

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. on the factory floor. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Philip N. Bredesen of Nashville; Joe Scattergood, plant manager; Wayne Wooten, president, United Auto Workers #1832; Bobby Lee Thompson, di-

rector, United Auto Workers, Region 8; and Tom Plimpton, general manager, Peterbilt Division. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks at a Democratic Luncheon in Nashville *January 12, 1996*

Thank you so much, Mr. Vice President, Governor McWherter, Senator and Mrs. Gore, and Senator and Mrs. Sasser—they'll do a great job for our country in China, I know. Senator and Mrs. Mathews, and to Congressman Gordon, Congressman Clement, and Congressman Tanner, and former Congressman Jim Cooper is here with us. I'm glad to see all of you here. To the mayors who are here, my good friend Wayne Glenn, and to other people who are here from all over Tennessee and from all walks of life. And Marilyn Lloyd, I think, is here somewhere—where is she?—former Congresswoman.

And let me say to all of you that I sure liked that speech Al Gore gave. I want all of you from Tennessee to know that when the record of this administration has been written, the consequences of our actions may be only apparent to the American people in their positive aspects years from now. But one thing is already clear. In the entire history of our Republic, the most effective, the most important Vice President in American history is Al Gore.

He has overseen our efforts to reform our environmental laws so that we could be better at growing the economy and preserving the environment at the same time. He is developing a plan that will have our country work in partnership with the private sector to hook up every student in America to the Internet with good software, good computers, good training, just in the next few years.

He has managed a permanent relationship with the Prime Minister of Russia which has reinforced the positive direction in which we are going and which has helped us to lift the cloud of nuclear threat from the American people since we've been here. For the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age, there is not a single, solitary nuclear missile pointed at an American child, and I am proud of that.

While our friends on the other side talked about not liking big Government, wanting to give more power to States and localities in the private sector, in a very quiet and straightforward and effective way the Vice President has helped us to reduce the size of the Federal Government by over 200,000.

And when you hear your Republican friends back in your neighborhood saying that the Democrats are the party of big Government, ask them, "Well, if that's so, why is the Government now the smallest it's been since 1965? If that's so, why is the Government, as a percentage of the civilian work force, the smallest it's been since 1933? If that's so, why are they dismantling 16,000 pages of unnecessary Government regulations put in by Republican executives who were there before we were? If all that is so, how did this happen?"

It happened because it's not so, because a big part of what we came to do was to give you a smaller, more effective Government. But we did not go to Washington to walk away from the American people and their future, and we have no intention of doing that.

Let me say, I know that all the publicity in Washington that's coming down here to you is all this debate over the budget. And it's being kind of, is it a horserace and who's giving up what and are they going to get a deal or not, and all that sort of thing. I understand that. I just want to take a couple of minutes to try to put that into a larger picture.

You know, when I leave you I'm going to Bosnia. I will see soldiers there from all over America, including soldiers from Tennessee. I will go to Hungary to see the basing that we're doing there in Hungary. And then I will stop in Zagreb, Yugoslavia—Croatia, in the former Yugoslavia, where we have a military hospital, some other actions, and I will see the President

of that country to try to make sure that we continue to work to maintain the peace.

And a lot of people wonder, "Well, why did the United States send soldiers there? I mean, the cold war is over. They're doing well with Russia. Why did they do that?" Well, it's part of my view, at least, of where we ought to go as a country. I'd like it if we could just lay down all our arms and lay down all our responsibilities. But if you think about what the world is going to look like in the years ahead for all these children that are here, it really matters if America is the strongest force for peace and freedom.

World War I started in Bosnia. So many troubles are just right there around it. If this war was not contained, it could spread and cause many of our people to go and lose their lives down the road. Meanwhile, hundreds of innocent people, tens of thousands of innocent people, have been slaughtered, over a million turned into refugees from their own country.

So we went there to help other countries make the peace. We didn't have to go alone, we're only a third of the total force, but it would not have happened if it hadn't been for the United States. What I want you to think about is, by our being involved with other people, we can make a difference in the world for our own people.

Let me give you another example. We want to fight terrorism. We've had terrorism right here in the United States, whether it was home-grown terrorism or people coming from other countries to our shores. Because we're involved with other countries, we've been able to get some of those terrorists arrested in other countries and brought back here to stand trial for killing innocent Americans, because we worked with them.

