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even with people who don't agree with her. You will be so proud of her.

So are you going to do what I asked you to do? [*Applause*] Are you going to go tell people what's at stake? [*Applause*] Are you going to ask them if they want to keep the prosperity going? [*Applause*] Are you going to ask them if they want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? [*Applause*] Are you going to ask them if they want to keep building one America? [*Applause*] And what's the answer? Al Gore, Joe Lieberman, Hillary, Major, and Greg.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:53 p.m. in the gymnasium at Long Island University in Brooklyn. In his remarks, he referred to David J. Steinberg, president, Gale Stevens Haynes, provost, and Simone Knight, student body president, Long Island University; Mr. Steinberg's wife, Joan; H. Carl McCall, New York State comptroller; Judith Hope, chair, New York State Democratic Party; and New York State Assembly member Clarence Norman, Jr., 43d District, Kings County chair. Representative Major R. Owens was a candidate for reelection in New York's 11th Congressional District, and Gregory W. Meeks was a candidate for reelection in New York's Sixth Congressional District.

Remarks at an Arkansas Civic Leaders Luncheon in Little Rock, Arkansas

November 5, 2000

Thank you very much. I'm really glad to see you. [*Laughter*] I bring you greetings from Hillary and our all-grown-up daughter, who are otherwise occupied in New York today. And she's doing very well, and I'm proud of her. I think she's going to win on Tuesday.

I want to talk today about today and tomorrow. Nostalgia will have to wait. I do want to thank people that are up here on this stage for their friendship. I thank Mark Pryor for taking on this campaign and for getting involved in public life in our State, carrying on his great family tradition while his daddy becomes an ivy league egghead. [*Laughter*] You notice, I was the only one who was dumb enough to do that before I ran for office; David waited until afterward.

I want to thank Vic Snyder, who has been a great friend and supporter of mine in Congress and a great Representative for this district. It's been my honor to vote for him every time he's been on the ballot.

I want to thank James Lee Witt and Rodney Slater. They have represented our State so well in the Cabinet. They have represented our country. They have done superb jobs, and I'm very proud of them.

We have a few other Arkansans in the crowd. I can't see everybody because the lights are real bright. But I saw Ken Smith and Jim Bob Baker out there. They've also done very well by our administration and there may be others. But I'm really—and Janis Kearney, I think, is here, who—she keeps up with what I do every day, and some day when I want to write my memoirs, I'll be able to read what Janis said I did. And so when you read the book, it may be what she said instead of me, because I can't remember anything anymore. [*Laughter*]

But I want to thank all the people who are here. I want to thank Carroll Willis who has been down here working and who has been at the Democratic Party all these years and has done such a great job. And I want to thank my buddy Dale Bumpers. I finally got over being mad at him for leaving the Senate. [*Laughter*] You know, Dale and Dave and I couldn't quite calibrate our respective schedules and biological clocks so we could go out together. But I sort of envision a remake of the "Three Amigos" movie, where we just get on horses and ride out of Washington and thank hallelujah we survived it all.

Look, I want to talk about this election a little bit. Arkansas is close. Polls say we're a couple points behind. The people in this room could carry this State for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, if you want to bad enough. And I just want to say a few things. I appreciate what's been said, but our public life is always about tomorrow. And yet, yesterday is an indicator of tomorrow.

As near as I can see, the case that the other guys are making is, "Well, the economy is better; crime is down; welfare is down; the environment is better; education is improving; more people than ever are going on to college; we've got a decline in the number of people without health insurance for the first time in 12 years. So what we need to do is bag all those policies and do something entirely different. And among other things, now that we've got this surplus, I'm going to give it all back to you right now, and then some." Now, as nearly as I can see, that's the campaign. And I don't think people understand that. Because, as Vic would say, they run these ads on prescription drugs, and I'll say more about that and the Patients' Bill of Rights and all that. Why is that? Because they know that they've got a lot at stake in this election.

