislative provisions. Of particular importance is a provision that will help set a national impaired driving standard at 0.08 Blood Alcohol Content and thus reduce drunk driving on our Nation's roads. As I have previously said, this is a reasonable, commonsense standard that could save 500 lives a year, while still permitting adults to drink responsibly and moderately. I wish to commend Senators Lautenberg and Shelby, Congressman Wolf, and Congresswoman Lowey for their bipartisan efforts in seeking inclusion of this provision. The legislation also includes a compromise measure that will enable the Department of Transportation to proceed with all stages of rulemaking, short of a final rule, on "hours of service" concerning the amount of time drivers of large interstate trucks and buses can spend behind the wheel. It also permits the Department to move forward with its proposal for rollover ratings on cars and light trucks while the National Academy of Sciences studies this issue. In addition, the legislation contains funding increases requested by my Administration for motor carrier safety, pipeline safety, and the automotive defect investigation program.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 provides the funding levels required by the Federal Aviation Administration and the Coast Guard. I am particularly pleased with increased funding for modernization of our aviation system envisioned in the Wendell H. Ford Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century.

I am disturbed by the provision of H.R. 4475 that blocks the Department of Transportation from evaluating the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. Recent data indicate that motor vehicle fuel economy efficiency has declined. I believe that the Department should be allowed to analyze this issue, and I expect the Department to work with the National Academy of Sciences to carry out the CAFE study authorized by the bill to develop workable approaches to energy conservation. The Act provides important funding for Job Access grants that will help hard-pressed working families, including former welfare recipients, get to work. I am disappointed, however, that the bill provides $50 million less than our request for these grants, earmarks 75 percent of the program, and does not include my Administration's proposal to allow Native American tribes to apply directly for this funding.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 contains $600 million for the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. When added to the $900 million already appropriated, this will complete the Federal Government's contribution to this bridge. Likewise, I am pleased that the bill includes an additional $25 million for Indian Reservation Roads.

Our transportation investment must continue to be intermodal and applied to critical needs. Excessive earmarking can undermine this goal, which is why I am disappointed with the widespread earmarking of vital highway, airport, and transit construction and research programs contained in the Act. This earmarking is without regard to criteria established to ensure that these are sound investments. Many earmarks are aimed at projects that have not advanced in the local planning process, and the funding will often lie unused for a long period of time. This deprives ready-to-go projects of needed Federal assistance. I ask the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to work with the Department of Transportation to see that essential projects that can quickly utilize Federal funding are able to move forward.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 includes additional requested resources for the Internal Revenue Service to implement the bipartisan IRS reform legislation enacted in 1998. The Act also responds to my request for additional resources for counterterrorism programs in the Department of the Treasury, thereby enhancing the Federal Government's efforts to deter and detect terrorist activity and to continue the high level of effort undertaken during Millennium celebration events.

I am pleased that H.R. 4475 includes funding the Unanticipated Needs account, which can be used by the President to meet needs in furtherance of the national interest, security, or defense. I am especially pleased this account includes the funding I sought to assist the people of Puerto Rico in deciding their islands' future status, an issue that the Puerto Ricans have long asked us to clarify. Other Presidents and I have sought legislative action, and there has been some, but this is the first piece of legislation passed by both Houses of Congress that supports Puerto Rico choosing its future status. The account also provides funds to educate Puerto Ricans on the available options, relying on the Office of the President to ensure the options presented to the voters are realistic in light of the Constitution and the basic laws and policies of the United States. Once the options have been presented, the account also funds a vote by the Puerto Rican people to choose what their status should be. I am already working to clarify the options, and I am also working to ensure that the next President will continue the effort to resolve this issue.

I also note that language purporting to require congressional committee approval for a plan to spend certain funds is unconstitutional under the Supreme Court's holding in *INS* v. *Chadha*, 462 U.S. 919 (1983). In addition, section 347 purports to restrict the contents and form of the President's budgetary proposal. This provision would interfere with the President's constitutional power to recommend legislation and will accordingly be construed as advisory.

Overall, H.R. 4475 makes a positive contribution to meeting the transportation and other needs of this country. I am pleased to sign it into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 23, 2000.

NOTE: H.R. 4475, approved October 23, was assigned Public Law No. 106–346.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Maurice D. Hinchey in Kingston, New York

October 23, 2000

Thank you very much. First of all, thank you for the wonderful welcome. I am delighted to be here. You may know that on the way over here today, I stopped at your local elementary school and shook hands with the principal, the teachers, and as many of the eager students as I could reach. [*Laughter*] And they made a lot of wonderful signs, and I signed them, and I'm very grateful for that. I had a great time.

I also went across the street and shook hands with the kids at the pizza place. [*Laughter*] But because I was a little late, I didn't have one. [*Laughter*] I want to thank Mayor Gallo and Assemblyman Cahill and the other local officials who are here—John Parete, the Ulster County Democratic chairman. And most of all, I want to say I'm honored to be here for Maurice Hinchey.

We came in together, but I want to make absolutely sure he's still there when I go. [*Laughter*] We have fought our fights together. He has taken the risks that I have taken to try to turn the economy around and pull the country together and move us forward.

I'm especially grateful for his leadership for the Patients' Bill of Rights, to put medical decisions back into the hands of medical professionals and their patients; for a Medicare drug program that would provide all of our seniors access to affordable prescription drugs; for our education initiatives and, especially, our school construction initiative, which would give States like New York that have either overcrowded or falling down schools the funds they need to help repair or build or modernize schools without putting all of the burden on the local property taxpayers; and for his help for the environment, because one of the things I was determined to do when I became President is to prove we could grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time.

You know, when things go well, the President tends to get credit, and when they don't,

well, that's the way it goes. [*Laughter*] Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here." But sometimes I think the credit should be more broadly shared, first and foremost with the American people. But you need to know that on more than one occasion, the critical initiative, beginning with our economic plan in 1993, has passed by one vote in Congress. So, if it hadn't been for Maurice and people like him, so much of the good things that we have been able to do for America over the last 8 years would not have been possible, and you need to keep him right where he is.

I would also like to say a few words about this Senate race, in which I have a passing interest. [*Laughter*] And I would like to say a few words about Vice President Gore and Senator Lieberman.

But I want to begin by just making two introductory comments. First of all, my heart is filled with gratitude for the people of the United States and especially to the people of New York, who have been so wonderful to me through two elections, giving me the State's 33 electoral votes, along with Al Gore. Last time, about 59 percent of the vote in 52 of the 62 counties supported our efforts, and you will never know how grateful I am.

Secondly, as Maurice said, for all the celebrations we've had in the last few days, our 8-year long effort to stand against ethnic cleansing and genocide and abuse in the Balkans, beginning with our efforts to stop the war in Bosnia, to roll back the expulsion of the people in Kosovo, the embargo on Serbia. Now we have a genuinely elected President there, committed to the rule of law.

We have the President of South Korea winning the Nobel Peace Prize, which he richly deserved, a lifetime of struggle for democracy, first in his own country, narrowly escaping death, partly thanks to President Jimmy Carter over 20 years ago, and now opening the way to North Korea. And the United States supported that policy and, I think, had a significant impact on its success. And now Secretary Albright is there, and we have some hope of resolving our outstanding differences with North Korea and looking forward to the day when they will truly close the last chapter in the aftermath of the Korean war.

That's all been very moving, but it is punctuated and overshadowed now by the terrible violence in the Middle East, which also occurred at the same time that we lost 17 fine young men and women in the United States Navy in the terrorist attack on our ship in Aden, Yemen. I don't want to say too much about that today except I'm working on it, and my experience has been, in these matters, that the less you say publicly, the more likely you are to get done.

The point I want to make is, when I see, around the world, how people continue to struggle with their differences—with their religious, their racial, their ethnic differences—how people continue to misunderstand each other; how after working together for 7 years for the cause of peace, with occasional difficulties but never anything like this, the thing could get off the tracks like this, it makes me so grateful that our country has been so blessed to be the most diverse it has ever been and yet to be more united and making more progress and moving forward.

And the main thing I want to say to you today is, I've never thought much about the ability of one elected official to influence another one's race, so I don't know that I can convince anybody to vote for Maurice or Hillary or the Vice President. But what I would like to say is, I'd like to just share with you from my heart what I think the issues are and what I hope you will say to your friends and neighbors, because there's no doubt that citizens influence one another's opinions.

And if you think about—Hillary said this last night, and I had never quite thought of it this way, but she said, "You know, it was very hard for us to go down to that memorial service for the sailors and their families at the U.S.S. *Cole.*" People often ask me what the most difficult days of my Presidency are, and bar none, they have been the days when I had to go greet the families of people who were killed because of their service for the United States in the Embassies in Africa, in Ron Brown's plane, Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. It is very difficult.

But what my wife said last night that I would like to echo is, you know, the rest of us are not asked to put our lives on the line, and most of the people were so young. I think the oldest one was 31, but many of them

were just 19. Many of them were younger than my daughter. And the least we can do is to be grateful for the progress of this country, to be proud of it, to show up and vote, and to take the next 2 weeks to discuss with our friends and neighbors and co-workers and family members what we think this is about. And so that's the spirit in which I would like to speak to you today.

Things are going well for this country, and we have—this is the first time in my lifetime where we've had at the same time so much economic prosperity and social progress, with the absence of domestic crisis and foreign threat. And so we have before us the chance to build the future of our dreams for our children.

And this election ought to be a feast for America. People shouldn't feel bad about the fact that nothing bad is happening. They should feel good about it. [*Laughter*] But they should understand that sometimes it's harder to make a good decision when times are good than when they're bad.

There's not a person in this room over 30 years old that hasn't made at least one mistake in their life, not because your life was going so badly but because things were going so well, you thought there was no penalty for the failure to concentrate. Isn't that right? Isn't that right? It's true. [*Laughter*] And all of the younger people are looking at those who are laughing and—[*laughter*]—time will take care of it. You will soon know about that. [*Laughter*]

So what I have urged my friends to do in the Democratic House and the Senate and in advancing the Vice President's cause and Hillary's cause is just to strive for clarity. I really think, you know, the American people nearly always make the right decision if they have enough information and enough time. If they didn't, we wouldn't still be around here after 224 years.

So, from my point of view, this is what I would like you to know. First, I would like to say about my wife, that for 30 years, as long as I've known her—and I met her almost 30 years ago—her obsession has been the welfare of children and families. She took an extra year when we were in law school to study at the Yale Hospital and Child Study Center, so when she got out of law school, she would understand precisely how the law affected young children and their parents. And it has been the driving obsession of her whole life.

She has spent most of the last 30 years working on education, health care, and other children's and families' issues, and also working on the relationship between education and economic development and, specifically, how to get jobs into places that aren't growing as fast as the economy as a whole is growing.

And she went on corporate boards when we lived in Arkansas. She did a lot of work trying to figure out how to get investment into areas where it was needed, which is a big issue for upstate New York this year. And that's a subject that she's worked on for 20 years, so when she talks about it, it's not something that just sort of occurred to her when she started coming up here to see you.

The second thing I would like to say is that, for the last 8 years in the White House, she has perhaps been the most active First Lady in history, certainly had the broadest range of interests since Eleanor Roosevelt. She has worked on—the first thing she worked on was trying to help pass the first bill I signed, the family and medical leave law, which over 20 million Americans have now used to take some time off from work when a baby is born or a parent is sick, without losing their job. It is a great piece of legislation.

And she was very active in our health care efforts, even though we knew it was controversial, and in the end we got a lot done. Medicare was supposed to go broke last year when I took office. It now has 26 more years of life, something that you should remember when people ask you what we did.

We passed the bill that says you can keep your health insurance if you change jobs or if someone in your family gets sick. That's important. And we passed the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest expansion of child health since Medicaid was enacted in 1965, which has now given us a decline in the number of uninsured people for the first time in 12 years.

She worked to find out more about the illnesses of veterans in the Gulf war and whether we should be doing more to help

them, totally an issue that she just got interested in because nobody else was working on it. She didn't want those folks ignored.

She thought up the idea of celebrating the coming of the millennium by having a project that imagined the future and honored our past, and her Millennium Treasures Project is now the largest historic preservation project in the history of the United States—$100 million in private and public money together. And a lot of the places preserved have been in New York, places like George Washington's revolutionary headquarters, Harriet Tubman's home, parts of the Underground Railroad—things that will go to places, many of them not doing so well economically, that will make them much more attractive for tourists, build community pride, and change their future.

So I'm very proud of what she has done as First Lady. And I'm especially proud that she's been to more countries than any other person in that position, ever. She says I shouldn't say that, because there's a lot more countries now than there used to be. [*Laughter*] After the fall of the Berlin Wall, it's sort of not a fair comparison. But she's spoken out for women's rights, for the rights of children, trying to get more kids in school. She's pointed out that national security involves more than just military aid, that we have to have education and health care and environment partnerships around the world.

We have to work together to roll back the tides of AIDS and TB and malaria, which together kill one-fourth of all the people who die every year on this Earth. And she's had a special role in the tough spots. She was very, very active in bringing women together and working with them in the Northern Ireland peace process. She spent a lot of time in Israel pursuing our twin goals of the security of Israel and the long-term necessity of resolving the matter through peaceful negotiations. And she's been to see our soldiers in Kosovo and Bosnia several times. I'm very proud of what she has done.

And what I'd like to say to you is that, of all the people I've known in public life, I've never known anybody over 30 years—and in spite of the fact that we all say harsh things about each other at election time, the truth is that most people in public life I've known are honest, work hard, and do what they think is right. Otherwise, we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. But I've never met anybody that had a better combination of brainpower with a great heart and compassion who would just consistently, day-in and day-out, work for what she believed in, never get tired. She spent 30 years working for other people. As far as I know, this is the first time in 30 years she ever asked anybody to do anything for her, and she had a hard time doing it. I said, "You've got to ask people to vote for you. You've got to ask people to contribute to you." She said, "I'm used to asking them to do that for you. It's hard to ask them to do that for me."

I think it's very important, if you're going to elect a Senator to succeed Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the most accomplished people to serve in the United States Senate in the 20th century, to succeed Robert Kennedy—he held that seat—you need a good partner for Senator Schumer. And New York has got a lot of big things on the agenda, and there are a lot of things that have to be done for America.

I have never known anybody with the combination of brains, compassion, heart, and the ability to get things done that she does. She will be a great Senator if you make sure she wins.

I want to say something about the Vice President. He has been a big part of all the success that we've enjoyed in the last 8 years and the decisions we made that were good. One of the things that President Kennedy said in more eloquent words—I wish I could remember exactly what he said—but he said, the Presidency basically is a place of decision; it's important that you work hard. And I think I've met that standard. But he has worked as hard as I have. But in the end, hard work is not enough. You also have to make good decisions, and that requires a certain level of experience, a certain level of judgment, a certain instinct.

And he was right when he supported our economic program. Maurice talks about it. He had to cast the tiebreaking vote in the Senate, or it would have been defeated. And that's what turned this whole budget around, got interest rates down, got investment up, and got the economy going. He supported

the efforts we made to reform the welfare system. We now have cut the welfare rolls in half, and families and children are better off, not worse off, as predicted.

He led our reinventing Government program. You know, sometimes our friends in the other party talk about how they're against big Government. But the facts are that under Al Gore's leadership, we reduced the size of the civil Government to its lowest size since 1960, when President Kennedy was running for office and Dwight Eisenhower was still President.

Under Al Gore's leadership, we have reduced 16,000 pages of Federal regulations which were on the book in the previous administration. We have reduced regulations in the Department of Education alone, regulations on States and school districts, by two-thirds. You don't have to keep that a secret if you don't want to. [*Laughter*] You can tell people that. I think it's an important part of the record.

He has—I don't know if you saw the announcement last week. General Motors announced that they had developed a car that will get 80 miles a gallon, which is the target they set in the beginning of our administration when we organized something under Al Gore's leadership called the Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicle.

You're all worried about the price of home heating oil this winter. We're all worried about what happens if there is instability in the Middle East with the price of oil. But I'm telling you, the answer is, more conservation, alternative sources of energy, free up the oil that is there for the things we need, like home heating oil. Now, if we get 80 miles to the gallon—and when GM made the announcement, they said that their participation in this Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicles project made it possible.

Al Gore also led our efforts to adopt a telecommunications law, a big bipartisan law that we passed 4 or 5 years ago that's created hundreds of thousands of jobs, thousands of new businesses, and something called the E-rate, which we fought hard for, and he led the fight, which enables every school and hospital to afford to hook up to the Internet.

Now, when we started this project in 1994, trying to get all our schools hooked up, we had only—listen to this—we had about 15 percent of the schools and only 4 percent of the classrooms in the entire country were connected to the Internet. Today, 95 percent of the schools and 65 percent of the total classrooms are connected. And part of the reason is the E-rate; people can afford to hook onto the Internet to give kids in the poorest schools in this country access to tomorrow's information and tomorrow's economy.

Now, these are big things that he did. He also led our efforts on arms control, in many, many important other areas. So you cannot cite any person, I believe, in the history of the country who, in the position of Vice President, had the impact that he had. And I think that's very significant for this election.

Now, let me just say this. It seems to me there are four things I'd like you to consider. Maurice said, "Tell your weather story." I told the Congress, our crowd in the Congress, last week that those who were on our side needed to think of themselves as America's weather corps in the next 2 weeks, because if things were clear to the American people, we would win, and if things were cloudy, we might be in trouble. So we wanted clear. We need for people to understand clearly what the issues are.

And again I say, that in a positive, happy sense. I think this could be the most positive election we've had in a month of Sundays. You don't have to be mad at anybody. You can posit the fact that your opponents are honorable, good people and that they will do what they believe is right, and we'll do what we believe is right. So what we need to do is make sure the voters know exactly what the differences are and then let the voters make up their minds.

I trust the American people. And I trust the people of New York to do the right thing. But I think there are—let me just make these four arguments for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary and Maurice.

Number one, we've got to keep this prosperity going. You know, just looking around upstate New York, there are places and communities that still haven't fully participated in this economic recovery. Now, we've got a special program we're trying to pass to give extra incentives to get people to invest there.

But to get there you've got to keep the overall prosperity going; you've got to keep unemployment down and labor markets tight. If you want investments to flow to inner-city neighborhoods, rural towns, Indian reservations, you name it—anybody that's been left behind—the economy has got to be strong to get people to invest there. This is a huge deal—plus which, it benefits all the rest of you if the economy keeps going.

Now, I believe it is critical to do that, to adopt a policy that our side, all of our candidates have espoused, which is, "We'll give you a tax cut, but it's considerably smaller than the other guy's, even though most middle-class people are better off under ours, because we think we've got to save some money for education and health care, and we have to get America out of debt. We've got to keep paying down the debt until America is debt-free. We can do it in 12 years and put us out of debt for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President."

Now, why should that be important to you? Why should that be important to the young people in the uniforms back there who have been serving your meal, besides the fact that it sounds good? Because we live in a global economy; a trillion dollars moves around the world every day, crossing national borders. And that means if we keep interest rates lower by paying down the debt, it means for all of you lower home mortgage payments, lower college payments, college loan payments, lower car payments, lower credit card payments. It means lower business loans—costs, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market.

So if you keep interest rates down, everybody benefits—all the working people, all the business people, all the people on Wall Street, everybody else. And that is very, very important. And we have a program that will permit the country, under the Vice President's leadership, to do that.

By contrast, the size of their tax cuts plus the cost of their Social Security privatization program plus their spending promises means they can't do that. They can't get America out of debt. The numbers won't add up. So this is a significant difference. You just have to decide whether it's important to you or not.

But let me just give you an example. If you keep interest rates one percent lower a year than they would otherwise be, the American people save $390 billion on home mortgages alone; $30 billion dollars on car payments; $15 billion on college loans. That's a $400 billion tax cut right there, in lower interest rates. But people have to understand. That's a big decision you need to make, and you can make it either way. We haven't been out of debt since 1835. You can say we'll just go on and have higher interest rates; take the money now and leave. But people need to understand what the decision is, and then we'll trust the American people to make the right decision. I think I know what they will decide if they clearly understand it.

The second decision I think is very important is whether we're going to build on the progress that we've made in other areas over the last 8 years or reverse that. Now, let's just look at some of those areas, if I could. In welfare, I've already said, welfare rolls are half what they were. The crime rate has dropped every year. It's now at a 26-year low; murder rate at a 33-year low; gun violence down 35 percent. In health care, we finally got the number of uninsured people going down because we're insuring more children.

In the environment, compared to 8 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; the food is safer. We've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps, and we've set aside more land in perpetuity for all time than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt a hundred years ago.

Now, I don't—and in education, let me just say something about that, that I think is very important for the American people to know. The dropout rate is down. Test scores in math, science, and reading are going up. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. There's been over a 50 percent increase in the number of our kids taking advanced placement courses and, among Hispanic kids, a 300 percent increase, among African-American kids, a 500 percent increase. And perhaps most important to me, more important than anything else, we have

evidence in every State in the country that schools that were once thought to be failing inevitably are turning around.

I was in a school in Harlem the other day where, 2 years ago, a grade school—listen to this—2 years ago, 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level. Today, just 2 years later—new principal, school uniform policy, high standards, accountability—74 percent of the kids' reading and math at or above grade level in 2 years—2 years.

So are we going to keep building on this or not? So in this election, we believe that our program put 100,000 police on the street, and now to add 50,000 more in high crime areas, had a lot to do with bringing the crime rate down. So does every policeman in America. They believe that's not a Federal responsibility, and they want to get rid of it. You have to decide, but it will make a difference.

In education, we believe that education is a constitutional responsibility of the States and an operational responsibility of the local districts but a national priority. And we think there's a limit to how much money local property taxpayers can come up with. So we've been paying for 100,000 teachers to make sure we have certified, well-trained teachers in the early grades to lower average class size to the point where the teachers can teach, and kids aren't sent to the fourth grade without the requisite reading and math and other skills they need.

We think this is important. We're about a third of the way through that program. Al Gore will continue it and build on it. So will Hillary. So will Maurice. They believe that is not a national decision, that we shouldn't have made that, and they ought to just block-grant the money, give it to the States, and see what happens. You can decide what you think, but people should know.

In the environment, we believe we've proved you can clean up the environment and grow the economy. They believe the air pollution laws are too tough and I went too far in protecting 43 million roadless acres in the national forests, even though the Audubon Society said it was the most significant conservation move in 40 years in the United States. They don't agree with that.

You get the drift here. It's not like there are no decisions. And I can make their argument. But you have to decide, and your friends and neighbors have to decide. So A, do you want to keep the prosperity going; B, do you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, or do you want to reverse course; C, who's the best qualified to meet the new challenges?

This is going to be a very new era. We have to close the digital divide. You know, we could create a new, gaping chasm in America and throughout the world if people everywhere don't have access to computers, know how to use them, can afford to log on to the Internet, and can get this information and know what it means.

We have to make the most of this new biotech revolution, which is one of the reasons I want to get medicine covered by seniors, because within the matter of a few years, you are going to see cures for Parkinson's, for Alzheimer's, for two or three different kinds of cancers. It's going to be amazing.

With the human genome coming out, new mothers will soon begin to come home with genetic maps of their babies, and it will rather quickly take average life expectancy from where it is now, at about 77, up to 90 years. There are young women in this room that will have babies that will be born with a life expectancy of 90 years. You mark my words.

Now, what does that mean? It means, among other things, we've got to figure out how to make sure these benefits are broadly shared, and it means that once all your medical and financial information is on somebody's computer, we've got to figure out how to protect your privacy rights, even as we make the most of this information. That's a big deal.

And I'd like to have somebody that really understands that. I mean, the other day, 425 high-tech executives including Vint Cerf, who really is one of the fathers of the Internet and sent the first E-mail ever sent, 18 years ago, to his then profoundly deaf wife, who now can hear for the first time since she was three because of a computer chip implanted in her ear.

They came out for Al Gore. Why? Because they know he understands the future, that he has thought about these things, that he

cares about them. He understands the energy future and what kind of changes we're going to have to make, and that's very important.

So how are you going to keep the prosperity going? Are you going to build on the progress or reverse course? Who understands the future best? And last, and maybe most important, how are we going to continue to build one America? The main reason I'm a Democrat is that we believe everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; everybody has a role to play; and we all do better when we help each other. That's what we believe.

Now, what does that mean? I believe—that's why we are for the minimum wage. That's why we're for stronger enforcement of equal pay laws to make sure women who do equal work get equal pay. That's why we're for hate crimes legislation. That's why we're for the deductibility of college tax tuition, because we think the people who serve this meal ought to have the same chance to send their kids to college as those of us who could afford to pay for it. That's what we believe.

So sometime between now and the next 2 weeks, I hope every day you will have some chance to talk about this election. And if somebody says, "Well, why are you for Hillary for Senator? Why are you for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? Why is Maurice Hinchey so great anyway about?" you need to say, "Look, there's four big things you've got to decide in this election. Number one, do you want to keep this prosperity going or not? If you do, you better pay down the debt and keep interest rates down, have a tax cut we can afford, and save some money to invest in education and our future.

