

Remarks on Arrival in Memphis November 13, 1993

Thank you very much for coming out here in the wind and rain and braving the elements. It's kind of like what we have to do to get things done in Washington. I'm glad to see you here.

I want to thank my good friend Governor McWherter, Mayor Morris, Mayor Herenton. Thank you all for being here today. I want to thank these fine Members of Congress who are here. Harold Ford made a great statement in support of the North American Free Trade Agreement. I'm very grateful to him and to Bob Clement and to Jim Cooper for their support. I also want to introduce some other Members of Congress who are here: first of all, from our neighboring State of Louisiana, two Members who have expressed their support today, Representative Bill Jefferson and Representative Jimmy Hayes. I want to thank your Congresswoman Marilyn Lloyd for her support for NAFTA. And I want to introduce two Members of my congressional delegation from Arkansas, Blanche Lambert and Ray Thornton, and thank them for their support.

Let me ask you something. Were you proud of Al Gore the other night in his debate? I mean, was he great or what? I want to tell you something, folks. This vote over the North American Free Trade Agreement has brought out a lot of feelings and emotions in this country that I think probably need to be brought out. We've seen in the opposition to NAFTA a lot of the legitimate fears that the American people have developed because so many hard-working Americans have worked and worked and worked, and they've still lost their jobs. Or they worked harder year-in and year-out, and they never got a pay raise. And the global economy has been pretty tough on a lot of people in the States represented here today, on people in Tennessee and Louisiana and Arkansas, and all of us know that.

Let me tell you, when I was Governor of my State, I saw plants shut down and move to Mexico or just disappear altogether or move production all the way to Asia. I understand that very well. I want you to know that there's not a person on this platform today, including the President, who would be supporting this

agreement if we weren't convinced that it will bring more jobs to Tennessee and Louisiana and Arkansas. That's why we're for it.

I came here today to make a point. I'm wearing a tie that was made in Little Rock, Arkansas, and shoes that were made in Nashville, Tennessee. I believe we can compete and win in the global economy. You heard the Governor say that since 1987, exports to Mexico from Tennessee have increased by 300 percent. That's 10,000 jobs due to exports for Mexico. In our State, exports have also tripled in the same time period. We have 5,000 jobs now based on exports to Mexico. In Louisiana, exports have doubled since 1987. Louisiana will be a big winner if all those trade barriers come down because of the increased activity around the Port of New Orleans. We know that this will mean more jobs for this country. Why? Because when the trade barriers come down—their trade barriers are 2½ times as high as ours—as they earn more money and make more money, they'll spend more money on American products. Seventy cents of every dollar Mexico spends on foreign products is spent on American products.

Why will it also make a difference? Because if we make this agreement with Mexico, we'll be able to use it as a basis for similar agreements with all the other Latin American countries. Someday we'll have a trade bloc going from Canada to the United States to Mexico to the rest of Latin America, over 700 million people buying from each other, selling to each other, helping each other to grow.

My fellow Americans, I worked my heart out in this country right here for the last 12 years to bring more jobs to the people of my State. And one thing I know: You cannot put more people to work at a time when productivity is increasing—which means that fewer people can produce more things—you can't put more people to work unless you've got more people who will buy your products and services. Without expanding your customer base, there is no way to create more jobs. It cannot be done. And we have got to learn that in America. We cannot let other people outrade us. We can outwork anybody in the world. We still have the most productive workers in the world. We've learned

a lot of hard lessons in the last 12 years, but we've got to have more customers. And that's what this is about.

So I ask all of you, all of you, to support the members of the Tennessee congressional delegation that have come out for NAFTA, to support the members of the delegations from Arkansas and Louisiana and from the other States that are supporting this, to give our country a chance to compete and win.

On the day after Congress votes on this agreement, I have to fly out to Washington State to meet with the President of China, the world's largest country; with the Prime Minister of Japan, the country that had the largest growth rate in the 1980's; with 13 other leaders of Asian nations. That's the fastest growing part of the world. I'm going to say to them, "We want to be your partner. We will buy your products, but we'd like for you to buy ours." If we adopt NAFTA, it will be a lot easier for me to make that case.

I want the American people to be confident about the future. I want them to believe we

can do better. In the last 10 months we've seen interest rates come down, inflation down, the deficit's come down. Millions and millions of Americans have refinanced their homes and their businesses, and this economy has produced more jobs in the last 10 months than in the previous 4 years. But I'm telling you, you and I know there are not near enough jobs, and incomes are not going up near enough. And the reason is we don't yet have enough people who will buy our products and services.

We need more growth in the world economy, and we need more customers. And Wednesday we're going to take a big first step with NAFTA, thanks to the people of Tennessee, your Vice President, your congressional delegation, and the other Members who are here.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. at the Air National Guard Ramp, Memphis International Airport. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor William N. Morris, Jr., of Shelby County and Mayor W.W. Herenton of Memphis.

Remarks to the Convocation of the Church of God in Christ in Memphis November 13, 1993

Thank you. Please sit down. Bishop Ford, Mrs. Mason, Bishop Owens, and Bishop Anderson; my bishops, Bishop Walker and Bishop Lindsey. Now, if you haven't had Bishop Lindsey's barbecue, you haven't had barbecue. And if you haven't heard Bishop Walker attack one of my opponents, you have never heard a political speech. [*Laughter*]

I am glad to be here. You have touched my heart. You've brought tears to my eyes and joy to my spirit. Last year I was with you over at the convention center. Two years ago your bishops came to Arkansas, and we laid a plaque at the point in Little Rock, Arkansas, at 8th and Gaines, where Bishop Mason received the inspiration for the name of this great church. Bishop Brooks said from his pulpit that I would be elected President when most people thought I wouldn't survive. I thank him, and I thank your faith, and I thank your works, for without you I would not be here today as your President.

Many have spoken eloquently and well, and many have been introduced. I want to thank my good friend Governor McWherter and my friend Mayor Herenton for being with me today; my friend Congressman Harold Ford, we are glad to be in his congressional district. I would like to, if I might, introduce just three other people who are Members of the Congress. They have come here with me, and without them it's hard for me to do much for you. The President proposes and the Congress disposes. Sometimes they dispose of what I propose, but I'm happy to say that according to a recent report in Washington, notwithstanding what you may have heard, this Congress has given me a higher percentage of my proposals than any first-year President since President Eisenhower. And I thank them for that. Let me introduce my good friend, a visitor to Tennessee, Congressman Bill Jefferson from New Orleans, Louisiana—please stand up; and an early supporter of my campaign, Congressman Bob Clement from Ten-