Weekly Compilation of

Presidential Documents

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Editor's Note: The President was in Lake Placid, NY, on August 18, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

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Week Ending Friday, August 18, 2000

Written Responses to Questions Submitted by the Arabic-Language Newspaper Al Hayat

August 10, 2000

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Do you have any special message for the Arab world after Camp David?

The President. We have in the next few months an historic chance to resolve the Palestinian issue. It is the core of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and we can and must resolve it on a basis that's fair, honorable, and lasting. Together, we need to seize this opportunity, or it will be lost. The parties cannot do it alone. We need the help of our Arab friends in the region. And we need an approach that resolves problems in a practical and fair way so that the principles that guide Arab-Israeli peace—comprehensiveness and implementation of United Nations Security Resolutions 242 and 338, including land for peace—can be realized in a way that meets the needs of both sides. What is fair and just for Palestinians and Arabs must also be fair and just for Israelis. There cannot be a winner and a loser in these negotiations. We must have two winners, or we will lose the peace.

I know that there is a deep sense of grievance in the Arab world, and through nearly 8 years of working for peace alongside Chairman Arafat, I understand the suffering and pain of the Palestinians. But I also know that the only pathway to realize Palestinian aspirations is through negotiations, through the process of give and take where each side can have its needs met and its hopes realized. I urge all those in this region committed to peace to join with me and to seize this historic moment.

The opportunity to work for a lasting peace between the Palestinian and Israeli people has been among the most meaningful and rewarding aspects of my Presidency. I am motivated in these efforts by the possibility of a better future for all of the peoples in the region. We must all remain focused on this better future, a future in which the Palestinian people might finally achieve through negotiations their aspiration of a Palestinian State recognized by and integrated with the world, at peace and working to address the needs of the Palestinian people.

U.S. Role in the Peace Process

Q. How would you characterize the American role during Camp David talks? Do you see that role evolving in the future, and if so, in what direction?

The President. The talks at Camp David were revolutionary in their detail, their directness, and their honesty about what each side needed to reach an agreement. I worked personally—sometimes all night long—with both sides to advance this process. Both sides, both Chairman Arafat and Prime Minister Barak, worked hard and in good faith on difficult problems. Sometimes we proposed ideas, suggestions, even language. We made progress across the board. At the same time, our role was not and will never be a substitute for direct Israeli-Palestinian engagement. We will need both levels of interaction to reach an agreement.

U.S. Embassy

Q. You have repeatedly urged the two sides of the conflict not to take any unilateral action that could block progress in the peace process. However, you told Israeli television in your recent interview that you are reviewing the decision to move the Embassy to Jerusalem by the end of the year. Don't you consider this announcement a contradiction of the stated American policy and an impediment to your peace efforts?

The President. From the beginning of my administration, one factor has guided me: to take no action that I judged would harm the peace process. That still is my guiding principle. The 2 weeks I spent at Camp David

underscores my commitment to doing everything I can to help both sides reach an agreement.

With regard to the Embassy, I stated that I would review the issue by the end of the year, and I will do so. It is my great hope that by then Israelis and Palestinians—with our help—will have reached an agreement on Jerusalem that meets their needs. Then I would also be able to inaugurate an American Embassy in the capital of a Palestinian State. I firmly believe that the Jerusalem problem can be resolved in a way in which both sides' national aspirations can be realized.

Jerusalem

Q. Many Arabs consider President Clinton as the most sympathetic to the suffering of the Palestinian people and their political aspirations and the only leader in their history to have achieved breakthroughs in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Are you concerned that taking a position in the issue of Jerusalem at this stage would hurt not only Arabs but Muslims and Christians around the world?

The President. I have worked hard to understand the plight of the Palestinian people, to understand their aspirations, their losses, and their frustrations. My trip to Gaza and the opportunity to address the Palestinian National Council with Chairman Arafat was critical to this process and a great honor for me.

I am guided in my efforts by one central goal, the need to promote a fair and honorable solution to each of the core issues that both sides find acceptable. Jerusalem is a difficult issue because of its critical importance to Islam, Judaism, and Christianity. It is a unique problem which requires a unique solution. In this regard, Jerusalem is really three cities: It is a municipal city like any other with problems of environment, traffic control, and city services; it is a holy city which embodies the values of three great religious traditions and which contains religious sites sacred to three religions; and it is a political city which symbolizes the national aspirations of Israelis and Palestinians. Resolving the issue of Jerusalem means dealing with all three of these dimensions in a way that harms no one's interests and promotes the interests of all. And I believe it can be done.

Q. The Camp David summit was a landmark in terms of tackling for the first time the core issues, and at the same time it did not produce the hoped-for final agreement. Are you worried that reducing your personal involvement in the process would lead to a speedy deterioration of the situation?

The President. One of the remarkable aspects of the Camp David experience was that Israelis and Palestinians engaged on the core issues in an unprecedented manner. They broke taboos and discussed issues seriously and not on the basis of mere rhetoric and slogans. I am ready to do my part. To do so effectively, both sides will need to be ready to make historic decisions and, on the most sensitive issues, recognize that both must be satisfied.

Confidentiality of the Peace Process

Q. Did you receive a letter from Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat recently? What can you tell us about it?

The President. One of the reasons Arabs and Israelis continue to look to the United States for help is that we protect their confidences. I have great respect for Chairman Arafat, and I'm sure you understand that I'm not going to start now by talking publicly about letters either from him or Prime Minister Barak.

Further Negotiations

Q. Are you willing to issue an unconditional invitation for Arafat and Prime Minister Barak to come to Washington and give peace another shot?

The President. I'm willing to do anything if it will help Israelis and Palestinians reach an agreement. At the same time, I know that the two sides need to reflect on what happened at Camp David and work together. Without an Israeli-Palestinian foundation on the substance of the issues, the United States cannot play its role effectively. That process got a big boost at Camp David. It needs to be continued now. Both leaders must be ready to make historic decisions.

Egypt's Role in the Peace Process

Q. There has been criticism of Egypt's role. What is your view?

The President. The fact is that all that has happened since the original Camp David in September 1978, including Madrid and Oslo, is a vindication of the courageous and visionary policy of Egypt. Egypt was a pioneer for peace and continues to be a key partner for the United States. We agree on the fundamentals of the peace process, and we will not be able to reach an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on these core issues without close consultation with Egypt. We are engaged in such a process today.

NOTE: The responses referred to Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority and Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel. The questions and answers were released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 11. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Statement on the Executive Order To Improve Access to Services for Persons With Limited English Proficiency

August 11, 2000

Today I am issuing an Executive order to help people with limited English proficiency (LEP) access Federal services. Many people who are eligible for Federal services cannot effectively use those services because they are not proficient in English. The Executive order directs Federal agencies to improve the language-accessibility of their programs by December 11, 2000. This initiative complements our commitment to promoting programs to help individuals learn English.

I am concerned that language barriers are preventing the Federal Government and recipients of Federal financial assistance from effectively serving a large number of people in this country who are eligible to participate in their programs. Failure to systematically confront language barriers can lead to unequal access to Federal benefits based on national origin and can harm the mission of Federal agencies. Breaking down these barriers will allow individuals with limited English proficiency to more fully participate in American society.

This Executive order directs Federal agencies to break down language barriers by implementing consistent standards of language assistance across agencies and among all recipients of Federal financial assistance. Under this flexible standard, agencies and recipients must take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities, taking into account a variety of considerations. Among the factors to be considered are the number or proportion of LEP persons in the eligible service population, the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program, the nature and importance of the service provided by the program, and the available resources.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Xavier Becerra in Los Angeles, California

August 11, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Let me say, first, how delighted I am to be here with Xavier and Carolina. Thank you, Fermin Cuza, for being here and standing up for him. I thank my good friend Luis Gutierrez from Chicago for bringing his family here today. We were laughing—when I was running for President in early 1992, he was out there running with me. We were standing by the entrance to the El in Chicago early one morning, shaking hands, when only my mother thought I could be elected President. [*Laughter*] And 8 years later, it's worked out pretty well.

I want to thank Tom Umberg for the distinguished work he did in the Clinton-Gore administration, and I thank you for being here. And Councilman Pacheco, thank you. And Mike Feuer, who's gone, I have to mention him because he's one of the guys that voted to have the city make a contribution to our convention so we could be here today. [*Laughter*] And I want to thank him.

Let me say, I was profoundly honored to present Cruz Reynoso with the Medal of Freedom, and I thank you for coming here,

sir, and for all you have done for civil rights and human rights over all these years.

I'm delighted to have the chance to start my stay at the Democratic Convention with all of you for Xavier Becerra. I am going on to a dinner for the Host Committee of the convention, to make sure we've nailed down every detail of what we're supposed to be doing here and what we have to do. And I'll have a chance over the next couple of days, over the weekend, to go around and meet with most of the various caucuses of our party and many of the State delegations and then have a lot of them come to me to say the most important message I have to say to the Democrats, which is, thank you. Thank you for me and for Hillary and for Chelsea and our family and friends and our administration, for giving me the chance to run in '92, for sticking with me in '96, and for supporting a new direction for America.

Xavier talked about some of the results. I have tried to be a builder. In the first campaign our slogan was "Putting People First," and our theme song was, "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow." In the second campaign, our slogan was "Building a Bridge to the 21st Century." And we built our bridge to the 21st century, but we still can't stop thinking about tomorrow.

And that's why I'm here tonight. I admire your Congressman and, obviously, for so many of you, your friend. Nothing I have achieved in the last 8 years would have been possible if it had just been me out there talking. I had a great team in the White House, led by the Vice President, and an unbelievable group of people in Congress who, in the majority, and later in the minority, stood strong for the things that we together believed would build America and stood against those things we thought would divide America or tear America down.

And so the simple message I have is, we've got to keep this progress going. We have to keep changing but changing in the right direction. We have a chance, because of all this prosperity and social progress, to build the future of our dreams for our children. We have a chance to make sure that not only the people who can afford to come to a fundraiser but the people who work for a minimum wage can all send their kids to college and have a chance to live the American dream.

So I have said all over America, I'll say again, you need to know the following things about this election. It is a huge election. It is maybe the only time in your lifetime you will be voting for President, Vice President, and Congress and Senate, with literally the chance to build the future of your dreams for your children in your hands, where there is so much economic prosperity and social progress, the absence of domestic threat or foreign threat, a great deal of national self-confidence and great good feeling, which our friends in the other party tried to tap into in Philadelphia—[*laughter*]—but they wanted you to believe it all happened by accident, you remember? [*Laughter*]

My old daddy used to say, "If you find a turtle on a fencepost, chances are it didn't get there by accident." [*Laughter*] You know, I remember when they were in office and in charge of economic policy for 12 years, they took credit if the Sun came up in the morning. [*Laughter*] Now they want you to believe it all just happened by accident. "I have no idea where all these jobs came from." [*Laughter*]

Well, what I want to say to you is, I think we ought to have a great, happy, positive election about the differences in our ideas. I don't believe we ought to even allude to the fact that we think there is something wrong with them as people. We've had enough of that the last 20 years to last this country for the rest of its existence. We've had enough of the politics of personal destruction and division, but we'll never get enough of the politics of honest debate and difference. That's how we grow. That's how we learn.

Nobody's got a monopoly on the truth, and we ought to say we're going to assume in this election that they're all honorable men and women, from the candidates for President and Vice President to the Senate candidates to the House candidates. We're going to assume they love their families, and they love their country, and they will do what they think is right. But we do believe they ought to tell the American people what they intend to do because, while this is a very important election and there are profound differences,

I get the feeling most days that only the Democrats want the people to know what the differences are. And we see in some campaigns across America where they're complaining that we're running negative campaigns if we tell the voters how they vote and what they said. It's almost as if they have a right to conceal their record and their positions and what they intend to do.

So all I want to say is, I posit that they're good people, and I think we ought to forget about the recriminations against the kind of politics that so many of them have put us through for a long time. I don't believe in negative campaigns. But I think we ought to have a debate here, because there are differences. Let me just give you a few examples.

If Xavier Becerra and Luis Gutierrez were in the majority rather than in the minority in Congress and if Tom Daschle were the Senate majority leader instead of the minority leader, along with Speaker Gephardt, this year we would have already signed into law the Patients' Bill of Rights, the minimum wage, equal pay strengthening for women, hate crimes legislation, sensible gun safety legislation that mandates child trigger locks, closed the gun show loophole, stopped the importation of large capacity ammunition clips, hate crimes legislation—I don't know if I said that or not—and school construction legislation to help places like Los Angeles which are being overrun by more and more school kids and where we need new buildings built, old buildings fundamentally adapted, and repairs done.

Now, those are just some of the things that I have proposed that our side is for that they're not. So there are consequences to this election. It matters who's in the House. It matters who's in the Senate. And I am doing what I can to help our side in the House and the Senate.

I'll give you another example. Every single year since our party has been in the minority, every year I have to fight against attempts to weaken the environmental laws of the United States. And every year, because enough of the Democrats stay with me, we say no.

So now you've got cleaner air, cleaner water; literally 43 million more Americans breathing air up to Federal standards than before we took office; cleaner water, 450,000 fewer instances of sickness a year because of polluted water; set aside more land than any administration except the two Roosevelts in the continental United States. We closed 3 times as many toxic waste dumps in 8 years as they did in 12—3 times as many. And the economy got better, not worse. But every year we still had to fight efforts to roll back these environmental standards. So you have a choice. All I'm saying is, it really matters who gets elected to the House and who gets elected to the Senate. And, of course, the Senate also has to confirm the appointments of the President, including the appointments to the Supreme Court.

Now, you may have noticed that I have a particular interest in one U.S. Senate race. [*Laughter*] California has two women Senators; I think New York should have at least one. And I hope you will help.

Then we come to the Presidency and the Vice Presidency. This is the week that Al Gore and Joe Lieberman get to make their case to the American people the way their counterparts did in Philadelphia. And I'll make you a prediction, and I haven't seen either one of their remarks. I'll bet you they'll be far more specific about what they're for, because we don't have to hide what we're for. And I'll bet you Al Gore will say the same thing in the general election he said in the primary, because he doesn't want anybody to develop amnesia about what he said in the primary. [*Laughter*]

And all I want us to do is to actually flesh all this out and let everybody say, they have differences. They have differences on education, on health care, on the environment, on what it takes to build one America, including equal pay, the minimum wage, hate crimes, employment nondiscrimination, and a woman's right to choose. They have differences. So let's just set them out there, and let the people decide.

They have differences on crime policy. Were we right or wrong to put 100,000 police on the street? Are we right to try to put 50,000 more in the highest crime areas? Were we right or wrong to do the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban? And should we close the gun show loophole? And should we

require child trigger locks? And should we ban the importation of large capacity ammunition clips?

The Vice President thinks, in a gutsy move, and I agree with him, that we ought to say to people that buy handguns they ought to have a photo ID license like people that get cars that shows they know how to use it safely and they passed a background check. Now, who's right and who's wrong?

We trust the American people with our positions, those that are popular and those that aren't; those that rile certain powerful interest groups and those that don't. And the most important thing—I'll just say a little something about this in detail—there is a profound, yawning difference on economic policy and tax policy.

Now, I think that I've earned a right to talk a little bit about economic policy. And Al Gore has earned the right to be heard about economic policy because he cast the tie-breaking vote for the '93 economic plan that got interest rates down and business investment up and started this whole economy on this wild ride we've been on the last 8 years.

And so what I want to say to you is this: They say, now we've got a huge surplus. In Philadelphia—I got tickled listening to them—they have no idea where it came from. It just happened. [*Laughter*] It must have happened in spite of President Clinton, since he never did anything right. [*Laughter*] And he and Al Gore, they just rocked along for the ride, and the Democrats, they never did anything about it.

Back in '94, before they knew it would work, they didn't mind laying our House Members out on the cold slab of political defeat because they voted for it. They thought it was our responsibility in 1994, before the American people could see that it was going to work.

So now they say, "Okay, they got rid of the deficit, and we've got a little surplus, and so what, they paid $400 billion off of the debt." [*Laughter*] "Who cares? It's just one of those things. But what we should do now," they say, "is, since we're going to have this big projected surplus over the next 10 years, enough to get us out of debt for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President"—and I want you all to follow this kind of close, because there's a reason why I'm telling you all of this. I know I'm preaching to the saved here. [*Laughter*] But all of you have friends who aren't as active in politics as you. All of you have friends who may not think this is such a big election. Every one of you has friends who don't understand what the differences are between the two candidates for President and Vice President, and the candidates for the Senate and the House—every one of you.

And it's not good enough for you to come here and give this man a contribution. He's already been chairman of the Hispanic caucus in Congress. He's already been recognized as a leader. But he needs a little wind at his back here. He needs to have all the things he's fought for validated. And that requires that you go out from this city and this convention and talk to everybody you know and say, "You've got to vote. Here's what the differences are. I want you to think about it."

So let me finish. What they say—it sounds so good. They say, "Okay, this surplus has materialized. We don't know where it came from." [*Laughter*] "We're quite sure that President Clinton and Vice President Gore had absolutely nothing to do with it. It just sort of appeared. And it's your money, and we're going to give it back to you." And it sounds good, right? "It is your money." And so they say, "We're going to give it back to you. We're going to have"—"going" is the operative word—[*laughter*]—"over the next 10 years $2.2 trillion. That's a whole bunch of money, and it will be good for you if we give it back to you, and it's yours, anyway."

