

## Remarks at a Rally for Democratic Candidates in Cleveland, Ohio November 1, 1994

*The President.* Thank you. I've had a good time tonight, haven't you?

*Audience members.* Yes!

*The President.* Mr. Stephenson, you play that horn a lot better than I do, but I love listening to you. You were great, and I thank you; You were great, and thank you, sir. And I thank the Cleveland School of the Arts for that wonderful rendition of "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Weren't they magnificent? They were great; we thank you. When I'm not as hoarse as I am tonight, I can sing that song—[laughter]—even the second verse.

Reverend McMickle, I'm honored to be in your beautiful church tonight; honored to be here with so many distinguished pastors, upstairs and down, and so many other concerned citizens. I'm glad to be here with the mayor, who sounded a little like a preacher tonight. [Laughter] When I heard Mike up here talking, it reminded me of what my grandmother said to me the first time she heard me give a speech. When it was over, she came up to me—my grandmother was about 5' 2", weighed about 180 pounds. She was one tough cookie. [Laughter] You've all had grandmothers like that. So I gave this speech and I was pouring my heart out, and she looked at me and she said, "Bill, I believe you could have been a preacher if you'd been a little better boy." [Laughter]

You've made a fine mayor and a good friend; I thank you, Mike White. Mr. Pinkney, I thank you for your work on this event tonight and for your service to our community. And my good friend Lou Stokes, what a fine man he is and what a great leader he is. I'm not sure, I think this is my third visit to Congressman Stokes' congressional district, maybe my fourth, but however many it is, it's however many he told me I was going to make. When I am summoned, I am here. [Laughter]

I want to say a special word of thanks, too, for the presence of some other people here: First, your wonderful Senator and my stout friend and a great leader for this whole country, Senator John Glenn, I appreciate his being here today. My friend and State chairman, your attorney general, Lee Fisher, I want you to reelect

him on Tuesday. Lee Fisher is a good, good attorney general.

And I want to say something about a couple of other folks who are here. Barbara Sykes, stand up, stand up. I'm going to use Barbara's story as a little illustration about the difference between us and them. Barbara Sykes is from my home State. She's from Arkansas. And she was my political director here in Ohio. And a lot of you know Ohio made me the nominee of the Democratic Party and made me the President of the United States; I got my 276 electoral votes from when Ohio was declared. So now she's running for State treasurer. And not in Cleveland where it would hurt him but down south, in the typical way these Republicans are—they say one thing one place and another, another, and hope they don't get caught—[laughter]—there's a big newspaper article today about how her opponent is running a picture down south, where I'm not supposed to be popular in the State, of her having her picture turn into me and turn back into her.

Now, I don't know what her relationship with me has to do with her fitness to be State treasurer or not, but since he raised it—[laughter]—since he raised it, I hope all the Ohio press gets this straight. Her opponent says, "She was Bill Clinton's political director, and she's from Arkansas," like it's some sort of podunk place, right? What has that got to do with being State treasurer? "I, on the other hand," he says in his ad, "I was the chief aide to Jack Kemp at HUD"—[laughter]—"and therefore I ought to be the State treasurer because I'm better at counting money."

Well, let me tell you something. I like Mr. Kemp; as those Republicans go, he's got some good ideas. But he's had some zingers, too. Jack Kemp was one of the guys that told President Reagan that you could increase spending and cut taxes and balance a budget at the same—[laughter]—right? He didn't go to the Cleveland public schools, or anyplace else. He forgot about arithmetic. [Laughter]

And we went all through the 1980's with their money counters. We quadrupled the debt of the Federal Government. We sent our jobs overseas. We put our economy in a ditch with their

economic theory. That was trickle-down economics. Now he wants to count your money? I'd bet on her any day of the week. [Laughter]

I'm glad to see your distinguished and very handsome candidate for Lieutenant Governor there. And I'm glad to see some other people here. Congressman Sawyer is here. He's come all the way from Akron with some of his folks. He is a great leader in the Congress. I hope and pray he will be reelected on Tuesday.

