

without regard to our race or our gender or our religion or our sexual orientation, and we ought to all be part of America's future, and you're sick and tired of the politics of division, and you want us to pass the employment non-discrimination act and the hate crimes prevention act, and in a larger sense, you want us to stand for these things around the world; if you thought we were right to try to stop ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo and to try to bring peace to the Middle East and Northern Ireland, and to do our best to diffuse the tensions between India and Pakistan; if you believe that ought to be America's role at home and abroad and you don't want to see us go into the 21st century everybody hooked up to a mod-

ern computer and everybody hooked down and held down by paralyzing primitive hatreds, then you ought to be a Democrat, and you ought to be for Brad Sherman and take him back to Congress and holding the White House and helping us to build a country this Nation can be in the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Richard S. and Daphna Ziman; California State Attorney General Bill Lockyer and Controller Kathleen Connell; Sharon Davis, wife of Gov. Gray Davis of California; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Beverly Hills

October 3, 1999

The President. Thank you very much. Clarence, I'd like to spend the night and—[laughter]—and we could have quite a bunking party here. [Laughter] But you'll have to give me a raincheck.

I want to thank Clarence and Jackie and their family for having us here, and all the other people who helped to sell tickets and make this event possible. I'd like to thank my good friend Maxine Waters for being here and for her passionate leadership for our party. Having Maxine for a friend, a supporter, and an occasional rebuker has been one of the more interesting experiences of my life. [Laughter] And I like it. I'd like to thank Governor Romer; I'd like to thank Beth Dozoretz, our national finance chair of the DNC, for being here. I want to thank all of you.

You know, I was thinking, particularly here, all of you have to come to so many of these dinners, and you listen to so many people give speeches, and I'm trying to decide what can I do to make this memorable? I guess I could give the talk I normally give. I remember one time Tina Turner came to Little Rock to give a concert, when she was just sort of making her comeback. It was right after she'd come out with that "Private Dancer" album. You all remember that? And she had that big macho saxophone player with chains and everything—

it made me want to go pump iron and apply for a new job. [Laughter] But anyway, she sang all these new songs, and she was a big hit, and everybody loved her. And we got to the end of the concert, and the band started playing her first hit, "Proud Mary," playing the introduction to "Proud Mary." And she kind of moved up to the microphone, everybody cheered, and she moved back. She moved up and everybody cheered, and she said, "You know, I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I do it." [Laughter] So maybe this will be a little better. [Laughter]

But I would like to just ask you to take just a few minutes to be a little serious with me tonight about why you came. If somebody asked you tomorrow why you came, what are you going to say? If somebody asked you tomorrow why you contributed, what are you going to say?

When I came to California as a candidate for President and then later the Vice President and I came together, this State was in trouble. It was in trouble economically; it was divided socially; there was a great sense of anxiety and frustration. Maxine took me into her home, and we walked down the streets and the neighborhoods that she represented, and people were worried about the future. And I had this idea that—this general idea that there was something

wrong with American politics in the early nineties because it was basically all focused on repeating the same old arguments we'd been having in America for years and having the same old fights with the same old language and seeing who could divide the pie up. And it was all about the politics of division. And when you got through slicing the citizens up, you just hoped that your share of the pie was bigger than the other person's share of the pie.

It didn't seem to me to be working very well. I mean, after all, we had high unemployment; we had social tension; we had no driving vision; we had quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years. We had a lot of problems. So I said, "Give me a chance to lead the country on a philosophy that there should be a community of all Americans, and that we should look for unifying ways to do our business together. We should look for an economic policy that gets rid of the deficit and continues to invest in the education of our children. We should look for an economic policy that helps business and labor. We should be able to grow the economy and make the environment cleaner, not dirtier. We should be able to respect all of our differences and treat everybody with respect and still be more united by our common humanity." It sounded kind of Pollyanna, I'm sure, to some people, but I believe it.

So I was making an argument to the American people, and thankfully the American people said, "Okay, we'll give these guys a chance." And they did. But they didn't know. They couldn't know. It was my argument.

In 1996 people thought there was some evidence that it was working, and so they renewed my contract. If anybody comes to me and talks to me about running for President, I say it's the world's biggest job interview. [Laughter] You get an employment contract if you win. And then you move to a place where everybody who talks to you tries to make you to forget who you really work for and what you're supposed to be doing.