"Number two, do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years or not? If you do, we better stay with the crime program, the education program, the health care program, the environmental program that have worked, that are moving this country in the right direction, not change course.

"Number three, we need people in office that think about the future and understand it.

"And number four and most important, we need people who really believe that we have to be one America across all the lines that divide us."

If people think about these issues in that way, we're going to have a great celebration November 7th.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. at the Hillside Manor Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor T.R. Gallo of Kingston; New York State Assemblyman Kevin Cahill; President Vojislav Kostunica of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; and Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Flushing, New York

October 23, 2000

Thank you very much, my long-time friend Tom Manton. You know, the story he told you was true. I was in Manhattan. They said, "We're going to the Queens Democratic Party. Congressman Manton is the chairman of the county party. If you do really well, they might endorse you." I said, "Well, what happens if they don't?" He said, "You'll lose Queens in the primary." [*Laughter*] "And we're going on the subway, and a television camera is going to follow you on the subway because they don't think anyone from Arkansas knows what a subway is." [*Laughter*]

So properly intimidated, I haul myself onto the subway. And it was fascinating, because no one in New York knew who I was, and yet, here is this camera with this bright light filming my every move. And all these people are dead-tired, and they're being elbowed around by this energetic camera person. They probably thought I was some—you know, in the precursor to "Survivor" or something—[*laughter*]—just some anonymous guy trying to make it out of Queens, on the subway, with a funny accent. It was funny.

So I was really apprehensive. We got to the meeting site, and I walked up the stairs, and the county committee clapped, and I walked down the middle of the aisle, not having a clue about what was going to happen.

And this African-American guy who was taller than me leaned over and put his arm around me and said, "Bill, don't worry. I was born in Hope, Arkansas, too. Everything is going to be fine here." [*Laughter*] And I thought, "Only in New York. This is great." [*Laughter*]

So thank you, Tom Manton, for being my friend, for helping me get off to a good start as President. I wish your successor, Joe Crowley, could be here tonight, but he and Kasey had a baby girl today, and we're really happy for them, and that's why they're not here. I always say, the Democratic Party has to be pro-work and pro-family. So tonight is Joe's pro-family night. I think we can give him an excused absence.

I want to thank the other Representatives who are here: Gary Ackerman, who was with me last night; and Greg Meeks; Anthony Weiner. I thank them for their leadership in the Congress. I thank them for their support of Hillary. I thank them for what they do for New York every day.

You know, when things go well, the President gets a lot of credit. But the truth is that over and above the American people, who deserve the lion's share of credit for every good thing that happens in this country, so much of what I have done would not have been possible if it hadn't been for the support of the Democrats in Congress. And that became even more true after we were in the minority. So I want you to know that these men have my undying loyalty and gratitude, because they have been wonderful to me, along with Senator Schumer and the other Democrats in the delegation.

I want to thank Alan Hevesi for being here, and your borough president, Claire Shulman, my long-time friend. Michael Reich, thank you for the work you do for the Democratic Party. And Alisa, you are great. You're going a long way. That was a great national anthem. And I want to thank Brian McLaughlin for making me feel welcome and being so kind to Hillary over these years and this last year of hard campaigning.

I was thinking about how I was introduced to Queens, by having this guy who was born in the same State I was, welcome me. And then I was thinking about all the times I've spent in Queens since then. I went to a Greek diner not very far from here a couple of times. I had a wonderful time in—I bet a lot of you have eaten there. Today I spent an hour and a half in the Jackson Hole Diner, near LaGuardia. I broke all my caloric rules. [*Laughter*]

While I was there, the guy that owns it—who grew up a block from the diner—but his manager is Vietnamese, and his mother still lives in Saigon. While I was there, I met this African-American guy and his wonderful young son named Miles, who asked me more questions about the White House than I could answer, so finally I just gave him a book about it. [*Laughter*] And the man said something to me that meant more to me than just about anything anybody could say. When I was walking out of the diner he said, "Mr. President, I just want you to know that the whole time you were there, I felt like it was my house, too."

I want to say to all of you, as America grows more diverse, that will be more important. Claire Shulman and I were at a school in Queens the other day that was built for 400 and has about 800 children, predominantly Asian-American and Latino, the new children coming there, Chinese-American, Indian-American. And then tonight I showed up, and I looked out at all of you. Welcome to 21st century America.

On the way out of the Jackson Hole Diner today there were two guys sitting outside drinking a beer, and I stopped and shook hands with them, and they said hello to me. And I said, "Where are you from in Ireland?" [*Laughter*] And they said they were both from the same little village in County Clare. And I said, "Did you know each other as children?" They said, "Yes, but we didn't like each other until we came to America." [*Laughter*] And I thought, "Oh, if I could just hold that thought."

There is a lady back there with a sign that says Croatian-Americans support Hillary. And I thank you for that.

And I guess I would like to just start with that. There are four things I want you to know about this election, four reasons you ought to be for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary and our side. And I'll start with what I usually leave for last.

We are committed, all of us, led by our candidate for President—the Vice President—to build one America across all the lines that divide us and to relate to the whole rest of the world, based on our values of peace and freedom and opportunity. We know that the world we're living in, the country we're living in, and whatever communities we're living in are growing increasingly more interdependent. And I am very grateful that we've had the chance, for example, to stand against ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, to stop the war in Bosnia and stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and stand with our embargo until Mr. Milosevic finally could be dislodged by the people of Serbia in a Democratic, true uprising of popular feeling.

And I want you to know that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary supported everything we ever did there. I don't know how many times Hillary went to the Balkans, not just with me but on her own, to support our troops, to meet with women who were struggling to get the Croatians and the Muslims and the Serbs together, across the ethnic and religious lines that divided them.

There were a lot of people that came through the line where I just was shaking hands a few moments ago, had Irish accents. And these two Irish guys asked me today, said, "Well, where is your family from?" And I said, "Well, we're from the wrong side of the line. We were from Roslea, County Fermanagh. But my oldest known homestead is right on the borderline of the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland." And this guy says, "So that's why you got involved?" [*Laughter*] I said, "Well, it was a reason."

No administration had ever tried to play a constructive role in resolving the difficulties in Northern Ireland before, for fear of interrupting our special relationship with Great Britain. I finally concluded that Great Britain would be better off with a minor interruption where, over the long run, they had a long-term settlement in Northern Ireland that was consistent with the interests of the people of the United States.

And I'm very, very grateful that Tony Blair and, before him, his predecessor, John Major, came to accept that and welcome our involvement. And I'm grateful for the work we've done. We're not out of the woods yet in the Irish peace process. There is still some work to be done to get the police force right and to get the decommissioning finished. But it's a lot, lot different than it was 8 years ago, and for that I'm grateful. And again, as Tom Manton said, Hillary went there a lot on her own, not just with me, to work with women who were committed to reaching across the lines of division there and putting their children first and finding ways to grow a grassroots economy and to relate to one another.

And of course, now, we're most concerned again about the recent tragic events in the Middle East. I promised myself when I ran for President that I would always be a friend of Israel, that the only way I could ever see that Israel could be secure in the long run would be to reach a fair, just, and lasting peace with its neighbors. And I had the great good fortune in the beginning of my term to work with Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin, one of the greatest human beings I ever met in my life. And we have made so much progress.

And I end with Israel for a couple of reasons. First of all, because here again not only have I spent more time on that, I suppose, than any other part of the world, but Hillary has gone there a lot on her own, without me, at the request of Mrs. Barak and others, to just try to keep pushing things forward. We've done everything we know to do.

But this is a cautionary reminder to all of us here in America. Look around the room at how quickly people who have even worked together for years can give into their fears and their misunderstandings and what turns out to be one bad day, turns out to be one bad week, turns out to be 2 bad weeks. And then all these unintended consequences flow.

The commitment of the United States to the security of Israel is as strong or stronger than it has ever been. But we shall also keep trying to stop the killing and to give them a chance to work their way back to the peace table.

And that brings me finally to something my wife said last night that, I must say, I identified with. She was talking about the memorial service we attended for the 14 young American sailors, men and women, who were killed on the United States Ship

Cole, by terrorists in Yemen, at the port of Aden.

Those are the toughest days I ever spent as President, in 8 years, by far—much worse than any political setback or anything else—going into room after room after room, seeing the parents of people, most of whom are less than half my age, or their wives or their children, people who had died serving the United States—the *Cole,* Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, our two Embassies in Africa, on Ron Brown's plane, and in other cases. It is unbelievable.

But I never went through one of those days without being profoundly grateful for these kids who get up every day and put the uniform of our country on and serve and do the best they can to represent us stunningly well, and have prevented more wars than you, even I, will ever know, and saved us more headaches just by going out there and putting themselves on the line every day than we will ever know.

And one of the things that is so moving is, if you look at our Armed Forces today, they all look like this room. They're from every different racial and religious and ethnic group, and they work together. And just sending them somewhere around the world is a profound statement about what we Americans believe about how people should celebrate their diversity but affirm the primary importance of our common humanity.

And that means, to me, two things. Number one, as Hillary said last night, we've all got to vote. The least we can do for those kids is vote. If they can put their uniform on and risk their lives, and sometimes give their lives, the least we can do is show up and be good citizens. Number two, we have to remember the lesson of who they are and how they worked together, as we stand for peace around the world and we work for one America here at home.

So I'll get back to the main point here. This is an increasingly interdependent world. The more we believe that everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other, the better we're going to do. The more we celebrate and find excitement in the differences among us but constantly reaffirm our common humanity, the better we're going to do.

For the Democrats, that means significant differences in approach, very often, from our friends in the other party. We're for strong hate crimes legislation that protects people without regard to race, age, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. We're for it, and they're not. We're for that. We are for stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws, because we don't think it's right for women to do the same work as men and not get equal pay for it. We believe that. We believe that we've got to go forward together. That's the first thing I want to say. And it's a big issue for the 21st century.

The second point I want to make is, you ought to be for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary if you want to keep this prosperity going. Just remember what it was like 8 years ago. You know, it may be hard to remember what it was like, but I do. That's how I got elected. The people of New York were very, very good to me in 1992, after making me run a gauntlet or two. [*Laughter*] That's just what you do—and I liked it, actually, once I realized what the deal was. [*Laughter*]

But we've come a long way. Now, our party has a plan: Give a tax cut that we can afford, concentrated on the main needs of middle class people to send their children to college; have long-term care for their elderly and disabled family members; have help for child care, help for retirement savings; give extra incentives to invest in poor urban neighborhoods and rural areas that have been left behind; but have a tax cut we can afford so we've got some money left over to invest in education, health care, the environment, and pay down the debt.

Now, you heard Tom talking about how we've turned the deficit to surplus. Why should the Democratic Party be for paying down the debt? Here's why. Because every day a trillion dollars cross national borders—every single day. Interest rates are set based on how responsible you are and how much money you need. The less money the Government takes, the more money is there for you, the American people, at lower prices.

So if we keep paying down the debt, we'll keep interest rates low. Our plan, on the whole, would make interest rates about a percent lower every year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to you? Just listen:

$390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more new businesses, more new jobs and a higher stock market. That's what that means.

So number one, we're the party of one America. Number two, we're the party that will keep this prosperity going. Number three, we're the party that will build on the progress of the last 8 years in every other area. The crime rate is at a 26-year low. The welfare rolls are at a 30-year low. The environment is cleaner. We've got the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in a dozen years. So you have to ask people, "Look, all this stuff is going in the right direction. Do you want to build on it, or do you want to reverse policy?"

And finally, you ought to ask people, what about the future? Which candidates are more likely to figure out how to close the digital divide so that every kid has access to the Internet? Which party and which candidates are more likely to understand the implications of this biological revolution with the human genome? The young women in this audience today, within just a few years, when they enter their childbearing years, the young girls here, they'll be bringing home babies with a life expectancy of 90 years. That's the good news.

But all of your medical and all your financial information is going to be on somebody's computer. Who is most likely to understand how to protect your privacy and make the most of the Internet and the biological revolution? These are big questions. This is a serious time we're moving into.

Now, look, I've done everything I could do to turn this country around, pull it together, and move it forward. But in America, our public life is always about tomorrow—always. And I can tell you, you need to go out and ask people which party and which candidates will stick up for one America and give us all a chance? Which party, which candidates will keep the prosperity going? Which party, which candidates will keep the progress going in crime, in the environment, in welfare, in health care, and in education? And which party and which candidates most nearly understand the future?

If you can just remember to make those four points, it's going to be fine. And I just want to tell you, don't forget that Vice President Gore has been at the center of every major positive decision made in the last 8 years by this administration. He broke the tie on the economic plan when nobody in the other party would vote for it. It turned this country around and got the economy booming. He led our efforts to reduce the size of Government but increase its effectiveness. We've got the smallest Government since 1960, doing more good for more people.

He led our efforts to get the so-called E-rate passed about 4 years ago, which guarantees a discount to poor schools, so that every school in this country can get hooked up to the Internet. When we started this project, 14 percent of our schools were connected to the Internet in 1994. Today, 95 percent are, thanks in large measure to the efforts of Al Gore. So I'll just tell you that.

Everybody in New England and the Northeast is worried about home heating oil, the energy shortage this summer. Let me just tell you, it was a piece of good news 3 or 4 days ago; General Motors announced that they had developed a car that gets 80 miles to the gallon. Did you see it? That's what they announced. And they gave credit to a project most of you probably never heard of, called the Partnership for the Next Generation Vehicles.

They said, "We were able to do this because we were involved in this partnership." We started that partnership with Detroit and the United Auto Workers in 1993, and who ran it for 7½ years? Al Gore. Listen, we need somebody like that in the White House, who will make good decisions, who understands the future, who can do what needs to be done.

Now, let me say a few words about Hillary. [*Laughter*] I mean, I am a completely unbiased source. [*Laughter*] You can bank this. I may be biased, but I know more about this than anybody else.

I met Hillary almost 30 years ago. When I met her, she had already been involved for

some time in her lifetime obsession with children and families, with education, with health care, with child care, with all aspects of early childhood development. She spent an extra year when we were in law school just so she could study child development at the Yale Child Study Center and the Yale University Hospital. She stayed an extra year, so she wanted to know for sure when she got out of law school she would understand the impact of every legal and public policy decision on the children of this country.

And for 30 years, until she started running for this office, she has worked tirelessly as a citizen advocate, starting organizations, heading up others, working for other candidates. She never asked anybody to do anything for her in 30 years, except to join her in common cause, until she started running for the United States Senate from New York. And I thought it would be the hardest thing in the world for her to go out, ask you to vote for her, ask you to contribute to her campaign. And it turned out, in the beginning, it was kind of hard. She said, "I never did this for myself before." But she has worked for 30 years on things that you need someone to work on for New York in Washington.

For the last 8 years as First Lady, she has worked on a lot of things that had a direct, positive impact on the people of New York. She spoke out, as soon as we took office, for the family and medical leave law. It was the first bill I signed. Over 20 million Americans have taken advantage of family and medical leave when a baby was born or a parent was sick, to take some time off without losing their jobs. It's one of the best things we ever did in these whole 8 years.

She brought people to the White House from all over the country to help us make policy on children's health, on early childhood development and what happens to kids' brains, what kind of things we should do more of. We got 90 percent of our kids immunized against serious childhood illnesses for the first time in history. She worked on that.

She worked on the bill that allows people to keep their health insurance when they change jobs or when somebody in their family gets sick. She was an advocate for our Children's Health Insurance Program, which has now in the last couple of years brought health insurance to 2.5 million children in lower income working families and finally—finally—after a dozen years, got the number of uninsured kids going down in America, going in the right direction.

And when we decided to celebrate the millennium, she came up with this idea that we ought to find a way to celebrate the turning of the century and the turning of the millennium by thinking about the future but honoring the past. And her Millennium Treasures Project is the largest single historic preservation movement in the history of the country. It has put $100 million, in public and private money, in it now. And a lot of the places preserved are right here in New York State, in places that need it economically, for tourism, for community pride: George Washington's revolutionary headquarters, Harriet Tubman's home, parts of the Underground Railroad—had a direct positive impact. It's the biggest thing of its kind in the history of the country. It came right out of her head. She thought about it.

What's the point of all this? In 30 years, I have known hundreds, thousands of people in public life. And I want to tell you, most people who do this work are better than they get credit for most days—Republicans as well as Democrats. I'll even say that 2 weeks from election. Most people I've known in public life are honest, worked hard, and did what they thought was right. But I have never known anybody in 30 years that had the strong combination Hillary does of brains and heart and determination and imagination and ability to get things done and work with all different kinds of people. She will be a worthy successor to the great Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to Robert Kennedy, and a great partner for Chuck Schumer, if you will just make sure she wins on November 7th.

Ladies and gentlemen, the next Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:15 p.m. in the Electrical Industry Auditorium at the Union Hall. In his remarks, he referred to former Representative Thomas J. Manton, chair, and Michael H. Reich, executive secretary, Queens County Democratic Organization; Mr. Reich's daughter,

Alisa, who sang the national anthem; Representative Crowley's wife, Kasey; New York City Comptroller Alan G. Hevesi; State Assemblyman Brian McLaughlin; former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Prime Minister Tony Blair and former Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom; and Nava Barak, wife of Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel.

Remarks at a Westchester County Democratic Party Dinner in New Rochelle, New York

October 23, 2000

Thank you. Thanks. [*Laughter*] Thank you for the wonderful welcome. Thank you for being here in such large numbers. Thank you for making David Alpert look good tonight at the Westchester County Democratic dinner. [*Laughter*] Thank you, Dennis Mehiel, for your friendship and your support. I want to thank my great friend John Catsimatidis for helping you at this dinner, and Anthony Pagano and everyone else who had anything to do with the dinner.

I want to thank the county executive, Andy Spano, for being such a good friend to Hillary and to me and making me feel welcome here in Westchester County. Our great comptroller, Carl McCall, we welcome him tonight. And I want to thank the two people here who, next to Hillary, are most responsible for making me look good over the last 8 years, Representatives Eliot Engel and Nita Lowey. Thank you very much for all you have done, wherever they are.

Now, let me say to all of you, I want you to have most of the time to listen to Hillary and to think about this Senate race, but I want to say just a few things about how the race for the Senate in New York relates to the larger national campaign, which will also unfold 2 weeks from tomorrow. I want to begin by thanking you all from the bottom of my heart for the phenomenal support that the people of New York have given to me and Al Gore in 1992 and then in 1996. I am very grateful.

I would just say, to me there are basically three or four questions that are really important. I think they matter in the Senate race. I think they matter in the race for President and Vice President. And I hope you will share them with friends of yours who not only live in New York but live in other States, because every one of you has tons of friends or family members, co-workers, some of whom live in New York, some of whom don't even live in this State, who will never come to a dinner like this. Isn't that right?

When you come to a dinner like this, don't you have some people say, "Why do you spend your time and money doing that?" [*Laughter*] You do, don't you? Everyone one of you do, right? But all these people that sometimes make fun of you, sometimes want to know why you're doing this, virtually all of them are going to vote 2 weeks from tomorrow, or they would if they knew exactly what was at stake.

So while we're all having a good time tonight, and the temptation is just for me to hit you with a bunch of one-liners that make you want to scream with joy—[*laughter*]—the truth is, what we should be focused on is, how do we get people who don't come to dinners like this, who aren't as political as we are but who love our country very much and will definitely show up at election time, to understand this election in the way that we understand it?

I told the Democratic Congress and the Senate the other day that we ought to think of ourselves as America's weather corps, that if we can make the choices clear, our side wins. If the choices can be blurred and remain cloudy, we have a lot more trouble. So over the next 2 weeks, this is what I could say, if I could personally speak to all your family and friends: Here's why you ought to be for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary.

Number one, we've had the longest economic expansion in history, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history, the lowest minority unemployment ever recorded. And it's really important to keep this prosperity going, especially if you want to extend it to the inner-city neighborhoods in New York and the rural counties in New York that still haven't fully participated. You will never be able to do that unless you keep the economy going, keep unemployment down, and keep it going.

Now, you have a choice. And what our side says is, "Look, we're going to have a tax cut, not near as big as theirs, not nearly as big. And we're going to focus it on paying for college tuition, paying for long-term care for elderly or disabled relatives, financing retirement, paying for child care, the basic things that families need today, and inducing people to invest in areas that are still underdeveloped."

But it's a smaller tax cut than theirs. We admit it. Why? Because we want money to invest in education and health care and the environment, what we have to invest in technology and national defense, and we've got to keep paying down the debt. The single most important economic difference in the election today is that our budget pays down the debt and gets America out of debt for the first time since 1835.

Now, why is that important? Why is that important, and why should people, even people who do quite well and would get more money in the short run under their tax cut, support our program? Because if you pay the debt down, you keep interest rates lower. If you keep interest rates lower, it's like a whole other tax cut. If we keep interest rates a percent lower a year for a decade, and that's about what the difference in the two plans will do, do you know what that's worth to you, as an American? Listen to this: $390 billion in lower home mortgages; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; plus lower credit card payments; plus lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market. It's a tax cut for everyone, to get America out of debt. It is the progressive, right thing to do.

We have worked so hard to turn a $290 billion deficit into a $230 billion surplus, so hard after quadrupling the national debt for 12 years, before we came in, to start paying the national debt off. This is a big deal. You need to go out and tell people, "If you want to keep the prosperity going, support Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary and get this country out of debt to keep interest rates down."

Number two: Second thing you ought to say is, if you want to build on the progress in areas other than the economy and keep our society growing stronger, you should vote for Gore/Lieberman, and Hillary. Look at where we were 8 years ago compared to now. The crime rate has dropped every year to a 26-year low. The murder rate is at a 33-year low. Gun violence down 35 percent. In the environment, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; the food is safer. We cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as they did in 12. We set aside more land in perpetuity than any administration since that of Theodore Roosevelt 100 years ago. And the economy got better.

We added 26 years to the life of Medicare, had the most sweeping improvements in diabetes since the development of insulin, did more to prevent breast cancer and prostate cancer, provided health insurance for children of low-income working parents, which has given us the first decline in uninsured people in 12 years. In education, we sponsored higher standards, accountability, smaller classes. We're in the process of putting 100,000 teachers in the schools. We've gone from zero to serving 800,000 children in after-school programs. We're trying to build or modernize schools. We've opened the doors to 2 years of college to everybody, and our college tax credits are now being taken advantage of by 10 million families.

What are the results of all this? A lower dropout rate, a higher graduation rate, higher test scores, the biggest college going rate in history. So the question is, are we going to keep going in the right direction? If you want to go in the right direction, since there are honest differences in this campaign, on crime policy, on environmental policy, on health care policy, on education policy—it's not like you don't have a record here. And the differences are honest and heartfelt. So Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Hillary, they'll do what they think is right, and our opponents, they'll do what they think is right.

But we have a record here. So you have to say, if you want to build on the prosperity of the last 8 years, and you want to take on the big challenges of the future—excellence in education for everybody, closing the digital divide, opening the 4 years of college, making the most of the human genome, protecting the privacy rights of people and their medical

and financial records, all these big new questions—you only have one choice. You've got to vote for Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Hillary, if that's what you want.

The third thing and maybe the most important is, you ought to vote for them because we are really the party of one America. We believe that our diversity of all kinds is interesting and makes America more exciting, makes us much better prepared for the global society we'll be living in, but we think our common humanity is even more important. And that has very practical implications. It means we think all these young people that served your meal tonight, they ought to have the same chance to go to college and send their kids to college as people who could afford to come here and buy a ticket tonight do.

It means we're for raising the minimum wage. It means we're for stronger enforcement of the equal pay laws, because there's still discrimination against women in the workplace today, and we think we ought to get rid of it. It means we're for strong hate crimes legislation and employment nondiscrimination legislation. It means that we are for a Supreme Court that will protect a woman's right to choose and the other basic fundamental rights.

Look, I have spent, as all of you know, and many of you mentioned tonight when I saw you earlier, I spent a lot of time the last 8 years trying to bring peace to the world. We've made a lot of progress in Northern Ireland. We've made a lot of progress in the Balkans, after combat in Kosovo and conflict in Bosnia. We finally had the last dictator in that part of the world gone from office now. We've worked for 8 years in Korea to try to bring an end to the conflict on the Korean Peninsula. We're closer than ever before, and the Secretary of State of the United States is in North Korea, and the President of South Korea won the Nobel Peace Prize because he went with an outstretched hand and said, "Let's put an end to the Korean war. It's been 50 years."

The world is moving in the right direction. And until 2 weeks ago, you could make the same case about the Middle East. With all the trouble that has roiled the Middle East in the last 2 weeks—I don't want to talk too much about it tonight, because I find when I'm heavily involved in something like this, the more I say about it, the less positive impact I can have, and the less I say, the more I can get done. But suffice it to say that the United States has been a friend to Israel, has believed in Israel and its right to be in the Middle East, and has thought the only way, ultimately, for real peace and security to come was through a reconciliation and a peace process that would end the violence and enable everybody to live on fair and decent terms. And I don't think all this is going to change that.

