

Remarks at the Port of New Orleans, Louisiana

October 8, 1992

The President. Thank you, Governor Treen. Good morning, everybody, and thank you, thank you for that warm welcome. May I salute David Treen, who did a great job as Governor of this State; my friend Congressman Bob Livingston. If we had more Members of Congress like him, they wouldn't be yelling at me "Clean House!" all the time. We've got a good one here. May I salute our Secretary of State, Fox McKeithen; and Peggy Wilson, right here with me; Ron Brinson, the president and CEO of the Port of New Orleans; and of course, our old friend, a great Louisianian serving at my side in the White House, Henson Moore.

You know, it's a very special pleasure for me—I'm going to take my coat off. It's hot out here, man. It's a very special pleasure to be here. Let me tell you one of the reasons why. Thirty-five years ago I came back to this city—I came here many, many times—came back here to the Bienville Street Wharf down the way a bit to christen a new offshore oil rig. I was a small-business man with an office right here near here in downtown New Orleans and the offices also over at Cameron and Morgan City and Lafayette. I grew to know this State and to love Louisiana and the people, the food, the music, the fondness for the old, and the passion for the new. I am glad to be back here today because it brings back a lot of memories, and you make me feel right at home. Thanks for this warm welcome.

I mentioned offshore drilling. I am for the offshore drilling industry. Ask the super-environmentalists, the Clinton-Gore ticket, exactly where they stand and then try to get them to keep their word. They waffle on every single issue.

This morning I want to say, or this afternoon, just a few words about the economic challenge facing this great country of ours, about the powerful force of trade, a force that will shape the lives, the livelihood of these children here today. And let me just say I salute the Taylor's kids, and Pat Taylor, who helps get them educated.

In this campaign, I have laid out an Agenda for American Renewal. It is a comprehensive series of steps to win the new global economic competition, to create here in America by early in the next century the world's very first \$10 trillion economy.

My agenda spells it out in detail what we must do to achieve that goal, the priorities I'm fighting for. I want to literally, to begin with, we have got to literally reinvent American education and give every parent the right to choose their kids' schools, public, private, or religious. Governor Clinton said it won't work, and I say I do remember that it worked pretty well for the GI bill, and it can work for all the parents today. So let's fight for that.

I want to reform our legal system. Frankly, we must limit these crazy lawsuits. As a nation we must sue each other less and care for each other more. I don't care, the liberals don't like this one, but I want to see us strengthen the American family because family is still the foundation of our Nation.

I want our Nation to save and invest more. And we can do this only by reducing the size of the Federal Government, because today's Government is too big, and it spends too much of your money.

I want to limit the terms of Members of Congress and take Congress away from the special interests and give it back to you, the American people.

These are steps that we must take to realize the global opportunity before us, to place more of our neighborhoods on the path to prosperity. But we can begin by grasping a unique opportunity to break down century-old barriers to the free flow of goods and ideas, by fighting to open new markets. Because you know as well as I do, given the right chance, the American worker can outthink, outcompete, outwork any other worker in the entire world.

I was over in San Antonio yesterday to mark a turning point in the history of North America. Yesterday will be remembered in history, for along with President Carlos Salinas of Mexico and Prime Minister Brian

Mulroney of Canada, we watched the signing of a truly historic agreement, the North American free trade agreement or NAFTA. And over the next 15 years, NAFTA will create the largest free trade area in the world, an economic trading area with over 360 million customers and over \$6 trillion in annual output.

Trade between the United States and Mexico and Canada has already increased by over 70 percent in the past 5 years. This agreement strengthens our partnership, and most of all, it creates good jobs for American workers. And that has got to be the goal. Everybody in the Port of New Orleans knows what I'm talking about. This agreement allows the United States to build on our lead as the export superpower.

America already sells more products abroad than any other nation in history. Over the past 3 years, despite a sluggish world economy, U.S. exports have increased more than 30 percent and more than \$20 billion of these goods passed right through the Port of New Orleans. And you know what this means for the city.