So here we are now, almost 7 years into this grand experiment. It is not an argument anymore. One reason you should be here is, the politics of community and progress together work. This country has had, in the last 7 years, the longest peacetime expansion in history; we now have the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years, the lowest welfare rates in 32 years, the lowest crime rates in 26 years, the lowest pov-

erty rates in 20 years, the first back-to-back budget surpluses in 42 years, and the highest homeownership in history. This is not an argument; there is evidence. What we have done has worked for America. And I'm glad that we have been a part of that. But that's not enough.

We've got the country working again. What I think we have to do now is to look at the great, long-term challenges of the country. Once in a lifetime do people get a chance to do what we have a chance to do now, to look around and say, if we wanted to paint a picture of tomorrow for our children and our grandchildren, if we wanted to celebrate the new millennium not just with the brilliant show that Quincy is putting together for me on The Mall but with a really different way of living in America, where we were working for ourselves and for our neighbors and where things were really working in ways that we could all be proud of, what would we do?

When I got here, we couldn't ask these questions. We had to get the country working again, you know? We had—as somebody said—what's that old saying? If you're up to your ears in alligators, it's hard to talk to somebody about draining the swamp. [Laughter] Well, now we can drain the swamp. Now we can look ahead. We can imagine what would we really like America to be like in the new millennium and what would we have to do to get there.

I want us to think about big ideas. Let me just say, some of them are things that I can make some real headway on in the time I'm in office, and some of them are things that will have to be dealt with when I'm not President anymore. But the main reason I hope that you will say—tomorrow if somebody said, "Well, why did you go there last night?" I hope you'll be able to say, "Well, I bought their argument, but it works; but more importantly, I share their vision for tomorrow, and I want to be part of it. Because elections are always about tomorrow."

I'll just tell you one other little story, then I'll go back. When I was a Governor of what President Bush used to call a small southern State, every year I would go out to the State Fair, and I would have Governor's day. Sounds kind of august. Really what I did was go into this big tin shed and find myself a little booth, and I'd sit there and any citizen who wanted to come up who was at the fair and talk to me and say anything would do it.

And so in 1989, in October, this month, 10 years ago, I'm having Governor's day at the fair. And there's another election coming up in 1990, at which time I will have been Governor for 10 years and four terms, because we went from 2- to 4-year terms. So this guy comes up to me, about 70 years old in overalls, and he looks at me and he says, "Bill, are you going to run again?" Except he said, "again." [Laughter] And I said, "Well, I don't know. If I do, will you vote for me?" He said, "Yeah, I guess I will; I always have." And I said, "Well, aren't you sick of me after all these years?" He said, "No, I'm not, but nearly everybody else I know is." [Laughter] And this guy might have won me the election in 1990.

So I had this conversation. So I got sort of hurt and huffy, and I said, "Well, don't you think I've done a good job?" He said, "Yeah, but"—this is exactly what he said—he said, "Yeah, I do. But," he said, "you did get a paycheck every 2 weeks, didn't you?" [Laughter] He said, "That's what we hired you to do." He said, "If you want to win this next election, you'll have to tell them what you're going to do next time." He said, "The fact you did a good job doesn't mean much." He said, "We paid—we gave you a salary, gave you a nice house to live in, you know."

And that's very important. But the reason that the achievements of our administration and our party and our Members of Congress like Maxine matter is that they are some evidence that if we're going to change, we need to keep changing, building on what we've done that's right, rather than changing by taking a U-turn and going back to what got us in trouble in the first place. Neither she nor I should get some sort of gold star. The question is, is it evidence of whether we're moving in the right direction as a country?

Now, here are some of the things that I think we ought to be doing if we want America to look like it should. Number one, we've got to deal with the aging of America. When the baby boomers retire, the number of people over 65 will double. There will be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. I am the oldest of the baby boomers. Tony told me tonight—Tony Robbins—that he was the youngest. I wish I could switch positions. [Laughter]

But I can tell you that my people, the people I grew up with, middle class people, people

without a lot of money, they are plagued by the notion that the retirement of the baby boom generation will impose an intolerable burden on our children and our grandchildren. And we have a chance now to take care of Social Security and Medicare, so we take care of the elderly, but the income of their children is free to raise their grandchildren. It's a big deal.

The second thing we ought to do is to recognize that we have an extra-special responsibility to children and families because we've got more kids in school today than ever before, from more diverse backgrounds. The school district across the river from me in Washington, DC, in Alexandria, Virginia, has people from 180 different national and ethnic groups, speaking 100 different languages—one school district—even slightly more diverse than the Los Angeles county schools, unbelievably enough.