They know there are big differences, and they know that the voters understand what the differences are and what the consequences are, that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will be elected and the Democrats will win the House and the Senate. Therefore, there has to be a lot of muddying of the water. And it's a lot easier to muddy things up than it is to clarify them.

Plus which, I think a lot of people kind of have forgotten what it was like 8 years ago. And sometimes it's harder to make a good decision in good times than it is in bad times. There are younger voters that will be voting in this Presidential election that don't even remember what it was like 8 years ago; even if they tried to think about it, they would have no memory of it.

So here's what I would like you to say to people for the next 3 days. The people in this room can carry this State for Al Gore if you want to bad enough. And this State could literally determine the outcome of the election. There are about 15 to 20 States that are literally within 3 points one way or the other. And no one knows what's going to happen, but what will happen is, the people that want it bad enough will win. That's what's going to happen.

Now, you know they want it bad enough because they don't like what we've done on issues where the majority of the people agree with us, and you know that they'll show up because they have been out a long time. So you've just got to decide whether you think this is worth fighting for; because if you do, we'll win.

Here is what I would like you to say to people. First of all, the Republicans believe that former President Reagan is the source of all wisdom. He said you should decide whether to continue the party in office based on whether you're better off today than you were 8 years ago. So, by the Reagan test, Al Gore wins.

But the real issue is, do you want to continue this prosperity and extend it to people and places that have been left behind? Now look, I want—I've never heard this as clearly explained as I think it needs to be. And the previous speakers talked about it a little bit, but I want you to think about it.

People ask me all the time, they come up to me, and every time I go someplace in the country, they say, "Oh, Mr. President, you've had such a nice, good 8 years, and you've had such a good economy; what great, new idea that you and Bob Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen bring to economic policy in Washington?" And I always answer with one word, "Arithmetic." [*Laughter*] You know, and I'd normally tell them I was from Arkansas and I had to be Governor 12 years, and I always found arithmetic was good—I didn't need algebra, calculus, trigonometry—arithmetic. We made the numbers add up.

And what getting rid of the deficit did was to drive interest rates down, make it cheaper for people to borrow in the private sector. It ballooned the stock market, increased investment in business. It created over 22 million new jobs. And we did it in a way—this is the most important thing to me—it was good for everybody. Poverty went down; average income went above $40,000 for the first time in the history of the country. We all went forward together. But it starts with arithmetic.

Now, you can argue that Governor Bush and Al Gore have different tax plans and which one is better. Most people in Arkansas would be better off under the Gore plan in the short run, because it's more tilted toward middle class working people. But forget about that. Let's just look at the cost. And you can certainly argue about the Social Security plan, about whether it's good or bad to privatize Social Security. Let's forget about that for just a minute.

The projected surplus is $2 trillion. That sounds like a lot of money—just say 2. I don't think it will be that big, by the way, because this Congress put a lot of pork-barrel spending in to get themselves reelected, which I don't

think they'll be successful in doing, and I certainly hope not. But give the Republicans their number, 2. Now, the Republican tax cut costs 1.3, but because you're not paying down the debt as much, it has extra interest costs. That's another 300 billion, so it's really 1.6. Now, they have admitted that their privatization of Social Security plan costs a trillion dollars. And as the Vice President said, you can't spend the same money twice; you can't give the same money to young people to put in the stock market and then give it to those of us who are over 50, when our Social Security checks are due. So that's another trillion that has to come out of the surplus. So that's 1.6 and 1. And then they promise to spend some money, about half a trillion dollars—that's .5. Here's the big issue in this election, economically: 1.6 plus 1 plus .5 is 3.1, and 3.1 is bigger than 2.

Now, I'm telling you, this is not rocket science. You get by all the romance and all the rhetoric, somebody up there has got to have arithmetic. We brought arithmetic back to Washington. The Republicans forgot about arithmetic for 12 years. They quadrupled the debt, and they want to go right back to the same economic policy they had before. And it's higher interest rates, which means trouble for all of you.

