

eral chairman, Marvin Rosen, national finance chairman, and Scott Pastrick, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; Debra DeLee, chief executive officer, Democratic National Convention Committee; Joel Ferguson, businessman and former Michigan State University trustee; civil

rights leader Rev. Jesse L. Jackson and his son, Representative Jesse Jackson, Jr., of Illinois; Mayor Dennis W. Archer of Detroit, MI; and Mayor Willie Brown of San Francisco, CA. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Beginning a Bus Tour in Cape Girardeau, Missouri August 30, 1996

The President. Thank you so much. Ladies and gentlemen, first of all I am thrilled to see you here in such large numbers and with such enthusiasm. It's good to be in Cape Girardeau. It's not the first time I've ever been here, but it's the first time I've ever been here as President. And the last time I was here as a private citizen, I just stopped and got a Coke and nobody came out to see me. It's pretty nice to be here with 30,000 of our best friends. Thank you. Thank you.

I want to say a word of thanks to some folks who haven't been recognized yet, but I used to do this, and they're the people that provided our music. They're over there in those hot uniforms: the Southeast Missouri State Band, the Cape Girardeau Central High School Band, the Jackson High School Band, the Fredericktown High School Band, the Farmington High School Band. Thank you for the music. Thank you. You were great, and we appreciate you.

Thank you, Governor Carnahan, for being my friend and being a great leader for Missouri, for creating jobs and advancing education and moving people from welfare to work. I want to say one thing about Mel Carnahan. While there was a lot of political rhetoric in Washington about welfare reform, Mel Carnahan developed an idea, a plan to help move people from welfare to work. We approved it. He's implementing it. And I want you to know there are, in addition to 10 million more Americans at work, there are 1.8 million Americans fewer on welfare than there were the day I became President, thanks in part to the leadership of people like Mel Carnahan.

Thank you, Emily Firebaugh, for presenting yourself as a candidate for Congress, for undergoing the rigors of the campaign, and for understanding what is at stake. Ladies and gentlemen,

what she said is true. And what I said to the convention last night is true. Last year there was, and this year there has been, a competition of balanced budget plans. Let me remind you that they always talked about balancing the budget, but when I became President, the debt of this country had been quadrupled in 12 years. We cut it by 60 percent in 4 years. And you would have a surplus today if it weren't for the interest we have to pay on the debt run up in the 12 years before I became President.

And so, I said, "Here's a balanced budget plan. It has a tax cut to pay for education and childrearing. It's targeted to middle class families. It invests in education. It invests in the environment. It invests in research and technology for the future. It protects Medicaid for the elderly in nursing homes or poor children, for families with members with disabilities. And it protects Medicare. Take it."

They said, "No. Here's a balanced budget plan. It cuts Medicare too much. It cuts Medicaid too much. It divides Medicare into a two-class system. It removes the guarantee of Medicaid coverage for people in nursing homes, for families with disabilities, and for poor children. It cuts education. It cuts the environment. It lets companies raid \$15 billion of their workers' pension funds. And it raises taxes on the hardest working, lowest paid working people with children in this country. You take that, or we'll shut the Government down."

I said no. I said no. But as I said yesterday, I have done my best to change the politics of Washington, DC, to make it more like life in Cape Girardeau. I am sick and tired of Washington taking up the headlines over who's to blame. I think the question is not who's to blame; it's what are we going to do to make America
a

better country and to give our children a better future?

So it's not enough to blame and to say no. We have to say yes. We have to have the right kind of balanced budget. That's one of the decisions we can make if we had people like Emily Firebaugh in the United States Congress. I hope you'll send her up there and give her a chance to serve.

I want to also, if I might, echo something Hillary said. I know that we're pretty close to Arkansas here. And if I had doubted it, there's a bunch of my friends from northeast Arkansas in this crowd. I thank you for coming, all the people who came up from Arkansas that are over here to my left.

We've got some water here. And if anybody passes out in the heat, we've also got a bunch of medics here. So just wave your hand; they're all looking for you. What did she say?

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Thank you. That we have a lot of nurses here, that's what they were saying.

Ladies and gentlemen, I came into Chicago on a train from West Virginia to Kentucky, to Ohio, to Michigan, to Indiana, and then into Chicago. I did it to say that America is on the right track to the 21st century, but I did it to see people like you, the people we've been working and fighting for for 4 years. We left Chicago on a bus to get back on the roads that we drove in 1992 because Hillary and I and Al and Tipper, we want to see the face of America, and we want you to know that we're going to build a bridge to the 21st century that all of you can walk across with your families, with your children, and with your neighbors.

I want to do every single solitary thing I talked about last night, to create more opportunity, to inspire more responsibility in our people, and to build a stronger sense of community. I don't want to go over all that, but I do want to remind you of a couple of things that we are going to do to build that bridge.

