

Remarks to Outlook Graphics Employees in Neenah, Wisconsin July 27, 1992

Thank you all very, very much. Please be seated. Thank you and good afternoon, everyone. Let me just say thank you to the Governor for that very kind introduction. But let me tell you this: I know these Governors, all of them, and you've got one of the very best, if not the very best, in the entire United States. I really mean that, a solid friend, a strong leader and innovator. You're lucky, and I'm lucky, too, because he sets an example. He brings new ideas to these Governors meetings. He sets a high example for everybody including the President of the United States, and I am very, very pleased to be with him.

Of course, I'm very pleased to see my great friend, your Senator Bob Kasten; and these two Congressmen, Toby Roth and Tom Petri, who are doing a first-class job. If we had more like them, you talk about change, we could change America and change it fast for the better. I am glad they could join us today, as well as Mr. Herbert Grover, the superintendent of public instruction for the State of Wisconsin. He's doing a first-class job for education statewide. And David Erdmann, thank you, sir, for your hospitality. I'm just delighted to be here.

Now, it is a pleasure to be here. For any sports fan, it's a thrill to be at the birthplace of America's sports trading cards, and for me, it's a little humbling. I don't dare ask how many hundreds of George Bush cards you have to trade to get one Michael Jordan. *[Laughter]*

I've come here to talk a little bit about our future, about the kind of nation we want for ourselves and our children. The world has undergone remarkable changes in the past few years. And today our kids worry about the usual things, about school friends, about such earth-shattering questions as "Where can I get an Olympic Dream Team card?" But I can tell you one thing they don't worry about anymore, the specter of nuclear war.

Today, America is safer than ever before, safer than we were a decade ago, safer than

we were a year ago, and safer than we were just a few weeks ago, when I sat down with Boris Yeltsin, the President of Russia, to eliminate some of the most dangerous nuclear weapons on the face of the Earth, getting rid of those great big SS-18 ICBM's. That's good change. That is positive, and it's great for these young people here today.

Now that we've changed the world, it is time to change America and time to turn our attention to pressing challenges like how to give a pink slip to our slow-growth economy, and how to make America's families more like the Waltons and a little bit less like the Simpsons—*[laughter]*—how to take back our streets from the crack dealers and the criminals. Progress has been made, as I announced yesterday at the White House, in the casual use of cocaine by these teenagers, dramatic improvement, almost 60 percent down in the last 3 years. But we've still got a long way to go. We've got to win that battle.

This election year, we're told, is about how we can change to meet these challenges. But this election is not just about change because change has a flip side. It's called trust. When you get down to it, this election will be like every other. When you go into that voting booth and pull the curtain behind you, trust matters.

That's the way it should be. Many times in the White House late at night, the phone rings. Usually it's some young aide calling in about doublechecking the next day's schedule. But occasionally it's another voice, more serious, more solemn, carrying news of a coup in a powerful country or asking how we should stand up to the "Baghdad bully" halfway around the world. The American people need to know that the man who answers that phone has the experience, the seasoning, to do the right thing. I believe I have proved I am that man.

That is trust in the traditional sense. But people who've spent their lives in government forget that trust is even more than that. I'm a Texan, raised my children there, built my business there, voted there in

every Presidential election since my first, the 1948 election, the year, if you'll go back and remember, some of you older types here, the year the press and the pundits counted out Harry Truman before the fight even began.

I believe our country's heartbeat can be felt in places like Neenah, Wisconsin, not Washington, DC. So I stake my claim in a simple philosophy: To lead a great nation, you must first trust the people that you lead. If you look at almost every important issue we face, you see a clear choice, a choice between those who put their faith in average Americans and those who put their faith solely in the Government. Let me explain what I mean, starting with the basics, home and family.

The most difficult question that many parents face is, who will care for the kids while we're working? A few years ago, Washington wanted to help, but the idea back there was to rock the cradle with the heavy hand of the bureaucracy. All the plans boiled down to creating some new kind of Government apparatus, like a "Pentagon" for child care.