The reason I mention it to you is this. So much of the world's trouble, in this most modern of ages, where all of our kids are teaching us more than we know about computers, where the human genome—this is literally the truth—the human genome will lead to the younger women in this audience who have, let's say, 10 years of childbearing left, I think in about 10 years, women will be coming home from the hospital with kids that will have a life expectancy of about 90 years. There's going to be an enormous number of wonderful things happening, and the old world we live in is bedeviled by the oldest fear of mankind. We are still paralyzed by our fear and distrust and our vulnerability to slip into violence and hatred against people who are different from us, they're of a different race, a different ethnic group, a different faith.

And we can all clap when we look around this room. I mean, look around this room. This is America in the 21st century. And we can all clap about it; it's great. But what we need to understand is, you just look what happened to people who have been working together for 7½ years, in the last 2 weeks. And I'm telling you, the country needs a leader in the White House and a voice in the Senate that—people who believe with the core of their being that what we have in common is more fundamentally significant than all of our differences. Our differences are interesting. Our common humanity is fundamental.

So, if somebody asks you tomorrow—and I wish you wouldn't wait for them to ask—why you showed up here and why are you doing this and why are you for Hillary or

Al Gore or Joe Lieberman, I hope you will say, "Well, you see, there are three reasons. One is, I'd kind of like to keep this prosperity going, and the only way to do it is to keep paying down this debt, investing in our future, and take a tax cut we can afford instead of one that looks good. Number two, I'd like to keep making progress. I like the fact that we've got a cleaner environment, a lower crime rate, better schools, more people with health insurance, and I want to build on that progress, not turn around. And number three, the most important thing of all is, I want to keep building one America, where we grow closer together, where we believe everybody counts, everybody deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other." That's what you ought to say. And you ought not to wait for somebody to ask you to say that. [*Laughter*]

I'm telling you, these races are close, and you may have more influence over the kind of people I'm talking about than I would. And you need to know just what three things to say. That's what I believe. If I were talking to any of your friends or family members alone in a room, with nobody looking and no media covering it, and they said, "Why should I vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? Why should I vote for your wife for Senate?" those are the three things I would say. And I hope you'll say them.

And let me just say one other thing. Dennis is going to come up here and introduce Hillary, but I want to say just one or two things about her candidacy. First of all, I am grateful to all of you for being so good to her, and I am immensely proud of her for having the courage to run and for running as she has for this last year and some odd months.

We met almost 30 years ago, and even then she was literally obsessed with the welfare of children and families, with education and health care and early childhood development. We worked together for a dozen years when I was Governor of my native State on education and economic development. One of the reasons the people in upstate New York ought to vote for her is that she literally devoted an enormous percentage of her time for years and years and years to just what upstate needs now, which is figuring out how to get investment and opportunity to places that aren't fully participating in the national economy.

When she became First Lady, she traveled all over the world, from the Balkans to Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Africa to the Indian subcontinent, trying to promote peace and reconciliation and the interests of young girls and families that were left behind in poorer societies. She sponsored the Millennium Project, to preserve our treasures for the new millennium, which has done a lot for New York. It's the biggest historic preservation movement in history, in American history—the biggest one—$100 million in public and private money that among other things preserve George Washington's revolutionary headquarters in this State, Harriet Tubman's home, Louis Armstrong's home and archives, in places that it's good for tourism, good for community pride, and good for the history of this great State.

I can just tell you that in 30 years of working in public life—you know, it's probably not even fashionable to say this quote until the election, but I basically like most of the people I've known in politics. I find that most of the Republicans and well as most of the Democrats I've know are honest people who work hard and do what they think is right, to the best of their ability to do it. But I have never known anybody that had the combination of intelligence, compassion—compassion and commitment and ability to get things done and think of new things to do that Hillary has. She will be a worthy successor to Senator Moynihan and a great partner for Chuck Schumer.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:48 p.m. at the VIP Club. In his remarks, he referred to dinner emcee David Alpert, chairman, Westchester County Democratic Party; dinner cohosts Dennis Mehiel, John A. Catsimatidis, and Anthony Pagano; New York State Comptroller H. Carl McCall; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea.

Remarks at a Tribute to Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., of North Carolina

October 24, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, first of all, to all our friends from North Carolina, welcome to Washington. I'm glad you're here. The two previous speakers have been two of the closest friends I've had in politics and two of the best Governors with whom I've ever served. And so I thank them both.

I want to start by saying a word about Governor Patton and then get into the tribute to Governor Hunt and what all that means for what we're doing as Americans right now in this election season.

First of all, Paul Patton ran for Governor and won in Kentucky after Jim Hunt and I had been out working on a lot of this stuff for years and years and years, going back to the seventies. I have personally never seen anybody learn so much so fast and have such an impact as Governor Patton did in Kentucky. I've never seen anybody get up to speak so fast on things that he had not previously lived with and worked with and have an immediate impact. And along the way, he found the time to help Al Gore and me carry Kentucky in 1992 and 1996, against enormous odds, where we had absolutely no right to think we could win. And we sort of squeaked by both times. And he has done a magnificent job.

But let me just give you one example. Several years ago, when Secretary Riley, who also served with Jim and me as Governor back in the seventies, early eighties, was—we persuaded the Congress to adopt a bill saying that all the States ought to have academic standards. Then we persuaded Congress to say that States getting Federal money ought to at least have a system for identifying their failing schools.

Paul Patton said, "Well, if we're going to identify them, we might as well do something about them." And so when I was—and I have been trying to pass, with the support of Jim Hunt and Paul Patton, an accountability measure that Vice President Gore has advocated in his campaign that basically says that the recipient—it's real accountability. If Jim and Paul and I had time, if we had another 30 minutes, we could explain to you why the proposal of the Democratic nominee for accountability will work better than the proposal of the Republican nominee for accountability, based on our combined half-century of experience in this.

Anyway, Patton says we ought to have—if we've got to identify these failing schools, we ought to do something about them. So he comes up with this system. I went to western Kentucky with Governor Patton a few months ago, to try to persuade the Congress to pass our bill, saying if you get this Federal aid, you must not only identify the failing schools, you have to turn them around within 2 years or shut them down and reopen them under new management.

Now, Jim has done something very like that in the most comprehensive way in North Carolina, and I'll come back to that. So I'm in this school in western Kentucky, in this low-income area, where over half the kids are on school lunch, where 4 years ago this was one of the worst schools in Kentucky. And they go through this system, and in 3 years, this is what happened: They went from 12 percent of the kids reading at or above grade level to about 60 percent; they went from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; they went from zero kids in the whole school doing science at or above grade level to 63 percent—in 3 years.

And what does that show you? First of all, for those of us who have been doing this for 20 years, we know something now we didn't know in the late seventies, or we didn't know in '83 when the "Nation at Risk" report was issued. We actually know that you can identify failing schools and turn them around. And nobody, no State has done it any more systematically then he has. That school that was an abject failure is now one of the top 20 schools in the State of Kentucky.

Thank you Governor, for your leadership.

I want to start with something personal. When I was elected Governor in 1978, I got to serve with Jim Hunt, starting in '79. And he was a big deal, even then. [*Laughter*] And I was 32 and looked like I was about 25. You guys have taken care of that in the last 8 years. [*Laughter*] And you know when you come to the end of a certain period in your life, as I am coming to the end of my service

as President—and this is the first election in 26 years where I haven't been on a ballot somewhere, and most days I'm okay about it—but you can look back over your life and see a handful of people who did this, that, or the other thing for you, without whom you might never have become President.

And in 1979 Jim Hunt told the Democratic Governors they should make me the vice chairman of the Democratic Governors' Association, which, in turn, would entitle me to become chairman. And I was, by 9 years, I think, the youngest Governor in the country at the time. And nobody had—it would never have happened—the only reason it happened is because everybody thought he knew what he was talking about, and so they said okay. [*Laughter*]

And it was the first significant national position of any kind I had. And in 1980 I did become chairman of the Democratic Governors' Association and got involved in a whole range of things that I had never been involved with before and might never have come in contact with. So for good or ill, depending on what you think of the Clinton Presidency—[*laughter*]—I'm not sure I'd be here if it weren't for you.

And over more than 20 years now, Jim and Carolyn have been friends to Hillary and me. We always love being with them. We follow the progress of our families and the ups and downs and changes in our lives. And I have seen now that—he is the only Governor I know that served in the seventies, the eighties, the nineties, and the 21st century. [*Laughter*]

But as a result—he was kind of like me—if you really love being Governor, you don't get tired of doing it, because it's the best job in the world in so many ways. And there's nobody in my adult lifetime in the United States who has served as a Governor who has done more for education, children's health, or the long-term economic interests of a State than Jim Hunt. He has the most sweeping, deep, consistent record of public service over the longest period of time of any Governor in the United States in my lifetime. And the people of North Carolina should be very, very proud of that. It's an astonishing record.

Along the way, he's led your State through difficult times, like those awful floods, and made sure that we here in Washington did our part to help you recover. You have not really been in politics until you have been lobbied by Jim Hunt for something. [*Laughter*] And if you don't want to say yes, it's just like going to the dentist and having him yank your teeth out without any kind of deadening on your gums. [*Laughter*] It just never ends, and his capacity to guilt-trip you kind of goes up by the day. [*Laughter*] So eventually you say yes, and then after a while, you learn to say yes the first time you're asked because there's no point in going through this. [*Laughter*]

He really did a great job for you on that. I've watched him with these preschool programs and these early childhood health initiatives and the efforts he's made to turn around his schools that were underperforming. And along the way, he's done a lot of things nationally, but one thing in particular I want to thank him for, because he introduced me to the idea of the master teacher and National Board of Professional Teaching Certification, the idea that we ought to have, eventually, in every school building in America, somebody who has proved not only that he or she knows the subject that they're teaching completely, which is a big challenge today because we've got a teacher shortage, but is also supremely gifted in the classroom and good at teaching children.

So Jim worked for years and years and years on this National Board for Professional Teaching Certification, and a few years ago he came to the White House, and we kicked it off. And we certified, within a short time, the first 500 teachers. Now we have about 5,000. By the time I leave office, we'll have almost 10,000. And thanks to his leadership, we have as part of our education budget the capacity to go to 100,000 master teachers over the next 3 or 4 years. And now we've got this huge backlog. This is a big deal. The teachers, the men and women who get national board certification, have to prove they know their subjects well, that they are extremely skilled in the classroom, that they understand how to relate to children and families.

And this is a huge professional distinction if they get it. We see that every time there's one of these master teachers, just in one school building, he or she can change the whole culture of education in the building and infect everybody else with a certain enthusiasm and sense of possibility and learning. This is something that's impossible to make a headline out of. It's impossible to make it an issue in the Presidential election. You know, it sounds like something little. It's something huge. You've all seen that new book that's out called "The Tipping Point." That's what these master teachers are. They're not only good in their classroom; they provide the tipping point of influence in school after school after school.

So long after Jim Hunt is gone from the North Carolina Governor's Mansion, this passion that he nurtured for years, when no one else was paying attention, to train, identify, certify master teachers and then get one in every school building in the country, will be revolutionizing education and improving the futures of children not just in his native State but throughout the United States.

There's nobody like you. And I love you, and I thank you for everything you've done. Thank you.

Let me just say one other thing. What's all that got to do with this election? Let me just make a couple of points here. I believe, and it's already been said, that education is sort of at the center of this Presidential election, and that's good. And then there are people that view that cynically, because they say, "Well, Presidents can get up and talk about education, but after all, what can they do? It's only 7 percent of the total money we spend on our public schools." Well, let me just say, when I got elected, it was under 6 percent and headed down. So at least we got it back to 7.

But it seems to me that we ought to say that education is a constitutional responsibility of the State, the operational responsibility of the local schools and the districts, but it still is a national priority. And what I have always believed is that we had a special obligation, number one, just to invest more, because we've got the biggest and most diverse group of schoolkids in our Nation's history and because even though the school populations are bigger in many, many States, a smaller percentage of the property owners who pay property taxes have kids in schools. I know that seems counterintuitive, but that's happening in State after State.

So the States need more resources, number one. And number two, there is now, as I said a moment ago about the failing schools, we now know something we didn't know in 1983, when the Governors were responding to the national report called "A Nation At Risk." We know things we didn't even know in 1989, when the Governors met with President Bush and articulated these national education goals for the next decade, to try to be reached by the year 2000, about how to do this.

And our philosophy has been that we should not tell the States how to do what they do, but we should fund those things that the research and the educators tell us work. For example, one of the things—I wish you had heard this in some of the discussions we've heard in this election, but one of the things that I'm quite proud of is that under Dick Riley, who was Governor of South Carolina, as I said, with Jim and me in the seventies and the eighties, the burden of regulations the Federal Government imposes on the States and the school districts has actually been reduced by about two-thirds below what it was in the previous administration. We have nearly doubled funding for education and training, even as we have gone from a $290 billion deficit to a $230 billion surplus and shrunk the size of Government to its lowest point in 40 years.

But we've tried to focus this money on what works. For example, when I became President, we were giving no support to the States for after-school programs and summer school and night programs, to turn the schools into community learning centers, nothing, even though we knew that we had all these latchkey kids and that they needed some place to go.

Well, now, we're serving 800,000 of them, and we want to go to 1.6 million of them in this budget. And it's the best money we could spend. And a lot of these schools have absolutely no capacity to afford things like this unless we do it. We started in '94. Only 14 percent of our schools and 3 percent of

our classrooms were connected to the Internet. Because of the leadership of the Vice President and getting the E-rate, which allows even the poorest schools in North Carolina a 90 percent discount so they can hook on, we have gone from 14 percent of our schools to 95 percent of our schools connected to the Internet; from 3 percent of our classrooms to 65 percent of our classrooms connected to the Internet. So we're moving this thing a long way.

And our basic philosophy is, then, that we should not micromanage what the schools do but that we should target the funds, since it's only 7 percent, to the areas that the educators and the research says will have the biggest impact.

Now that's the real fundamental debate in this election. And if you listen to—both sides say they're for accountability, and they are. And as I've said, I think our accountability proposal that our candidate for President, Vice President Gore, and the others have embraced is better. And I believe Jim and Paul agree with me, but we don't have to argue that out. The point is, that's the good news. The good news is that the American people believe that there should be higher standards and accountability.

But we believe it ought to be accountability-plus—plus funds for 100,000 new teachers for smaller classes in the early grades; plus a tax credit to help to cut the costs of raising bond issues to build or modernize schools; plus funds to help repair 5,000 schools a year. We've got $100 billion school construction and repair deficit in America today. I bet you there is—no telling how many schools in North Carolina and Kentucky, where the kids are going to schools in housetrailers or where big closets have been converted to classrooms or where old buildings are so old they can't—I've been in schools that are so decrepit they can't even be wired for the Internet.

So we have standards and accountability, plus the tools to do the job. And I think that is consistent with the stunning record of Jim Hunt. If you look at what he's done, he's gone out there and given local communities the tools they need to give children early childhood education, access to health care, and strategies to turn around schools that aren't performing. It works, and we ought to do more of it.

The only other thing I would say that's highly relevant to this is, you can't get blood out of a turnip. If you're going to spend money, you've got to have the money to spend. And that's the other big issue in this election. I don't want to get into a political debate about the structure of tax programs or even how the Social Security should be reformed. I have my own ideas, but someone else will have to make that decision. But I just want to make a basic point here that I think is fundamental to this.

People ask me all the time, "We have such a great economy, and you and Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen and Gene Sperling, you've got all these wizards coming in. What great new idea did you bring to economic policy?" And I always give a one-word answer, "Arithmetic." I brought arithmetic to Washington. That's the great thing I got out of living way out there in the hinterlands. I still thought 2 and 2 was supposed to add up to 4. And a rosy scenario was not any good until the money came in. That old Cuba Gooding line "Show me the money" is still a pretty good line when you're making—[*laughter*].

So what does that all have to do with this election and education? If you want States to be able to progress in education, they have to have the funds to do it, which means you have to have continued prosperity, because when people are prosperous, they send tax money to the State. And if you want the Federal Government to do it, you have to continue the prosperity. And the most important thing we can do, I believe, is to continue a formula that says, find new markets for American products and services; keep investing in America's productive capacity, education, and technology and science; and keep paying down the debt down and make America debt free.

Why? Because it keeps interest rates lower. In a global economy, where a trillion dollars crosses national borders every day, the interest rates people pay for homes and college loans and car payments in North Carolina are affected by whether or not this Nation is a fiscally responsible Nation.

So whatever you think about the details of these competing tax cuts or Social Security plans, here is the bottom line: You cannot have a $1½ trillion tax cut, a $1 trillion Social Security privatization program, and several hundred billion dollars worth of promises unless you go back into deficits. The big argument for our side, for Vice President Gore and Senator Lieberman, is, we say, "Look, we're going to have a smaller tax cut. We think it's better because we try to target it to education and long-term care and child care and retirement savings, but it can't be much bigger than this because we've got to invest in education and health care and the environment and defense, and we've got to keep paying off the debt."

Now, that's the big issue. It's not—I promise you, it's more important—the arithmetic issue is more important than the details of who's got the better Social Security plan or the details of who's got the better tax plan, even though I think our side does, and I'd be happy to debate it—the arithmetic issue, the big thing here.

The other thing you need to remember is—and we've shown it for 8 years—you can say, "Well, I'm going to spend this much money over the next 10 years." But if the money doesn't come in, you don't have to spend it. But if you give it all away in a tax cut on the front end or the privatization program, on the front end, it's gone. And you're certainly not going to go get it back when the economy turns down.

So you're going to have a big Governor's race in North Carolina. The ability of the next Governor—and you know who we all hope it will be and believe it will be—but his ability to follow in Jim Hunt's footsteps will rest in no small measure on the success of the North Carolina economy, in generating jobs, generating opportunity, in generating revenues to turn around and put in education.

So that's my pitch to you. I think accountability-plus is better than accountability-minus in education. And I think arithmetic still works in economics. And I know if we just keep interest rates one percent lower a year over the next decade, which is what I believe the difference will be in paying off the debt and going back to deficit so you can't pay off the debt—let me just tell you what that is. That's $390 billion in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, plus lower credit card payments, plus lower business loan costs, which means more new businesses, more employees, higher profits, and a bigger stock market. It's a tax cut for everybody. Getting this country out of debt is a tax cut for everybody.

So that's what—when you go back home in North Carolina and people talk to you about, the next 2 weeks, about how this fits into the decision you have to make in North Carolina, talk to them about arithmetic and economics and talk to them about accountability-plus and tell them that Jim Hunt deserves a worthy successor.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. in the Monticello Room at the Jefferson Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Treasury Secretaries Lloyd Bentsen and Robert E. Rubin; Governor Hunt's wife, Carolyn; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; and actor Cuba Gooding, Jr.

Remarks on the Legislative Agenda for School Construction and Education

October 24, 2000

Well, first, let me thank Glenda Parsons. I thought that she was eloquent, insistent, comprehensive, and enlightening for anybody that hasn't heard about this issue and why it matters. And let me thank Secretary Riley for pointing out that the Federal Government helps States and localities build roads and highways and prisons, and schools are the most important network to the 21st century of all.

Let me thank you, sir, in a larger sense, for nearly 8 years of service now, during which you have reduced the paperwork burden on local school districts and States but mightily increased the level of assistance we are giving them to do the things that work. That's one reason—along with the outstanding work being done at the State level by people like Governor Patton from Kentucky, who is here with us today, and local

educators—that the test scores are up, the dropout rate is down, the college-going rate is up. We're moving in the right direction, and Dick Riley deserves his fair share of credit for that, and I thank him very much.

I would like to thank the extraordinary array of Members of Congress who are here, including the Democratic leaders of the Senate and the House, Senator Daschle and Congressman Gephardt. I would like to thank the people from the administration who are here who have worked with us to help to develop this very important proposal, including Secretary Larry Summers and Jack Lew and Sylvia Mathews from the Office of Management and Budget.

I want to thank the people who are here from the DC City Council and the coalition to Rebuild America's Schools, teachers, administrators, architects, members of the construction trades, and many others. And I also want to thank the people who came out here all morning, building our new schoolhouse. We wanted people to have a little red schoolhouse here to emphasize what this is about. And our special guests from Brent Elementary School, let's welcome them here.

The little red schoolhouse behind me was erected as evidence of the commitment of all of us here to give our children the safest and best schools in the world. In its unfinished state, it's also a symbol of the unfinished work still before the Congress. Nearly 2 months into the new school year, the majority leadership still hasn't given a single dime for school construction and modernization, not even enough to build a one-room schoolhouse.

Week after week now, I've been signing continuing resolutions to give Congress more time to work on this year's budget. But the time for tardy slips is over. It's time for the leadership to put progress before partisanship and address at last the needs of our schools and our children.

For nearly 8 years now, we've worked hard to turn our economy around. We've replaced record deficits with record surpluses. We now enjoy the longest economic expansion in history. Today we received even more good news about the economy. According to our Treasury Department and the Office of Management and Budget, the surplus for the 2000 fiscal year is the largest in American history, $237 billion. This is the third surplus in a row, the first time our Nation has done that in 51 years, since 1949, when Harry Truman was President.

It's worth remembering, I think, that when Vice President Gore and I took office in 1993, the deficit was $290 billion. The debt had quadrupled in 12 years. Economists predicted that this year, instead of a $237 billion surplus, we would have a $455 billion deficit. Working together, we turned that around, not by chance but by choice.

Now to the moment at hand. What are we going to do with our prosperity? What are we going to do with our surplus? It is not the Government's surplus. It is the people's surplus. How shall we apply it to our common goals and needs and challenges? I feel very strongly that we ought to first make a commitment to keep the prosperity going by paying the debt down over the next 12 years, to keep interest rates down.

Then I think we ought to take what's left and have a tax cut we can afford, that focuses on sending our kids to college, providing our kinfolks with long-term care who need it, helping working families with child care, and helping all Americans save for retirement, because savings rates are not high enough in our country today. And I think we ought to save some money to invest in education and in health care, in science and technology, in the environment and defense, in the future of America.

So, in other words, there are big opportunities and big challenges out there, but I believe we have to first stay with what got us here: Pay down the debt; strengthen the Social Security and Medicare systems for the aging of America when all people like me, the baby boom generation, become too old to work, and we don't want to be a burden on the rest of you. And we need to then seize this opportunity to take the money that's left to invest in our future, especially in education.

You've heard what has already been said, but I think it's worth reiterating. We have the largest, most diverse student body in history. They are in overcrowded classrooms, but a lot of things are going right in America. Reading and math scores are up; Hispanic

and African-American students are taking advanced placement courses in record numbers—over the last 6 years, a 300 percent increase for Hispanic students, a 500 percent increase for African-American students; the college-going rate at a record high, because we have provided more college assistance increase than any time since the GI bill. So a lot of things are going well. SAT math scores are the highest since 1969, when we went to the Moon. But we have more to do. And I want to focus on this today.

And let me just say one other thing I would like to say, because I really want to thank the Vice President for this. When we started in 1994 with a goal to hook up all of our classrooms and schools to the Internet, only 14 percent of the schools and 3 percent of the classrooms in America were hooked up. Now, 95 percent of the schools and 65 percent of the classrooms are hooked up, thanks in no small measure to an idea Al Gore led our fight for, the E-rate, which gives discounts of up to 90 percent to low-income schools so that all of our schools can afford to hook on.

Now, what's all that got to do with why we're here? The average public school building in America is 42 years old. Decades of use have taken their toll: leaking roofs, broken boilers, crowded trailers. It's hard to educate kids in schools that are falling down. Some of our schools are so old, they literally cannot be wired for Internet access. I have been in schools where, when one room works—that is, if they turn on all the lights, and they're using the lab, and then somebody logs onto the net in one room, it will literally short out everybody else in the school building. You also need to know, there are buildings in New York that are still being heated with coal in coal-fired furnaces. The average school building in Philadelphia is 65 years old, and about the same in New Orleans.

So those of us that have been around the country looking at this know that you've got the problem of the old schools, and then all the places we've been—including the smallest place I've been with a lot of trailers was the community of Jupiter, Florida, which is not very big, and they had a dozen trailers outside one school.

So this is a national challenge. They're bad for our children's education. I might also say that they can be quite bad for our children's health, especially if they have asthma or if they have other disabilities. And this is something I think that has been underestimated. You know, just the cost in education days of asthma in our children is staggering throughout the United States today. We ought not to be sending the kids into school buildings that make it worse.

Now, I have asked Congress to send me an education bill that does the following: First, give us $1.3 billion to fix up thousands of schools in desperate need of repair right now. And let's do that over 5 years. We can repair 5,000 schools a year over 5 years. It would be a big thing to do, and it would help a lot.

Second, I have asked Congress to enact the bipartisan—and I emphasize bipartisan—school construction tax proposal, to provide $25 billion in school construction and modernization bonds. Now, you just heard Glenda explain why Loudoun County couldn't bear this burden alone. Even counties where the average income of the school parents may be above average, there is a limit to how much you can do. They've got to build 23 schools in 6 years? Can you imagine how much construction that is? That's in one school district. That's just one. We estimate the deficit in school repair and school construction in America, given the condition of the buildings, the size of the population, and the projected population over the next 5 years, is somewhere between 110 and 125 billion dollars.