We know that every day Americans die because of the scourge of drugs. Because we work with other countries, just this last year we were instrumental with our military and our civilian law enforcement in seeing seven members of the infamous Cali drug cartel in Colombia arrested, seven—it was unheard of—because we worked with other countries.

Because we worked with other countries to have not only more free trade but more fair trade, the exports of American products have increased by one-third in the last 3 years to an all-time high. Because we work with other countries, people in Nashville and in Tennessee

have jobs and a better future. And we know if we're going to have a free trading system, it has to also be a fair trading system.

And that's how you need to see this fight over the budget and all the accomplishments the Vice President talked about. Our theory is that America is a team, that we're going forward together, we're going up or down together. If you look at the whole history of our country, you go back and read how we got started: We believed in liberty; we believed in progress; and we struggled to find common ground, to get together in spite of our differences. Those three things are constant in every important period in our history. And what we know is unless we get together and work together, our liberties can be threatened. And we know, unless we get together and work together, we can't make progress.

I just came from the Peterbilt truck factory here. I'm sure it's a source of pride to everyone in Tennessee. They've got backlog orders for 7 or 8 months. They've added 600 people to the payroll since we came into office. I'm proud of that. I'm proud for them. But we didn't do anything directly for them. Our job is to give them a framework within which they can do well. Why are they doing well? Because they work together.

Now, that's what this budget fight is all about. Should we have a country in which our hatred of Government says the market should control everything, everybody for themselves, winner take all? Or should we have a country that says we love the market system, we love the free enterprise system, but we know that winners work together, and we want a country where everybody has a chance to win? That's what this is about.

The congressional leaders now agree that I have submitted to them a budget which would be balanced in 7 years, by their scorekeeping. They sent me a little letter which I hold up all the time. They agree. The issue is not, will we balance the budget; the issue is, how should we do it?

Look, folks, I hate this deficit. Our country never had a permanent deficit until the 12 years before I became President. We never had that, never. It was in those 12 years when the debt was quadrupled. And our friends on the Republican side say, "Well, the Democrats controlled the Congress." That's not true. In the first 6 years when most of the damage was done, they

controlled the Senate and the White House, and they had effective control of the House of Representatives. And they put us in the hole we're still digging out of.

Now, when we came in, we cut the deficit in half in 3 years. They said—you need to know, when you talk to your friends about this budget debate, the Federal budget would be balanced today with a surplus—today with a surplus—but for the interest payments we pay on the debt run up between 1981 and the end of 1992. Only in those 12 years.

Now, I want to be fair. We have really worked hard together. We spent 50 hours together, the Vice President and I, the Republican and the Democratic congressional leaders. We found we did agree on a lot of things. One of the things we've agreed on is over \$600 billion, way over \$600 billion, in savings over the next 7 years, more than enough to bring our budget into balance and enough to still have a modest tax cut.

We don't have an agreement because of the things we disagree on. They think we should cut Medicare more than I think we should cut it. I think \$400 a couple for elderly people—[inaudible]. If we don't need it to balance the budget, I don't think we ought to take it. We don't know how much can be taken out of these rural hospitals and rural nursing homes without doing damage to them. We have to save some money, but we've got to be careful.

The Medicaid program is not so widely known as Medicare. But there are millions, millions of children, poor children, many of them in poor working families, who depend upon it. Our middle class families have their parents in nursing homes depending on it. A lot of middle class families have disabled children who get a little help from Medicaid. It keeps them from going broke while they care for their children. And people say, "Oh, you know, the Democrats, they're pandering to the elderly." Bull! [Laughter] Bull!

If the savings that the Vice President and I have proposed are enacted into law, they will represent the biggest savings ever achieved in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. We know we've got to do better. We know we can't keep letting health care costs go up at 3 times the rate of inflation. We know we have to support these health care providers that are giving folks more choices if they want to go into managed care networks. We're all for that. But I say we should not do more than we know the sys-

tem can take. We should not hurt any seniors that we know we can avoid hurting.

And keep in mind, this is not just an issue of elderly people. If you make it more difficult for people to have their parents in nursing homes and they have to spend more money on that, where will the money come from to send their children to college? If you make college loans more expensive or you have fewer scholarships, where will the strength in our economy come from 10 years from now when we know we need more young people going to college?

