

Week Ending Friday, September 6, 1996

**Remarks at a Democratic National
Committee Post-Convention
Celebration in Chicago, Illinois**
August 30, 1996

Thank you, thank you very much. Well, I can't believe we're all still standing. [*Laughter*] I'd like to join the Vice President and Hillary and Tipper in thanking the leadership of our party—Don Fowler and Chris Dodd and Marvin Rosen, who had a birthday yesterday but has really put 15 or 20 years on his life since he took this modest little part-time job as the finance chairman of our party—and all the other people from the DNC. And I thank the committee here tonight.

I would like to say to Carl Lewis, thank you for being here. We're honored by your presence and we were thrilled by your last victory and every other one you had in your career.

And Candice Bergen, thank you so much for what you said. When you and Chloe came to visit us at the White House and Ron Brown and our other friends had just been killed in that plane crash, I don't think you know what a wonderful thing it was for me to meet a person like your daughter and remind us that life goes on and we have to think about that. So I think she helped me get through those 2 days a lot more than I helped you by being around the White House. And thank you for your gracious comments tonight.

I would like to just thank two other groups of people. First of all, Mr. Mayor and Maggie and Bill Daley and Dick Notebaert and the entire committee of people from Chicago did a magnificent job with this convention. And we thank them. [*Applause*] We thank you.

You know, when it's all over and it looks good, it's easy to say it was easy, but the truth is there were some considerable risks for the mayor and the city for taking on this convention after what happened here so long ago.

At least we all were afraid of that. But I spent a lot of time in Chicago in the last several years; I've seen how it works, and I see how it continues to work better and better. And I believe that America should see this. And I think America has seen it. And I hope that, in addition to whatever benefit the Vice President and I and our Democratic candidates for Congress and Governor and the other races have received from this convention, I hope that Chicago got its just due. And I believe it did. And we thank you.

Finally, and most importantly, we should recognize the people who pulled this convention off. And I would like for Debra DeLee and every person here on the convention staff to please stand and receive a warm applause. You all were magnificent, and we thank you. Thank you, Debra, and thanks to everyone else. You were wonderful, wonderful, wonderful.

I have a very emotional feeling about being here tonight not only because of my wife's roots in Chicago, but on St. Patrick's Day in 1992 we were here in Chicago when we won the primaries in Illinois and in Michigan and virtually sealed the Democratic nomination. And David Wilhelm, my campaign manager in 1992, of course, is from Chicago, and so many other people who were then on our staff or people like Kevin O'Keefe who are still there. This is a wonderful town, and I am very grateful to everyone here and throughout the State of Illinois.

Just to show you we're not taking this for granted, we're actually going to start this bus trip again tomorrow. After I finished the speech—and I can see I've almost lost my voice from being on the train—I figured that in the 3½ days on the train we saw at least 150,000 people in the events alone. It was unbelievable.

So I said to Al Gore tonight, I said, "Man, I'm dog-tired. Why in the world are we getting on that bus tomorrow?" [*Laughter*] "Why aren't we taking our kids to the Shed

Aquarium tomorrow? Why aren't we sort of just chilling out tomorrow?" And he looked at me with that inevitable sense of humor of his and he dead-panned, "We do not want Mr. Dole to be President of the United States." So I said, "Okay, but when I get up in the morning and I'm whining about this and talking about how I'm older than you are and I hurt everywhere, just say that again so I'll remember why I'm doing this." [Laughter]

We're going to do our best to make you proud. We've all worked so hard this last year and a half or so. I was looking out in this crowd tonight just really feeling bad that I couldn't go to every table and shake every hand and thank every person personally, because I just look at you and I know that we wouldn't be here if you hadn't been there for us. And many of you were there when nobody gave us a prayer of coming back, when people did not believe in what we were trying to do and did not believe that it would ever work or did not believe it would ever be apparent to the American people. And you all know who you are.

And I can't be at your table tonight, and I can't tonight—when I would especially like to do it—look into your eyes and thank you. But you know who you are, and tonight I want you to be very, very proud. And tomorrow I want you to be determined that tonight will not have been in vain. We'll celebrate in November.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:10 a.m. at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to U.S. Olympic athlete Carl Lewis; actress Candice Bergen and her daughter, Chloe; and Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, his wife, Margaret, and his brother William. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks to the Annual General Session of the Democratic National Committee in Chicago

August 30, 1996

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, you just heard a speech from the part of our ticket who got the most sleep last night. [Laughter]

I asked Al last night, after the convention adjourned and I was just drained, you know—and you all were so wonderful to me, and I thank you very much—but I said, "Gosh, I wish tomorrow we were getting up and taking the kids to the aquarium and the zoo and just kind of looking around Chicago, a wonderful town; I hadn't spent any time here. Why are we going out on that bus?" [Laughter] "Why are we doing that tomorrow?" Totally deadpan, you know, just like he did in the speech, he said in his version of the macarena, you know that dead stare—[laughter]—he said, "Because we do not wish Senator Dole to win the election." [Laughter] So I said, "Okay, when I get up tomorrow and my back hurts and I'm whining around, you remind me of that so I can be in a good humor." [Laughter]

Rabbi, Reverend Barrow, ladies and gentlemen, I just want to echo, if I might for a moment, a lot of what has been said and make two brief points about our party and our future. First, I want to thank Don Fowler for a lifetime of devotion to our party and for doing the hard work—out of the limelight and keeps going. I want to thank B.J. Thornberry and the staff at the Democratic National Committee who have worked hard to bring our party back.

I thank Chris Dodd for his tirelessness and his eloquence. By the time he got through nominating me the other night I felt like a real President. [Laughter] I thought it was quite wonderful, and I thank you, sir.

I want to thank Marvin Rosen and Scott Pastrick and all the folks that have worked so hard in raising our funds that for a year enabled us to be on television debating the different visions of the future that we and our opponents have.

I feel deeply indebted to you, Debra DeLee, and to all the people who worked on the Chicago convention—a lot of people left the White House, volunteers came from all over the country. They did a wonderful job. I said before how very much I appreciate what Mayor Daley and Maggie did and the magnificent job that Bill Daley did in mustering a broad base of support for the Democratic Convention in Chicago, and I'm very grateful to them.