I don't think it's too much to ask the Federal Government, at a time of record surpluses, to provide $25 billion in school construction and modernization bonds. It will help to build or modernize 6,000 schools. In the process, it will create some good jobs. It will be especially helpful in the poorest areas of our country, like Native American communities and others with greater needs and the total inability to raise the money at the local level.

And third, Congress should follow through on our proposal to help fund 8,000 after-school and summer school programs, to help $2.5 million kids boost their test scores, stay

out of trouble, and get more involved in their communities. If you think about how overcrowded these schools are, it is more important than ever that we allow them to stay open in the afternoon and to provide summer programs, so that the kids that may not get it during the daytime, when they're being crammed in, pushed around, and can't even sit down for lunch, according to Glenda, at least to have the ability to stay late or come back in the evening or come in on the weekend or be involved in the summer program that will make sure they don't fall behind. So that's also a very important part of this.

Fourth thing I'd like to urge them to do is to provide $1.75 billion to help pay for almost 50,000 teachers to reduce class sizes in the first grades, the next big step of our 100,000 teacher program to reduce class size in the early grades. We know that new qualified teachers can help children learn.

And finally, I ask Congress to support our initiatives to improve teacher training, increase accountability, and to turn around failing schools or shut them down and open them under new management. We have here—I will say again what I said at lunch: Governor Patton is exhibit A.

I have been working on this for 22 years now. I was there when, under the Reagan administration, Secretary Bell issued the "Nation at Risk" report, a brilliant report. I was there when President Bush invited all the Governors to Charlottesville, Virginia, and we had a summit and established goals for the Nation. And I helped to write that document, and it was a great and moving meeting. But I can tell you something. If somebody asked me what's changed in the years since, I'll tell you what's changed: We actually know now that failing schools can be turned around, and we know how to do it, and we didn't before. And so I want to emphasize this.

I was in a school in western Kentucky with Paul Patton that was one of the worst schools in Kentucky 4 years ago, where only 12 percent of the kids were reading at or above grade level, 5 percent of the kids were doing math at or above grade level, no kids were doing science at or above grade level. And under the system he put in place, that we want for America, in 3 years the numbers went from 12 to 57 percent in reading, from 5 to 70 percent in math, from zero to 63 percent in science. That's one place, one of the best elementary schools in his entire State. We can do that everywhere, and we should.

I mean, I have very strong feelings about this. These kids deserve a decent place to go to school because they can all learn. I was in Harlem the other day in a school that 2 years ago—listen to this—2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids doing reading or math below grade level. Two years later, a new principal, new morale, school uniforms—something I like—high standards, in 2 years they went from 80 percent doing reading and math below grade level, to 74 percent doing reading and math at or above grade level, a total turnaround. You can do this. We can do this all over America.

But it is illusory to think that we can tell all these kids and their parents they're the most important things in the world to us, "But here, go to school in broken windows and leaky roofs, and sit in this closet somewhere, or go out into a busted trailer, and we'll get around to you when we can." And meanwhile, we've got all the money in the world to spend on roads and airports, because they've got a bigger lobby than little kids do.

Now, this is not complicated here. We have fooled around with this for 2 years, and the problem is just getting bigger. So I say, before Congress goes home, let's do this for the kids in the future.

At the end of World War II when my generation was starting schools, the National Government under President Truman, with Republican as well as Democratic support, did not hesitate to help our children find the space to go to school.

In a world where education is even more important than it was then, where the student body is even bigger, and where it is much more diverse, in a world that is much more interconnected, there can be nothing more important than actually acting like we say we believe, that our kids are the most important thing in the world to us. Let's do it with the school construction proposal.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to parent Glenda Parsons of Loudoun County, VA, who introduced the President.

Statement on Signing the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000

October 24, 2000

Today I am extremely pleased to sign the "Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000," which invests over $990 million over 10 years in an important new health option for thousands of low-income, uninsured women with breast or cervical cancer. I was proud to include it in my FY 2001 budget, and I am proud to sign this bipartisan legislation into law.

Women without health insurance are 40 percent more likely to die from breast cancer than those who are insured. Not only are they less likely to be screened, but the course of treatment they elect is often affected by their ability to pay for services. This important legislation will expand the limited treatment options now available to low-income, uninsured women with breast cancer who are in the unique situation of learning about their condition through federally sponsored screening programs.

The new assistance today's action will provide for thousands of women with breast or cervical cancer continues my administration's longstanding commitment to breast and cervical cancer research, prevention, and treatment. It builds on a record of administration achievements that includes legislation to ensure the quality of mammograms and prevent drive-by mastectomies, increasing access to cancer clinical trials, and increasing funding for breast and cervical cancer research, prevention, and treatment from $283 million to over $620 million during my administration.

As important as today's achievement is, we have many health care issues that still must be addressed. I urge the Congress to pass additional coverage expansions including a new, affordable health insurance option for parents and new health insurance options for Americans facing unique barriers to coverage, such as those aged 55 to 65, workers in small businesses, and legal immigrants. I also urge the Congress to pass legislation streamlining the enrollment of uninsured children in health insurance programs. Taking these long overdue steps will bring us closer to our larger goal—ensuring that every American has access to high quality, affordable health insurance.

NOTE: H.R. 4386, approved October 24, was assigned Public Law No. 106–354.

Proclamation 7369—United Nations Day, 2000

October 24, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Fifty-five years ago, the United States played a leading role in founding the United Nations, and the treaty creating the U.N. was signed in San Francisco. Today, we are proud to serve as host country for the United Nations, whose headquarters in New York City stands as an enduring symbol of the promise of international peace and cooperation.

The United States remains fully committed to the principles of the United Nations Charter, and we support efforts to make the U.N. a more effective tool to meet the challenges of our changing world. Many of those challenges—poverty, disease, ethnic violence, and regional conflict—recognize no borders and can only be addressed by nations working together with shared resources and common goals. The United Nations is uniquely positioned to facilitate such collaborative efforts.

Today, more than half the world's people live under governments of their own choosing, an achievement that reflects the role the U.N. has played as a steadfast peacemaker and staunch advocate of international human rights. But three- fourths of those people live in developing countries, and more than a billion of them live in abject poverty. Through agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the U.N. is working to address this gap between the

world's richest and poorest countries by supporting comprehensive debt relief and providing billions of dollars in loans and grants to developing nations for projects that promote health, nutrition, education, entrepreneurship, and civil society.

While the devastating world wars of the 20th century are now a part of history, ethnic and regional conflicts continue to threaten global stability and contribute to human misery. Millions of innocent people have lost their lives in such conflicts, and millions of families have been driven from their homelands to seek refuge in neighboring nations. Through its international diplomacy efforts, peacekeeping operations, and humanitarian assistance, the United Nations serves as a beacon of hope for countries torn apart by ethnic, religious, or regional strife.

In September of this year, the leaders of 189 countries came together in New York at the United Nations Millennium Summit. This unprecedented gathering of international leaders reaffirmed that the importance of the U.N.'s mission is undiminished after more than 5 decades of extraordinary challenge and global change.

As we observe United Nations Day this year, let us celebrate the spirit of international cooperation and dedication to peace enshrined in the U.N. Charter. For 55 years, the United Nations has led the world in addressing international security problems and promoting human rights and human dignity. Today we reaffirm our commitment to this vital institution and pledge to work with other member nations to ensure that the U.N. is equipped with the resources it needs to remain a powerful instrument of the international community and an effective force for the common good.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 24, 2000, as United Nations Day. I encourage all Americans to educate themselves about the activities and accomplishments of the United Nations and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities devoted to enhancing international cooperation.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fourth day of October, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., October 26, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 27.

Remarks on Signing the Jordan-United States Trade Agreement

October 24, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Your Majesty and members of the Jordanian delegation; Senator Lugar; Senator Moynihan; Representatives Bonior and Levin; Secretary Cohen and other members of the administration.

Let me begin by saying a special word of appreciation to Dr. Mohammad Halaiqa and to our Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky for the work they did on this agreement.

The American negotiators, led by Catherine Novelli, and their Jordanian counterparts have labored hard over these last few months and around the clock this past weekend, something that seems to be the order of the day for us lately, to conclude this very important agreement.

Most of all, it is a great honor to welcome King Abdullah to the White House again. He is a voice of reason and calm in a region urgently in need of both. His leadership has been especially important over these last difficult weeks, which have brought such suffering and loss in the Middle East, and thrown into sharp relief the choices facing all people in the region.

Down one path lie the enormous challenges of building a lasting, secure peace and the concomitant enormous benefits. Down the other path lies more bloodshed, more hatred, more shattered lives and broken dreams.

Though the path of peace is steep and has become steeper these last few weeks, in the long run it is the only path that offers the peoples of the Middle East hope for a normal

life as part of the modern world. That is the path Jordan has chosen consistently.

It is critically important that the United States stand with Jordan and leaders like King Abdullah, struggling to give their people prosperity, standing for peace, understanding that the two pursuits go hand in hand.

As hard as that may be, there must be an end to the violence, and the Israelis and Palestinians must find a way out of confrontation back to the path of peaceful dialog, and they must do it sooner rather than later. For in the Middle East, as we have all learned, time does not heal wounds, it simply rubs more salt in them. The issues do not change. They just get harder to resolve.

The agreement we are about to sign will establish free trade between the United States and Jordan. It is a good and important agreement, one that I hope Congress will support on a bipartisan basis. It will be good for the United States, good for Jordan, good for the long-term prospects for peace in the Middle East. It will eliminate duties and break down commercial barriers to trade between our two nations in both products and services.

Under King Abdullah's leadership, Jordan already has made impressive strides in modernizing its economy, opening its markets, promoting the well-being of its people. This agreement will help to accelerate that progress. It will also cement the bonds of friendship that already exist between Jordan and the United States.

The record is clear that open trade creates opportunities, raises prosperity, and can lift lives in every country. Nowhere is this more apparent than here in the United States, where our exports in open markets have helped to fuel the longest expansion in our history. Nowhere are the benefits of trade more critically needed than in the Middle East. By opening markets, we can help to ease poverty that makes peace hard to achieve and harder still to sustain.

Today's agreement is remarkable in another respect as well. Even if it didn't have a thing to do with peace, we would still be here, because it is the first free trade agreement ever signed by the United States which incorporates into the body of the text labor and environmental protections, a landmark achievement for which the negotiators on both sides deserve extremely high praise.

For the United States, this follows through on our commitment to insure that the drive toward globalization reinforces protections for our workers and for air, water, and other natural resources. The first trade agreement to have undergone an environmental review under a new U.S. policy requiring such analyses. This trade agreement is one that all Americans can be proud of.

For Jordan, it represents a farsighted commitment to worker and environmental protection that is very much in keeping with Jordan's visionary commitment to peace. In today's world, developing countries can achieve growth without making some of the mistakes developed nations made on our path to industrialization. In the information age, the byproduct of the industrial age, the idea that to grow more you had to exploit both workers and the environment, is simply no longer true.

Today it is possible to grow an economy faster, while protecting air, water, and keeping children in school. This trade agreement embodies that big idea. Now we must turn our energies to implementing it as soon as possible. The insistent voices urging us to build a future that is healthier, more just, more prosperous, and more peaceful are not patient, nor should they be. This is a very good day.

Again, let me extend my congratulations to the negotiators, my thanks to the King of Jordan and his Government and my great hope that this will be the beginning of even stronger bonds between our people and a real trend in modern commercial agreements among good people and good nations everywhere.

Now, I'd like to invite His Majesty to come up here and make a few remarks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:52 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy Prime Minister Mohammad Halaiqa of Jordan. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of King Abdullah II of Jordan.

Remarks at a People for the American Way Reception

October 24, 2000

Thank you very much, Ralph. I want to thank you and your predecessor, Carole Shields, and the other board members of the People for the American Way. I thank Representative Sheila Jackson Lee from Houston for joining us tonight. Where are you, Sheila? She's here somewhere—right there. Thank you. And I want to thank Mary Frances Berry. You know, we go back to the Carter administration together. We've been friends for way over 20 years, and now she's the Chair of our U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. She's done a magnificent job. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I smiled when I walked in and put my arm around her. I said, "Mary Frances, that gray hair looks a lot better on you than it does on me." And we concluded that we had both earned every one of ours in the last 8 years, and we're proud to have them. So thank you, Mary Frances Berry. Thank you.

I want to thank you for hosting this event. I thank all of you for participating, because one of the great questions the American people will answer in this election is the future of the Supreme Court, the future of the Federal courts generally, and what the shape of American life will be when it comes to the individual rights of American citizens, and potentially as important, the power of the United States Congress and the Federal Government to protect the American people from all manner of things, in the face of a determined effort by what is already on occasion a majority in the Supreme Court to limit the ability of the Congress to do it.

On a daily basis, Federal judges make decisions that affect our everyday lives. Of course, they can decide at the Supreme Court level whether women continue to have the right to choose or if their fundamental rights to privacy will be eliminated; whether the Government can keep a safe environment for our children; whether we can keep guns out of schools; whether we can pass a law to protect women from violence; whether we can ban hate crimes; and whether we can expect the States to cooperate with the Federal Government and do their part if the Congress finds the national interest, or whether we will have a new form of ultraconservative judicial activism that rejects the Government's rights or authority to protect the rights of our citizens and the interests of our citizens.

For 8 years now, I have worked to ensure that our courts at all levels are filled with judges who are qualified, fair, reflect our Nation's diversity, and uphold and enforce our laws. Since 1993, I've had the honor to appoint more women and minorities to the Federal bench than any previous President, almost half of my judicial appointees. But I'm also gratified to know that they have garnered the highest percentages of top ABA ratings of any group of Presidential appointees in nearly 40 years, which shatters the myth that you can't have diversity and excellence at the same time.

In spite of the fact that study after study after study have shown how qualified these people are, and I might add, how relatively nonideological and mainstream, a number of my appointees, especially in election years, both in 1996 and this year—although in this case, some of these go back the last 3 or 4 years—have been denied a place on the bench and in many cases even denied a hearing for partisan political reasons, even though it's clear that they're qualified. There are more than 40 pending judicial nominees currently. More than half of them are women and minorities. A study not very long ago showed that the women and minorities I appointed had to wait a whole lot longer for a hearing than guys that looked like me, and that they were much more likely to be denied.

For example, even though the fourth circuit in our country, in southeastern United States, has the largest percentage of African-Americans of any Circuit in the United States, no African-American has ever served on it. And there have been plenty of qualified lawyers in the fourth circuit who happen to be African-American. Roger Gregory would be the first African-American. He's not been given a hearing.

In the fifth circuit, which has, next to the ninth circuit, the largest number of Hispanics, Enrique Moreno—graduated with great distinction from Harvard and is a native

of El Paso, and the judges in west Texas said he was one of the three best lawyers in west Texas—has been deemed unqualified for the fifth circuit by the Republican Senators. And I might say, the response from the other Republican officials in Texas has been deafening silence.

The longest waiting appellate nominee is Helene White of Michigan, who has been waiting for 3 years now. They include Kathleen McCree Lewis, daughter of the civil rights lion Wade McCree. She'd be the first African-American woman to serve on the sixth circuit. The people who can't get a vote include Bonnie Campbell, former attorney general of Iowa, who led our administration's efforts to pass the Violence Against Women Act.

Time and again I have asked the Senate leadership just to give these folks a vote. But they did it once, when they rejected Ronnie White, the first African-American State supreme court justice in the history of Missouri, who was turned down for a Federal judgeship, though he was superbly qualified, on grossly political grounds. And the reaction of the public in Missouri and throughout the United States was predictable and quite honorable. And so the next strategy was that "People don't like it very much when we vote these folks down, so we'll just let them die in silence. We'll just never have hearings."

I've had, as you might imagine, a lot more success in appointing Federal trial judges, but the Republican majority has been quite sensitive to the appellate courts because they know they make a lot of policy, just like the Supreme Court. And when they had the White House the last time, they appointed a lot of very young people to those appellate courts, in the hope that by the time they got it the next time, whatever they couldn't pass through Congress and whatever the American people wouldn't put up with, they could just do it through the courts, with people who had life tenure.

Now, we're just a vote or two away from reversing *Roe* v. *Wade* in the United States Supreme Court, and I think it's inevitable that the next President will have two appointments to the Supreme Court; could be more.

Beyond that, as I intimated in my opening remarks, there has already been a majority in this Court for restricting the ability of Congress, even a bipartisan majority in Congress, to get the States to help implement public interest legislation that protects people. The Supreme Court threw out part of the Brady bill because it required the States to help do things. It struck down part of the Violence Against Women Act, and other laws. I'm sure that people who are going to be part of this forum will talk more about this, and I don't need to go through this whole litany of cases.

But I can tell you that Justice Scalia and Justice Thomas, occasionally with three others voting with them, have a view that is quite different than the view that has prevailed in the country for the last 40 years about what Congress should be able to do to advance the cause of civil rights and the environment and public health. Now, I have no doubt this view is honestly held, and I have no personal criticism of them, but they do have a lifetime appointment and unlimited abilities, except only by the cases that come before them, to advance this view. And if they get one or two more allies and their view prevails, we'll have a philosophy of what the role of the National Government in our country's life is that will be coming out of the Supreme Court that will have as its only modern parallel what prevailed in the 1930's, until Franklin Roosevelt tried to pack the Court with the help of his majority leader from my home State, Joe T. Robinson. And the public hated it, and there was a terrible reaction, but afterward the Supreme Court began to uphold the New Deal legislation.

And so we all want to pretend that there's no politics in this, but there is certainly philosophy in this. There is philosophy in the appointments of Supreme Court Justices and appellate court justices. And therefore, the Presidency is important, but the Senate races are important as well, because they have to confirm these folks.

And I don't doubt for a moment that the main problems that the present majority in the United States Senate has with my nominees is probably not primarily race or gender; they just know they're not going to be as right-wing as they think they ought to be. And they can't credibly claim that they would be too liberal—whatever that is—but they know that if they can just keep these folks

from getting a hearing, over and over and over again, and then if they get lucky and have the Senate and the White House, they'll be able to move the judiciary way to the right and reinforce and accelerate the pace of decisions restricting not only some individual rights under the judicially defined constitutional right to privacy but also the ability of the National Government to protect certain vital interests.

That's what was inherent in the Brady bill, the Violence Against Women Act, and any number of these other cases. And I said I hope the people that come behind me will actually go through in greater detail these cases, because I think a lot of Americans have a general idea that the right to choose may be at stake in this election in the appointments to the Supreme Court, but what—I think virtually no Americans, outside those who follow the day-to-day decisions of the Supreme Court, understand just how many of our other rights are at stake by virtue of the possibility of different Court appointments.

So I come here just to sort of give you good cheer and say how you're doing a good thing—[*laughter*]—and remind you of something. The American people have normally gotten it right. That's why we're all around here after 224 years. Sometimes it takes an agonizingly long period of time, but the story of the United States of America is pretty much an illustration A of Martin Luther King's eloquent statement that the arc of history is long, but it bends toward justice. So I urge you to see your presence here as benders. You're the people who are supposed to make sure the arc keeps bending toward justice.

Our country is a different place than it was 8 years ago. We're remarkably more diverse, as well as more prosperous. We're learning to live together and work together and accept each other in ways that we never did before. You've now got more than two-thirds of the country and heavy majorities of people in both political parties for a hate crimes bill that protects gay Americans as well as racial minorities and disabled people. It's a big deal. That's a big deal. You've got a majority in the country and a majority of people in both parties for an "Employment Non-Discrimination Act" that covers gay Americans as well as people of all races. But the anchors of the Republican Party in the Congress are to the right of that, and they see this election as their chance.

Now, while it's true that nobody can predict with any 100 percent precision how his or her appointees will vote—thank goodness, President Eisenhower didn't really know about Earl Warren and Bill Brennan—[*laughter*]—we've got a lot better feel for it today than they did 40 years ago and a lot better idea of what the issues are going to be. And I say this with all respect: We should all assume that the people running for President and the people running for the Senate and all these other races, that they actually believe what they say, and therefore, if they are elected, we should assume that they will act on their beliefs.

As I have said repeatedly, the American people ought to view this election as a celebration: how to keep our economy going; how to extend it to people in places left behind; how to keep the environment improving and the schools improving and more people getting health insurance and the welfare rolls and the crime rates going down. All the indicators are right. The question is, how are you going to make a truly good society out of this? And what kind of individual protections do we think should be out there? And what kind of group rules should be out there in terms of the absence of discrimination and the presence of opportunity?

And because our country is in good shape today, we can have an honest, open debate. But it doesn't serve anybody to pretend that these differences aren't there when they, in fact, are there. So what I hope will come out of your gathering here is a clear and sharp understanding of the honest differences that are out there, of the kinds of decisions that will be made and the appointments that will be made to all of our Federal courts, beginning with the Supreme Court but including the courts of appeals and the district courts. And then you can do whatever you want with it with the American people and in your own communities between now and the election and thereafter.

But I have to tell you that as someone who has been a law professor, been an attorney

general, related to the Federal courts as a Governor, and then appointed people as a President to all levels of the Federal judiciary, it is my honest opinion that the incredibly energetic debate that is going on now at the Supreme Court level about the role of the National Government and the range of personal-privacy-related individual rights will only intensify in the years ahead and will be swung decisively one way or the other depending on the outcome of these elections. And to pretend otherwise is to be like an ostrich with your head in the sand.

So we don't have to be hand-wringing, and we don't have to overstate the case, and we don't have to attack our adversaries. This is America. We've always had people with different views and different feelings and different convictions. But you're here because you have a certain take on what the parameters of personal liberty have to be in order for America to have a genuine community across all the lines that divide us. That's how come you're here. That's how come you belong to this organization. So you have to understand with great detail and clarity what is at stake, and then you have to be willing to share it, because, as I said, the American people will make a decision in this election which will shape the Supreme Court and the other Federal courts and the range of liberty and privacy and the range of acceptable national action for years to come.

I think it is fair to say that with the single exception of a woman's right to choose, which is fairly high on the radar screen, most people have no earthly idea that any of these other issues are even at stake in this election. And a lot of people still don't really believe a woman's right to choose is at stake in this election. But it is. So those of us who are old enough to remember what it was like before *Roe* v. *Wade,* and those of us who care about things like the Violence Against Women Act and the Brady law and the other things that we believe make America a better country and are not so burdensome to ask the States to walk along with us hand in hand and work with us, we have a big job to do in the next 2 weeks.

So again, Ralph, I thank you. Mary Frances, I thank you for your leadership and your passion and for always prodding me along. Whenever anybody else thinks I've done a great job on a civil rights issue, I get about a C-plus from her. [*Laughter*] But that's her job. That's her job.

Look—this is the last thing I'm going to say. This is a great country. Our diversity is making us greater, richer, and more interesting. But if you look around the world at all the trouble spots today, you see people have a whole lot of trouble dealing with folks who have honest convictions that are different from theirs, especially if they're religious convictions, or if they are of different racial and ethnic origins which lead them into different cultural patterns of life. The great genius of America in the 21st century has got to be how to take the most diverse society we've ever had and the most diverse one in the world—although, interestingly enough, India is a pretty close competitor—and how to celebrate all this diversity and, at the same time, affirm our common humanity. Doing that in the context of all these cases that keep coming up to the Supreme Court requires a great deal of wisdom and understanding about what the real principles of our Constitution require and how the real world works and an imagination about how it has to work in the 21st century.

So you're here discussing something profoundly important. I just don't want you—you don't have to wring your hands about it, but you do have to get your telephone ringing when you go home.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:19 p.m. at the National Education Association, prior to a panel discussion on the future of the Supreme Court. In his remarks, he referred to Ralph G. Neas, president, and Carole Shields, former president, People for the American Way.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Donald Dunn

October 24, 2000

Well, let me first of all say I'm delighted to see all of you here, and I'm delighted to be here, myself, for several reasons. I'd like to begin by thanking Ron and Beth Dozoretz

for doing this, for their incredible generosity, and their support.

I'm here because I owe this guy. [*Laughter*] You know, he started out with me as an intern; then he went to work in the White House; then he went out of the cocoon of the White House, into the administration. And then he actually—he could have stayed here in a cushy job until I left, and then sort of written it all up on his resume and gone out and made a lot of money in Washington or New York or someplace. And instead, he made the decision that I made half my lifetime ago, when I turned down all the clerkships and all the things I was offered and I went home to Arkansas.

And when I ran for Congress in 1974 in Arkansas, I ran in a district where the previous Democratic candidate for President in the previous election had received 24 percent of the vote. So I know what he is going through. [*Laughter*] And half the people thought I was a communist, because I was a Democrat. [*Laughter*] And it was in 1970, so it was acceptable to have longer hair. [*Laughter*]

But I identify with this. And it was a real rural district, and I just—I admire you so much for doing this. And nothing ever changes until someone like you steps out and takes a chance. I also want to say that sometimes things do change.