Look, we're all in this together. That is the central issue. And I will say again, my plea to the leaders of Congress—just as I pleaded with the Democrats to bend over backwards to meet the Republicans halfway, just as we have worked hard to do that—is we need to pass a plan to balance the budget because it will drive interest rates down, it'll make it easier for business people to go get a loan, easier to expand payrolls, easier to keep economic growth going. We need to do this.

But we are going to have some disagreements. What we need to do is to agree on everything we can, identify the disagreements and tell the American people that it's their business, it's their future, and they should resolve those disagreements in the election. But to put off balancing the budget because we have some disagreement over the size and shape of a tax cut, over changes at the margins in the Medicare program that can make huge impacts but aren't necessary to save the money we've talked about, over big cuts in education and the environment, that's wrong. We should not put this other business off.

You know, we have a system—this is not a parliamentary system. If we were having this kind of fight in Great Britain, for example, we'd just call an election 5 weeks from now, and you all would decide what you want, and I'd either go home or they'd do it our way or vice versa. That's the way we'd do it. This is not a parliamentary system. We can't have a work stoppage in Washington until November. It is inexcusable; it is unacceptable.

We ought to go back there and say, "Look, we've agreed on enough money to balance the budget. We've agreed we can provide at least a modest tax cut to people for childrearing and education. We can help small business some with their pensions and with some other things.

Let's get after it and do it and get it behind us and then go on and do politics."

But again I will say, the reason we have to balance the budget is because we misplayed this for 12 years. This was misplayed by our country. And the politicians, to be fair to them, were more or less just doing what the people wanted. Nobody was ready to take any tough decisions. We have obligations to each other. We owe these kids a better future, just like we owe our parents a decent health care system.

Now, that's the difference. I do not want to see America become a country full of possibility, with record numbers of new successful people every year, but more and more people falling behind. I think we're better when we're a team. I'm going to go see those military folks. Why are you so proud of them? You may not know the name of a single person over there, but you know they're going to do a good job, don't you? Why? Because they're a team, because they work together. You know they're going to do a good job.

Let me tell you, the only thing that surprised me about the Vice President's speech? It took him about 7 minutes to get around to rubbing it in about Tennessee winning a bowl game. [Laughter] Now, Tennessee has a great quarterback. But they didn't beat Ohio State with their quarterback. They beat them with the quarterback, the other 10 people on offense, the other

11 people on the defense. Right? If Ohio State scores three touchdowns instead of two, your great quarterback loses a game. Right? Teamwork! Why do we forget it when it comes to our public decisions?

That's what this whole issue is about, folks. We can balance the budget; we can keep this economy going; we can keep the good trends in our life going, keep the crime rate and the welfare rolls and the food stamp rolls and the poverty rolls coming down, which is what is happening now and I'm proud of that. But we can only do it if we remember that this country got here because at our most important moment we came together. That's what we're fighting for.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:25 p.m. at the Opryland Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ned Ray McWherter, chairman, Tennessee Clinton/Gore Reelection Committee; former Senator Albert Gore, Sr., and his wife, Pauline; U.S. Ambassador to China Jim Sasser and his wife, Mary; former Senator Harlan Mathews and his wife, Patsy; Wayne E. Glenn, international president, United Paperworkers International Union; and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks to American Troops at Aviano Air Base, Italy January 13, 1996

The President. Thank you very much. Good morning.

Audience members. Good morning.

The President. I know it's early, but we can do better than that. Good morning. [Laughter]

Minister Corcione, Ambassador Bartholomew, our distinguished Italian hosts and guests, General Joulwan, General Ryan, Colonel Wald, Chief Myers, Colonel Moody, Aviano families, and to the men and women of Operation Decisive Edge. Let me begin by thanking the colonel for that fine welcome and thanking all of you for making me feel so welcome. I am very pleased finally to have a chance to come here to Aviano and to see you. And since it's so

early, I may be more pleased to see you than you are to see me. But I'm glad you came out anyway.

I thank you for giving me the chance to meet you and to tell you how important and how appreciated your work is. What you and our allies are doing here and in Bosnia is the difference between a war that resumes and a peace that takes hold. You are giving people who have suffered so very much a chance to enjoy the blessings of a normal life. You are living up to the great traditions of the Armed Forces of the United States, protecting our Nation's interest by keeping a fire out that has threatened the heart of Europe's stability. On behalf of