

be shaped by the Internet, by the global economy, by the revolution in science and technology. He has accomplished more for the American people as Vice President than any person who ever held that job before.

But most important, President Kennedy once said that the Presidency is preeminently a place of decisionmaking. You hired me for 8 years to make decisions that the President is supposed to make. Al Gore is a good man who makes good decisions, and with your help he will be a great President of the United States.

So here's what I want you to do. You've got a few days now. Every day, when you see somebody you know wasn't here today, you tell them you want them to vote. You tell them you want to vote for Al Gore, for Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats. Why?

Question number one, you want them to vote because you want to keep this prosperity going. Number two, you want them to vote because you want to keep building on the progress of the last 8 years. Number three, you want their vote because you want to keep building one America; you kind of like it, thinking that the White House is your house, too.

This is a close election. Every vote counts. There is a clear choice. I cannot thank you enough for how good you've been to me. But let me tell you something: If you want to build on the prosperity, if you want to build on the progress, if you want to keep building one America, you've got a clear choice and a clear responsibility, your only choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and the Democrats.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:20 p.m. in the parking lot at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza Mall. In his remarks, he referred to musician Kenneth (Babyface) Edmonds; Art Torres, chair, California State Democratic Party; State Senators Hilda Solis and Kevin Murray; Genethia Hayes, member, Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education; State Assemblyman Herb Wesson; Los Angeles City Council member Mark Ridley-Thomas; Art Pulaski, executive secretary-treasurer, California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO; Robert M. Hertzberg, speaker, California State Assembly; actresses Holly Robinson Peete and Camryn Manheim; and musician Wyclef Jean. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Gerrie Schipske in Los Angeles November 2, 2000

Thank you. You all sit down. Well, this is a pretty rowdy crowd. [Laughter] Nice sign. [Laughter]

I want to thank—first of all—thank all of you for coming, but I especially want to thank Jeremy and Marc Nathanson; and my friend of more than 30 years now David Mixner, who still has no gray hair practically. [Laughter] And thank you, Antonio Villaraigosa, for being here and for your friendship to me.

And I want to thank Gerrie Schipske for having the guts to run and run again and be in here. I enjoyed visiting with Gerrie and Flo and the kids back there. You know, I was listening to her—she tells a pretty good joke—[laughter]—sort of an essential criteria if you want to be in Congress. [Laughter] Better to tell one than be one, I always say. [Laughter] You know,

my mother was a nurse anesthetist. I never met anybody associated with health care who didn't have a sense of humor. And you need it in that line of work.

But she was kind of hung up about me being on page one of the Advocate; did you notice that? [Laughter] She was on page 56. I've just got to tell you, if we do our job, by less than a week from now you'll be on page one of the Advocate, and I'll be lucky to be on page 56. [Laughter]

I think there ought to be more people associated with health care in the Congress. Lois Capps, who represents the district a little north of here, was a public school nurse and a magnificent woman. And we have one or two other

people in the Congress who did a stint in nursing or health care. One of the Republican physicians in the Congress, Greg Ganske from Iowa, was one of the people that gave us the bipartisan majority we needed for a real Patients' Bill of Rights.

When you think about the role that health care plays in our national life and all the complex issues that have to be faced, and how much money there is behind a lot of the organized positions taken by the other party in Congress—I know a lot of you are here because you support Gerrie on the human rights issues and all of that, but I'm telling you, we need more people who understand health care from the human point of view.

I can't tell you—you know, I could give you, if we had all night to talk, I could give you 50 examples that I have personally experienced in the last 8 years. So one of the reasons that I'm here for her, apart from the fact that I like her and I support her and I agree with her, is that we really do need more people who've actually done things with their lives that could actually be valuable to people when they have to make laws. And so that's good.

Now, I want to be brief here, because I realize that I'm preaching to the saved. *[Laughter]* But let me tell you, I've been doing this a long time. Now, this is the first time in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot running for something. I was 27 years old when I started, and I lost the race for the House of Representatives—thank goodness—I wouldn't have made it here, I guess, if I hadn't. *[laughter]*. And I've loved all these elections.