And we say, "But, wait a minute. We have to hold back enough money to extend the life of Social Security and Medicare so the baby boom generation can retire without bankrupting their children. We ought to add a prescription drug benefit that all seniors can afford. We have the largest and most diverse student population in our history; we're going to have to invest more in education, with all these teachers retiring. And besides that, something might come up." [*Laughter*] Either the money might not come in or an emergency might happen, like we've had 3 years of farm emergencies where we've taken

the tax dollars people in the city of Los Angeles paid and given them to farmers all across America because we have an interest in preserving family farms and because agricultural income has been so distressed. Just like they gave their money to you when you had your earthquake and your other natural disasters. Something might come up. In California, you know that. Things come up—earthquakes, fires. [*Laughter*] I mean, I've been through everything but a plague of locusts with you folks. [*Laughter*] So we say something might come up.

And then we say, "We're for a tax cut. But we're honest. Ours costs way less than half theirs, and it's focused on what families really need—tax cuts for long-term care for their elderly or ill, disabled family members, tax cuts for the cost of college tuition, for the cost of child care, for retirement savings, for alleviating the marriage penalty. And even though ours costs way less than half theirs, about three-quarters of the American people would be better off under ours. They get more benefits."

Plus, ours allows you to still get us out of debt by 2012, which the Council of Economic Advisers said 2 weeks ago would keep interest rates a percent lower for a year, for 10 years—a percent a year lower for 10 years. Do you know what's that worth to you? It's worth about $850 a year in lower home mortgages to the average family and lower car payments, lower college loan payments, lower interest rates for business loans so businesses can expand more, hire more people, and earn more money.

In other words, almost all the Americans—at least four out of five Americans would lose more in higher interest rates under their plan than they would get in tax cuts.

But the main thing is, I want to tell you—so it's bad economics. And the Chairman of the Federal Reserve said over and over and over again, in this strong economy, if you have a huge tax cut, he'll raise interest rates to keep inflation down. But the real big deal is, it is a projected surplus.

Now, you have a—I bet you in your mind, particularly if you've got to think about raising kids and sending them to college, you probably have a projected income. [*Laughter*] And what is your projected income for the next 10 years, anyway? Just think about it. You have a projected income. Now, if I ask you right now to sign a contract to give it all away today, your projected income for the next 10 years, on something you really wanted, would you do it? No new money for education or health care or rainy days or emergencies because you really want this thing I'm going to give you. All you got to do is give away all your income for 10 years. Would you do it?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. If you would, you should really give serious consideration to supporting them in this election this year—[*laughter*]—because that's what they want to do. But it sounds so good. See, they say, "It's your money, and I'm going to give it back to you." I'm going to tell you something. We may never again be in this situation. We may never again be in this situation.

I remember the last time we had the longest economic expansion in history. You know when it was? Nineteen sixty-one to 1969. I remember when the American people thought the economy was on automatic and no one could mess it up—in the mid-sixties. I remember when the American people thought that all the big social problems of America then related to race and poverty, would be handled in the Congress and the courts and would never go to the streets in the mid-sixties, and that we would all—we would just keep up feeling good, and everything would be rocking along, and so we didn't really have to concentrate.

Then we had the riots in Watts. Then Martin Luther King got killed. Then Bobby Kennedy got killed here in Los Angeles. Lyndon Johnson said he couldn't run for reelection because the country was so divided over Vietnam. The country took a different course in the '68 election. Pretty soon the longest economic expansion in history was over. And I'll tell you something. I'm not as young as I once was, and I certainly have aides in the White House, but I have not lost my memory. [*Laughter*] I have waited—I'm not telling you this as your President; I'm telling you this as your friend. Los Angeles and this State have been wonderful to me and to my family and to my administration. I have waited 35 years, since the mid-

sixties, for my country once again to be in a position where people with the values and skills and concerns that this man has could build the future of our dreams for our children.

You know, you will never find—and I want to say this about Al Gore and Joe Lieberman. I've known Joe Lieberman for 30 years. He helped me develop a lot of the ideas that I brought to the '92 campaign that we implemented. And he deserves your support. In every way, you will be more than pleased.

And I have worked closer with Al Gore than any other living human being outside of his family. He supported all the tough decisions I made, including the ones that were unpopular. I'll never forget the day he and I decided we had to give economic aid to Mexico because we couldn't let them go downhill, and it would lead to a flood of immigration that was illegal. It would lead to all kinds of tensions on the border. It would make them even more vulnerable to narcotraffickers. It would cause the instability in the whole economy of Latin America. But there was a poll that day that said, by 81 to 15, the American people did not want us to help Mexico; it was a bad investment. We did it, and he was for it, and they paid the loan back ahead of schedule. It was the right thing to do, but it wasn't popular.

I remember—I remember when I had to decide whether to stand up against ethnic cleansing and slaughter in Bosnia and Kosovo, and it wasn't popular. But he supported me. He said, "You have to do it. It's the right thing to do. I'll back you."

I remember when we presented this economic plan in 1993, and everybody knew how hard it was politically. The deficit had gone up to $290 billion. We were hooked on it. We were hooked on deficit spending. We quadrupled the debt in the 12 years before I showed up. We were hooked on it.

You know, when you get in a deep, deep hole and you want to climb out, there isn't any easy way. You're going to have to break your fingernails trying to get up that wall. There was no easy way. And he said, "Do it. We have to pay the consequences."

This is a guy that I know will do what he thinks is right. He will look to the long-term interests of the country, and he has the right economic program to keep the prosperity going and to extend its benefits to the people that are still left behind. This is a man who understands the future, the future of information technology, the future of the human genome, the challenge of climate change, the need to stay ahead in science and technology. All these things are important.

He understands that we're going to get a little gene card that tells all of our babies what their future is going to be. But we don't want anybody to be able to get ahold of that and deny our children health insurance or a job. He understands that we get a lot more efficient now because of the Internet and all of our financial and medical records are on it, but we don't want anybody to have them unless we say okay.

I think we need somebody in the White House who has spent a lifetime thinking about the future from the point of view of ordinary people who need someone to stand up for them.

And the last thing I want to say is the most important of all. It applies to Xavier, Congressman Gutierrez, everything I've tried to do as President, and profoundly it applies to Al Gore, who shares with me a history of growing up in the segregated South and a lifetime of commitment to civil rights.

The most important thing of all is not what is in our minds; it is what is in our hearts. The most important thing of all is that we believe that everybody counts, that we believe everybody deserves a chance, that we think we all do better when we help each other. We believe that it's not enough to say that you care; you have to act as if you care.

The reason I want Al Gore and Joe Lieberman to win this election is I know they'll keep the prosperity going. I know they'll keep us moving into the future, but most important of all, they'll make sure we all go along for the ride.

Thank you very much, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:25 p.m. in the Santa Monica Room at the Westin Century Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Becerra's wife, Carolina Reyes; Fermin Cuza, senior vice president of international trade, Mattel, Inc.; Tom Umberg, former Deputy Director, Office of National Drug Control Policy; Los

Angeles City Councilmen Nick Pacheco, 14th district, and Michael Feuer, fifth district; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush and Vice Presidential candidate Richard B. Cheney. Representative Becerra is a candidate for reelection in California's 30th Congressional District. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

August 12, 2000

Good morning. These are good times for America, with the strongest economy we've ever had. And all across our country, Americans of every age and background are working together to strengthen the fabric of our communities.

Today I want to talk about some remarkable progress our society has made in the last 8 years: Crime is at a 25-year low; the welfare rolls, the smallest in 30 years; and a new report from the Centers for Disease Control shows that teen birth rates have fallen for the eighth year in a row, and now we have the lowest teen birth rate in 60 years. This is a remarkable achievement.

Consider this. If the teen birth rate had stayed at the same as its peak in 1991, teen mothers would have given birth to another 120,000 babies this year. That drop is wonderful news and further proof that together we can make real progress on social problems people once said were beyond our reach. This is a tribute to community and religious groups, to teachers and families, and of course, to our teenagers themselves.

From the start of our administration, we've endeavored to restore the sense that responsibility and opportunity are the foundations of a strong American community. Five years ago we called upon parents and community leaders to launch a national campaign to prevent teen pregnancy. The next year we worked across party lines to enact landmark welfare reform, which requires unmarried minor parents to stay in school and live under adult supervision. We also demanded that fathers live up to their obligations and have doubled child support collections. We've increased counseling, promoted abstinence, and paired children with mentors, documenting our achievements in a report to Congress this week.

Despite this progress, we know that too many of America's children still are having children. As friends and neighbors, we need to reach out and help these young people learn and grow.

Today I'm taking action to promote one innovative approach we all know will work. It's called, second-chance homes, an idea that Vice President Gore and I have long supported and which was championed early on by Senators Moynihan, Kent Conrad, and Joe Lieberman.

These homes provide teenage moms and their babies with an environment that is safe, supportive, and supervised. The teens get the help they need to finish school. They learn how to care for their children and manage a budget. Some homes also work with teen fathers.

Experts say mothers in these homes are less likely to have another baby or go on welfare and more likely to get an education and find a job. I read of one young Massachusetts woman who got pregnant at 14 and soon was estranged from her family with no place to live. With the help of a second-chance home, she got back on her feet, trained at a community college, and has left welfare to become a proud working mother.

Second-chance homes are a good idea that enjoy bipartisan support. I've asked Congress already to provide $25 million to start more of them across the country. Now let's take bipartisan action to give mothers and babies hope for a better future.

But many families shouldn't have to wait for Congress to act. That's why today I'm directing the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development to work together to help more communities across America open second-chance homes.

First, we'll make it easier for communities and faith-based groups to acquire vacant or foreclosed property to create these homes for teen mothers.

Second, we'll provide communities a blueprint for how to create second-chance homes, and a roadmap of Federal and State resources they can tap to get one up and running.

We extend this helping hand to these families because it's the right thing to do and because, over time, it will help the teen birth rate go down even more. With these steps, we'll do still more to make welfare what it was meant to be, a second chance, not a way of life. Working together in a spirit of progress and respect, we can help everyone to make the most of their own lives.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:22 p.m. on August 11 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 12. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 11 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Memorandum on Second Chance Homes for Teen Parents

August 11, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

Subject: Second Chance Homes for Teen Parents

My Administration has made it a key priority to promote personal responsibility, prevent teenage pregnancy, and to provide young people with the educational and employment opportunities necessary to break the cycle of dependency. We know the devastating effects on young people when they become parents too soon—nearly 80 percent of single teen mothers end up on welfare and only one-third receive a high school diploma or GED. We also know the impact that this has on their children, who are 40 percent more likely to have low birth weights; need 20 percent more health care; and are at greater risk of abuse and neglect. Moreover, girls of teen mothers are a third more likely to become teen mothers themselves and boys of teen mothers are nearly 3 times more likely to be incarcerated than boys of mothers who delayed childbearing.

Under my Administration, I have taken bold steps to promote responsibility and prevent teen pregnancy by taking executive action to require young mothers to stay in school or risk losing welfare payments, enacting welfare reform in 1996, strengthening child support enforcement, and launching a National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. We know that these efforts are having an impact: teen birth rates have dropped for the eighth year in a row, falling by 20 percent since their most recent peak in 1991 to the lowest levels since we began collecting these data 60 years ago. But we also know that there are still far too many children having children, and we must do more.

To build on this progress and to reach out to teen mothers at risk of a repeat pregnancy, my FY 2001 budget includes a provision to invest $25 million in the creation and expansion of "second chance homes." It is critical that we help teen parents who cannot live with their own parents or other relatives gain access to supportive, adult-supervised living arrangements—second chance homes—that offer parenting skills, job counseling, education, and other referrals to help reduce the chance of repeat pregnancies and improve the prospects for young mothers and their children. Where appropriate, these programs should also reach out to involve young fathers in responsible parenting, and to help reconnect these teens with their own parents. An early evaluation of the Second Chance Homes program in Massachusetts has demonstrated that second chance homes can reduce the number of repeat pregnancies. Moreover, this study showed that mothers served by second chance homes were more likely to become self-sufficient, complete high school, and to keep their children's immunizations up to date. With approximately 100,000 repeat pregnancies each year, we must do all that we can to help improve the prospects for teen parents and their children.

Therefore, I direct the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development to work together to implement the following actions:

(1) Within 60 days, issue guidance to nonprofit organizations (both faith-based and other community-based organizations) and State and local governments to create awareness about the second chance home model, highlight States' responsibility to provide access to adult-supervised living arrangements for minor parents who

cannot live at home, provide best practices concerning program design, and provide user-friendly information about existing funding sources for both facilities and services costs, for the creation or expansion of second chance homes;

(2) Create a joint technical assistance effort to help communities interested in establishing or expanding second chance homes;

(3) Use all available legal authority to provide organizations interested in establishing second chance homes access to foreclosed, underutilized, and surplus real estate or facilities at the maximum allowable discount. The Department of Housing and Urban Development should also explore opportunities to increase the availability of Supportive Housing Program funds to second chance homes for teen parents; and

(4) Clarify that teen parents in second chance homes may be eligible for low-income housing vouchers and encourage second chance home operators to accept housing voucher holders into their programs.

The swift and collaborative implementation of these actions is vital to achieving our goal of helping teen parents take responsibility for their lives and their children's futures.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was embargoed for release by the Office of the Press Secretary until 10:06 a.m. on August 12.

Remarks at a Hollywood Tribute to the President in Los Angeles

August 12, 2000

Thank you so much. I want to thank all the people Hillary mentioned, all the other wonderful entertainers who are here in the audience tonight, all of our friends and supporters. There are so many things—I'd like to say something about everyone. I do have a confession to make. When I was in Aachen, Germany, the other day to receive the Charlemagne Prize, the ceremony began in Charlemagne's Church, built in the 8th century. And you can actually sit in the place where Charlemagne sat, and you can actually see the throne on which Charlemagne was crowned. And at that very moment, I really thought Shirley MacLaine was sitting right next to me. [*Laughter*]

I would also like to thank the members of our family, some of whom are here tonight, some of whom, like my mother and Hillary's dad, aren't here anymore. I'd like to thank my mother-in-law and my stepfather, Dick Kelley, my brother and his family, Hillary's two brothers, our wonderful nephews, my wonderful sister-in-law, Maria. And all these times over the last 8 years, they shared a lot of the joy, which was their perfect right, but they also had to take a lot of the bullets, which they shouldn't have. And I'm really glad that they're here with us tonight.

I was looking at those movies up there, interspersed with all the entertainment and the wonderful, wonderful things that were said. And by the way, the people that produced this show and conceived it did a fabulous job, and we ought to give them a round of applause, too. [*Applause*]

And I was thinking how quickly it all passed and what an absolute joy it was. I want you to know that for me this was not only the greatest honor of my life but every day, even the bad days, were good days, as long as I remembered who hired me and what I was doing there.

There were some days when the cost of doing business seemed reasonably high at the end of the 20th century, but it was still a joy. Because of you and the other Americans who gave me a chance to serve, I had a chance to save lives and lift lives. I hope I made some little kids and forgotten people think that they still counted. I hope that around the world, fewer people will die of AIDS, fewer children will grow up poor, fewer people will die in battle. I hope that here at home, now that we have this unbelievable prosperity, the American people will decide this year to make the most of it.

That's the last thing I'd like to ask you. I've often wondered why I love music and movies so much. And Franklin Roosevelt

once said it was necessary for the President to be America's greatest actor. When I read it, I had no clue what he meant. Now I understand all too well. [*Laughter*] I think it is because public life and politics are more than reason, and progress is more than policy. It helps to have a pretty good mind. It helps even more to have a strong constitution and a reasonably high pain threshold. But in the end, the most important thing is to do the people's business from the heart.

For in the end, it is the life we share with people whom we'll never know, many of whom have to struggle every day, perhaps that get into a wheelchair to move around or to keep body and soul together or to keep their kids out of trouble. But the difference between them and us is actually quite small.

I used to tell people in some of the dark days, when they'd say, "Don't you sometimes regret that you ever got into this?" I'd say, "Lord, no. Just a few twists in the road, and I could be home doing real estate transactions in a musty loft."

This has worked out wonderfully, because America is better off. I want you to remember that for me it was an affair of the heart, that every slogan I ever used was something I believed. I still believe we should put people first. I still believe that everybody counts; everybody ought to have a chance; we all do better when we help each other. I still believe we ought to build bridges instead of walls. I still think we should never stop thinking about tomorrow.

And more than anything else, I feel gratitude. But more than anything else, you should feel, if you really believe what was said and what we celebrated, that the best is yet to be. It is a rare thing when a country has a chance to build a future of its dreams for its children.

When Hillary decided to run for the Senate after half a dozen New York Congressmen asked her to do it, and she stirred around up there and decided she kind of liked it and that she wanted to do things that still needed doing that she had worked on all of her life, I was really proud of her, because we could have spent more evenings like this, and we could have simply spent the last year celebrating and enjoying the good fortune that our country has had, perhaps in some measure because of our efforts.

But she took all those things I've been saying all these years to heart. So after 30 years of helping other people and fighting for good causes, she decided to run for office. I hope you'll help her win, and I thank you for your help tonight.

And I just want to say one thing about the Vice President and Joe Lieberman. I couldn't top what Red Buttons said. I wish I'd written it down. I might actually crib it Monday night when I speak. [*Laughter*] Al Gore is a good person, a brilliant person, a hard-working person. But the reason you ought to be for him is he understands how to keep this magical prosperity going and how to spread it to the people that, I regret to say, are still left behind.

He understands the future. He was talking about global warming when we ran in '92, and people were still making fun of him. Now even the oil companies admit that it's real. He understands the implications of the Internet because he helped to take it out of being a private province of a handful of physicists.

When we became President and Vice President, there were only—listen to this—50 sites on the World Wide Web. Today, there are 10 million or 20 million. He understands the magical promise of the human genome but doesn't want anybody to have a little gene map that costs them their health insurance or their job. And I want somebody in the White House that understands the future, because it's really unfolding fast.

