We've cut the deficit for 4 years in a row by 63 percent, to its lowest level in 15 years. But we protected the health of our parents and grandparents, we invested in the education of our children, and we protected our environment for future generations. Together America has created 10.7 million new jobs and 4½ million new homeowners. Unemployment is at 5.2 percent, and the average family income has risen $1,600 in just 2 years.

Now we have to finish the job and balance the budget while we continue to protect our values. My balanced budget plan eliminates the deficit by 2002, while protecting our values by strengthening Medicare and Medicaid, expanding our investments in education, protecting our environment.

When it came to fighting crime, the old politics of division demanded a choice between more police and tough penalties, or effective prevention and fewer guns on the street. We said we need more police and tougher penalties, but we also need effective prevention and fewer guns on the street. So we're putting 100,000 new police officers on the street. We passed "three strikes and you're out" and the death penalty for drug kingpins and cop killers. We banned assault weapons, passed the Brady bill, and fought for safe and drug-free schools.

Two weeks ago, the FBI reported that crime had dropped 4 years in a row to a 10-year low. Now we have more to do to keep crime dropping for 4 more years. We have to finish putting 100,000 police on the street, target violent gangs, ban bullets whose only purpose is to pierce the bulletproof vests of police officers.

When it came to welfare reform, the old politics of division demanded a choice between strict time limits and work requirements, on the one hand, and child care and creating jobs for people to move, on the other hand. We said, we need time limits and work requirements because welfare is supposed to be a second chance, not a way of life. But we also need to work together to create jobs, because if we expect work we have to make sure people have a chance to work.

Well, today there are nearly 2 million fewer people on welfare than there were the day I took office. In August, I signed historic welfare reform legislation that would change the welfare system forever. Now we have a responsibility to make the most of this opportunity to lift millions of families from welfare to work. And I have a plan to move a million more people from welfare to work over the next 4 years.

When it came to our American community, the old politics of division was at its worst. Instead of bringing people together around common values, the old politics of division tried to drive wedges between us, to take advantage of our fears. We must never let that happen again.

Unfortunately, here at the end of the election, some people are tempted to take advantage of these issues for political advantage. I say to them, we've seen the results of this before. The politics of division yields only division and gridlock. The search for common ground yields solutions and progress and a future worthy of our past.

So whether you belong to the party of Lincoln, the party of Jefferson, whether you're independent or unaffiliated, remember that most of all you belong to the community of America. We are all in this together. We will rise or fall together. So let us build a bridge together, wide enough and strong enough to carry all of us into the bright future that is America in the 21st century.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:40 p.m. on November 1 at Las Cruces International Airport in Las Cruces, NM, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 2.

Remarks in San Antonio, Texas

November 2, 1996

The President. Thank you. Thank you. Good morning, San Antonio.

Audience members. Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The President. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm glad to see you here in large numbers. I'm glad to see you here in high spirits. I'm glad to see so many young people here, for this election is about you. My heart is full of gratitude today.

Thank you, Congressman Henry Gonzalez, for what you said and for so many years of

exemplary leadership. Thank you, Congressman Kika de la Garza, Congressman Frank Tejeda. Thank you, Governor Dolph Briscoe, for being here and for all the help that you have given to us. Thank you, Texas Democratic Chair Bill White. To Senator Carlos Truan and the other members of the legislature here; my longtime friend Wilhelmina Delco. To our congressional candidate Charlie Jones and—[*applause*]—a little there. And thank you, Victor Morales, for your long, courageous struggle.

Thank you, Linda Chavez-Thompson, for coming home, the first woman ever elected to national office at the AFL–CIO. Thank you, Secretary Federico Peña, for your great job at the Department of Transportation, for coming here to be with us. Thank you, Ann Richards. And I want to thank whoever organized the progam so I didn't have to speak right behind her. [*Laughter*] Thank you, my old friend Garry Mauro, for being there for me for over 20 years now. And I want to thank some of the other folks who have come here to be with us today, and I'd like to ask them to stand: Jimmy Smits, Esai Morales, Johnny Canales, Jeff Valdez, Liz Torres, and Tommy Lee Jones. Thank you all for being here. Thank you.

