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when the debates come on and when people look at all the evidence, that welfare charge, as you often hear down here in Texas, it's pretty hard to make that dog hunt, I mean that liberal charge. It'll fall to the evidence if people listen to it.

Press Secretary McCurry. We've got to go.

Q. Thank you for the time.

The President. Glad to do it.

NOTE: The interview with Kathy Lewis of the Dallas Morning News and Nancy Mathis of the Houston Chronicle began at 10:20 a.m. at Armadillo Willie's restaurant. In his remarks, the President referred to Truman Arnold, chairman and chief executive officer, Truman Arnold Companies, and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview. This item was not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.

Remarks in Fort Worth, Texas

September 27, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. Hello, Fort Worth! Well, folks, I've got 39 more days, but the Rangers just have one more day. It is great to be here. And Mr. Mayor, thank you for welcoming me here, and thank you for your strong leadership. And I want to say on behalf of the people of our entire country, it is truly inspiring to come to Fort Worth, to stand in this gorgeous square to see the magnificent work that has been done here by your citizens—of course, the Bass brothers, but others as well—to renovate this place and make this city look beautiful and livable and attractive, a place you can be proud of. Thank you very much for what you have done.

Sundance Square is a place that any American would be proud to stand in and feel good in, and it shows you what we can do when we work together, when we change the way we do business from pointing fingers and trying to blame people to saying how can we roll up our sleeves and work together to make life better for everyone. That's what I am trying to do.

I'd like to thank Rich Connor for giving me that beautiful hat. Don't you think it looked pretty good? I thought it looked pretty good. And I'm honored to be in the long line of Presidents who have received hats from the publisher of the newspaper here. I was so impressed when I heard that President Roosevelt and President Truman and President Coolidge and Winston Churchill had gotten these hats. And then when I put mine on, I wondered, I wonder if they ever wore those cowboy hats. [*Laughter*] I'll wear mine, and I thank you for it.

I'd like to thank Art Brender and the Tarrant County Democrats who have worked so hard to help at least a fair portion of you get here today. Thank you, Speaker Jim Wright, for being here and for all your service to our country and the people of this county. Thank you, Governor Ann Richards, for all you have done for Texas and for our country.

I want to thank these fine young people in the Tarrant County President's Band. Aren't they fine looking? [*Applause*] They're going to play for us later. Thank you.

Thank you, Carlton Lancaster, for the work you've done to get them together—you and Jesse and Bob Copeland. I was so impressed when I heard about this band. I couldn't wait to hear them. And they promised me now when I get off here and start shaking hands, you're going to play some more for me. You see the saxophone section raising their horns there, that's good. Thank you.

I want to thank Bill White, the Texas State Democratic chairman and the cochair of our campaign. He did a magnificent job for all of you when he was the Deputy Secretary of Energy in our administration. And now that he's home in Texas, he's doing a great job for all of us again. And thank you, Garry Mauro, the Texas State land commissioner and my long-time friend, for cochairing our campaign. Thank you, Senator Mike Moncrief and Representative Glenn Lewis.

I want to say a special word of thanks to our candidates for Congress, a man who's been a friend of mine a long time, the 5th congressional district candidate, John Pouland. I hope you'll help him win this election. And your former mayor, a great mayor, a man who will be a great Congressman if you will give him a chance to serve, Hugh Parmer. Thank you very much for being here today.

Thank you, Yolanda Cuevas-Chavera. Boy, what a wonderful representative she is of American free enterprise and the idea that if we give everybody an opportunity, all of us will be better off. We're better off that people like her can start a business and create jobs and make our communities and our country stronger.

I have to say that one of the things that I determined to do when I became President was to create a climate in which it would be possible for more people to start small businesses and to succeed. And in the last 4 years there are a lot more folks like Yolanda out there. And every single year we have set a record for new small business starts. The Small Business Administration cut its budget but doubled its loan volume to provide more opportunities for small businesses to be started, including a 300 percent increase in loans to small business women, people like Yolanda who are moving this country forward.

We made every small business in the country eligible for a tax cut if they invest more money in their business. We made it easier for small businesses to take out pensions for themselves and their employees and for the employees in small businesses to take those pensions with them, which is so important. And just a couple of days ago we increased the tax deductibility of the health insurance costs of people who are self-insured, which will help small business people all across this country—more Yolandas, a stronger America.

Thank you, Martin Frost, for your unrelenting efforts to give the House of Representatives back to the American people and take it away from those who tried to destroy the Medicare system, take away Medicaid's guarantee of health care to families with members with disabilities, to our poorest children, to newborns, to elderly folks in nursing homes. Thank you for that. Thank you for stopping the cuts in student loans and education funding and environmental protection.