Congressman Fingerhut met me at the airport. He may not be here, but since he's from around here, in some of the Cleveland meetings here I want to talk about him. You've seen those ads they're running against him? Oh, it's the awfulest thing you ever saw. [Laughter] He's one of—why would they be spending so much money to beat a first-term Democrat who is as independent as can be? I'll tell you why. Fingerhut's great passion in life is to clean up the influence of the lobbyists in Washington. He wants to pass this lobby reform bill and require them to report all the money they spend. He's got this crazy idea that you ought to know how much the organized interests in Washington spend to keep from having your interests furthered down there. So they are going bananas. And they're trying to beat Fingerhut, and they're saying all these terrible things about him. But I want to tell you something. When you see those ads, the reason they're trying to beat him is, if he comes back, he will pass the lobby reform bill that the Republicans killed this time because we ran out of time. That's what they're trying to do.

Now, this is kind of like this treasurer's deal I was telling you about. A few weeks ago when the Republicans were already counting all their victories on Tuesday, convinced they were going to win, they beat the lobby reform package, and they beat campaign finance reform at the end of the last congressional session. This was on a Saturday. On a Monday, the House Republican leader meets with the lobbyists in Washington, and he tells them—this was reported, big front-page story in the Washington Post—“Now, we took care of you. You better take care of us. And you'd better not give any money to those Democrats because we're keeping score.”

The next day, it's in the paper that he met with a bunch of Republican political operatives and said, “Our goal in life is to convince people that the President is the enemy of normal Amer-

icans. We're going to make it unsafe for him to go anywhere except to talk to black voters between now and the election.” That's what he said. Let me tell you something, folks. This whole country would be better off if every person in public life felt as comfortable in this church tonight as I do.

So if you can do anything for that young man, Eric Fingerhut, you ought to. He voted to get this country moving in the right direction. But the real reason they're out to get him in your neighboring district is they don't want that lobby reform to pass, and he will bust a gut to pass it if he gets reelected.

Now, Mr. Hyatt here, who's been my friend a long time—I've known him longer than nearly anybody in this church—he wants to be a Senator. And his opponent, oh, he's said all kind of terrible things about him. But let me ask you something: If you had a chance to vote for a guy who had built a business giving people legal services who had to have it and couldn't afford to pay big money for it; creating a lot of jobs for people; who'd been terrifically successful and then said, “Because I'm successful, I need to give something back to my State and my country, and I want to go up there and fight for ordinary Americans, not for organized interests. And I'm prepared to pay my fair share of taxes, and I'm prepared to do my part. I want to move this country forward,” and the fellow running against him had been one of the people who brought you the trickle-down Reaganomics that nearly bankrupted this country, wouldn't you vote for Joel Hyatt? I think you ought to, and I hope you will.

Let me remind you of something else, too. The man that's running against Joel Hyatt 2 years ago was running against John Glenn when I was running for President. And I was coming to Ohio all the time, following this election very closely. Now, you may not agree with every vote Senator Glenn ever cast. He and I have a disagreement once in a while. But one thing nobody will ever question is that John Glenn is one of the most distinguished, patriotic Americans in the 20th century. Nobody could question that. I'm going to come back to this in a minute. But in 1992, the same man who wants to beat Joel Hyatt today ran against John Glenn and, because he had a lot of money to put ads on television, thought he could get away with actually questioning Senator Glenn's patriotism. I have just this to say to him: When you go fly

all those planes full of bullet holes and you get in a spaceship and go up by yourself in space, then you question John Glenn. Otherwise, be quiet and do something else. Do something else.

This is an amazing year, you know; I mean, it's a strange year. And I was glad to hear the pastor quoting the Scripture. There's a lot of things we need to think about. You can go back in the Scripture, and you can find times like this when things seemed sometimes upside down. But I can tell you this: We're a week out from this election, and the clouds are beginning to clear, and people are beginning to see what this election is all about. The election is about whether we're going to keep going forward, or whether we're going to turn around and do what got us in the trouble we got in in the first place. That's really what the election is about.

You know, 21 months ago I became President, thanks to you. [Applause] Thank you. And I had a program that I thought would help take our country into the 21st century, to rebuild the American dream by putting the American people first. I had some very specific commitments I made. I said, "If you will vote for me, here's what I want to do: I want to make Government work for ordinary Americans again, to do more with less. I want to empower you and then challenge you to do what it takes to compete in this fast-changing, global society. I want to get this economy back on its feet again. I want this world to be a more prosperous and a safer place for Americans to operate in. And we can do that if we'll take the challenge." Well, 21 months later we haven't solved all the problems in this country, but we're in a lot better shape today in America than we were 21 months ago.