I thank the Texas Victory Democrats for the work you have done and the work you will do between now and Tuesday. And again let me say, as Hillary has already said, a profound word of thanks to Henry Cisneros for the work he has done for America these last 4 years. I'm delighted to see his parents here, and I'm glad Mary Alice came. And I want the people of San Antonio to know you would have been so proud every day of them for the last 4 years. I go places all over America, far from San Antonio; mayors, people who build housing, people who work in law enforcement come up to me and spontaneously say, Henry Cisneros is the finest Secretary of HUD we have ever had in the history of the United States. Everywhere they say it.

I was in Miami the other day, and man said to me, "There are hundreds of people who are no longer homeless. You could walk down streets at night that used to be littered with people spending the night. They aren't there anymore because we had a dream and an idea and Secretary Cisneros supported us and we took the homeless people off the street."

I was in the another part of the country the other day, and people said, "We were absolutely overwhelmed with substandard public housing infested with gangs and guns and drugs. And Secretary Cisneros helped us to tear it down, get rid of it, and build new housing for people to live in dignity and raise their children in an environment in which anyone could be proud of."

Ladies and gentlemen, I did want to come and stand in front of the Alamo on the last weekend of the last campaign of my entire life. I wanted to come here because I have such vivid memories of this place. Twenty-four years ago, I remember, in October, Congressman Gonzalez and I, when I was a very young man, on a Saturday morning like this, after we'd had a dinner at the Menger Hotel, got Congressman Hale Boggs up in the morning, and he got on a plane and flew to Alaska, to his death. There was something in your local paper about it.

I have vivid memories of all the times I have ever been here. I remember in 1992 when I came here, and then along toward the end of the campaign, some of my friends from Texas put about $200 worth of that mango ice cream on my plane, and we all ate it until we couldn't walk. I got a little to take with me today, too. [*Laughter*] I remember so many things. But this place, the Alamo, has always symbolized to me the transformation of Texas, the transformation of America, and the best hope for our future. The Alamo is not just a place of great personal courage, it is a place of great standoff in the beginning between two nations and two peoples. And the story of the Alamo over the last 160 years and the story of San Antonio is the story of the reconciliation and friendships between two great nations and two great peoples here in Texas and throughout the United States. It is a great, great story.

We represent people who believe that by working together and helping each other we can all do better. Franklin Roosevelt, as Henry reminded me this morning, built your wonderful Riverwalk during the Great Depression. Lyndon Johnson did teach in Cotulla, not very far from here, where he

learned what it was like to be poor and Mexican-American.

We have always come out of a tradition that believed that if we worked together to give each other the tools—not a guarantee but a chance—to make the most of our own lives, this country could move closer to its ideals and we would all be better off than if we just said, ''You're on your own.'' When we come together and search for common ground we are always, always stronger as a nation. There is nothing we can't do.

Now, in 3 days before this election, I really believe more than anything else what is left is not about the evidence, it's about the attitude. It's not so much about the mind as it is about the heart. You know, 4 years ago, Al Gore and I asked you to take a chance on us when we said, ''We're going to change the direction of this country. We're sick of the politics of division in Washington. We want to create more opportunity for everybody, demand more responsibility from everybody, and create an American community of everybody, where everybody's got a role to play and a place at the table.'' You just took a chance; you didn't know. But now we have a record.

Four years ago, we had high unemployment, widespread frustration, rising crime, increasing family breakdown, rising welfare rolls, fears, hatred, and people had given up on being able to do anything about any of our problems. I was determined to start a new direction for this country, to stop pointing fingers and say, ''Here's my hand. I don't care whether you're a Democrat or Republican or what you are. If you will work with me to make this country a better place, I'll work with you, but we've got to take along everybody. We've got to give every single person a chance.''

