

gether. We're going to walk across it together. And our best days are still ahead.

Will you help me build that bridge? [Applause] Will you be there and vote? [Applause] If you've voted already, will you bring someone else? [Applause] You can go in the courthouse and do it right now. Be there, and we'll have a great celebration for America Tuesday night.

Thank you. God bless you. And bear down. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:30 p.m. at the Clark County Government Center. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jan Lavery Jones of Las Vegas; State Senator Dina Titus; entertainer Gladys Knight; tennis player Andre Agassi; Nell Justice, who introduced the President; and State Senator Bob Coffin, candidate for Nevada's First Congressional District.

## Remarks in Oakland, California October 31, 1996

*The President.* Let's hear it for Sherman Spears; give him another hand. [Applause]

*Audience members.* Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

*The President.* Thank you, thank you very much. Well, happy Halloween, Oakland. Mr. Mayor, thank you for making me feel at home again. Senator Boxer, Senator Feinstein, Congressman Dellums, how fortunate the people of California are to have you pleading their cause and pushing their futures in Washington, DC. Thank you for your friendship, your support, and your leadership.

I want to thank the House Jacks for the national anthem and their music. They did a great job. I want to say how glad I am to be here with all the people on the podium, including Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis, Congressman Tom Lantos. My Chief of Staff from California, Leon Panetta, is here with me. I want to thank the young people here who are in the neighborhood watch from the Oakland Home Alert; thank you. And I want to thank these young folks who made this bridge to the 21st century for me. Didn't they do a great job? [Applause]

I want to echo what has already been said and ask you to help Ellen Tauscher go to the United States Congress. We need her there. She looks like a congresswoman—[laughter]—but, more importantly, she'll vote like a congresswoman from California, advancing the interests of all Americans. And I hope you will help her.

You know, folks, I know this is Halloween and we've got a few masks on out there; we've even got a television camera over here masquerading as Freddy Krueger. [Laughter]

But I want to ask you tonight to sort of take off the mask for a minute. I want to begin by thanking all the young people in this audience who have come tonight, for more than anything else this election is about your tomorrows. It's about what kind of country we're going to be in the 21st century.

And I want to ask you all to do something tonight for me when you go home. Before you go to sleep, whatever your age is, just see if you can answer this question for yourself: "What would I like my country to look like when we cross that bridge into the 21st century in 4 years? What would I like my country to look like when I have children, like Sherman does? What would I like that to be?"

And I think you will find a good answer. And I want to tell you what my answer is. I believe in a country where everybody, without regard to race, gender, or whatever else, no matter where they start in life, has a chance to live out their dreams. I believe in a country—I believe in a country where America leads the world for people in freedom and prosperity. And I believe in a country where we celebrate our diversity instead of being divided by it, where we're one great, strong community.

So when you choose the last President of the 20th century and the first President of the 21st century, you have to ask yourself this question. There is a huge difference here. There's a huge difference in these choices for Congress. And it's not fundamentally about party, it's about what you want America to be like. They say you'd be better off on your own. I say—as a friend of mine said, someone I'm reasonably

close to—it does take a village to raise our children and build our future. They say, “There is a future out there, and it sure will be exciting if you can get there, and I wish you luck.” I say, we’ll all get there if we build a bridge big enough and strong enough to walk across together.

Now, 4 years ago the people of California gave me the chance to serve as President and gave Al Gore the chance to serve as Vice President, and basically you took me on faith. Tonight you don’t have to do that anymore. We know which approach works. There’s an old saying where I come from: If you find a turtle on a fencepost, the chances are it did not get there by accident. *[Laughter]*

We do have 10½ million more jobs than we had 4 years ago. California’s economy has turned around and is going in the right direction compared to 4 years ago. We do have 4 years of declining crime rates, the lowest crime rate in the whole country in 10 years and in California in 25 years. There are nearly 2 million fewer people on welfare than there were 4 years ago. We are moving in the right direction.