Now, this is a godsend in a global economy with a global society if we can figure out how to take our conviction that all these children can learn and turning it into an educational environment in which all of them do learn. We ought to have after-school and summer school programs for the kids who need it. We ought to end social promotion but not blame the kids for the failure of the system, so you've got to give them the support they need. There ought to be universal access to the Internet. We ought to have more teachers for smaller classes and modern schools. These things are all terribly important. And you should know that there's a big difference in the parties on these two things: what to do for the seniors, what to do for the children.

The third thing we ought to do is to do something about poor people who haven't been part of our prosperity. It really bothers me that we've got the greatest economy in the history of America, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest African-American poverty rate ever measured—we've only been measuring it about just under 30 years—but if you go to any inner city, if you go to the Mississippi Delta, if you go to Appalachia, if you go to the Indian reservation—unemployment on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota is 73 percent—you will see that there are people who have not participated in our prosperity. And we cannot do it by just Government programs alone, because we still have to—I'll say more about that in a minute, but we've got to find a way to bring enterprise to these people.

And I'll just give you two examples, two ideas I have. Number one, if you want to invest in the Caribbean and Latin America, in Africa, in poor countries in Asia, we will give you significant loan guarantees and tax credits to do so. I think we ought to give people the same tax incentives to invest in poor areas in America we give them to invest in poor areas around the world. Let me be very clear: I don't want to take away those other things. I want Americans to help other people work their way out of poverty. I'm trying to pass an Africa trade bill right now that will bring us closer to Africa. I'm trying to pass a Caribbean Basin initiative right now that will bring us closer to the Caribbean and do more to help those people, but I want to help people here at home.

The other thing—think about this. I was in northern California the night before last with a bunch of people that worked for eBay. Did you ever buy anything off eBay? Do you know eBay? Do you know there are now over 20,000 people who make a living not working for eBay, the company, but trading on eBay the Internet site? Many of them used to be on welfare. They actually make a living trading on eBay.

Now, think what we could do for the economy of America, for poor people, if we could, within the next couple of years, make access to the Internet as universal as access to the telephone is—access to the Internet as universal as access to the telephone. Giving investors in America the same incentives to invest in poor areas they have to invest around the world, we can do something to bring enterprise and opportunity to people who aren't part of our prosperity. And I think we ought to do it. It's the right thing to do.

One last economic thing, a big idea that I think I've sold most of my fellow Democrats on, that no one ever thought the more liberal party in America would advocate: if we follow the budget outline that I gave the Congress, we can actually afford a modest tax cut and still get this country out of debt in 15 years for the first time since 1835 when Andrew Jackson was President.

Now, everybody in this room who is over 40 years old who studied economics was taught that the country ought to be in debt a little bit; a little debt was a healthy thing. Why do I think we ought to get out of debt? Because everybody in this room that is in the global economy in any way, shape, or form—whether

it's in entertainment, investment, or anything else—you know that there is a worldwide market for money. Every time a country gets in trouble, they find out they can't keep their money in if people want to put it somewhere else.

If we got this country out of debt, what would it mean? It would mean lower interest rates forever. It would mean lower interest rates if Berry wants to start a new business in his second childhood. [Laughter] It means more jobs. It means higher incomes. It means you can send your kids to college cheaper. It means you can buy a home cheaper. It means that our friends around the world who are poorer than we are can borrow money that we used to take away from them. This is a big deal. We can give our children a generation of prosperity if we make America debt-free.

Let me just give you a couple other ideas. We've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years. Does anybody seriously think that it's low enough? Don't you think America is still a pretty dangerous place? Don't you think we're still losing too many of our kids? Don't we still have too many people in prison?

Okay, now, we can talk all day about this, but I just want to say one thing. I think America should adopt as a goal, say, okay, for a long time we didn't think we could get crime down. Now we know we can drive crime down, 7 years in a row; big deal. It is a big deal. And it's the lowest it has been in 27 years. There are some places where the murder rate is half what it was 5 years ago. This is huge. But no one believes this country is safe enough.

Why don't we adopt a big goal and say we're going to make America the safest big country in the world? If we're the most prosperous country in the world, if we're the freest country in the world, why shouldn't we be the safest country in the world? Well, I'll tell you one thing. We're going to have to do more to keep kids out of trouble and help them and support them. We're going to have to do more to keep guns out of the wrong hands. It's crazy.

You know, every time I have a fight with the NRA, they say guns don't kill people, people do. They say this is about evil. So I said the other day, I said, "Okay, it's about evil. I agree with that." I mean, this guy shoots this Filipino postalworker out here and shoots at these little Jewish kids. Yes, that's evil. But do you believe America is more evil than any other country

in the world because we have a higher murder rate? I don't.