And thank you, Victor Morales, for running for the Senate. I want to tell you a little tale, folks, when you think about how you ought to make a decision. I had an interview with a couple of reporters today. I was in Longview before I came here. We had 13,000 folks in Longview this morning. It was a pretty good crowd.

I want to tell you two different stories. I had a great interview with two reporters who said, "Why are you in Texas, and do you really think you can win here, and what's your message?" And I said "Well, you know, 4 years ago I had a pretty hard hill to climb. I had to run against two guys from Texas 4 years ago." [*Laughter*] "And Texas has been voting Republican in Presidential races on a fairly regular basis for a good while now. So I said to myself, first of all, for 12 years I was the Governor of Arkansas, your neighboring State. I spent it, I'm sure, except for candidates for President from Texas, I spent more time in Texas in the last 40 years than anybody else that's running for President." [*Laughter*] "And if you look at the results of what I said we would do, what we have done, and how much better off Texas is today than it was 4 years ago, if the people are willing to give me a fair shot and look to the future, yes, I think we can carry Texas because it's right for the American people."

I ran for President, my fellow Americans, because I thought national politics had become too much rhetoric and too little action, because I got sick and tired of people calling each other names and trying to demonize their opponents and trying to scare the living daylights out of people and convince people that their opponents were no good. And if you noticed, I gave strict instructions at our Democratic National Convention I didn't want anybody to say anything bad, personally, about Senator Dole; about Congressman Kemp, a man I like; about Mr. Perot; about even Speaker Gingrich, who says some pretty harsh things about the rest of us. What I said was, let's talk about their votes, let's talk about their positions, let's talk about where we differ, and let's look at who's right and who's wrong. That's what elections ought to be about.

Now, I believe that we need a common vision for our country to take us together into the next century. And here's what I want it to be like for these children in this audience: I want us to go into the next century with the American dream of opportunity alive for every single person who's willing to work for it, without regard to their race, their gender,

and what they start out with in life. If you're willing to work hard, you ought to have a chance. You ought to have a chance.

We're living in a global economy. We're living in a global society. You can move money and information and ideas and technology around the world in no time. Our diversity, our differences, the fact that we come from so many different places is a great, great source of strength for the United States, if we can learn to get along together and respect each other and be fair with one another. I want us to be one American community. And I want us to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity because that's an important part of our future as well. Now, how have we done creating opportunity, insisting on responsibility, and bringing us together in a community? That's the test. And what are we going to do?

Now, Mr. Morales, he's offered himself as a candidate for the Senate. I remember in 1993 when I asked the Congress to pass our economic program, to get the deficit down, get interest rates down, get this economy moving again and keep investing in new technologies and education and the environment and protecting our obligations to our seniors, to the Medicare program, Mr. Morales' opponent said, ''If the President's plan passes, the deficit will go up, unemployment will go up, the economy will be in terrible shape.'' That's what he told you. And my opponent agreed with him.

Well, now we know. Now we know. You don't have to guess in Texas. And I'm glad we've got some folks in the back representing the other side. They're welcome.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. No, no, don't boo them. They're welcome here. This is America; everybody's welcome here. They're welcome here. I'm glad they're here. But here we are now in 1996, and here are the facts on the opportunity——

[*At this point, the audio system failed.*]

You reckon they cut the microphone off? [*Laughter*] Is it on? Now? Turn this thing on. Cheer a while while we wait.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Now? Now? No? Yes. Is it on?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Can you hear in the back?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. Well, here are the facts: We have 10½ million more jobs; record exports; record numbers of new small businesses; 4½ million new homeowners; a 15-year high in home ownership; a 7½-year low in unemployment—in Texas, a 15-year low in unemployment—the lowest combined rates of unemployment, inflation, and home mortgages in 27 years. We're moving in the right direction.

Here are the facts: Yesterday we learned in the annual report put out by our Census Bureau that median incomes in America rose about $900 last year after inflation—the biggest rise in the incomes of average Americans in a decade—and $1,600 since that plan went into effect.

Listen to this: Yesterday we learned from the Census Bureau that in 1995, childhood poverty reached its lowest level, had the biggest drop in 20 years—in 20 years. We learned that the number of poor people in America went down by the largest number in 20 years. We learned that all Americans for a change are beginning to benefit in the economic recovery. Wages are rising for the first time in a decade, and we had the biggest decline in inequality among working people in 27 years. We're going forward together. We are going forward together.