I believe in the American political system. You know, I don't know how many years David Mixner and I had to wait until we actually got to vote for somebody for President that actually won. *[Laughter]* That's not true. I voted for Jimmy Carter, and you did, too. But it was a pretty long time there, you know. And I was beginning to think I would be on Social Security before I ever had a winning election, when I was a kid. *[Laughter]*

But I believe in the American political system, and I think, over time, the American people are an embodiment of Martin Luther King's eloquent statement that the arc of history is long but it bends toward justice. That's a very eloquent statement. And we have to not grow weary. We have to just keep on working at it.

But most people are good people. And free people generally tend to do the right thing if they have enough information and enough time to digest it and enough experience against which to test it. And I say that because—I do want to be just a little serious with you tonight. These elections are tight. I've been fooling with this a long time now. President Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey by a little over a percent. President Kennedy defeated Richard Nixon by four-tenths of one percent, 100,000 votes, in the whole country—less than a vote a precinct. President Carter defeated President Ford by about a percent.

So close races for President are not without precedence. But now they're manifesting themselves in these races for Congress. Now, it's quite interesting because on all of the major issues of the day except one or two, the people agree with the direction we've been taking the last 8 years.

Now, what does that lead you to say? What conclusion can you draw from that? In so many strange places—for example, when I was trying to help James Byrd's children pass the hate crimes legislation in Texas, which as you know is no heart of flaming liberalism, a survey came out in Austin the day I was there that showed that in Texas, two-thirds of the people, without regard to party, agreed that Texas ought to have hate crimes legislation that included protection for gays—in Texas.

On the other hand, a massive amount of voting is always cultural. You look around here, people tend to kind of—they hang with their crowd, and they kind of vote and kind of go in one direction, and then they find it hard to turn around and go the other way. And it takes a while for a different issue approach to register. That's part of it.

Part of it is, a lot of young people can't even remember when the economy wasn't this good. You know, they have no recollection of this, so they kind of take it for granted. And indeed, the nominee of the other party, I can't figure out—sometimes he says nothing good has happened in the last 8 years, and then, once in a while reality will dawn, and he'll say, "Well whatever good happened, it was an accident. They didn't have anything to do with it"—*[laughter]*—which is an interesting thing, because when they were in, they took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. *[Laughter]* They even ran a campaign on the Sun coming

up in the morning. Do you remember that? "It's morning in America." Do you remember that? [Laughter] But I do believe—we're all having a good time here, but seriously, I think that one of the problems in good times is it's easy to forget that they weren't always good, and it's difficult sometimes to make the connection between what some people in public life have done and the good consequences that have occurred.

And so everybody feels kind of like, well, this guy sounds good, and that woman sounds good, and the other one sounds good, and you know, what am I to do here? So you look around, and all these races are tight as a tick. In the Presidential race, when I last checked, which was this morning, there were roughly a dozen States within two points one way or the other—just unprecedented.

And all over the country, you have races like Gerrie's for Congress, and so what is important is that you be able to make a case to people in these closing days that includes some of the specifics you know we win on, but is part of the general approach.

And so, I just want to share this with you, because I want her to win. And there are four other House seats we can win here. And the Vice President and Senator Lieberman are ahead now in the polls in California, but they have to win here.

The whole basis of the Clinton/Gore political success was never having to worry about what we called the western wall of the United States, anchored with California. We won Washington, Oregon, and Hawaii. And then we never had to worry about New York and north; we won everything that way. And we always had Illinois, which was my wife's home and a place where I had spent a lot of time. And we always—and we had Arkansas, so what we had to do was, we went out from New York to New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and out from Illinois to Michigan and Ohio, and then we just went down the Mississippi River. And that's more than enough to win, and the rest was gravy, because it's an electoral strategy.