Or what about this; listen to this. The number of children killed accidentally by handguns in America—accidentally—is 9 times greater than the number of children killed accidentally by guns in the next 25 biggest industrial economies combined.

Now, do you believe we're more stupid than any other country?

Audience member. Yes. [Laughter]

The President. So are we, like, 9 times more stupid than—you see where I'm going with this? Look, I grew up—I was shooting cans off fenceposts with .22's when I was 12 years old. I governed a State where we shut factories and schools down on the opening day of deer season because there wouldn't be anybody there anyway. [Laughter]

But this is madness, to let people go to gun shows and buy guns with criminal records and go out and shoot people when you can stop it. And don't let anybody tell you we can't do something with reasonable restraints; 400,000 people have not been able to get guns because they have criminal backgrounds since the Brady bill passed. And don't you kid yourself for a minute; that's one of the reasons we've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years. Let's make America the safest big country in the world.

And I want to say just two other things, one thing that people normally—maybe you wouldn't see raised in a group like this. But I think environmental issues are too little discussed outside environmental groups. You know, the economy has gotten better in the last 7 years; the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer; we set aside more land than any administration in history, except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. But we're still in the grip of a big idea that's not right anymore.

Most of you now believe—I think you do—that global warming is real. I hope you do. Nine of the 11 hottest years in the last 500 years have been in the last 12 years. If this thing happens—I just was down in New Zealand near the South Pole, the polar ice cap melting, big chunks of it coming off. If the planet heats too much, the polar ice caps melt, the water level rises, island nations can be flooded. Sections of Louisiana and Florida can be flooded. The whole center of agriculture, the people who produce our food that we live by, will be moved

to the north, changing and disrupting societies. This is a big deal.

You have malaria now today in places in Africa where it has never been before at altitudes it has never been before because the mosquitoes are going higher because it's hotter up there. This is a serious thing. Now, what's that got to do with all of you? It's a big deal.

For a long time, it was true that you could not build a rich country unless you put more greenhouse gases into the air by burning coal and oil. It was true. But it isn't true anymore, and most people still think it is.

So the Indians and the Chinese, they think they can't get rich, and when I tell them they don't have to do this, they think, "old Bill Clinton's trying to hold us down on the farm." In America, in Congress, there are people who think that I have some dark plan to wreck the American economy. Well, if I wanted to wreck the American economy, I've done a poor job of it.

But I'm telling you, we now can conserve our way to greater wealth. We will be a wealthier country if we are environmentally responsible. We will be a wealthier planet if we protect the Earth. And the young people in this room, you mark my words. Someday you'll remember I said this; 10 years from now, if you go to one of these events, I'll bet you environmental issues take up 30 percent of the discussion, maybe more.

So why don't we turn it around now while we can? Why don't we say we'll make America the first country in the world to give up an idea that's not true anymore and embrace the future?

The last thing I want to say is this. The thing I most worry about of all is that we're on the verge of a new millennium with these unbelievable technologies and these unbelievable scientific discoveries; a lot of the young women in this room tonight will have babies in the future, will have your children after the human genome project is completed and we have decoded all the mysteries of the human gene. So literally, this might start in 5 years. You have a baby, and then you come home from the hospital, and you have a road map of you child's future. And it's a little scary because it says, well, your child may be more likely to develop heart disease at an earlier age, but it will also say, but if you do these five things for the first

10 years of his or her life, you'll add another 20 years to their life.

The average 65-year-old person today has a life expectancy of 82. The children—Quincy said thank you. [Laughter] You think about this. Think about young mothers bringing home their children thinking their kids are going to be 90 or 100 years old, and they'll be alert and active and healthy and strong. It will be great.

So you've got all this, and we're all hooked in on the Internet, and all this stuff is happening. And whoop-dee-doo, and it's wonderful. And there are more rich people than ever before. But what is the biggest problem in the world today? What do I spend my time worrying about? That there are still people who insist upon killing each other and preventing the children of their areas from having a decent future because of their racial, their ethnic, their religious, their tribal differences.

And what's the biggest problem we're dealing with in America today? From the bombing in Oklahoma City to stretching poor, young Matthew Shepard out on a rack and killing him a year ago in Wyoming this week to dragging James Byrd until he came apart, literally, in Texas to what happened out here at the Jewish school and with the Filipino postalworker to what happened in Illinois and Indiana with that young man who was a member of a church that said they didn't believe in God but they did believe in white supremacy, so he went—he murdered a former basketball coach at Northwestern and murdered a young Korean coming out of church—the guy was coming out of a church and he got shot in the back and killed—what do all these people have in common?