And picking Joe Lieberman showed a lot of judgment, as well as a lot of character. Hillary and I met Joe Lieberman when he was 28 years old, running for the State Senate, not so long after he had been a Freedom Rider in the South, helping black people to register to vote, when it was still very segregated. I've known him a long time. He also is a brilliant man, who is a little bit of an iconoclast and not afraid to think differently. And we need some of that in the White House, too, because it's awful easy to get hidebound there and to stay with the conventional wisdom.

But the most important thing is, to me anyway, they want to take us all along for the ride. And they think the people who worked

this stage tonight whose names we'll never know deserve the same chance we have to send their children to college and to build the American dream for their families. They think in the arena of citizenship there are no backup singers, that everybody should have a starring role, and that's real important to me.

So that's the last thing I'd say to you. Whoopi said it right; I'm not going anywhere except to a different line of work. I'll try to be a useful citizen, and I'll try to hang around. But it's in your hands now. And the best thing you could do to honor me is to go out to everybody you can find between now and November, through every network of influence you have, and say, "Hey, the best is still out there, and the problems are still out there, and the challenges are still out there."

And those of you who are at least as old as I am know that the kind of chance we have today to build the future of our dreams for our kids maybe—maybe—comes along once in a lifetime, and nothing stays the same.

So thanks for the honor. Thanks for the memories you gave me tonight. But don't stop thinking about tomorrow.

God bless you, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Shirley MacLaine, Red Buttons, and Whoopi Goldberg; and the President's brother, Roger Clinton, mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham, and brothers-in-law Tony and Hugh Rodham.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Brunch Honoring the Cabinet in Los Angeles

August 13, 2000

The President. Well, first of all, let me say I'm glad to see you here in good spirits. Are you ready to leave and win? [*Applause*] I want to thank Mayor Rendell and Mayor Archer and Congresswoman Sanchez, Joe Andrew, all the leaders of our Democratic Party. I want to thank all of you who have helped me over these last 8 years. I want to thank you for your commitment to helping Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

I want to say something—I hope we can be more positive and more specific than our friends were in Philadelphia. But I do just want to—I'm just standing up here on the stage thinking about one thing. You know, when they wanted to show harmony and inclusion and all that, they had to put their leaders in a closet and go scare up people off the street to get on the stage. [*Laughter*] When we want to show harmony and inclusion, all we have to do is bring our team up on the stage.

When they want to show harmony and inclusion, they have to use the people they've got on the stage to hide their policies. When we want to show harmony and inclusion, all we have to do is talk about what we've done, and even more important, what Al Gore and Joe Lieberman are going to do. There's a big difference.

And so, I just want to say when I heard them talking about how we coasted through the last 8 years—[*laughter*]—I sort of thought, where did I get all this gray hair anyway? [*Laughter*] I sort of thought, where do they think those jobs came from, where do they think those educational statistics came from, where do they think the cut in the welfare rolls in half, and the decline in the crime rate, and the fact that over 40 million more Americans are breathing clean air? And I could talk here until dawn about it.

Do you remember when they were in? They took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. [*Laughter*] The Republicans are in, and "It's morning in America. The Sun came up again today." [*Laughter*] "Look at it. There it is in the sky. We did it. There it is." [*Laughter*]

Well, God made the Sun rise, not the Republicans or the Democrats. But President Kennedy once reminded us that "Here on Earth, God's work must truly be our own." That is what this Cabinet has tried to do—has tried to make the work of making this a more decent, more just, as well as a more prosperous country, their work.

Let me just tell you one story. One night in a rather dark period for the administration, not long after the American people decided to give the Republicans a chance to run the Congress in the '94 election, in early '95, Vice President Gore and I invited a couple of

Presidential scholars to come to the White House to talk to us in a very quiet way about where we were at this moment in history, what was going on, what we ought to be thinking about and looking at. And one of these scholars looked at me and the Vice President, and he said, "You guys don't have to worry. You're going to win reelection." And I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "I spent my whole life studying administrations. You have the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson's second administration."

Now, you may take that for granted, but you've got to understand, we live and work in a town where most of the people who write about things think loyalty is a vice, not a virtue—[*laughter*]—and where all the pressures are designed to get people to think about anything other than the work they're doing for the American people, to divert their attention, to break their concentration, to undermine long-term plans. It's about politics, not people.

This administration has been about people, not politics. And that's why these folks behind me have done so much good. A lot of them have been here the whole 8 years. Let me say to all of you—I don't want to give the speech I'm going to give tomorrow night— [*laughter*]—but I do want to say this

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Audience member. Practice on us. [*Laughter*]

The President. Practice on us. [*Laughter*] It's kind of like these singers who have been around a long time; they always sing their old songs. I once went to a concert where Tina Turner sang "Proud Mary," and she said, "I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I sing it." [*Laughter*] So there won't be any surprises. [*Laughter*]

What I want to say to you is this. Elections are about the future. And people get—the people who vote in elections are all of us, and they've been making pretty good decisions for over 200 years, or we still wouldn't be around here. But the world is growing ever more complex, and they have access to more and more information than ever before, which is good on the one hand, but on the other hand, it means it may be harder to concentrate on and distill out the essential meat of any decision that has to be made.

When I was a boy coming up, we had three television stations, one for each of the networks, and we didn't have much option on what we watched at night in the news. Now you can watch news in seven or eight different formats, and if you just want to watch a movie and skip it altogether, you can. So there's more information than ever before out there, but it's also harder to get clarity.

And I want to ask you something seriously. All of us have done our best, and we've still got a little ways to go, and we've got a lot of things we think we can get done before we leave. But this is a political convention to nominate the next President and Vice President and to clarify for the American people the choices before them.

The modern role of the political convention is to get the American people, just for a few moments every night for 4 days, to stop, look, and listen. That's what it is. And in those 4 days the two parties get to say, "I know you're busy. I know you've got other things on your mind. You may think you already know what this is about, but we want you to know who our leaders are, what their values are, what their vision is, what they intend to do."

Now, I've said this all over America, and you've heard me say it until the cows come home, but we have a big mission this year, first to convince the American people how important this election is. We cannot allow the Democrats to be punished by the good job all these folks have done, by the good job Al Gore's done, by the good job Joe Lieberman and our Senators have done, by the good job Dick Gephardt and our House Members have done, because people will be in such a good humor that they think, "Well, everything is rocking along here. What could possibly be the consequences of these elections?"

So you have to say, "Hey, what a country does with its prosperity, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, is as big a hurdle, a big a test, and as important a decision as what we did in adversity in 1992." You have to get that out.

Now, that is not a case we had to make in '92. Everybody knew what the deal was,

right? You didn't have to be as bright as a tree full of owls to know we had to change the economy—[*laughter*]—and the social direction of the country. You didn't. But you've got—listen, this is serious. You have to do that.

The second thing you've got to do is to convince the American people that there are big, meaningful differences between the two candidates for President and Vice President and our Senate and our House candidates. And that will be harder because, as you saw from their convention, we're the only side that wants the American people to know what the differences are. Because if the other side—you know, they know if the American people figure out what the real differences are, we win. Right?

You don't have any doubt of that do you?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Do you have any doubt at all?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. If people know what Al Gore stands for and will do as President as compared with what his opponent will, the difference in Joe Lieberman's voting record in the Senate and Dick Cheney's voting record in the House, if people know the difference in what's in our vision for the future and what we're going to build on and what they intend to dismantle, do you have any doubt what the decision will be? Of course you don't.

Therefore, you should be of good cheer because we can turn around these polls. But it's not the work of a day. It's going to take every day between now and November, and you're going to have to go to every friend you have. And most of the people you know are not as political as your are. Isn't that right? Even the Democrats—they're not as political as you are. And you've got to go out of this convention committed to telling people, "This is a big election. There are big differences. In spite of all the good that's been done in the last 8 years, you haven't seen anything yet. You give Al Gore and Joe Lieberman 8 years and you will see that the best is yet to be." That's what we want you do to for us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at the Casa Del Mar. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Mayor Dennis W. Archer, general cochair, Representative Loretta Sanchez, vice chair, and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman; and Republican Vice Presidential candidate Richard B. Cheney.

Remarks at a Jewish Community Celebration in Los Angeles

August 13, 2000

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Tim and Joel Tauber and Todd Morgan and Bill Dockser and all the leaders of the organizations that brought you all here together. Thank you for giving Hillary such a good reception, I am grateful for that.

I want to say, more than anything else, how profoundly grateful I am for the support I have received from the American Jewish community since 1991, when I first began running for President.

When Hillary and I were discussing whether I should make this race, way back in '91, well over 8 years ago now, one of the things that I hoped I could do was to bring whatever powers of persuasion and understanding of history, as well as human psychology, that I've acquired over the years, to the process of peace in the world.

It seemed to me that the end of the cold war had imposed upon the United States a very special responsibility to reach out and build bridges to countries and regions that we had too often overlooked or seen through a limited lens during the period of the cold war and to try to be a special force for peace, from the Northern Ireland problem to the Balkans to Haiti and our own region, but especially in the Middle East.

And for nearly 8 years now, we have worked to be faithful to the commitment I made to the American people when I began, that we would make the United States the world's leader for peace and freedom, for human rights and security wherever we possibly could. This has been the most rewarding thing, I think, in many ways I've been able to do as President. But it's a work that is—and by the very nature of the way we

human beings are—it's a work that will always be, to some extent, in progress.

Hillary has done a lot, especially with her Vital Voices program in Northern Ireland, going to Israel and working with Mrs. Barak on the violence issue, and, before that, working with others who were in the Israeli Government.

I think I should tell you that the last person I talked to before my plane landed in Los Angeles was Leah Rabin. She's back here in the United States seeing her doctor. She said she got a reasonably good report. And I told her I was going to see you, and she asked me to say hello, so I'm doing it. And I want to get my brownie points with her for doing it.

Tim already mentioned the nomination of Joe Lieberman, but I want to say just a few words about it. I was at a dinner last night that a few of you attended, which honored the last 8 years of our administration. And one of the people who performed was the comedian Red Buttons, who must be—I don't know how old he is now, but he's not a kid. [*Laughter*] And he can say things the rest of us can't say. And the first thing, he got up and said, "Do you know that in Los Angeles the Democrats are changing their theme songs from 'Happy Days Are Here Again' to 'Hava Nagila?'" [*Laughter*] He also gave me a lot of other jokes, but I don't think I should use any of them. [*Laughter*]

Hillary and I have known Joe Lieberman—she may have said this—but we met him in 1970, when I was a first year law student, she was a second year law student, and he was a 28-year-old candidate for the State Senate. And I was especially impressed by the fact that he had been a Freedom Rider in Mississippi, or somewhere in the South, and was down there registering voters at a time when it wasn't easy to do and, frankly, anybody who tried to do it was in some measure of physical danger.

In all the years since, we've kept in touch. And about 15 years ago we were among those who started the Democratic Leadership Council. He's a brilliant man, a little bit of an iconoclast and always willing to think new thoughts, and I think we need more of that in politics. The world is changing very rapidly, and we need people who can think.

And most important of all, he will be a living embodiment—along with Hadassah, who, as all of you know, is the child of Holocaust survivors—they will be a living embodiment of America's continuing commitment to build one national community, to embrace people across all the lines that divide us. It's still the most important thing we can do.

I want to say just a few words, if I might, about the peace process in the Middle East. You'll hear enough of the election rhetoric elsewhere, and maybe a little from me tomorrow night. But I want to talk about that for a moment.

In the last 7 years we've seen the signing of the Declaration of Principles on the South Lawn, which reflected the direct engagement of the parties at Oslo; the Israeli-Palestinian interim agreement, a treaty leading to genuine peace between Israel and Jordan; the rallying of the world's leaders, including the leaders of the Arab world at Sharm al-Sheikh, to condemn terrorist attacks against Israel; the Hebron and Wye accords, which put the implementation of the interim agreement back on track.

In these years, both sides have recognized that whether they like it sometimes or don't like it sometimes, the Israelis and Palestinians are bound to live side by side. Throughout the process, however, the ultimate question of how they would live side by side has been continually deferred. I always thought that was part of the genius of the Oslo accord. Some people didn't like it; I thought it was a smart thing to do. Everyone knew how hard these final status issues were, and everyone knew there was absolutely no chance of resolving them unless the people, particularly those in responsible positions, lived together and worked together over a period of years and gradually began to implement other parts of the agreement so they could get a feel for each other.

However, they agreed that they would resolve all this by September, and we were coming up on the deadline. And they had never really had a formal, face-to-face set of official conversations about these final status issues. And I can understand why. It's kind of like going to the dentist without anybody to deaden your gums. [*Laughter*] I mean, if

this were easy, somebody would have done it years ago.

But that is the context in which I brought them together at Camp David, not because I thought that there was a guarantee of success—far from it—but because they needed a setting in which they could speak openly, think freely, protected from the competing pressures and constant scrutiny that is a part of political life in Israel and throughout the Middle East, perhaps even more than it is in the United States.

Now, I don't want to sugar-coat it. I wanted an agreement. We didn't get one. But I can tell you, significant progress was made at Camp David. One of the Palestinian negotiators said that these were truly revolutionary talks because on their side they entertained publicly—or, not publicly but in front of others—positions they had never before considered. It's almost as if we cracked open a sealed container and took out a set of problems that had been festering in a dark place for 52 years. They're now out on the table; the parties are talking about them—issues never before confronted in an official setting. How would a new Palestinian State be defined? What would its borders be? What should be done about refugees from 1948, not just Palestinian refugees but Jewish refugees, as well. And you might be interested in knowing that the Palestinians felt that their families should be entitled to compensation as well. How do you protect Israel's security if it withdraws from the West Bank? What in the world do you do about Jerusalem? It is a holy city, but it has caused a hellish lot of problems. And we have to think it through in a very serious and sober way.

The process is not over, and therefore, it is inappropriate for me to discuss the specifics. I don't want to make a hard problem more difficult. But I can say one or two things.

First of all, everybody affected by the peace process is faced with a choice. We are now at a crossroads because of the calendar to which the parties themselves have agreed: Down one path lies more confrontation and conflict, more bloodshed and tears; down the other is an agreement, however difficult. By definition, agreements require compromise, which means no one gets 100 percent and neither side can be in a position to say that it has completely vanquished the other.

That means that, given the positions taken—and I talked about this at the end of the Camp David process—this is an excruciatingly difficult negotiation. The choices are painful and agonizing, but they have to be made. Otherwise, we will repeat the pattern of the past, and then, sometime in the future, another group of leaders will come back to the same set of choices with the same history after more bloodshed and tears, more grievances to redress, more bitterness to overcome.

We may or may not be able to get an agreement, but we ought to keep trying, and I will keep trying every single day.

I want to emphasize some things I have said for 7½ years now, and I haven't changed my mind. We can come up with ideas. We can offer alternatives, but we must not, indeed, we will not attempt to impose any of our ideas. These choices must be freely made by people who must live with them.

In the meanwhile, we must continue to stand by Israel, as we have during my entire tenure as President and for the last 52 years. We will help Israel to maintain its strength. We will minimize the courageous risks the Prime Minister is taking for peace. We will improve our security relationship. We will do everything we possibly can to make this work.

One of the things I think you should know that struck me most at Camp David, and says something for the people who launched the Oslo process 7 years ago, is the difference in the way the negotiators relate to each other even when they were fighting. When I brought the parties together at Dayton after we and our NATO Allies ended the Bosnian war, they could barely stand to be in the same room together. When I went to Kosovo to see our soldiers and to meet with all the parties there, the wounds of ethnic cleansing and the battle we waged to reverse it were so fresh and raw that people could hardly bear to come into the same room and came only because I invited them and insisted that they come.

When I went first to Northern Ireland and walked down the Shankel and the Falls, the Catholic and the Protestant streets in Belfast, it was difficult for the most controversial of

the political leaders who had to be involved in any resolution to even be seen talking to each other, much less for anyone to know they had shaken hands.

The Israelis and Palestinians, after these years, know each other by their first names. They know their spouses' names. They know how many children they have. They know how many grandchildren they have. They tell jokes to each other, sometimes about their own leaders. They laugh, and they talk, and they have a feel for the humanity and the difficulty of the situation.

This is not to say that they are soft-headed. Indeed, I never saw anyone more resolute about the fundamental security interests of the State of Israel than the Prime Minister was in these negotiations. And for whatever it's worth, the security questions were the ones on which we made the most progress, which is something that should be encouraging to all of you.

I don't know what's going to happen. But I know this. The most heartbreaking moments of the last 8 years for me and for Hillary, for Al, and for our whole team, have been those moments when people were blinded by acts of hatred against others because they fit in some sort of category or another—that poor twisted boy that blew up the Federal building in Oklahoma City, his mind and soul polluted by this anti-government venom that was out there at the time; the school children who were killed by terrorist attack in Israel; the man who belonged to a church that he said didn't believe in God but did believe in white supremacy, murdering an African-American basketball coach in Chicago and killing a Korean Christian as he walked out of his church; people who shot the—the man who shot the Jewish children here going to their school and then killed a Filipino postal worker and thought he had had a double success—he killed an Asian and a Federal employee.

We see it within our country and beyond our borders. I have seen people who were literally ethnically indistinguishable in the Balkans killing each other because history made them Orthodox Christians or Muslims or Catholics.