I fought for a different approach, with the support of these Members of the United States Congress, and we won. Our landmark legislation allows parents, not the Government, to decide whether your children are cared for in a school, a relative's home, or a church. When it comes to raising children, I say, don't put your faith in the Government bureaucracy. Why not trust the parents, the ones who are responsible for bringing these kids up?

Now, what about our educational system? To renew America we must renew our schools. We all know this. Money alone is not going to do it. We already spend more money—this is a little scary—we already spend more money per student than almost any other country in the world, and our children still rank near the bottom in crucial subjects like math and science. Again, a lot of ideas floating around, most of them to pump more tax money into the same old system, the same old programs that have failed the American family. I say, try something different: Open up schools to competition, and trust you, trust you to decide whether you want your kids to learn in a

public school, a private school, or a religious school. School choice is the answer.

When it comes to education to give our kids a better chance, isn't it time to try something different? The old way has failed, has not worked. Why not trust the people?

What about Government regulation? Sure, some of it's necessary; some of it even essential. But if you believe that there is a Government solution to every problem, an alphabet agency for every issue, then you look at regulation not as a necessary evil but as a necessary way to rein in people's evil tendencies. It can lead to the same crazy behavior. Let me tell you a story about one crazy regulation affecting hardhats. Hardhats, that's right.

Here's what happened. Back in Washington, someone in an agency stumbled upon a potential national crisis, workers being infected from putting on someone else's hardhat. The alarms went off. The bureaucratic blood boiled. One small fact was overlooked. There wasn't a single documented case anywhere in the United States of America of anyone getting infected from wearing someone else's hardhat. That didn't deter the bureaucrat. So with the best of intentions, the rule was written: Every hardhat must be disinfected before one worker passed it on to another. Estimated cost to business: \$13 million a year. Measurable benefit: slightly less than zero.

Now, there is a happy ending to this story, but only because we were there to give it one. We found the regulation before it hit the books and said America can survive without that particular hardhat regulation. But can you imagine what might have happened if these enterprising regulators had made their way into the vast, unregulated territory of lunch pails or thermos bottles? Think of the threat to the Nation. [Laughter]

Some believe the solution to our problems is more Government regulation. I take a very different view. I've put a moratorium on new Federal regulations, to give businesses like this one, growing enterprise business, giving it room to breathe and grow and create jobs for these young people here today. On child care, educa-

tion, regulation, it is a matter of trust, trusting Americans to make their own choices.

The point is not to let people fend entirely for themselves. Americans are a generous people, and Government must never shirk its responsibilities. But programs have to give people a hand up and trust human ingenuity to take it from there.

You'll find a good example of what Government can do right here at Outlook. Last April I challenged the Nation's Governors to join me in a new national job training effort. I introduced a program called the "Youth Apprenticeship Act" in Congress. The program is geared especially to teenagers who want to work, who want to learn a skill, but may be tempted to drop out of school, true to form.

Then comes along Governor Thompson, Tommy Thompson. He's already reaching out to these young people. The youth apprenticeship program will encourage young people to complete a sound high school education while getting on-the-job training at great companies like Outlook. I salute Outlook and Governor Thompson for helping me create a work force that's ready for the challenges of the 21st century.

So I believe we can give Americans the tools. And then it's a matter of trust, trusting Americans to make their own choices. When it comes to the most pressing issue of the election year, revving up our economy, forgetting this idea of trust is not just a nuisance, it can be downright dangerous.

The revolutions of the past few years herald a new era of global economic competition, with free markets from Siberia to Santiago. Can the United States compete now that everyone is playing our game of free markets? Well, I know we can. Despite all the criticism you've heard lately, keep in mind just a few facts. Who is the largest, most envied economy in the entire world? The good ol' U.S.A.

Look at inflation, the Jesse James who robs the middle class of dreams. We have locked that crook in a maximum security cell, so he can't steal the paycheck of the working men and women of this country. The last time interest rates were this low, "The Brady Bunch" wasn't even in reruns yet. Despite all the stories about our problems, and we've got plenty, but despite all

the stories, you are still the most productive workers in the entire world. You put these workers up against the English, the Germans, the Japanese, and you, you American taxpayers, you win; you American entrepreneurs and business people, you win; and the work force itself wins.

