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Vice President Bush a lot to do and they had more of a systematic relationship. And then when—and Al Gore and I actually made a study of this, what had happened throughout history. And I decided that this was crazy; that, first of all, this guy might be President any day now, especially with the kind of mail I've been getting the last—[*laughter*]—and secondly, why have a person with a lot of energy and intelligence just hanging around waiting to go cut ribbons?

And so, I put him to work. And I nearly broke him a couple times. I never saw anybody work any harder; he's the only guy I ever met who worked harder than me. But you need to know that there has never been anybody in that job who had more of an impact on more issues across a broader range of areas, and that a lot of the success we enjoy today would not have been possible if it hadn't been for him. So there's nobody that's any better prepared, not only by virtue of past service but by virtue of future orientation.

So I realize this is not a big campaign speech, but you need to think about this. If somebody says tomorrow, "Why did you go there?" say, "Well, but first, I'm really concerned about what we're going to do with this prosperity. It's just as stern a test for the country's character, what you do with good times as what you do with bad times. It's not as if you've got a lot of options, and your back is against the wall. Second, ideas matter, and there are honest differences between the candidates and the parties. Third, I think based on the evidence and the argument, I agree with the Democrats, and here are some examples."

Now, I hope you can all do that, because this is going to be a close election. And part of it—in a funny way, we're almost disadvantaged by how well things have gone. There are young people who are voting in this election who can never remember a bad stock market, never remember high unemployment, never remember the kind of social discord and rising crime and those kinds of things. They just think it happened. It didn't just happen.

And I don't mean by any stretch that I am solely responsible; that's not what I mean. America changed in the nineties. We became more community-oriented; we became more civically responsible; we became more interested in opportunity for other people as well as for ourselves; and we began to think about tomorrow as well as today. It wasn't just me, I was just a part of it.

But you need to really keep that in your mind between now and November. This is a big election. It's about what we're going to do with our prosperity. It's a stern test, ideas matter, and you think we're right—if you can sell that, I'll feel pretty good about the outcome.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:30 p.m. in the Atrium Room at Key Investment, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon hosts Vance K. and Darin Opperman; Joan Mondale, wife of former Vice President Walter Mondale; State Senator Steven G. (Sandy) Novak; President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; King Abdullah II of Jordan; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president, National Rifle Association; and Vice President Gore's mother, Pauline.

Remarks at a New Leadership Network Reception in Minneapolis

June 10, 2000

Thank you. Wow! [*Laughter*] I started off today at 5 o'clock this morning in Washington—that's 4 o'clock your time—and I came out to Carleton to give the commencement address. And I came here, and I went to another event. It's just getting rowdier as I go on. You guys are doing great.

I would like to thank my friend and partner Mayor Rendell from Philadelphia, the chairman of our party, for coming out here with us. And I want to thank Mike—you and Mary and all the people have done a great job with this party—all the sponsors. This is just fabulous. And I'm delighted to be here.

And I want to thank the Fine Line Music Cafe folks, and all the people who provided the music. And I want to thank Senator Paul Wellstone and Sheila and their kids and grandkids—the whole Wellstone family is here today. And Representative Martin Sabo, who's daughter is also a candidate here today.

Your State auditor, Judi Dutcher, I want to thank her for being here.

Look, this is a good way to spend Saturday afternoon. [*Laughter*] And I realize I, in a way, don't need to give a speech because I'm sort of preaching to the saved here. [*Laughter*] But I would like to say a couple of things anyway, if it's all the same to you. I mean, since I'm the only one in my administration or in my house who is not running for anything this year—[*laughter*]—I'm afraid I'll get out of practice if I don't get to kind of work out a little. So you all just relax; I want to give you a little bit.

First of all, I want to thank the State of Minnesota for voting for Bill Clinton and Al Gore twice and giving—[*applause*]. Secondly, I want to thank you for fielding competitive candidates for the House and the Senate to help us win back the majority in the United States Congress which we—we could do.

You know, I think Minnesota is a place where people know ideas matter. I was here on my education tour not very long ago, and I went to St. Paul to the first charter school in the history of the country. And you know, since then, since we got in, there was one when I became President, and there are now over 1,700 because we have worked so hard to get the point out across the country and get the word out that our public schools can succeed, and they can educate our kids. Even the kids from the most difficult circumstances can learn if we had the right kind of educational opportunities for them.