And let's look at some other scorecards. In the area of health care, we made 25 million Americans eligible to keep their health insurance by passing a bill which says you can't lose your health insurance anymore just because you changed jobs or somebody in your family has been sick.

Yesterday I signed a bill to stop drive-through deliveries, to stop insurance companies from throwing women and their little babies out of the hospital 24 hours after the babies are born. The bill also begins to provide some protection for health care coverage for families with mental illness, a very important thing in our country. And the bill says to Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange—many of their children have gotten spina bifida—finally, after all this

long time we're going to give disability support and other help to those people who served our country. It's a good thing for America.

Look at the family scorecard: 12 million American families have taken advantage of the family and medical leave law that says you can take a little time off. If you've got a baby born or a sick parent you can take a little time off without losing your job. Now, our opponents didn't think much of that bill, either. They said it was bad for business. But 3½ years later, we've got 12 million families that are stronger and 10½ million new jobs. I think we were right and they were wrong.

The crime rate has come down for 4 years in a row. There were one million fewer victims of crime last year than there were when I took office. The welfare rolls have come down by nearly 2 million. Child support collections are up by nearly 50 percent, $3.8 billion a year, lifting families out of welfare. On October 1st, in just a few days, 10 million hard-working Americans will get an increase in their minimum wage. In that same bill—in that same bill we offer a $5,000 tax credit to families who will adopt children. There's a lot of kids out there that need homes. This is pro-family legislation at its best.

We have made the air cleaner, our drinking water and food safer. We've cleaned up more toxic waste dumps in 3 years than were cleaned up in the 12 years before I became President. We are moving in the right direction, building our bridge to the 21st century.

Our national security is stronger. There are no Russian missiles pointed at the children of America for the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age. We are tackling terrorism all over the world. We are promoting peace. We have 200 separate trade agreements of all kinds, from NAFTA and the GATT world trade agreement to 21 agreements with Japan. If you doubt whether it works, in those 21 areas with Japan our American exports have increased by 85 percent and we're number one in producing cars in the world again for the first time since the 1970's.

And Fort Worth has made its contribution to our national security, for it is here that the V–22 Osprey is made, a very important part of America's defense future. And I thank you for that.

And our friends in the other party, they always say Government is the problem, Government is the enemy, Government is bad. But you know what? We've done more to reduce the size of Government than they ever did. It's the smallest it's been since John Kennedy was President. We got rid of more regulations, ended more unnecessary programs, gave back more authority to States and local governments to run their own affairs than our Republican predecessors did. But what we did not do is to give you a Government so weak it could not build a strong economy, invest in education, protect the environment, and take care of the people who have earned the right to a little help from the rest of us. We are going to go forward together. That is the right thing to do.

So I say to you, my friends, in the next 39 days, I hope those of you who are here at this rally will go visit with those who aren't here at this rally and say, ''You know, we might ought to vote for this President. We might ought to vote for these candidates back here, because this country is on the right track, and we don't want to take a U-turn. We need to go right ahead, straight into the 21st century.''

I want to ask you to help me to continue this work to build that bridge to tomorrow. The future of this country represents our best days if we do the right things. The kids in this audience, they'll be doing jobs that haven't been invented yet. A lot of the children in this audience will be doing jobs that have not been imagined yet if we do the right things.

We've got to keep this economy going. That means we have to balance the budget, but we've got to do it in the right way. We can balance the budget and still protect our investments in education, in the environment, in Medicare, and Medicaid. We shouldn't let them raid workers' pension funds under the guise of balancing the budget. We can have a tax cut, but it ought to be the right kind of tax cut, targeted to families that need it for childrearing, for education, for buying that first-time home, for medical care. And when you sell your home, if you got a gain on it you shouldn't have to pay taxes on it, because it's where most people's savings are. We can afford that.

And that's what we ought to do. But we ought not to have a tax cut we can't afford, even though it's popular at election time. And here's why. I tell this everywhere I go. Every time I leave town in Washington, some expert says, ''Now, don't go down there again into the heartland and talk about the deficit. People are bored by the deficit. Nobody cares about balancing the budget when the economy is good.'' Here's why you ought to care about it.

One big reason this economy has taken off in the last 4 years is that we brought the deficit down. What does that mean? We had to borrow less money. When we borrowed less, that left more for you. That meant the interest rates went down.

Our friends in the Republican Party put out a study last year that I have to tell you I agree with. I wish they still agreed with it. But they agreed with it last year. What that study said was if we're not on a plan to balancing the budget, it will add 2 percent to the interest rates that American people are charged.