Ten million more people got an increase in the minimum wage. There’s been a 50 percent increase in child support collections. Twenty-five million people now have a chance to keep their health insurance because we passed a law that says you can’t lose it if you change jobs or someone in your family gets sick. We also passed a bill that says that insurance companies can’t kick mothers and their newborn babies out of a hospital in 24 hours anymore.

We know that if we work to expand opportunity, increase responsibility, and build our American community we’re going to be better off. Now, let me say—I’d be the very first to say, even 5 days before an election, I do not deserve credit, solely, for all the good things that have happened in America. We did this together. And I just want us to keep on working together. I don’t want to see us divided and going back and forgetting about our obligations to one another.

I’m trying to get another million people to join in these neighborhood watches like these young folks, because I know if you have police on the street and partners in the neighborhood working together, you can prevent crime and save children, not just catch criminals. And you’ll drive the crime rate down.

I’m trying to get a million more people—a million more—to go out there and teach our young children to read as reading tutors, so that every 8-year-old can read a book on his or her own by the year 2000. I’m trying to mobilize volunteers all across this country to help us hook up every classroom and library in the United States to the Internet, so that all our kids will finally have access to the same knowledge at the same time. We’ve got to do this together.

I’m trying to work with the cities and the private sector to create another million jobs to move people from welfare to work. You can’t tell people they have to go to work unless you also have work for them to go to.

We’ve got to do this together. And your big decision here is: bridge to the future, or bridge to the past; doing it together, or you’re on your own. I want the young people here especially to think about this. With all my heart, I believe the best days of this country are still before us. With all my heart, I believe that the people who are growing up now and will come of age in the 21st century will have more opportunities to live out their dreams than ever before, if we do the right things.

But there are new threats, new challenges out there, challenges to our security in the form of terrorism and biological and chemical weapons and ethnic and regional hatreds all over the world that could flare up. There are new challenges here at home. We’ve got to get the drugs and the gangs and the guns off the street and give people something to say yes to and a future to build. We have to make it possible for everybody to benefit from this new high-tech global economy, not just the ones that are going to make it anyway if we don’t do anything. And we’re going to be better off, all of us, if all of us have a chance—not a guarantee but a chance—to make it. That’s what this whole election’s about.

Now, since this is Halloween but I asked you to take off the mask, I’m going to take off a mask or two myself tonight. Yesterday we found out that the economy is growing at about 3 percent a year. Incomes were up 5 percent a year after inflation, after being stagnant for 10 years. People are actually getting paid for the work they’re doing again. And my opponent said that we had the worst economy in 20 years.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* I've got news for him. The worst economy California had in 20 years was when I got elected President. It's better now.

Now—but it's not all bad because yesterday he said we had the worst economy in 20 years, but just 2 weeks ago he said we had the worst economy in 100 years. [Laughter] Now, I think you ought to vote for a guy who can make up 80 years in 2 weeks. I've done a pretty good job.

But you have to decide who's right. Let me tell you, I don't approve—I'll say right now, I do not approve, even when we do it, even sometimes when I have lapsed into it—do not approve of all this attempt that people in politics make today to convince people that their opponents are no good, they're bad people, they're corrupt, you know. It's not true; that's not right.

After the Vice President and I and Mr. Pannetta spent 55 hours negotiating the budget with Senator Dole and Speaker Gingrich and the leaders of the Democratic Party, Mr. Arney, on their side, we were alone in the White House one day, just the three of us. And I looked at them and I said, "You know, I've enjoyed being with these people, and I've learned a lot. They're just different from us." And I do not mean it in any hateful way. They really believe things that are different from what I believe. And if every American understood that, every American would show up, they would show up Tuesday, and they would cast their votes, and we would all chart our course to the 21st century. I'll just give you a few examples.