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

The President. You know what this means for the city, don't you? As the Saints' fans might say, "Cha-ching!" You know, today, Louisiana is the Nation's eighth largest export State with over \$16 billion in export sales. Almost 70,000 jobs come from manufactured exports. You send chemicals to Australia and cotton to China and paper to France. You see, where's that—there it is, this yellow tractor right here, it's headed for Chile. But no matter what we're putting in these ships, we're going to mow down the international competition. We can't do it if we're protectionists. We do it by things like NAFTA, this forward-looking agreement.

You know, Louisiana leads the way, all right, but the rest of America isn't far behind. Already, one in six American manufacturing jobs is supported by trade. For those who worry that our children will not enjoy high wages, consider this fact: On average, trade-related jobs pay 17 percent more than the average U.S. wage. So, if we want the sons and daughters of steelworkers to earn a good living and get their share of the

American dream, we have to promote trade, and we have to do it right now.

You see, the world has changed dramatically over the past few years.

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

The President. Where once leaders gathered to find ways to evade conflict, now we must meet to find new ways to promote opportunity. And where once our progress was measured only by a crisis averted, in the new world it will be measured by new jobs created. And I learned the lessons of trade not from a textbook over in Oxford, England, not from a briefing paper, but from the only teacher that counts, real-world business experience.

Even back in the days back there in the late fifties and sixties when I was coming here to New Orleans to work with these oil rigs, I learned that the more my company could sell abroad, in Japan in our case or South America or the Middle East, the more jobs we could create for Louisiana roughnecks and drillers and tool-pushers. My company drilled wells off this coast. The skill of our workers made us the very best in the entire world. And as we drilled abroad, we created good jobs for U.S. workers. It was true then, and it is true today. So don't listen to that measure of protection.

Over the years, I sensed that the world was becoming more like us and saw people in China and Europe demand more of our cars, our computers, even our colas. That is why I am so excited by the new era that lies before us, lies ahead for these kids. You know, I know times have been tough here in America, but we must keep in mind, this is a global economic downturn. The nations of Europe suffer higher unemployment, higher interest rates, higher inflation. But we can and we will lead the way to a new era of prosperity, if we have the courage to do what is right today.

I believe that America is uniquely suited to lead this new world, just as we led the old one. Despite all the pessimism, all the tearing down of the United States of America, don't forget a few facts. We have the world's largest market. We sell more high-tech products than any other nation. Our workers are more productive than the Ger-

mans, more productive than the Japanese, more productive than any other men and women in the entire world. And so don't let that Clinton-Gore ticket tell you how bad everything is.

You know, in the cold war, we used our military might to force alliances, to push them together all across the Atlantic and the Pacific. Today, we can use our economic strength to forge new trade alliances, push them together. NAFTA is only the first. I see other trade agreements with nations in Europe and Latin America and Asia. As we tear down barriers, we create good, high-paying jobs for American workers, and that is what this Nation desperately needs.

You know, there used to be a great distinction, but that old distinction between foreign policy and economic policy has simply vanished. To build a strong economy at home, we must be strong and aggressive abroad. That's why I believe that the American people have a clear choice this November between an experienced leader with a clear global vision and a Governor with no international experience, who can't seem to make a decision on any issue at all, any day of the week.

Audience members. We want Bush! We want Bush! We want Bush!

The President. There's a great article up there in USA Today. Get a look at it, this morning's USA Today. It chronicles Governor Clinton's changing positions on ten issues, from taxes to term limits to the Gulf war. I challenge you to read this article and tell me where Bill Clinton stands on any of these important issues. He says all things to all people. In the White House, I've found out something. You have to take a stand. You can't keep everybody happy. You've got to call them as you see them and do what is right and not waffle.

I see these signs out here about NAFTA, this free trade agreement. Well, take that for an example. When he started his campaign, Bill Clinton sounded like a staunch defender of free trade. Then, he sought the endorsement of some powerful labor people, particularly the labor leaders in Washington. Before long, he announced he was undecided. Finally, last week, Governor Clinton looked at the polls one more time and came out for NAFTA.

But then, he waffled. He said, "I'm for it—but." He said he didn't want the agreement to encourage strikebreakers from coming into the country. The agreement already prevents that. The agreement takes care of that. It isn't going to happen. He said he didn't want the agreement to allow contaminated food to come into the country. That's already been taken care of in this agreement. He said he didn't want the agreement to allow other countries to flood our market with imports, but part of the agreement is devoted to providing safeguards against that. He said he has reservations about the environmental impact of the agreement, and yet the National Wildlife Federation, our nation's largest environmental organization, has already endorsed the agreement.

