

Remarks at a Bush-Quayle Fundraising Dinner in Dearborn, Michigan

April 14, 1992

Thank you very, very much. And John Engler, thank you, sir, Governor, for that kind introduction. John Engler and I have been side by side in politics for a long time, and I'll tell you, I am mighty proud of the job he is doing as Governor of this great State. You're lucky, and you ought to know it. I might salute your lovely wife, Michelle. He had to go to Texas to find her, but here she is, and we're all for her, too.

And let me thank Mike Timmis for the thoughtful invocation and Randy Agley for the superb job as master of ceremonies and for so many other things as well. Also, of course, our special thanks to our esteemed friend Max Fisher, whom we heard from tonight, always at my side, always with sound counsel and advice, a great friend of every Republican and a great leader of this State and, indeed, of our country. Max, thank you, sir.

And of course, if you want to get the job done, get Heinz Prechter involved; he'll twist the arm right out of your socket. But he did a first-class job. And I also want to thank Dave Doyle and Chuck Yob and Tim Leuliette. And let me also acknowledge Bob Mosbacher, our former Secretary of Commerce, now one of the great leaders of our campaign; Bobby Holt, the national finance chairman, whom you met; and Michigan natives Spence Abraham, who used to be the State party chairman, now doing a superb job for the NRCC in Washington, and then our special friend Bob Teeter, who is calling a lot of the shots at our campaign. We've got a great team, and I'm grateful to each and every one of them, all here tonight.

And there's two others I was privileged to sit between, Andrea Fischer and Yosef Chafari. These are the two leading ticket sellers. And I had a fairly relaxed evening, sitting between these two leading ticket sellers. They're trying to sell me tickets to the next event. [*Laughter*] But I'm telling you, this thing was put together in quite a short period of time, relatively short period of time, and we are very, very grateful. I un-

derstand that there's even an overflow room. And after we finish these remarks, I want to go in there.

I will repeat for the benefit of the people in the overflow room: You are safe. By that, I'm referring to a joke that Billy Graham used to tell about the speaker that went on and on and on. And finally, the chairman picked up the gavel, heaved it at the speaker, missed him, and hit the woman in the front row. And she said, "Hit me again; I can still hear him." [*Laughter*] So, to the people in the overflow room, you are safe.

Let me say that it's a pleasure to visit the Detroit area. On our final approach on Air Force One, we had to climb a little higher over Tiger Stadium. Cecil Fielder's turn at bat, at the batting cage there, and we wanted to be out of his range. [*Laughter*]

Let me thank all of you who had contributed so generously to this reelection campaign. With help like yours and the efforts of millions of people like you at the grassroots level, our team is going to win 4 more years to lead this country. I'm absolutely confident of that.

And as John said, we have been trying since 1989, working for reform and change. And I've often had to buck a Congress that, frankly, is resistant to change. But now, this year, in the election year, we can put it in focus, the things we've been trying to get done, and let the American people say whether they want change or not.

We must accelerate reform, reforms to strengthen the bulwark of our Nation's character, and I mean the American family. A major mayors group came into my office, and the thing that they say is the most common problem in the great urban areas of America is the dissolution of the American family. And we've got to find ways to strengthen it.

We've got to find reforms to preserve half a century's hard-won gains for world freedom and peace, reforms to provide Americans with first-rate jobs in this whole new global, the new world economy. And

that's why it's so important that you're here tonight. We have much to do if we're to prepare our Nation to compete in this exciting new century ahead.

None of us can do it alone. But together we are up to any challenge that lies ahead. And frankly, I'm a little sick and tired of some of the gloomy news out there every single night, telling us what's wrong with the United States of America. There's a lot right about it, and I'm going to take that message to the American people.

But your support is key if we're truly going to change this country. And it's key if we're to revolutionize our schools, make health care accessible and affordable. It's key to the frivolous court cases that drain our economy; reform the way our Government works, especially up there on Capitol Hill. And finally, your support is key if we're to open markets the world over for American goods and services, to sustain and to create jobs for Americans, jobs right here in Michigan.

Each one of you tonight is making a difference on these five important challenges because they're all part of my mission as President of the United States. And with your support, I aim to complete that mission. We've got to get this job done.

