

drop in welfare rolls—3.8 million since I took office—in the history of the United States.

And we had to fight to preserve the environmental protections in this country. The air is cleaner, the water is cleaner, the food is safer, and there are fewer toxic waste dumps than there were 5 years ago, but we have had to fight to preserve an approach that says we can grow the economy and improve the environment. And that's what we owe our children. We cannot abandon our commitment to clean up the environment. You have a clear choice.

So I'm asking you to help Jay Nixon, not just tonight with your funds but tomorrow with your voice and for another year. I think it's a pretty gutsy thing for a guy to give a year to run a campaign to try to unseat an incumbent, when we know historically our party has been badly outspent in these kinds of races.

You can give him your contributions. You can give him your voice. You can give him a year in which every time you walk into a coffee shop, every time you've got a break at work, every time you're sitting around talking with your friends, you can ask people: What do you want for this State? What do you want for this country? What are the real consequences? What difference does it make who the Senator is? I can tell you, it makes a big difference. He's a good man. I'm glad you're here for him tonight.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the lobby of the Fox Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Clarence Harmon of St. Louis; Lt. Gov. Roger Wilson of Missouri; and St. Louis County Executive George (Buzz) Westfall.

## Remarks at a Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Dinner in St. Louis November 17, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Jay. Thank you for running. Thank you for being a good attorney general. Thanks for inviting me to dinner. [*Laughter*] Maybe I will come back next Monday. [*Laughter*] I'd also like to thank the owners of this magnificent theater for allowing us to be here tonight and for doing such a wonderful job in restoring it.

I think that when we come here and you see all this beauty and—sort of—your eyes normally just sort of go up, don't they?—and you feel elevated, that's the way you ought to feel about your country. That's the way you ought to feel about your political system. That's the way you ought to feel about your choices as citizens to support people in campaigns.

So the first thing I want to do is just to thank you for being here tonight and for being proud to have the freedom to come here, to contribute to this man's campaign and to what he's trying to do for our country, to take a stand, and to be a part. I hope that when you think about it over the next year, you will be constant in trying to help him get elected and that you will go beyond financial support to talking to your friends and neighbors and doing

whatever you can to help prevail. And I hope you will always try to remember how you felt when you walked into this theater tonight. If you can create that kind of spirit among the people of Missouri, I think you'll win the election. And I think you can do it.

Let me say that, as all of you know just from reading the press, this is a rather challenging time for our country, and I don't have anything else to add about what I'm trying to deal with in Iraq than what I've already said. But it has made me a little more reflective even than normal, and I'd like to try to put this race for the Senate in some sort of larger context for you so you can see how I see it and why I came here.

When I ran for President, when I decided to run for President about 6 years ago and I was the Governor of your neighboring State to the south, I was really concerned about the country, not because I was worried about Americans or I didn't think that we could deal with any problem but because we were going through this period of sweeping change with no unifying vision about how we were going to go into the 21st century together, and because we had been

dealing with the impacts of the global economy and increasing technology and changes in the way we work and live for 20 years. Even by the time I ran for President, it had been nearly 20 years since it had become apparent to everyone that there were big changes going on. The average wages of Americans had been stagnant for 20 years. Unemployment was going up, and we were beginning to see tensions, racial tensions, rekindled in America. The economic anxieties, I'm convinced, were the primary driving force in the movements that I faced, that we all faced as Americans to try to restrict opportunity to minorities and to immigrants. And it seemed to me that Washington was making it worse by having the same old debates over and over and over again.

What I wanted to do was to take the values that I was raised with, which I think are the values of the Democratic Party and I hope are the values of America, and tie them to new ideas and new policies for new times, so that we could not just reclaim the White House but reclaim the future for our children; so that we could challenge every American to be responsible and give opportunity to every responsible American; so that we could bring this country together, across all the lines that divide us, into one community; and so that we could continue to lead the world for peace and freedom and prosperity.

Now, when I went to Washington, thanks to the votes of the people in Missouri and a number of other places, I encountered an atmosphere very different than any I had ever seen as a Governor. I had always had opposition, and we had fought hard, and I welcomed my opposition to the debate. We fought hard over issues. I had never been to a place where they said no before they heard what you were for, a place so dominated by partisanship and old categories and old thoughts and old behavior that I could see that breaking the paralysis was not going to be easy.

But I ask you to consider the decisions that we have made in the last 5 years and the consequences of those decisions and the decisions that still have to be made, and think about how it's going to affect you and your children and your grandchildren, and then you can decide how hard you want to work on this Senate race.

