

Welfare reform—we have reduced the welfare rolls by over 3 million, but we have a lot of work still to do. They said, just cut people off. I said, make people who can work, work; but remember, everyone's most important job is being a good parent. Provide the child care, provide the support; then require people to work. Our plan is working. But it has to be implemented by the States. I trust Jim McGreevey to help us drive the welfare rolls down more, in ways that support being strong for work but good to the children of this State. And it's a big issue for you.

Finally, in the last few months, Hillary and I have had two conferences in Washington about young children, preschool children—one on the development of children's brains, in which we discovered that an enormous amount of the capacity all of us have as adults was developed in our first 4 years of life; in which we discovered that if a child has loving and supportive parents and a good child care environment, they'll get about 700,000 positive interactions in their first 4 years, but if a child lives in either a home or is in a child care center or both where the children are not being stimulated, they might get as few as 150,000 supportive interactions in the most important period of a child's life.

Then we had this child care conference in which we discovered that some families are spending up to 25 percent of their income on child care; that some of our best educated child care workers are more poorly paid than some of our rudimentary workers in our society; and that we are simply not doing enough.

Now, I want to design a system in this country by the time I leave office where I can have confidence that people can succeed at home and at work, and no one has to sacrifice being a good parent to do their job. I want to see—I'm telling you, we have to balance the budget, we have to run a stronger economy. We cannot afford to do the whole job at the national level. It will have to be done in partnership, partnership with private companies, partnership with the States. I trust Jim McGreevey to care about the children of the working families of the State of New Jersey.

So that's about it, folks. [*Laughter*] I want you to understand this is not about me, or about my Republican congressional friends who are in here campaigning for the Governor. This is not about Washington or about what the pundits will say. Only one thing matters: Is it good for you and your children and the future of this State?

But I can tell you, based on 12 years as Governor, almost 5 years as President, and the things that I have seen work and my passionate commitment to the future of this country, you can trust Jim McGreevey to fight for that future as Governor.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. in the gymnasium at Middlesex County Community College. In his remarks, he referred to State Assemblywoman Barbara Buono; State Senator Wayne R. Bryant; Tom Giblin, State Democratic chair; and Gov. Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey.

## Remarks at a Rally for Mayoral Candidate Ruth Messinger in New York City

November 2, 1997

*The President.* Thank you very much. Now, I'm a little hoarse, so you're going to have to bear with me. And I'll try to be heard in the back. I won't be funny as Al Franken—[*laughter*]—because I don't want to be driven from office. [*Laughter*] But I thank him for being here tonight and for always being there for me. Thank you, Al. I thank our friends, Peter Yarrow

and Judy Collins, for performing at one of the—at this event. I thank all of you for being here.

Let me begin by saying from the bottom of my heart, I am profoundly grateful and will be to my last day on this Earth to the people of this State and especially the city of New York for the wonderful support you have given to me and Hillary, the Vice President, and our

administration. Thank you. [Applause] Thank you very much.

I look out at this sea of people here tonight from so many different racial and ethnic and religious backgrounds, somehow bound together across all your differences by a common concern for the future of your children, and this is what distinguishes Democrats in this time: a common understanding that if we want all of our kids to do well, including our own, we have to go forward together.

And I want to tell you tonight why I'm here. I know why you're here: you have a vote in New York. [Laughter] You're entitled to know why I'm here. I'm here for three reasons.

Number one, in 1991, when I first started running for President, the borough president of Manhattan endorsed me. Now, that may seem like a smart decision in 1997—[laughter]—but let me remind you, in 1991, when Ruth Messinger endorsed me, most people in New York didn't know who I was. [Laughter] A lot of people in New York couldn't find my State on a map. [Laughter] Other people pointed out it was only about as populous as Brooklyn and what did I have any business running for President for? [Laughter]

And then when I got into the race, there were a lot of people who said that I shouldn't be President, and others who said, well, even if I could be President I couldn't be elected, and she ought to leave me. And there were lots of times when it would have been more comfortable for somebody who was the borough president of Manhattan to be somewhere else. But through all the times, when I was going through my own particular New York marathon in 1992—[laughter]—she stuck by me. And I'm standing with her tonight, and I'm proud to do it.