And I always tell people—this is the first election since 1974 that I haven't been on the ballot. And I think the really great campaigns of my life were the 1992 Presidential campaign; the 1982 campaign for Governor, where I got reelected after I had been defeated, and that had never happened before; and that first campaign I ran for Congress. I learned how to listen. I learned how other people viewed Government. I learned the richness and texture of the story that every person has. It made me believe completely in democracy. And I also learned that you can turn a lot of people around if you take the trouble to do it and you believe in them and you give them respect to do it.

And I'm also glad to be here because I really care a lot about Utah, and I honor the heritage of Democrats in Utah. When I became Governor in 1978, the Governor of Utah was a man named Scott Matheson, who is now deceased, but he was a great—he was a great friend of mine, and I loved him. I appointed his son United States attorney, and now he's running for Congress, also in Utah. And his wife, Norma, was and remains a friend of mine.

And I've always wanted to see the Democrats come back in the Intermountain West. And it can be done. Fifty years ago, when everyone thought Harry Truman was defeated in his race for President in 1948, one of the reasons he won is that he swept the Intermountain West, the most Republican area of America today. And the reason he won then is the same reason we lose today—so much of the Intermountain West belongs to the Federal Government. And in the beginning, when all that was happening, it was just a boon to the people who lived there, nothing but a source of income and grazable land and mines to be mined.

Then, after the whole ownership of the Federal Government had matured and the resources had to be managed—and sometimes they had to say yes, as well as no, and sometimes the Federal Government was good at it, and sometimes they weren't very good at it—so, sort of a culture of having to hate the Federal Government that owned all the land built up, so that now it's sort of culturally unacceptable to be a Democrat, because they all think we're, by definition, nuts. [*Laughter*]

That's sort of what's happened. And the only way you can break that psychology in a State like Utah or Idaho or the other smaller States, Montana, is if one person, like him, will go home and say, "Listen, this is my place, too. I love it. Here's where I stand. Here's why I want to be in public office. Here's why I want to serve you."

So I just want to tell you, I think you've got a chance to win, too. And you have changed your life. You have changed the lives of the people that have worked with you. And you have changed the district in which you have worked forever, whatever happens. But I hope all the rest of you will take a little solace at what he's done.

And let me just say one other thing. This election is unfolding against the backdrop of the national election. I have always felt, I will say again—I've been saying this for 2 years.

I will say it one more time—when the votes are counted on November 7th, Al Gore will be the next President of the United States. That's what I believe, because in the end, people will have to decide whether we want to continue the economic prosperity and expand it or adopt a whole different economic theory that has already been tried once and didn't work as well as ours. They'll have to decide whether they want to continue to build on the social progress of the last 8 years. Compared to 8 years ago, the crime rate is down; the welfare rolls are cut in half; the environment is cleaner. For the first time in a dozen years, fewer people are uninsured; the schools are getting better, we have a record number of people going on to college. You have to decide if you want to build on that or take down a lot of those policies.

And finally, the thing that makes those of us who are Democrats, Democrats: Do we want to go forward together as one America? Do we really believe that everybody counts, everybody should have a chance, we all do better when we help each other? We ought to have hate crimes legislation because hate crimes are bad for a society like ours, that has to accept everybody that obeys the law and plays by the rules. We ought to have equal pay enforcement because it's bad in a society like ours, where women and men both have to work, if the women don't get paid for what they do. We ought to grow together.

So I believe that the next 2 weeks will be a fertile period for him to go back to Utah and put his message out there, because I think the American people will begin to focus on the big things. What has happened big in America in the last 8 years? He was a part of it. He was there. We changed the economic policy, the environmental policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the crime policy, and the welfare policy of the country. And compared to 8 years ago, everything is better.

The question now is not whether we will change but how. This country is changing so fast, the young women in this audience today that haven't had their children yet, within a decade they'll be bringing home babies from the hospital with a little gene card that tells them all the good things and all the bad things and what to do about the bad things. And within a decade, maybe—certainly not much longer—women will have little babies that will have a life expectancy of 90 years. The world is going to change dramatically. And it's very, very important that we keep changing but in the right direction.

I was looking at Don making his talk, and I was trying to remember what I might have been like 27 years ago—half my lifetime ago, when I was your age. I'm quite sure I wasn't nearly as well-dressed. [*Laughter*] Of course, we were all sort of cosmetically challenged in the early seventies, if you've ever—[*laughter*]—most men wore clothes that looked like they came off the seat covers of old 1950's automobiles.

I doubt if I made as much sense as you did, but I'm quite sure I was as optimistic and idealistic as you are. And what I want to say to all of you today is that I think that you'll always be proud you gave this young man a hand up when he needed it. And I hope you'll look forward for other opportunities to do the same for other young people. This is a great country, but we have to keep bringing young people into the system. We have to empower them. We have to give them a chance to serve. And we've got to keep changing in the right direction.

I think he's got a great career ahead of him. I think he's done a brave thing. And I won't be terribly surprised if lightening strikes and he wins, because he's always had a clear idea of what he was doing and he's always had a message that he could take out there that people who share his roots could hear. And I just want you to know I'm really proud of you. And I'm really grateful to all of you for helping him.

And you remember what I told you about this election. We've got 2 weeks. You get out there and tell people, whether it's the race for the House in Utah or the race for the Senate in New York or the race for the White House, there are three big questions: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to people to who haven't felt it, or abandon it for a theory that won't work, and it won't pay down the debt? Do you want to keep building on the social progress of the last 8 years, or reverse policies that are proving to

work? And do you think we ought to go forward together as one America? Those are the three great questions we have to ask and answer. If people understand that those are the questions, I know what the answers will be, and we'll all be celebrating 2 weeks from tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:42 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Ronald I. and Beth Dozoretz; and Jim Matheson, candidate for Utah's Second Congressional District, and his mother, Norma. Donald Dunn is a candidate for Utah's Third Congressional District.

Remarks on Departure for New York City and an Exchange With Reporters

October 25, 2000

Budget/Legislative Agenda

The President. Good morning. I want to say just a few words about the budget and the work we still have ahead of us if we want all our children to have a first-class education.

Way back in February, I sent to Congress a budget that keeps America on the path of fiscal discipline. It would strengthen Social Security and Medicare, pay down the debt by 2012, and make key investments in education, health care, the environment, and national security. It would also modernize Medicare with a voluntary prescription drug benefit available and affordable to all seniors who need it.

That was in February. Now we've come to the end of October, nearly a month past the end of the fiscal year, and we still have not seen from Congress a completed budget. Four times they've asked me for an extension of time to finish the work. Today the latest extension runs out, and Congress is about to ask for another. But from this point forward, as I've said, I will agree only to a day-by-day extension, until Congress finishes the job.

From this point forward, Congress should work every day and every night to put progress over partisanship, to make the investments in education our schools need and our children deserve. Congress should pass a budget that reduces class size in the early grades; that contains tax credits to repair old, crumbling schools and build new, modern ones; a budget that invests in after-school programs that mean more learning, lower crime, and fewer drugs. It should ensure the hiring of new, highly trained teachers, and help States turn around failing schools or shut them down and open them under new management. This Congress is not done, and this Congress will not be done until it accomplishes these objectives. We should also work together to pass tax cuts for middle-class Americans.

You know, in budget talks the two sides often wind up talking past each other. It takes a little extra effort to reach across the divide. So that's what I'm trying to do today. I'm sending an offer to Speaker Hastert and Senator Lott that says, let's work together in good faith to achieve common ground on tax relief.

I've identified areas of agreement so Congress can pass a bill I can sign, tax cuts that preserve fiscal discipline, help our people save for retirement or pay for long-term care, help build and repair schools, and boost investments in our new markets, the places that have been left behind in our prosperity. These are tax cuts we should all be able to agree on, tax cuts to help America's working families provide for the things that matter most.

There's also more to do in the last days of this session. Congress should be working overtime to pass a voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit, to raise the minimum wage, pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights, expand health coverage for the American people, and invest our Medicare resources wisely, not just or overwhelmingly in the HMO's, including those that don't need it, but in teaching hospitals, home health agencies, rural and urban hospitals, and other health care providers.

Congress should also pass a tough hate crimes bill. After all, there's a bipartisan majority for it in both Houses. It's pretty hard to explain why it hasn't come to my desk for signature. And Congress should insist on and provide for fairness for legal immigrants and equal pay for women.

These are our most pressing priorities. We can make progress on all of them. There's a huge piece of new evidence. Just in the last 24 hours, there has been a truly bipartisan and historic agreement on providing much-needed debt relief to the world's poorest countries. This initiative was supported by a broad—in fact, the broadest imaginable—coalition of religious leaders. You all remember when many of them came to the White House just a few days ago.

This enables America to do something that is good and just and manifestly in our interests. It will go a long way toward ensuring our leadership for progress and prosperity in the 21st century world. It is something that will be very important to leave to all of our successors after this next election, something America can build on for years to come.

I am profoundly grateful to the leaders in both parties in Congress for reaching agreement on this. This is something every single American should be very, very proud of. And it is fresh evidence that when we work hard to put our differences aside and find common ground, we can in fact do it. I hope the leadership of the Republican Party will join me and the Democrats to continue to do this, to continue to put progress above partisanship. And we'll get an awful lot done for the American people in the next couple of days. Then they can go home and have a good election over the differences.

Thank you very much.

Government Shutdown

Q. Mr. President, are you prepared to risk a government shutdown if you don't get what you want?

The President. I don't think it will come to that. I mean, I think this agreement yesterday—this is really big. This will be one of the signal achievements of this Congress. And it shows that, as has been the case since we've been in this unusual relationship with the Republican majority and a Democratic President, that at the end, we can still get a lot done. So I hope it won't come to that, and I don't think it will.

Go ahead.

"Immigration and Latino Fairness Act"

Q. Mr. President—excuse me—the "Immigration and Latino Fairness Act" is something you have been pushing for. It's supposed to come up in the State, Commerce, and Justice appropriations bill. How are the negotiations going on between the White House and the Republicans, and will you veto it, the appropriation, if it doesn't contain what you want?

The President. Well, as I said, I hope we can reach agreement on it. We've made some real progress, and the Republicans have come some way toward our position on this. I don't think it's enough, and I hope we can do more.

Look, this is a very large issue. There are a lot of people in this country who came here in good faith under adverse circumstances. They've lived here, worked here, paid taxes here, established families here. And I believe we ought to go as far as we possibly can get this Congress to go to legitimize their presence and to do the other things that are in our initiative. So I'm working, and I think that's all I should say now. We're in the process of negotiating this.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. In the Middle East, can Yasser Arafat be considered a reliable partner for peace while he is releasing Palestinian militants from jail and actually giving them decision-making roles? Can he be reliable?

The President. Well, as you know, part of what the parties agreed to at Sharm al-Sheikh was a certain specific set of security measures which were, by agreement of the parties, kept confidential. But I think it's quite important that, as I think it was reported in the morning press, that I had a conversation with Chairman Arafat. I talked with him and Prime Minister Barak yesterday. I talk to them several times a week now. And one of the things we need to do is to have people who are interested in violence off the streets and the people who are interested in ending the violence out there doing what they're capable of doing.

A big part of what the parties recognized at Sharm al-Sheikh was that it's impossible to maintain this uneasy status quo, where we've come so far in the peace process, but

the big and most difficult issues remain. We can't expect there to be a reliable peace process unless we can reduce the violence. That's the real answer to your question. We would like to see, and I think that the Israelis would like to see, a resumption of the peace process, but both parties have got to do what they said they'd do at Sharm and get the violence down, so we can open up the possibility of peace again.

Yes.

Social Security

Q. Mr. President, the Democrats are about to launch a concerted campaign effort to discredit Governor Bush's Social Security proposals. I'm wondering if you plan to participate in that effort.

The President. Well, I haven't been asked to do that. To me, the major issue right now—I had hoped we could get agreement on Social Security reform, and I thought that Chairman Archer and I could actually make an agreement. But neither of us had enough support in our caucuses to do that. And this is one of those big issues that I think will have to be resolved in the next 4 years.

So I decided to do the next best thing, which is to make sure we could keep paying the debt down and to offer the option to put about 10 years of savings on interest that we get because we're not spending the Social Security taxes now, which we did from 1983 until a couple of years ago. We're not spending the Social Security taxes now, so they're contributing to debt reduction. That means our interest burdens are lower. And what I think should be done at a minimum is that the interest savings should be applied to Social Security. That way you could take it out to 2054 and get it out beyond the life of the baby boom generation, when, after that, the pressures on Social Security will begin to ease because there will be fewer people retired in relation to the number of people working.

Now, if they want to make other changes, as I learned and as Mr. Archer learned when we tried to argue this through, there will have to be a bipartisan coalition in Congress. And I hope there will be fresh energy when you've got a new President, a new Congress, a new amount of time to work on that.

The central problem here is, there are problems there. And I think that the Vice President and Senator Lieberman and the Democrats in Congress and the experts are perfectly capable of pointing them out. What I'm most concerned about is that we don't get anyone locked into something that would take us back to deficits. And you have to add up the cost of a tax cut and a privatization of Social Security and all the spending programs. And if you do that, and the sum of it is more than $2 trillion, you're in trouble. You're back in deficits. You've got high interest rates.

That's the thing that I've tried to get the American people to focus on. We've got to keep paying down the debt to keep the interest rates down, to keep the prosperity going. But I think on the details of the plan, that's something that should properly be left to the candidates in this election. And I think that Governor Bush can state his position, the Vice President can state his, and the Members of Congress on both sides can argue it out without too much help from me.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Mr. President, do you think that Chairman Arafat can still retain sufficient influence over his people to stop the violence in the West Bank and Gaza?

The President. I think the violence can be dramatically reduced. I think that there are probably some people within the Palestinian territories, and probably some people within Israel, that are not within total control of Chairman Arafat or even the Israeli Government. But I do think Chairman Arafat can dramatically reduce the level of violence.

The problem, as I have been saying for years and years to the people in the region, is that once you actually start a peace process and people's expectations get built up and you have a commitment to peaceful resolution of these issues, violence is no longer a very good tool to achieve political objectives. It always, in the end, will be counterproductive. Why? Because if you look at the pattern, what you have to do is, you stir the people up—you get the people all stirred up so that they believe that violent reactions are legitimate—and then you can't just turn mass

emotions on and off, like you can a water tap. It's just not that simple.

So I think that it's very important—I think what we did at Sharm was to put at least a speed bump on the road to the dramatic deterioration of the situation. But I don't think that we should ask ourselves whether he has 100 percent control, because the truth is, none of us know the answer to that, and nobody has 100 percent control of any situation. The real and fundamental question is, can the level of violence be substantially reduced by a sustained effort? If the parties do what they agreed to do at Sharm, the answer to that is a resounding yes.

Yes, ma'am.

Q. Mr. President, to follow up on that question and one other question, you said that you do believe he is capable of reducing the violence. So are you saying that he hasn't tried to do that? And secondly, there was a poll out today in Israel that showed that if there was an election today, Netanyahu would beat Barak 2-1. And are you concerned at all that in your attempts to be an honest broker and the way the violence has continued that you've somehow sold out Barak, that he will no longer be a leader in Israel in a few weeks, in a few months from now, and that the peace process will inevitably be over once that happens?

The President. Well, the short answer to your question is no, because he made the decisions that he made—he made very courageous decisions, and he's in a difficult position now because he's getting the worst of both worlds. I mean, he reached out to the Palestinians, and he showed enormous courage in doing so. And we did not get an agreement at Camp David, although it was, on balance, quite a positive thing.

I will say again, you can't maintain this status quo. We either have to shut the violence down and get back to the peace process, or there is going to be at least a level of anxiety, mistrust, and a worsening of relations, which I don't think would be good for anybody.

But I think that—I will say what I said the day the Camp David talks ended. Prime Minister Barak knew what he was doing. He took a big chance. He did it because after years in the Israeli military, he reached the same conclusion that Yitzak Rabin reached, that in the end, the best guarantee of Israel's security is a sustainable peace with all of her neighbors. He knew there would be bumps along the road and that there would be points at which the process would be ragged. He made a decision that he was trying to go for the long-term security of Israel. And events in the next several days will determine whether or not we can get back on that path.

That's my reaction. I think it can be done, and I think the parties can do it, and I'm going to do my best to see what I can do to be helpful. But we've got to get the level of violence down. This peace with the Israelis and the aspirations of the Palestinians can, in the end, only be fulfilled by agreement.

We called at Sharm for a commission to look into what happened, to try to make sure it shouldn't happen again. We can do that, but the critical pillars for a good situation in the Middle East are the absence of violence and the presence of negotiations and continued progress. And those are the things that all the people should be focusing on. Those are the things that I've been working on every day for the last couple of weeks now.

Medicare Legislation

Q. On the tax package, the Republicans yesterday said they are considering including an increase in the minimum wage, which you want, and a scaled-back school bond proposal, which you also support.

The President. A scaled-back what?

Q. A scaled-back school bond proposal. But they are also considering including the Medicare giveback, which you've threatened to veto. Would that veto still hold if the tax package includes these provisions which you support?

The President. Well, it depends what the Medicare thing looks like. The only thing that bothered me about the Medicare issue is that we were working along in a bipartisan way. We had some differences. They want to give what I think is too much money to the HMO's. They say they need to do it because the HMO's are dropping people, dropping Medicare folks from coverage in their HMO's. But if you look at the provision, the

money goes to the HMO's without any guarantee of continued coverage for Medicare patients who may have serious problems.

So the thing that bothers me about it is, you have a lot of other—look, we all have acknowledged that in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, to achieve the savings we targeted we had certain specific changes in the Medicare program which, number one, produced greater savings than we estimated, or than the Congressional Budget Office estimated, and did so at a cost to the health care providers which was unacceptable; and that there were substantial difficulties for urban hospitals, for rural hospitals, for the teaching hospitals, for nursing homes, home health providers, hospice services, the whole range of things.

And I have no objection to the HMO's being given consideration in this bill. The only point I tried to make is that if you give them as much money as the Republicans do, you severely short the urban and rural hospitals, the teaching hospitals, and these other providers that I just mentioned.

So the question is, can we achieve some balance here? I hope we can. This is a very important thing. I sympathize with the Republican leadership in not wanting to let the cost of this bill balloon out of control. And I offered to work with them on that. That is something—a goal that we both share. But this should be a question that's decided strictly on the merits. This is not a political issue with me. You have all these folks; they have people they have to care for. We made a decision in '98 to sign a balanced budget bill, and they made a decision to pass it, which had specific changes in the Medicare program designed to produce an amount of savings. The savings were greater, and accordingly, the loss to the providers was greater, and the quality of health care is, therefore, strained.

So what we need to do is just take this on the merits. So I don't want to turn this into a big political fight. I just think this is one where the facts should get out, and we should do what the facts indicate is the best balanced thing to do with the money we have available for all the providers. And I simply don't think that their proposal does that or even comes close. So I hope we can reach agreement on it.

Thank you. I've got to run.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Prime Minister Ehud Barak and former Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Gregory W. Meeks in New York City

October 25, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Let me say, first of all, I am delighted to be here with Greg and Simone-Marie and their beautiful daughter. Chelsea and I were glad to come by, remembering when Chelsea was that age. Didn't she do a good job of sitting through her daddy's speech? I thought it was fabulous. [*Laughter*] Right in the middle of the speech, she was looking at him. She said, "Daddy." So your name recognition is high where it needs to be. [*Laughter*]

I am honored today by the presence of the Manhattan Borough president, Virginia Fields, and Assemblywoman Vivian Cook and Senator Malcolm Smith and our members of the council, Archie Spigner, Tom White, and Juanita Watkins. Let's give them all a big hand. [*Applause*] Thank you for being here.

I feel a great deal of gratitude today, and every day these days—I'm very grateful to the people of New York for being so good to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore, for your support in 1992 and 1996. I'm very grateful for Greg Meeks. He is an outstanding Congressman. He has supported our economic initiatives, our education initiatives. He's been a real champion for building one America, and I think he has a brilliant and limitless future in the House of Representatives.

Let me say to all of you, I know whenever I do an event like this, in the parlance of my faith, I'm always preaching to the saved, or you wouldn't be here. But I think that it's important in the last 2 weeks of this election that we reach out to other people, to

tell them how important it is to vote and what is at stake here.

I have, as you know, more than a passing interest in the elections in New York this year—[*laughter*]—because Hillary is running for the Senate and because we now have a home here, and I want it to be the leader of the country. New York kind of led the way for us over the last 8 years, and I hope it will continue to do so.

And I just would like to tell you that not only as President but as a soon-to-be citizen who has spent a lifetime looking at this country, studying it, hoping for the best, I think it's important that every American understand that there are really three great questions in this election. There may be a thousand questions, but there are three that override all others for me.

And if I were sitting alone with any of you in a room and we were just having a conversation and there was no press coverage and no particular political impact and you asked me what the election was about, I would tell you exactly the same thing. I think the first question is, how do we keep the prosperity going and extend it to people and places that have been left behind? We have the longest economic expansion in our history, the highest homeownership in history, 22 million jobs, the lowest African-American and Latino unemployment ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, welfare rolls cut in half.

We have done a lot of important things. The Vice President has run our empowerment zone program, and thanks to Charlie Rangel, one of them is here in New York. And we've worked hard to increase lending to people who have been traditionally shut out of access to capital.

And I'm grateful for all that. But there's a lot more we can do. We can keep the economy going, and we can extend it to people and places left behind. But in order to do it, we have to, first of all, build on the strategy that got us to this point, fiscal responsibility, investing in our people and our future, and selling more of our products and services around the world. That's how we got here, and if we want to keep making progress, we have to do that.

Now, only Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg Meeks, that team, will make America debt-free, will keep paying down the debt until we're debt-free in 2012, will keep investing more in education and science and technology, in solving the energy problem, in the environment, and all the things that we need to be investing for our future, and have a tax cut we can afford as opposed to one that might be more attractive at election time.

And this is very important, because on everything else rests our ability to continue to build our prosperity. I always say one of the things that I wish the American people knew is that if you pay down the debt and we keep doing it, we'll keep interest rates lower. One of the big reasons that the American economy turned around is, from the moment we announced our economic plan after the election in 1992, interest rates started to drop; the stock market was building; investment began to flow into America at record levels.

If you pay down the debt, as opposed to spend so much on a tax cut and privatization of Social Security and other spending that we'll be back in deficit, interest rates will be about a point lower a year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to ordinary people and to people who are in high-income groups and to people who serve this lunch today? Three hundred ninety billion dollars in home mortgages savings over a decade; $30 billion in lower car payments; $15 billion in lower college loan payments; lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, and a better stock market.

I think it is quite interesting that in the financial capital of America, New York City, it's one of the strongest places in the country for the Gore/Lieberman ticket, because people understand here that keeping interest rates low is more important to prosperity and to wealth creation and to keeping the expansion going than having a large tax cut in the short run.

And so I hope you'll tell people that. We've got to keep the prosperity going. And if you want to do it, you've got to keep paying the debt down and then use what's left for investment in education and the future and for an affordable tax cut. And the people who are

on that program are Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg Meeks. That's the first thing.

The second thing I want to say is, this country is not just progressing economically; it's progressing in other ways as well. Just for example, the crime rate is at a 26-year low. We have a cleaner environment, cleaner air, cleaner water, safer drinking water, 3 times as many toxic waste dumps cleaned up in our 8 years than in the previous 12 years under two administrations of the other party. We have, for the first time in a dozen years, the number of people without health insurance is going down, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program, and New York has been one of the best States in the country in enrolling kids.

And the schools are getting better. The dropout rate is down. The reading and math scores are up. The college-going rate is at an all-time high. We have had, in the last 5 years, a 50 percent increase in children taking advanced placement classes, but a 300 percent increase in Latino kids and a 500 percent increase in African-American kids taking advanced placement classes in high school, so they can go on to college. This is a big deal.

Now, what should we do about this? I think we have to continue to invest in what works. And in every one of these areas—I won't go through it, but in every one of these areas, if you want to build on this progress, you've got to be for Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg, because there are differences between the two parties, and they would reverse the policies that we've had in education and health care, the environment and crime.

So that's the second big question. I think it's a good thing that America's a safer country. I think we ought to have more police on the street, not fewer. I think we ought to have more teachers in the classroom. I think we ought to modernize our schools. I think we ought to have universal access to preschool, after-school, and summer school programs, for the kids who need it. And I think now we know we can turn around failing schools, we ought to give out this Federal money in a way that every State has to identify its failing schools and turn them around or shut them down and reopen them under new management. That's what I think ought to be done.

You could find lots of exhibits here in New York. I was in Harlem the other day, in a grade school that 2 years ago—listen to this—2 years ago 80 percent of the kids were doing reading and math below grade level. Enter new management, new policies, high expectations, accountability. Two years later now, same school, same neighborhood, same kids, 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level. We can do this. We can make all of our educational system work.

That's the second big question. The third big question, maybe most important of all, is whether we're going to continue to build one America and be heavily involved in a positive way in the rest of the world. What does that mean? To me, it means passing strong hate crimes legislation, being against racial profiling, passing employment nondiscrimination legislation, passing the immigrant fairness legislation that is so important that we're fighting for now in the Congress, continuing to support AmeriCorps, our national service program, preserving a woman's right to choose, and having a Supreme Court that will protect the rights of the American people, not restrict the right of Congress to advance our public interests.