The family and medical leave law has helped 12 million people to take a little time off from work when their babies are born or when their family members are sick. They led the fight against it, because they said it would hurt the economy, we were interfering with the economy. My attitude is, the most important job anybody's got is raising their kids. If we had more people doing the job, we'd be in less trouble than we are in. And almost all families are having some trouble raising their kids and doing their jobs. Even well-to-do people often find terrible conflicts between the demands of their work and the demands of children, so you know how much harder it is for people that are just struggling to get by. And we have to fashion a world in the 21st century, we have to use the technology, we have to use our ingenuity, we have to use all our creativity, to help people succeed in raising their kids and doing their work.

Nobody here is doing any more important work than Sherman is, trying to save our kids. But his first job now is to save his own child and give his own child a good future. We all have to succeed at both. So I think we were right. I want to expand the family leave law and say people ought to be able to go see their children's teacher twice a year and take them to the doctor without losing their job. I think that's right. I think when people work overtime, if they've got a problem at home they ought to have the option to take their overtime in pay or time at home dealing with their sick spouses or their children.

That's what I believe, because we have to find ways for people to succeed at home and at work. It's a big challenge in the 21st century. They disagree. You have to choose. Should we build a bridge together, or would it be better if you were on your own? I know the answer to that. And I think you do, too.

I'll give you another example. When I was for the Brady bill, they led the fight against it. When I supported Senator Feinstein in her finest hour in banning those assault weapons, they led the fight against it. When I said, "I've been talking to all these police officers and they say we cannot jail our way out of this crisis; we've got to prevent crime and give our kids something to say yes to, and we need to put police back on the streets in the neighborhoods, building trust in partnership with people again. That's why I want 100,000 police," they led the fight against it. They really believed it was a mistake. And now we know it's bringing the crime rate down, and they're still trying to get rid of it. I don't think they're bad people, but I sure think they're wrong. And I hope you do, too.

Their idea of balancing the budget included cuts in Head Start, cuts in college loans, abolishing the Department of Education.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* My idea of balancing the budget has given us the smallest Federal Government in 30 years. We, the Democrats—Ron Dellums, Barbara Boxer, Dianne Feinstein—we, the Democrats—you should know this—have eliminated more unnecessary programs, more pages of Government regulations, we have privatized more Government operations than the Republicans did in 12 years. But we still think we should balance the budget and invest in edu-

cation and the environment and protect Medicare and Medicaid.

My idea is to teach every 8-year-old to read, to let every 12-year-old log in on the Internet, and open the doors of college to everybody in America that wants to go and will work for it. My idea of a tax cut is to give families tax cuts for raising their kids and education and health care and buying a home; to let people deduct dollar for dollar the cost of a typical community college tuition so we can make 2 years of college as universal as a high school diploma is today in just 4 years.

My idea is to let you save in an individual retirement account and withdraw from it tax-free if you use the money for education or health care or homebuying. And I think we ought to give you a \$10,000 tax deduction for the cost of any college tuition at any institution of higher education in America. That's what I believe.

But I don't believe—I don't believe in coming to you at election time and telling you I can have a huge tax cut that will blow a hole in the deficit, raise interest rates, send California's economy back into a tailspin and require bigger cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment than I vetoed before when they shut the Government down. I just don't agree with that. And I think you agree with me and America does.

But we're different. They believe every time you really protect the environment it hurts the economy. So they said, "We're going to cut environmental enforcement by a third; we're going to paralyze the ability of the Government to do new things to protect our air and water."

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* They wanted to abolish the principle that the polluters should pay for their pollution and make the taxpayers pay for all of it.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* There are 10 million children still living within 4 miles of a toxic waste dump. My idea is clean them up and let our kids grow up next to parks, not poison. That's just different. We have proved—we have proved that you can protect the environment and grow the economy. Their idea is to just cut whatever needs to be cut because nearly any Government spending is worse than nearly any private. My idea is let's define together what things we have to do as a people.

And let me just give you some examples of some things I think we have to do as a people. Yesterday, last night, I was in Denver and I gave a little speech like I am tonight, and then I did what I'll do tonight, I went around the crowd and shook hands with people just like this. And just standing there in the crowd, the following things happened to me—just literally walking down the crowd.