It is ironic that at a time when we celebrate the triumph of the human genome and where the Internet is the fastest growing communications vehicle in human history—and, by the way, Al Gore did sponsor the legislation. [*Laughter*] Part of my job since I'm not running, you know, is to correct the record here. [*Laughter*] The Internet was, in the beginning, the private province of a few physicists. Al Gore saw—virtually before anybody else, certainly in Congress—that it could be transformed into a medium of communication and could hold information that could benefit all of human kind, that the whole Library of Congress would one day be on the Internet. That was the metaphor he said well over a decade ago.

Now the whole Encyclopedia Britannica is on the Internet. Pretty soon, my whole Presidential library will be on the Internet. There were only 50 sites on the World Wide Web when I became President—5–0. Today there are—I'm not sure how many—but way, way over 10 million, the fastest growing mechanism in human history.

But anyway, so you've got all this stuff happening, all this wonderful, modern stuff, and here we are bedeviled by the oldest problems of human society—the fear of the other, people that are different from us.

That's why it's a good thing that Al Gore put Joe Lieberman on the ticket, and other Americans will see that he is a brilliant person, that he is a good person, that he has a contribution to make. And I think more and more people will respect the fact that he gives up his entire Sabbath away from all work and politics on a day that coincidentally happens to be the best politicking day in the American political system. I think this will be a good thing for America.

And what I would ask you to do as we see the events of the coming weeks unfold, is to never lose your passion for peace and for reconciliation, to remember that America cannot do good works abroad unless we are a good country first here at home, that we have to purge ourselves of all traces of bigotry and hatred, and that we have to go forward together as one community, and that we have to do it not just with our words and our pictures but with our deeds.

It is one thing to say we want to build one America and another thing to do it, whether

it's passing hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, raising the minimum wage, or doing the other kinds of things that show that we really believe that we're all in this together, and we all do better when we help each other.

The overwhelming fact of modern life is not the growth of the Internet, the growth of the global economy, the explosion of biotechnology, but what they all mean in a larger sense, which is that every single day, in breathtaking ways, many of which we cannot see, we are growing more interdependent. We need each other more. So we have to find a way not just to tolerate one another but to celebrate our diversity and take comfort from the fact that what we have in common is even more fundamental and more important. Yes, compassion is important, but enlightened self-interest is even better. We need to know we actually need each other, and we need to do the right thing by each other.

So for me it's a great comfort to know that the Vice President and Joe Lieberman are running, that Hillary is running, and that we're moving in the right direction. I just want to ask you this. Spend every day you can between now and November reminding people that it matters and that there are differences. And if you do that, we'll all win, and America will be fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:20 p.m. at the Sony Picture Studios. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Wuliger, president, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Joel D. Tauber, chairman, executive committee, United Jewish Communities; Todd Morgan, chairman, Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles; William B. Dockser, national chairman, National Jewish Democratic Council; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel, and his wife, Nava; Leah Rabin, widow of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; and Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman and his wife, Hadassah.

Remarks at a National Democratic Institute Luncheon in Los Angeles

August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, you have just heard a stirring example of Clinton's first law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. [*Laughter*]

Secretary Albright, thank you for your great work as Secretary of State and, before that, as our Ambassador to the United Nations and for your constant friendship and support to Hillary and me.

Gary, thank you for hosting this today and for what you said and for all the good work you do. Mr. Mayor, thank you for putting on a great convention and sitting through all these speeches by Democrats. [*Laughter*] There's been a lot of talk in this convention about religion because Joe Lieberman is our first Jewish candidate on the national ticket. But I want you to know I am still a confirmed Baptist. We believe in deathbed conversions, and I'd like to have you switch at any time—[*laughter*]—we love you very much. You too—[*inaudible*]. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Paul Kirk, my friend of many years, and Ken Wollack and all the members of the NDI. Thank you, Senator Feinstein. And I'd like to thank all the members of the diplomatic community who are here, parliamentarians from around the world, and the people who have been or are now part of our diplomatic efforts: Vice President Mondale, who did such a brilliant job in Japan; and Reverend Jackson, our Special Envoy to Africa; Ambassador Blinken; Ambassador Shearer; there are a lot of others here. But I thank them all for what they have done.

I'd also like to say how much I appreciate the work of the NDI, how much I've tried to support it, how grateful I am that we have a nominee for President and Vice President in our party who will strongly support you for a long time in the future.

Way back in the distant past of the last millennium, when I was first elected President, people were asking whether the end of the cold war would lead to a new birth of freedom or whether incipient democracies would be overcome by forces of hardship and hate. There were then perhaps as many reasons for fear as for hope.

In Russia, people faced breadlines and hyperinflation. Many were resigned to an inevitable backlash that would lead back to

communism or ultranationalism. Southeast Europe was full of backward economies and battered people willing to be manipulated to wage war on their neighbors. In parts of Asia, leaders claimed democracy was an alien, Western imposition, that there was really no such thing as a universal conception of human rights or free people governing themselves. Never mind, of course, that people from Burma to the Philippines to Thailand were already struggling and sacrificing for freedom. Some still believed democracy only works for people of a certain culture or a certain stage of development.

Well, since then we've learned a lot about human nature and humanity's desire for freedom and self-government. Looking back, I think we'll all say that the 1990's were democracy's decade. With our support and with your support, democracies flourished in central Europe. Despite all the difficulties, it has endured in Russia, persevered in Latin America, and truly triumphed in Mexico. In 1999, thanks to the democratic transformations in Nigeria and Indonesia, more people won the right to choose their leaders than in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell.

In the Balkans, the cause of pluralism faced perhaps its greatest obstacles. Prime Minister Dodik and the head of Bosnia's leading multiethnic party, Zlatko Lagumdzija, are both here with us today. We welcome them, and we urge them to keep up their good work for freedom. Their success has proven that Bosnians of every ethnic background are turning to leaders delivering prosperity and hope, instead of exploiting human differences.

Last week I met with the new President and the new Prime Minister of Croatia. They're taking their country on a breathtaking journey to democracy. Their success says to all the people of the Balkans, where popular will overcomes authoritarianism and hate, the road to Europe is open.

With Kosovo holding the first free elections in its history later this year, the only vestige of the Balkans' undemocratic past is Serbia. We are encouraging the democratic opposition there to mount as unified a challenge to Mr. Milosevic as possible, so that even if he steals the coming Presidential election—he undoubtedly will try to do that—he will lose what legitimacy he has left with the Serbian people. But whatever may happen, he has utterly failed to build a greater Serbia based on ethnic cleansing and exclusion. All around him, instead, we are seeing the emergence of a greater Europe based on tolerance and democracy.

We also learned some lessons in democracy's decade of the nineties. It used to be said that unelected leaders were easier for America to deal with because they were free to make hard and unpopular choices. Well, it turns out to be one of those big ideas that just isn't true.

Consider the case of Prime Minister Barak. In pursuit of peace he has been able to make some of the hardest and most courageous decisions I, personally, have ever seen because he knows he draws his mandate from the people. Consider Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. He overcame his country's economic crisis because he had the legitimacy to push through wrenching change, and he made a brave, brave step in reaching out to North Korea.

Ironically, unelected leaders tend to be more fearful of political opposition than elected leaders. That's a lesson I've had to learn the hard way. The first 3 or 4 years, when I heard that, I thought they were just making excuses for something they didn't want to do. And finally I realized that they really were afraid to take unpopular decisions, even if they might be able to sell a vast majority of their people on it because it was the right thing to do. Maybe it's because when dictators lose power, they lose everything; Democrats live to fight another day—or build Presidential libraries. [*Laughter*]

Another lesson that we learned is that democracy's success is in our interest. Our support can be critical to that success. Next week I'll be going to Nigeria, to a new, democratic Nigeria. [*Applause*] Thank you. A Nigeria that's a leader for peace and economic development in the struggle against AIDS. If democracy takes root in Nigeria, it will lift up an entire region. So we'll do our part to help with trade and investment, support for Nigeria's peacekeepers in its efforts to ensure that the vast wealth it has accumulated and

squandered in the past finally benefits its people.

Now, a day after I come back from Nigeria, I'll be going to Colombia. There, people are struggling to keep one of the oldest democracies in our hemisphere alive in the face of terrible violence, fueled by a drug trade that threatens their children and ours. We have a national interest in supporting them, and now with strong bipartisan support from Congress—for which I am profoundly grateful—we have made a commitment to do just that.

We care about democracy in countries like Nigeria and Colombia because the success of freedom is contagious, and so is freedom's failure. One reason we can tip the balance is because of the work NDI does. Just about every time I travel to an emerging democracy, whether it's Nigeria or Ghana or Bosnia or Russia or Nicaragua or Bangladesh, I find that NDI is there before I land and, most important, after I leave. Thanks to you, America not only has a Peace Corps; it has a democracy corps. If the 1990's were democracy's decade, you had a lot to do with it. And with your help, we can now start building democracy's century, a century that we can't stop working on until the most powerful, liberating, revolutionary idea in all human history touches every human community.

Let me just say in closing something that's not in my notes, and I'll probably get in trouble with all my staff for saying—[*laughter*]—but we have people here who devote your life to thinking about these things. I am gratified that in this very turbulent period, that we have been able to build in the United States a bipartisan commitment to democracy that has been manifested, for example, in Plan Colombia, manifested in the passage of PNTR with China, manifested in the passage of the African/Caribbean Basin bill, manifested in the common commitment both candidates for President have consistently made this year, to an expansive, embracive, farsighted trade policy.

But there are still challenges out there that, if we want to maximize our impact on, we have to internalize debate and resolve as a people. Because we have seen over and over and over again, it is very difficult for America to do anything big, good, profoundly long-lasting unless we are agreed. And let me just give a few examples.

I hope the commitment we have made to Africa will endure and be embraced in a bipartisan way. I hope those people who believe in the Congress and in the country that I honestly made a mistake—and they honestly believe this—those who believe that I made a mistake in committing our military resources and our diplomatic muscle, first in Bosnia, and then in Kosovo, will rethink, because I think if the cause of freedom had been lost in those countries and the principle of ethnic cleansing had been upheld, we would be paying for it along with free people across the world for a very, very long time.

I hope the next administration will continue the commitment that we have begun to a new stage in our relationship with India and that we will continue to be involved in trying to resolve the tensions on the Indian subcontinent. If you think about the 200 or so ethnic groups that we have in the State of California and in the United States of America, Indians and Pakistanis both rank in the top five in per capita education and per capita income. There is no telling what could happen for the good on the Indian subcontinent in the 21st century that will open new vistas of possibilities, not only for people who are still desperately poor in those nations and in Bangladesh but, indeed, throughout the world, if they can just find a way to resolve their deep differences. So I hope that will happen, and I hope all of you will stay with us.

The other day when we said—our administration—that we felt that the worldwide spread of AIDS had become a national security threat to the United States, some people ridiculed that. But I hope we will have a broader notion of our national security and a broader sense of what tools we need to bring to bear against them.

I have done what I could in every year to support a strong defense budget, to support improvements in the quality of life for our men and women and families in the United States military, to modernize our weapon systems. But I think the work that we're trying to do this year in the Congress to fight AIDS, malaria, and TB is important.

I think we should be doing much more than we are to help countries deal with the breathtaking breakdown in public health systems in a lot of the former Communist world and in a lot of the developing countries, things which really could just eat the heart out of democracy over the next 10 or 15 years unless people can at least find a way to keep babies alive and to stop children from dying prematurely.

I hope we will be very creative in the ways we fight terrorism and chemical and biological warfare, cyberterrorism, and what I think will be the most likely threat to our security over the next 20 years, which is that the miniaturization process that we see, inevitably, part of technology that now allows you to have a little computer in your palm with a screen and a keyboard that people with big hands like me can't use anymore—will also—you will see this with weapons. And it is far more likely that we will deal with those kinds of weapons in the hands of terrorists, with enormous destructive potential, even than we will have to fend off hostile missiles coming in. And I hope we'll have a bipartisan consensus about how to imagine the new most likely security threats of the 21st century.

I hope there will be even stronger support for relieving the debt of the poorest countries in the world. I hope there will be even stronger support for the initiative that Senator McGovern and Senator Dole brought to Secretary Glickman, who is here. We have—we really believe that for a relatively modest amount of money, a few billion dollars, we could guarantee one nutritious meal to every poor child in the entire world every day at school. If we did it, it would dramatically increase school enrollment, especially among young girls, and do a lot to reverse the tide of trafficking in young women and of the abuse of the rights of young women. And it would change the whole fabric of society all across the world in a way that would be very good for democracy. We need a real consensus on those kinds of things that there has not been nearly enough talk about. And we need to look at all these things in terms of our commitment to democracy, our commitment to national security.

We have to have—and as I said, I don't think I have to take a back seat to anybody in my commitment to a strong national defense, but our national security and our advancement of democracy depends on far more than our military power. And as wealthy as we are now, as successful as we are, for a relatively modest increase in terms of the surpluses we're projecting, in the investments we make around the world in people problems and in building institutions and in giving people the capacity to fight off the demons of the 21st century, we will get a huge return in the advance of freedom.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Winnick, founder and chairman, Global Crossing, Ltd.; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Paul G. Kirk, Jr., chairman of the board, and Ken Wollack, president, National Democratic Institute; former Vice President and former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Walter F. Mondale; Rev. Jesse Jackson, Special Envoy to Africa; Alan J. Blinken, former U.S. Ambassador to Belgium; Derek Shearer, former U.S. Ambassador to Finland; Prime Minister Milorad Dodik of the Serb Republic (Republika Srpska) of Bosnia-Herzegovina; Zlatko Lagumdzija, president, Social Democratic Party in Bosnia; President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan of Croatia; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; and former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole.

Remarks at an American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association Luncheon in Beverly Hills, California

August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, first I want to thank Sandy and Bob and all of you with the AFT and the NEA for all these years of support and friendship and for what you have done in our schools over the last 8 years. It seems like only yesterday that I started this odyssey to become President in late 1991, in no small measure because I wanted

to see the President and the National Government really, really take education seriously on a consistent, day-in and day-out basis, to care for our children not just in word but in deed.

And one of the best decisions I made the whole time I was President, I think, was to ask my friend of more than 20 years, Dick Riley, to become the Secretary of Education. He and Tunky are here today, and he deserves at least—at least—50 percent of the awards and the recognitions that you have given to me.

I can't tell you how much it has meant to me to know that what we have done together has actually made life better for the children of America. Bob gave a little history lesson. I got tickled, actually, when I heard them talking in Philadelphia. It was really almost funny, you know. [*Laughter*]

You know, when they were in—remember that?—[*laughter*]—they took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. [*Laughter*] "It's morning in America." [*Laughter*] But now they want you to believe that the turtle on the fencepost got there by accident—[*laughter*]—and that we just somehow just coasted along. Where do they think I got all this gray hair? [*Laughter*]

What I'd like to point out is that all the things that Sandy and Bob talked about have actually changed the lives of millions of Americans. In our schools today the math scores are up; the reading scores are up. Some of the biggest gains have come in some of the poorest schools, and I'll just give two examples for the public record here.

I was in Harlem the other day, in a school, celebrating the "Save the Music" program that VH1 is doing. And I was in this elementary public school in Harlem which 2 years ago had 80 percent of the kids reading and doing math below grade level—2 years ago. So they get a new principal; the teachers all get together; they adopt a school uniform policy; they adopt real standards of measurement of what they're going to do; and 2 years later—in 2 years—they went from 80 percent of the kids doing reading and math below grade level to 74 percent of the kids doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years.

Then I was in western Kentucky a few weeks ago, at a school where well over half the kids are on the school lunch program. It was identified 3½, 4 years ago, under the Kentucky law as one of the failing schools in Kentucky. They got some more of our teachers we were talking about; they have smaller classes in the early grades and a dedicated, very well-trained young woman that I had the privilege of meeting, known in her school as the "Clinton teacher," which I like. [*Laughter*] So in 3 years, they went from 12 percent of the kids doing reading at or above grade level to 57 percent. Listen to this; it gets better—from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; from zero percent of the kids doing science at or above grade level to 63 percent. It's now one of the 20 best elementary schools in the entire State of Kentucky.

So what's the point of this? The teachers of America now have example after example after example to rebut the critics. They can say all our children can learn, number one. And number two, our public schools, all of them, can produce; they can educate our children; they can make the grade.

You know the argument for Proposition 38 out here, the argument for that proposition in Michigan? Their whole argument is that there is this sort of mindless bureaucracy out there grinding our children down. And the appeal really goes to people who really don't know what's going on in the schools, don't understand how hard it is, and don't understand how much it's changing. Now, you have evidence.

And we say to our friends in California, our friends in Michigan, and throughout America, we don't have a dollar to spend on something besides the educational improvement of our public schools, and that's what we ought to be doing with that money. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Now, let me say—let me just go on a little bit. [*Laughter*] Sandy talked about the big expansion in college aid. We had a big increase in Pell grants. We went from 700,000 to a million work-study positions. We had the education IRA's. There are now 15 million families taking advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax cut. And the direct student loan program—listen to this—has already

saved college students over $8 billion in loan repayment rates.

So this is really good news. Why? Because the dropout rate in high school is down. The college-going rate is the highest it's ever been. The SAT scores are up, even though more people are taking it from more diverse backgrounds. And last year, for the first time in the history of our country, the high school graduation rate for African-Americans was about the same as it was for white American students. This country is moving in the right direction.

Now, who deserves the lion's share of the credit for that? The teachers, the other educators, the students, themselves, and their parents. But it matters that we have a national policy that says: high standards, strict accountability, more investment, do what works, and empower these schools, put more teachers out there. Well, I just announced an initiative a couple days ago to let teachers who go into underserved areas or into underserved fields get more of their college loans forgiven for teaching. We need to do things that work.

