

one of us to walk across. On Tipper Gore's birthday and my birthday and that beautiful 3-year-old girl's birthday over there, August 19th, we came to west Tennessee and we visited a white church and a black church that had been burned. And Hillary and Tipper and Al and I worked on rebuilding the African-American church. And I've done a lot to try to sensitize the American people about how terrible it is to burn churches or deface synagogues or mosques or any other religious institutions in this country and how terrible it is for us to look down on other people because they are of a different race or religion than we are. That's not America.

I have spent a lot of time as your President dealing with problems that we have as Americans around the world, because other people refuse to get along with one another, because other people—whether it's in the Middle East or Northern Ireland or Bosnia or Africa or you name it—insist on killing each other because they're of a different race, a different tribe, a different ethnic group, a different religion. In America, we say all you have to do is believe

in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, be willing to work hard and play by the rules. You're our kind of person. We're going arm in arm with you into the future.

Will you help me build that kind of America? Will you help me build that bridge to the 21st century? Will you do it for the next 68 days? Will you do it for 4 years after that? Will you talk to your friends and neighbors and ask them? [Applause]

Thank you. God bless you. I'm proud to be here in Covington. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:30 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Russell B. Bailey of Covington; Jimmy Naifeh, speaker, Tennessee House of Representatives; Houston Gordon, Tennessee senatorial candidate; Ned Ray McWherter, former Tennessee Governor; Don Trotter and Harold E. Ford, Jr., candidates for Tennessee's Seventh and Ninth Congressional Districts, respectively; and Lois DeBerry, speaker pro tempore, and Bill Purcell, majority leader, Tennessee House of Representatives.

Remarks on Concluding a Bus Tour in Memphis, Tennessee August 31, 1996

The President. Thank you. Thank you for waiting. You have made us very happy tonight. It's wonderful to see you. I want to thank Mayor Herenton and everyone else here in Memphis who worked hard to make this night a reality.

Hillary and Tipper and Al and I, we kind of like doing this. Can you tell that? [Applause] And when we look out and see you, the people we've been working for and fighting for for the last 4 years, it makes it all worth it. We can see what it is we've been doing in the hope, in the spirit, in the energy, in the happiness of your reception. Thank you so much.

I want to thank Lois DeBerry and Bill Purcell and Speaker Naifeh and all the members of the Tennessee Legislature who are here. Chairman Farris, thank you for being here. I want to thank all these Congressmen-to-be. Congressman Ford, thank you for your friendship and your service in the Congress. And about-to-be

Congressman Ford, thank you for that barn-burning speech and what you want to do.

Mr. Trotter, thank you, and I want you to help him. Those of you who live in his district, he needs your help and he has votes around here. We need your help. Houston Gordon, thank you for your speeches and for being brave enough and good enough to get out here and make this run for the Senate. We need you there.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me just say one thing before I get into my remarks here. You heard the Vice President say what he did. You remember the awful budget fight we had. We wanted to balance the budget. We brought the deficit down. But we said, we're not going to balance the budget on the backs of the people that we depend upon to carry us into the future or that got us here. We're not going to cut education. We're not going to hurt the environment. We're not going to wreck Medicare and

Medicaid. We don't have to do it, and we're not going to do it.

And then they said, "All right, if you don't do it our way we'll shut the Government down, and we'll see how you like that." And I said, "I don't believe the American people like blackmail. You can shut it down, but I'm still going to veto that budget. It's wrong for America." And I did.

But folks, you don't want the President just to say no, you want us to say yes. I need—but more importantly by far, you need people in the Congress who will both balance the budget and keep the economy going and protect our values, who will meet our challenges, protect our values, and move us forward together. All these people will.

But I want to introduce one more person who is here today because those of you who live in Memphis know that over in Arkansas a bunch of us who lived in the eastern part of the State basically believe that Memphis is the capital of the Mississippi Delta, and we're sort of a part of it. And eastern Arkansas and that congressional district over there, we're about to make a change, and 15 to 20 percent of the people who vote over there get all their news from over here.