But while our economy is growing, it clearly has got to grow faster. The question is how. The other side suggests a simple two-part solution: First, raise Government spending, and second, raise taxes.

Now, as you evaluate their idea, keep this in mind. Here in Wisconsin, you already work 126 days just to pay your taxes before you earn a single dime to spend on the family. I don't know about you, but I don't want you to have to pay 127 days.

Let me just describe for you what I'm up against. In January I proposed a commonsense plan in the State of the Union Message, commonsense plan to get this economy moving faster, right now. The plan included tax incentives to encourage businesses to hire new workers, tax breaks for young families who want to buy that first home. If Congress had acted right away, half a million jobs would have been created for your neighbors, your family, and your friends.

But they didn't. Instead Congress sent back what you might call an anti-trust program: new Government spending and new taxes. So I vetoed their plan and sent it right back to them. And thanks to these Congressmen, that veto was upheld. I am still waiting, pressing for these incentives to get passed by the Senate and the House. I am still waiting almost 200 days later. This economic recovery plan is being held hostage, held hostage, and the ransom note reads, "Wait till after the election." Today I say to the Congress and the Senate, especially: Release the economy. Approve this jobs program, and put America back to work right now.

Speaking of numbers, this is a great place to speak about numbers, right here at Outlook: number 16 means Joe Montana; number 9, my dear friend with whom I attended the All-Star Game in San Diego, number 9, Ted Williams; number 15, a Packer named Starr. Here's a number for

you, 38. Think hard now, 38. That's how many years the Democrats have controlled the House of Representatives. Get rid of number 38, and we can make America number one for sure for many years to come. If you want to change something, the one institution that hasn't changed, if you want to change something, change control of the United States House of Representatives, and watch what we can do for America.

I'm getting fired up for after our convention in August. [Laughter] You'll notice this has been relatively nonpartisan up until now. [Laughter] Relatively.

No, but you see, it all comes down to a question of trust. I trust you to spend and save your money more wisely than a budget planner in Washington.

You say this is all common sense, and I agree. But there's a certain type of person attracted to Government for whom the word "trust" has a strange meaning. Most of them have spent all their lives in Government and don't have much experience in the real world. Half my adult life spent in service and the other half trying to work for a living and make a paycheck and build a business, I think that's a good qualification for President of the United States of America. They say they want to put people first. But if you look real close, the people that they put first are all on a Government payroll.

I stand with the flag-waving, yes, and the God-fearing, yes, and the tax-paying, hard-working people of America. A leader of a free people must understand that Government can not only help, it can hinder. He must have the confidence to say, "I trust you. I trust the people." Ultimately you must decide who you trust, who has the experience, the ideals, and the ideas to find the appropriate balance.

Yes, America will change, just as we have changed the entire world. The question now is who will change America for the better? It won't be people whose only enthusiasm is for Government, who measure progress by programs created and special interests satisfied.

If you want to know who's going to change America, look around you. Look around. It's going to be the guy who works an extra shift every week so his son can go to the school of his choice. It's going to be the small-business woman who takes a risk on a new product, the computer hacker working in a lonely garage, the merit scholar from south central L.A., the entrepreneur with a crazy idea of putting players' faces on cards and turning us all into wonderful kids once again.

There's your answer, some of it, I might say, sitting right back here: These apprentices, wanting to work, wanting to learn. There's your answer: The American people are going to change America. But only if they have a Government, particularly a Congress, with the wisdom to know its own limits, with a leadership who knows where the true American imagination lies. Countries around the world have at long last understood the power of trusting the people. America will change by reaffirming the lesson that we have taught the entire world, by trusting a leader who trusts you.

It is a great pleasure to be back in the wonderful State of Wisconsin. Thank you all. May God bless the United States of America, the greatest, freest country on the face of the Earth. Thank you very, very much.

Note: The President spoke at 2:09 p.m. at Outlook Graphics Corp. In his remarks, he referred to David Erdmann, president of the corporation.