Do you know, the average—the first—people in America who are paying on a $100,000 mortgage today are saving $2,000 every single year in lower interest rates because we got rid of the deficit. It is estimated that Al Gore's plan will keep interest rates one percent lower for a decade. Why? Because he pays off the debt.

Now, you know what that's worth? Three hundred and ninety billion dollars in lower home mortgages, $30 billion in lower car payments, $15 billion in lower college loan payments, lower credit card payments; lower business loans, which means more businesses, more jobs, higher income and a bigger stock market. That's how the rich get richer, and the rest of us do, too. [*Laughter*] Arithmetic.

Now, I'm telling you, you cannot go back to deficits without having higher interest rates and hurting ordinary people and weakening the overall economy. So you've just got to tell people this. You can't—you know, things are going along so well, they say, it's your money—which of course it is, the whole deal is yours. That's what the election is about.

So things are going along so well, they say, let's just take it all now. And here is the Vice President, that they criticize for telling people what they want to hear, and he said, "Uh-uh, we're going to first pay down the debt. Then we're going to take what's left, and we're going to invest in education, health care, and the environment and give the American people a tax cut we can afford, for child care, long-term care, the cost of college tuition, and retirement savings. That's what we're going to do."

But why are intelligent and very wealthy people like Bob Rubin still for Al Gore? Because they know they're better off with lower interest rates and working people having jobs and consuming and keeping this economy going.

Now, you can explain that to people. Anybody can understand that. You can't have a tax cut this big, a Social Security privatization program this big, and promise to spend this kind of money when there is not that much money. And the Gore/Lieberman plan is to pay down the debt, invest in the education of our children, in health care, in the environment, in national security, the things we have to have, and give the people a tax cut we can afford. We'll all be better off.

And you've just got to ask people, "Do you remember where we were 8 years ago? Do you want to build on this prosperity and extend it to others, or do you want to reverse it and go back to the previous economic program? It's not like we don't have a test here. We tried it our way for 8 years; before that, we tried it their way for 12 years. Our way works better. Vote for Gore." You can say that, and people will understand what you're saying.

The second thing I want to say is, this country is not just better off. This is a better, stronger, more united country. And I think it's worth pointing out that there were specific, serious policies of this administration that contributed to that.

The crime rate is at a 26-year low. Why? Because we've got 100,000 police on the street; we're putting another 50,000 on the street. The Brady bill kept guns out of a half million felons and stalkers, and no matter what our friends at the NRA say, there hasn't been a single hunter miss a day in the deer woods or a single sport shooter miss an event in Arkansas, not one, not one single day. It's just all a bunch of hogwash. But people are safer.

The environment: The air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, 43 million more Americans breathing clean air. We have safer drinking water, safer food, 90 percent of our kids immunized for the first time. And we've set aside more land for permanent preservation than any administration since Theodore Roosevelt almost 100 years ago. And the economy got better, not worse.

Now, health care: I remember their guy was saying all the time, you know, "You had 8 years; you didn't do anything on health care." And I thought, there you go again. [*Laughter*]

When we took office, Al and I, Medicare was supposed to go broke last year—broke, out of money, kaput, busted. It's now good for 25 more years. And we've added preventive care for prostate cancer and for breast cancer. We have revolutionized care for diabetes. The American Diabetes Association said what we did was the most important thing since the development of insulin.

We've got the number of people without health insurance going down for the first time in 12 years, because of the Children's Health Insurance Program we insisted be in the Balanced Budget Act.

Now, there's a difference here, and I'll come to that. What does Gore say? Pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights; pass a Medicare prescription drug program that all our seniors can afford to buy into. Give all our kids health insurance and insure as many of the working parents as we can afford to insure.

Education: I notice that the Republicans have quit saying there is an education recession. So every now and then—usually the facts have no impact on them. I almost admire that about them. [*Laughter*] Never mind the facts, they know what their line is, and they just say it. But they have kind of quit saying that.

