

Remarks at a Bush-Quayle Rally in Canton, Michigan August 25, 1992

The President. Thank you all very much for that warm welcome. May I salute all the party leaders here, especially the great Governor of Michigan, John Engler. He's doing a first-class job. May I thank the band, the Catholic High School band, the Motown band, Canton VFW colorguard; Susan Heintz and all those that have been out here making this program possible. Thank you very, very much.

You know, this town proves what we all know in our hearts. America's best days are ahead of us. Last Thursday at our great convention in Houston, I laid out a central challenge to our Nation to win the global economic competition, to win the peace. America must be a military superpower, an economic superpower, and an export superpower.

I differ with the Governor of Arkansas. He wants to turn inward and protect. I want to look outward and expand markets, expand American jobs. Let me just touch on what Governor Engler said because it affects the life of everybody in the automobile industry and everybody who's connected with the automobile industry.

Governor Clinton's record on the environment, to be charitable, is a little less than stellar. Listen to his own chairman of the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission who said that the Arkansas laws are so lenient that "if California was operating on the laws of Arkansas, you'd have to wear a gas mask." How is that for the laws in Arkansas on the environment? Now, is it any wonder that they rank dead last in the Nation in policies to protect the environment, according to a study by the Institute of Southern Studies. The good people of Arkansas deserve better than that. And we don't need that kind of record running the environmental policies of the United States Government.

Remember what I said down there in Houston, slippery when wet? Well, listen to this one. Listen to this one. He's gone all the way over from that lousy record now to becoming bright green. He's turned that bright. And if Clinton has his way, Michigan

auto workers are going to be turning green with illness. Here's why.

In a speech in Drexel University on April 22, Governor Clinton talked about a more ambitious Federal regulation that he supports involving the fuel standards for cars. He said this, and this is an exact quote: "In my administration we will accelerate our progress toward fuel-efficient cars and seek to raise the average goal for auto-makers to 40 miles per gallon by the year 2000, 45 miles by the year 2020." Now, that is not me, that is Governor Clinton talking.

You might ask what would happen if we did that. Well, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, fatalities and injuries will increase. But the worst thing is we will throw American auto-workers out of their jobs, and I'm not going to have that. The Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association in Michigan alone said that 40,000 workers would go from the assembly line to the unemployment line if we go from those ridiculous standards.

We've got to fight against that kind of extremism. Those 40,000 will be joined by 700,000 workers put out there by the payroll tax that Governor Clinton is suggesting for his backdoor Government takeover of our health care system. You know, he says he likes to put people first. He doesn't mention that it's first out there on the unemployment line. We're trying to get people off of that. His tax-and-spend policies will put people out there. We don't want that.

I normally don't speak much about his running mate, Senator Gore of Tennessee, but he's written this famous book now that Governor Clinton talks about. On page 325 of the book, he makes an interesting comparison. He says that the automobile industry, and I quote right here, quotation, "poses a mortal threat to the security of every nation, that is more deadly than that of any military enemy we're ever again likely to confront." That is Clinton's running mate talking about the auto industry that means so much to our country. And

one page later he calls for the “elimination of the internal combustion engine.” What kind of people are we dealing with here? [Laughter]

Well, it would be funny if it weren’t so serious, if one out of six jobs in America today weren’t in some way tied to the car industry, and if this philosophy of tax and spend, regulate and regulate wasn’t going to make it impossible for us to win the economic competition. Now, look, we have a sound and positive and strong environmental record. I fought for and won the first meaningful revision to the Clean Air Act, and we got that done in spite of that gridlocked Congress.

Audience members. Clean the House! Clean the House! Clean the House!

The President. I’ll be there. Just a minute. I’ve got more to say about that one, and I love saying it because it’s true. Now, wait a minute, I’ll be there in a second.

Environment: We have expanded our parks and wildlife refuges. We’ve curtailed drilling in the environmental sensitive area of California and New England. We’ve enforced our environmental laws so we’ve collected record amounts of fines. I have been criticized by some in big business and by environmentalists. But I believe that somewhere you can find a reasonable formula where you protect jobs and still clean up the environment. That’s what we’ve got to do.

So when that Clinton-Gore bus goes off the left side of the highway onto the shoulder, we’ve got to guard against that, too.

Here’s what I want to do to lift the burden from the small businessman, the mom-and-pop operations, and others: Put a freeze on unnecessary Federal regulation. We’re regulating ourselves to death.

You didn’t hear much about this in the Clinton-Gore convention, but I’ll tell you something. The Federal deficit is threatening the very future of these children here today, these young ones. So I am fighting for a line-item veto, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. You know who says no to all this: the gridlocked Congress, the Clinton-Gore gridlocked Congress.

So last week, last week—the editorial writers don’t like this one; the sophisticated

elitists don’t like it—but let me tell you something, I unveiled an idea last week that the American people like, and it says this. You have the right to check off on your tax return using up to 10 percent of your income tax for one purpose, if you want to, and that is to reduce the budget deficit. It’s a good idea. If Congress can’t do it, let the American people have a shot at it. The editorial writers and Congress, they call it a gimmick. But I think the American people want the power to say to Congress, “If you won’t cut the deficit, we’ll get the job done for you.”

Yesterday, we unveiled a new program to help people that need to transition into new jobs. Because we’ve been successful in war and peace, because we’ve changed the world, we have been able to reduce defense spending. Now, that’s cost people some jobs. So now we’ve got a new training program to help those people find work, find work, jobs, productive jobs in this country. So we’re talking about skill grants, giving workers in certain industries \$3,000 to go out and buy training on their own. The philosophy isn’t to empower the bureaucrats but empower the people so you can stay ahead of the economic change.

Heavens knows, we’ve got to reform our welfare system, get people to work and to learn and avoid the indignity of welfare. So later today I’m going to be signing a welfare waiver giving Michigan the authority to experiment with welfare programs that keep families together and get people off the dole and into jobs.

And one other thing. My opponent is supported by this trial lawyers group. I want to break the back of those who are suing us too much and caring for ourselves too little, caring for us too little. These reckless lawsuits are keeping doctors from practicing medicine, keeping people out away from coaching Little League, and we’ve got to stop it. I’ve tried for 3 straight years. Now change that Congress, and help me stop it.

Audience members. Clean the House! Clean the House! Clean the House!

The President. All right, I’ll give you an example. That’s a great idea. Now I’ll give you an example. We know that our schools have to improve. If we’re going to compete,

they've got to improve. I believe competition can be a force for good in education, just as it's been a force for greatness in American industry. Earlier this year I sent a proposal to Capitol Hill, a "GI bill" for kids to give States and localities the flexibility to allow parents, not government, to choose the schools their kids attend, public, private, or religious.

A few weeks ago this came before the gridlocked Congress, a brandnew proposal, and they killed it. Why did this great idea fail? It failed, according to news reports, because the Democratic leadership did not want to give me credit for a new idea in education. Now, that is not progress. That is gridlock, and they are doing it to the taxpayer in this country.

Let me be a little more specific. I'm a little tired of Congressmen that talk one way in Michigan and vote different in Washington. I'll give you an example. One of those Democratic leaders that blocked this new proposal in education is named Congressman Ford, Bill Ford. He has stood against school choice and just about every education reform I have put forward. And what's worse, Governor of Arkansas agrees with him.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Want parents to have real choice in where to send their kids to school? The Governor and Congressman Ford say no. I say yes.

You want to stand up to a Baghdad bully like Saddam Hussein? Governor Clinton waffled. Congressman Ford said, "No way." I say yes.

You want a balanced budget amendment that disciplines both the Congress and the executive branch? Governor Clinton and Congressman Ford say no. And I say yes.

Do you want to limit the terms of Congressmen? Governor Clinton and Congressman Ford say no. And I say yes. It's about time. The President's term is limited. Let's limit this gridlocked Congress and get them out of there.

The key issue—clean that House! You're right. The key issue is, do you want to try to cut Federal spending and give Americans relief from higher taxes? Well, Governor Clinton and Congressman Ford, linked together, say no. And I say yes.

Governor Clinton refers to himself as Elvis. Well, let me tell you something. [Laughter] He does. We're playing an old Elvis Presley song, "Return to Sender," return to Arkansas. As we get that done in November, as we get that done in November, let's take Congressman Ford and others like him that talk one way at home, vote different in Washington, that whole leadership of the gridlocked Congress, and do what those brooms say: Clean House!

Audience members. Clean the House! Clean the House! Clean the House!

The President. Get them out of there. We have been trying and trying to move this country forward, blocked by this gridlocked Congress. And I am tired of it.

While we're at it, let's send Charles Vincent, Dick Chrysler, Megan O'Neill, John Gordon, Frank Beaumont, Nick Smith, and don't forget Joe Knollenberg and John Pappageorge. Get them in there. In this district, replace that leader that talks one way and votes another. Send Bob Geake to Washington, and get this country moving.

You know, the other day we were in Alabama, a crowd of about 20,000 people in the rain. Lee Greenwood, you know, that great singer, was with us. And as he started to sing "I'm Proud To Be an American," I looked out in the crowd and saw a little girl, couldn't be more than 4 or 5, perched on her dad's shoulders waving a little American flag and singing. This election is about that little girl, and all the kids in this crowd, all the kids across America. Do we want them to grow up in an America that is stronger, safer, and secure, more secure? You bet we do. With my ideas and a new Congress, we can make it happen. We are the United States of America. We are going to make it happen.

May God bless Michigan, and may God bless our great country.

Note: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in Canton Township Heritage Park. In his remarks, he referred to Susan Heintz, master of ceremonies for the rally.