And we have a Democratic nominee for Congress in eastern Arkansas who was an official in our Agriculture Department, who has been a friend of mine for 20 years, who is one of the finest people I have ever known. And I want to remind the farmers, our administration has been good for American agriculture. We've opened more markets. We've had more exports. Farm prices are high. And we have supported rural development to help people out in the country who can't make a living on the farm anymore. A major architect of those policies is now the nominee of our party for Congress in eastern Arkansas, Mr. Marion Berry. I'd like to ask him to come up here, and you all give him a good Memphis welcome. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want him to say just a word. Thank you. [*At this point, Marion Berry, candidate for Arkansas' First Congressional District, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, on Thursday night, from Chicago, I had the honor of accepting our party's nomination for President for the second time and laying before the Amer-

ican people what Al Gore and I will try to do as specifically as I could if you give us 4 more years. But what the Vice President said is absolutely true. This is a choice between building a bridge to the past and building a bridge to the future. It's a choice between people who believe we should say you're on your own, and those of us who believe, yes, it does take a village, we ought to help each other to make the most of our own lives, to build strong lives, strong families, strong communities, and a strong country.

I want to build that bridge based on opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and an American community that includes everybody—everybody. We cannot go forward as Americans unless we're willing to go forward together, arm in arm.

And what I want to say to you tonight is, we've been working on this for 4 years, so you don't really have to guess. Four years ago we had high unemployment, stagnant wages, rising crime, problems unmet, cynicism on the rise, middle class dreams in danger. Four years later, because we changed the politics of Washington from the old politics—which was just pointing fingers at people and saying who is to blame—to what I think you want us to do, which is to say, forget about who's to blame. What are we going to do about it? How are we going to move forward?

And I appreciated what the Vice President said about Senator Dole. We're not interested in a campaign of insults. We want a campaign of ideas. We'll put our record and our ideas against their record and their ideas, and we trust you to make the decision.

But look where we are compared to 4 years ago. Let me just give you a few things. You just think about this: 10 million more Americans at work; 4½ million Americans moving into their first home; 12 million Americans getting family and medical leave so they can take some time off when a baby is born or a parent's sick; 1.8 million Americans go from welfare to work; child support collections go up \$3 billion, by 40 percent; 40 million working Americans have their pensions protected; 15 million of our hardest pressed working families get tax cuts; and every small business in the country qualifies for a tax cut if they invest more in their business to make it more productive or hire somebody else.

And in October, 10 million more Americans will get a pay raise when the minimum wage goes up on October 1. Twenty-five million Americans will be helped, including a lot of people in this audience, because we passed the Kennedy-Kassebaum health care reform bill that says you cannot be denied health insurance or have it jerked from you just because somebody in your family has been sick or you've changed jobs. It is a good thing to do.

Fifty million more Americans are breathing clean air, and we've cleaned up more toxic waste dumps in 3 years than the previous administration did in 12.

And let's talk about some of their issues. Four years in a row, the crime rate has come down. We passed the ban on assault weapons. We passed the Brady bill. Not a single Tennessee or Arkansas hunter lost their rifle, but 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers could not get handguns to hurt people in their neighborhoods.

We have reduced the deficit in every one of our years of this administration. And the Clinton/Gore administration is the first administration to reduce the deficit in all 4 years since the 1840's, before the Civil War. We have the smallest Federal Government since John Kennedy was President. And there would be a surplus in the budget today if it weren't for the interest payments we're making on the 12 years of debt run up before we went to Washington to try to turn this country around. I'd say that's a pretty good record. Will you help us build on that record?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Folks, we have to do more. We do have to build a bridge to the future. The children in this audience will be doing jobs that have not been invented yet. Many of them will be working at things that have not even been imagined yet. Let me give you just one little example. Just a few weeks ago the Vice President and I announced that the United States Government was going to do a research project or a development project with IBM to build a supercomputer in the next couple of years—now listen to this—a supercomputer in the next couple of years that will do in one second what it would take you, going home with your hand-held pocket calculator, 30,000 years to do. That is an example of where we are going and how fast we are going.

We can create a future in the 21st century where more people have more chances to live

out their dreams than ever. We can also do something with technology we've never done before, which is to give poor people and people isolated in our inner cities and our poor rural areas, who haven't had a break in 30 years in terms of economic opportunity, a chance to fully participate in the American dream for the first time in a generation, if we do it right. We can do that.

But we have to make the right decisions. The first thing we've got to do is to make up our mind our bridge is going to be built with the finest educational system in the world available to every single person. And let me just mention three things. Number one, we have a plan to take our AmeriCorps volunteers, 30,000 mentors, and a million more volunteers to make sure that by the year 2000 every 8-year-old in America can read on his or her own so they can learn the rest of the way through school.

Number two, we have a plan by the year 2000 to make sure that every classroom in America, in the poorest inner city and the most remote mountain village, every single solitary one is hooked up, not only with computers and trained teachers but hooked up to the information superhighway so that, for the first time in the history of America, the kids in the poorest districts can get immediately the same quality of information and learning that the kids in the wealthiest districts in America can get. We're going to do that by the year 2000.

And finally, we want to make college available to everybody who wants to go, and we want to say that by the year 2000, 2 years of college in a community college will be as universal in 4 years as a high school education is today, because we're going to pay for it by giving you a tax credit for the cost of the tuition to a community college for 2 years. And we want to give every person in college, every person in any kind of post-high school education, a tax deduction for tuition up to \$10,000 a year.

And we want to give workers who are unemployed or underemployed access to a "GI bill" that will be worth over \$2,000 in educational benefits to them so they can get a better job. It's not just young people that need an education. Anybody that loses their job in this country ought to be able to go back to school and get a better job with a better future because they're willing to work.

Now, that's a strong bridge to the 21st century. We want to build a bridge to the 21st

century with a growing economy. That means that we have to continue to balance the budget.

I don't know how many times I've been told, "Mr. President, don't go to a good old-fashioned Democratic crowd and talk to them about balancing the budget. It bores them to death." What's that got to do with Memphis? Who cares? I'll tell you why you should care. If we have to go start borrowing more money and you're trying to borrow money, what happens? Interest rates go up. What does that mean? Your car payment, your credit card payment, your home mortgage payment goes up. Even more important for your future, it means that business people have to pay more to borrow money, which means they don't create as many new businesses and they don't start as many and they don't hire as many.

One of the things that I am proudest of in the last 4 years is that in each year we have had a record number of new businesses start, including now, in America, a record number of businesses owned and operated by minorities and women. I'm proud of that. We need more of it. That's why we need to keep these interest rates down.

That means that our tax cut proposal is better than theirs, because ours is targeted. It's targeted to raising your children. It's targeted to education. It says you can take out an IRA and then you can withdraw from it without penalty for a medical emergency, to buy a first home, to educate your family; says you shouldn't pay any taxes on the gain from the home you sell. But we can pay for it. Every bit of it is paid for.

Now, they're saying, "But we'll give you more money. Oh, yes, we'll give you more money." Well, how are you going to pay for it? "Well, we're going to cut Medicare and Medicaid, education and the environment even more than we did in that budget the President vetoed." Do you want that?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. And then they still won't be able to pay for it so then they'll have to increase the deficit, which means higher interest rates and a weaker economy. So we get the worst of both worlds.

So I say, I want you to help us build a bridge to the 21st century with more economic growth, not less, and economic growth which comes here to help you. Will you do that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Now, there has been a lot of talk about responsibility and a lot of debate about welfare. Let me tell you what this new welfare law does. First of all, I'll say again, we have 1.8 million fewer people on welfare than we did when I took office. What does that mean? If you give people a job, they will take it. People don't want to be on welfare. They want to go to work. They want to go to work.

So here is what the new law says. It says we're going to keep giving children and their parents health care, nutrition through food stamps, the guaranteed school lunch program, and child care if they get a job. But what used to be in the check can now be sent to the State and they can use the money to create jobs.