But look at the facts here. The dropout rate is down; the high school graduation is up; the college-going rate is at an all-time high, thanks in part to the biggest expansion in college aid in 50 years. But this is important: The math, the reading, and the science scores are up; there has been a 300 percent increase in the last 3 years in African-American and Hispanic kids taking advanced placement tests.

We have 800,000 kids now in after-school programs that weren't there before we took office. We've got, thanks to the leadership of our Education Secretary, Dick Riley, all but one State have academic standards now against which they measure their kids and systems for identifying failing schools and turn them around. So the schools are getting better.

Yes, the work is done by the schools, and yes, most of the money comes from the States. But the way we have spent this money has made a significant contribution to the continuing improvement of education in America.

So what's their answer to that? Change it all. It's not like you don't have a choice here. People need to know what the choice is. On crime they have committed to repeal the 100,000 police program. They say never mind the fact we've got the lowest crime rate in 26 years, the Federal Government has got no business doing that. Al Gore, he wants to put 50,000 more police on the street and keep going until America is the safest big country in the world.

On the environment, Al Gore wants to build on what we've done, and he'll do even better because the economy is stronger. They want to repeal my order setting aside 40 million roadless acres in the national forests and to weaken the clean air standards. If you want to do that, you should vote for them, if you really believe that I've hurt the economy so bad. But if I was trying to hurt the economy with the environmental policies I have, I've done a poor job of it. [*Laughter*] I made a pure mess of that if I was trying to mess the economy up with my environmental policy.

On health care, they're against the Patients' Bill of Rights, against the Medicare drug program, against our program to expand coverage. Oh, yes, they run these ads, and they say, "We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, too." What they don't say, because they can't afford to say: "We're for as much of a Patients' Bill of Rights as the HMO lobby in Washington will let us be for"—which means it's a bill of suggestions, because if you get hurt, you can't sue.

On the Medicare drugs, they say, "We're for Medicare drugs, too." What they don't say is, "We're for as broad a plan as the big drug companies will let us be for"—so they don't lose their monopoly position. And who cares if they leave half the seniors out who needs these drugs.

You need to tell people this. They have a choice. But if they want every senior in this country to have access to medicine, if they want a real Patients' Bill of Rights, if they want to keep improving the environment as we grow

the economy, if they believe that we ought to be making, for example, fuel out of farm products and biomass—let me just tell you, the reason ethanol never caught on, even though we had a plant in Arkansas way back in 1980, is that it takes 7 gallons of gasoline to make 8 gallons of ethanol. But the Department of Agriculture is funding research that I believe will bear fruit in the next couple of years. And when it happens they will crack the chemical mystery, and it will be just like when you turn crude oil into gasoline. Then you'll be able to make 8 gallons of ethanol, and you won't even have to use corn—you can use rice hulls; you can use hay; you can use any kind of biomass fuel with one gallon of gasoline. And when that happens, we'll all be going around getting 500 miles a gallon. Now, Al Gore will fund that and push that, and they won't. You can choose.

But you talk about something that could revolutionize life for America's farmers, change everything in rural America and in rural Arkansas, that's it. So that's what Gore wants to do. They think we can drill our way out of the energy problem we've got.

And in education, they want to repeal our commitment to put 100,000 teachers in the classroom. They say the Federal Government shouldn't be doing that. All I know is that when we passed class size standards in Arkansas in the early grades, the achievement of our children went up, and it is happening all over America. We have the biggest number of kids in the history of our country, and we need more teachers in those schools.

So you've got a choice. If you want to take down the 100,000 police and take down the 100,000 teachers and not have a real Patients' Bill of Rights and not have a Medicare prescription drug program that helps all of our people and not have a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition and weaken the environmental standards, you've got a choice. But if you kind of like having safer streets and a cleaner environment and knowing your National Government is supporting school reforms that work and helping more people get access to health care while we grow the economy, you've got to vote for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, and you need to tell the American people that.

We've got these two big questions. Do you want to build on the prosperity and keep it going; do you want to build on the social progress and keep it going? And there's huge choices.

