

not spent with a husband, a child, a friend, or a parent.”

Barbara knows that kids, quoting Art Linkletter, say not only the funniest but the most insightful things, especially about religion. Once a Sunday school teacher started talking about the story of Jonah and the whale, and she asked what the story showed. A small boy raised his hand. “I know,” he said. “People make whales sick.” [Laughter]

Well, each of us turns to God daily to make lives well, and we act through the third and greatest of God’s gifts, prayer. If Congress can spend time debating Vanna White’s appearance on the Home Shopping Network, surely Congress can find time to pass an amendment allowing voluntary prayer in our classrooms. So let’s do what we can to bring the faith of our fathers back to our schools.

You know, I’ve been President for 3½ years now. More than ever, I believe with all my heart that one cannot be President of our great country without a belief in God, without the truth that comes on one’s knees. For me, prayer has always been important but quite personal. You know us Episcopalians. [Laughter] And yet, it has sustained me at every point of my life: as a boy, when religious reading was part of our home life; as a teenager, when I memorized the Navy Hymn. Or how 48 years ago, aboard the submarine *Finback* after being shot down in the war, I went up topside one night on the deck, on the conning tower, and stood watch and looked out at the dark. The sky was clear. The

stars were brilliant like a blizzard of fireflies in the night. There was a calm inner peace. Halfway around the world in the war zone, there was a calm inner peace: God’s therapy.

This month I got a letter from a little girl, age 11, Joy Vaughn. Oh, I love getting the mail at the White House, but this one was special. She lives in Mesa, Arizona, and one of her brothers is a missionary. She wrote, “I just wanted to tell you that I am praying for you.” And then she added, “God is in charge.”

So Barbara and I have concluded, as every family that’s been privileged to live in the White House I’m sure has concluded, that you cannot be President without believing in God. We say our prayers every night. When we sit in that historic family dining room on the second floor of the White House, we say the blessing before our meals. Today I ask for your prayers, not for the campaign that we’re in but prayers asking God to give those of us in leadership positions and give me as President the strength to do what is right, the courage to lead this, the greatest nation on the face of the Earth, the United States of America, one Nation under God.

Thank you, and may God bless our great country.

*Note: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. at the University of Houston. In his remarks, he referred to Mary Lou Retton, 1984 Olympic gold medalist; Ninfa Laurenzo, Houston business leader; and evangelist Billy Graham.*

## Statement by Press Secretary Fitzwater on the Decision of the Railway Labor Dispute Arbitrator

August 20, 1992

On August 18, 1992, the President received for his review the decision of the arbitrator in the one remaining railway labor dispute associated with the shutdown of the Nation’s railroads in late June. This decision was rendered pursuant to the arbitration process established by the Congress and

concerns the dispute between the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) and the American Train Dispatchers Association. The decision becomes final and binding upon the parties unless the President disapproves it within 3 days following its receipt.

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The President has decided that he will not disapprove this decision. The President is grateful to the arbitrator for his work in resolving this dispute.

## Remarks Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in Houston

August 20, 1992

*The President.* Thank you all very much. Thank you, thank you very much. And I am proud to receive and I am honored to accept your nomination for President of the United States.

May I thank my dear friend and our great leader, Bob Dole, for that wonderful introduction.

Let me say this: This nomination's not for me alone. It is for the ideas, principles, and values that we stand for.

My job has been made easier by a leader who's taken a lot of unfair criticism with grace and humor, the Vice President of the United States, Dan Quayle. And I am very grateful to him.

I want to talk tonight about the sharp choice that I intend to offer Americans this fall, a choice between different agendas, different directions, and yes, a choice about the character of the man you want to lead this Nation. I know that Americans have many questions about our economy, about our country's future, even questions about me. I'll answer them tonight.

First, I feel great. And I am heartened by the polls, the ones that say that I look better in my jogging shorts than the Governor of Arkansas.

Four years ago, I spoke about missions for my life and for our country. I spoke of one urgent mission, defending our security and promoting the American ideal abroad.

Just pause for a moment to reflect on what we've done. Germany is united, and a slab of the Berlin Wall sits right outside this Astrodome. Arabs and Israelis now sit face to face and talk peace, and every hostage held in Lebanon is free. The conflict in El Salvador is over, and free elections brought democracy to Nicaragua. Black and white South Africans cheered each other at the Olympics. The Soviet Union can only

be found in history books. The captive nations of Eastern Europe and the Baltics are captive no more. And today on the rural streets of Poland, merchants sell cans of air labeled "the last breath of communism."

If I had stood before you 4 years ago and described this as the world we would help to build, you would have said, "George Bush, you must have been smoking something, and you must have inhaled."

This convention is the first at which an American President can say the cold war is over, and freedom finished first.

*Audience members.* U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

*The President.* We have a lot to be proud of, a lot. Some want to rewrite history, want to skip over the struggle, claim the outcome was inevitable. And while the U.S. postwar strategy was largely bipartisan, the fact remains that the liberal McGovern wing of the other party, including my opponent, consistently made the wrong choices. In the seventies, they wanted a hollow army. We wanted a strong fighting force. In the eighties—and you remember this one—in the eighties, they wanted a nuclear freeze, and we insisted on peace through strength. From Angola to Central America, they said, "Let's negotiate, deliberate, procrastinate." We said, "Just stand up for freedom." Now the cold war is over, and they claim, "Hey, we were with you all the way."

*Audience members.* Boo-o-o!

*The President.* You know, their behavior reminds me of the old con man's advice to the new kid. He said, "Son, if you're being run out of town, just get out in front and make it look like a parade."

Well, make no mistake: The demise of communism wasn't a sure thing. It took the strong leadership of Presidents from both parties, including Republicans like Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan.