

Remarks in Fulton, Kentucky August 31, 1996

The President. Good morning!

Audience members. Good morning!

The President. Thank you for coming out. Thank you for waiting. I want to thank the mayors of both these communities. I'm glad to be in Kentucky and Tennessee, and I want to thank all of you who worked hard on this event. I see a lot of work has been done on the buildings. I see a lot of work has been done to make us feel welcome in these two proud communities and I thank you. I am glad to be here, and I am glad to see you.

We are fighting for your future. Will you help us build that bridge to the 21st century?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us send Steve Beshear and Houston Gordon to the United States Senate and Steve Null to the Congress to help us build that bridge to the 21st century?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us make 2 years of college education as universal as a high school education is now in the next 4 years?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us close two-thirds of the toxic waste dumps so our kids live near parks and not poison in the next 4 years?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us balance the budget without doing what our friends in the opposition want to do, without hurting Medicare, Medicaid, our commitment to education, and the environment? Will you help us do that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Folks, this country is in better shape than it was 4 years ago. We are on the

right track to the 21st century. But we still have work to do. On Thursday night in Chicago, I outlined the direction that the Vice President and I and our administration will take, and I want you to help us. This is an election about whether we're going to build a bridge to the future or a bridge to the past, about whether we believe we're all in this together and everybody has a role to play and a place, or whether we ought to say you're on your own.

I believe that my job is to give you the tools you need and the conditions you need to make the most of your own lives, your family's lives, your community's lives. I think that's our responsibility. That's what we've been doing for 4 years. That's why we're on the right track. But we have got more to do.

We need to build a big, strong bridge that's wide enough for everybody to walk across so every child in this audience will have a good, good life in the 21st century. Will you help us?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. For 68 days will you help us?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you, and God bless you. We're glad to see you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:58 a.m. in the Town Square. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Elaine Forrester of Fulton, KY; Mayor Kent Greer of South Fulton, TN; Steven Beshear, Kentucky senatorial candidate; Houston Gordon, Tennessee senatorial candidate; and Dennis Null, candidate for Kentucky's First Congressional District.

Remarks in Troy, Tennessee August 31, 1996

The President. Thank you. Mr. Vice President, it's great to be here in your State of Tennessee with Governor McWherter, Congressman Tanner, Houston Gordon, all of our legislative and other leaders. Hillary and Tipper and Al and

I love these bus trips, but the closer to home they get, the better we like them. [Laughter]

And let me also say a special word of honor and appreciation to Congressman Ed Jones and his wife, Lou. After Ed Jones left the Congress,

Ned McWherter appointed him to work with the then-Governor of Arkansas to try to find ways to redevelop the Mississippi River region. He was my partner and my friend, and I developed just as much respect and love for him as all of you have. And Mr. Ed, it's great to see you today, sir. Thank you.

I also want to make one other introductory remark. I shook hands with Mrs. Jim Bob Robertson. She said, "I'm 101 years old. I've never missed an election, and you're the first President I've ever met." [Laughter] And I said, "Well, it's high time." [Laughter] And then she leaned over and kissed me. And I can tell you, she may be 101, but she still kisses real good. I appreciate that. I thank her.

Ladies and gentlemen, before I make my remarks I want to report to you on a development in another country that you may not have heard about. Early this morning, the military forces of Iraq overran the city of Irbil, which is in the portion of northern Iraq controlled and populated by the Kurds. The situation there remains unclear. There are reports of heavy fighting and firing in populated areas. There are indications that some Kurdish elements may be involved in the operation with Iraq. These developments, however, cause me grave concern. I have placed our forces in the region on high alert, and they are now being reinforced.

It is premature at this time, and I want to emphasize that, entirely premature to speculate on any response we might have. But we are prepared to deal with these developments. We will be working hard with others in the international community who share our concern.

And let me just say in closing, I hope all of you are as proud as I am that we have the quality and strength of the men and women in uniform we have serving us all around the world. And I hope you'll say an extra prayer for them tonight. Thank you.

Remarks in Dyersburg, Tennessee August 31, 1996

The President. Thank you. Wow! Well, I asked you not to leave, and you didn't. Thanks for staying. We got here as quick as we could.

We're glad to be here. We didn't expect that this many of you would be here, and we're awfully glad to see you.

On Thursday night, I had the opportunity to speak from Chicago in our Democratic Convention to the American people about what Al Gore and I would like to do if you give us 4 more years. The fundamental question is whether we're going to build a bridge to the future or a bridge to the past. Will you help us build a bridge to the 21st century?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. A bridge with world-class jobs, world-class education, a clean environment, with a growing economy; a bridge where families can be strong in raising their children, succeeding at work and home; a bridge where communities know that the crime rate is going to come down every year because there are more police officers on the street and because we're all taking more responsibilities to keep our kids out of trouble in the first place—will you help us build that kind of bridge? [Applause] Will you help us for the next 68 days in this election? [Applause] And then for 4 more years after that? [Applause]

Let me tell you, folks—I said this at the convention, I want to say it again—politicians are always known for overstating. It is no overstating when I tell you that Albert Gore from Tennessee is the finest, most effective Vice President in the history of the United States of America. And if you'll give us a chance to build that bridge and you'll build it with us, we'll all walk over it in the year 2000.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:05 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Ned Ray McWherter, former Tennessee Governor, and Houston Gordon, Tennessee senatorial candidate.

I want to thank the mayor and everyone who worked hard to make this event possible today. I thank the two bands for bringing us the music. Thank you very much.