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NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 3.

Remarks at a Reception Honoring Representative Peter Deutsch in Palm Beach

October 29, 1998

Thank you very much, Doctor. Thank you for your remarks—and Peter and Lori, and your families and your extended family here. Let me say at the outset that I had two thoughts when Peter was speaking—one sort of craven thought. I thought I wish I had taped that, and the next time I really need a tough vote for him I will play it back. [*Laughter*] My more noble thought was—[*laughter*]—was that, I was sitting there looking at Peter and thinking about the times we spent together, the times Lori used to go jogging with me before I hurt my leg. Now I use it as an excuse not to be humiliated. [*Laughter*] And I was thinking about the times we spent together, and I was thinking how fortunate our country is that people like him will do the work that he does. And we are very fortunate.

You know, this has been a pretty good 6 years for the economy, and if Peter Deutsch hadn't been in Congress, he would have made a lot of money in this economy. [*Laughter*] He would have done well in this economy. And our country is blessed by that.

Let me just be very brief here. Today I came to Florida with Hillary to see the space shuttle and to see a man who has been a very good personal friend of mine and of my wife's, John Glenn, go into space at the age of 77. It was a thrilling experience. I'm sure all of you who either saw it from a distance or saw it on television felt the same way. And a lot of people came up to me and said, "Gosh, you look tired." And that's because I still haven't recovered from what I was doing last week at this time, which was finally announcing the end of 9 days of talks on the Middle East peace process, which culminated in a 30-something hour marathon. I was up 39 hours in a row, and I didn't even do that in college. [*Laughter*] I didn't know I had it in me at my old age and in my declining years. But anyway, I made it.

I say that because those two events, this space shuttle with John Glenn on it and that peace process, embody so much of what I've tried to do as President and so much about what I think is best in our country, the idea of giving everybody an opportunity to go as far as his or her dreams will carry them, the idea of being adventurous in all—and daring to change, and being willing to take a risk and always thinking about the future.

One of you who went through the line and had your picture taken with me tonight quoted back my 1992 campaign theme: Don't stop thinking about tomorrow. That's what that space program is all about. And then the peace process embodied not only the peace we would like to bring to the world but the peace we would like to bring to our own country—how strongly and earnestly we wish to reach across all the lines that divide us here to make one America and then to bring that spirit of reconciliation to the rest of the world in freedom, in democracy.

And when I became President I really set out to create a country for the 21st century where everyone who would work for it could have opportunity, where we would be one community across all our diversity, and where we would still be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity, not just for ourselves but for others as well.

None of the things that I have done that required any act from Congress would have been possible without people like Peter. And when things go well, the President gets the credit. But very often there are so many others whose work is utterly indispensable. And I think you should know that.

If we hadn't passed that economic plan in 1993, we wouldn't be here celebrating this today. If we hadn't passed the crime bill to give 100,000 police to our streets and to finally take on the Brady bill issues and the assault weapons ban, we wouldn't be here celebrating the lowest crime rate in a generation today. So there are lots of things that he and others deserve credit for.

In this last budget negotiation the reason we got, in a hostile Congress, the reason we got 100,000 teachers and after-school programs for kids in trouble and a big increase in our clean water plan and continued support to clean up the Florida Everglades and

restore them was that the Congress stayed with me, the Democrats and our party, and we were reunited.

And I want to thank Peter for having this PAC and for being willing to not only help himself but help like-minded people throughout the country, because this election Tuesday is no ordinary election. This election will have a lot to do with 21st century America. And the differences between the parties are quite profound.

We don't believe that we—we waited 29 years for a surplus, and we do not believe we should spend it until we have saved Social Security for the 21st century. They disagree with that. Furthermore, I don't think we should do anything that gives the slightest signal of economic instability at a time when there's so much trouble in the rest of the world. And Florida depends upon trade, investment, and tourism to do well. You have a big interest in our doing the right thing by our economy and trying to stabilize the world economy.

So that's something we believe. The other—the leadership of the other party disagrees with that. We believe that it's a good thing to have properly managed health care but that the management of a system should not overcome its purpose and that people who are in health plans ought to have a right to see a specialist if the doctor says they should see one, that they ought to—if they get in an accident, they ought to go to the nearest emergency room, not one that's 20 miles away because it's covered, if they're in the middle of a pregnancy or a chemotherapy treatment, they ought not lose their doctor just because their employer changes health plans during that period. That's what we believe. And they disagree with us on this Patients' Bill of Rights. It's something that would affect well over 100 million Americans. It's a huge issue.

We believe that our children should all have a chance to have a good education. That's why we fought for the 100,000 teachers. But we did not win. [*Applause*] Thank you. But we did not win the classrooms to teach them in. We also had a plan fully paid for in the balanced budget to help states build or repair 5,000 schools. No State in America needs that more than Florida. We disagree on that. They don't think we should be doing this in Washington. I think we should.