Now, that brings me to the next point. I was given a note here before I came in, and I don't know if they're still here, that Congressman Earl Hilliard and Congressman Rush Holt are here, or at least they were here. I'm going to New Jersey for Rush Holt in a few days. He's got a tough race. He's the only physicist in Congress. [*Laughter*] Somebody told me the other day, he said, "Rush is not qualified to be in Congress. He actually knows something." [*Laughter*] Now, Earl has got no problem, but I want you to help him, too. [*Laughter*] But Rush Holt was the first Democrat from that district in—I don't know—since the Civil War, and he deserves to be reelected.

And every one of these House and Senate seats is important. We still have to fight every year for that 100,000 teachers. Every year it's another battle. We still have not succeeded in getting Federal assistance to build or do major repairs on 6,000 schools and repair another 5,000 a year for 5 years, which is a desperate problem for our public schools all over America. It matters. Every one of these House and Senate seats matter.

And I hope you'll forgive me if I put in a little extra plug for the Senate candidate from the State of New York. [*Applause*] Thank you. I'll tell you, I am quite sure that there is no person running for the Congress this year, the House or the Senate, who was not previously a teacher, who spent as much time in school, listening to teachers, listening to principals, talking to parents and kids as Hillary has over the last 20-plus years. Even when she was younger, when she was a young girl, she would go door to door in Chicago trying to figure out why kids weren't in school and what it would take to get them there. Her whole life has been an obsession with the welfare and the proper development of our children.

And you know, the big question for the American people this year is whether to keep this progress and prosperity going. It's very, very important, every one of these House seats, every one of these Senate seats. And I can tell you, if the people of New York see fit to elect her, she will be one of the great Members of the United States Senate, now or ever.

I will also say that by far the biggest decision the American people have to make, obviously, is the race for President and Vice President. And you all know how I feel. [*Laughter*] But there is a big teaching job here, and I just want to say a few things about that.

I've known Joe Lieberman for 30 years, since I was a law student, still a student, and he was a young man running for the State Senate. I probably know Al Gore better than anybody outside his family now, because of the way we've worked together for 8 years. We had lunch once a week, every week for 8 years, until he got something more important to do. [*Laughter*]

You know, as your time runs out, you have little—it's sort of a gradual, your increasing humility; it doesn't just all hit you at once. [*Laughter*] One former President once told me it took him 3 or 4 months to realize he wasn't lost every time he went in a room because nobody played a song anymore. [*Laughter*] Anyway, it'll be all right. [*Laughter*]

To get back to the main point, I know this guy. This is not politics. I know this guy. I

have seen him when he was happy. I've seen him when he was sad. I've seen him when he was worried about his children being sick and when he was happy and elated about some achievement we had secured. I know him.

And I know how deeply he feels about equal opportunity for all people, because of his depth of conviction about the inherent worth of every person. And I know how that will play itself out in education policy. I know he will be a ferocious advocate of the children, the teachers, the schools and the future of this country. And I think it's really important because—you know, I say this, and a lot of times people laugh. But sometimes it's better to get people to laugh; they'll actually listen to you then. One of the things I learned when I became President is, just because you're talking doesn't mean somebody's listening. [*Laughter*] I'm sure you've had that experience in the classroom. [*Laughter*]

But look, we need you. I know you're all well organized, and I know you've contributed your dues. And I know that you'll invest money in this, and I am sure you'll do your Get Out the Vote and everything. But we need you from now until election day to be teachers. We need you to do the kind of thing that Bob did here on the education record and throw it into the future.

Why is that? Because this is a really big election. And what we do with our prosperity is as big a test of what kind of wisdom and what kind of values we have, what kind of judgment we have, as what we do in adversity, maybe a bigger test. Because, when you're, you know, in the ditch, you don't have to be as smart as a tree full of owls to know you've got to do something different to get out. [*Laughter*] But when everything is just rocking along, you can just sort of bliss out and say, "Well, you know, what difference does this make? They all seem pretty nice to me."

So it's a big election. Most of you are younger than me, but those of you my age or older know that you maybe get one chance in a lifetime to build the future of your dreams for your kids, unencumbered by incoming fire. America has—the people of this country must know how blessed we are now. You can help them understand that.

Then it's a big election because there are very large differences between the two candidates and their visions—the parties—which will have immense concrete impact on the lives of every American.

Now, does that mean this should be a negative campaign? No, this should be a highly positive campaign. I don't want anybody at our convention to say anything bad about them. I don't like that. We've had enough of that for the last 20 years, mostly coming out of their side, to last us a lifetime. I don't like that. We should posit that they are good, honorable, patriotic people who love their children and love this country and will do what they believe is right.

But then we ought to say, however, we disagree with them on a lot of things, and it seems like we're the only ones who want the American people to know what our disagreements are. Big election; big differences; only the Democrats want you to know what the differences are. Who does that tell you about who you ought to vote for?

Think about this. This is really true. I think we should compliment them for abandoning their mean and harsh rhetoric. [*Laughter*] We should. No, we should—wait, wait. Words are important. Woodrow Wilson said once, "Words could inflict more pain and damage than bullets." I wouldn't know, but he said that. [*Laughter*] So we're all having a good time, but you should welcome that. It's a good thing they did.

And everybody talks about—there was even a big article in one of the papers about phrases, verbatim phrases we had used in '92 and '93 and '94, verbatim were used by the Republicans in their speeches in Philadelphia. And I consider that both a compliment and an advance. [*Laughter*] Look, I'm being serious now. Don't laugh when—[*laughter*].

But the difference in where we were in '92 and where they are today is that we actually had policies that backed up our rhetoric. We had a new education policy, a new welfare policy, a new crime policy, a new environmental policy, a new economic policy. We had policies that backed up our rhetoric. And Al Gore and Joe Lieberman can speak for themselves, but I just want to say one word about the economy because that affects how much we can help our schools. And I think

I've earned the right to talk about economic policy.

People say to me all the time, "What great innovation did you and Bob Rubin bring to Washington to get this great economy?" And I always say, arithmetic. [*Laughter*] We stopped pretending that 2 and 2 was 6. We got rid of rosy scenarios and looked at the money that was coming in, and we had priorities for what was most important.

So we had this new economic policy. But it really was based on arithmetic. And that's what is at issue now. The Vice President says we ought to have a tax cut, but it ought to be one that we can afford, targeted to helping people send their kids to college, pay for long-term care, pay for child care, pay for retirement, easing the marriage penalty, helping low income workers with a lot of kids. And we ought to save some money for education and to cover Medicare and Social Security out through the life of the baby boomers and add a Medicare prescription drug benefit. And oh, by the way, the money may not come in because this so-called surplus is a projected surplus.

So his policy is: Stay with what works; get us out of debt; keep the interest rates down; give a tax cut we can afford; save some money to invest in our future, in education, Medicare, drugs, lengthening the life of Social Security and Medicare. That's his policy.

Their policy sounds better the first time you hear it. Their policy is this: "Hey, we're going to have this big surplus. It's your money. We're going to give it back to you." That sounds good. There are several problems with it.

First of all, if you give all the projected surplus and more in a tax cut, it leaves you nothing to lengthen the life of Social Security and Medicare. It leaves you nothing to invest in education. It leaves you nothing to prepare for an emergency. We've had 3 years of big farm emergencies. And it leaves you no cushion in case the money doesn't come in.

Never mind the programs they have. If they privatize Social Security partially, like they say, that will cost another trillion dollars over a decade. So inevitably what they're really saying is—what they're saying is the sweet part of it, "I will give it all back to you in tax cuts." They're not playing the sour part, which is, "Now, of course, this will mean that we'll have higher interest rates, because we're going back to deficits, and we will have less money to invest in our future."

Our tax cut, the one our side has proposed, costs way less than half theirs and gives two-thirds of the American people more money. Plus which, by keeping interest rates at least a percent lower than they otherwise would over the next decade, you know what that's worth, a percent a year for 10 years? Two hundred and fifty billion bucks in lower home mortgage, 30 billion bucks in lower car payments, 15 billion bucks in lower college loan payments, all to middle class people, like school teachers.

Now, how is it that we could have a tax cut that costs less than half theirs, that gives two-thirds of the people more money? Because, like always, as Bob said, most of their money is going to people like I hope I'll be when I get out of here. [*Laughter*] But you know, that's not our way. We think the people that served this food to you deserve the same chance to send their kids to college that we have. That's not our way. [*Applause*] Thank you.

So you've got to think about it. And you've got to be teachers. You need to ask people who tell you, "Well, it's not a very important election,"—you have to say, "Oh, yes it is; here's why." "Well, they both seem pretty nice, and there's not any difference in them." Say, "Oh, yes, there are, big difference in crime policy, big difference in environmental policy, big difference in civil rights policy and over a woman's right to choose. Big difference in"— [*applause*].

You just go down through all the things that will affect real people's lives. Anybody that writes a column in the newspaper saying there's not much difference between them is somebody that's already got everything they want in life and doesn't think anybody can take it away from them.

This is a big election. And you don't have to say one single, solitary mean thing personally about the people who are on the other side. Just be teachers.

But now this economics thing is big. Because if we put this country back in the ditch economically and we start running deficits again, there won't be any money for anybody

to keep these education promises or to invest in our children. And you need to go out and ask people, say, "Listen"—just go up and ask people, be a teacher—say, "What's your projected income for the next 10 years? How sure are you that it's going to come in? Now, if I ask you to sign a binding contract today to spend it all, every last penny, even on something you really, really wanted, would you do that and save no money for your family's health care or education or an emergency or just have a cushion in case you didn't get the raises you're counting on?" Of course, they wouldn't. Now, if they would, they should really consider supporting the Republicans. [*Laughter*] But of course they wouldn't, and America shouldn't either. This is dead serious. This is a huge difference, and so much else depends on that.

So I want you all to think about this. It's not enough to vote. It's not enough to work on election day or the weekend before. It's not enough to give your dues to the organization and have them invest it right. I am telling you, this election is going to be determined by what people think it's about. This is one of those deals where the answer you give depends on what you think the question is.

And if people really believe it's about how to keep the progress and the prosperity going and if they really understand the differences, then the Vice President and Senator Lieberman and Hillary and Rush Holt and our crowd—we'll be fine because we're on the side of the American people, and they agree with us. But we have to flush this out, and you have to be teachers.

The last thing I'd like to say is that I have no words to convey how grateful I am to you for what you do every day, for taking care of our kids. Almost a hundred percent of you could be making a lot more money doing something else. And you embody, to me, the best of American citizenship. Working with you has been a joy; knowing that we made it better has made it even more joyful. I'll be grateful for the rest of my life.

But remember, we are all citizens first, and our citizen duty now is to make sure the American people understand exactly what is at stake. If they do, trust me, the best is still out there.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:34 p.m. at the Beverly Hills Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Sandra Feldman, president, American Federation of Teachers; Robert F. Chase, president, National Education Association; Ann (Tunky) Riley, wife of Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley; and former Secretary of the Treasury Robert E. Rubin.

Remarks to the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, California

August 14, 2000

Thank you. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Isn't it great to be here in California together? [*Applause*] Forty years ago the great city of Los Angeles launched John Kennedy and the New Frontier. Now Los Angeles is launching the first President of the new century, Al Gore.

I come here tonight, above all, to say a heartfelt thank you. Thank you. Thank you for giving me the chance to serve. Thank you for being so good to Hillary and Chelsea. I am so proud of them. And didn't she give a good talk? [*Applause*] I thought it was great. I thank you for supporting the New Democratic agenda that has taken our country to new heights of prosperity, peace, and progress. As always, of course, the lion's share of credit goes to the American people, who do the work, raise the kids, and dream the dreams.

Now, at this moment of unprecedented good fortune, our people face a fundamental choice: Are we going to keep this progress and prosperity going? Yes, we are.

But my friends, we can't take our future for granted. We cannot take it for granted. So let's just remember how we got here.

Eight years ago, when our party met in New York, it was in a far different time for America. Our economy was in trouble. Our society was divided. Our political system was paralyzed. Ten million of our fellow citizens were out of work. Interest rates were high. The deficit was $290 billion and rising. After 12 years of Republican rule, the Federal debt had quadrupled, imposing a crushing burden on our economy and on our children. Welfare rolls, crime, teen pregnancy, income inequality—all had been skyrocketing. And our

Government was part of the problem, not part of the solution.

I saw all this in a very personal way in 1992, out there in the real America with many of you. I remember a child telling me her father broke down at the dinner table because he lost his job. I remember an older couple crying in front of me because they had to choose between filling their shopping carts and filling their prescriptions. I remember a hard-working immigrant in a hotel kitchen who said his son was not really free because it wasn't safe for him to play in the neighborhood park.

I ran for President to change the future for those people. And I asked you to embrace new ideas rooted in enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans. You gave me the chance to turn those ideas and values into action after I made one of the very best decisions of my entire life, asking Al Gore to be my partner.

Now, first we proposed a new economic strategy: Get rid of the deficit to reduce interest rates; invest more in our people; sell more American products abroad. We sent our plan to Congress. It passed by a single vote in both Houses. In a deadlocked Senate, Al Gore cast the tie-breaking vote. Not a single Republican supported it.

Here's what their leaders said. Their leaders said our plan would increase the deficit, kill jobs, and give us a one-way ticket to recession. Time has not been kind to their predictions.

Remember, our Republican friends said then they would absolutely not be held responsible for our economic policies. I hope the American people take them at their word. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Today, after 7½ years of hard effort, we're in the midst of the longest economic expansion in history, more than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, the lowest Hispanic and African-American unemployment rate ever recorded, and the highest homeownership in history.

Now, along the way, in 1995 we turned back the largest cuts in history in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. And just 2 years later we proved that we could find a way to balance the budget and protect our values. Today, we have gone from the largest deficits in history to the largest surpluses in history. And if, but only if, we stay on course, we can make America debt-free for the first time since Andy Jackson was President in 1835.

For the first time in decades, wages are rising at all income levels. We have the lowest child poverty in 20 years, the lowest poverty rate for single mothers ever recorded. The average family's income has gone up more than $5,000, and for African-American families, even more. The number of families who own stock, in our country, has grown by 40 percent.

You know, Harry Truman's old saying has never been more true, "If you want to live like a Republican, you better vote for the Democrats." [*Applause*] Thank you.

But our progress is about far more than economics. America is also more hopeful, more secure, and more free. We're more hopeful because we're turning our schools around with higher standards, more accountability, more investment. We have doubled funding for Head Start and provided after-school and mentoring to more than a million more young people. We're putting 100,000 well-trained teachers in the early grades to lower class size. Ninety-five percent of our schools are already connected to the Internet. Reading, math, and SAT scores are up, and more students than ever are going on to college, thanks to the biggest expansion of college aid since the GI bill 50 years ago. Now, don't let anybody tell you that all children can't learn or that our public schools can't make the grade. Yes, they can. Yes, they can.

We're also more hopeful because we ended welfare as we knew it. Now, those who can work, must work. On that, we and the Republicans agreed. But we Democrats also insisted on support for good parenting, so that poor children don't go hungry or lose their health care, unmarried teens stay in school, and people get the job training, child care, and transportation they need. It has worked. Today, there are more than 7½ million people who have moved from welfare to work, and the welfare rolls in our administration have been cut in half.

We're more hopeful because of the way we cut taxes to help Americans meet the challenges of work and childrearing. This year alone our HOPE scholarship and lifelong learning tax credits will help 10 million families pay for college. Our earned-income tax credit will help 15 million families work their way into the middle class. Twenty-five million families will get a $500 child tax credit. Our empowerment zone tax credits are bringing new business and new jobs to our hardest pressed communities, from the inner cities to Appalachia to the Mississippi Delta to our Native American reservations. And the typical American family today is paying a lower share of its income in Federal income taxes than at any time during the past 35 years.

We are a more hopeful because of the Family and Medical Leave Act, a bill that the previous administration vetoed. They said it would cost jobs. It's the first bill I signed, and we now have a test. Twenty-two million new jobs later, over 20 million Americans have been able to take a little time off to care for a newborn child or sick relative. That's what it means—that's what it really means to be pro-family. [*Applause*] Thank you.

We are more secure country because we cut crime with tougher enforcement, more than 100,000 new community police officers, a ban on assault weapons, and the Brady law, which has kept guns out of the hands of half a million felons, fugitives, and stalkers. Today, crime in America is at a 25-year low.

And we're more secure because of advances in health care. We've extended the life of the Medicare Trust Fund by 26 years, added coverage for cancer screening and cutting-edge clinical trials. We're coming closer to cures for dreaded diseases. We made sure that people with disabilities could go to work without losing their health care and that people could switch jobs without losing their coverage. We dramatically improved diabetes care. We provided health coverage under the Children's Health Insurance Program to 2 million previously uninsured children. And for the first time in our history, more than 90 percent of our kids have been immunized against serious childhood diseases. You can be proud of that Democratic record.

We are more secure because our environment is cleaner. We've set aside more land in the lower 48 States than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt, saving national treasures like Yellowstone, the great California redwoods, the Florida Everglades. Moreover, our air is cleaner; our water is cleaner; our food is safer; and our economy is stronger. You can grow the economy and protect the environment at the same time.

Now, we're more free because we are closer today to the one America of our dreams, celebrating our diversity, affirming our common humanity, opposing all forms of bigotry, from church burnings to racial profiling to murderous hate crimes. We're fighting for employment nondiscrimination legislation and for equal pay for women. [*Applause*] Thank you.

We found ways to mend, not end, affirmative action. We have given America the most diverse administration in history. It really looks like America. You know, if I could just get my administration up here, it would be just as good a picture as anything you saw a couple of weeks ago in Philadelphia—the real people loving it. And we created AmeriCorps, which already has given more than 150,000 of our young people a chance to earn some money for college by serving in our communities.