If you look at it, we're making Government work for just working people with families and jobs. That's what the family and medical leave law was all about. It protects 2 million people in Ohio who might need to take a little time off from work because there's a baby born or a parent sick, without losing their job. That's what our economic plan was all about when we lowered taxes for 500,000 working families in Ohio who are working full-time with children in the house who should not be in poverty. We ought not to tax people in poverty. We ought to lift them up if they're working and doing their best to raise their children.

That's what we were doing when we passed the Brady bill and the crime bill with more police, more prisons, more punishment, but more prevention, too, to give our kids something to say yes to and a chance to avoid a life of crime and trouble and misery and instead make something of themselves so they can lift their voices and sing. That's what that crime bill was all about.

And we have begun to empower people more. We've started a program to help every State set up apprenticeship programs for people who don't go to college but want to be in good jobs, not dead-end jobs. We provided a dramatic increase in lower cost college loans so that everybody can afford to borrow the money to go to college. And they'll have easier terms to pay it back, so they can always afford to pay it back. It is a big deal, and we need to celebrate it and use it. One million students in Ohio alone are now eligible for lower cost, better repayment college loans. That is something that can change the future of the State as well as of the people involved. That is making the Government work for ordinary people. That is empowering people. That's not giving people anything except the tools to make something of their own lives.

And we said we'd get the economy going again. And so I gave the Congress a long-range economic plan: expand trade, invest more in education and technology and defense conversion, and bring the deficit down. And when the Congress voted on our deficit reduction program the Republicans said, "Oh, my goodness, if this plan passes, the sky will fall. The economy will collapse. You ought to do it the way we did. Tell everybody what they want to hear, and let the debt go crazy, and let the economy run off the track. But at least you won't make anybody mad." I said, "Our job is to take responsibility. Better to make a few people mad and straighten things out and get us on the right road." And that's what we did.

So what has happened since our opponents said the sky would fall? Well, the unemployment rate in Ohio fell 1½ percent. And now 4.6 million new jobs have come into our economy. And in the last 3 months the economy expanded at a healthy rate of about 3.4 percent with no inflation—1.6 percent inflation. In other words, the economy is coming back. We were right, and they were wrong.

And who could fail to be pleased that for the first time since we had nuclear weapons

in two countries there are no longer any Russian missiles pointed at our children tonight? There are the elements in place of an agreement that will keep North Korea from becoming a nuclear power. We've been on the side of peace and freedom everywhere from the Persian Gulf to the Middle East to Northern Ireland to southern Africa to Haiti. This world is for Americans a more prosperous and a safer place than it was 2 years ago.

Do we have problems yet? You bet we do. There are still people in Cleveland that want a job that don't have one. There are still people in Cleveland that haven't gotten a raise in years. There are still people in Cleveland worried about losing their health insurance or afraid they'll lose their job and won't be able to get another one. Yes, there are problems. What is the answer to the problems? The answer is keep on doing what works. Don't turn around and go back and do what didn't work. That's what the answer is. And that's why you need to vote on election day and make sure all your friends do.

Our Republican friends, they're an interesting lot in Congress. They want to kill things and then blame us for not having them pass. They tried to kill the crime bill. They attacked the crime bill for its prevention programs, even though they had cosponsored a bunch of them. They thought they wouldn't get caught. And they delayed, as I said, they killed the lobbying bill, the campaign finance reform bill.

They killed the Superfund legislation. A lot of you don't know what that is, maybe, but that was the bill to clean up the toxic waste dumps of the country. That's a big problem, you know? Everybody was for the bill. We had the chemical companies and the labor unions and the Sierra Club, the environmental groups. There wasn't anybody against that bill except enough Republican Senators to delay it to death. Why did they want to delay it? Because they didn't want Lou Stokes to be able to come home and be able to say, "I helped to clean up poison waste dumps." They said, leave the poison in the ground and try to put some poison in the political atmosphere. I say it's time to take the poison out of the ground and out of the political atmosphere and start building this country again and doing what's right for the people of America for a change.