Now, you didn't know; you just took a chance. But look at the evidence. We have 10.7 million new jobs in America; 5.2 percent unemployment; rising incomes for the first time in a decade. The deficit has gone down in all 4 years for the first time in the 20th century, down 63 percent. Homeownership is at a 15-year high. We have nearly 2 million fewer people on welfare. Child support collections are up 50 percent across the country. The crime rate has gone down for 4 years in a row; it's at a 10-year low all across America. We raised the minimum wage for 10 million people. We've protected people from losing their health insurance if they've been sick or somebody in their family has been sick or they changed jobs. We said hospitals can't kick mothers and newborn babies out of the hospital after only 24 hours anymore. Twelve million people took advantage of the family and medical leave law and got to take a little time off from work when a baby was born or a family member was sick, without losing their jobs. This country is in better shape than it was 4 years ago. We are moving in the right direction.

Let me ask you something—this is an affair of the mind and the heart. When it was published yesterday that we had 210,000 new jobs in America, my opponent said we've got the worst economy in 20 years. [*Laughter*] I tell you what, I'll take that bet. I ask every person in Texas who believes it is the worst economy in 20 years to vote for Senator Dole, and every person who knows better to vote for me. I'll gladly take the results of the election in Texas.

Now, just 2 weeks ago, my opponent said that we had the worst economy in 100 years. [*Laughter*] So I think he's campaigning for me now. I mean, after all, who else could make up 80 years in 2 weeks? I think we're doing pretty well.

All this is not a matter of the evidence. What do you think the Republicans would be saying if they had a President who had presided over an administration that had cut the deficit by 63 percent, that had the highest job growth rate of any Republican administration in 70 years, that had the lowest average unemployment in 20 years, the lowest average inflation in 30 years, the biggest decline in income inequality among working people in 27 years, the lowest combined rates of unemployment and inflation since Lyndon Johnson was President 28 years ago? If they had a record like that, what do you think they'd be saying? They'd be saying, ''It is morning in America.'' [*Laughter*] They'd be saying that the President can virtually levitate. [*Laughter*]

Why? Why are they doing what they're doing? Why is the election in doubt? Why aren't we ahead in Texas in the polls? It is

an affair of the heart. It is because we have practiced the politics of division for so long, we have tried to turn our opponents into aliens. We have been told, ''Oh, those Democrats, they don't really believe in work and being tough on crime and all that.'' This is an affair of the heart.

And I tell you, this country does well when we find common ground, when we build bridges together, when we acknowledge it takes a village. And when we say we're on our own and our opponents are our enemies and they're no good and we need to be divided from one another, we always pay the price. Look at the history of the Alamo in the last 160 years. Does anyone doubt it is better now that we are joined together with our friends in Mexico and together with each other than it was 160 years ago?

And so I ask you to get people to think differently and feel differently about this. Look at the budget choices. You bet I did veto their budget; it was bad for America. It would have divided us. And when they shut the Government down, I thought about the Alamo. They said, ''Oh, the President will cave; he won't be able to stand having the Government close.'' We had this economy rocking along. We were number one in automobile production for the first time since the seventies. And they were threatening to default on our debt and wreck the economy. They said, ''Oh, he'll blink.'' And I said, ''You know, I'd a lot rather see the American people hurt for 2 or 3 weeks or 2 or 3 months than 20 or 30 years; shut her down. I'm not going to buy your budget; I'm not going to let you do it; it is wrong.''

But you have to understand. What they believe the old politics of division is, ''We've got to have a tax cut, and so it's unfortunate but we'll just cut education and paralyze environmental protection and take away Medicaid's guarantee of health care to people with disabilities and poor children and wreck the Medicare program, because we've got to have this other thing; it's either/or.''

I believe we can find common ground, we can balance the budget, have a targeted tax cut for people who really need it for education, for childrearing, for home buying, for health care, and still protect education, the environment, Medicare, and Medicaid. That's common ground.

