

I want everybody walking across that bridge to the 21st century. I don't intend to see the lower Mississippi Valley left behind. I want your children to have the best education, your parents to have the best jobs, and your people to have the best future. That is my commitment to you.

Let me just say a word about education. Al Gore and I, in the next 4 years, are committed to seeing that every classroom in America, in the remotest mountain village, in the poorest city neighborhood, up and down this Delta, every single classroom and library not only has the computers they need with the teachers trained to help use them but is connected to an information super-highway that will give, for the first time in the history of this country, every child, rich or poor, immediate access to the highest quality information available on any subject, to any child, in any school in the United States or in the world. That is worth fighting for.

We are committed to the right kind of tax cuts for working families: a tax cut in the form of a \$500 credit for young children; a tax cut in the form of a \$1,500 credit to make 2 years of education after high school as universal in 4 years as a high school education is today. We ought to make it possible for every family to go to a community college at least and have it paid for and not have to worry about it through tax cuts. We ought to give every family with a child in college or a parent in college a deduction for the cost of tuition up to \$10,000 a year. We ought to educate America and do it now.

So I say to you, if you want that kind of future, if you want the feeling you have tonight on this beautiful lawn of this magnificent old library to carry you through, if you want to feel on election day the way the Vice President says and feel that way all through the next 4 years, you have to help me build that bridge to the 21st century. Will you do that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us for 68 days to talk to your friends and neighbors about going into the future instead of going back? Will you do that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. God bless you. Stay with us and we will make the kind of future you and your children deserve. Thank you. We're delighted to be here.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:26 p.m. at the Stafford Public Library. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor James Wilson of Cairo. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks in Paducah, Kentucky

August 30, 1996

The President. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I'm glad to be back in Paducah. Folks, I don't know if you remember this, but on the day before the election in 1992, I flew to Paducah and I didn't have any voice at all. I've still got a little left now. And I could only get up and say to you, "Folks, I have lost my voice, but if you folks in Paducah and Kentucky will vote for me I'll be your voice for the next 4 years."

Well, folks, I'm here tonight with what the crowd counters tell me is 25,000 of our good friends and Americans to tell you I have been your voice. Compared to 4 years ago, we are better off. We are on the right track, but we still have work to do. And I want you tonight, for the next 4 years, to help me build that bridge to the 21st century. Will you do it? Will you do it?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. I want to thank Governor Patton and Mrs. Patton for being here, for their leadership and their energy. I want to thank our good friend Senator Wendell Ford, a great leader in the Senate and an immensely respected man. I don't know how many times I've thought to myself, if we just had about 10 people like Wendell Ford in the Senate we could solve half the country's problems in a month or two.

I want to thank Lieutenant Governor Steve Henry for being here. I want to thank Steve Beshear and join in what has been said about him. When I was looking at him speak tonight, I thought, boy, Kentucky would be better off if he were the United States Senator, along with Wendell Ford.

You know, it's really too bad that a person like Steve Beshear or our fine candidate for

Congress, Dennis Null, who I urge you to help elect—if it's too bad that they have to get up and give campaign speeches, with so much to be done in this country, about what they have to help stop. It's too bad that they have to talk about—here it is, 1996—that a Congress in 1996 actually had to break apart Medicare and do a two-tier system; that a leader of the Congress, now a nominee for President, actually bragged about—in 1996, not before—actually bragged about being one of the only 12 people to vote against Medicare in the House; that they tried to take away the guarantee that Medicaid gives not just to elderly folks in nursing homes, not just to pregnant women and poor little kids but also to a lot of middle class families that happen to have a family member with a disability.

A lot of you saw Christopher Reeve and his magnificent speech to the convention. But, you know, one of the most moving conversations I've had in the last several months was with Mr. Reeve when he said, "A lot of people with my disability don't have the income of movie stars, and even movie stars can go broke caring for something like this. Don't ever let anything happen to Medicaid, Mr. President." We need for working middle class families to be able to care for their children, their brothers, their parents, their spouses if they have a disability without going broke and going to the poorhouse. We ought not to have to defend that against these congressional leaders.