Now, our Republican friends say if they get to go to Congress, they've got the answer to all of our problems, their Contract With Amer-

ica. I called it a contract on America, and it upset Mr. Hoke. Come to find out, I wasn't sure they knew what was in it, he and his AA. They asked me all those questions in Cleveland last week. [Laughter] I'll tell you what's in it. It's a sweet deal. They come to you and—I come to you with challenges; I tell you there are things you're going to have to do. I can pass the crime bill; you've got to fix crime in your neighborhood. You've got to take this and use it, use the police, use the prevention programs, use these things, and you do it. I passed the college loan bill; I'll tell you, you've still got to go to college. [Laughter] I can't do it for you.

What do they say? They say, "Oh, we're going to give everybody a tax cut." They don't tell you almost all of it goes to very wealthy people. "We'll give everybody a tax cut, and we're going to increase defense, and we're going to increase Star Wars. We're going to bring that back, and we're going to balance the budget." Sounds great; how are you going to pay for it? "We'll tell you that after the election." [Laughter]

That was the theory, by the way, of the fellow that wants to be the treasurer: "We're going to cut taxes, raise spending, and balance the budget." I wouldn't let anybody count my money that had that idea. [Laughter] And that was their idea; so they want to do it all over again. Now, I'm going to tell you what's going to happen. If you raise this spending and you cut all these taxes and you balance the budget, the only way to do it is to cut Social Security and cut Medicare, and that's wrong. And we're not going to let them do that; that's not right.

And if they don't mean it, if they're going to run and hide—boy, they're running for cover on that now; we pointed out what the math was—if they don't mean it, the only other alternative is to explode the deficit and drive the economy in the ditch and send our jobs overseas just like they were before. And I say we have to tell them we have been there, we have tried that. We don't want to cut Social Security and Medicare and college loans and veterans benefits, and we do not want to explode the deficit and put the economy in the ditch. No thank you very much. We'll keep going forward. We do not want to go back.

I got to thinking about this, folks. It's frustrating for them. They ran against the Government for years, you know; the Republicans said how

much they hated the Government. Now we have reduced the size of the Federal Government. They ran against the deficit, even though they gave it to us. We have reduced it. They said they were for a strong economy. We got more jobs. They said they were interested in foreign policy. Our country is safer and more secure. So how are they getting away with having a close election? Why is Joel Hyatt in a close election? Why isn't Tom Sawyer and why isn't Eric Fingerhut and why isn't Lee Fisher—why aren't they being elected overwhelmingly? Because the American people have been told for so long that things are so bad, and they've been told they ought to be cynical and skeptical and nothing good ever comes out of Washington. Can anything good come out of Washington? That's in the Bible somewhere, too, right? [Laughter] And they remind me now of another Biblical verse because they're often straining at a gnat so they can swallow a camel. [Laughter]

So what is their theory? Their theory is, just deny that we did these things. Shoot, if a Republican President had reduced the deficit, reduced the size of the Federal Government, passed a tough crime bill, and promoted economic growth, they'd be saying it's unpatriotic to criticize the man. [Laughter] You know they would. I can hear it now in all their talk shows: "How dare they criticize our President. He reduced the deficit. He reduced the size of the Government. He grew the economy, and he got tough on crime." What do they do? They just deny that it happened. And they hope that you have been so conditioned for so long to hear only bad things, and that you hear the way people scream at each other in communication today, that it will just miss you.

They want to turn other voters, and they want you to stay home. They want you not to know what has happened. They want you not to understand what is at stake. They want you to let them go right back to the 1980's when the country was in trouble but the people they were trying to help, the organized and powerful interest groups, did just fine, never mind what happened to America. They were wrong. Let's tell them no, we're going forward to tomorrow, not backward to yesterday. Our kids depend on it, our country depends on it, and we're going to do it.

Proverbs says, "A happy heart doeth good like medicine, but a broken spirit dryeth the bones." When you are raising children, what's one of

the first things you try to teach your kids when they're old enough to understand? Don't ever make a decision when you're mad. "If you're mad, count 10 before you say something." How many times have we all been told that when we were children?

We can win on Tuesday if we know what the record is, if we know what the alternative is, if we know what the future holds, and if we believe in ourselves, and if we go out and talk to our friends and neighbors and say, "Listen here, don't make a decision when you're mad. Take a deep breath. Let's have a cup of coffee. Let's go drink a Coke. Let's talk about our kids and our future and what is at stake and why we cannot walk away."