So I could go through lots of other issues. We tried to raise the minimum wage because unemployment and inflation are low, and they didn't think we should, and they stopped us. We believe that we should act to protect our children from the dangers of tobacco, the number one public health problem for kids in America, and they stopped us. We believe we should pass campaign finance reform and they stopped us. There is a huge choice.

And you may have noticed in the press yesterday that in the last 2 years, not unrelated to the bills that they defeated, they were successful in raising $100 million more than we were in the last 2 years. But because of people like Peter and because of people like you, we are doing quite well in a blizzard of close races in which we're being outspent. So you have to understand that your being here, too, is an act of citizenship and that, if you weren't here doing this, that no matter how good our ideas are and no matter how big a majority there is in the country for our ideas, they wouldn't be heard by the voters.

The last thing I want to ask you to do is to do everything you can between now and Tuesday to ask everyone with whom you come in contact to go and vote. Everybody who felt patriotic when John Glenn went up in the space ship today with his colleagues should carry that feeling through to Tuesday. Because the space program—that's the last thing I want to say—the space program is a product of a democratic system in which it was under complete assault when I became President. And the space program is exhibit A for the idea that Government can give you more at less cost. They're not spending much more money than they were the day I took office 6 years ago. Then, they were sending up two launches a year. Now they're sending eight launches a year at roughly half the cost per launch.

I know it's important to Florida. So I ask you—thank you for your money, thank you for Peter Deutsch. Keep him in Congress as long as he wants to stay. Give him a promotion some day. But you just remember what I said. There's a huge difference in a

very clear way about what kind of 21st century America we're going to have. And you and everybody you touch between now and Tuesday needs to show up.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:03 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Lori Deutsch, wife of Representative Peter Deutsch. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at a Florida Democratic Party Dinner in Palm Beach

October 29, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. The first thing I have to say is that Meyer Berman asked me to make a public service announcement—[*laughter*]—that in the interest of enlightened citizenship he has for everyone here a copy of James Carville's latest book. [*Laughter*]

Let me, first of all, say to Danny and to Eva, thank you for bringing us into your beautiful home for the wonderful dinner, for the music on the balcony. I thank all the people who served us tonight. I think they did a great job, and I think we ought to give them a round of applause.

I thank you and Meyer for cochairing this event. I thank all of you for coming, some of you my good friends from all around America. I'd like to say to all the public servants who are here a special word of appreciation. Florida has been, I think, particularly blessed to be well served. I want to thank Lawton Chiles for being a great United States Senator and a great Governor and a great partner for me—and a great friend.

Congressman Alcee Hastings, thank you for your support and your friendship. Congressman Peter Deutsch and Lori; Congressman Rob Wexler and his wife, Laurie, thank you for being here. Senator Daryl Jones and State Representative Elaine Bloom, thank you for being here. This State needs good leadership.

I'd like to also say, back when I decided to run for President in 1991—I think I mentioned Senator Graham—did I? Where is he? He's here somewhere. I want to tell you, Senator Graham and I used to be seat mates. He taught me how to be a Governor. So I served with Bob Graham and Lawton Chiles, and I finally figured out how do the job. And that's really a big reason I got to be President.

But I want to come back to 1991, but I want to say that I think both of them would say that we really enjoyed being Governors. And I was so afraid that Bob Graham wouldn't run for reelection this year. And he's so desperately needed in the Senate, because when you get to be the Governor of a place like Florida, and there is so much to be done, and it's so exciting, and it's so vibrant, and things are changing so fast, and then you go to Washington, and you see there is so much to be done—[*laughter*]—and there are so many challenges, and it's so exciting, but nobody really wants to do it, or at least a lot of people would rather posture and position and sling words back and forth instead of actually rolling up their sleeves and doing it—that's why Lawton left the Senate and came back to Florida.

And yet I don't think it is wrong to say that that's really what America needs at every level, which brings me back to Buddy and Ann. When I wanted to run for President in 1991, really only my wife and my mother thought I had a chance to win—[*laughter*]—and apparently a few people in the Republican Party. [*Laughter*] But I came down here, and I knew—actually the first big test of a Presidential campaign is now in Florida. It's the straw poll conducted at the December State convention in Florida. Elaine remembers all the sort of traipsing around. And there were people in Florida who started with me in 1991 who have been my friends ever since.

But Buddy MacKay stood up for me and stood by me and was with me every step of the way. Now, one of the things I think you want in a Governor is somebody with a lot of foresight. And it looks to me like he qualifies just on that ground alone. [*Laughter*] He joined my mother and my wife in thinking I had a chance to win, and I think that's a big quality. [*Laughter*]

But let me say in all seriousness, I know this man very, very well. I admire him and his wife very much. And I made a—I sometimes—I guess because I'm not running