At a time when we know we need to be doing more for education, we ought not have to defend our education programs. Why would anybody want to make student loans more expensive and have fewer people in Head Start? We ought not to have to defend that. At a time when we have proved in this administration that you can grow the economy and save the environment at the same time, and create more high-wage jobs, we ought not have to deal with people coming in and trying to repeal 25 years of bipartisan environment protection. We ought not to have to do that.

Now, if you don't want to have to worry about that anymore, I want you to send Steve Beshear and Dennis Null to the Congress to advance your interests, and you won't have

to worry about those negative things happening to you anymore.

I want to thank my colleagues, former colleagues, Martha Layne Collins and Julian Carroll for being here. Mayor Jones, I'm delighted to be here in your community. I want to thank your county executive, Danny Orazine, and J.W. Cleary, the president of the Paducah NAACP; all the Kentucky legislators who are here; the chairman of our party, Bob Babbage; Sandra Higgins, the vice chair of our party, a native of western Kentucky; Glenn Dowdy, the head of the Western Kentucky AFL-CIO, is here.

I want to mention one other person here just for personal reasons. Nearly 20 years ago, or anyway, more than 15 years ago, I spent the night in western Kentucky in a nearby county where I met Mike Miller, the Marshall County judge. Now, folks, he kept me up half the night talking about western Kentucky. And that's why I got gray so young in my life. *[Laughter]* That's the only reason Al Gore's got dark hair and I've got gray hair—I had to stay up half the night with Mike Miller a long time ago. *[Laughter]* And I am here to deliver a report: Governor Patton and Senator Ford have made absolutely sure that the administration is perfectly aware that we are all for getting your new locks on the Kentucky Down, Judge. We are there. I have reported. Now, the next time I come to your county, I want to get a good night's sleep. Thank you very much.

Folks, when I asked—oh, one other thing. I'm an old band boy. Let's give a hand to the Murray State Band. They were great. They were great. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Folks, when I asked the American people last night—hello, folks. Keep playing, you're great. When I asked the American people last night, all of you, to help me build a bridge to the 21st century, that's not just a slogan with me. The Vice President will tell you that the thing that dominates our thinking and has for 4 years is the plain fact that our whole country is going through such a period of rapid change, how we work, how we live, how we relate to each other, how we're relating to the rest of the world. Most of these changes are very good, but not all of them are.

We have enormous new opportunities and some stiff new challenges. And all the time I'm thinking, we're only 4 years from a new century. What's this country going to look like when we start that century? What's this country going to look like when our children are our age? What's it going to look like when our grandchildren are our age?

This is the greatest country in human history. We've been around here for over 220 years now because more than half the time in times of profound change our people were both good and smart and did the right thing. And I'm telling you, the issue now is, are we going to build a bridge to the future or a bridge to the past? Do we believe we have to go forward together and help each other to make the most of our own lives, or would we be better off saying you're on your own?

I believe the answer is clear. We said in the convention a lot that Hillary's book was right, that it does take a village. And I believe that is right. We ought to go forward together.

And so tonight I say to you again, I want to build a bridge to the future with a strong economy. That means that we have to keep these interest rates down, investment going, keep the wages rising. That means we do have to balance the budget. But don't let anybody tell you any different, we do not have to balance the budget by breaking Medicare, turning away from our commitments in Medicaid, undermining our investments in our children's future, wrecking the environment, allowing \$15 billion to be taken out of worker's pension funds, turning our backs on the research and development that is critical to our future here in western Kentucky. I got asked—I heard it tonight from the platform—what we want for the Technology Center in western Kentucky. We have to invest in these things, folks. So I say again, yes, balance the budget, but, no, don't compromise our future or divide our people. Do it consistent with our values. We'll grow the economy.