So here is the bottom line. In the White House, you cannot have it both ways on tough issues. The phone in the Oval Office doesn't have a call-waiting button. When you're President of the United States, "maybe" cannot be your middle name.

This is especially important when you're fighting for free and fair trade. And today, the U.S. Congress is a riot of conflicting interests. As I said, I wish we had many more like Bob Livingston. Many Members are loyal to the future and understand that free trade is the way to create jobs. But others are only loyal to whomever gives them the biggest campaign check, and they back down to every group seeking a new tariff or a trade wall. As President, only I can stand up against irrational impulses of protectionism. And as President, only I can speak for the national interests and fight for the jobs of the future.

There was nothing inevitable about this trade agreement. It is the product of thousands of hours of grueling negotiation, hundreds of detours avoided, thousands of diversions ignored. Only the unwavering resolve of three governments, the steadfast commitment of visionary leaders like Brian Mulroney of Canada and President Carlos Salinas of Mexico brought this dream to life.

We must guarantee that America will remain the world's export superpower. Governor Clinton waffles and hedges his

bet, and I'm going to bet on our future. I'm going to fight for good jobs to go right in this port and ship our goods abroad, every one of them made by American workers in the United States.

Audience members. We want Bush! We want Bush! We want Bush!

The President. I care about America leading this new economy, right here. I just didn't read about free trade in a textbook somewhere; I feel it. I've learned it all my life.

And here at this port, you know that the future lies in reaching out, in tearing down barriers, in selling American products in every corner of the globe. Now let's get the job done, together.

I am proud of what we have accomplished the past 4 years to make freedom victorious, to make our children safer. You know, Governor Clinton doesn't seem to care, but I think it's a big deal that our kids, our children, go to bed every night safer from the scourge of nuclear weapons. I am proud that my administration had a lot to do with that. And we did it by standing up against aggression. The sons and daughters of Louisiana that served in Desert Storm deserve our thanks and deserve our support. And so do those that served in Vietnam.

Now we must build on our accomplish-

ment and meet the challenge of a global economy. America cannot be timid, we cannot be uncertain. That is not our nature. We must be aggressive. We must lead. We must keep our eyes fixed on the future, for that is where our opportunity lies.

This is the kind of leadership I've given America. As we've changed the world the past 4 years, this is the kind of leadership that I offer for the next 4 years, as we create jobs and renew this country we love so dearly. Do not let them tear down the United States of America. We are the best and freest and fairest country on the face of the Earth. Our future looks bright. Now let's get to work and create jobs here in America for all.

Thank you. Thank you. And may God Bless our great country. Thank you very much. Thank you all.

Note: The President spoke at 2:08 p.m. at the Nashville Avenue Wharf. In his remarks, he referred to Peggy Wilson, New Orleans council member; W. Henson Moore, Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs; and Patrick F. Taylor, who developed the Taylor plan for financing higher education for low- and moderate-income students.

Remarks to the Law Enforcement Community in New Orleans

October 8, 1992

Well, thank you, Ron, Pete, and I am very pleased to receive this endorsement. I am very pleased. Louisiana has got a great law enforcement community, and this is a wonderful occasion for me. The Police Association of New Orleans and the other representatives of law enforcement community here with us today, I just thank you all from the bottom of a very grateful heart.

Let me just say a word to the family and friends of Officer Norvin Powell, who dedicated a lifetime of service to the small town of Winfield, Louisiana. Two weeks ago, officer Powell responded to a routine break-in. Then after a struggle with the burglar,

Powell lay dead, and the burglar escaped. He didn't get far. After an 18-hour manhunt, he was arrested. Tragically, Officer Powell's handcuffs were still attached to one wrist. Powell took a stand. He made a difference in his community. On behalf of a grateful nation, while I'm here, I simply want to pay tribute here to this outstanding officer and others like him all across this country.

You know, keeping neighborhoods safe and secure has got to be one of the fundamental responsibilities of government. It takes a tough, no-nonsense approach, one that puts our sympathy with the victims of