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At the same time we see a very different crisis in some parts of the world, a crisis of hunger, where too many families face famine and starvation. For decades, American Presidents have addressed such crises. That's what I'm doing today.

Today I am acting within my full authority as President to take immediate steps to help our family farmers and to reduce crop surpluses at home. Within days, the United States Government will begin to purchase more than 80 million bushels of wheat, which could lift prices as much as 13 cents a bushel. With this wheat, I've instructed Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman to launch a new food aid initiative to press the world struggle against hunger.

Secretary Glickman, working with our Agency for International Development, will use the authority granted to him by Congress to oversee substantial donations of U.S. wheat to countries where the need is greatest—places such as Sudan and Indonesia. Donations will also be made to private humanitarian groups. All told, this is in the best humanitarian tradition, an action based on human need to help save lives as it opens new links of trade with these nations. It's good for American farmers, good for our economy, and it's the right thing to do.

This effort will provide a much needed boost to U.S. wheat farmers, but we can and must do more. I'm pleased that this week Congress took prompt bipartisan action to exempt agricultural trade from U.S. sanctions against India and Pakistan in the wake of their nuclear test. But more congressional action must follow. We should expand eligibility for direct and guaranteed loans, extend marketing loans when crop prices are low or transportation problems make marketing difficult, give farmers more flexibility to plant other crops when their primary crops fail. And above all, we must keep the market for our products growing by paying our dues to the International Monetary Fund so that we can stabilize and help to reform Asian economies that are such important customers for America's farmers and for our other exporters who are responsible for 30 percent of the remarkable growth we've enjoyed since 1993.

In my State of the Union Address, I urged Congress to do this for the sake of our own economy. Six months later, the need is greater than ever. We must pay our dues to the International Monetary Fund so that our people can sell their products abroad.

The steps I take today are in the best tradition of America. From our beginnings, we have recognized that the agricultural tradition strengthens the national community. In the depths of the Great Depression, President Franklin Roosevelt said, ''No cracked Earth, no blistering Sun, no burning wind are a permanent match for the indomitable American farmers who inspire us with their self-reliance, their tenacity, and their courage.'' Today, at a moment of broad prosperity for our Nation, we have an obligation to expand opportunity for all Americans as we move strongly into the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8:58 p.m. on July 17 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 18. This transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 18 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks at an Arkansas Victory '98 Dinner in Little Rock

July 18, 1998

Well, first of all, like all of you, I want to thank Maurice and Betty for once again being there for all of us and having us in their home, giving us a view of the river. I'm trying to get accustomed to it. In a couple of years, I'm going to have a library about a mile down the road there, and I'm going to be looking up this river, just like all the rest of you. I also want to thank Vaughn for being willing to come in here and go to work for our party and give us some energy and direction.

Today I had a great, great morning with the State Democratic Committee and a number of other people who came, and I tried to get them revved up and also remind them that the stakes in this election are quite high and we need to go to work on it. I feel very good about our candidates; I feel very good about the issues. I think the main thing we have to recognize is that in the non-Presidential years, voter turnout tends to go down,

and that's not good for Democrats—number one. Number two, when times are good, the tendency of any people in any society is to sort of relax and think, ''Well, why rock the boat?''

If you look at the newspaper, however, on any given day, if you analyze, among other things, the turmoil in Asia, you see, however, that we're living in a very dynamic time. Things can change overnight in a thousand ways. And my whole argument to the American people and the argument that I want to see brought home here in our State is that this is a time when we should be bearing down and moving forward and being even more committed to doing the things that need to be done to get our people ready for a new century and a completely different way of living and relating to the rest of the world. If you can't do it when times are good, then you're not going to do it. And we need to do that.

The other point I tried to make today, which I will make very briefly, is that thanks to the 22d amendment, I'm not going to be a candidate anymore. But I think it's very important that people understand—that the voters understand—and this election gives us an opportunity to—is it's not just a question of putting certain people in and having good things happen; it really matters what your ideas are, what your policies are. There is a connection between what we do in public office and what consequences flow in the country and in the world.

And that's the argument we've got to make. There are real clear, unambiguous, powerful differences on State issues and national issues between Democrats and Republicans. And we are now no longer vulnerable to the kind of reversed plastic surgery they used to do on us at every election. That is, no one can say we're not responsible on the budget or the economy or welfare or crime or foreign policy or national defense or all those other things they used to say. So now people are free to take a clear-eyed view of the future. And it's very important that all of us use these funds you've given and use our personal contacts to say, ''Listen, this wasn't just a matter of Bill Clinton getting elected President. The Democratic Party has a bunch of new ideas; we've put them into action and they worked.'' And they are still relevant, these differences, to every race in the State and every race for Congress that's going to be held this fall.

