AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

If they would work with us, everybody could have credit. There's more than enough credit to go around. You ought to be in the driver's seat in this country, not a bunch of politicians in Washington trying to cause failure to make you mad, to hope you'll do the wrong thing. And that's their program. You've got to do the right thing. You've got to turn the lights on in America. You've got to say we're going in the right direction.

Let me say this. You know, I ought to quit, but I'm having a good time. I was asked the other day, and I got to thinking about it—somebody said the other day, said, ''Did any job you ever had prepare you for being President?'' And I said, well, I was a Governor a long time, but it really wasn't the same. For one reason, you can stay in touch with the people better. It was much more difficult for folks to get in the way of me and my constituents when I was the Governor of a small State. So I thought of all the other jobs I've had. And the one that my job is most like now is one I never made a penny doing, was when I worked with civic clubs on car washes—[*laughter*]—because I liked to clean the windows off. That's what we've got to do in America today. You know, if you drive your car and there's a lot of stuff on the windshield, you can think it's dark outside when the Sun's shining. You could think there are obstacles there when the way is clear. And then there could be a huge obstacle out there and you wouldn't be able to see it, and you'd run smack-dab into it. That's what they've done. They've put a lot of dirt on America's windshield. We've got to clean it off between now and Tuesday. Will you help? Will you do your part? Will you go forward?

Folks, this is an election between hope and fear, between unity and disunity but, more than anything else, between going forward and turning back. As I told the people over in Pawtucket at the Portuguese Social Club today, think about it like this: Every one of you is in the driver's seat, and on election day, just imagine that you have a remote control in your hand and what's in the movie screen or television screen is a movie about America's future. And you've got the remote control in your hand. You can push forward, you can push fast forward, or you can push reverse. Push forward, go on and push fast forward if you want to, but say no to reverse, no, we're going forward; we're doing better; we're going to do better still; we're going forward. Forward, forward.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:56 p.m. at Rhode Island Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to James Langevin, candidate for secretary of state; Sara Quinn, candidate for attorney general; and Richard James, candidate for general treasurer. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Interview With Mike Siegel of KVI Radio, Seattle, Washington

November 3, 1994

Mr. Siegel. Very good to talk to you today. You sound a little hoarse.

The President. I'm a little hoarse, but I'm feeling great.

Q. All right. Let's go right to it then. One thing that crosses my mind is something that you were in fact one of the creators of back in the mid-eighties, Democratic Leadership Council, and talked a great deal about bringing the party back to a centrist kind of position. And now we see today that there is, according to the New York Times today, a two-to-one margin of the people in this country believe Government should be less involved in solving national problems, which would be consistent with what the Democratic Leadership Council said, as you were one of those who were the inspiration to create it.

And then there are those who now criticize what you have done because of the health care and the crime bill and the environmental proposals and the very large budget proposals that you've made. Are you creating big Government again, in contradiction to what you wanted to do at the Democratic Leadership Council?

The President. Absolutely not. The people wouldn't feel that way if they were given the facts. This year, for the first time in 25 years, the Congress adopted a budget that I recommended that reduced both defense and domestic spending—this year, first time in 25 years.

The only thing that increased this year was health care costs, because we refused to act, Medicare and Medicaid. We reduced domestic spending. We reduced defense spending. We have reduced the size of the Federal Government. There are 70,000 fewer people working for the Government than there were on the day I was elected. There will be a reduction of 270,000 people in the life of my budgets. And the crime bill was a bill that empowered local governments.

I don't understand where people get off saying that's the National Government interfering in crime. What we did with the crime bill was to reduce the size of the Federal Government by 270,000 and give it to local communities to hire police, to build prisons, to have the resources in the courts for tougher punishment and alternatives to imprisonment for first offenders, and to have prevention programs. That's what we did with the money.

So the crime bill is evidence of reducing the size of the Federal Government to empower people at the local level to reduce the crime rate. If you look at the initiatives we have taken, basically all the major initiatives we have taken are designed to empower individuals to assume greater responsibility for themselves: the Family and Medical Leave Act, the expansion of Head Start, the apprenticeship programs for young people who don't go to college, the better repayment terms for college loans. Basically, I have implemented chapter and verse the agenda of the Democratic Leadership Council.

Now what is the problem? There are three problems. One is that Republicans tried to kill all the major initiatives that we passed. They were against deficit reduction, against the middle class college loans, against the crime bill, against everything. And they characterized it as big Government and taxes because they had to find some way to cover up their opposition.