And the third thing I'd like to say is this—and James Lee said this; it really meant a lot to me. You know, I've watched Rodney and James Lee for the last 20 years, and now they're maybe the two most popular people in the Cabinet. You know, James Lee is from Yell County; Rodney is from Lee County. And I think, you know, one of the reasons that they do so well is they came from little towns, and they learned to talk to people instead of talking "governmentese," and they understand human nature.

And here's James Lee Witt up here giving you a civil rights speech about how he has changed FEMA. [*Laughter*] But what he proved is that FEMA could be both competent and reflective of America. And the truth is, the more reflective of America it got, the more competent it got.

Now, that's the third big issue. You know, I tried to make every American, even when they and, on many occasions, I'm sure you, disagreed with some particular decision I made, I tried to make people feel at home with the White House, to know that I was pulling for ordinary Americans, that everybody—everybody—in this country interests counted, with the White House, with the Cabinet, with the decisions that were made.

And I think it's really important that we keep moving forward to build one America. That's why I'm for this hate crimes legislation and for employment nondiscrimination. That's why I'm for stronger equal pay laws for women. That's why I think it's important that the Supreme Court continue to protect civil rights and human rights.

This is a big deal in this election. They're against the hate crimes legislation. They're even against our attempts to strengthen the equal pay laws for women. And most people believe the only issue at stake in the Supreme Court is a woman's right to choose. That's not true. That's at stake, by the way, and it will certainly change depending on whether Al Gore wins or loses this election. You can go to the bank on that, because there will be at least two appointments in the next 4 years.

But something that could have a more profound effect on America is that there is already

a majority of 5-4 on that Court, that is determined to limit the ability of our National Government to protect and advance the civil rights and basic public health, safety, and welfare of the United States of America. Already, they have invalidated a provision of the Brady law because it required local folks to help us check criminal backgrounds. They invalidated a provision of the Violence Against Women Act—the Violence Against Women Act—because it required local government to do something to support our enforcement of that. And in the last couple of weeks, they invalidated an anti-AIDS-discrimination law. Now, these are bills we even got the Republicans in Washington to vote for.

The Supreme Court is to the right of the Republican Congress—already. You have got to think about this, and you've got to talk to people about this. People need to understand this is a big deal.

Now, it ought to be a happy election because nobody has to say anything bad about anybody else. Near as I can see, the Vice President has never one time questioned the character or the integrity of his opponents. I wish I could say the same thing for them about him. But it still hasn't been too bad an election. The only problem is, people are fixing to go to the polls, and there is still not absolute clarity about what the choice is, what the consequences are to real people and their families.

And look, this is a—I don't know if we'll have another election in my lifetime where we've got so much prosperity, so much social progress, the absence of crisis at home, the absence of threats to our security abroad. And I just want to echo one or two things that Dale Bumpers said.

First, let me say a word about Joe Lieberman. I've known him for 30 years. I met him when he was running for State senate, and I went to law school, in Connecticut. More than anybody else in the Congress, I think he clearly understands the approach that we brought to the country in 1992, whether you call it the New Democratic approach or the DLC approach or whatever. Basically, it was the idea that we would stop making false choices in Washington and try to unify our country. We could bring the deficit down and increase investment in education. We could be pro-business and pro-labor. We could be for a clean environment and for a growing economy.

But you've got to be disciplined to do that. And he understands as well as anybody that the real appeal of our opponents in this election is, "It's your money; let's just take it all now." Even though, as Dale Bumpers said, it hasn't materialized yet.

And they want to talk about spending all this surplus right now. It reminds me of those letters we used to get in the mail from Ed McMahon, you know, the sweepstakes letter: "You may have won $10 million." If you went out and spent the 10 million, you should vote for Bush and Cheney. If not, you should vote for Gore and Lieberman.

And what Dale said about the Vice President is absolutely right. But let me say, I think I know something about economic policy. And I hope I've learned something about decision-making and about the world at large. It matters whether you know about these issues. It matters how hard you work. You know, this is a job. It's not just a media event every day. It's a job.