The first thing we had to do was to scrap trickle-down economics. It was a failure. It quadrupled the debt of the country in 12 years.

The country was drifting apart. And we put in a new economic policy that I called invest-and-grow. I said, give me a shot; I believe I can reduce the deficit and still have more money to invest in education and technology and our future. And we got our shot by one vote in both Houses. It was the Vice President's incentive; as Al Gore never tires of saying, whenever he votes, I win—[laughter]—by the narrowest of margins. Why? Not because the Democrats didn't support me—I received more support from my party than my three previous Democratic predecessors—because every single member of the other party voted against my economic program and railed to high heaven and talked about how it was going to bring a recession, how it was going to be a total failure, told all the American people we were putting these huge tax burdens on them, when they knew that 98.5 percent of the American people were not going to have an increase in their income tax. They knew that we were cutting taxes for more people than we were raising taxes for—mostly hard-working people. Now a family of four with an income of under \$30,000 is paying \$1,000 less income tax than they would have paid under the system that existed before our economic plan passed.

They knew all that, but they hoped that the people couldn't figure it out by 1994's election and that they wouldn't feel a better economic climate. And they were right about that, and they won a lot of seats in Congress over it.

But now it's 5 years later, and we're in a position to make a judgment. Every single one of them, including Mr. Nixon's opponent, voted no on our '93 economic plan. What did it do? Well, before one dollar kicks in from this balanced budget amendment, we've reduced the deficit by 92 percent, produced 13½ million jobs—a record for this period of time—and we now have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. So you have a clear choice there, and you should bring that choice to bear on this race.

On the area of crime, Jay Nixon, as attorney general, supported our efforts to put 100,000 police on the street, to have gun-free school zones, to ban assault weapons. Now, consider what happened: In 1994, I brought the crime bill up. I was an attorney general; I have been working on criminal justice matters for 20 years now. That crime bill was not written by me or by bureaucrats in Washington; it was written

by police officers and prosecutors and community workers who work with young people in trouble all across this country. And all I did was reflect what was already working in many communities to bring the crime rate down.

So I said, "You know, violent crime has tripled, but we only have 10 percent more police officers. Let's put 100,000 police on the street." Our friends on the other side said, "Oh, if you do that, it won't make a lick of difference; it's just a waste of Federal money." I suggested that it was time to pass the Brady bill and not let people who had criminal histories buy handguns. They said, "Oh, it's unenforceable, and it won't do any good." I said, "You know, I come from a big hunting State, but I just don't think the NRA is right on these assault weapons. I never saw a single deer killed with an assault weapon." [Laughter] And they said when we passed that, we were going to go out and take everybody's guns away.

We had this bitter fight over this crime bill—pure politics. The whole law enforcement community in the country was on our side. But they were good politicians, and they did everything they could do in the Senate to beat it, everything they could do. A bitter, bitter, bitter filibuster—the awfulest things said you ever heard. And we broke the filibuster, finally, because there were five brave Republicans who stood up and said, "Enough is enough; we're going to go out and vote with the Democrats and try to give our kids a better, safer life."

And so we put 100,000 police on the street. That's what we're doing. We're 3 years ahead—we're 3 years into it; we're two-thirds of the way done; we're ahead of schedule and under budget. And we banned the assault weapons, and we kept over a quarter of a million people with criminal histories or mental health histories or people who were stalkers from buying handguns, who shouldn't have done it. And the crime rate is the lowest it's been in 24 years.

Now, he took one position; his opponent took another position. You have evidence; you know. Make a judgment, and tell the people who live in Missouri to make a judgment. But don't pretend that there are no consequences to this vote. There are consequences. And we could have used another vote or two in 1994 when we were trying to save the lives of the children in this country. This is a safer, better country today because we won that fight and they lost it. And I'd like to have some more help when

we deal with the issues that are still ahead of us.

Juvenile crime hasn't dropped as much as crime among adults. Most juveniles commit crime between 3 and 7 in the afternoon. We have to do some creative things to keep those kids out of trouble in the first place, and we don't need any more speeches on the floor of the Congress about how it's a waste of money to try to keep kids out of trouble in the first place. I'd rather keep a kid out of trouble than send another kid to jail, if we can do that. And I think we ought to do it. So we were right, and they were wrong.