Now, with all this closeness, the same thing is true, as you heard Gerrie say, she wants to be one of the Members that gives us the majority in the House. We can do that. But we have to win a lot of these California seats. There are five seats in California we have a bona fide chance of winning.

So what I'm here to ask you to do—I thank you for giving her money. If you can give her some more, you ought to, because she's being outspent. If you haven't reached your legal limit or you can give her some more, I hope you will do that. But there's something else you could do. You could actually take it upon yourselves to be as active as you possibly can until the polls close Tuesday night, because every one of you has lots of friends who have never been to an event like this. Is that right? Don't you? I mean, most of your friends don't come to deals like this, do they? They've never been to an event like this where the President speaks or where the Governor speaks or people talk about this.

Even Marc, who has been living on this political stuff and has done more than anybody west of the Mississippi River to try to make Dick Gephardt Speaker, even Marc, most of his friends never come to events like this.

A lot of your friends wonder what in the world you're doing spending your money on this. Isn't that right? [Laughter] They say, why did you spend all that money? I mean, you could have been home watching a basketball game, right?

So we're laughing, but let me just tell you seriously. I would like to tell you what I wish you would tell everyone you can see, call, scream at, or touch between now and Tuesday. And if we were alone in a room, you and I, and you asked me, "Why are you really for Al Gore? Why are you really for Gerrie Schipske? What have you really learned in 8 years," this is what I would tell you if you were alone and I had about 5 minutes to talk to you. And I think this is something everybody can remember.

Number one, I learned a lot watching President Reagan, and he taught me what the test was for whether a party in office should be returned: Are you better off today than you were 8 years ago? And I noticed all these folks running this year are comparing themselves to President Reagan, so I think we should say that was one thing he was right about. And we all agree, and that's a test. So why are we having this debate and election?

More seriously, the important thing about this economic recovery—and Governor Davis and I were talking about it—and I agree, by the way, with what Jeremy said about him. There are very few people in this entire country that work

harder and get more done than Gray Davis. If anybody—you ought to really be proud. And I sort of think charisma is as charisma does, you know? [Laughter] I've always found Governor Davis to be highly interesting, especially because he never sees me that he doesn't ask me to do something else for California. [Laughter] So I'm honored by that.

But now, think of—let me just say this. Here's the thing that makes this recovery interesting. Yes, it's the longest economic expansion in history. Yes, there are 22 million new jobs. But this is the first recovery in 30 years where everybody went along for the ride. We have a record number of millionaires. We have a record number of billionaires, and that's good. But we've also had a 15 percent increase, real increase, after inflation, in median income—over \$5,000 a year. Median income got over \$40,000 a year in America for the first time in our entire history. We have the highest homeownership in history, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest African-American and Hispanic unemployment rate ever recorded. So we're all going along for the ride.

Now, that is very, very important in a free society. Everybody that works ought to be rewarded for it. And we believe in policies like the minimum wage, like the family leave law, like the earned-income tax credit for people with a bunch of kids and a modest income that gives them a little extra tax break, that will allow us all to go along for the ride.

But in a larger sense, getting rid of the deficit has helped us all to go along for the ride. Why? Because that's the best tax cut of all, having lower interest rates. That helps everybody with a home mortgage, everybody with a car payment, everybody with a college loan payment, everybody with a credit card payment. It helps every small-business person that ever has to get a loan to start or expand a business. And every American with credit has saved thousands of dollars, most of them thousands of dollars a year, because we got rid of the deficit.

The fundamental fact of the global economy is that conservative fiscal policy is progressive social policy, because it helps ordinary people and brings money to the Government to invest in education and other things.

Now, why does that matter in this election? This is a huge deal. It is estimated that we have a projected surplus of about \$2 trillion. That sounds like a bunch of money, and people's

eyes glaze over. I promise you it won't be that much, barring some unforeseen development, because the Congress has spent a lot of money and because of the curious way that it's calculated. But let's just assume it's going to be \$2 trillion.