Take education, for example. Our America 2000 education strategy thrives on local initiatives. Polly Williams in Milwaukee and Patrick Rooney in Indianapolis have captured national attention for their new programs to give inner-city parents what wealthier families have right now, a real choice for schools for their children.

And right here in Detroit there's an exciting new effort in the inner city, Cornerstone Schools. And one of the leaders is Eddie Edwards, a Protestant pastor in the black community, whom I have been pleased to recognize as one of our daily Points of Light for our Nation. A key partner with the Reverend Edwards in this project is Archbishop Maida of the Catholic Church. And they've won generous support from business leaders as they break down barriers and reinvent, literally reinvent excellent schools for children who need them most. And they didn't wait for bureaucrats in Washington, DC, to mandate them or to give them direction. They rejected business-as-usual. And I sa-

lute them for reform. And our America 2000 education strategy will change America by encouraging that kind of innovation.

And meanwhile, grassroots Republicans in the Michigan Legislature are working with our great Governor on Michigan 2000, this State's plan to give parents more freedom and responsibility in their children's education. And there's a powerful reform spirit in Michigan to ease the strictures of teacher tenure and certification, to establish solid core curricula, and to measure results, and to give individual principals new incentives to innovate through charter schools and school empowerment.

I can assure you, the Republican reformers in Michigan's Legislature are light years ahead of the liberal Democratic leadership in the United States Congress. And I can't wait to elect a new Congress that will work for true reform of our Nation's schools. And I might add, a centerpiece for our strategy for reform is choice for parents for public, private, and religious schools. And then you watch the schools that are not chosen bring themselves up through competition. Parental choice is an important key to our reform program.

You know, Michigan is also a leader in making quality health care available and affordable to absolutely everyone. And Michigan soon hopes to become the first State in the Nation to enroll its entire Medicaid caseload, one million people, in managed care. Managed care improves quality while cutting costs. And it's an important part of our national health care reform package. We have the best quality health care in the entire world here in the United States, but too many people lack basic health insurance coverage. And the Capitol Hill liberals' ideas of health care are expensive and coercive.

And some Democratic leaders promote a plan they call "play or pay." It's a mandated benefit scheme whose costs would be virtually unmanageable. And then there's another favorite Democratic plan: It's to make the Federal Government the monopoly provider of national health insurance. And if you think socialized medicine is a good idea, ask a Canadian for a second

opinion. Because central planners ration their health care, Canadians often must wait weeks or months for treatments readily available to Americans.

And like my agenda for literally revolutionizing our schools, my health care reform package emphasizes consumer choice. It promotes private sector competition. It promotes innovation. Transferable credits and tax deductions would enable virtually every American to purchase basic health insurance. We would change the law to assure that no one is denied coverage for a pre-existing condition or because of a job change. And in many cases, providing basic health insurance will help us drive down costs. And right now, for instance, poor people who lack insurance often go to emergency rooms for nonemergency treatment. Well, with health insurance, these kind of cases would be handled in family doctors' offices more effectively and for much less cost. New efficiencies such as this would enable us to reform our health care system without having to raise taxes on the over-taxed American people.

Another institution that we've been trying to change—and now that we've taken the case to the American people maybe we'll have a chance to get it changed—one that's ripe for reform, is our legal system. We have become the most litigious society on Earth. We have 3 times as many lawyers per capita as Great Britain, 5 times as many as France. And I'm often asked, if an apple a day keeps the doctor away, what works for lawyers? [Laughter] Litigation costs, liability insurance costs, and other costs associated with litigation or the avoidance of litigation are estimated to run as high as \$300 billion a year. And that is an indirect tax on every business transaction in America, and it siphons off more than 2.5 percent of our gross national product. And that's 5 times as high as the average in other nations.

And it's high time, then, we spent more time reaching out our hand and helping each other and less time suing each other. And that is why I have asked the Congress to pass my "Access to Justice Act," a reform bill to encourage people to resolve problems out of court and to crack down on frivolous lawsuits by making losers in certain cases,

not all, but in certain cases, pay more court costs. And it's time for action to stop the epidemic of lawsuits. And we need some changes in Congress to get an up-or-down vote on this important reform program.