And that to me sort of symbolizes what Minnesota is all about, high ideals—high ideals, high standards, practical approaches to problems involving everybody. And I just want to say to all of you that I think the election we're about to have is every bit as important as the two we just had. Now, in 1992 the country was in trouble, and everybody knew it. The economy was in bad shape. The society was growing more divided. The political rhetoric in Washington was paralyzed and seemed irrelevant to the way most of us live.

And we've tried to turn that around. We've tried to create a society in which there was opportunity for every responsible person and in which we were coming together in a more closely knit community, in which we were looking outward to the rest of the world and trying to be a force for peace and freedom and prosperity and decency. And we tried to avoid—[*applause*]—thank you. What I wanted to say is—and there's been a lot of success. We've got the strongest economy in history, and we've got a society that's coming together. Crime rate's down; poverty is down; the welfare rolls have been cut in half. We have the highest rate of minority business ownership in history and the lowest minority unemployment in history in America. We have a lot of things that are moving in the right direction.

So, you say, "Well, how can the 2000 elections possibly be as important as the '92 election was when we were in the tank, or the '96 election was when people were trying to decide whether to ratify the direction we were taking?" I'll tell you why—because once in a lifetime do you find a situation like this in America where the economy is strong, where the society is coming together, where we've got a lot of self-confidence. We're not paralyzed by a crisis at home. We don't feel immediately threatened by a crisis overseas, even though there are dangers out there. This has never happened before in my lifetime, and I'm older than nearly everybody in this room. [*Laughter*]

Now, and I can tell you this—how a country deals with its good moments is just as stern a test of its character as how it deals with its crises. So what do you think we ought to do? I'll tell you what I think we ought to do. I think we ought to bring jobs to all the people and places that have been left behind. I think we ought to get rid of child poverty. I think we ought to give every working family the time and the tools they need to take care of their kids, as well as work.

I think we ought to deal with the fact that when the baby boomers retire, it's going to impose new burdens on our society. We ought to figure out how to save Social Security and Medicare, provide prescription drug benefits to seniors that need it. I think this.

I think we ought to prove that we can have excellence in every school building in America. I think we ought to open the doors of college to every American. That's what I talked about at Carleton today. I think we

ought to roll back the tide of climate change and prove we can create jobs and clean up the environment at the same time.

I think we ought to prove we can create a global economy where there's more trade and there's higher labor standards and environmental standards and we put a more human face on it. I think we ought to keep working to get rid of all the hatred that still exists in this country, based on race or sexual orientation or religion or ethnic background.

And I think we ought to maintain our involvement with the rest of the world for peace and freedom. This is the one-year anniversary, today, of our formal victory in the conflict in Kosovo, where we stood up against ethnic and religious cleansing and let a million people go home.

But this is way more than military; it's mostly not military. I was ridiculed the other day by one of the leaders of the other party because we said that AIDS was an international security crisis for the United States. Seventy percent of those cases are in sub-Saharan Africa.

Now, you tell me—we've got a lot of allies there for freedom and democracy, and you have people actually hiring two people for every job opening because they assume one of them will die in a few months. We have armies where the infection rate is 30 to 40 percent, where a country can collapse on us, people that we believe in that we're trying to help. So I'm proud of the fact that I think we ought to be investing some of your money to find vaccines for AIDS, for TB, for malaria, for people overseas that need these things. I think that's right.

So here's the deal. I'm not running, but I know a little something about this election. [*Laughter*] It's just as important as the other two were. If somebody asks you why you're here and why you're doing this, you tell them that. It's a big election. It's a big test of a country how you deal with all these good times. And we've finally got the chance, a chance that we have not had maybe in my lifetime to deal with the big problems out there facing America, to deal with the big opportunities out there. And there's a huge difference between what our party believes and what our nominee for President believes, and what they believe.

You know, whether it is a big issue like maintaining our present economic policy or going for a tax cut so big that we'll go back to deficits, or a more discrete issue, like raising the minimum wage by a dollar over the next few years or not doing it, there's a huge difference. And I'm telling you—everything from the appointment of justices to the Supreme Court to our economic and environmental and health care and educational policies, there is a profound difference.