Now, what I say to you is, we talked a lot about responsibility. The State of Tennessee, the State of Arkansas, and all the rest of us, we now have a responsibility to create those jobs in the inner cities and in those poor delta towns and in other places where people are on welfare because there aren't any jobs. And I have a plan to let us all be responsible by investing in these places to create new jobs where there have not been any. Will you help me build that kind of bridge to the future?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. We can't be responsible unless our streets are safe. I have fought against the efforts by my opponent and Mr. Gingrich to cut back on the safe and drug-free schools money, to cut back on the funds we give to schools to stay open later because our kids need something to say yes to, not just something to say no to. We shouldn't leave children out here on the street raising themselves. If we need to keep the schools open, we need more funds to keep them open, not less. We need to be supporting our teachers, not tearing them down. We need to be bringing them in here.

Well, I'll tell you something, folks, one big reason—you can ask the mayor here, you can ask any mayor in America—one big reason this crime rate has come down for 4 years is that we're putting more policemen back in the neighborhoods where they can know the folks, they can know the children, they can be partners. They can not only catch criminals, but they can stop crime from happening in the first place.

Now, they all voted against, the other folks did, including my opponent—they all voted against creating 100,000 policemen. Then they

tried to take it away. Now they're trying to restrict it again. I say to you, why would we stop something that's working? We've got the crime rate coming down for 4 years. We need it coming down for 4 more years and it might be low enough to be tolerable. Will you help me stay with 100,000 police on the street? [Applause]

The last thing I want to say is we've got to go forward as one community. And that starts with strong families. A lot of people talk about family values, but as the First Lady said in our convention, it's time we advocated things that show we value family. We've got to help people succeed, raising their children and going to work.

I propose to expand the family and medical leave law so that you can take a little time off without losing your job to go to a parent-teacher conference or take your kid to the doctor. I propose letting people choose how to take their overtime. If they've got problems at home, if a child needs some care, if the parent has Alzheimer's, if there's some other trouble, I think people who earn overtime ought to have a choice to take it in money or time with their families, depending on what they need. Will you help me build that kind of pro-family policy as a bridge to the future? [Applause]

Finally, let me say this: The Vice President and I have worked as hard as we know how to prove you can protect the environment and grow the economy. And I can't thank Al Gore enough for all the things he's taught me about how to protect the environment and grow the economy. But we passed the Safe Drinking Water Act. We passed an act to purify our food from pesticides that every farm organization in America supported. We have upgraded the meat standards of this country. We improved the clean air laws. We cleaned up all these toxic waste dumps.

We've still got a lot to do. You want to know one way you can grow Memphis' economy and every other city? If we cleaned up every environment problem in every city in this country, we would make those places prime targets for new investments and new jobs. We're going to clean up the environment of the cities and grow the economy.

We're going to clean up—there are 10 million kids in this country that live within 4 miles of a toxic waste dump. We're going to clean up the two-thirds worst ones if you'll help us

so that our children can grow up next to parks, not poison. Will you help us build that bridge to the future? [Applause]

Finally, let me say again, you think about the bridge that connects Memphis and West Memphis, Arkansas. You imagine that being a bridge to the future. That bridge has got to be strong enough and wide enough for all of us to walk across. That's why, when Tipper and I celebrated our birthdays, Al and Hillary and the two of us came out here to Tennessee to try to rebuild that church that had been burned. Every time somebody burns a church or defaces a synagogue or a mosque, they deface the idea of America. And as I said Thursday night, the real flame that embodies America is the flame on the Statue of Liberty, the flame that the Olympic torch—carried by citizens, heroes all across America—embodied.

You've got this Olympic Gold Medal winner. Why do we love the Olympics? I'll tell you why. Because everybody has got to play by the rules. You can't get a gold medal by breaking in your opponent's room the night before and breaking their legs. [Laughter] Nobody brags on you if you stand up behind a microphone and bad-mouth your opponent. You can only win if you reach down deep inside and do your best and give your all. And then if you do that, even if you don't get a medal you're better off. And we think the world ought to work that way. That's why we liked the Olympics. That's why we liked the Olympics.