We are more secure, and we're more free because of our leadership in the world for peace, freedom, and prosperity, helping to end a generation of conflict in Northern Ireland, stopping the brutal ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, and bringing the Middle East closer than ever to a comprehensive peace.

We built stronger ties to Africa, Asia, and our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors. We brought Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO. We are working with Russia to destroy nuclear weapons and materials. We are fighting head-on the new threats and injustices of the global age, terrorism, narcotrafficking, biological and chemical warfare, the trafficking in women and young girls, and the deadly spread of AIDS. And in the great tradition of President Jimmy Carter, who is here tonight, we are still the world's leading force for human

rights around the world. Thank you, President Carter.

The American military is the best trained, best equipped, most effective fighting force in the world. Our men and women have shown that time and again in Bosnia, in Kosovo, in Haiti, and Iraq. I can tell you that their strength, their spirit, their courage, and their commitment to freedom have never been greater. Any adversary who believes those who say otherwise is making a grave mistake.

Now, my fellow Americans, that's the record, or as that very famous Los Angeles detective, Sergeant Joe Friday, used to say, "Just the facts, ma'am." [*Laughter*] I ask you, let's remember the standard our Republican friends used to have for whether a party should continue in office: My fellow Americans, are we better off today than we were 8 years ago?

You bet we are. You bet we are. [*Applause*] Thank you. Yes, we are. Yes, we are.

But—yes, we are—we're not just better off; we're also a better country. We are today more tolerant, more decent, more humane, and more united. Now, that's the purpose of prosperity.

Since 1992, America has grown not just economically but as a community. Yes, jobs are up but so are adoptions. Yes, the debt is down but so is teen pregnancy. We are becoming both more diverse and more united.

My fellow Americans, tonight we can say with gratitude and humility: We built our bridge to the 21st century. We crossed that bridge together. And we're not going back. [*Applause*] Thank you.

To those who say—and I'm sure you heard this somewhere in the last few days—to those who say the progress of these last 8 years was just some sort of accident, that we just kind of coasted along, let me be clear. America's success was not a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice.

And today, America faces another choice. It's every bit as momentous as the one we faced 8 years ago. For what a nation does with its good fortune is just as stern a test of its character, values, and judgment as how it deals with adversity.

My fellow Americans, this is a big election with great consequences for every American, because the differences, the honest differences, between our candidates and their visions are so profound. We can a have good, old-fashioned election here. We should posit that our opponents are good, honorable, patriotic people, and that we have honest differences. But the differences are there.

Consider this, just this. We in America would already have, this year, a real Patients' Bill of Rights, a minimum wage increase, stronger equal pay laws for women, and middle class tax cuts for college tuition and long-term care if the Democratic Party were in the majority in Congress with Dick Gephardt as Speaker and Tom Daschle as majority leader. And come November, they will be. That has to be clear to people. And that's why every House and every Senate seat is important. But if you'll give me one moment of personal privilege, I'd like to say a word about Hillary.

When I first met her 30 years ago, she already had an abiding passion to help children. And she's pursued it ever since. Her very first job out of law school was with the Children's Defense Fund. Every year I was Governor she took lots of time away from her law practice to work for better schools or better children's health or jobs for parents who lived in poor areas. Then when I became President, she became a full-time advocate for her lifetime cause, and what a job she has done. She championed the family leave law, children's health insurance, increased support for foster children and adoptions. She wrote a best-selling book about caring for our children, and then she took care of them by giving all the profits to children's charities. For 30 years—30 years—from the first day I met her, she has always been there for all our kids. She's been a great First Lady. She's always been there for our family. And she'll always be there for the families of New York and America. [*Applause*] Thank you.

Of course, we all know that the biggest choice that the American people have to make this year is in the Presidential race. Now, you all know how I feel. [*Laughter*] But it's not my decision to make. That belongs to the American people. I just want to tell all of you here in this great arena and

all of the folks watching and listening at home a few things that I know about Al Gore.

We've worked closely together for 8 years now, in the most challenging moments. When we faced the most difficult issues of war and peace, of whether to take on some powerful interests, he was always there. And he always told me exactly what he thought was right.

Everybody knows he is thoughtful and hard working. But I can tell you personally, he is one strong leader. In 1993 there was nobody around the table more willing to make the tough choices to balance the budget the right way and take this tough stance against balancing the budget on the backs of the poor and working people of America. I have seen this kind of positioning and this kind of strength time and again, whether it was in how we reform welfare or in protecting the environment or in closing the digital divide or bringing jobs to rural and urban America through the empowerment zone program. The greatest champion of ordinary Americans has always been Al Gore.

I'll tell you something else about him. More than anybody else I've known in public life, Al Gore understands the future and how sweeping changes and scientific breakthroughs will affect ordinary Americans' lives. And I think we need somebody in the White House at the dawn of the 21st century who really understands the future.

Finally, I want to say something more personal. Virtually every week for the last 7½ years, until he became occupied with more important matters, Al Gore and I had lunch. And we talked about the business between us and the business of America. But we'd also often talk about our families, what our kids were doing, how school was going, what was going on in their lives. I know him. He is a profoundly good man. He loves his children more than life. And he has a perfectly wonderful wife who has fought against homelessness and who has done something for me and all Americans in bringing the cause of mental health into the broad sunlight of our national public life. We owe Tipper Gore our thanks.

Al has picked a great partner in Joe Lieberman. [*Applause*] There's the Connecticut crowd. Hillary and I have known Joe for 30 years, since we were in Connecticut in law school. I supported him in his first race for public office in 1970, when I learned he had been a freedom rider, going into danger to register black voters in the then-segregated South. It should not be a surprise to anyone that Al Gore picked the leader of the New Democrats to be his Vice President, because Joe Lieberman has supported all our efforts to reform welfare, reduce crime, protect the environment, protect civil rights, and a woman's right to choose and to keep this economy going—all of them. And he has shown time and time again that he will work with President Gore to keep putting people and progress over partisanship.

Now, it's up, frankly, to the Presidential nominee and the Vice Presidential nominee to engage in this debate and to point out the differences. But there are two issues I care a lot about, and I want to make brief comments on them, and I hope I've earned the right to make comments on them. One is the economy—I know a little something about that—and the other is our efforts to build one America.

First, on the economy, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will keep our prosperity going by paying down the debt, investing in education and health care, moving more people from welfare to work, and providing family tax cuts we can afford. That stands in stark contrast to the position of our Republican friends.

Here is their position. They say we have a big projected 10 year surplus, and they want to spend every dime of it and then some on tax cuts right now. That would leave nothing for education or Medicare, prescription drugs; nothing to extend the life of Medicare and Social Security for the baby boomers; nothing in case the projected surpluses don't come in.

Now, think about your own family's budget for a minute or your own business budget. Would you sign a binding contract today to spend all your projected income for a decade, leaving nothing for your families' basic needs, nothing for emergencies, nothing for a cushion in case you didn't get the raise you thought you were going to get? Of course you wouldn't do that, and America shouldn't do it either. We should stick with what works.

Let me say something to you that's even more important than the economy to me. When Al Gore picked Joe Lieberman, the first Jewish-American to join a national ticket, to be his partner, and he joined with our Presidential nominee, who has, along with his great mother and late father, a lifetime commitment to civil rights and equal opportunity for all, even when it was not popular down home in the South, when they did that, we had a ticket that embodies the Democratic commitment to one America. They believe in civil rights and equal opportunity for everybody. They believe in a woman's right to choose. And this may be the most important of all, they believe the folks that you're buying your soft drinks and popcorn from here at the Staples Center should have the exact same chance they do to send their kids to college and give them a good life and a good future.

My fellow Americans, I am very proud of our leaders. And I want you to know that the opportunity I have had to serve as President at the dawn of a new era in human history has been an honor, a privilege, and a joy. I have done everything I knew how to do to empower the American people, to unleash their amazing optimism and imagination and hard work, to turn our country around from where it was in 1992, and to get us moving forward together.

Now, what I want you to understand tonight is that the best is still out there. The best is yet to come if we make the right choices in this election year.

But the choices will make all the difference. In February the American people achieved the longest economic expansion in our history. When that happened, I asked our folks at the White House when the previous longest economic expansion was. You know when it was? It was from 1961 through 1969. Now, I want the young people especially to listen to this. I remember this well.

I graduated from high school in 1964. Our country was still very sad because of President Kennedy's death, but full of hope under the leadership of President Johnson. And I assumed then, like most Americans, that our economy was on absolutely on automatic, that nothing could derail it. I also believe then that our civil rights problems would all be solved in Congress and the courts. And in 1964, when we were enjoying the longest economic expansion in history, we never dreamed that Vietnam would so divide and wound our America.

So we took it for granted. And then, before we knew it, there were riots in the streets, even here. The leaders that I adored as a young man, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, were killed. Lyndon Johnson, a President from my part of the country I admired so much for all he did for civil rights, for the elderly and the poor, said he would not run again because our Nation was so divided. And then we had an election in 1968 that took America on a far different and more divisive course. And you know, within months after that election, the last longest economic expansion in history was, itself, history.

Why am I telling you this tonight? Not to take you down but to keep you looking up. I have waited, not as President but as your fellow citizen, for over 30 years to see my country once again in the position to build the future of our dreams for our children. We are a great and good people. And we have an even better chance this time than we did then, with no great internal crisis and no great external threat. Still, I have lived long enough to know that opportunities must be seized or they will be lost.

My friends, 54 years ago this week I was born in a summer storm to a young widow in a small Southern town. America gave me the chance to live my dreams. And I have tried as hard as I knew how to give you a better chance to live yours. Now, my hair is a little grayer, my wrinkles are a little deeper, but with the same optimism and hope I brought to the work I loved so 8 years ago, I want you to know my heart is filled with gratitude.

My fellow Americans, the future of our country is now in your hands. You must think hard, feel deeply, and choose wisely. And remember, whenever you think about me, keep putting people first. Keep building those bridges. And don't stop thinking about tomorrow.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:52 p.m. at the Staples Center. In his remarks, he referred to Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator

Joseph I. Lieberman. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Los Angeles

August 14, 2000

[*The President was presented with an award from representatives of the housing industry.*]

The President. Now, I have one new house and two front doors. Well, let me say very briefly, I want to thank the Homebuilders, the Realtors, the Fannie Mae, the Freddie Mac people, everybody who was involved in this.

We had a serious policy right from the beginning to try to increase homeownership. And we have enjoyed working with all these folks that are presenting this award. I don't really feel that it's mine; I think it ought to go to our national economic team and to my Treasury Secretaries and my National Economic Adviser and all the people that have worked on this.

But one of the key things rarely noted by those who analyze our economic success over the last 8 years is the explosion in homeownership, which has been accompanied by an explosion in home building. It's one of the reasons we need to work hard to keep paying down the debt, keep the interest rates low, and keep creating jobs so there will be a pool of people to buy these homes when they get built.

These folks standing with me represent tens of thousands of our fellow Americans who played a major, major role in the economic boom that all the rest of us have been a part of. So I'm gratified to receive this award, but I kind of think I ought to be giving it to them.

Thank you very much.

[*At this point, Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee, made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you, Ed, and thank you Joe Andrew, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

I wanted to come by to thank you for your support of this convention and our party and our efforts, and also to participate in an award, which I'll say a little bit about it in a minute. But you know, I think sometimes people tend to minimize the importance of political parties in this day of mass media. We don't have the same kind of old conventions we once had, where we have 53 ballots before we pick a nominee. You know, that would be high drama. But these conventions are very important because they give our people from around the country—just as the Republicans got the opportunity in Philadelphia—to get together, to talk, to find common cause, to articulate what we believe to the American people, and also to reinforce one another in a profound way. I appreciated what Mayor Rendell said about the real people in the Pennsylvania delegation.

I think in some ways it's the most rewarding thing about having been President for over 7 years now. I was at a meeting about a week or so ago, and I was shaking hands with the people after I spoke. And two women were standing about 10 feet from one another and they didn't know each other; and both were on welfare when I became President. One of them has a master's degree now, the other is a lawyer. And it was really moving to me. I was in suburban Chicago a few days ago, and I met with these police officers from three different law enforcement jurisdictions. And two out of the three thanked me for helping getting more police officers for their area. So if you hang around long enough and you work at it, you actually can get some things done.

What I would like to say tonight, very briefly, before I bring my friend Walter Shorenstein up here with me, is that a couple of years ago we were talking, the Democratic leaders and I, and I said, "You know, here we are coming to the end of the 20th century. And if you look back to the time of FDR, our party has played a major role in shaping our Nation and our world. And I still think that political parties are important. And I think the Democratic Party ought to have a national award for a lifetime of service to our party that clearly benefited our country." So the Democratic Party thought it was a good idea, and last year we gave the first award

to Walter. And tonight we're giving the second award to Lew Wasserman, who is here, and I want to thank him. And I'm going to bring Walter up in just a second and let him say whatever he wants to.

But I came to see Lew Wasserman the first time, oh, maybe 20 years ago, more or less, when I was the young Governor of Arkansas—with no gray hair, didn't even look as old as I was and probably wasn't old enough to do what I was doing—and I asked him for advice. I went to his office, and I asked him for advice—this was in the seventies; it was more than 20 years ago—about how to make more movies in my State.

And then in the early eighties, I came out here again to an event that was held at his home. And over the last, now more than 20 years, Lew and Edie have spent a lot of time with Hillary and me; they've always been very generous to take us into their homes. I told Lew tonight I've been to so many fundraising events at his home, I expected him to prorate this year's property tax and send me my share—[*laughter*]—and I would pay. But in a remarkable lifetime of personal and professional success, he has shown astonishing generosity to a wide range of causes, but never stopped believing that one of the things that he ought to do is be an active citizen and an active supporter of his political party.

He has been a good Democrat without being a negative partisan. We've laughed in the past about how he supported the Presidential libraries of Republican Presidents, for example. But he was, he is, and I think Walter is, in the best sense, people who believe in their party and believe they can be proud of it without having to run down people in the other party, people who can sit down across a table and have an honest discussion about honest differences. And that's really what I was pleading for in my speech tonight.

You know, I don't think anybody who participates in the electoral process can have a genuine complaint if, after the election, everyone who votes is fully aware of the differences between the candidates and makes a really informed choice. And no one can complain. And this country is still around here after over 200 years because people normally get it right.

But the political parties play a role in that. And I can tell you, as someone with some measure of experience now spanning a few decades, there are very few Americans in the entire 20th century that were any more effective in supporting their parties in a patriotic way and, therefore, fulfilling their fundamental citizenship responsibilities—very few who did it as well as Lew Wasserman.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:16 p.m. at Paramount Studios. In his remarks, he referred to Joe Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Walter H. Shorenstein, founder, Shorenstein Co. LP; and Lew Wasserman, chairman emeritus, MCA, Inc., and his wife, Edie.

Remarks at a "Tribute to the President" Reception in Los Angeles

August 14, 2000

First of all, thank you. Let me say on behalf of my family, we're honored to have this Oscar. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank the Governor and Sharon for welcoming us to California, for the wonderful reception that we've had, for the great convention we've had. And I want to say to all of you—I don't know if any of you saw my "Home Alone" video that I did. Do you remember that? [*Applause*] Well, in this "Home Alone" video I was talking to myself in the mirror, and I had Kevin Spacey's Oscar. And he was ungracious enough to come take it away from me, just because he won it, and I didn't. So now that I have one of my very own, I'll be able to lord it over him.

We have had a wonderful time. I want to thank the delegates who are here from every single State. From the places where we started to the places where we ended, it's been a great ride. I want to thank you for being so good to Hillary tonight. And you just remember what I told you. We had a good run tonight because we've had a good 8 years. But the best way to validate all the work we've done is to win again and keep it going.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:18 p.m. at Paramount Studios. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Gov. Gray Davis of California, who presented the President with an honorary Oscar statuette for "Best President." The President also referred to Governor Davis' wife, Sharon.

Interview With Ron Brownstein of the Los Angeles Times

August 11, 2000

Republican National Convention

Mr. Brownstein. One of the things that was a little surprising at the Republican Convention was the extent to which they tried to characterize the meaning of your 8 years. Bush said you had coasted through prosperity. Cheney said these have been years of prosperity in the Nation but little purpose in the White House.

What is your response to that? How do you feel hearing that?

The President. Well, first of all, it was, on the facts, absurd. So I think what they're trying to do, their strategy seems to be to hope people think it all happened by accident. You know, when they had the White House for 12 years, they took credit every time the Sun came up in the morning. And also I think they did it because they fought so much of what we did.

You remember what they all said when they opposed the economic plan in '93, they said it would bring on another recession. They practically said it was the end of civilization as we know it. Then they fought the crime bill. They were against the 100,000 police. They were against the Brady bill. On welfare reform, we agreed that work should be mandatory and that the States should be able to design their own programs, but we disagreed on the requirements for national standards for nutrition and medical care and transportation and all that. So we just differed on so many things.

I think they were just trying somehow to get the American people to discount what's happened.

Economic Decisionmaking

Mr. Brownstein. In your mind—this is a legitimate debate—how significant a role did your economic decisions, the '93, the '97 budget, the other things that you've done, how important has that been in the prosperity of the last 8 years?

The President. I think it was pivotal. Because if you remember when we just announced what we were going to do—we announced we would have a deficit reduction plan that would cut the deficit by at least $500 billion. After the election, but before we took office, there was this huge boom in the stock market and interest rates dropped. And then when we passed it, it happened all over again.