And it's not like it was in 1992. In 1992, we made an argument, and you gave us a chance. Now, you've got running for President in the Democratic Party, the most experienced, effective Vice President in history who cast a tie-breaking vote on the economic plan in '93 that got us to where we are today; who cast a tie-breaking vote the other day to close a gun show loophole that requires child trigger locks; who has run our empowerment program which has brought thousands of jobs to some of the poorest communities in America; who has managed a big part of our relations with Russia, with South Africa, with Egypt, with other countries; who ran our reinventing Government program and helped to reduce the size of Government, without putting anybody in the streets, to its smallest size in 40 years so we could double education funding while we were cutting the deficit.

Now, there has never been anybody that had that kind of impact in that job who understands the future better. Along the way, he continued with his wife to hold every single year a family conference in Nashville, Tennessee, that dealt with things like family leave, health care for poor children, mental health parity in health insurance policies—the kinds of things that families come to grips with all the time Al and Tipper Gore have been working on for 8 years on their own in a way that has changed the future of America and what we've been able to do.

Now, here's the thing about elections. Somebody besides those of us in this room today get to vote. [*Laughter*] And most people who get to vote don't ever come to an event like this. And most people who get to vote may never hear me make this case for Vice President Gore or for our candidates

for the Senate and the House or for the fact that we have honest differences.

Then you get these elections where everybody is trying to convince you that anybody that's not in their party, there's something wrong with them; there's something bad. That's not true. We just have honest differences. Most people do what they say they're going to do when they get elected. And I'm just telling you, there are huge differences in economics, in health care policy, in environmental policy, in the constitution of the courts. I could go through every issue.

And it's not like '92, when we had an argument. You have evidence. We have tested what we believe against what they believe, in ways large and small. None of them support our economic policy. They said it was going to drive the country in a ditch. We now know it drove the country to 22 million jobs and the longest economic expansion.

Most of them were against our crime policy, the Brady bill and putting 100,000 police on the streets. They said it wouldn't do any good. They said that all the criminals bought guns at gun shows. Now that we're trying to do a background check at gun shows, they say they don't buy them there. But back then they said they did. [*Laughter*] So we tested it, and 500,000 guns later not in the hands of felons, fugitives, and stalkers; 100,000 more police on the street, more after-school programs for our kids—we've got the lowest crime rate in over 30 years. This is the right thing to do.

So go out there and tell people you're supporting the Vice President and the Democratic Party, number one, because they believe in opportunity for everybody and a community of all Americans. They've got good ideas, and they work; number two, because he had a pivotal role in it; and number three, because looking to the future, you agree with us. Whether it's the Patients' Bill of Rights or getting working families access to health care or raising the minimum wage or reversing global warming or just continuing to grow the economy in a responsible way and reaching out to all kinds of Americans to make them part of our family, you agree with us.

And you tell those people that haven't made up their mind, "Look, there is not an argument now. You've got 8 years of evidence. Go with the evidence. Go with the future. Stick with us, and America will be in a good place."

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:44 p.m. at the Fine Line Music Cafe. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Mike Erlandson, chair, and Mary McEvoy, associate chair, Minnesota Democratic Farmer Labor Party; Senator Wellstone's wife, Sheila; and Minnesota State Senatorial candidate Julie Sabo.

Memorandum on Actions To Further Improve the Management of Federal Human Resources

June 9, 2000

Memorandum to the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Actions to Further Improve the Management of Federal Human Resources

The Federal Government's most valuable resource is the talented and diverse group of men and women who work every day to make a difference in the lives of the American people they serve. Effective management of this workforce is critically important to accomplishing your agencies' varied missions and continuing to improve service.

My Administration has made a significant commitment to achieving the highest standards of human resources management and accountability for the American people—but more can be done. To continue to improve Government services, we must (1) recognize and reinforce the critical role human resources management plays in achieving each agency's mission and strategic planning goals, and (2) maintain and strengthen our vision of a diverse Federal workforce that is skilled, flexible, and focused on results and service.

To achieve these goals, I direct the heads of each executive department and agency to take appropriate action to:

- fully integrate human resources management into your agency's planning, budgeting, and mission evaluation processes, and clearly state specific human