Now, these are big, big issues. And if you believe that it's important to keep building one America—and there are differences between the parties from top to bottom on these issues—if you agree with us, your only choice is Gore, Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg.

So that's my pitch to you. There are three big issues in the election: Do you want to keep the prosperity going and build on it, give it to people and places left behind? Do you want to keep the progress going in the environment, in crime, in education and health care, and build on it? Do you want America to continue to be a model for harmony, because we're living with each other in an increasingly diverse society? And I might say one other thing: Do you want us to continue to be involved in the rest of the world?

I've been working for the last 3 weeks to try to end the violence in the Middle East,

stop the killing, and get the peace process going. We have worked successfully to end ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. And I think it's a good thing that we went there, and I think it's a good thing that we're there now. Even though we only have 15 percent of the troops in Kosovo and Bosnia, we're important to the preservation of liberty there.

I don't know how many ethnic groups there are in New York City that have known in the past people who tried to wipe them off the face of the Earth, just because of their religion or their ethnic background. And we have to be a force for this around the world.

Why is the United States, for example, historically so committed to the preservation of Israel? Because we learned in World War II and we learned from the Holocaust survivors and their children and people who have come here the terrible price we pay. We've learned from our own racial history. We've learned from our own history with the Native American tribes what happens when people can be denigrated, dehumanized, killed, and walked away from and ignored, just because of who they are.

So this is a big deal to me. I think building one America and standing for these values around the world is the most important thing, even more important than keeping our prosperity going, because Americans are smart and they're innovative. If they get in a tight, they'll always figure out how to solve their problems as long as we have the right value system and as long as we believe everyone counts, everyone deserves a chance, and we all do better when we help each other.

So if you want that kind of America, working for that kind of world, your choice is Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg. That's my pitch, and I hope you agree.

Let me just say one other thing. I know when the Vice President sometimes says, "You ain't seen nothing yet," people say, "Well, he's running for office. What do you expect?" But I'm not running for anything. For the first time in 26 years, I'm not on the ballot. And I can tell you, I believe that. It takes a long time to turn a country around. It takes a long time, after a certain order in the world goes away—in this case, the order imposed by the cold war—to kind of figure out how to make the most of the new set of arrangements. And I've done everything I could to turn our country around, to move us forward, and to pull us together and have the right approach toward the rest of the world, toward Africa and Latin America, as well as Europe and Asia, to really reach out and be involved as a force for peace and prosperity. And I believe the best stuff is still out there.

In my lifetime, our Nation has never before enjoyed at once so much economic prosperity, social progress, with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat. This is the chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children. But in order to do it—none of us can imagine what the end results of all these scientific discoveries are going to be; none of us can see with absolute clarity what the big new problems of the next 10 years or 20 years will be. But we know one thing: If we keep the prosperity going, if we build on the social progress, if we keep building one America, if we keep reaching out to the rest of the world, America is going to do very well, indeed—the best chance you may ever have in your lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children. And the answer is, I want you to tell everybody you know, Gore/Lieberman, Hillary, and Greg.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:37 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Battery Park. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Meeks' wife, Simone-Marie; State Senator Malcolm A. Smith; and New York City Councilmembers Archie Spigner, Thomas White, Jr., and Juanita E. Watkins. Representative Meeks is a candidate for reelection in New York's Sixth Congressional District.

Remarks at a New York Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee Reception in New York City

October 25, 2000

The President. Thank you.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years! [*Laughter*]

The President. I'm just looking forward to being a good, law-abiding taxpayer of New York. [*Laughter*] Let me say, Mr. Speaker,

I thank you for inviting me here tonight and for your truly outstanding leadership. You've had a lonely post in a State with a Republican Governor and a Republican Senate. And I have watched for years, long before I could have known we'd be in the positions we're in today, where I'm out here campaigning for a Senate spouse. [*Laughter*] And I admire so much what you have done, and I was honored to be invited to come by and be with you tonight.

I thank our Democratic Chair, Judith Hope, and all the members of the assembly who are here. I feel so grateful to New York for many reasons—for the extraordinary support that you have given to me and Al Gore from 1992 on. Knowing that there would be 33 electoral votes in the can before we had to worry about the rest has been an enormous sense of psychological support for us these past 8 years.

I thank you for the uncommon kindness and generosity that so many of you have shown to my wife in this very long campaign, about a 16-month campaign she's waged now. And I think it will be successful, in no small measure because people like you have helped her. And I'm very grateful to you for that.

I, also, as a lifelong baseball nut, I thank you for giving us the best World Series in 50 years.

I want to say just two things seriously, if I might. First of all, as I think all of you know, I was a Governor for a dozen years before I ran for President, and I think I understand the connection between the Federal and State Government about as well as anybody. I understand that no matter what we do in Washington and how well we do it, the impact that our policies have on real people depends in part on how aggressively a State does its job.

New York, for example, because you had a program to insure children previously, has been one of the most successful States in enrolling children in our Children's Health Insurance Program. And I know a lot of you have been very active in that. I'll give you—the polar opposite case is the legislature in Arizona got a bill passed through the legislature which literally prohibited the schools of Arizona from enrolling children in the program in school. So not surprisingly, they're not doing very well.

But that illustrates the point. The flip side is that no matter how well you try to do your job, if you have a lousy economy, it will be harder for you. There won't be as many taxpayers, and there will be a lot more drain on the State treasury. And if we make bad decisions in terms of how these funds are allocated, it will be tough for you.

And I tried to be very, very sensitive to that for the last 8 years. And I can give you one example of that now, that our friend Congressman Engel, who also previously served in the New York Assembly, and he's here with us tonight, is helping me on.

In 1997, when we passed the Balanced Budget Act, because the Democrats had taken all the tough decisions in '93 alone, without any help from the other party—when the Vice President cast the tie-breaking vote and began to turn this country around, something I believe he'll be rewarded for 2 weeks from yesterday—we knew we had to slow the rate of growth of health care expenditures. And we agreed to take the estimates of the Congressional Budget Office, just like your legislative budget operation here, about what changes would be necessary to achieve a certain level of savings.

Now, we thought at the time that they had overestimated what had to be done. But we all agreed to play by the same rules. We did it in good faith, and we had a remarkable moment of bipartisan harmony. Now there is 100 percent agreement that the changes that we instituted in 1997 were too draconian and that the Medicare programs are not properly funded. And there is a bipartisan agreement to put $28 billion back into Medicare. But we're having a huge fight down there about how to allocate it. And our friends in the Republican caucus basically asked the Democrats in Congress and the representatives of the White House to leave, and they cut the money up and gave a third of the money to the HMO's, without any guarantees, I might add. The argument was that all over America, especially in a lot of small towns in rural America, HMO's were dropping their Medicare recipients. That's true. But they put the money in without any

guarantee that they'll take them back and keep them once they take them back.

So it has the feeling of a political decision that won't have a good policy impact. And it has the consequence of depriving urban hospitals, teaching hospitals, nursing homes, home health care agencies, hospice operations, and a few other smaller health care providers of the funds they need to serve people on Medicare.

So we're in—one of the last-minute struggles we're in as we try to finish this congressional session, already about a month late this week, is trying to get a fair share for New York of these health care funds, but not just for New York, for everybody in the country that's in the same situation you're in.

But it will have a lot to do with how well you can do your job in the coming year whether we make the right decision or not in the next 48 hours. So I come here basically as a Governor and as a President who has 8 years of experience understanding that if you do your job well, the policies I've fought for will be validated. If you don't, the impact of the policies will be severely limited. And I know that if we don't do the right things in Washington, we're making your load an awful lot heavier. So that's why I'm honored to be here.

Now let me just say three things that I promised myself I would say to every group I saw between now and the election. And they're the same things I would say if I were sitting alone in a room with any of you and you asked me why we should be supporting Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Eliot, all the Democrats. There are three great questions that the voters will resolve in this election, whether consciously or unconsciously. Whether they vote or stay home, there will be three great questions resolved.

One is, are we going to keep this prosperity going and extend it to the people who aren't a part of it yet? We say the first thing we've got to do is keep paying this debt down, because the decision we made to get rid of the deficits in '93 led to an immediate drop in interest rates, a big increase in the stock market, and people saved huge money on business loans and everything else that requires credit. And we have to keep doing that.

We set aside the money to do that and then say, with the money that's left we'll have a tax cut we can afford, that will focus on the needs of working families, to educate their children, send them to college, for child care, for long-term care for the elderly and the disabled, for retirement savings, but we'll have one we can afford and still have the money we need to invest in education, health care, the environment, national security, and our future.

Now, that's very important, because our friends on the other side say that we can afford a trillion and a half dollar tax cut, a trillion dollar Social Security privatization program, and $500 billion worth of spending. There is no way you can cram $3 trillion into a $2 trillion projected surplus—which won't be that big, ask Eliot, there's no way it's going to be that big, not after this session of Congress—without going into deficit.

If you go into deficit, it means higher interest rates. The Gore-Lieberman plan will keep interest rates about a percent lower for a decade. That's worth $390 billion in lower home mortgage payments, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments, lower business loans, means more businesses, more jobs, and a higher stock market. This is not rocket science. This is elementary mathematics. You need to drive this home to everybody you talk to. It's an issue in the President's race. It's an issue in the Senate race. It's an issue in the races for Congress, and it will dramatically affect what you do in the State Assembly for the next 4 years.

The second issue is, are we going to build on the progress we've made in bringing our society together or reverse policy? Now, look, in the last 8 years the welfare rolls have been cut in half; there is a 26-year low in crime; the environment is cleaner; the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the drinking water is safer; we've cleaned up 3 times as many toxic waste dumps. And we've proved you can do it and grow the economy. We've got a decline in the number of people who don't have health insurance, for the first time in a dozen years—again, thanks a lot to people like you who have made sure we enroll these children in the Children's Health Insurance Program. And the schools are getting better: The drop-

out rate is lower; the college-going rate is at an all-time high; the reading and math scores are up. We know now how to turn around these failing schools.

So we have to decide, are we going to build on this prosperity, this progress? That's what Gore and Lieberman and Hillary and all the people running for Congress have advocated. They'll give you more tools to help make the schools better, to help improve the health care system and provide insurance to people who don't have it, to provide a Medicare drug program, to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights. They'll continue to make the environment cleaner. They'll continue to drive the crime rate down by putting more police on the street.

In every single one of these areas they're running against people who, in good conscience I think, want to reverse all these policies. Now, it's not like you haven't had a test run here. You need to talk to people about that. We tried it our way. We tried it their way. Our way works better. [*Laughter*] It works. The evidence is in.

And the third great question is whether we're going to continue to build one America as we grow more diverse. Shelley mentioned the work that we've done in the Middle East and are doing. And that takes about half of every day I have now and most of the night. We are, as ever, committed to the security of the State of Israel and committed to the proposition that if it can be done honorably, the long-term security of Israel is best served by a just peace. It is very tough over there now, and I'm doing what I can.

Some of you mentioned the work we've done in Ireland. I thank you for that. New York also has a lot of people from the Balkans who have commented to me in the last few weeks how grateful they are that Mr. Milosevic is gone and that we ended ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo.

But the point I want to make for tonight is that in order for the United States to continue to do good around the world, we have to be good at home. We have to be an example of a genuine, tolerant, open society. And the Democrats, therefore, are for the hate crimes bill. They're for the employment nondiscrimination bill. They're for immigration fairness legislation that we're fighting like crazy for in the closing days of this legislative session. They're for continuing our national service program. They're for equal pay for women. They're for a woman's right to choose and appointments to the judiciary that will generally reflect the ability of legislative bodies, including the Congress to protect the rights and the interests of the American people. Now, that is a very important—[*inaudible*].

And this election will determine, therefore, whether we keep the prosperity going and extend it to people who aren't part of it yet, whether we keep the social progress going and build on it, and whether we continue to build one America. Those are the three great questions. And I just hope that every day you can, between now and election, you will share those three points with as many people as you can, because this is a great time. I've done as—I've worked as hard as I could to turn the country around, to move it forward, to pull it together. But when Al Gore says to you that the best is yet to come and you ain't seen nothing yet, when a person running for office says that, it may sound like a campaign statement. But I'm not running for anything for the first time in 26 years—[*laughter*]—and I believe that.

It takes a long time to turn a country around. All the best things are still out there. All the best things are still out there. That's what he and Joe Lieberman have been talking about. That's what Hillary has tried to talk about in this election. And we may never have another chance in our lifetime to have a moment like this, that we can mold for our children and our grandchildren.

So I think you should all be happy; you should be confident; you should be proud to be members of the Democratic Party. And you ought to go out there and bear down, every day between now and election, and turn as many voters as you can here and in New Jersey and in any other place in America where you know people that would be more likely to help us if they knew those simple three things. And remember, not voting is almost as bad as voting against us.

So turn them out, and we'll have a great celebration in 2 weeks.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. at the Four Seasons Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sheldon (Shelley) Silver, speaker, New York State Assembly; Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; and former President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

Statement on National Disability Mentoring Day

October 25, 2000

Today, on National Disability Mentoring Day, I commend the members of my administration and the public and private organizations across the Nation that are conducting mentoring activities to help expand employment opportunities for young people with disabilities. I also applaud the young people participating in Mentoring Day and extend my special congratulations to the winners of the Disability Mentoring Day Essay Contest. Each participant has helped advance the goal of today's effort to expose young people with disabilities to a variety of career options, while acquainting employers with the contributions that this future talent pool can make.

I am pleased to report that my administration is taking specific actions to help more people with disabilities participate in the workforce. These steps include new public-private partnerships to close the digital divide for people with disabilities and a variety of grants to advance the goals of the landmark Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act I signed last year.

I am also glad to report important progress in both Federal and private sector initiatives to hire more people with disabilities. First, the Federal Government is on track to meet the goal I announced on the 10th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act to hire 100,000 more persons with disabilities over 5 years. Second, CEO's of a dozen major companies are leading the way by pledging to support the recruitment, hiring, and promotion of individuals with disabilities.

Together, these important steps represent a powerful statement about what we can accomplish when Federal, State, and private sector partners work together toward the full inclusion of people with disabilities in our Nation's historic economic growth and prosperity. Hiring people with disabilities is not just the right thing to do. It's good for business; it's good for communities; and it's good for all Americans.

Statement on the Need for Congressional Action on the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act"

October 25, 2000

It is long past time that we correct several injustices and provide fairness in our immigration system by enacting the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act." This legislation is a straightforward proposal to keep families together and to make our immigration policies more equitable. This legislation would help individuals and their families who have been living for many years in the United States and have developed strong ties to their communities to adjust their immigration status. My administration has been trying to negotiate with Republicans, but unfortunately, current Republican proposals would not help most of the immigrants that would get relief under the "Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act," and would perpetuate the current patchwork of contradictory and unfair immigration policies. These injustices should be corrected by Congress before they adjourn this year. If these issues are not resolved, I will veto the Commerce, Justice, State appropriations.

Statement on the Irish Republican Army's Decision on Arms Inspections

October 25, 2000

I was very pleased to learn today of the IRA's announcement that it has decided to allow a repeat inspection of a number of its arms dumps. This constitutes an important and timely confidence-building measure as part of a process initiated by the IRA aimed at putting its arms completely and verifiably beyond use. I welcome the IRA's statement that it has not broken off contact with the de Chastelain Commission, and I hope discussions with the Commission will resume at the earliest possible opportunity. I urge

all parties to work together and in cooperation with the British and Irish Governments to build on the genuine progress that has already been achieved in implementing the Good Friday accord, by restoring momentum toward full implementation of all its provisions within the agreed timeframe.

Statement on the Bombing of Civilians in Southern Sudan

October 25, 2000

I am deeply concerned by reports that the Government of Sudan is bombing innocent civilians in the southern part of the country. Last week Government aircraft dropped munitions on a village while an international relief agency was distributing food. International relief workers report that the Government of Sudan has bombed civilian and humanitarian locations more than 60 times during the past year.

Such egregious abuses have become commonplace in Sudan's ongoing civil war, which has already claimed over 2 million lives. If the Government of Sudan seeks to demonstrate to the international community that it is prepared to act according to international norms and the rule of law, it must allow full and immediate access for humanitarian organizations seeking to provide relief to Sudan's war-ravaged civilians.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the Older Americans Act

October 25, 2000

I applaud the House of Representatives for today's overwhelming bipartisan vote to reauthorize the Older Americans Act (H.R. 782). Our Nation's older Americans have been waiting for more than 5 years for Congress to approve this critical legislation. Now that the House has acted, it is imperative that the Senate pass this important legislation before it adjourns.

The Older Americans Act is the cornerstone of our Nation's commitment to senior citizens. Seniors all across the country rely on vital OAA in-home and community-based services, including home delivered meals, nursing home ombudsmen, and employment and transportation services that are essential to preserve their dignity and independence.

I am also pleased that the House bill includes the new National Family Caregiver Support Program, proposed by this administration to help hundreds of thousands of family members who are struggling to care for their older or disabled relatives. The Senate must do its part to pass this legislation without further delay.

Statement on Congressional Action on the Foreign Operations Appropriations Legislation

October 25, 2000

I commend the House and Senate for passing a foreign operations bill today that supports our efforts to promote peace and stability around the world, in turn helping to make our Nation more safe and secure.

I am particularly pleased that this legislation funds our landmark initiative to provide debt relief to the poorest of the world's nations. Our commitment to debt relief gives these poorest countries a critical opportunity to combine reform with funds to reduce poverty and provide basic health care and education for their people. I applaud the efforts of all those across the political spectrum who joined forces to secure this vital funding.

I also am pleased that this legislation increases funding to fight HIV/AIDS. In nations around the world, HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death and is undermining decades of effort to reduce mortality, improve health, expand educational opportunities, and lift people out of poverty.

This legislation also helps strengthen our efforts to support democracy and stability in southeastern Europe, the Newly Independent States, and other key regions. It includes additional resources to combat terrorism and nuclear proliferation. It also provides increases for our Peace Corps volunteers around the world and for the Export-Import Bank, which supports the export of American products overseas.

Finally, I am pleased that this legislation commits additional critical funding for international family planning organizations and lifts the restrictions hampering their work that I have strongly opposed in the past.

Message on the Observance of Diwali, 2000

October 25, 2000

Warm greetings to Indian Americans across our country as you observe the festival of Diwali.

This ancient and joyous holiday, with origins in the Hindu faith, reflects both the unity and the rich diversity of the people and culture of India. It is truly a "festival of lights," marked by lighting candles and lamps, setting off firecrackers, and dressing in vibrant colors. During Diwali, Indians of all ages and backgrounds come together to celebrate life, the triumph of good over evil, and the hope for happiness and prosperity that we all share.

America has become home to men and women from countries across the globe, whose skills and perspective have enriched our culture, enhanced our economy, and broadened our vision of the world. Diwali presents all of us with an opportunity to reflect on the many ways the talents, history, and traditions of the Indian people have contributed to our national life and cultural heritage and to give thanks for the extraordinary diversity that is one of our nation's greatest strengths.

Hillary and I extend best wishes to all for a wonderful celebration.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Executive Order 13172—Amendment to Executive Order 13078, To Expand the Role of the National Task Force on Employment of Adults With Disabilities To Include a Focus on Youth

October 25, 2000

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, and in order to provide for improved access to employment and training for youth with disabilities, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 13078 of March 13, 1998, is amended by adding to section 2 of that order the following new subsection to read as follows: "(h) To improve employment outcomes for persons with disabilities by addressing, among other things, the education, transition, employment, health and rehabilitation, and independent living issues affecting young people with disabilities, executive departments and agencies shall coordinate and cooperate with the Task Force to: (1) strengthen interagency research, demonstration, and training activities relating to young people with disabilities; (2) create a public awareness campaign focused on access to equal opportunity for young people with disabilities; (3) promote the views of young people with disabilities through collaboration with the Youth Councils authorized under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998; (4) increase access to and utilization of health insurance and health care for young people with disabilities through the formalization of the Federal Healthy and Ready to Work Interagency Council; (5) increase participation by young people with disabilities in post-secondary education and training programs; and (6) create a nationally representative Youth Advisory Council, to be funded and

chaired by the Department of Labor, to advise the Task Force in conducting these and other appropriate activities."

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 25, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:42 a.m., October 26, 2000]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on October 27.

Executive Order 13173—Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley

October 25, 2000

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to provide a more rapid and integrated Federal response to the economic development challenges of the Central San Joaquin Valley (Valley), it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. (a) There is established the "Interagency Task Force on the Economic Development of the Central San Joaquin Valley" (Task Force).

(b) The Task Force shall include the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Administrator of General Services, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, or their designees, and such other senior executive branch officials as may be determined by the Task Force. The Chair of the Task Force shall rotate annually among the Secretaries of Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, and Commerce in an order deter mined by those agency heads. Administrative support shall be provided by the then-current chair.

(c) The purpose of the Task Force is to coordinate and improve existing Federal efforts for the Valley, in concert with locally led efforts, in order to increase the living standards and the overall economic performance of the Valley. Economic development efforts shall include consideration of the preservation or enhancement of the natural environment and natural resources of the Valley. Specifically, the Task Force shall:

(1) analyze programs and policies of Task Force member agencies that relate to the Valley to determine what changes, modifications, and innovations should be considered, if any;

(2) consider statistical and data analysis, research, and policy studies related to the Valley;

(3) develop, recommend, and implement short-term and long-term options for promoting sustainable economic development;

(4) consult and coordinate activities with State, tribal, and local governments, community leaders, Members of Congress, the private sector, and other interested parties, paying particular attention to maintaining existing authorities of the States, tribes, and local governments, and preserving their existing working relationships with other agencies, organizations, or individuals;

(5) coordinate and collaborate on research and demonstration priorities of Task Force member agencies related to the Valley;

(6) integrate Federal initiatives and programs into the design of sustainable economic development actions for the Valley; and

(7) focus initial efforts on pilot communities for implementing a coordinated and expedited Federal response to local economic development and other needs.

(d) The Task Force shall issue an interim report to the President by January 15, 2001. The Task Force shall issue its first annual report to the President by September 15,

2001, with subsequent reports to follow annually for a period of 5 years. The reports shall describe the actions taken by, and progress of, each member of the Task Force in carrying out this order.

Sec. 2. *Specific Activities by Task Force Members and Other Agencies.* The agencies represented on the Task Force shall work together and report their actions and progress in carrying out this order to the Task Force Chair one month before the reports are due to the President under section 1(d) of this order.

Sec. 3. *Cooperation.* All efforts taken by agencies under sections 1 and 2 of this order shall, as appropriate, further partnerships and cooperation with organizations that represent the Valley and with State, tribal, and local governments.

Sec. 4. *Definitions.* (a) "Agency" means an executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105.

(b) The Central San Joaquin Valley or "Valley" means the counties of Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus, and Tulare in the State of California.

Sec. 5. *Judicial Review.* This order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
October 25, 2000.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:42 a.m., October 26]

NOTE: This Executive order was published in the *Federal Register* on October 27.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bipartisan Tax Cut Legislation

October 25, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

We are well beyond the time when Congress should have finished its work, with many of our most important issues still left unresolved. It is crucial that we now take all possible steps to find common ground.

In that spirit, I would like to put forward a consensus tax offer to help resolve the impasse on taxes. This offer does not contain everything that my Administration and Congressional Democrats would prefer; nor does it contain all that Congressional Republicans hope to see. Rather, it recognizes that both sides need to give a little in order to accomplish bipartisan tax legislation this year and that we should keep the overall tax cut size to an amount that ensures we continue on our path of debt reduction and fiscal discipline.

First, we can raise the minimum wage without eroding traditional worker protections, while at the same time providing reasonable and targeted tax relief for small businesses. Accordingly, in exchange for my proposed minimum wage increase, I would accept the core elements of Speaker Hastert's offer on a small business tax package, costing approximately $30 billion over 10 years, provided that the FLSA and FUTA provisions are eliminated, the welfare-to-work tax credit is extended, and modifications are made to the meals and entertainment deduction and amortization of reforestation expenses. I discuss your health care proposal later in this letter.

Second, it is essential that the Labor/HHS bill include the Rangel/Johnson proposal to build and modernize 6000 schools through $24.8 billion in school construction financing, costing $8.5 billion over 10 years. Considering the estimated need for $125 billion to meet our nation's demand for safe and modern schools, this proposal is the least we should do for our children.

Third, the offer includes pension legislation adopted by the House and Senate, costing about $50–60 billion over 10 years, provided that certain modifications that the Treasury Department has discussed with the tax-writing committees are made to ensure that employer-provided pensions for workers are not harmed, to provide meaningful protections for workers affected by cash balance conversions, and to provide progressive savings incentives for low- and moderate-income workers.

Fourth, the package includes the tax and other incentives from the bipartisan New Markets/Community Renewal legislation, at a cost of about $25 billion over 10 years, with

some changes that we have previously discussed and other associated items upon which we can agree. This will be an historic commitment to expand the promise of free enterprise and entreprenuership to our nation's poor and underserved urban and rural areas.

