

Remarks at the Bush-Quayle Welcoming Rally at the Republican National Convention in Houston, Texas

August 17, 1992

The President. Thank you all very much. What a wonderful welcome home.

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

The President. You got it.

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

The President. Thank you all very much. Thank you so much. Let me just thank a couple of people at the beginning. First, let me thank Craig Fuller, who's done a great job as our convention chairman; Rich Bond, our national chairman; Jeanie Austin, our cochairman. And let me say this: What a wonderful welcome home. It is sure great to be back here in Texas, home again.

May I thank Ray Childress and Warren Moon, great heroes right here, and deservedly so, in Houston, for being with us; and of course, another friend who entertained us, and at least I got here in time to hear him, a great American and a great singer, Randy Travis. By golly, he was first-class.

I'm leaving out a lot of people, but one other person, my partner in a great adventure, with me every step of the way from west Texas to the White House, Barbara Bush.

Let me thank our great Governor, Carroll Campbell, who's given this Nation so much leadership as Governor of the State of South Carolina, and a special word, a special word about two very special friends of ours, Dan and Marilyn Quayle, the Vice President of the United States.

Four years ago, Dan Quayle and I teamed up. I told him then, speaking from some personal experience, that the job of Vice President was a real character-builder. [Laughter] And I was not exaggerating. But look, this guy stood there, and in the face of those unfair critics he has never wavered. He has never wavered. He simply told the truth, and let the chips fall where they may.

He said we need families to stick together and fathers to stick around, and he is right. He says what we need is an America that stands behind our law enforcement officers, and he is right about that. He also said

we've got to take on those trial lawyers and all those who inundate this country with frivolous lawsuits, and he's right about that. Let that ABA turn off to the left; we are with the American people.

So when the establishment in Washington hears all this, they get all uptight about it, about him. They gripe about it. But folks in the real world understand, and they nod their head. He has been a super Vice President, and he will be for another 4 years.

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

The President. I couldn't help but notice an interview that my opponent gave to the USA Today last week. It was absolutely incredible—

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. You haven't heard it yet. [Laughter] He talked about how he's already planning his transition, figuring out who should be Deputy Assistant Under Secretary in every Washington Agency, even where he can get away from the White House for a day or two. I half expected when I went over to the Oval Office to find him over there measuring the drapes. [Laughter] Well, let me say, the first shot out of the barrel, I have a message for him: Put those drapes on hold. It is going to be curtain time for that ticket. And I mean it.

You know, for 9 months the other side has had a one-way conversation with the American people, and now it's our turn. They have called our great country a mockery and sounded the saxophone of change. And that sound sure sounds familiar. They say they want to shake up Washington, but they oppose limiting the terms of Congressmen. That's a change, just changing the subject.

They say they believe in a strong America, but they propose gutting the national defense of this country. That's called changing their tune. They say they want to put people first, but they are proposing the largest tax increase in the history of the

United States of America.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. I guess that's change, but by the time they're through, change is all you're going to have left in your pocket. We're not going to let that happen to the United States.

You don't kid yourself, America. We're not running against the Comeback Kids, we're running against the Karaoke Kids. They'll sing any tune, any tune they think will get them elected, say one thing in one place and then whisper something else in another. And we're not going to let them get away with it.

You know, I've never pretended to be much for words, but for me, eloquence is action. And for the next 78 days we're going to go out there to ask the American people a simple question: Who do you trust to do what's right for the United States of America? It's a question of trust.

Audience members. George Bush! George Bush! George Bush!

The President. Forty-four years ago, Barbara and I started out, out in west Texas, the Odessa-Midland area. I remember traveling across that country to Wink and Kermit and Notrees and Andrews, places where parents worried and watched when a kid crossed the street; the kind of towns that sent those kids halfway around the world, from the DMZ to Da Nang and to Desert Storm. Barbara and I loved the rhythms of west Texas. You remember the Friday night football and Saturday picnics and Sunday sermons. We raised a family and built a business, made friends that have lasted us an entire lifetime. We worked hard. But when the work was done, we sat around the table late at night, and we talked, talked about report cards—same thing you all do—schoolyard fights, small things, big dreams.

No matter what the other side says, America is still the land of dreams, dreams as vast and wide as those plains out there in west Texas. Our dream, our ideals, and our ideas have awakened dreams from Managua, to our south, all the way to Moscow. With faith in our people, we will reawaken those dreams right here in the United States of America.

