

heart and sheer ability to get things done than Tom Harkin. He is a precious asset for Iowa and the United States, and I am glad you are here to support him tonight.

He was very generous, he talked about me going to Switzerland to speak for the children all over the world who are the subject of abusive child labor. It's the sort of thing a President is supposed to do. But a person could be elected and reelected Senator from Iowa and never say anything about abusive child labor around the world. Tom Harkin was out for that issue a long, long time before I was. I was there because of Tom Harkin and his leadership.

And today the Governor and Leonard and Tom and I, we sat around and we met with some farmers—and I want to say more about that in a minute—but we know we've got a terrible problem in farm country all over America. And you can be sure that when something is done to help America's farmers, Tom Harkin will be in the forefront of that. He won't be in the forefront of that. He won't be dragging up the rear; he'll be there pushing everybody to do more, to do better, to think through it. And he'll be—every time somebody wants to do something that doesn't make a lick of sense based on decades of history on the farm, he will be there to remind people to do the right thing by America's farmers.

You know, he says I've been a good President for the disabled of America. I hope I have been. But if I have been, half of it is because of what I learned from Tom Harkin.

Let me just close with this—because I hope you will think about this as caucusgoers, but also as American citizens. You have to ask yourself, why are you here tonight? Why do you have the political views you have? What really matters to you? What do you think politics is about? Is it about money and power, primarily, and the kicks you get if you get invited to the White House or the statehouse or whatever? Or is it about what I think it's about?

I'll tell you what I think it's about. I think politics is about ideas and action and people. And I believe that the reason the country is in the shape it's in today is in no small measure because we had a different set of ideas. We really believe that we could create

an America in the 21st century with opportunity for every person responsible enough to work for it, an America that was a community of people who were very different but had a common citizenship and a common humanity, an America that was leading the world toward peace and freedom and prosperity. We believe that. And we believe that we could go beyond the paralyzing debates that had put this country in a terrible hole in 1992, when we were out there running.

We thought you could improve the economy and improve the environment. We thought you could make it so people would succeed at work without being able—and still be able to succeed at home in the most important job any American has, raising children. We thought that you could be tough on crime without giving up personal liberty. We thought that you could have sensible gun control without interfering with people's right to hunting and fishing and sporting season. These are things we thought.

Now, we thought we could balance the budget and increase our investment in education. We thought we could cut the size of Government and increase its effectiveness and its impact in ordinary people's lives. And every step of the way, we were opposed by people who believe differently. And what I want to say today is that, yes, I'm glad that we've got 19 million new jobs, the longest peacetime expansion in history, a 30-year low in unemployment, a 30-year low in the welfare rolls, a 26-year low in the crime rolls, the highest homeownership in history, the lowest minority unemployment in history. I'm glad for all that. I'm glad. But at this moment, I tell you that the people hire us to win for them tomorrow. And if we did a good job yesterday, most taxpayers think that's what they were paying us to do.

And the reason I say that is, I am very grateful that I've had the chance to be your President and grateful that I have had a chance to be the instrument of this. But what we need to think about is, what are we going to do tomorrow? What are we going to do tomorrow? And in particular, what is our obligation at this moment of enormous prosperity when we went from having the biggest deficit in history in 1992 to the biggest surplus we've ever had? What are we going to

do with it? What are we going to do with this opportunity? And there are big decisions to be made here.

Tom Harkin and I are on one side and most of our friends in the other party are on the other side. But let me just mention three things, because you want to have fun tonight and you don't want to have a serious talk, but I want you to think about three things. Number one, I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, and when we retire there's going to be a whole bunch of us retired, and there will be more people retired and fewer people working than ever before, and we had better use this surplus now to save Social Security and modernize Medicare for the 21st century.

Number two, as everybody who knows—a farmer knows—not everybody who is a part of this country has participated in this recovery. From Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta to the Indian reservation to the inner city to the farm to the disabled and welfare populations who still want to go to work, we can't quit until we put everybody on a track to opportunity in this country. And if we set aside most of the surplus for Social Security and Medicare, we can, in 15 years, be debt-free for the first time since 1835. That's what we ought to do.

And finally, we ought to give our children a better future. We ought not—we ought not to squander this surplus in a way that has not enabled us to invest in world-class schools, connecting the classrooms to the Internet, world-class teachers and enough of them to do the job, education. Save Social Security and Medicare first, pay down the debt, take care of education, then give the country a tax cut. That's what we believe. That's good for the future.

Now, what I said was—what I said over there at the other place that I just want to say is, I noticed in the debate over the Patients' Bill of Rights, where the Republicans won the battle in defeating our attempts to give every American the right to see a specialist, go to the nearest emergency room, stay with the doctor through treatment, but we will win the war—you—work.

But in this thing—during this debate, the Republicans, were actually making fun of the Democrats for talking about stories, human

stories of people who had been hurt because we don't have a Patients' Bill of Rights, and they acted like there was something wrong because a lot of them think politics is about power and position. But we think it's about ideas, action, and people.

I saw a little girl today at that school that I first met in Iowa in 1992, an African-American girl being held by a white woman in a rally in Cedar Rapids. And I asked this mother, I said, "Whose child is this?" And she says, "This is my baby." And I said, "Where did you find this baby?" She said, "This baby was born in Miami with AIDS, and no one would take it, so I did."

And I came to find out this woman was divorced; her husband had left her; she was raising her own two children with modest income; but she cared enough about a child she had never known of another race, afflicted with AIDS, to take this child into her home. Today, at that school, that child was in the audience. She is tall; she is beautiful; she got up in my arms, and she said, "Mr. President, I can give myself my own shots now. I'm doing well in school, and I'm doing well." And she has gone—the reason she is still alive is in these 6½ years since I first saw her mother holding her—7 years now—she's been able to come to the National Institutes of Health and get good health care, even though she comes from a family of modest needs. Why? Because of the leadership that Tom Harkin has exercised over the years for health research and other research.

Now, this is a story—am I trying to affect your emotions? You bet I am. Is that wrong? No. This is what politics is about to us. When I see nurses weeping, weeping because the insurance company tells them that the doctor they worked for can't send a patient that is sitting there in front of them to a specialist to save their lives—is that somehow illegitimate to make laws based on those stories? No. That's what counts in life. What we care about is our relationships with each other, whether we've all got a chance to live out our dreams and live up to our God-given potential.

I told another story. When I was here in the flood in '93, I met a little girl when I was putting those sandbags up that wasn't even 5 feet tall. But she was already 13 years