Now, what do the Democrats say? What do Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and our Democratic candidates say? They say, "Okay, first, let's stay on this path to pay the debt off in 12 years to keep interest rates down. Then let's give people a tax cut we can afford for child care, long-term care, sending kids to college, and retirement savings. And let's take the rest and invest it in health care, education, the environment, and the other critical needs of the country. But first, keep the economy strong."

What do they say, the other guys? They say, "Hey, this is your money. What's the Government doing keeping your money?" Which, of course, it is your money. And they say, "We're going to give you a tax cut 3 times as big as they are," and some of you in this room who can afford to be at this event tonight, would actually do better under theirs in the short run, and some of you wouldn't, depending on your income group. So they say, "Our tax cut is 3 times bigger than theirs because it's your money."

But forget about all the zeros, okay? The surplus is 2, okay, the projected surplus. Their tax cut, plus the interest cost associated with it, is 1.6. But then they want to privatize Social Security, and they have now admitted that if we give young people 2 percent of their payroll, it will take a trillion dollars out of the Social Security Trust Fund. So you've got to spend \$1 trillion to replace that, unless you want Social Security to go broke earlier. So that's 1.6 and 1. And then they want to spend a little money too, which is good. They want to be compassionate, and they are interested in spending money too, so they want to spend about \$500 billion. Now, 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1. Three-point-one is bigger than 2. [Laughter]

Now you're all laughing, but look, I've spent 8 years working on this. People ask me all the time, "What brilliant new idea did you bring to Washington to get the economy going?" And I always say, "Arithmetic." [Laughter] I brought arithmetic to Washington—not calculus, not trigonometry, arithmetic.

You're laughing, but I'm dead serious. I'm going to be gone out here—you know, if I'm

fortunate, I'll be one of those guys that will make out like a bandit under this Republican tax cut. But look, 3.1 is bigger than 2. What does that mean? It means you go back to deficits, which means higher interest rates, higher inflation, slower growth.

Under the Gore/Lieberman plan, interest rates will be about a percent lower a year for a decade. Do you know what that's worth to the American people? Same thing as a tax cut, lower interest rates: \$390 billion in lower home mortgages, \$30 billion in lower car payments, \$15 billion in lower college loan payments, plus the credit card payments, plus the business loans, equals more businesses, more jobs, higher incomes, and a better stock market.

So you've got to decide. Do you want to all keep on going together, so we'll make more millionaires and more billionaires, but average people will do better too? If you do, you only have one choice. You've got to vote for Gore and Lieberman, and you've got to vote for Gerrie, because that's the right decision.

Now look, I still—I honestly don't believe a lot of people have thought this through. And you say, "Well, how can Al Gore afford to spend all that money?" Because if you get rid of the deficit—the debt, if you pay the debt down, your interest payments on the debt go down. The third biggest item in the Federal budget is interest on the debt. We take 12 cents out of every dollar you pay to the Federal Government and spend that just on the debt. So if you quit spending so much on interest, you can spend a lot more on education and health care and, yes, even on a tax cut, because you're getting rid of that 12 cents.

Now look, I don't think most people have clearly focused on this, do you? So you need to go tell people that if they want to keep the prosperity going, if they like where—if they compare where we were 8 years ago in California and America, with where we are today, we've got to do this. And they only have one choice: Gore, Lieberman, and Gerrie.

Now the second thing I want to say is, this country is about more than economic progress. We've had a lot of social progress: crime at a 26-year low; welfare at a 32-year low, rolls cut in half. The air is cleaner, 43 million people breathing cleaner air. The water is cleaner. We set aside more land than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt, and we cleaned up

3 times as many toxic waste dumps as the Republicans did in the 12 previous years.

We have added 26 years to the life of Medicare, which was supposed to go broke last year when I took office. For the first time in 12 years, the number of people without health insurance is going down, not up, thanks to the Children's Health Insurance Program, which the Governor has strongly supported and administers.