My opponent wants to protect the jobs

of the past. And I have a plan to create the jobs of the future so that the sons and daughters of steelworkers and linemen can build their dreams. My opponent wants to change our schools, oh, just a little bit. And I have a plan to revolutionize our schools so that our kids can do as well in the science labs and math room as they now do in the swimming pool and out there on the basketball courts.

My opponent, and Dan touched on this, ridicules or attacks me as we talk about family values. Well, let me tell you something: We are going to keep on trying to strengthen the American family, to make American families a lot more like the Waltons and a lot less like the Simpsons.

Now that I'm getting warmed up, let me tell you about another target that I'm going to get in the crosshairs. The Democratic leaders of the United States Congress don't like our ideas. They are the sultans of the status quo. They are the only people in America who could drive to work with a blindfold every morning because they've been going the same way, controlling that Congress for 38 years.

Audience members. Clean your House! Clean your House! Clean your House!

The President. You tell me about it. You're darn right. You talk about gridlock, we know where the gridlock is. It's under those leaders that control the Congress, both the Senate and the House, and we're going to change it. We are going to get the American people to change it.

I was very lucky; I didn't get to see the Democratic Convention. [Laughter] But up in Manhattan last month, you didn't see those congressional leaders. Finding them was like playing "Where's Waldo" in the Astrodome. They gave a new meaning to the word "closet liberal."

Don't kid yourselves. Look at where their support is coming from, that same ossified, entrenched, change-allergic support groups out there supporting the Democratic leaders of the Congress. We're going to make the American people understand it. I'm going to do what Harry Truman did. I am going to take that message to change the Congress all across this country.

I've held out my hand to those crazy

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guys. I've held out my hand to them, only to have it bitten off, and I'm tired of it. We're going to change that Congress. And we are going to link that Clinton-Gore ticket right in close to those Democratic leaders. They are one and the same, and we're not going to let the American people forget that.

You hear a lot about these polls. Yes, they say it's going to be a tough fight. We know that. The truth is I get a little comfort from some of these polls. You know me. In politics I've always done better when I fight back, when I'm behind, because you have a certain freedom. It gives you a certain freedom. The other guy can do what the polls want. The other side can pay attention, changing this or changing that because of what the polls say. I'm going to roll up my sleeves and do what is right for the American people, and I don't care what the polls say. Do what's right for America. And I am a fighter, and I intend to fight for what's right for America.

Right next door there's a big building. They call it the eighth wonder of the world. Well, Houston, get ready for wonder number nine, the most stirring political come-

back since Harry Truman gave them hell in 1948. It starts right now.

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

The President. It all starts right here. You know, the Gatlin Brothers like to sing, "Houston means I'm one day closer to you." Well, no offense to Larry, but to me Houston means that we are one day closer to victory, one day closer to building a better and a brighter future for the people of this great country.

Barbara and I want to thank you for coming here. We want to thank you for this magnificent show of support. When history writes about this election, they're going to say it started right here when you fired up this President to take this message to the American people.

May God bless the United States of America. Thank you all very much.

Note: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. at the Houston Astrodome. In his remarks, he referred to Houston Oilers football players Ray Childress and Warren Moon and country music entertainers Randy Travis and the Gatlin Brothers.

Remarks at an Antidrug Rally in Houston

August 18, 1992

Thank you very, very much. Speaking of goals, that's one of the reasons I'm back in Houston. Yesterday we got off to a pretty good start, I think.

But nevertheless let me salute first my friend Chuck Norris, friend of long standing, commend him on being what we call a Point of Light, reaching out to help others. What this program is about, kicking drugs out of school, it should have the support of all Americans. And I salute him for giving of his time so generously.

I salute these instructors. I salute these experts that we saw in action. I thank you all for this most wonderful presentation. May I also thank the school principal who is with us; our new, or not so new but our most distinguished superintendent of

schools; and also our new police chief; all of them with us today. I don't know if you saw them when they came in. Maybe they'd stand up. Chief?

There's a message in all of this because we support our law enforcement officers who are trying to keep not only the schoolyards clean but preserve order in this wonderful city of ours. I salute our school superintendent who has led the way in making Houston a Houston 2000 educational community, not fearing to change. He's on the leadership edge of literally helping revolutionize education in this country, and I salute him for that. As for our principal, just hearing wonderful things about her and what she's done. May I express our appreciation for letting this marvelous group