It is also important that we provide the bipartisan credit for vaccine research and purchases, which will save lives and advance public health, costing about $1.5 billion over 10 years.

Finally, it is essential for our commitment to economic growth to include the replacement of the Foreign Sales Corporation regime, which has passed the House and Senate with broad bipartisan support, costing about $4.5 billion over 10 years.

I believe the package I have outlined above can be the basis for bipartisan consensus on a tax package.

While Congress has failed to send me a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights and a voluntary Medicare prescription drug plan for all seniors, I believe it is possible to forge a bipartisan agreement that would expand health care coverage for uninsured working Americans. The best way to do this is through the FamilyCare plan that builds on the successful Children's Health Insurance Program and expands affordable insurance to over four million parents. A deduction for the purchase of private health insurance in the individual nongroup market is an inefficient and costly way to do coverage, is far less equitable than other options that use refundable tax credits, and could lead to private employers dropping health coverage. However, in the spirit of bipartisanship and breaking gridlock, I propose that your deduction be modified to a credit with necessary consumer protections in the individual insurance markets and that the credit be coupled with the bipartisan FamilyCare proposal.

I further believe we should find a common agreement to ease the burden of long-term care on American families. The best means to accomplish this goal is through our proposal to provide a $3,000 tax credit for people with long-term care needs or the families who care for them. This tax credit would provide immediate assistance to those burdened by these long-term care costs today. While I cannot support your proposal to turn this into a deduction, on grounds of both equity and effectiveness, if you are willing to support our $3,000 tax credit, I would be willing to agree to your proposal to provide an enhanced deduction for the purchase of private long-term care insurance provided there are appropriate consumer protections. This bipartisan, long-term care package has already been endorsed by the AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, and the Health Insurance Association of America.

In the spirit of compromise, I believe we can work together quickly to pass this balanced legislation that I can sign into law and that can benefit the American people.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, majority leader of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at a Birthday Tribute to Hillary Clinton in New York City

October 25, 2000

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Wait, wait, wait, wait. You're off message. [*Laughter*]

Look at this guy. This is why I don't have birthdays anymore. [*Laughter*] Has Tom Cruise had a great career, or not? Let's give him a hand. Isn't he wonderful? [*Applause*] Thank you. Bless you.

Now look, before I say anything else, I just want you to know, if anybody has the remotest doubt that in about 90 days I'm going to be perfectly happy to leave the White House and come to New York and be a real, honest-to-goodness New Yorker—[*laughter*]—wait a minute—if you have any doubt about that, here's what I have to say. Forget about it. [*Laughter*] Why are you laughing? Why are they laughing?

Robert DeNiro. Well, I told you. I told you, if you want to make it in this town, let's work on this.

Fuggedaboudit. [*Laughter*]

The President. Forget about it. [*Laughter*]

Mr. DeNiro. Fuggedaboudit.

The President. Forget about it!

Mr. DeNiro. No, no. Fuggedaboudit. Whatsamaddawhityou? [*Laughter*] Fuggedaboudit.

The President. You talkindame? [*Laughter*]

Mr. DeNiro. Fuggedaboudit.

The President. Hey, I know I just got here, but who was that guy, anyway? [*Laughter*] Fuggedaboudit. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Robert DeNiro. He has been a wonderful friend to me and to Hillary. And I just appeared between two guys that make more money in 8 minutes than I made in 8 years. [*Laughter*] Maybe they can get me into that apartment we talked about earlier tonight. [*Laughter*]

I have a role tonight. I'm going to play my role. I am campaigning hard out here for Spouse in Chief. And I want to tell you that I met Hillary when she was 23 and I was 24, and we were in law school. And I saw her kind of moseying around the law school, you know. And I'm embarrassed to say, for all you young people who are still students, I hate to admit this, but I was not totally absorbed by my studies at that point in my life. [*Laughter*]

And so I saw Hillary kind of floating around the law school. And she was sort of a presence there and a rather famous figure. I was a scruffy guy who was stylistically challenged. [*Laughter*] And so anyway, I had a lot of sense not to speak to her. I knew, I said, "If I talk to this woman, this is going to be nothing but trouble. I am not going to talk to her." True story.

So one night I was in the library at Yale Law School, and this guy is trying to talk me into joining the Yale Law Review. And I said, "I don't want to be on the Law Review." He said, "But you get to clerk for the Supreme Court." I said, "I don't want to clerk for the Supreme Court." He said, "You'll make more money." I said, "I don't give a damn about that. I want to go home." So he's giving his best pitch, and I see Hillary all the way across the library, and she sees me staring at her. And she put her book down, walked across the library, and she said, "Look, if you're going to keep looking at me, and I'm going to keep looking back, at least we ought to know each other's names. I'm Hillary Rodham. What's your name?"

I couldn't remember my name. [*Laughter*] Now, that's how we met. I say that to remove any doubt that she has the requisite aggression to be a good New Yorker. [*Laughter*]

I want to tell you that, for me, this is a birthday for Hillary that is filled with gratitude. The people of New York have been so wonderful to me in two Presidential elections and all the years in between. You have, for the last 16 months, opened your hearts to her and given her a chance to make her case. And I am so grateful to you.

You know, we've had a lot of fun here, making fun of politicians, including me. And it's all been in fun. But I'd like to tell you something seriously. When I leave office, after 26 years of running for office or serving in public life, I will be more idealistic about this country than I was the day I took the oath of office as President, the day I took my first public office.

And I've known a lot of people in politics, thousands of them, Republicans and Democrats and the occasional independent. And on balance, I've found them to be good, honest, hard-working people who love our country and do what they think is right. And they're better, on balance, than they get played out in the popular press. But in all these years, I have never, ever, ever known anybody that had the combination of intelligence and heart and consistent caring and persistence and ability to organize and energize other people and get things done that Hillary has. She's the best I have ever known.

And I am quite sure that if she hadn't spent the last 30 years helping me and helping children and families' causes, starting organizations and heading others, and always doing things for other people and never asking anybody until this election to do anything for her, that she would have been doing this years ago. When we met and fell in love, I actually—I told her forthrightly that I almost hated for her to come home to Arkansas and start our life together because I thought she had immense talent, and I felt that I somehow would be depriving her of a public career. So for me, the feelings I have for all

of you for lifting her up and supporting her and giving her a chance to serve this State and serve this Nation are almost inexpressible.

It's worth noting that this seat was held not only by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, one of the great intellects and public servants of the last 50 years, but also by Senator Robert Kennedy, who inspired me and so many people of my generation to believe that we could make a better country. And I want you to know that if you just keep working for 13 more days, she is going to make you profoundly proud that you have helped her in this.

And on top of that, she looks pretty good to be 53 years old, wouldn't you say? So I want you to stand up with me and offer a toast to the next United States Senator from New York.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:20 p.m. at the Roseland Ballroom. In his remarks, he referred to actors Tom Cruise and Robert DeNiro. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Admission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Into the Stability Pact

October 26, 2000

I applaud today's decision by the members of the Stability Pact to welcome the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as a new member. Last month the people of Yugoslavia spoke clearly in support of democratic change. The response today from the international community is just as clear. We will stand with the new democratic government as it pursues economic and political reform, meets its international obligations, and works with neighboring countries to promote lasting stability throughout the region.

We helped launch the Stability Pact last year with a common understanding that an undivided, democratic, and peaceful Europe will be a reality only when the countries of southeast Europe are integrated with the rest of the continent. To achieve this goal, the governments of the region are pressing ahead with reforms; the international community is supporting the region's economic development and integration; and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia can now play its own indispensable role in that effort.

At previous Stability Pact conferences, we invited participation by the political opposition in Serbia and by the democratic government in the Republic of Montenegro, both of which had the courage to stand up to the violence and corruption of the Milosevic regime. But we always kept open a chair for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Now the dramatic changes in Belgrade allow the chair for Yugoslavia to be filled. This is a major step towards realizing our shared vision of a region committed to peace, to healing the wounds of war, and to taking its place in a peaceful, undivided, and democratic Europe.

Statement on the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety

October 26, 2000

I am pleased that the 2000 Annual Report on School Safety released today by the Departments of Justice and Education shows that crime and violence in our Nation's schools continue to decline. Since 1992, rates of serious crime, including violent crime, have declined steadily in our schools, and the number of non-fatal crimes in schools is down by more than 21 percent. Between 1992 and 1997, the number of students who report carrying a weapon to school decreased by 25 percent. School homicides, which remain extremely rare, are also on the decline. This report provides encouraging data that our efforts to protect our children are having an impact.

Since Vice President Gore and I took office, we have encouraged communities to come together to ensure that our schools are safe places for learning. By making school safety a top priority, our administration has helped provide more and better-trained police officers in schools, vastly increased funding for after-school programs, required zero tolerance for guns in schools, and funded more mentors and school counselors to help our kids stay on the right track.

We owe it to our children to make sure that crime in school continues to decline. We can continue our progress by supporting

comprehensive, locally based efforts such as the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. Across the Nation, 77 communities have received $147 million under this innovative program to fund enhanced educational, mental health, and law enforcement services. Programs such as this one allow us to promote the healthy development of our students and to identify those children who may be having problems and get them the help they need to turn things around. By working together, we can continue our success in making America's schools safe for each and every student in our Nation.

Statement on Reaching the Nation's Highest Homeownership Rate

October 26, 2000

Today I am proud to announce that our Nation has broken a new record. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, America has reached its highest homeownership rates ever. This is tremendous new evidence that more and more American families are realizing the dream of owning their own home. Higher homeownership rates help build stronger families, create more stable communities, and raise living standards for all Americans.

Vice President Gore and I came to office committed to a strategy to make it easier for American families to buy their own homes. By providing record levels of homeownership loan assistance, increasing the availability of affordable housing, providing incentives to save for a home purchase, and maintaining our commitment to fiscal discipline that has kept interest rates low, we have worked to ensure that every family has the opportunity to own their own home. I would like to particularly thank Vice President Gore and Secretary Cuomo for their excellent leadership in working with families, especially in low-income and empowerment communities, to help make homeownership a reality.

Statement on Reauthorization of the Older Americans Act

October 26, 2000

Older Americans all across the country have reason to cheer today. After more than 5 years of congressional inaction, the Senate voted to approve legislation to reauthorize the Older Americans Act. I look forward to signing this measure of vital importance to our Nation's older Americans.

The Older Americans Act ensures that seniors in every State have access to meals, nursing home ombudsmen, legal assistance, elder abuse prevention, employment and transportation services that are essential to their dignity and independence. Enactment of the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 will strengthen and improve these services.

I am especially pleased that the final legislation includes the National Family Caregiver Support Program—a key administration priority designed to provide respite care and other supportive services to help hundreds of thousands of families who are struggling to care for their older loved ones who are ill or disabled.

I applaud the bipartisan leadership in the U.S. Senate for its outstanding efforts to approve the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000. Finally, and most important, I want to pay special tribute to the aging community for its tireless commitment to the needs of older Americans.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Counterdrug Assistance to Colombia and Neighboring Countries

October 26, 2000

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I hereby report, in accordance with section 3202 of the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, on current U.S. policy and strategy for counterdrug assistance to Colombia and neighboring countries. The enclosed

report sets forth the rationale for expanded support to Colombia and neighboring countries and highlights the comprehensive initiatives now underway in the Andean region in support of the National Drug Control Strategy.

Colombia's success in combating the threat of drugs is profoundly in the interest of the United States. A peaceful, democratic, and economically prosperous Colombia will result in a significant reduction of the supply of illicit drugs and help promote democracy and stability throughout the hemisphere. I am proud of the bipartisan effort that has made our Colombian initiative possible.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Bipartisan Tax Cut Legislation

October 26, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

Thank you for your letter yesterday responding to my proposed consensus tax package. As I said yesterday, I believe we all have a responsibility to make every possible effort to come together on a bipartisan agreement on tax relief and Medicare/Medicaid that will maintain fiscal discipline and serve the interests of all the American people. That is why I put forward a good faith offer yesterday that sought to reflect our differing priorities in a balanced manner. I was disappointed, however, that, without any consultation with me or Congressional Democrats, you chose to put forward a partisan legislative package that ignores our key concerns on school construction, health care, and pensions policy. If this current tax and Medicare/Medicaid package is presented to me, I will have no choice but to veto it.

While we have already reached substantial agreement in important areas, such as replacement of the Foreign Sales Corporations regime, your legislation has substantial flaws in several key areas.

As I stated yesterday, I believe it is absolutely essential that we do as much as possible to meet America's need for safe and modern schools. It is estimated that there may be as much as a $125 billion dollar financing gap in meeting the school construction and modernization needs of our children. The bipartisan Rangel-Johnson proposal to finance $25 billion in bonds to construct and modernize 6,000 schools is, quite frankly, the very least we should do, given the magnitude of this problem and its importance to America's future. Unfortunately, your proposal falls far short of the mark. We should not sacrifice thousands of modernized schools to pay for inefficient tax incentives that help only a few. For example, the arbitrage provision encourages delay in urgently needed school construction and would disproportionately help wealthy school districts.

On health care, my offer sought to lay a path to common ground by coupling both of our priorities on health and long-term care. Unfortunately, your health care proposal completely ignores our proposal to cover millions of uninsured, working Americans. Instead you put forward a series of tax cuts that, particularly when standing alone, would be inequitable, inefficient, and even potentially counterproductive health care policy. For example, while our FamilyCare proposal would expand coverage to 4 million uninsured parents at a cost of slightly over $3,000 per person, your proposal would provide additional coverage to one-seventh the people at six times the cost per person. Moreover, your proposal would give the least assistance to moderate-income families that need help the most, while even raising concerns that those with employer-based coverage today could lose their insurance.

Similarly, on long-term care, I offered to embrace your proposed deduction for long-term care insurance in exchange for inclusion of my proposal to give families, who are burdened today by long-term care needs, a $3,000 tax credit. Unfortunately, your legislation ignores the bipartisan package I suggested and instead would provide half the benefits of my proposal for financially

pressed families trying to provide long-term care for elderly and sick family members. Surely we can agree on this bipartisan compromise that has already been endorsed by a broad array of members of Congress, advocates for seniors and people with disabilities, and insurers. Similarly, I am perplexed that we cannot agree to include the bipartisan credit for vaccine research and purchases that is essential to save lives and advance public health.

I also am disappointed that you have made virtually no attempt to address the concerns my Administration has expressed to you about the pension provisions of your bill. By dropping the progressive savings incentives from the Senate Finance Committee bill, you have failed to address the lack of pension coverage for over 70 million people. Moreover, employers may have new incentives to drop pension coverage for some of the low- and moderate-income workers lucky enough to have pension plans today.

Finally, I remain deeply concerned that your Medicare and Medicaid refinement proposal continues to fail to attach accountability provisions to excessive payment increases to health maintenance organizations (HMOs) while rejecting critical investments in beneficiaries and vulnerable health care providers. Specifically, you insist on an unjustifiable spending increase for HMOs at the same time as you exclude bipartisan policies such as health insurance options for children with disabilities, legal immigrant pregnant women and children, and enrolling uninsured children in schools, as well as needed payment increases to hospitals, academic health centers, home health agencies, and other vulnerable providers. Congress should not go home without responding to the urgent health needs of our seniors, people with disabilities, and children and the health care providers who serve them.

A far better path than the current one is for Congressional Republicans, Democrats, and my Administration to come together in a bipartisan process to find common ground on both tax relief and Medicare/Medicaid refinements.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Trent Lott, majority leader of the Senate. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Legislation

October 26, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. Leader:)

I am writing to raise my serious concerns with the FY 2001 Commerce, Justice, and State appropriations bill that was filed this morning as part of the FY 2001 District of Columbia conference report. Although neither my Administration nor virtually any Member of Congress has had an opportunity to review this bill, it is our understanding that it fails to adequately address a number of high-priority issues that the Administration has previously brought to your attention. Therefore, I have no choice but to veto this bill.

It is our understanding that this bill fails to redress several injustices in our immigration system as called for by the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act. Those provisions would help normalize the immigration status of individuals and their families who have been living for many years in the United States, and, as such, would restore fairness and equity to our immigration laws. Current Republican proposals would not help most of the people who need relief and would perpetuate the current patchwork of contradictory and unfair immigration policies.

In addition, it is our understanding that this bill fails to provide the resources needed for the Department of Justice to let justice work its course by pursuing tobacco litigation to address the need for tobacco companies to bear responsibility for the staggering costs of tobacco-related illnesses. Congress should not block the judicial process, especially in a matter that is of supreme importance to the public health and the public interest.

This bill also fails to include hate crimes legislation that would cover crimes motivated by bias on the basis of a victim's gender, disability, or sexual orientation. Both the House

and Senate have had bipartisan votes indicating their support for strong hate crimes legislation and it should become law this year.

The bill fails to address in any meaningful way the real privacy concerns about Social Security numbers raised by the Administration. Regrettably, it does not include needed protections against the inappropriate sale and display of individual citizens' social security numbers. Moreover, the bill creates loopholes that seriously undermine the goal of the legislation to protect privacy. In addition, by not reauthorizing the Violent Crime Reduction Trust Fund, the bill fails to support successful Federal efforts to protect critical law enforcement funding and reduce violent crime.

We also understand that a range of anti-environmental, anti-competitive, and other damaging riders have been under consideration and may have been added to this bill. I urge Congress to refrain from adding riders that would reward special interests at the expense of the public interest. I also urge Congress to drop the rider that would prevent the Federal Communications Commission from licensing new low-power FM radio stations to provide for a diversity of voices in communities around the country. And regrettably, Congress has attached a deeply flawed Commerce, Justice, and State bill to an otherwise signable District of Columbia bill.

I urge the Congress to complete its work by sending me acceptable bills. I regret that the bipartisan discussion to resolve these issues in this bill were abandoned. The recent passage of several other appropriations bills shows that when we work together and Congress puts progress over partisanship, we are able to deliver real results for the American people. It is long past time for Congress to do the same for the Commerce, Justice, and State bill and to produce a bill I can sign.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks on the Budget and the Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 27, 2000

The President. Good morning—good afternoon. [*Laughter*] Don't tell anybody I didn't know what time it was. [*Laughter*]

I would like to say a few words about the budget, the progress we have made, and the work still to be done in this Congress.

The appropriations bills we pass every year do a lot more than keep our Government running. They tell us something very basic about our priorities as a nation. There's no great secret to getting things done around here. When we put progress over partisanship, we get results. When we work together, we get results.

For example, I just signed a very fine VA/HUD appropriations bill, along with the energy and water appropriations bill. It includes some impressive advances for the American people: 79,000 housing vouchers to help people move from welfare to work; more support for housing for the elderly and disabled; investment for our economic empowerment agenda that the Vice President has led, including empowerment zones and community development banks; more funds for AmeriCorps; funds for climate change research and technology in the Energy Department; funds to support our space program; the largest increase ever in the Veterans Administration and in the National Science Foundation, something that is critically important to our future; and adequate funding for FEMA to meet our national emergencies.

The energy and water bill also contains funds for climate change technology and research in solar and renewable energies. These things will have a direct, positive impact on our long-term energy future and help us to become less dependent on and less vulnerable to supply interruptions and price explosions in oil. This is very, very important.

Now, I could say the same thing about the Interior bill I signed the other day, which

many of you were here for, the largest appropriation for land preservation ever in our country's history for our lands legacy initiative. And the foreign operations bills, which the Congress has passed in a completely bipartisan way, funds the debt relief initiative for the poorest countries in the world, which is one of the most significant achievements in the international arena in years and years for the United States and, I believe, for years to come will provide a foundation upon which my successors, whoever they are, will build to help advance America's interests and build a more peaceful world.

So we can do things that really matter around here, even though we have differences. Do I agree with every little thing in these bills? No, I do not. Did I get everything I wanted in these bills? I did not. But we all worked together, and we had some remarkable successes.

Now still, here we are, almost a month past the end of the fiscal year, and there are still some very vital work to be done by Congress. And I have the feeling that the congressional majority has not yet decided whether to wrap up with more progress or score partisan points and leave town, and that would leave vital national needs unmet.

Two days ago I made a good-faith offer to the Republican leadership. I said, let's work together to meet our most pressing outstanding priorities and pass responsible tax relief for middle class families and small business. The answer I got was disappointing. Instead of meeting us on common ground, instead of working with the White House or congressional Democrats, the Republican leadership closed its doors to compromise, literally closed the doors to compromise.

They crafted their own partisan tax package and passed it last night on a party-line vote. The Republican tax package fails to meet the test of fairness to our children, our seniors, or the millions of Americans without health care coverage. If it reaches my desk in its present form, I will have no choice but to veto it.

Congress has to get back to work on this, so let me be clear about my concerns. First, the bill is unfair to children. We can't expect to lift them up if we put them in schools that are falling down. That's why I've proposed to repair old and crumbling schools and build new ones. Unfortunately, the majority's inefficient tax incentives help only a few, and ironically, most of the help would go to the schools and school districts that need it the least.

This bill is unfair to hospitals, to community providers, and to patients. It is a massive give-away to the HMO's, tens of billions of dollars at the expense of teaching and rural hospitals, home health agencies, and other community providers who really need the help. And even though they are spending the Medicare resources, their plan allows the HMO's to take the money and then abandon the Medicare patients, which is the alleged pretext for giving them so much of this money, that they've been dropping people from their Medicare program out in, especially in the rural areas of our country over the last couple of years.

Now, we have to make improvements in the Medicare and Medicaid allocations here. At the same time, the majority is blocking bipartisan proposals to extend health care coverage for children and pregnant women who are legal immigrants or to expand coverage for children with disabilities. Just an hour ago I met here at the White House with a group of Americans with disabilities who lead various groups across our Nation. They have a vital interest in adequate funding for home- and community-based services in this Medicare-Medicaid allocation bill, a need the that Republican bill grossly shortchanges because it disproportionately gives the money to the HMO's.

The priorities of this leadership bill do not reflect the priorities and needs of the American people. The bill is unfair to seniors. The tax package the House passed last night abandons my bipartisan approach to providing significant, long-term care relief for families' long-term care costs. It also fails to address the lack of pension coverage for more than 70 million hard-working Americans.

So again, I ask Congress: Send me a tax bill that helps us build new schools and repair old ones; a bill that helps our workers, all of them, save for retirement; a bill that expands long-term health care coverage for Americans who need it; a fair tax bill.

I also want to raise the minimum wage but not with a Republican bill that stacks the deck against American workers. The leadership should not play games with the minimum wage. They should stop holding it hostage to tax breaks for special interests, stand up for working Americans, and send me a bill I can sign. We can do that and still have appropriate small-business tax relief.

There is more we should do and some more things we must do. We certainly should pass the voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit and a real Patients' Bill of Rights. And we must pass fairness for Latino immigrants. We have a hate crimes legislation we ought to pass. And they've had a bill there that has enormous bipartisan support throughout the country to strengthen the equal pay laws for women.

Again I say, there's no secret to getting things done. We have to work together. Look at the VA/HUD bill I just signed, the energy and water bill. Look at the Interior bill. Look at the foreign operations bill. This Congress has done some good things. But whenever the Republicans shut the Democrats and the White House out and go behind closed doors and try to make an agreement among themselves for the benefit of the elements in the rightwing of their caucus, we wind up with a bill that is unacceptable to the American people.

So I'm here. I'm prepared to keep working. But as we celebrate these good days, we ought to finish the business of the public in the right way.

Thank you very much.

Need for Bipartisan Approach

Q. Mr. President, the leadership says it's you that's playing politics, trying to help the Vice President and the Democrats who are running.

The President. Well, look at the facts. The problem with that charge is, it doesn't stand up to the facts. I have signed every appropriations bill that has been the product of a bipartisan process, every single one. The only one we don't have now is the Labor/HHS bill which contains the education budget of the country, which is the most important one, but we're making real progress there. If you notice, even though it hasn't passed—and it should have passed—I didn't say a word of criticism in my remarks about it because we're continuing to work together in a bipartisan fashion.

What happened with this Commerce/State/Justice bill and the immigration issues and the other issues and this tax bill is that the Republicans basically kicked the Democrats and the White House out of the room. And they came up with a bill, and then they called us and said, "Now, we took care of this, that, or the other concern of yours. Now you guys just be cooperative and sign off on what we have decided to do. The leadership has decided this is the only bill we can get past our rightwing, and you'll just have to take it."

Well, that's not the way to go. I have never tried to play politics with this in this year. Look, I bragged on them today. Every time we do something in a bipartisan way, I try to give credit where credit is due. I have bent over backwards for 8 years here to work with both Republicans and Democrats. But I will not bend over backwards to be run over, not because of me or the Democrats in Congress but because it's not good for the American people.

Now look, we just have these two appropriations bills, and we have the tax legislation, and we have to put some money back into health care. And we can do this, but we're going to have to do it together. We can't just—we can't have our Republican friends say, "Hey, we're having a really tough time getting agreement within our caucus, so you guys have to go away, and we'll go in our caucus, and we'll try to fight it out with each other, and whatever we can live with by ourselves, the rest of you have got to take." Now, that is what happened. That is the fact.