Now, you just figure it out for yourselves. What would it mean to you to have to pay 2 percent more on your credit card debt, on your college loan, on your car payment, on your home payment? What would it mean to the economy of Fort Worth and Tarrant County and Texas if every businessperson had to pay 2 percent more every time they went to the bank to borrow money? It would mean fewer jobs, a weaker economy, not as many pay raises. It's not a good deal. Let's only have the tax cut we can afford. Let's pay for it, and let's target it to education, childrearing, and build a stronger America. Let's do that.

I want to build a bridge to the 21st century that says to every child in this country and every adult, education is now a lifetime endeavor and we're going to have the best education opportunities in the entire world. Forty percent of our 8-year-olds still cannot read on their own. That is bad. They can't learn the rest of the things they need to learn.

I want to mobilize an army of volunteers to work with parents and teachers to make sure that by the year 2000 every third grader in America can pick up a book and say, ''I can read this all by myself.'' I want to make sure that every, every single classroom in America and every library in every school has not only computers and educational materials and teachers trained on the computers but is hooked up to this worldwide information superhighway, to the Internet, to the World Wide Web.

What does that mean? It means the kids in the poorest schools in America and the kids in the most remote rural schools for the first time in the history of this country can get the same information in the same time in the same way as the children in the wealthiest schools in America. And that will revolutionize educational opportunity. And we can do that. Will you help me build that bridge to the 21st century? [*Applause*]

And most important of all, I want to open the doors of a college education to every single American who is willing to go and work for it. I want to let more families save for an IRA, for their own retirement, and then withdraw from it tax-free, if they want to, to pay for education. I want to say that we can make 2 years of college as universal in 4 years as a high school diploma is today, by giving families a tax credit, a dollar-for-dollar reduction on their tax bill for the cost of a typical community college tuition in this country. And then everybody can go. Everybody can go.

And I believe that we ought to give a tax deduction of up to $10,000 a year to families for the cost of any college tuition, undergraduate or graduate, medical school, veterinarian school, you name it. We can lift America if we do that. Will you help me build that bridge to the 21st century? [*Applause*]

I want you to help me build a bridge that keeps the crime rate coming down. The crime rate in Fort Worth has dropped 50 percent in the last 4 years, 50 percent in this community. If we lower it for 4 more years, it might be low enough for us to all feel safe again on our streets, in our homes, in our schools. That's very important. We've got to keep putting 100,000 police on the street. We've got to continue that fight.

And let me say one thing about that. We had a pretty rough time, our side did, in the elections of 1994, and one reason was a lot of good, God-fearing people in Texas and Arkansas and other places who loved to hunt,

loved to go out in the woods and engage in sports shooting as well as hunting, were absolutely convinced when our opponents said that we were trying to take their guns away because we banned 19 kinds of assault weapons and passed the Brady bill. That's what they said, and a lot of people believed them. They were scared, and they voted against some good people in Congress.

Well, it's been 2 years, and it's kind of like the economic plan: Now we know. Now we know. Not a single Texas hunter has lost a rifle. Everybody is still hunting with the same weapon they had 2 years ago if they want to. Every single soul in the country. But you know what? Sixty thousand fugitives, felons, and stalkers cannot get a handgun because of the Brady bill, and we're safer because of it. We are safer because of it. And I don't think they ought to be able to buy guns, people who beat up their spouses and their kids, either. I don't think they should. And I think we ought to extend it.

And we ought to keep going until we put 100,000 police on the street so we can prevent more crime. We ought to test people on parole for drug use, because 60 percent of the serious drugs in this country are used by people that are already in the criminal justice system. And parole is a privilege; people shouldn't be able to get out and abuse it and go back on drugs and become criminals again. Our children deserve better than that, and I hope you'll help us.

And one other thing, we can't entirely jail our way out of this problem. We've got to keep our kids out of trouble in the first place. We've got to do more to keep them off drugs in the first place. One of the things that I have fought hardest for is the safe and drug-free schools act, which gives schools all across our country the resources they need to make sure that they've got those D.A.R.E. officers coming into the classroom, they've got other people coming in to talk to these kids and be good role models and tell them that drugs can kill them and destroy their lives.

And you know, that's another thing that Mr. Morales' opponent and mine tried to cut. Now, why in the world they wanted to cut the safe and drug-free schools act and stop us from putting 100,000 police on the street is beyond me. But I think we know now we were right and they weren't. And I think we need to keep building that bridge to the 21st century.