If the American people believe that, we're going to have an historic upset of the patterns that normally prevail in these midterm elections. So that's what we're going to use these funds for.

I believe that we can do quite well indeed because there are people like you all over America that feel the same way you do. But just don't forget, we have succeeded in convincing people that America is successful, and we're moving in the right direction. And I've been the luckiest person in the world. The American people have continued to support me in the face of unprecedented attacks.

But that's not the most important thing for this election. The most important thing is people realize—is we actually had a plan; we had ideas; we had policies; we had a plan. We implemented them, and the results were good. That's why things are good in America. And that's why they should support all of these other Democrats that are running in all the State offices and the races for Congress.

It is logical, and it is clear, but in good times, sometimes people just don't think about it. That's the case we have to make. We've got all the way between now and November to make it, and we certainly have a very impressive array of candidates. For all of you who are running and all those who were here who are now over at the other event, I want to say I appreciate the fact that you've been willing to offer yourselves. Sometimes I know it's hard to do, especially when you see what happens to people who are successful. [*Laughter*] But you did, and I'm grateful. And I think we're going to be very grateful on election night in November. And I thank you very much.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Maurice Mitchell and his wife, Betty; and State Democratic Party Chair Vaughn McQuary. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in Little Rock

July 18, 1998

Blanche, that was a great talk. And I can't believe you remember that, but it is a true story. After we walked on up the steps—that story you were telling—the Irish Ambassador looked at me kind of funny. I said, "Listen, those guys are from my home State, and I'm absolutely certain they're Irish." [*Laughter*] So he was fine. [*Laughter*] People have learned to make allowances for my Arkansas ways in Washington, you know.

I want to thank Senator Pryor for a lot of things, for being my friend—he and Barbara were in the snows of New Hampshire with Hillary and me and our campaign—for many years of service in a stunning, wonderful, decent way, and for coming home and not only not losing interest but actually generating more interest and energy in the future of the children of Arkansas. And we are all very much in his debt that he is doing that, and I thank you, sir.

I want to thank all the officeholders and the candidates who are here. I thank especially Congressman Snyder and Congressman Berry who have been great friends to me and to our administration and to our cause. And I want to ask you all to do everything you can to help Vic Snyder win reelection. He is a truly exceptional human being, and we need more people like him in the Congress.

I ask for your support for Bill Bristow and his running mate, and Judy Smith, and of course, Mark Pryor. Every time I look at Mark Pryor I think, you know, the first time I saw that guy he wasn't old enough to vote. [*Laughter*] Actually, I'm not sure he knew what voting was the first time I saw him.

But it's wonderful to see all these new people coming in, all this new blood, all these young people coming in. I'm very grateful. But the most important thing of all—I'd like to acknowledge all the relatives of Blanche who are here and the other six people in the audience. [*Laughter*] You know, I thought I'd done pretty good; I had relatives in 15 counties. She makes me look like a piker. [*Laughter*]

Actually, it's great to see this election be a family affair, not only for her family members but for all the rest of you. And we've had a good time tonight. I've enjoyed visiting with everybody, and all of you have heard me speak a thousand times anyway, and you probably think that everything that needs to be said has already been said, but not everyone has had the chance to say it yet. But there are a couple of things I would like for you to know.

First of all, I would like for you to know that not everybody in the U.S. Senate is like Dale Bumpers and David Pryor. And I don't mean in terms of party or philosophy. And I see a couple of people nodding their head back there who have to come to Washington and lobby all the time.

I would like for you to know that maybe because we're from here, but for whatever reason, people like Blanche and me, we sort of had this apparently naive idea that if we went to Washington, we'd just sit down with everybody who's interested in solving a problem without regard to their party or where they were from, and we'd figure out how to do it just the way we do at home. We thought that people would always put progress over partisanship. And you can tell by the stories that were told that we believe that politics is about people not power.

We think the Founding Fathers believed that, too, by the way. If you go back and read the Constitution, power is given to people who are in politics temporarily and in limited fashion for the sole purpose of advancing the cause of the rest of the folks that live in this country.

And you know, I went to one of these events in Washington, DC, that the press puts on every year, and it was a kind of a toast and roast, and everyone makes fun of me, so I get to say a few wisecracky things. And I alluded to the fact that some people have criticized Hillary and me for traveling abroad from time to time. And I said that we always liked to go to a new country and that we particularly enjoyed the opportunity to get a visa to come to Washington, DC, and see how a completely different culture lives. [*Laughter*]

I say that to make a very serious point. There are two reasons you should send