So I tell you, my friends, you just think about that. The United States cannot afford to let racial bigotry get back into our lives. We cannot afford to let religious bigotry back into our lives. We cannot afford any kind of discrimination. We need to say to the whole world—and most important, in the privacy of our own rooms at night as we say our prayers to God, we need it to be true in our hearts—if you believe in the Declaration of Independence, if you believe in the Constitution, if you believe in the Bill of Rights, if you get up tomorrow and do your work and you obey the law and you play by the rules, you're my kind of American. I don't care what else there is about you. We're going to cross that bridge together. Will you help me build that kind of bridge to the future?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us for 68 more days?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us for 4 more years?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. We need you. We love you. Thank you, and God bless you. Let's go get it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:53 p.m. at City Hall Plaza. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor

Willie W. Herenton of Memphis; Lois DeBerry, speaker pro tempore, Bill Purcell, majority leader, and Jimmy Naifeh, speaker, Tennessee House of Representatives; Bill Farris, Shelby County Democratic Party chair; and Harold E. Ford, Jr., and Don Trotter, candidates for Tennessee's Ninth and Seventh Congressional Districts, respectively. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Reception for Harold E. Ford, Jr., in Memphis August 31, 1996

The President. Thank you. First of all, I'd like to—let me say to all of you who are here—Bishop, the pastors, Bill Farris, John, the political leaders who are here—I could sit over there with Hillary all night long and watch this. I mean, I've known Harold Ford a long time, and I saw him get up, and he did his little thing. And then his son got up, and he sort of turned it up a notch. [Laughter] And then Al Gore got up and talked about how dynasties were a good thing in Tennessee. [Laughter] And I sort of felt like I was watching the three greatest ballet dancers of all time do the Tennessee waltz.

The Vice President. Or the macarena.

The President. Or the macarena, he said. If you'd indulge me just one thing, I'd like to introduce one other person. I introduced him at our rally, but my candidate for Congress in the Mississippi Delta of eastern Arkansas is here, my longtime friend and former official at the Department of Agriculture in our administration, Marion Berry, and his wife, Carolyn. Will you please make them welcome here. [Applause] Thank you. And over there next to them is the man I hope will be your next Senator from Tennessee, Houston Gordon. Thank you, Houston.

Now, folks, let me say a special word of thanks, too, as President, to Harold Ford, Sr., who as—he does not look old enough to me to be retiring from Congress. But his son has so much talent, it may just be like baseball, you know, it's just time to go and do something else. [Laughter] But I can tell you that I had a chance to begin working with Harold Ford nearly 10 years ago when I was a Governor,

and we were trying to find a humane way to make it possible for more people to move from work to welfare. And I was impressed then by his keen intellect and his enormous energy. I've also learned something in years since about his determination and never-say-die attitude—something that I have had to have a little bit of myself from time to time. [Laughter]

I see the pride in his eyes about his son, and I have been able to observe Harold Ford, Jr., speak and campaign. And I empathize with what Al Gore said about his own career: Our country is better off that both Gores served, and our country will be better off that both Fords served.

And you know, I just turned 50, and Al never lets me forget about it. And I got my AARP card, you know; I'm a certified old guy now. [Laughter] And I was looking at Harold, Jr., up here, thinking I was about his age when I first ran for Congress. I got beat, but I got over it. [Laughter] He's not going to get beat. You're going to send him to Congress.

Let me just make one final, highly personal remark. There is underlying all great elections a big idea. Sometimes it's clear, and sometimes it's not. And in this election we said that the big idea was whether we're going to build a bridge to the future or a bridge to the past. But that may not be quite as explicit as I'd like to be, thinking about this young man starting his career in Congress, listening to the conviction, passion, and eloquence of his words tonight.

When I was a boy growing up in Arkansas, the year I was born our per capita income was 56 percent of the national average. Only Mis-