And in the schools, in spite of all the problems, reading, math, and science scores are up; the drop-out rate is down; the graduation rate is up. There is, for the first time in our history, almost no difference between the African-American and the white high school graduation rate. College-going is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the biggest expansion in college aid since the GI bill. So all this stuff is going in the right direction.

Now, what's that got to do with anything? Because you've got to make a choice. Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years or reverse it? I'll just give you a couple of examples.

Our crime policy is opposed by the other party—not just gun safety measures. They don't want to close the gun show loophole in the Brady law. They actually want to get rid of the 100,000 police program. Our education policy is opposed. They want to get rid of the 100,000 teacher program. Our environmental policy is opposed. They want to weaken the clean air standards and get rid of my order setting aside 40 million acres, roadless acres in the national forest, something the Audubon Society said was the most significant conservation move in the last 40 years.

So, our side, we want to build on—we want to have a safer society, a cleaner environment, stronger education programs. And in health care, Gerrie's area of expertise, she can tell you better than me the differences—perhaps most stark of all. We're for a real Patients' Bill of Rights. They're not. We're for a Medicare prescription drug program that covers all of our seniors, and they aren't. And that's just the beginning. We could provide health insurance to all our kids. We can now actually afford to help working families who have no health insurance, buy insurance for the parents of the kids in this program. And we're for that, and they're not.

So again, if you want to build on the social progress of the last 8 years, you only have one

choice: You've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Gerrie.

And the third thing that I would like to say, which maybe is the most important of all to me, is, I've worked real hard to build one America. A lot of you have referenced my work with the gay and lesbian community. I met earlier today with a representative of one of the Native American tribes who told me that I had done more to try to reach out to them than anybody had in a long time, maybe ever.

I think it's real important for America to be a place that is constantly evolving in respect for people, mutual understanding, and real interdependent cooperation where we don't just tolerate one another. I don't really like the word "tolerance" in this context because that implies that one dominant group is putting up with somebody else that's not as good as they are, but at least they're not kicking them around. That's not what this is about. I don't like "tolerance" in that way, you know? That's not what this is about.

This is about, you know, actually appreciating the differences among us and affirming the common humanity that we share as being even more important than the differences. And this is a big deal now, you know. We've become wildly diverse, racially, ethnically, religiously. I mean, we're going to get more that way. And it's a godsend in a global society if we figure out how to be one America, which means you've got to respect and enjoy the diversity because it makes America more interesting. But you also have to do the rest. You've got to affirm our common humanity.

So, for me, that has meant things like the family leave law and having an administration that represents all kinds of Americans and having people like the people in this room feel like they have a friend in the White House, and it's their White House too, not somebody else's White House; that every American can feel comfortable walking in there and knowing that you may not agree with everything I do, but at least I'm thinking about it, from your point of view as well as mine.

Now, this is important. And there are a lot of these issues out there. And you have a choice to make. I'll just give you a few examples.

Al Gore and Joe Lieberman and Gerrie and our whole crowd, we're for the hate crimes bill; we're for the "Employment Non-Discrimination Act"; we're for strengthening the equal pay laws

for women, which is still a big problem; we're for a Supreme Court that upholds not only a woman's right to choose but also civil rights, human rights, and the capacity of the National Government to protect the American people.

I'm telling you, there's already a majority on the Supreme Court that has struck down provisions of the Brady bill, of the Violence Against Women Act, of an age discrimination act, because they want to restrict the power of the Federal Government to protect the people and to enlist the States in doing that.

Now, most people don't, I think, really understand this. But on every one of those issues I just mentioned, hate crimes, ENDA, equal pay, the Supreme Court—and I could mention a bunch of others, but just those—the two parties are different. So if you agree with us, you just have one choice: You've got to be for Al and Joe and Gerrie.