And secondly, on the health care debate, I was not for a big Government health care plan. My plan provided private health insurance for small business people and self-employed people on the same terms that those of us who work for Government and big companies got it. It wasn't presented to the American people that way because the special interest groups who were going to lose money in it spent $200 million or more to tell the American people something different.

And one of the things that we have learned in this information age is if you have enough money, you can just buy your message, and it's very hard for people to know whether it's accurate or not. But if you look at where we are today compared to where we were when I took office, we've got more jobs, we've got a lower deficit. We've got more high-wage jobs. We've got a smaller Federal Government. We've taken a serious approach to crime. We've done things to help working families, to expand education, to have more trade, and a smaller threat to our national security abroad. The country is in better shape than it was 21 months ago. We've moving in the right direction.

Mr. Siegel. Let me give you a couple of other quick questions because your time is short; your office is telling us that. In the poll that came out in the Times, CBS-New York Times poll, 27 percent of the people believe the country is going in the right direction, and 56 percent disapprove of your handling of the economy. There's something in the perception of the American people that says we're not doing the right thing. You're the CEO of the country, why do the people feel that way?

The President. Well, I have very little control from time to time over how they feel. What is the information they get? What are the facts? I deal in the facts. The facts are: job growth is very fast in the first 2 years of my administration, after the worst job growth since the Depression, under the Bush administration. The fact is that the deficit went up under the previous administrations until they quadrupled the debt. We're bringing it down. The fact is we're getting more high-wage jobs into the country. If the American people don't know it, they obviously can't act on it.

Now, what are the problems the American people have? We have 20 years of accumulated insecurity in our work force, people not getting a wage increase, people losing their health insurance, people changing jobs rapidly. I can't stop them from having to change

jobs rapidly, so I'm trying to institute a system of lifetime education and training.

I tried to make sure that working people wouldn't lose their health insurance. The Republicans and the special interest groups stopped me. But I tried to deal with that. But by every objective measure, the economy is in better shape and the country is in better shape.

I would also have to say, as you well know and as studies have documented, the way people get their information today in America is overwhelmingly skewed to negative information, to conflict, to failure, to negativism. And that's just a matter of fact. I am doing my best to shed some light on this, to get the truth out to the American people. But every day, they're told bad things, bad things, bad things. The truth is very different.

When I travel abroad on behalf of our country, world leaders ask me what is going on in the United States? How could people possibly be pessimistic when our economy is so much stronger than theirs, when we are doing so much better, when we are doing so much better than we were? The answer is, the people don't know. I am doing my very best to cut through the fog and shine some daylight and tell the truth. It's a daunting challenge, but I'm doing the best I can.

Mr. Siegel. Mr. President, I don't mean to interrupt you, I want to keep you, but your office is telling us you have to go. I'm going to be in DC November 14th for that week, broadcasting this program. I hope we can get more time to talk during that week.

The President. Well, I hope we can. And I'm looking forward to being there on Sunday. I'm going to do a rally there on Sunday at 12:30 p.m. at the Pikes Peak——

Mr. Siegel. Pike Place Market, yes. You'll have a lot of people out here then.

The President. I hope they will. And I'm going to be putting this message out there. You can't blame the people for this; they can only act on what they know. But if they had—it's a very strange situation. We have never had an election in which the information the people had was so at variance with the facts. And if they have the facts, they're going to vote to keep on going the way we are.

It's an amazing thing where the 1980's and trickle-down economics and explosion of the debt and shifting our jobs overseas—that's what got us in the trouble we're in.

Look at Washington State. Since I've been President, we're selling Washington apples in Asia for the first time. We're selling these Boeing airplanes around the world and doing everything we can to keep those jobs at Boeing. The economy has done much, much better.

And you started with this DLC thing. I have absolutely kept the commitments I made in the DLC credo, to move this country to the center and push it forward. The people just need to have the evidence and the facts; then they need to feel it.

Mr Siegel. Well, Mr. President, I thank you again. I'm sorry we don't have more time, but I hope we will get time during that week I'm in DC in November.

The President. Yes, well, check in with us. I'd love to do the interview.

Mr. Siegel. Thank you very much. Good to talk to you, and have a good week if you would.

The President. Goodbye.

NOTE: The interview began at 5:25 p.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Savery Hotel in Des Moines, IA. This item was not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.

Interview With Cheryl Jennings of KGO Television, San Francisco, California

November 4, 1994

Midterm Elections

Ms. Jennings. Mr. President, you are coming to California just before the November elections. Why are you choosing this State in particular?

The President. Well, I, first of all, try to come often to California. As you know, I've done a lot of work to try to bring back the California economy, to try to help deal with the immigration problems, to try to help deal with the problems of defense conversion. And I feel that I have a big stake out there