It is true that the bills are not as awful as they once were. It is true that they took some things out. But the bills are not what they would be if they were like all the other appropriations bills, the products of a genuine bipartisan negotiation. That's all I'm asking for. That's all I've ever asked for. And like I said, in these bills that I signed today, there are hundreds, literally hundreds, of projects that the Members wanted that I did not support.

They cut back on the investment in some things that I thought were important. But when you sit down and negotiate with people, you have a good-faith obligation to try to come to agreement. We honored that, and we got the agreement. And I'm very, very pleased with these bills. But the ones that are still out there, they do more harm than good, and we need to clean them up. And we need to do it in a hurry so they can get out of town and go on about their business.

Q. Mr. President, the Senate majority leader says that the tax cut bill gives you 80 to 90 percent of what you wanted and what you were asking for and that no President should expect to get 100 percent of what he wants.

The President. I agree nobody should expect to get 100 percent, but I don't agree that it's 80 to 90 percent. I explained what I thought was the matter with it. That's just not a—I do not believe that is an accurate characterization of the tax bill. And again I say, you know, whenever I'm involved in a peace process around the world, I hear the same sort of thing. If people aren't talking to each other, they say, "Well, why don't they like this? This is more or less what they've asked for." And it's very important that you understand what happened.

On these bills, unlike the other work we have done, they sent the Democrats and the White House out of the room, because they were having trouble agreeing among themselves. Once they made an agreement among themselves and made some changes based on objections we had raised, they said, "Well, why aren't you happy?" And again I would say, all we need—if we get a negotiation, we will have a compromise bill that will be an honorable compromise.

But you all know this is so, because you follow this. The way these bills were produced, the tax bill and the Commerce/State/Justice appropriations, was different from the way all the other bills were produced. Today we had Senator Mikulski in here, a Democrat from Maryland, Congressman Walsh, a Republican from New York in here talking about what they did together on the VA/HUD bill. That's the way we need to get this done.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. Four more Palestinians died this morning in clashes with Israeli troops. Are you trying even harder now to try to arrange separate meetings with Prime Minister Barak and Chairman Arafat, or do you think that violence still has to stop before there is even any point in bringing them here?

The President. I think there has to be a much lower level of violence before they could meet together and talk about the long-term prospects for peace. I worked on this for several hours yesterday, and we obviously keep up with it. And I'm very disturbed about today, because we actually had 2 or 3 good days here, where there was very little violence.

We're trying to get to the bottom of seeing what happened and see what, if anything, we can do to undermine the causes of today's violence so that it won't recur. But we've got to get the level of violence down before there can be a resumption in negotiations.

In terms of who comes here when, that is still subject to discussion. We're talking to the Israelis. We're talking to the Palestinians. We're talking with others around the world, and—look, I'm working really hard on this. I'm frustrated—I'm just as frustrated as you are, and it's heartbreaking. We've just got to try to get a hold of it, and I—but don't lose sight of the fact that we had 3 pretty good days. And I would say to the people in the region not to lose sight of the fact that we did, and tomorrow needs to be a good day, not a bad day, because of what happened today.

Budget

Q. Mr. President, are you in danger of playing into Governor Bush's hands on this budget battle? After all, Governor Bush has run largely on the premise that he can get things done—as a Washington outsider, he can come in here and break gridlock. Now, you're threatening to veto.

The President. Well, first of all, let's have a little reality therapy here. You know, I said that I would do that, and I have. I kept waiting for someone to point out—some of you to point out when they kept saying, "The partisanship is terrible in Washington, and nothing ever gets done"—well, let me just point

out—since they came in, it is true that they shut the Government once down because I wouldn't agree to abolish the Department of Education and agree to the biggest Medicare cost increases on recipients in history and the biggest education and environmental cuts in history.

But when that was over, look what's happened: We had a bipartisan welfare reform bill that passed with big majorities in both houses of both parties; we had a bipartisan balanced budget bill that passed with big majorities in both Houses in both parties, including the Children's Health Insurance Program, the biggest increase in children's health in 35 years. We had a bipartisan Telecommunications Act that provided the E-rate that has taken us to 95 percent of our schools now hooked up to the Internet, created thousands and thousands of businesses, hundreds of thousands of new jobs. We've had 100,000 police. We've had 100,000 teachers. We've gone from zero to serving 800,000 kids in after-school programs, all done in an entirely bipartisan way. I just went over this breathtaking litany of things that were done at the end of this negotiation process in a purely bipartisan way.

Now, the only thing I have objected to is the unipartisan, if you will, the single-party production of a tax bill and one appropriations bill. That's it. And I don't think that party should seek to—should be able to benefit from their failure at bipartisanship.

Let me just give you another example. We have a bipartisan majority in this Congress, in both Houses, for hate crimes, for a good school construction bill, for a minimum wage increase, for a Patients' Bill of Rights, for campaign finance reform. Now, it's not bipartisanship that is keeping those bills from passing. It is the leadership of the other party in the Congress blocking a bipartisan majority. I fail to see how you could argue that the voters ought to reward people for creating the problem that they are complaining about. I think that's a pretty hard sell.

Yes, sir, go ahead. This gentleman has had his hand up.

Pork Barrel Projects

Q. Thank you. Critics of spending, of Federal spending, identified the VA/HUD bill as an example of legislation that's so stuffed with pork that next year we may not have an on-budget surplus, and whoever succeeds you in office won't have enough money for their proposals. And I'm wondering, how can you sign a bill like that and say it's a fine bill, when it has so many pork-barrel projects in it?

The President. Well, the one thing about—first of all, it does have too many pork-barrel projects, for my taste, but that's what the Republicans wanted. If I wanted to get the money to help people move from welfare to work and have housing, if I wanted to get the funds to help create—continue to help create jobs in poor areas that have been left out and left behind, and the other things that are in the VA/HUD bill, they were also willing to—you know, they never agreed with me and the Vice President on global warming before, and they came in and really supported our budget for research and development and new energy technologies.

And most of these projects—I saw an article in the press today that estimated that this spending in this Congress would reduce the projected surplus by $900 billion. Let me just say, I don't—it will reduce the projected surplus, but I think it's by more like half that, and let me explain why.

Because the one thing about these so-called pork-barrel projects—and I've found in Washington and in life, a pork-barrel project is the other guy's project. It's never yours. If it's the project in your hometown, it's the greatest thing you ever saw. But they are—because they are capital projects, they are not repeating. So the assumption that this erodes almost half the surplus is based on the fact that you'd have this rate of increase every year to sustain that. And that does not have to be the case, because a lot of these projects are—you know, they got the funding, and they'll do the project, and they don't have to repeat it next year. And that's the difference in that.

So I do think that the estimated surplus will have to be reduced, but I think that the assumption that these spending projects require us now to assume that spending will increase by this amount every year for a decade, I do not agree with that. And it shouldn't, and we shouldn't.

Peru

Q. Mr. President, you've always been interested in promoting democracy in Latin America and fighting drugs. There is a problem now in Peru, in which the ex-head of intelligence went to Panama, has returned. President Fujimori supposedly is looking for him, and the situation—political situation in Peru is really very perilous. What do you think is going to happen, and what can the United States and the OAS do to help it out?

The President. Well, I don't know what's going to happen. I'm following it closely, and I don't know. I think what we have to do is to continue to support democracy and the rule of law in whatever way is appropriate. I don't know that I can say much more than that right now.

Situation in the Middle East

Q. One more on the Middle East. How can you have peace in the Middle East until you train the younger generations of both Palestinians and Israelis to stop hating each other?

The President. Well, you know, that's—I must say, that's what the Seeds of Peace program was about and a lot of these young Palestinians and young Israelis, along with other young Middle Easterners I've met, young Jordanians and young Egyptians, in the Seeds of Peace program, young people from other Arab countries.

I think, obviously, a big part of what is driving these demonstrations is a profound alienation of young people in the Palestinian community who have not seen any economic benefits from peace over the last 8 years, and who despair that it will ever actually be completed. I think finding a way to reach out to the young and give them some more positive contact with each other across the lines that divide them is very important.

I think one of the best things I've seen in the whole region over the last 8 years is this Seeds of Peace program and what these young people have done together. And that kind of dialog is what has to replace the bullets and the rocks.

Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus

Q. Mr. President, despite your personal involvement for a Greek-Turkish rapprochement over the Aegean and Cyprus, Ankara has become more aggressive against the territorial integrity of Greece and the Republic of Cyprus in the last days. May we have your comments?

The President. I don't know if I can comment on what's happened in the last few days, simply because I've been so overwhelmingly involved in the Middle East. But I can say that one of the relatively small number of real disappointments I have after 8 years of working in the foreign policy field is that I have not made more progress in helping to resolve the Cyprus issue, because I have always felt that Turkey should be integrated into Europe. I have always felt that Turkey and Greece should be natural allies because they're allies in NATO. I've seen them work together.

I think the whole world was profoundly moved by the way that the Greeks and the Turks responded to each other's human losses in the earthquakes, and basically to see entrenched and unmovable positions in Cyprus in what really ought to be a fairly straightforward problem to solve, keep them apart, and keep Turkey more at arm's length from Europe, I think it's a price not worth paying, and I think it's a very sad thing. I still hope it can be resolved.

There is actually some chance we can make a little progress before I can leave office. If we don't, it's something I will keep an interest in and would be willing to keep working for even after I'm gone from here, because it just—it makes no sense in the larger context of the future of Greece, the future of Turkey, and the future of the Cypriots, themselves, to maintain this present impasse with all the bad feelings and conflicts and estrangements that it has brought us.

Week Prior to the Election

Q. Mr. President, if this budget process drags on into next week, are you concerned that it could cut into your efforts to get out the vote and energize the base for the Democrats? It's a busy week next week.

The President. Well, the most important thing I can do is to do my job. And events around the world could also cut into that. We just have to see what's going to happen.

As I have said to you all along, I've always been happy to do what I could basically to go out and say what I believe, which is that the country is in better shape than it was when I took office, that we're moving in the right direction, and I hope we'll build on that instead of reversing it.

And this ought to be a happy election for the American people. They ought to be out there excitedly debating the differences. But I think the Vice President and Senator Lieberman have made a very good case for themselves, and I think they will continue to do that. And I will do what I can to help, in terms of explaining to people how important it is that they go vote.

But the votes will be won or lost by the candidates in the ongoing, sort of 24-hour debate that will happen between now and election day. I would like to be helpful because I believe what we've done is important, and I think the progress should be continued. I think it's very important that we not get into a budget where the numbers don't add up and we get back into deficit. I think it's very important that someone be here in this job to restrain the impulses of the rightwing of the Republican Congress if they should stay in the majority in either House.

I think that—you know, all this is important. But the first thing I've got to do is, do what the American people hired me to do, because they're going to make their decisions based on their own evaluations of the candidates and the arguments they make.

I may be the only person here who has ever been on the other side of this, because I was a Governor for a dozen years when there were Republican Presidents who would come to my State from time to time in election season. I can say my sense was, when they came, that they did help get their own voters out but that the electorate who were undecided, who were listening, were listening more to what my opponent and I were saying than to what the President said about us. That's where I think we are here.

So my role has got to be, go out and tell the people this country is in great shape, and we're in better shape than we were 8 years ago. We're moving in the right direction. I hope we won't take a U-turn.

There are certain things I think I can speak with some credibility on, like the budget and the need to resist some of the extremist impulses in the Republican caucus. But by and large, what I want to do is just tell the American people this is a chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our kids, and you all ought to show up to vote.

We may never have another election like this where we've got this much prosperity and this much progress with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat to our security. It may not happen again in our entire lifetime. And that's the message I hope I'll get to go out and deliver, and I'll do everything I can to do it.

President's Role in 2000 Campaign

Q. [*Inaudible*]—were out there doing it now?

The President. That's not true. No, that's not true. I've seen some of these stories, and I have to tell you, since August, I told—I was talking to Bill Daley yesterday, and he was reminding me, he said, "You first told me in August that you should stay in Washington and do your job with the Congress and do your job with the country until the last week or so of the campaign, except for the work you could do at night, helping to raise funds for the Congress and the Senate and the Democratic Party." And that's pretty much what I have done.

You know, as I said, I've actually experienced this in my former life, when I was a Governor. And the stories that imply that I have disagreed with that up to now are just not accurate. I believe that I have been doing what I should be doing, the work of the country. The political work I have done, even for my wife, I have done in a way that was consistent with, first of all, getting this work done.

Now, when you get down to the last week or so, I think the American expect everybody to get out and kind of mix it up, and they want us all to be out there. But make no mistake about it, they're going to make their judgments overwhelmingly based on what these candidates say to them.

And I think the Vice President has been doing a great job, and I feel comfortable. I just want to make sure the American people

understand what the stakes are and understand how truly unique this moment in history is. You know, most voters are now younger than me, and most people—a lot of voters will vote who have never lived in anything other than a time of economic expansion, declining crime and welfare rolls, an improving economy, increasing college-going, and all these things that have been happening. And you know, they may think it's just—that's the way things are, and so they don't have to factor all that into their voting.

I've lived long enough to live through many different cycles of life in America, and so I just want to get out there and make sure everybody understands what a unique moment it is. But if I have to do it from here, as I'm doing it today, because my job requires me to stay here, I'll stay here until election day, if I have to, to do right by the American people, because my first job is to take care of them.

Q. Mr. President, your feelings are not hurt? You're not angry?

The President. I have always believed that what I should do is to do my job here. When I can go out at night and on the weekends to help the House and Senate Members raise money, I should do that, or help our party. I should go to the Democratic Convention, make the best speech I could about giving an account of the last 8 years, and then I should do whatever I could to help increase the turnout and make sure the stakes in the election were understood in the last week or 10 days or so.

That's exactly what I thought should be done. So I actually feel quite good about this. And I think—what I want to see the American people have here is great clarity in what the choice is and what the consequences are, and I think they're getting more and more clarity with every passing day. So I feel good about that.

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, one on Korea. Is it your intention that if you made a personal trip to North Korea now, do you think it would result in specific steps to have them reduce their missile production and export of missile technology, and do you intend to go?

The President. Well, the answer to the last question is, I have not made a decision yet. But I was very pleased with the reception that Secretary Albright received, and I hope that the North Koreans were pleased with the reception that General Cho received here. And we're talking about those things.

If I could just take a minute, I think it's important for the American people to understand just how far this issue has come, and yet what is still out there. When I became President, and I began to get—after the election, just as the new President-elect will find, I got all these briefings, and we went through all the national security stuff. The general consensus was that the most dangerous problem I was facing in late 1992 was North Korea's nuclear program and that it could lead to the development of not only nuclear weapons, which would imperil the Korean Peninsula and our then about 40,000 soldiers there—we have slightly fewer now—but that in the worst of all worlds, they might develop nuclear weapons and sell them to others, along with missiles, which would be devastating to the whole future of arms control.

And what happened? We got an agreement to end the nuclear program. The Japanese supported it. The South Koreans strongly supported it. We got other countries to kick in a little money. We've worked on it. We've continued to negotiate over missile testing and technology with them. And we refused to have an independent relationship except on arms control issues, in the absence of some improving relationship between North and South; the present President, Kim Dae-jung gets elected in South Korea, breaks this long icy relationship, justifiably wins the Nobel Peace Prize. I was elated for him. And then they come here; we go there. So let me just remind you, we are a long, long way in the right direction, compared to where we were back in January of '93.

But we still have substantial concerns in the missile area, as you pointed out. We're working on it, and that's all I think I should say now. We're working on it, and I haven't made a decision on the trip.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel;

Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; former Chief of Intelligence Vladmiro Montesinos and President Alberto Fujimori of Peru; National Defense Vice Chairman Cho Myong-nok of North Korea; and President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 21

In the morning, the President traveled from Lowell, MA, to Indianapolis, IN, and in the afternoon, he returned to Washington, DC.

October 22

In the morning, the President traveled to Johnson City, NY. Later, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel concerning the Middle East peace process. In the afternoon, he traveled to Alexandria Bay. In the evening, he traveled to Hempstead and New York City, and later returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 23

In the morning, the President traveled to Kingston, NY, and later, he traveled to Queens and New Rochelle. In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 24

In the evening, the President met with King Abdullah II of Jordan in the Yellow Oval Room at the White House to discuss the Middle East peace process.

The President announced his intention to appoint Jeffrey Akaka, Glenn T. Fujiura, and Jose R. Rodriguez as members of the President's Committee on Mental Retardation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Diane Josephy Peavey as a member of the President's Advisory Council on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The President announced his intention to nominate Kenneth Lee Smith to be Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks at the Department of the Interior.

October 25

In the morning, the President traveled to New York City, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC, arriving after midnight.

October 26

The President announced the nomination of Isaac C. Hunt, Jr., to be Commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The President announced his intention to nominate George (Buddy) Darden to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation.

The President announced his intention to appoint Christopher B. Galvin as a member of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The President announced his intention to nominate Gerald S. Segal to be a member of the National Council on Disability.

The President announced the nomination of Maria Otero to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The President announced the nomination of James A. Dorskind to be General Counsel at the Department of Commerce.

The President announced his intention to appoint Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman, Office of Management and Budget Director Jacob J. Lew, Deputy Secretary of Commerce Robert L. Mallett, R. Thomas Buffenbarger, Vance D. Coffman, Philip M. Condit, Ann R. Markusen, and David C. Mowery as members of the National Commission on the Use of Offsets in Defense Trade.

October 27

The President declared a major disaster in Arizona and ordered Federal aid to support State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on October 21 and continuing.

The President announced his intention to appoint John T. Chambers as a member of the President's National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Louisville, KY, and New York City on October 31, to McLean, VA, on November 1, to Los Angeles, CA, on November 2, and to Oakland, CA, on November 3.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted October 25

George Darden,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for the remainder of the term expiring December 17, 2000, vice Zell Miller.

George Darden,
of Georgia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation for a term expiring December 17, 2003 (reappointment).

James A. Dorskind,
of California, to be General Counsel of the Department of Commerce, vice Andrew J. Pincus, resigned.

Lois N. Epstein,
of New York, to be a member of the Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board for a term of 5 years, vice Devra Lee Davis, resigned.

Maria Otero,
of the District of Columbia, to be a member of the Board of Directors of the U.S. Institute of Peace for a term expiring January 19, 2003, vice Theodore M. Hesburgh, term expired.

Kenneth Lee Smith,
of Arkansas, to be Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife, Department of the Interior, vice Donald J. Barry, resigned.

Submitted October 26

S. Elizabeth Gibson,
of North Carolina, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fourth Circuit, vice Samuel James Irvin III, deceased.

Isaac C. Hunt, Jr.,
of Ohio, to be a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission for the term expiring June 5, 2005 (reappointment).

Gerald S. Segal,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the National Council on Disability for a term expiring September 17, 2003, vice Shirley W. Ryan, term expired.

Withdrawn October 26

Marc Lincoln Marks,
of Pennsylvania, to be a member of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission for a term of 6 years expiring August 30, 2006 (reappointment), which was sent to the Senate on June 8, 2000.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released October 23

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Released October 24

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Transcript of a press briefing by U.S. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky on the Jordan-U.S. Trade Agreement

Announcement: United States and Jordan Sign Historic Trade Agreement

Released October 26

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Statement by the Vice President on the need for congressional action on legislation to save the Everglades

Statement by the Press Secretary on the proposed Republican tax cut legislation

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Fourth Circuit

Released October 27

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Jake Siewert

Statement by the Press Secretary on the establishment of the National Commission on the Use of Offsets in Defense Trade and the President's Council on Offsets in Commercial Trade

Letter from Chief of Staff John Podesta to Senator Orrin G. Hatch on proposed immigration legislation

Acts Approved by the President

Approved October 19

H.R. 2302 / Public Law 106–315
To designate the building of the United States Postal Service located at 307 Main Street in Johnson City, New York, as the "James W. McCabe, Sr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 2496 / Public Law 106–316
To reauthorize the Junior Duck Stamp Conservation and Design Program Act of 1994

H.R. 2641 / Public Law 106–317
To make technical corrections to title X of the Energy Policy Act of 1992

H.R. 2778 / Public Law 106–318
Taunton River Wild and Scenic River Study Act of 2000

H.R. 2833 / Public Law 106–319
Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area Act of 2000

H.R. 2938 / Public Law 106–320
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 424 South Michigan Street in South Bend, Indiana, as the "John Brademas Post Office"

H.R. 3030 / Public Law 106–321
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 757 Warren Road in Ithaca, New York, as the "Matthew F. McHugh Post Office"

H.R. 3454 / Public Law 106–322
To designate the United States post office located at 451 College Street in Macon, Georgia, as the "Henry McNeal Turner Post Office"

H.R. 3745 / Public Law 106–323
Effigy Mounds National Monument Additions Act

H.R. 3817 / Public Law 106–324
To dedicate the Big South Trail in the Comanche Peak Wilderness Area of Roosevelt National Forest in Colorado to the legacy of Jaryd Atadero

H.R. 3909 / Public Law 106–325
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4601 South Cottage Grove Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, as the "Henry W. McGee Post Office Building"

H.R. 3985 / Public Law 106–326
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 14900 Southwest 30th Street in Miramar, Florida, as the "Vicki Coceano Post Office Building"

H.R. 4157 / Public Law 106–327
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 600 Lincoln Avenue in Pasadena, California, as the "Matthew 'Mack' Robinson Post Office Building"

H.R. 4169 / Public Law 106–328
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2000 Vassar Street in Reno, Nevada, as the "Barbara F. Vucanovich Post Office Building"

H.R. 4226 / Public Law 106–329
Black Hills National Forest and Rocky Mountain Research Station Improvement Act

H.R. 4285 / Public Law 106–330
Texas National Forests Improvement Act of 2000

H.R. 4286 / Public Law 106–331
Cahaba River National Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act

H.R. 4435 / Public Law 106–332
To clarify certain boundaries on the map relating to Unit NC-01 of the Coastal Barrier Resources System

H.R. 4447 / Public Law 106–333
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 919 West 34th Street in Baltimore, Maryland, as the "Samuel H. Lacy, Sr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 4448 / Public Law 106–334
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3500 Dolfield Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland, as the "Judge Robert Bernard Watts, Sr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 4449 / Public Law 106–335
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1908 North Ellamont Street in Baltimore, Maryland, as the "Dr. Flossie McClain Dedmond Post Office Building"

H.R. 4484 / Public Law 106–336
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 500 North Washington Street in Rockville, Maryland, as the "Everett Alvarez, Jr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 4517 / Public Law 106–337
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 24 Tsienneto Road in Derry, New Hampshire, as the "Alan B. Shepard, Jr. Post Office Building"

H.R. 4534 / Public Law 106–338
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 114 Ridge Street, N.W. in Lenoir, North Carolina, as the "James T. Broyhill Post Office Building"

H.R. 4554 / Public Law 106–339
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1602 Frankford Avenue in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the "Joseph F. Smith Post Office Building"

H.R. 4615 / Public Law 106–340
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3030 Meredith Avenue in Omaha, Nebraska, as the "Reverend J.C. Wade Post Office"

H.R. 4658 / Public Law 106–341
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 301 Green Street in Fayetteville, North Carolina, as the "J.L. Dawkins Post Office Building"

H.R. 4884 / Public Law 106–342
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 West 2nd Street in Royal Oak, Michigan, as the "William S. Broomfield Post Office Building"

S. 1236 / Public Law 106–343
To extend the deadline under the Federal Power Act for commencement of the construction of the Arrowrock Dam Hydroelectric Project in the State of Idaho

Approved October 20

H.J. Res. 114 / Public Law 106–344
Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes

S. 2311 / Public Law 106–345
Ryan White CARE Act Amendments of 2000

Approved October 23

H.R. 4475 / Public Law 106–346
Making appropriations for the Department of Transportation and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes

H.R. 4975 / Public Law 106–347
To designate the post office and courthouse located at 2 Federal Square, Newark, New Jersey, as the "Frank R. Lautenberg Post Office and Courthouse"

Approved October 24

H.R. 1509 / Public Law 106–348
To authorize the Disabled Veterans' LIFE Memorial Foundation to establish a memorial in the District of Columbia or its environs to honor veterans who became disabled while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States

H.R. 3201 / Public Law 106–349
Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site Study Act of 2000

H.R. 3632 / Public Law 106–350
Golden Gate National Recreation Area Boundary Adjustment Act of 2000

H.R. 3676 / Public Law 106–351
Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Act of 2000

H.R. 4063 / Public Law 106–352
Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park Establishment Act of 2000

H.R. 4275 / Public Law 106–353
Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Act of 2000

H.R. 4386 / Public Law 106–354
Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act of 2000

H.R. 4613 / Public Law 106–355
National Historic Lighthouse Preservation Act of 2000

H.R. 5036 / Public Law 106–356
Dayton Aviation Heritage Preservation Amendments Act of 2000

S. 1849 / Public Law 106–357
White Clay Creek Wild and Scenic Rivers System Act

Approved October 26

H.J. Res. 115 / Public Law 106–358
Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes

H.J. Res. 116 / Public Law 106–359
Making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2001, and for other purposes