

budget act, we have enough funds to more than double that. We have a housing strategy that we believe can attract middle class people as well as low income people to have housing together in the inner cities so that we can also attract a business base here. We know a lot more than we used to about what it would take to have a thriving and working private sector in our urban areas. I have not done that yet. And that's what you ought to expect me to be working on.

And then there are a lot of unmet social problems that we need to deal with. It's still—you know, I got my head handed to me, I guess, in the '94 elections because I had this crazy idea that America ought not to be the only country in the world where working families and their children didn't have health care. It seemed to be a heretical idea, but I still believe that, and I'm not sorry I tried. So now we're trying to give our children health coverage. And I think you ought to expect all the children in the African-American community to be able to go to a doctor when they need it. I think you ought to expect us to continue our assault on HIV

and AIDS. And until we find the cure, I think you ought to expect us to stay at the task. I think you ought to expect us to continue to make headway on other medical problems which have a disproportionate impact in your community.

These are some of the things that I think that you should expect of us: more opportunity, tackling more of the problems, bringing us together. I have tried to be faithful to the support I have received, not only because it was the support I have received but because I believed it was the right thing to do. And I believe that when our 8 years is over, you'll be able to look back on it and see not only a lot of efforts made but a lot of results obtained.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. in the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Arthur Fennel, president, JoAnne Lyons Wooten, executive director, and Vanessa Williams, vice president/print, National Association of Black Journalists; Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago; and civil rights leader Jesse Jackson.

## Remarks at the Funeral Service for Hilary Jones in Jasper, Arkansas July 18, 1997

Pastor, to the members of Hilary's family, and to the legion of friends who are here today, let me say, first of all, that I feel profoundly honored to have been asked by the family to speak for a moment or two about my friend. There's not a person here today who couldn't stand up here and entertain us and relieve our grief for a few moments with Hilary Jones stories. So as we come here to mourn the death of our friend, let us remember, as the pastor said, that death is a part of life for all of us. And let us take a few moments to celebrate his life, for he would have wanted that very much.

I first met Hilary Jones over 23 years ago now, when I first came to Newton County. And I can't exactly describe it, but after the first time I met him, I knew that my life would never quite be the same. He wasn't like anybody I had ever met before, and I have seen a little

bit more of the world since then, and I never have met anybody like him since. [*Laughter*]

He introduced me to the beauty, to the history, and the fantastic characters of the Arkansas Ozarks. Some of them are in this church building today. He took me into his home and his heart. I learned a lot about politics and people. I learned that he was quite a disarming human being. The language he spoke was pure Arkansas hillbilly, and I think he enjoyed it if you underestimated his intelligence, which could be a fatal error, for he was a very smart man.

He was deeply interested in people who were different from him and deeply compassionate with people who were in trouble if he thought they were basically good-hearted. And he was so passionate about what he cared about. He cared about his family, and he was so passionate, he had a very big one. [*Laughter*] And he was very proud of them.

He was so passionate about politics that, when I first him, he could actually look at the vote totals in Newton County, precinct by precinct, and tell you whether a family had told him the truth or not about how they were going to vote. [Laughter]

He was so passionate about being a Democrat that 22 years ago, when I spoke at the Jasper High School commencement and commended to the seniors the example of Abraham Lincoln as a person who could overcome adversity time and again and keep going in his life, Hilary and a few others—some of whom are in this church today—took me outside and said, “Bill, that is a wonderful speech. And you can give that speech in Little Rock any day. Don’t you ever come up here and brag on that Republican President again.” [Laughter]

I must say that years later I was amused when I finally talked him into coming to visit me at the White House. I persuaded him to spend the night in the Lincoln Bedroom—[laughter]—something I failed to do with Bo Forney, sitting back there. [Laughter] And afterward, as we kidded him about spending the night at the Lincoln Bedroom, he said, “I did that for the President, but I stepped on the side of the bed that was under Andrew Jackson’s picture.” [Laughter]

He was passionate about fish and wildlife. He loved his service on the Game and Fish Commission, and I was honored to appoint him. I think Steve Wilson, whom I see here today, will tell you that they never had a commissioner like him either. He was absolutely fool enough to believe we could bring the elk back to Arkansas. No one else in the State believed it, but he kept doing it. And sure enough, somehow we had the elk come back to Arkansas.

If you were his friend, he was your friend, through thick and thin, in lightness and dark, no matter what happened. If you were his political friend, he was your friend whether you won or you lost. But he believed that people were basically good. And he believed that the purpose

of politics was to help ordinary people live their lives better.

And I learned a lot from him about going to the sale barns and the country stores and remote places where most people never went, just to listen to people’s hopes and dreams and hurts and fears. And I learned what ferocious power can beat in the heart of any ordinary citizen who believes that he or she can make a difference. Hilary Jones always believed he could make a difference. And he always believed he had an obligation to try, whether it was in the lives of his children or his grandchildren or his friends.

I always felt that somehow, some way, he had adopted me into his family. And I believe he would want me here today if I had never been reelected Governor and had gone out in life as one of history’s losers, because Hilary didn’t judge people by whether they were on top or on the bottom, he judged them by what they thought was in their hearts.

I loved this man. He was my friend, my brother, my surrogate uncle or father. But what he was to me he was to literally hundreds of other people. Look around this church today. God gave Hilary Jones a great gift, a unique blend of heart and mind and energy and passion that very few people in this life in any position ever have. And he used it well.

We will miss him. We may not ever see anybody like him again. But I ask his family to remember as their hearts are broken that this, too, is part of God’s plan and how blessed they were that he was their father and our friend.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10 a.m. in the Jasper First Baptist Church. In his remarks, he referred to Rev. Manual Macks, pastor, Jasper First Baptist Church; Bo Forney, long-time friend of the President and Mr. Jones; and Steve N. Wilson, director, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.