And should we have a tax cut? Yes, we should. But it ought to be the right kind. It ought to be a tax cut we can afford. It ought to be targeted to people who need it. And it ought to be targeted to things that will grow the economy, educating our children and car-

ing for our children, helping people to buy that first home, helping them get in another home, helping them to save for health care costs. That is what this tax cut ought to be.

And I want to say again to you, any tax cut I propose to you in the election will be paid for line by line, dime by dime. I am not going to let this country go back to exploding the debt. I learned what happened. We quadrupled the debt of this country in 12 years before we took office, and today your budget would be in surplus—in surplus—and we could have a bigger tax cut but for the interest we are still paying on the debt we ran up in the 12 years before Bill Clinton and Al Gore took over the White House. That is a fact. We cannot go back.

Now, our opponents say the way to go to the 21st century is to have a tax cut that's 5 times that big, that's undifferentiated, that can't be paid for. Well, I want to tell you something, if they got their way there would be even bigger cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment than the ones I vetoed that Steve talked about, number one. And still it wouldn't cover it, so we would blow up the deficit anyway.

Now, what does that mean? Who cares what happens to the deficit? You should. Why? Because if the Government borrows more money, then your interest rates will go up: what you paid for your home mortgage, your car payment, your credit card payment, what every small business person in Paducah and all over western Kentucky has to pay to borrow money to start a new business or expand a business and hire new people.

So I am telling you, let's keep the economy going and growing and wages rising and jobs coming in with the right kind of tax cut targeted to educating our people, raising our families, meeting their health care costs, and fully paid for in a balanced budget. That's my part of the bridge to the 21st century.

I want you to help me build a bridge to the 21st century where we've got the best educated people in the world; where every person, no matter where they live, because of technology now has a chance, now has a chance to get a world-class education. I want you to support my initiative to make sure every third grader in this country can read on his or her own by the year 2000, with

more tutors, support for teachers, support for parents.

I want you to support our idea which will have phenomenal consequences in places like Kentucky and rural Tennessee and my native State of Arkansas. We are going to see, by the year 2000, that every classroom and every library in every school in this country not only has computers, not only has the teachers trained to teach the students how to use the computers, but is hooked up to the information superhighway, so that for the first time in history, in the poorest hill and hollow in Appalachia, in the poorest inner-city school district in any city in this country, they have access at the same time to the same information children in the wealthiest school districts in America do. It has never happened before. We're going to make it happen if you help us. Will you help us do that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us build that bridge?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. By the year 2000, I want us to make sure that 2 years of college education, at least a community college education, is just as universal in America as a high school education is today, by giving people a tax credit for the cost of that community college tuition for 2 years. We ought to do that.

I want us to make sure that every student in this country who wants to go to college, whether they're young, middle-aged, or older, who needs to do it can do it. I want to preserve our good student loan program, and I want to give people a \$10,000 deduction for the cost of college tuition every year they're in school.

I want us to make sure that we don't short-change education, as our friends in the opposition tried to do in the budget I vetoed. I want us to do more with education. You know as well as I do, we will never, never, never give every American a chance to participate in tomorrow's economy unless we give every American a chance to get a world-class education. And I want you to help me.

And I might say, the Vice President talked about how we're going to run a civil campaign and just talk about our disagreements. I disagree with the condemnation of teachers

which I heard at their convention. I think we ought to be lifting our teachers up and supporting them and supporting their efforts with our children and helping them to do a better job.

I want us to build a bridge to the future that breaks the cycle of welfare dependency. I am proud of the fact that there are 1.8 million fewer people on welfare today than on the day I took the oath of office as President of the United States. I am proud of the fact that child support collections have increased by \$3 billion, 40 percent, since we took office. We're supporting more children. But I'm telling you, we can do more. If everybody paid the child support they owed, 800,000 women and children would leave welfare tomorrow.