Now, there is a second reason. The second reason I'm here is that I am very proud to be a Democrat. And I am proud to be a part of a party that has a broad tent and is inclusive and welcomes all kinds of people. We heard for years that if they ever gave us the range of any executive authority, we'd be soft on crime, foolish on welfare, we would wreck the economy, raise taxes, and mess up the foreign policy of the country. Well, 5 years later, the country is stronger around the world; we've advanced the cause of peace and freedom; we have the best economy in a generation, 3 million fewer people on welfare; the environment is

cleaner; the schools are better; and we're opening the doors of college to all Americans. I think they were wrong, the Democrats were right, and I'm proud to be here as a part of that.

I would also like to say—and in that connection, let me say I am especially pleased to see the people who contested the Democratic primary for mayor here. The fact that Ruth's former opponents are here says a lot about their character and their concern for the people of New York. And I thank them for being here.

Here's the third reason, and it's the most important, because the third reason relates to you. After all, this election is not about me or any big Republican leader who may have been here. It only matters to those of you who live here, to your children and your children's children and the future. So I was thinking to myself—and I had been thinking about this for weeks because I care a lot about Ruth, and I knew when she got into the race it would be a hard race, and I knew there were good reasons it would be a hard race—so I said to myself, if I were a citizen of New York, knowing what I know about the way the world works and what's going on in our country, why would I vote for her? What are the good reasons?

Well, let me begin by saying I think it's a good thing that crime has come down in New York, and I don't think any Democrat should criticize any legitimate effort that brought it down. After all, remember, the first aggressive community policing and the first drop in the New York City crime rate began when David Dinkins was mayor. Don't forget that.

Now—wait a minute—so, if in the last 4 years there's more community policing, more sophisticated deployment of law enforcement resources, if people aren't getting hassled on the street as much, there's not as much crime and less violence and people are less likely to get hurt, that is a good and noble thing. That is an American ideal. That doesn't belong to either party. And I am proud that our party in Washington, over the opposition of the Washington Republicans, came out for the Brady bill, for the assault weapons ban, for putting more police on the street, for doing things that would help to bring the crime rate down.

Now—and I believe with all my heart that there is a bipartisan, American consensus now that we ought to keep pushing more police officers on the street, working with communities, preventing crime from happening in the first

place, catching people when they do something wrong as quickly as possible, making the streets safer. Now, having said that, every election ought to be about tomorrow. What about tomorrow?

There are three things I want you to think about. Number one, while the crime rate has gone down in this country and in New York City substantially in the last 5½ years, crime among people between the ages of 12 and 18 has not gone down so much; in some places not at all. The second fact about that is, most crime by juveniles is committed between 3 o'clock in the afternoon and 7 o'clock at night. Why? Because they're out of school, not at home, and mama and daddy are still at work.

Now, it is my opinion, having been involved in law enforcement now for more than 20 years, that the most serious proposal put forward in any of the elections occurring in this election year likely to deter juvenile crime and lower the crime rate is Ruth Messinger's call to keep all the schools in New York open after school hours.

Second reason—I heard you amen-ing when Ruth was talking about the schools—if you really want a safe society, you must have a well-educated society. New York is blessed by having a phenomenally diverse population, people from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups in your school system. But they're all kids with minds given to them by God, and they can all learn. They can all learn. But they deserve good schools with high standards, high accountability, adequate investment, and yes, we ought to do some more in Washington. And I'm going to do my best to help the cities alleviate the overcrowding problem, to repair these schools and build new facilities. We've got to do that.

But I just got back from Chicago, where Hillary and I went because they opened up the town to her one day—it's my wife's hometown—to celebrate her 50th birthday. And let me tell you that not so many years ago, Chicago had, by common consent, the worst schools of any major city in America. They were shut down every year by a strike, whether there was an issue or not. And that's all people knew about them. In the last 4 years, the people of Chicago, led by a mayor who put education first, have begun to literally revolutionize their schools. They have mandatory summer school for children who don't perform. They hold kids back if they don't pass an exam to go on to high

school. But they don't just punish kids, they give all children a chance to succeed. New York City should give every child a chance to succeed. Ruth Messinger cares about that.