I just came back from the Middle East. I was honored to represent all of you for our country's role in helping to make peace between Israel and Jordan. And then I got to go to the desert of the Persian Gulf and see our young men and women in uniform, who stood up for freedom there and rolled back Saddam Hussein. I have seen the faces of Haitians saying "Thank you, America" when our troops took President Aristide home and reestablished democracy. I have received the President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, thanking us for America's role in helping make sure his elections were fair and free. I have been so pleased to have our country asked to help the Catholics and the Protestants in Northern Ireland, who have been fighting for hundreds of years, finally make peace, one with another. And here's what I want to tell you. The rest of the world thinks we're a pretty good country. And we are.

I was the first American President to go to Syria in 20 years, in Damascus, the oldest continuously occupied large city in the world, rich with the texture of Biblical history. And I watched those people pouring out to their apartment windows, standing in the street, looking not at me but at America.

When I spoke to the Jordanian Parliament and I said that in our country we respect all religions—"I don't believe we've got a fight in America with Moslems, with the religion of Islam. We're against terrorism wherever it occurs, on our streets, or in your country. But millions of our people answer the Moslem call to prayer; we respect Islam."

When I woke up in Jerusalem, looking over the Holy City at sunrise, and then I saw the faces of the people in Israel looking to America,

our power, our strength, our example, our ability to change, our fidelity to our ideals, I am telling you, there are no cynics about this country beyond our borders. And there should be no cynics about this country within our borders. We are going in the right direction. We are a great country. We can solve our problems.

But we have to stand up to the forces that would divide us. We have to stand up to the forces that would take us back. And we've got to stand up for ourselves. No matter what I do, I cannot take you to the polling place on Tuesday. You've got to go there yourselves. You are the bosses in this country, and I am your hired public servant. You are in control. And on Tuesday, you will be in control. And you will be in control whether you vote or don't. Because if you don't vote, that's a decision, too.

Now, I'm telling you folks, all these people that are trying to divide us by race, by region, by religion; all these people that are trying to throw a big blanket over what we've done the

last 21 months and hope nobody notices it until it's too late; all these people who are pushing us to political extremes to grab power—we have to stand up, and we have to say, “We tried that, and it got us in a lot of trouble. And we just started 21 months ago in a new direction. And if it's all the same to you, we'll keep going forward with our face toward the Sun, with the wind at our back. We will not turn back. No, no, we're going forward, every one of us, and we're going to do it together.”

God bless you. We can do it. I need your help. They need your help. Let's do it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:38 p.m. at the Antioch Baptist Church. In his remarks, he referred to saxophonist Sam Stephenson; Rev. Marvin McMickle, pastor, Antioch Baptist church; Peter Jones, candidate for Ohio Lieutenant Governor; and insurance executive Arnold Pinkney, coordinator for the school levy bond issue.

## Interview with Ed Gordon of Black Entertainment Television November 2, 1994

### *Midterm Elections*

*Mr. Gordon.* Hello everyone, I'm Ed Gordon. Welcome to the Roosevelt Room in the White House. Today, a group of African-Americans from across the country will meet face-to-face with President Bill Clinton. They will be discussing the President's domestic policy agenda as it concerns the black community.

*Mr. President,* thanks for coming in. First, I get my crack at you, before we turn it over to these folks. Let me ask you, with less than now a week away from the elections, you've been on the stump for the last week and a half and will leave us today and continue—and I suspect right down to the last days.

One of the things that we are hearing, as I travel across the country and we get calls into Black Entertainment Television, is a concern of African-Americans that perhaps, particularly with what's on the line, Democrats haven't been reaching out to blacks as they hoped. What would your thought be on that?

*The President.* Well, I can't speak about what the local candidates are doing, because it may

differ from State to State. But I can say for sure that nationally we have continued to do that. The Democratic Party has had a massive outreach program. Reverend Jackson is traveling all around the country now, going to rallies every day, in a way that we have coordinated between my schedule, the Vice President, and his. We're all trying to hit the right places.

And we've got a real story to tell about what we've done here in the last 2 years, and about what's at stake in this election. And the Republican candidates are far—on balance, tend to be far more extreme right-wingers than they have been in the past, tend to be people who say that anything the Government does is evil and bad. And there's a lot on the line in this election.

We have made—this country is in better shape than it was 21 months ago. It's economically in better shape. We are moving here to try to address some of the concerns that working families have that especially impact the African-American community in America. So, I'm hoping that in the last 7 days we will really get