Now, the old politics of division used welfare as a whipping boy, you know, ''Everybody on welfare is lazy; nobody wants to work.'' And then people on the other side said, ''Oh, no, no, they're good people; we've got to take care of their children.'' I said, ''Why do we have to choose between beating up on a system that doesn't work and protecting children? Why can't we do both?'' We have moved almost 2 million people from welfare to work. I signed a bill that protects health care and food and gives more for child care and then says we've got to create jobs for people who are able-bodied to change the welfare check to a paycheck. And I've got a plan to put another million jobs into the cities to create those jobs and then require people to take them. That's the new politics of common ground.

The old politics of division on law and order was all, you know, ''Talk tough. Don't do anything, but talk tough. Get tough on criminals.'' And then the opponents would say, ''All they care about is being nice to people and trying to keep people out of trouble in the first place.'' I said, ''Well, that's the dumbest thing I ever heard of. Why shouldn't we try to keep our kids out of the trouble in the first place and still do things that will be tough on serious criminals?''

So we passed the crime bill to put 100,000 police on the street, to take assault weapons off the street, to tell fugitives and felons and stalkers they couldn't buy handguns and protect the rights of people who were hunters and sportsmen to have them, and to give our children something to say yes to in prevention programs and to support safe and drug-free schools. Why was it punishment or prevention? Why was it division? Why, if you wanted to help kids stay out of trouble, were you soft on crime? We proved you could do both. You know what? We got 4 years of declining crime, the only Democratic ticket in history to be endorsed by every major law enforcement organization in the country because common ground is better than division and it works. It works.

The biggest problem I see with this, as we go into the future, is that nearly every family I know, even people with very good incomes,

has faced some conflict between their responsibilities as parents and their responsibility at work. Everywhere I go in this country people talk to me about it. I believe we have to create an America where you can succeed at home and work.

This is a good example. When I was trying to pass the family leave law and Senator Dole and Congressman Gingrich were leading the fight against it, they said I was interfering in the economy; I would hurt the economy; I would burden the economy; we would undermine our recovery. We've got a higher rate of job growth than any Republican administration in 70 years, record numbers of new small businesses, and we've protected 12 million families. I think we ought to help people succeed at home and at work. That's the new politics of common ground.

I think we've done the right thing to help families with this new requirement of more educational television and a television rating system. I think we've done the right thing to try to fight against Republican cuts in the safe and drug-free schools program. We need more people out there telling kids that drugs are wrong, illegal, and can kill you, not fewer people. We don't need fewer people. And we did the right thing to be the first administration in history to stand up to the tobacco lobby and say, ''You can't advertise and sell cigarettes illegally to children anymore. You're killing them.'' It was the right thing to do.

I believe we are doing the right thing whenever we work together. You know, they honestly believe on the other side that you can't grow the economy while protecting the environment. That's what they really believe. I'm not telling you they're bad people; they believe that. I know; I've talked to enough of them. They honestly believe it.

But look at the record. We've taken tons—millions of tons of chemicals out of the air in the last 4 years. We have improved our drinking water. We have raised standards for our food. We've cleaned up lots of toxic waste dumps. We've protected more natural heritage. And the economy is growing faster because we can grow faster if we have sensible, proper environmental protection and public health. That's the right way to do that.

I want you to just look around today. I'm telling you, that's what this is all about. If I were a Republican President—after all the rhetoric they've used—with a declining deficit; a growing economy; a declining crime rate; declining welfare rolls; no Russian missiles pointed at our kids, by the way; and a stronger America with a stronger military, they'd be saying it's morning in America. But they love to practice the politics of division.

Look at the Alamo, folks. Think of Bosnia. Think of Northern Ireland. Think of the Middle East. Think of all those tribal wars now going on in Africa. Think of your own history. The great thing about this country is that in our best moments, we say, ''Our differences don't matter as much as our shared values. And everybody who believes in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence is part of our America. If you show up for work, if you show up for school, you do what you're supposed to do, we don't need to know anything else about you. You are part of our America.'' That is what I believe.

So I want you to go out between now and Tuesday and say, ''Listen, this country is moving in the right direction. The President has good plans for the future, but most important, we have got to build a bridge to the future that is wide enough and strong enough for all of us to walk across, and we've got to do it together. That is the question. We must be together. Build common ground, reject division, and build that bridge with us.''