A lot of reasons that these things have piled up, these good, positive changes, is that every day we had all these folks in the White House and all these folks in the Cabinet and Al Gore and I, we were working. We treated this like a job. We showed up, and we worked like crazy for 8 years. I got the gray hair to prove it. We worked at it.

It matters whether you work hard, and it matters whether you can learn and whether you're curious. But it also matters what kind of experience you have. John Kennedy said the Presidency was preeminently a place of decision-making. Al Gore makes good decisions.

When he had to come off the campaign trail a few days ago—we had all that trouble in the Middle East—and we were sitting in this room and for about 30 minutes he was asking questions from the various members of our national security team, I thought to myself, I would feel absolutely comfortable under any circumstances, with any crisis in the world, knowing that this man had to make the call. And that's a big deal, because it's still a world with real challenges out there.

So, good man, good decisions. I think he will be a great President. And you know as well as I do that if everybody understood the differences and the positions like I just explained them to you today, we'd win. Do you have any doubt of that?

Okay, so I'll say again, you can win this election in Arkansas for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman if you want to bad enough. And you just think about what we've got. We've got a chance, as Dale said, that at least in my lifetime we've never had, and we may not have it again in our lifetime, to literally build the future of our dreams for our kids.

So you just go ask people three questions: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to the people who have been left behind? Do you want to build on the progress of the last 8 years? Do you want to keep doing it as one America, keep bringing people together? Do you want to vote for somebody who is experienced and solid and proven, who will work hard, who knows a lot, who understands the future? You just have one choice. It's not close. But it needs to be clear.

You've got 2 days to make it clear. Please, go do it. You'll be proud you did for the rest of your life.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:21 p.m. in the ballroom at the Statehouse Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Arkansas State Attorney General Mark Pryor and his father, former Senator David Pryor; Kenneth L. Smith, Acting Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior; James R. (Jim Bob) Baker, Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration; Janis Kearney, Special Assistant to the President and Special Advisory for Presidential History; Carroll Willis, director, community service division, Democratic National Committee; former Senator Dale Bumpers; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas and Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney; and former Secretaries of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin and Lloyd Bentsen.

Remarks to the Community in Pine Bluff, Arkansas
November 5, 2000

The President. Thank you all very much. I want to thank—first, I thank the choir and my friend of nearly 20 years Carrie Paige, who looks exactly like she did 20 years ago, and I look 50 years older. [*Laughter*] God's been good to you. Thank you for your song; thank you for your music, all of you, so much.

I want to thank all the folks who came here with me: our State party chair, Vaughn McQuary. I want to thank Attorney General Mark Pryor—I don't know if he's here or not—there he is—the chairman of the Gore/Lieberman campaign in Arkansas. Thank you for taking it on. I want to thank my friend Lottie Shackelford and Sharon Priest and Hank Wilkins and all the other local officials.

And I want to thank my good buddy Congressman Danny Davis, who is from the Mississippi Delta in Arkansas, Phillips County, but now represents Chicago and is my great friend; thank him for coming here. I want to thank Carroll Willis, who has worked with me at the DNC for 8 years and has come down here and is working hard for us.

I want to thank James Lee Witt and Rodney Slater. What a great job they have done for you and for all America. They're two of the most popular people who have served in the Government in the tenure I've been there.

And I want to thank Dale Bumpers, who has stood by me through thick and thin and voted to turn this country around with the economic plan of 1993. I cannot tell you what having Senator Bumpers and Senator Pryor there early in my Presidency meant, not only to me but to the United States of America. They miss him in the Senate, but I'm glad he's home and stirring around with you.

And it's not true I fell asleep on him coming down here. [*Laughter*] He just has such a soothing, melodic voice, you just sort of drift off, you know? [*Laughter*]

I wanted to come down here for a couple reasons today, first of all to say thank you. Thank you, thank you, thank you. [Applause] Thank you.

Mike Ross—I met Mike Ross in 1982, when he was a teenager and he was driving me