They are on the verge of a new millennium that is the most modern of times, absolutely in the grip of the most primitive and ancient of hatreds, the fear, the hatred, and the dehumanization of people who are different from them.

And that's the last thing I want to say to you. All these other things I've said to you are important, but they're by and large mental problems. This is a spiritual problem. But it should be part of the political platform of any group of citizens that really seeks to make the future America's greatest days. You have to ask yourself if you really believe that what we share in common is more important than what divides us.

And if you just think about it, I mean, here, we're—I'm trying to get this thing done in Northern Ireland, where my people grew up—in my family there were both Catholics and Protestants, and they lived on the line between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and this has been going on for a few hundred years now. It's not like we're unacquainted with the issues. And they've been fighting for 30 years, and now they've all agreed what to do and everybody's agreed that they all have to do what they're supposed to do and everybody's agreed they all have to do what they're supposed to do by a certain date. And a lot of people are prepared to let it all go back to smithereens again because they want to have an argument about who goes first, like you used to have when you were 6 or 7 years old on the playground.

I'm just telling you, just think about it. Look, we all wake up every day with, like, little scales inside of hope and fear and light and darkness. We all do. Everybody has bad days. But it is unbelievable that we're almost in a new millennium and the world is in a grip of this level of primitive hatred and destruction. My party believes that we are one America. My party believes that I did the right thing in trying to stop the slaughter of the Muslims in Bosnia and the Albanians in Kosovo.

I believe that when my child is my age, she will live in a golden age if, but only if, we have married all this modern science and technology to a higher level of humanity. Thank you very much.

[At this point, dinner host Clarence Avant, chairman, Motown Record Co., made brief remarks and presented a gift to the President.]

The President. Thank you. Let me say, you know, one of the things that all this money you give to the Democratic Party does is to finance a lot of the election activities in 2000, and my wife may be part of those election activities. And she has—the reason I can't spend the night with Clarence and participating in this bunking party is that she has to go on a trip tomorrow. And I am going to get home before she leaves, because I want to see her before she leaves for a week, so I can't stay. But I thank you for this, and I thank you for your friendship and support. I wouldn't take anything for the last 7 years, warts and all. And a lot of you made it possible for me to serve and for us to do what we've done. Just don't quit.

Oct. 3 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

Believe me, these are big issues, and I hope I gave you some things to think about tonight that'll make you want to keep on fighting all the way through next year. Thanks.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Mr.

Avant's wife, Jacqueline; former Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, former general chair, Democratic National Committee; musician Quincy Jones, a coordinator of the planned millennium celebration on The Mall; motivational speaker Anthony Robbins; and Berry Gordy III, founder, Motown Records Industries.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Iraq's Compliance With United Nations Security Council Resolutions October 1, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Consistent with the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1) and as part of my effort to keep the Congress fully informed, I am reporting on the status of efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council. My last report, consistent with Public Law 102-1, was transmitted on Au-

gust 2, 1999. I shall continue to keep the Congress informed about this important issue.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 4.

Remarks on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and an Exchange With Reporters October 4, 1999

The President. Is everybody in? I'd like to make a brief statement, and then I'll answer your questions.

Our national security team is about to meet to discuss the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to end nuclear weapons testing forever. This is very important for protecting our people from the danger of nuclear war. That's why so many prominent Americans, including four former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, support it.

For 2 years, the opponents in the Senate have blocked any consideration of the treaty. Now, we have been given just 8 days before the Senate vote. I will do all I can to get the treaty ratified.

Our experts have concluded that we don't need more tests to keep our own nuclear forces strong. We stopped testing in 1992, and now

we are spending \$4.5 billion a year to maintain a reliable nuclear force without testing. Since we don't need nuclear tests, it is strongly in our interest to achieve agreement that can help prevent other countries, like India, Pakistan, Russia, China, Iran, and others, from testing and deploying nuclear weapons.

The treaty will also strengthen our ability to monitor if other countries are engaged in suspicious activities, through global chains of sensors and onsite inspections, both of which the treaty provides for. This is a crucial decision the Senate is about to make that will affect the welfare of the American people well into the next century. I hope the American people will pay close attention to this, and I hope the Senate will pay close attention and that we will have a careful debate as much as possible within the time that's been allotted.