Number one, I met a man and he said, "My wife and I just adopted a child. And because of the family leave law, my wife's getting to know our baby at home and we're making that baby a part of our family, and she didn't lose her job."

And then I met a man who said that he got the first research grant under a new policy that I started when we lifted the ban on fetal tissue research that looked into Parkinson's. And this professor just had fire in his eyes, and he said, "We're going to cure that, we're going to whip Parkinson's, we're going to make people free of that because of what we're doing in research."

And then I met a young man who said he'd given up all hope, but he listened to what I was saying and he believed he could make something of himself again. And he got a student loan and he was going back, after being a dropout, to study microbiology. And he was going to get a degree and help to build our bridge to the future.

And then I met three ladies who had a little sign that said, "Thank you for allocating \$30 million more to breast cancer research." They were breast cancer survivors and determined to see us whip that disease.

And then I met a young woman who was a police officer in a community near Denver, who said her community had just gotten five more police officers and she felt safer on the streets and she was going to make the people of her community safer. And that happened in about 10 minutes.

See, I think that's what this election is all about. That's what I think. Oh, you know what all the issues are. But the bottom line is, are we better off when we do these things together?

*Audience members.* Yes!

*The President.* Or would you just like to go your own way?

*Audience members.* No-o-o!

*The President.* That's what the big decision is here, don't make any mistake about it. That's

what this bridge to the future is all about. And I want you to think about that when you decide how you're going to vote and whether you're going to vote and what you can still say to others between now and Tuesday.

You know, this is my last campaign unless I run for the school board someday. [Laughter] And I'm thinking about what we're going to be like in the 21st century, what we're going to be like when our children are our age, whether we can give the great genius of America for continuous improvement and advancement and moving closer to our ideals on to our children. And I know we can. We've just scratched the surface.

We now know that there are two genes that cause breast cancer. And if we can figure out how they do it, we'll be able to cure virtually all cases and maybe even prevent all cases. We now know how to move drugs and mix drugs in a way that has more than doubled the life expectancy for people with HIV and AIDS in only 4 years. We know how to do that. We now know that for the first time in history laboratory animals with their spines completely severed have shown movement in their lower limbs because of nerve transplants from other parts of the body to their spines. If we can do that for people, we can revolutionize life in America for so many of our fellow citizens who deserve a better chance.

We now know that all this money that we have spent for satellites in the sky to look at the planets beyond and to find out what's going on here on Earth—they have to see real well to do that. We now know we can do that and use that technology to look at our bodies and maybe find all kinds of problems way before they get out of hand. We know that.

We're about to build a computer, the U.S. Government and IBM, that can do more calculations in a second than you can go home tonight and do on your hand-held calculator in 30,000 years. You get the point.

The Internet, which a lot of you are on, was started as a Government research project. The American winners of the Nobel prizes in chemistry and physics got research money from the Government to explore the mysteries. We know now how fast we're going. Four years ago only physicists knew about the Internet. Today my cat has a home page. [Laughter] Four years ago there were only 3 million Americans working at home making their living. Today there

are 12 million. Four years from now there will be 30 million. That will change everything for all of us in ways that will be some good and some challenge.

And you have to decide. And if you want to know why I have spent so much time on this, it's because I believe that we've got an opportunity that our country has never had before. We're going through this period of change in how we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. And if we do it right, it will be the most remarkable experience in democracy ever—ever.

Now, look around this sea of people tonight, all the way back there, and I want to make my last point. One of the great moments for our family in the Presidency was when Hillary and Chelsea and I got to go to open the Olympics, to represent you and all of our country men and women at the opening of the Olympics. And I was filled with pride as I looked at those delegations from 197 different nations and nationalities walking around the Olympic stadium. And I thought to myself, we are the only country in the world that has people from nearly every one of those places in our country.