And if you look at what's happened, Alan Greenspan said many times our fiscal responsibility in bringing the deficit down is what kept inflation pressures down and enabled him to leave interest rates lower so this whole thing would unfold. Otherwise, we would have had what had happened so long in the past—the productive capacity of the American people would lift the economy, then it would sag again, lift and sag, which is just what had happened before.

Social Indicators

Mr. Brownstein. A little bit on social policy, on crime, other social trends. Do you think that Federal decisions have been significant——

The President. Yes.

Mr. Brownstein. ——in things we've seen on those areas?

The President. Yes. I think if you look at it, I saw a study the other day—and I'm sorry; I don't remember who did it—which said that about 30 percent of the drop in the crime rate could be clearly attributable to the improvement in the economy. But I think the rest is due to better policing strategies and to more sensible efforts to keep guns out of the wrong hands.

The crime bill that we passed in '94 basically was the product of law enforcement officers, community activists, prosecutors, who were beginning to do things that were working at the neighborhood level. But since 1965, between then and 1992, the violent crime rate had tripled and the police forces of the country had gone up only by 10 percent.

So I don't think there's any question that putting 100,000 police in the streets, supporting more community prevention efforts, and doing the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban made a significant contribution. They don't think—the law enforcement people agree. I was in a suburban Republican community yesterday, outside Chicago, and I did what I always do when I leave, line up the police officers—and they had police officers from three different jurisdictions there—and two of them mentioned how important the COPS program had been to them and how much better they were doing as a result of it.

On welfare reform, I think starting with all the waivers we gave to States to experiment with welfare-to-work projects, right through the passage of the bill, and then getting 12,000 companies in the Welfare to Work Partnership to commit to hire people off welfare, I don't think there is any question that we have maximized the efforts. There again, some of the welfare decline has to be attributed to the improving economy. But the rest of it has to be attributed to changes in the law and the policies.

Choices in 2000 Election

Mr. Brownstein. So when you look at all of that, the economy, the social trends, to what extent do you consider this election, the November election, a referendum on your two terms, the good and the bad?

The President. I think it depends entirely on whether people understand what the choices are. And first, even before that, whether they think it's a significant election. I mean, the most troubling thing to me is—at least before the two conventions—there are a lot of people that are saying, "Well, things are going along well. This probably doesn't make much difference, and I don't know what their differences are—economy, crime, whatever."

I think if people understand with clarity what the choices are, they will clearly make a decision to keep changing in the right direction, because all the surveys show over 60 percent of the people approve of the economic policy, the crime policy, the welfare policy, the health care policy, the general direction of the country—the people support us.

Policy Differences

Mr. Brownstein. So you're saying in your mind you do view this as a choice between maintaining the direction you've set out and reverting back to the previous, or what?

The President. Well, it's different. I think in some ways you could argue that the Republican ticket this year is more conservative than President Bush in '92 or Senator Dole in '96. They've been quite adroit in the presentation of it and adopted a lot of our rhetoric and our positioning. And I suppose that's a step forward.

But the difference is, when we started in '92 we actually changed the policies of the Democratic Party, the economic policy, the trade policy, the welfare policy, the crime policy, the education policy, right across the board. And I think that's important to emphasize that distinction.

So again, from my point of view, for example, their tax policies, when you slice them up salami-like, like they're doing now, which is better politics for them, there's a compelling argument for each one of them individually. But when you add them all up, you're basically back in the deficit suit. And that's a big difference.

So in my view, that would be a reversion. It would take a while to have effect, because we've built in a strong base. But once it was clear that we were going to get rid of the surplus right off the bat and then stop paying down the debt, I think the pressures for—well, Greenspan has said if there's a big tax cut, he'll have to raise interest rates more. So most people would lose more money in the interest rate increase than they'll get in the tax cut.

Democratic National Convention

Mr. Brownstein. Is defining the stakes in the election one of the goals for your speech?

The President. Yes. But I think primarily that has to be done by Gore and Lieberman. Now, I do that when I'm out on the stump, you know, with our groups, because I want them to be able to go out and talk to other people and communicate that. But I think the American—I can say a few things about

what I think the choice should be. But this convention is very important that it belong to Al Gore and, to a lesser extent, to Joe Lieberman and that they define the choices.

I think that it should be the mission of this convention to have clarity of choice—first, to understand the importance of the election, then to have clarity of choice, then to make clear what our positions are. And that we're not—as I said, if somebody said, "Vote for me, I'll do just what President Clinton did," I would not vote for that person, because the times are very dynamic. There are still a lot of big challenges out there. But I think to keep changing in the direction we've taken is clearly what's best for America.

Choices in 2000 Election/Tone of Politics

Mr. Brownstein. In terms of defining the choices, when Bush and the Republicans define the choice, they put a lot of emphasis on changing the tone in Washington, changing the climate in Washington. When he talks about restoring honor and decency to the White House, do you feel as though he's talking about you, personally? Do you take that personally?

The President. Well, yes and no. Yes, he's talking about me personally; no, I don't take it personally. It's what they have to say. They're wrong on economics. They know the people don't agree with them on crime. They know the people don't agree with them on turning the environment back over to the polluters. They know the people don't agree with them on these issues. They know they can't make the case anymore that helping the environment hurts the economy. So they basically can't win any of the issues that affect the American people, so they have to divert the attention of the American people. So, no, I don't take it personally.

I think that what we have to do is talk about what we did for the people and the fact that we made specific commitments, and we honored them. Five years ago Thomas Patterson, the Presidential scholar, said I had already kept a higher percentage of my commitments to the American people than the previous five Presidents. And the number has gone up since then, and the ones that I haven't kept are ones that I tried and couldn't prevail on.

And the other thing I think is truly ironic, they're saying—they're responsible for the tone in Washington. I mean, I gave Bob Dole and Bob Michel the Medal of Freedom. I bent over backwards to work with Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey, and did, whenever I could. The truth is that the harsh tone in Washington, as the American people know, was set by the far right. They got rewarded for it in 1994, when there was a high level of frustration. They overread their mandate. And they basically turned up the volume on a strategy they had really been pursuing in the far right since 1980 or before. And then the people didn't like it.

So now they say they want to change it. What they're basically saying is, "It's Republicans that do this, so put us in. If you let us rule, we'll be nice, and the Democrats don't do this sort of thing, so you'll have a nicer tone. So reward us for our past misconduct, and then everything will be sweet."

What I'd like to see the American people do is to say, we want you to work together. If they ratify this choice—what we call the New Democratic choice—if they ratify the choice of the Republicans when they vote with us on balanced budget and welfare reform, and when we work together on trade and foreign policy, then that's the direction the country will take.

I think it's predictable that if they essentially reward them for first being mean and now being nice, that they will think that as long as they're nice they can then implement the policies that they were going to implement anyway. And I don't think the American people will like that, and I don't think it's good for the country.

Bipartisanship

Mr. Brownstein. Are you disappointed or frustrated at all, though, if you think back from when you first ran against brain-dead politics in both parties in '92, and you—with really the exception of the '96–'97 period of welfare reform, Kennedy-Kassebaum, and in the balanced budget deal—it's been very hard to get bipartisan, significant bipartisan agreement. And there have been significant

voices in the Democratic Party that have basically been cool to the idea, post the impeachment fight, very partisan atmosphere.

Is it tougher to bring the parties together than you would have thought?

The President. We got a lot done in '98. We got a lot done in '99—especially, mostly in the budget process; both times a lot of our education reforms went through. Even in 2000, we passed the Africa CBI bill with big bipartisan votes; we passed the China bill in the House; and the Senate, I think there will be probably more than half of both caucuses for the bill when they come back in September.

So I think it's important not to obscure the fact that things are still being done. And I wouldn't be surprised when they come back—if we do a good job at our convention, I wouldn't be surprised if we still don't get this year a Patients' Bill of Rights, a minimum wage increase, and maybe some of the other things we're working on.

So you know, it's harder, but I think we shouldn't obscure the fact that a lot of things still get done. I think we're going to pass a new markets initiative, thanks to the fact that the Speaker of the House has made it a priority in a bipartisan way. It got almost 400 votes in the House. It is a major, major piece of social legislation. It's basically the next big block on top of the empowerment zone program we adopted in '93.

So do I wish I could do everything? Yes. Do I wish it were less partisan? Yes. But that shouldn't obscure the fact that we're still getting quite a lot done.

Lieberman Selection/Tone of Politics

Mr. Brownstein. I asked you a moment ago if you thought that Bush was referring to you when he talks about honor and decency in the White House. The Lieberman selection as Vice President has been widely interpreted as signaling at once continuity with your policy, in terms of picking the chair of the DLC, but also an effort to separate from you, personally. Did you view it that way?

The President. Well, I think the far more important thing is the continuity of policy, because the thing that has always bothered me about these polls—until the last few days, where I think they are beginning to tighten up and firm up—is that the Vice President wasn't getting the credit he deserved for the role he played in the administration.

I never believed, not for a minute, that the American people were going to, in effect, vote against their own interests and their own values by holding Al Gore responsible for a personal mistake I made—for a second. The whole record here has been obscured. Joe Lieberman was the first Democrat to say it, but he didn't say anything different than Al Gore said. He certainly didn't say anything different than I said contemporaneously.

The issue is not—as a matter of fact, I think what he proposed was right. That doesn't mean that what they did was right. What they did was wrong. And what Lieberman said was right, and that's what Gore said. That's all Gore said.

So you know, sooner or—the American people would figure that out and they—people are so much more fair than politicians and, sometimes, press pundits.

Mr. Brownstein. Right.

The President. And they're also—you know, they don't cut off their nose to spite their face very long. All these tactics, even going back to the '92 campaign, the Republicans knew that what we were doing was best for the American people and that, if the American people understood that, we'd win.

So what have they done from '92 on? They've tried to divert the attention of the American people to make them vote against something, vote on the basis of something other than their families, their lives, their kids' future, and the need to change America in a constructive way. So this is just the latest and most subtle incarnation of what I see as a very constant strategy, going back until '92.

Impeachment Process

Mr. Brownstein. I want to ask you one last question in this area. That rather extraordinary session you had yesterday, talking with the ministers, and you talked at great length about your personal feelings, about the whole controversy. You didn't say much about looking back and how you felt about the impeachment process itself.

Do you feel now that it was only partisanship at work, or could there have been legitimate reasons for some Republicans to feel the way they did?

The President. Well, first of all, some of them—I think Peter King gave the best speech on that. I'll use his words. Peter King said, "I'm voting against this because if it was a Republican President you'd be against it, too." It's basically what I think. But you know, the American people can evaluate that. The most important thing was not what I say; it's what those 800 or 900 constitutional experts said. Way over 90 percent of the people with an informed opinion about the history and the law said it was wrong. Two-thirds of the American people thought it was wrong.

But that's all behind us. What the American people need to vote, in my judgment, the way they nearly always vote—they need to vote based on what kind of future they want. And if they believe that I have kept faith with the commitments I made and that we implemented those things and they had a good impact on the American way of life and our future and they understand what the choices are between the two candidates now and the two parties, I think we'll do fine.

Direction of Democratic Party

Mr. Brownstein. So it is the public record, in effect, the outward-looking record on which you think the judgment should be rendered and the vote should be based?

The President. Because that's the only thing that matters to them in their lives. And because, you know, if I were running again, they could evaluate me in whole, all my strengths and all my weaknesses. But I'm not running.

However, the things that we stood for—the reason I was thrilled about Lieberman's selection is that we've been working together in the DLC for years. It was a clear statement from Al Gore that he's going to continue this New Democratic course. It should be encouraging to independents and moderate Republicans that there will be a basis for bipartisan cooperation and that we're going to continue the kinds of change that have wrought so much good in this country in the last 8 years.

One of the things that will happen—as I said, I think Lieberman's selection will help the Vice President to get more of the credit he deserves for the good things that have happened the last 8 years.

Mr. Brownstein. You know, I wasn't planning to ask you this, but since you brought it up, one thing that's interesting about that, what you just said, though, is that the policy direction of the Vice President is quite similar to yours, overwhelmingly extending the kinds of things the administration has done, in some cases, literally, like CHIPS for adults or class size reductions through 12th grade or more police officers. But the music is a little different. He talks in a more traditionally Democratic language. He talks about big oil, big tobacco, whose side are you on. And some people feel that he's a more partisan—more comfortable in the Democratic Party, less comfortable reaching out across party lines.

Do you think there is a difference between the two of you and the extent to which you are comfortable challenging the party base and/or working with Republicans?

The President. Not really. I think that we're living in a time when the issues at hand and our frustration at not being able to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, for example, not being able to close the gun show loophole, having the NRA say they'll have an office in the White House if the Republicans are elected, have highlighted the differences between the special interests that dominate policy in their party and what we believe is in the public interest. And I think that accounts for some of the rhetoric.

I also believe, you know, when you're—if you go back to '92, the two New Democrats in the race were Tsongas and me, and Kerrey was, to some extent a New Democrat, we all had some pretty populist rhetoric. And there was reason for it then because people were suffering, really suffering. The reason for it now is that specific interest groups are holding up progress on issues even that a majority of the Republicans in the country favor.

For example, I think a majority of the Republicans clearly favor the Patients' Bill of Rights we're supporting. That's just one example. That's why I'm saying I think Lieberman coming on ticket sends a clear

signal. I also think he—Joe and I spent more years and just had the opportunity, for different reasons, to spend more time in the DLC than the Vice President did. If he hadn't become Vice President, I think one of these last 8 years he would have been chairman of the DLC. You think, if you have a chance to think about all this in a different way.

But I don't see it as a big substantive problem. I know how important it is to him, personally, to try to get bipartisan support for the work of a country. I know how important it is to try to get bipartisan support out in the country. I know how profoundly troubled he was in the last 2 or 3 years that even foreign policy began to get more partisan—the most amazing expression was the defeat of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the first time in 80 years the Congress had defeated a major treaty like this.

Electoral Fortunes of the Democratic Party

Mr. Brownstein. Let me ask you to sort of take a step back and think about the political ledger for a minute. You've become the first Democrat to be reelected since Roosevelt. The party was averaging about 50 electoral votes an election in the three elections before you. So clearly, there has been a restoration of the capacity to compete at the Presidential level.

On the other hand, you've lost Congress, fewer Governors, and Gore is in this ambiguous position here as the campaign begins—or in the middle of the campaign. Do you feel that you are leaving the Democratic Party in a stronger position than, in effect, when you found it in the fall of '91?

The President. Oh, yes, I do. Because a lot of those congressional seats we held because we had a guy who had been there for a long, long time, while the districts had been changing, more Republican. I feel terrible about what I did to weaken our position in Congress and, by extension, probably in the governorships in '94, because we got all the downside of voting for the crime bill. That is, the NRA was out there telling all those people we're going to take their guns away, and they hadn't seen it work, and they hadn't seen that the fear tactics were wrong.

We got the downside of voting for the economic plan because people didn't feel the economy going better, and the Republicans were out there telling everybody we raised their taxes. In fact, you know, for most people, the vast majority, they didn't get their taxes raised. We had more tax cuts than tax increases. But there was this general sense of, well, nothing is really all that much better yet. And I felt terrible because—you know, I got the benefit in '96, and we began to win seats back.

But what I think now is, the '98 election I think was a true watershed election, because the President's party won seats in the House for the first time since 1822, in the sixth year of a Presidency. That was a long time ago. And even though we only won 5, they thought they were going to win 20 or 30, and they spent $100 million more than we did. They thought they were going to win four to six Senate seats, and they didn't win any.

This year we're well positioned to pick up seats in the House and the Senate. In '98 Senator Hollings was reelected; we got a Democratic Governor in South Carolina; we got a Democratic Governor in Alabama; we got a Democratic Governor in Georgia; we got two African-American State-elected officials in Georgia. I think Zell Miller will be elected in Georgia in November.

So I think that the Democratic Party is coming back, and I think that it is a party reborn in the direction that we have taken in the last 8 years.

Status of Democratic Party Changes

Mr. Brownstein. Do you think Gore has to win in 2000 to institutionalize that in the party? Or do you think it is cemented now, the big things that you have changed—on crime, welfare, the budget—are they—free trade—are these cemented, regardless? Or if Gore loses, or do we reopen the debates?

The President. First of all, I've always thought he would win, and I still believe he's going to win. I thought he would win when he was down 18 points. Vice Presidents have always had a difficult time winning, but I believe he'll win. And I believe he'll win in a positive way.

President Bush won, basically, by demolishing Mike Dukakis. I think Al Gore will win for the right reasons, because the country is better off than it was 8 years ago, and it's a stronger country. It's also a more just country. And I think when people understand where we were, where we are now, where he wants to lead us, I think after they see Al and Joe and Tipper and Hadassah and their families and they hear him talk, I think the comfort level will go way up. And I think they'll have what I believe this election is about. I think they have four fine people running for President and Vice President with very different levels of experience and very different positions on the issues about the future. And I think they'll choose him. That's what I think will happen. I've always thought that would happen.

Republican Strategy

Mr. Brownstein. And that question of experience—your comments the other night in Rhode Island, sort of the humorous comments about Bush that sort of sparked a little—let me just ask you, so we can interpret those correctly. In your mind, does he have sufficient experience and those personal qualities it takes to be President?

The President. First, let me say I was surprised by the reaction. It isn't true that I was trying to get him. And I think it came probably because sometimes when I'm talking without notes I lapse into southern talk. We don't mean anything disparaging by "daddy." I talk about my daddy all the time. I think if I had said "father," it would have had a different resonance with them. And I didn't mean to do that.

But the point I'm making is, Bush has been a Governor for, what, 5 years. And I was a Governor for 11 years when I took office, and had been involved in a lot of these things. The point I was trying to make was a different one. It's not that being Governor of a State, big State, for 5 years is not enough to be President. It is that the argument that they're making is based far more on atmospherics and the rhetorical positioning of the candidate than on specific positions on the issues. That was the argument I'm making.