Thank you, San Antonio. God bless you. And be there Tuesday.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. at the Alamo. In his remarks, he referred to former Governors of Texas Dolph Briscoe and Ann Richards; Carlos Truan, Texas State senator; Wilhelmina Delco, former Texas State representative; Charles Jones, candidate for Texas' 23d Congressional District; Victor Morales, Senatorial candidate; Garry Mauro, Texas land commissioner; Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros' wife, Mary Alice; and entertainers Jimmy Smits, Esai Morales, Johnny Canales, Jeff Valdez, Liz Torres, and Tommy Lee Jones.

Remarks in Little Rock, Arkansas

November 2, 1996

The President. Thank you. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, first of all, let me say it's good to be home, and thank you for coming out to say hello. I want to thank the Parkview High School Band, the Central High School Band, the Little Rock Community Choir. I want to thank all of those who are up here on the platform with me. I don't have everybody's name up here; I don't know if I can remember without eyes in the back of my head. I never needed eyes in the back of my head until I moved to Washington. [*Laughter*]

I'm glad to be here today. I have just come from a great rally in front of the Alamo in San Antonio. And we were in El Paso, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, California on the day before that. I'm on my back across the country, from here to New Orleans and then on to Florida. But I wanted to stop here just to be with you once before this election to say a special word of thanks to my good friend David Pryor for his lifetime of service to our State, to Congressman Ray Thornton for his lifetime of service and to wish him well on his new service on the Supreme Court. Thank you, Ray.

I thank my good friend Dale Bumpers. Folks, I don't know what I'd have done in the last 4 years if it hadn't been for Dale and David up there keeping me sane in the tough times, standing up for you and for what was right, and never being intimidated by some of the most overbearing and destructive tactics I have ever seen coming from the other side.

I want to thank Sharon Priest and Lottie Shackelford and Julia Peck Mobley and Gus Wingfield, Charlie Daniels, Mayor Dailey, Mayor Hayes, Judge Villens. Thank you, Charlie Cole Chaffin, for running for lieutenant governor, and good luck to you. You were terrific. Bynum Gibson, my long-time friend Jimmy Lee Fisher, who was the coordinator of my campaign in the First Congressional District in 1978. We've been together a long time. Thank you, Jimmy Lee.

I read an article in the paper today, our morning paper here, saying that if the past was any precedent, it might be a mixed blessing for Winston Bryant and Vic Snyder and Marion Berry and Ann Henry for me to be coming down here today, because Arkansas people didn't really like for the President to tell them how to vote. Well, I couldn't tell you how to vote when I was Governor; I don't know how I'm going to start now. [*Laughter*] It never occurred to me to tell you how to vote. I will say this, since he asked me for it, I'm going to give Vic Snyder my vote on Tuesday. I'll be here, and I'll be proud to vote for him. And I'll be proud to vote for Winston Bryant, and I wish I could vote for Marion and Ann.

Let me say to all of you, you ought to vote for yourselves, your children, and your future on Tuesday. But you need to understand that while all four of these people are friends of mine and I have worked with them and I know them very well, what you really should be voting on is what you want our country and this State to look like when we start that new century just 4 years from now.

We're about to have a Presidential election for the last President of the 20th century and the first President of the 21st century. And the stakes could hardly be greater. We're actually very fortunate because not only are the consequences large but the choice is so clear.

I really don't like a lot of what's happened in politics in the last several years. I don't like the fact that, especially when you get down toward the end and people get desperate, they think the only thing to do is to try to convince you that their opponent is no good. The truth is, since you all started me out 22 years ago, it has been my experience that most people who do the public's work are honest people, they work hard and they do what they think is right, virtually all the time—in both parties. That's been my experience. And what I want to talk to you about today is that there are honest differences here. You know, I worked with Representative Hutchinson when he was in the State legislature; I liked him. We had a cordial relationship. Hillary and I send our prayers out to Tim and his wife for the welfare of their son. I know all of us feel that way, without regard to party. We ought to get away from this idea that we have to demonize our opponents in order to clarify our differences.