So you don't have to remember all the specifics I've given you. But I'm telling you, you could do a world of good for her, for the other four House seats we're trying to win, if everybody you saw in the next week, you said, "You've got to vote, and you've got to vote for our crowd. You want to know why? Because if you want to keep the prosperity going, you better keep paying down the debt and investing in our future, and you only have one choice if you want to do that. If you want to keep the social progress going and crime is down, the environment is better, the schools are better, the health care system is making improvements, you've got to build on that, not reverse it, and the other guys are against all the things we're for. And if you want to keep building one America, you actually have to work at it. There are things you have to do, and we have a program to do it, and the other side honestly disagrees with us."

You don't have to say a bad word about anybody. All you have to say is, if you want to keep the prosperity going—or, as I said at the convention here, if you want to live like a Republican, you've got to vote like a Democrat. [Laughter] If you want to keep the prosperity going, build on the progress of the last 8 years, and keep building one America, you only have one choice: Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, and Gerrie Schipske.

Now, this is a big deal. I promise you, you can have an impact on this election. All of these

elections are razor thin. And people, I'm absolutely sure, based on the support that the people of California have given me and the Vice President in the last 8 years and what I feel out there and what I know, that if everyone understood what the differences were, what the stakes are, what the consequences are to families and communities and States in our Nation, that we would prevail.

I'm honored to be here today. I'm honored to be here for Gerrie and for the Vice President and Senator Lieberman. I can tell you that, you know, John Kennedy said once that the Presidency was preeminently a place of decision-making. Half the time over the last 8 years, I've felt like it was a place to see if you could work 19 hours instead of 18 a day. But in the end, you have to make right decisions. And a lot of times, Presidents have gotten in trouble for working too hard, because then they weren't clear enough to make good decisions. On the other hand, hard work is an important part of the job.

And I just want to say about Al Gore—I know I don't have to say this to you, but it's something else you can tell people that I said—experience matters. It matters what you know. It matters how hard you work. It matters whether you have done a lot of this before. And he has had a more positive impact for the American people than anybody who ever served as Vice President before. He makes very good decisions, and he will be a very, very good President.

So please, just every day—don't let those election returns come in Tuesday night and you be sick about the outcome of some election that, you know, 400 or 500 votes made the difference. You've got to look around this room. The people in this room could change 5,000 to 10,000 votes between now and Tuesday. Look in this room—5,000 to 10,000 votes. John Kennedy was elected in the whole country by 100,000 votes.

Now, I'm telling you, every day between now and the election, say, "I want to keep the prosperity going, not risk it. I want to build on the social progress, not reverse it. And we've got to keep building one America. We've got to go forward together, because if we do, the best is still out there. And the choice is clear: Al and Joe and Gerrie."

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:37 p.m. in the Regency Room at the Regency Club. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Jeremy Bernard and Marc Nathanson; gay activist and author David Mixner; Antonio R. Villaraigosa, speaker emeritus, California State Assembly; Flo Pickett, Ms. Schipske's life partner; Gov. Gray Davis of California; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. Ms. Schipske was a candidate for California's 38th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Calvin M. Dooley in Beverly Hills, California

November 2, 2000

The President. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'm honored to be here tonight. What Cal Dooley told you is true. He represents a totally different district, lots of big farms. Some of the farms in Cal's district are almost as large as Haim's and Cheryl's backyard. [Laughter] Yes, Cal said he'll bring in a tractor next time he comes to see you here. [Laughter]

I want to thank all of you for being here, and thank Governor Davis and Sharon. They've been with me all day today. We had a meeting with people who are working on the Coordi-

nated Campaign, and then we went to an event for Gerrie Schipske. But before that, we went to a great rally in Watts today, and we had a really good time trying to stir the voters up.

And I'm honored to be here tonight with Cal and Lou Dooley. And I thank the other Members of Congress who are here, Representatives Waxman, Berman, and Becerra, my friends and partners; and Hilda Solis, who will soon be with us in Congress; and Jim Costa, whom I've known for many years.