It's all very well for us to sign a welfare reform bill, and I was glad to do it, but you cannot make people go to work unless there is a job for them to take. So in the next 4 years let us resolve that we are not only going to tell people who are poor but able-bodied on welfare, "we'll support your children with health care and child care and nutrition, but you have to go to work." Let's resolve to make sure we do everything we can to create the jobs wherever they're needed so people have the jobs to work at. That's a Democratic idea, and we owe it to them.

Let me say just one other thing: We can't build a bridge to the future unless we go there together. More than any other issues, the things that symbolize what we have to do as a community to me are, first, helping families to make the most of their own lives and to succeed at home and at work. Of the many achievements of our administration, I am perhaps most proud, among the top two or three, certainly, of the family and medical leave law because it has enabled 12 million—think about this—12 million American working folks to take a little time off when their babies were born or their parents were sick without losing their jobs. And it hasn't hurt our economy a bit. We are a stronger economy today because we're standing up for families and working people.

So I want to expand the family and medical leave law a little bit to say to these same working people, you can take a little time off to go to regular parent-teacher con-

ferences, because that's important to our future, and to take your kids to the doctor or your parents to the doctor. And I want to say to people, if you earn overtime you ought to have the option—not anybody else, you ought to have the option—to take that overtime in money or in extra time with your family, with your children, with your sick parents, with an uncle or an aunt with Alzheimer's, whatever you need, whatever is best for the family. We need to do what we can to make sure every single American can succeed as a parent and as a worker. That's important.

Last thing I want to say is, we can protect the environment and grow the economy. We still have 10 million kids living within 4 miles of toxic waste dumps. If you give Bill Clinton and Al Gore 4 more years, one of the ways we're going to build that bridge to the future is to clean up two-thirds of those dumps, the two-thirds of them, we want our kids to be living next to parks, not poison. And that will create jobs, not cost them. Will you help us build that bridge?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you help us do that?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Folks, on this beautiful, soft summer night, where there are more people than I ever dreamed I'd see—and I'm sorry you had to wait so long, but a lot of your fellow Kentuckians and folks from Illinois and from Missouri were waiting along the side of the road, too—I just want you to think about what kind of world our children can live in.

The children in this audience today, many of them will be doing jobs that have not been invented yet. Some of them will be doing jobs that no one has imagined yet. Right now, not sometime in the future, right now we are involved in a project with IBM—now, listen to this—to create a supercomputer within the next couple of years that will be able to do as many calculations in one second as you could do with a hand-held calculator in 30,000 years.

No one knows how many opportunities are going to explode for our people. But if we want the kind of America I believe we do, we have to say, we can't make it unless we've got opportunity for everybody. We can't make it until everyone is responsible. And

we can't make it unless we recognize we have an obligation to help all of our people make the most of their own lives to build strong families and strong communities so we can go forward together.

Now, I want you to go home and think about that tonight. Our children are going to live in the age of greatest possibility in human history if we simply have the courage to meet our challenges and protect our values. It's going to be a wonderful ride. And I just want, in this last campaign of my life, to do whatever I can to make sure that we build that bridge to the future sturdy, strong, beautiful, and straight, and wide enough for everybody to walk across. Will you help me?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. For 68 more days will you help?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. And 4 years after that will you help?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. I need you, and we'll do it for America. Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 p.m. at Harbor Plaza. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Paul E. Patton of Kentucky, and his wife, Judi; Martha Layne Collins and Julian Carroll, former Governors of Kentucky; and Mayor Albert Jones of Paducah. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

The President's Radio Address

August 31, 1996

Good morning. On this bright Labor Day weekend I'm speaking to you from America's heartland, where Vice President Gore, Hillary, Tipper, and I are traveling by bus through the small towns and lush farmland of Missouri, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, and my home State of Arkansas.

I took my train trip to Chicago and this bus trip after Chicago because I wanted to look into the faces, the eyes, the hearts of the people of our country who work so hard every day, the people I've been working hard for and fighting for the last 4 years. I just wish every American could have been with