And when I get up and I go to work on trying to keep people from killing each other in Bosnia, or trying to resolve the problems of the Middle East, or trying to resolve the problems in Northern Ireland; when I sent our troops to Rwanda with the French to stop the starvation of hundreds of thousands of people, I think to myself how sad it is that all over the world there's still so many people who have to define themselves in terms of what they aren't, who have to say, "Well, whatever's wrong with me, at least I've got somebody I can look down on here; I've got somebody I can kick around; I've got somebody I can feel is sub-human."

It's just a terrible, heartbreaking thing to see. And I go around the world and I say all these things, you know, and make all these arguments, and what all these arguments amount to is I'm trying to get people to let it go. It's what Sherman had to do, he had to let it go. He said he could never get revenge. Folks, I'll tell you something, nobody gets even in this world. Only God can get even and help us get even. Nobody gets even.

And there's a certain amount of injustice that everyone endures. I read something the other day where Mark Twain—he was a pretty smart

fellow—said, “Every dog needs a few fleas in his life; keeps him from worrying so much about being a dog.” [Laughter]

Now, I want an America where we all have a chance and where we respect each other. We don’t have to agree with what we do; we don’t have to agree with some of the choices we make. But we need a country where everybody’s got a chance and where everybody is respected.

My problem with this 209—I know it’s maybe popular and maybe not—but let me tell you what I know.

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* Let me tell you what I know. I’m old enough to remember in my home State when I could go into county courthouses and look at the square, and the restrooms were divided between “white” and “colored.” I’m old enough to remember when people had to buy a poll tax to vote. I’m old enough to know that if my skin were a different color, I could not have been born to a widowed mother in a tiny town in Arkansas, who married my step-father who did not have a high school diploma, and become President. But I believe there will come a time when all of you could become President or do anything else you want to do.

And I know that all these affirmative action programs haven’t been perfect. I’ve actually gotten rid of some myself; we’ve raised the standards on others. I’ve never been for quotas; I’ve never been for anybody unqualified getting anything they were not qualified for. But I am for giving people a chance to prove that they are qualified.

Let me give you an example. I admire General Powell for coming out here and taking on his own party and being candid enough to talk about how many African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American, and female military officers there are who got there because they had the right kind of affirmative action; not because they were unqualified, because they got a chance—somebody made an extra effort to give them a chance to prove they were qualified. I admire that.

I read an article the other day in a magazine about my appointments to the Federal bench. And they pointed out how I had appointed a higher percentage of women and minorities than any other President, but they also had the highest rating from the American Bar Association since the ratings have been used. We gave people a chance to prove they were qualified and

then to serve. And I think we ought to keep doing that. I believe that. If somebody can show us where we’re wrong on this or that or the other policy, we ought to be willing to change it. If some policy or program can’t be defended, we ought to be willing to get rid of it. But we ought not to give up the idea that we’re not where we need to be yet. But we’re going in the right direction. That’s what I believe. And I hope you do, too.

The other thing I believe is, we’ve got to get to the point in this country where we can let some of this stuff go and say, “You know, if you believe in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights, if you show up for work every day or you show up for school every day and you do what you’re supposed to do and you’re doing the best you can, we don’t need to know anything else about you. The rest of that shouldn’t concern us. You’re part of our America. And we’ll go in hands with you, and we’ll go on into the future together.”

That’s why I was so against those church burnings and why I hate it when a synagogue or a mosque is defaced in the United States and why it is wrong for people to manifest their Government hatred by blowing up buildings like the tragedy in Oklahoma City. We cannot afford that. We’ve got too much to live for, too much to work for. No country in the world is as fortunate as the United States, if we build a bridge to the 21st century together.

Now, will you help me do that? [Applause] And will you show up Tuesday? And will you talk to your friends and neighbors? [Applause]

Thank you, California. You were there for me. I’ve been there for you. I need you one more time on Tuesday. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7 p.m. in Jack London Square. In his remarks he referred to Sherman Spears, director, Teens on Target; Mayor Elihu Mason Harris of Oakland; Ellen Tauscher, candidate for California’s 10th Congressional District; and Gen. Colin Powell, USA (Ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.