In other words, you didn't hear anybody up there talking about, here's how I'm going to change the environmental policy; here's how I'm going to change the way I appoint judges to the Supreme Court; here's how I'm going to change the tax policy.

Oh, they talked about particular popular tax cuts, but they didn't say, here's the difference in my approach than theirs. That's the argument I was making. Their argument is: This economy is on automatic; nobody can mess it up; nobody was responsible for it; the Government doesn't have anything to do with it; we're going to give you the money back; let us govern. That's what I was trying to say.

It wasn't meant to be a personal barb in any way. I was actually complimenting their strategy, because it's the only way they can win. That is, the only way they can win is to take all the guys that really run the Republican Party—in other words, Mr. Armey and Mr. DeLay and all those guys, they still have their positions—if they took everybody that's really in control and they didn't show them to the American people, then they took their policies on—whether it was guns or the environment or health care or hate crimes or choice—and they put them in a closet for the convention, and they showed a whole different face to America to try to make people say, "Well, I feel okay about these guys. I'm going to give them job. You know, the other guy has had it for 8 years. Maybe we'll give it to them." That is their strategy. That's plainly their strategy and I——

Mr. Brownstein. Is it meant to deceive the American people about what they really intend?

The President. Well, that's your word, not mine. I just think that they would prefer not to talk about the issue differences. I don't think they think of it as deceit, because if you talk to any of them, they basically think they should always rule. They thought I was an historical accident. They thought they'd never lose the White House again. They thought they had sort of a proven strategy for beating all Democrats, which is, basically, if you listen to all their campaigns from the beginning, that we're not like normal folks, and they are, so we ought to vote for them.

And I think they obviously have two candidates of enormous skill, enormous political skill, running. And I don't think they think

of it as deceit. I think they think, if they get elected, they'll do the best job they can. But they ought to tell the American people what they're going to do in all these areas, and we ought to tell the American people what we're going to do. And that's what the debates ought to be about.

Qualifications of the Candidates

Mr. Brownstein. Let me go back to my question, though, from a moment ago. Even if you didn't intend anything to that effect in Rhode Island—let me ask you directly—do you think Governor Bush is sufficiently experienced to serve as President?

The President. Well, that's always a relative question. The point I've made about Al Gore is that he had a distinguished record in Congress, a distinguished record in the Senate. And he had the most extraordinary record of achievement in his present job than anyone in history. So he is much better qualified. He's also shown a peculiar qualification for this moment in history. That is, he's one of the most future-oriented people in American public life in the last 25 years. And he always has been.

Contrary to Governor Bush's jab at him, he never claimed to have invented the Internet. He did sponsor legislation which transformed what was called something else into the Internet, a public access means of communication that's the fastest growing one in history. And that's just one example. He understood all this genetic business before everybody else did. He was talking about climate change when they were still making fun of him in '92. Now the oil companies say it's real. So I think that he has had more relevant experience.

So compared to the Vice President, he's not experienced enough. If you think experience is important, the Vice President has much more than he does. So that's not an objective statement; it's a relevant statement. No disrespect to his service as Governor, but look at Al Gore's experience and look at the results of that experience. I think he wins on that experience hands down.

Post-Presidential Plans

Mr. Brownstein. Would you accept any kind of position—special ambassadorship—in a Gore administration? Do you have any interest in the Supreme Court?

The President. Well, I can't imagine that that would happen. I told Al once that if he got elected President my main goal would be to stay out of his way—because America can only have one President at a time. But if he ever wanted to talk to me, I'd be glad to talk to him. If he ever wanted me to do anything, I'd be glad to do it. If he just wanted me to go to funerals for him, I'd be glad to go. I will do whatever I can to be helpful to him, because I know what it's like to have that job and have to make the calls.

So my main concern as I look ahead is to try to find ways that I can use all the experience and the knowledge that I've acquired to be an effective citizen of America and to do some positive things around the world in ways that absolutely do not interfere in any way, shape, or form with his performance of his responsibilities, which are unique.

So if I ever did anything, it would be strictly within the confines of what I was asked to do. And I would guess if it ever amounted to anything, it would be one specific something that might come up in some area where I had a lot of involvement. But my main focus is on—I'm going to be a private citizen again, and I just want to be a good one, and that's what I expect to be.

Defining the Vice President's Role

Mr. Brownstein. In the last few minutes I have, I was asked by colleague Ed Chen to ask you a couple of questions for a profile of the Vice President that will be running during convention week. And I'm wondering if—this goes back to '92—but the first question he wanted me to ask was, when you talked with then-Senator Gore about the Vice Presidency, did he have any specific ideas of what he wanted the job to be? And how did they jibe with your view of what the Vice President—did you negotiate in advance about what the Vice Presidency would be?

The President. I don't know if I would say "negotiate." But yes, he did, particularly after we talked a second time. He knew that basically—that Vice President Mondale and

Vice President Bush had had more institutional—had a more institutionalized partnership than any Vice Presidents before them. So he said, "You know, if I do this I want to know that we'll have lunch once a week," and we have, faithfully, until he got involved in more important things. "I want to know that I can be a part of any meeting and a part of all important decisions." And I said he would.

And then he said, "What do you have in mind? What do you want me to do?" And I said, "Well, I'm asking you to do this because I think you'd be a good President. I think you'd be a good partner, and because you know things I don't know—arms control, defense, the environment, technology, principally." And I said, "As we unfold this administration, I will want you to do specific things. I want you to have adequate staff to do it. I want you to have adequate support to do it, and I don't want you to have some separate satellite operation. I want us to have an integrated White House operation—you, the Cabinet, the staff—I want us all working as a team."

And I rather suspect that the model that we have established operationally will be followed by subsequent administrations, Republican and Democrat, because it's just crazy that other people haven't used the Vice President more. I mean, I think it doesn't make any sense.

Mr. Brownstein. It very well leads into question two, which was—the question is, how aware were you in the early days of the administration to resistance within the Presidential staff to the Vice President having an active role? And what did you do to let people—and here it says, like George or Harold Ickes—know that Gore had to be a central part of decisionmaking? Was there resistance, in your mind, originally, among some of the White House staff to this—what you describe as a kind of unique, new, and different integrated role.

The President. Well, I don't know if I would—let me just say this. I don't know if I would describe it in that way. But when we got started, we had to create a culture, and we had thousands and thousands of decisions to make. And the deal I made with him, which I initiated, I said, "Look, if you think we're not doing something right or if you feel you should be involved in something you're not, the one thing I cannot tolerate, we'll never survive around here if this happens, is if you or anyone else sits around and fumes about something instead of bringing it out." I said, "If you think that we've messed up, you come and tell me, personally. And if I agree with you, we'll fix it."

So over the last 8 years maybe—maybe once a year something would come up where he'd say, "Look, this is how I think it should be, and we'd like to be more involved, and we're not," or, "This is something I think I should run myself." But it hasn't happened a lot. But in the beginning, you know, it took us a while to get this up and going. It's not easy. If you read these accounts of previous White Houses and how they operated, I mean, you would see—you've got a thousand different external pressures operating on you; you feel like you're in the fourth quarter of a game every day with the time running out. So it took us a while to work it out, but we did work it out, and I think on balance it's worked quite well.

Unfinished Agenda

Mr. Brownstein. My last question, so I'm going back to one of my own questions, instead of the Gore questions, which is: In the last few years, despite what we've talked about before, a lot of what you have proposed has been blocked. I mean, there has been, sort of, gridlock on a lot of things in Washington.

If you were going to look at one or two things, try to narrow it down, of the unfinished business of your Presidency that you think should be the top priority for the next President, areas or even specific proposals that you think are really right at the top of the agenda for a new Congress and a new President should focus, what would those be?

The President. Well, before they spend the whole surplus, in my judgment, they need to do the following things. There needs to be a long-term plan for what we're going to do on Social Security and Medicare that will require some more money and some substantive reform. I really regret—basically, neither party wanted to tackle Social Security

this year, because we could have done it. So they need to think about that.

Then I think they need a longer term strategy—I would advise the Vice President when he becomes President to think about this—really longer term strategy for education, because we're really beginning to see some improvement in these schools now. And we need to accelerate the pace of it, because now we know what works. And we're going to hit a roadblock when you have 2 million teachers retire over the next few years, really over the service of the next President, if the President is a two-termer.

Then I think—the third thing I think that really needs to be thought through is this whole complex of health care issues. I would recommend that we block out everything. For example, we could take a lot of the—the most vulnerable people without health insurance, we could take care of if we let all the parents of the CHIP kids buy into CHIP, if we let everybody over 55 who lost their health insurance at work buy into Medicare and give them a little tax credit to do it. And if then we let all young single people have access at least to some sort of catastrophic plan, along the lines of the slimmest plan offered by the Federal employees plan. And then we should beef up the public health network in America. I think that's important.

So those three areas, domestically.

Now, in foreign policy, I think that there are two things that need to be more work done. The one area, as you know, that I have failed to get a majority consensus in my party on is for the imperative of continuing world trade networks and to continue to have America benefit from the increasing interdependence of the global economic system. And I failed to get the Republicans to agree that you can't have an economic system that is interdependent without more of an interdependent social system. That's what the labor and environmental standards are all about. I think there ought to be a serious effort on that.

And then one other thing on foreign policy that I think is important. I've talked a lot about this, but we don't have the institutionalized commitment that I think we need to deal with the new security threats and the new opportunities in the 21st century. The Republicans made fun of me when we said AIDS was a security threat, but it is. The breakdown of public health networks all over the world and the rise of AIDS, TB, and malaria, but also just a breakdown of health care systems—in Russia, not just in Africa, in Russia and lots of other countries in the former Soviet Union and other places—it's a serious problem. And I think there should be much more money spent in nonmilitary massive security, foreign policy areas.

We do real well on an ad-hoc basis, like we've got a great bipartisan commitment on Plan Colombia. I know it's controversial, but I think it's right. I think we're going to do it right, and I think my successors will do it right. But we're spending much less in nonmilitary foreign policy expenditures than we were at the end of the cold war. That budget has been cut in real dollar terms even more than the defense budget. The difference is that we could cut the defense budget because we didn't need 200,000 troops in Europe. We can cut back some other places and still have the dominant military in the world. And even now we're starting to replenish, rebuild the defense budget, which we have to, because we need more investment and readiness and weapons modernization and things like that. We have got to invest more money in development.

If we get a Middle East peace, the Congress, I'm sure, will do what we should do.

If time permitted, I could give you a dozen examples where the direct, long-term interests of the United States are adversely affected by our inability to invest nonmilitary money in certain areas. And I'm not talking about just writing people a blank check and throwing the money away. But those are the areas, if I were in charge of a transition planning team for the new administration, those are the things that I would urge them to be looking at.

NOTE: The interview began at 4:43 p.m. aboard Air Force One en route to Los Angeles, CA. In his remarks, the President referred to former Senator Bob Dole; former Representative Robert H. Michel; 1988 Democratic Presidential candidate former Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman and his wife, Hadassah;

newly appointed Senator Zell Miller, who filled the seat of the late Senator Paul Coverdell from Georgia; and former Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Political Affairs Harold Ickes. This interview was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 15. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Remarks to the Community in Monroe, Michigan

August 15, 2000

Thank you. Are you ready to win this election for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman? [*Applause*] Let me begin by thanking Mayor Cappuccilli and his whole family for meeting me and Hillary and Al and Tipper. I thank you for coming out here today.

When we were riding in here, Hillary and Chelsea and I came in in a separate car from Al and Tipper, but we were looking at all the fields along the way, and then we looked at this really beautiful community that you live in. And it reminded us so much of all the places we visited on our bus tour in 1992, when we all got on the bus together and rode across America. The people who live here are the kind of people we ran to change the future for, the kind of people that work in our auto plants—and I thank Steve Yokich and the UAW for being here—the kind of people represented in Congress by John Dingell, who is recovering from surgery, but his wife, Debbie, is here—and Marcy Kaptur over in Ohio.

And miraculously for us, the people of Michigan and the people of Ohio twice gave us a chance to serve. Al Gore and I have worked for nearly 8 years now to put you first, never to forget about you, to get the economy going again, and to get our society moving in the right direction, to make us a more united nation, a stronger, a better nation.

I got to talk about that a little last night, and say—I imagine there were some people out there in the country that didn't like it, because when they met a couple of weeks before, they didn't follow that old Joe Friday maxim. I just gave you the facts last night. And one of the facts that I want to reiterate is that every good thing that has happened, that came out of our administration in the last 8 years, Al Gore was at the heart of it. He has been a leader for the new economy, a leader for welfare reform, a leader for education, a leader for lowering the crime rates.

The mayor talked about the brownfield program. That's a program that Al Gore took the lead in initiating that helped this community. You've got a community college here. We have 10 million Americans taking advantage of the HOPE scholarship tax credit, which makes community college virtually free in every State in the country. You got it, right? He got it right there, exhibit A.

When we took office in January of 1993, the unemployment in this community was 8.8 percent. Today, it is 2.2 percent, one-quarter of what it was before.

Now, I want to make just a couple of points and bring on the Vice President. Number one, this wasn't a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice. Not just us—nothing we did in Washington would have amounted to anything if you weren't doing your part out here, the working people, the business people, the local leaders of all kinds. I know that. But our job was to create the conditions and give you the tools to live your own dreams and make your own future. And I think the record is clear. This country is better off than it was 8 years ago.

Here's the second thing, and I hope you'll take my word for this because I spent most of my adult life studying economics and the development of our country. The things that have happened in the last 8 years, the good things, are nothing compared to the good things that can happen in the next 8 years—nothing.

But we've got to make the right choice. And you, all of you who came out here today, what you owe yourselves and your family and your future is to make sure that every single citizen you know in this country, all your friends and neighbors here, understand exactly what the choice is, what are the differences in the leaders and the parties, on the economy, on crime, on welfare, on civil rights, on choice, on all the issues that will shape our future.

I can tell you that as we move into the future, the nominee of the Democratic Party, my partner and friend for the last 8 years,

understands where we are, where we're going, and how it will affect ordinary citizens more than any other public figure in this country over the last 20 years. He is the right person to be the first President of the 21st century, Al Gore.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:32 p.m. at Loranger Square. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor C.D. (Al) Cappuccilli of Monroe; and Stephen Yokich, president, United Auto Workers. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Statement Announcing the Appointment of the Presidential Envoy for AIDS Cooperation

August 15, 2000

Today I am pleased to name Sandra L. Thurman Presidential Envoy for AIDS Cooperation—the first U.S. Envoy to deal exclusively with a global health issue.

AIDS is now the leading cause of death in Africa and increasingly threatens Asia and the former Soviet Union. It is reversing hard-won advances in life expectancy and economic growth and imperils the stability and security of nations.

Sandy Thurman has joined the battle against AIDS in every capacity from community activist to national policy director to international policy advocate.

Since I appointed her Director of the White House Office of National AIDS Policy—a position she will retain—she has traveled repeatedly to Africa and met many leaders including former President Mandela of South Africa, President Museveni of Uganda, and President Obasanjo of Nigeria. She led the U.S. delegation to the International AIDS conference in Durban and co-chaired its session on prevention.

Sandy will be an inspiring envoy. She combines the passion of an advocate with the skill of a diplomat.

One of her top priorities as AIDS Policy Director was to expand America's commitment to fighting global AIDS. Now Sandy will use America's growing efforts as leverage to encourage other countries to expand financial commitments, to step up prevention efforts, and to increase access to care and treatment worldwide. Sandy has an extraordinary record of service on this issue, and I am proud to make her America's first envoy in the global fight against AIDS.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

August 13

In the afternoon, in Los Angeles, CA, the President attended a luncheon at the home of entertainer Barbra Streisand for his Presidential library. In the evening, he met with the Arkansas delegation to the Democratic National Convention at Union Station.

August 14

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Beverly Hills, CA. Later, he returned to Los Angeles.

August 15

In the morning, the President and Hillary and Chelsea Clinton traveled to Monroe, MI. In the evening, they returned to Washington, DC.

August 16

The President had a telephone conversation with President Vladimir Putin of Russia concerning the Russian submarine accident in the Barents Sea.

The President announced his intention to appoint Najeeb E. Halaby to be a member of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Tanzania on August 28 to meet with former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa in support of the Burundi peace process.

August 17

The President declared a major disaster in the District of Columbia and ordered Federal aid to supplement local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe thunderstorms on August 7.

The President declared a major disaster in New Jersey and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, and mudslides on August 12 and continuing.

August 18

In the afternoon, the President and Hillary Clinton traveled to Saranac Lake, NY. In the evening, they attended a picnic at the Saranac Lake Civic Center hosted by the Democratic Parties of Franklin, Essex, and Clinton Counties. Later they traveled to Lake Placid, NY.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

NOTE: No nominations were submitted to the Senate during the period covered by this issue.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released August 14

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Excerpts of the President's speech at the Democratic National Convention

Released August 16

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President has accepted the invitation of former President Nelson Mandela of South Africa to join him in Tanzania on August 28 in support of the Burundi peace process

Acts Approved by the President

Approved August 18

H.R. 1167 / Public Law 106–260
Tribal Self-Governance Amendments of 2000

H.R. 1749 / Public Law 106–261
To designate Wilson Creek in Avery and Caldwell Counties, North Carolina, as a component of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

H.R. 1982 / Public Law 106–262
To name the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Rome, New York, as the "Donald J. Mitchell Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic"

H.R. 3291 / Public Law 106–263
Shivwits Band of the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah Water Rights Settlement Act