And now, if we're to reform education and health care and our legal system and if we're to reduce redtape and regulation and get our horrendous Federal deficit down, we must reform the United States Congress. And our congressional system is simply not working. And over the years we've all seen the symptoms: gridlock on important legislation; unconscionable delays on nominations; failure to modernize our banking laws, to reform our system, financial system; failure to strengthen our anticrime laws that would support the police, have a little more compassion for the victims of crime and a little less for the criminals themselves; failure to pass fair and simple proposals to stimulate our economy. I still have seven laserlike proposals that would stimulate the economy without increasing this deficit.

Major reforms are in order. And it's time for the Congress to govern itself by the laws it imposes on others. And I am going to fight to make them now pass laws that will put them under the same laws that you and I have to live by, laws they've exempted themselves from. No more special treatment. And it's time for sweeping reform of campaign financing, time to eliminate the special interest PAC's. It's time for real spending reform; time for the President to have what 43 Governors have, the line-item veto. And I'm going to take that case to the American people this fall.

And it's time to make Congress a citizen assembly, not a club for careerists. And it's time to limit the terms of Congress. My term is limited to two terms, and I want to serve both of them—[laughter]—but nevertheless, it's limited to two terms, and I don't see that it would hurt to have Congress limited to six terms for a Member of the House and two terms for a Senator. I think it would be good. I think it would keep Government more active and vital and closer to the people.

In my second and final term as President, I want to lead America in adopting each of

these historic reforms, these changes. I'm also working to lead America to new success in the global economy. We're working to open markets to American products, to create new jobs for the great American worker. And if we succeed with the current round of world trade talks, the GATT talks, world output could increase by \$5 trillion over the next decade, and more than \$1 trillion of that boom will go to the United States of America. Now, this applies no less to Michigan than to the rest of the Nation. With the open markets and the level playing field that I'm fighting to achieve, I am confident that American workers can outperform, outproduce, outcompete anyone, anywhere in the world.

I was commenting to John Engler as we flew in here this afternoon that Detroit will always be a special place for me. It was here 12 years ago that Ronald Reagan and I accepted our nomination for President and Vice President. And it was here that Ronald Reagan reminded us of Tom Paine's revolutionary words: "We have it in our power to begin the world over again."

Think how much we have accomplished since then. Think of our blessings. With God's help and with hard work to support our convictions, we've helped change the world. We've helped the peoples of Eastern Europe and the old Soviet empire peacefully throw off the yoke of communism. And today we're aiding their transition to free markets, helping them reduce their nuclear arsenals. And we stood up against dictators and exporters of totalitarian revolution in Latin America, and we've helped democracy take root in nearly every country of our hemisphere.

When a ruthless tyrant overran Kuwait and threatened to engulf the Middle East in its worst conflagration, we protected the people of Israel and Turkey and Saudi Arabia. And we organized an unprecedented world coalition, and we liberated Kuwait

from the aggressor. And in the process we accomplished a breakthrough sought by every President from Truman to Reagan. We brought Arab neighbors face to face with Israel for the first time at the peace table.

And we won the cold war and we stopped Saddam's aggression because, 12 years ago, we renewed our faith in our values and we strengthened our defenses. The United States is now the undisputed leader of the entire world. And we will keep ourselves strong. And we will stay engaged in world politics. This is no time to pull back and to retreat and to be afraid of the changes in the world. In world security and in world markets, we will remain engaged.

And we have a mission together to carry on the American dream for new generations. And with your help and with grassroots action, we can win a mandate to lead this country for 4 more years. And we can keep our country open to the contributions of immigrants, of trade, of ideas. And we can work together and win our plans to reform our schools, our health care system, our very system of Government. And we can assure that when we reach the new century, America still will be the strongest, the bravest, the freest Nation on the face of the Earth.

Thank you all. And may God bless each and every one of you and our great country, the United States of America. Thank you very much.

Note: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Max Fisher, Bush-Quayle '92 honorary dinner chairman; Heinz Prechter, national finance cochairman; Dave Doyle, Michigan Republican Party chairman; Chuck Yob, Michigan Republican national committeeman; Tim Leuliette, Bush-Quayle Michigan finance chairman; and Robert Teeter, Bush-Quayle campaign chairman.