We're going to make 2 years of college as universal in the next 4 years as a high school education is today. We're going to give America's families a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition up to \$10,000 a year. We're going to enlist 30,000 mentors to mobilize an army of one million people to work with parents to help their children read so that when we get to the year 2000, there will not be 40 percent of our third graders unable to read on their

own. Every third grader in America will be able to read a book on his or her own.

We're going to pass the right kind of tax cut, a tax cut involving a credit for \$500 for children 13 and under, a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition, a \$1,500 tax credit for the cost of community college, an IRA that families making family incomes up to \$100,000 can take out every year and then withdraw tax-free to pay for health insurance, a first-time home, or the cost of a college education. This is the right sort of tax program for America.

And we're going to say to middle income families, we're going to help you get in your home. We've got the highest rate of homeownership in 15 years. We've got the highest rate of minority homeownership in the history of America. We're going to take it in the next 4 years—over two-thirds of the American people will be in their own homes. And we want to say when you sell that home and move into another one, if we have our way you will never owe any taxes on the gain you have when your home goes up again for that.

But folks, these tax cuts are paid for line by line, dime by dime. We've still got to balance the budget. That's why our friends and our opponents' tax plan, which is 5 times bigger and sounds sweeter, is just flat wrong because it will require us to make even bigger cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment than the budget I vetoed. You don't want that, do you?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. And when they get through with that, they still won't have balanced the budget, so they'll blow a hole in the deficit. Now, that's boring compared to a check in your pocket. But let me ask it to you this way: Would you go to the bank in Cape Girardeau and borrow money to give yourself a tax cut?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Well, why would you hire somebody to do it for you? Now, you think about it. What happens is, if you borrow the money to give yourself a tax cut, everybody else is borrowing money, you're going to drive interest rates up; your car payment, your credit card payment, your home mortgage payment will be higher.

Last year our Republican friends said it would be higher by 2 percent. That means they'll take your tax cut away, weaken the economy and, most important, it will be harder for business

people here and throughout the country to borrow money, to expand their businesses, to start new businesses, to hire new people, to raise their wages. Let's have the right kind of tax cut, balance the budget, keep the interest rates down, keep the economy of Missouri and the United States of America going. That is the right thing to do.

We're going to prove you can protect the environment and grow the economy. There are 10 million kids living within 4 miles of a toxic waste dump. If you vote for us, we're going to clean up two-thirds of them in the next 4 years and make our kids grow up next to parks, not poison. That's the right thing to do for America's children.

We're going to build on our efforts to strengthen America's families and to help people succeed at work and at home. In all the crowds that I have been before over the last 4 years, when real Americans, ordinary Americans, hard-working Americans, the backbone of this country come out, I look and talk to people, and I don't ever meet a family that hasn't had some point in their lives where there's been a real challenge between the duty to raise their children well and their obligations at work.

That's why we passed the family and medical leave law and gave 12 million Americans a chance to take some time off for a baby's birth or a parent's sickness without losing their jobs. And that's why we want to expand the family and medical leave law, so people can take a

little time off to go to those parent-teacher conferences and the regular doctor's appointment with their kids. And we think there ought to be flextime rules so that if you earn overtime, depending on what's best for your family, you get to decide whether to take the overtime in money or extra time off if your children need it. That's the kind of America we're trying to build, stronger families for a brighter future working together.

Will you help us build that bridge to the 21st century?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Will you say that in America, if you believe in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, if you're willing to work hard and play by the rules, we don't care what your race is, what your gender is, what your income is, where you're from, or where you started, you're all going across that bridge together with us, we're going arm in arm, together and strong? Can we do that? Will you help us for 68 days, all the way to November?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Thank you, and God bless you all. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:57 p.m. at Capaha Park. In his remarks, he referred to Emily Firebaugh, candidate for Missouri's Eighth Congressional District.

Message on the Observance of Labor Day, 1996

August 30, 1996

Warm greetings to all Americans as we commemorate our nation's 102nd Labor Day holiday.

Each Labor Day we celebrate the accomplishments of our working men and women. Jobs drive our economy and ensure that the blessings of freedom will benefit generations to come. Labor Day is an opportunity to recognize those who began the fight to improve working conditions and labor laws for Americans, as well as those who continue to ensure dignity in the workplace, integrity in our society, and honor in the global marketplace.

This Labor Day, we have much to cheer, including 10 million new jobs created in the past three and a half years and better and safer pensions for 40 million workers and retirees. The Family and Medical Leave Act has permitted countless workers to care for loved ones without fear of losing their jobs or their seniority. And employees are now guaranteed that when they change jobs, they can take their health care coverage with them.

We observe this day knowing that the best is yet to come. Working together, management and labor can improve quality and efficiency,