The third thing I want to say is this. I am very proud of the fact that our economic policies have led to over 13 million new jobs, an unemployment rate below 5 percent, and the best economy in a generation. I'm proud of that. But it bothers me that there's still too many people in America who have not felt the economic recovery. I have done what I could to provide special tax incentives for people to invest in inner cities, to set up new banks for people to loan money to people who couldn't get money in any other way to start their own businesses, to do other things that would rebuild the economy of areas where the unemployment rate is too high. But anybody who's ever worked in this field will tell you that the Federal Government cannot do this alone. You have to have State support. You have to have local support. You have to be able to work with the private sector. And you have to try new ideas. Believe me, no one has fully solved this problem.

So I say to you, I believe if I were mayor of New York City, I would say my three priorities are: I'm going to get the unemployment rate down to the national level, I'm going to fix our schools, and I'm going to give these kids something to do after school to keep them out of trouble in the first place and keep the crime rate going down.

Now, this ought to be a positive experience for you and a positive election, and so I say to you—

[*At this point, there was a disturbance in the audience.*]

*The President.* Let me just say this. Wait, wait, wait. I believe in his right to free speech more than he believes in mine. So we let him talk a little bit. If you want to talk to me, go out there. Don't mess with the mayor's race. She doesn't deserve this.

Who do you believe—

[*There was another disturbance in the audience.*]

*The President.* Let me say something. While he's on his way out, let's talk about AIDS a minute. Let's talk about this. You all be quiet and listen to me. This AIDS issue is a serious issue. But you never get to the facts if you're

just screaming. And I can't win a screaming match today. [Laughter]

You might be interested to know, if you think it's important, that we have dramatically increased spending on AIDS research, dramatically increased spending—while I was cutting other things and balancing the budget—dramatically increased spending on AIDS treatment; that the new drugs dramatically approved much faster under my administration than ever before have lengthened the life and the quality of life of people with AIDS. And in terms of research, we are spending today more than twice as much per person with AIDS—with a fatal case of AIDS—in research than we are women with breast cancer, and more than 8 times as much as men with prostate cancer. I think we have done a good job on this issue. I'm proud of it, and I think you should.

Now, secondly, since we're here about the mayor's race, who do you think is more likely to care more about the AIDS issue as mayor of New York?

*Audience members.* Ruth! Ruth! Ruth!

*The President.* Now you've got a day and a half. You've got a day and a half. I want to ask you to do something. I was glad to come up here tonight. I don't have a vote. You have a vote. I won't be here on Tuesday to drag people to the polls, but you can. So think about the next day and a half and say, "You know, I'm thinking about the future of New York. I'm worried about the kids, and I want them off the streets and doing something positive after school. I'm worried about our schools, and I want them to be the best in the country. And I know we've got to try something new and innovative if we're going to cut the unemployment rate from 10 percent to 5 percent. And Ruth Messinger has a plan to deal with all three. I believe I'll help her."

Go out and do that, and have a good Tuesday. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. in Royal Ballroom B at the Sheraton New York Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to comedian Al Franken; musicians Peter Yarrow and Judy Collins; and Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, IL.

## Remarks at a Rally for Gubernatorial Candidate Donald S. Beyer, Jr., in Alexandria, Virginia November 3, 1997

*The President.* Thank you very much. This looks like a crowd of winners to me. Ladies and gentlemen, I am so honored to be here with Senator Robb and Mrs. Robb and Congressman Moran, Congressman Scott, your mayor, your Democratic State chair, with Bill Dolan and Susan Payne. And let me say, I thought Yvonne gave a great speech, didn't you? [Applause] And I am very, very proud to be here—very proud to be here with Don Beyer and his fine family.

Now, let me say to you, I think the last two speeches were about as good as it gets. [Laughter] And I may have nothing to add, but let me speak to you as someone who will never be a candidate for public office again—

*Audience members.* Awww—

*The President.* —unless you let me run for the school board down here someday. [Laughter] But I was a Governor for 12 years, and

I've been your President for 5 years, and I've seen most of the major political battles of the last 20 years unfold. Many times they were Democrats against Republicans in traditional ways, liberals against conservatives. That is not what this is. This is nothing more or less than what Don Beyer said: This is a vote for an easy hit today or doing the right thing for tomorrow.

And I was a Governor for 12 years—nobody likes to fool with licensing their cars, with taxing their cars; it is a pain. This is a brilliant ploy because there is hardly anything in life more irritating. [Laughter] So let us give the opposition credit; they have found an irritant that we would all like removed. The question is, at what price? At what consequence? And what happens after it's done?

This really is a question about whether Virginians will be selfish in the moment or selfless