I want to ask you all to think about that. There's more we need to do for families, more we need to do to clean up our environment. There's still 10 million American children living within 4 miles of toxic waste dumps. But if you'll give us 4 more years, we'll clean up the 500 worst dumps so we can say our kids are growing up next to parks and not poison. Every child in America deserves that. And I hope you'll help us build that bridge to the 21st century.

Ladies and gentlemen, this election is about your future and about the future of your children and your children's children. We are living in a time of phenomenal change in the way we work and live and relate to each other and the rest of the world. If we make the right decisions, if we build the right kind of bridge, if it's big and broad enough for all of us to walk across and for our children and our children's children to walk across, the best days of this country are still ahead.

So I ask you again in the next 39 days to help us build that bridge by going out and talking to other people and saying, "What do you want our country to be like in 4 years? What do you want our country to be like as we start that new century? What do you want our country to be like when our children are our age?" If we ask the right questions, we'll give the right answers in Texas and all across America. Help us build that bridge to the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. at Sundance Square. In his remarks, he referred to Fort Worth businessmen Ed, Bob, and Sid Bass who revitalized historic Sundance Square; Richard L. Connor, president and publisher, Fort Worth Star Telegram; Art Brender, chair, Tarrant County Democratic Party; former Speaker of the House of Representatives James Wright; Carlton Lancaster, his wife, Jesse, and Bob Copeland, event coordinators; State Senator Mike Moncrief; State Representative Glenn Lewis; and Yolanda Cuevas-Chavera, CEO, Cuevas Distribution Co., who introduced the President. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks Welcoming Returning Astronaut Shannon Lucid in Houston, Texas

September 27, 1996

Thank you very much. Thank you. I want to say first how very much I appreciate the work that is done here by all of you at NASA. Thank you, George Abbey. Thank you, Dan Goldin. Thank you, every one of you who worked for America's space program for a job well done. This is all of your triumph here today, and America is very proud of you. Thank you very much.

Of course, like all of you, I'm here to say welcome home to Shannon Lucid. There's so many things to say about the incredible skill and stamina and dedication it takes to be in space for 6 months. Her achievements: the longest single flight by an American in space; the longest duration for any woman in space; five shuttle missions now for her. It's a monument to the human spirit. One of the wits on my airplane remarked as we were coming down, he said, "You know, Mr. President, you're always talking about bringing the deficit down for 4 years in a row; it's a good thing you haven't been giving her frequent-flier miles or we'd be in debt again." [*Laughter*] It's an amazing, amazing achievement.

And I know I speak for all Americans when I say I think we all feel at least that we've gotten to know Dr. Lucid, watching her grin and bear it as the mission was extended, hearing her eagerness to see her family, her yearning for what she called the wind and the sun. Perhaps more than she knows, she has also set a remarkable example for a new generation of young Americans and especially young girls all across this country who look up to her and now see new possibilities for themselves. And we thank her for that as well.

Let me also salute Bill Readdy and the crew of the *Atlantis.* What seems to me remarkable about their launch and return is that they make it now seem easy, and we know it's not. But we know that their bravery and their professionalism make possible for all of us regular space travel with all of the scientific, military, and commercial benefits it brings. Now it's a part of our lives thanks to this crew and others like them.

The mission from which Dr. Lucid returns continues to cement the close and growing bonds of cooperation between the United States and the Russian space programs—something that we have worked very hard for—not only the cooperation between our Nation and Russia but between our Nation and other nations as well in the space station project.

We are committed to continuing the strong United States space program. We have to keep the space shuttle flying; work toward the international space station with all of its promise and challenges; develop the X–33, which will replace the shuttle; and help to create a revolution in global communications; and continue robotic exploration of Mars and the solar system.

I was told, in preparing these remarks, that when Dr. Lucid was in the eighth grade, she wrote an essay saying she wanted to be a rocket scientist. She was told by her teacher there is no such thing as a rocket scientist and if there were, it wouldn't be a woman. Well, how lucky we are that not everyone can foresee the future.

I say that today to make this point: The children here, whether when they grow up they have anything to do with the space program or not, many of these children will be doing work that has not been invented yet, many of these children will be doing work that has not been imagined yet. And we owe it to them, their future, and their children's future to continue in the American tradition of pushing back the frontiers of knowledge, exploring the frontiers that we don't yet understand.

Our space pioneers reflect the very best of America's spirit of exploration, our never-ending search for new horizons. And Dr. Shannon Lucid today stands tall among them all. We are grateful for her. We welcome her home.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:30 p.m. at Ellington Field. In his remarks, he referred to space shuttle *Atlantis* commander William Readdy. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.