In 1994, they picked up a lot of seats in the Congress. They went out there and told people in rural areas and all over America, "You know, President Clinton and the Democrats are coming to get your guns." I told the group earlier, I said I went back to New Hampshire, where I won in '92—unusual for a Democrat—and I went to this crowd of people, and every one of them had a hunting license, and they were looking at me kind of funny. [Laughter] And I said, "You know, in 1994 you people beat a Congressman up here because he voted to ban assault weapons. And they told you that you were going to lose your gun. And now it's 1996, and if you lost your gun I want you to vote against me, too. But if you didn't lose your gun, they didn't tell you the truth, and you need to get even." [Laughter] My vote in New Hampshire in 1996 was 12 percent higher than it was in 1992. [Laughter] And they got even.

I say that not for personal reasons but because there are consequences to this. There are a lot of voters out there that think, oh, it's all politics; it doesn't make any difference. That's bull. It does make a difference, and it makes a huge difference. If we had lost that economic fight in 1993, the deficit would not have gone down by over 90 percent and the economy wouldn't have produced 13½ million jobs and interest rates wouldn't have gone down. If we had lost that crime bill in 1994, we would not have as much success with crime as we've had today, the lowest crime rate in 24 years.

Or look at an area where we've worked together on. We got a big bipartisan majority for welfare reform finally, and I'm grateful for that and I appreciate the fact that the members of the other party worked with us on it. I tried every time I could to get a bipartisan resolution. But I had to veto two bills first because they

said, "If you want to require people on welfare to work, we also want you to take away from their children the guarantee that you want to leave them with, of nutrition and health care. And we don't want to give you a lot more money for child care, even though these women are going to get minimum-wage jobs and they can't afford child care. And we're not going to give you very much money to help people in big cities, where there aren't any private sector jobs, find jobs." So I vetoed the bill twice. Finally, we got it. But it would have been a tragedy if we hadn't passed the right kind of welfare reform.

We've now seen the welfare rolls drop by 3.8 million in America, the biggest drop in American history. But I think our side was right on that. The Democratic position was, yes, require able-bodied people to work, but do not require them to abandon their children. The most important job anybody ever has is being a good parent. And if everybody did a better job of that, we wouldn't have half the problems we've got in this country. You can't ask people to go to work and forget about their responsibilities at home. The trick is to allow people to fulfill both those responsibilities. And the parties had different positions on that.

There are huge differences in our attitude toward the environment. Look, we have gotten rid of more regulations than the two previous Republican Presidents have. We have given more authority to the States and local governments. We've even privatized more Government operations. I do not like Federal bureaucracies. The Federal Government is 300,000 people smaller than it was the day I took the oath of office. It's the size it was when John Kennedy was President.

But the air is cleaner; the water is purer; the food is safer; there are fewer toxic waste dumps. And I think we have established the fact that on the environment, our philosophy is right and theirs is wrong. Their philosophy is, we hope somebody will clean up the environment, but nothing should be allowed to get in the way of short-term economic gain. My philosophy is, we owe it to our children and our grandchildren to keep the environment and improve it. And we have proved that you can grow the economy faster with new technologies if you're committed to cleaning up the environment. It's a clear choice, and let's not pretend

that there is no choice there. There is a choice there.

So I've enjoyed these fights enormously. [Laughter] I like to debate; I like to argue. But I am impatient with those who think it doesn't make a difference. It makes a difference. And when I think about how far this country has come in the last 5 years and what we still have to do to build our bridge to the 21st century, when I think about the honest differences—I don't want to get into condemnation here, I'm talking about the honest differences in the parties—I know that a person like Jay Nixon could make a positive contribution to the people of Missouri and the people of this country. And I know that it would help in the fights we've still got ahead of us.

We finally—finally—succeeded, against intense opposition, in convincing a bipartisan majority of the Congress to embrace the elemental notions that it's high time in America we had some national standards of academic excellence and we quit putting kids out of school that can't read, write, and count; and instead, we give the schools of our country the trained teachers, the technology, the support they need, but there has to be, first, high expectations, high standards, and high measurements to see if they're being met. Every child in this country is capable of learning, but I'll guarantee you, a child in difficult circumstances with low expectations won't. And it's to the poorest children that we have the highest obligation to give a world-class education.

Now, I'm not trying to have the Federal Government take over education. Their argument was that the Federal Government should keep its mouth shut about education, maybe write a check. My argument is, we put more money into education in this last budget than any Presidency and any administration in 35 years, but it's not a question of money. It's money plus standards. It's a big issue. And I could give you—if we had all night, I could talk to you all night about the differences between our parties. It makes a difference. A Senator's vote makes a difference.

Last year they held all these judges hostage, in an election year, hoping against hope I'd get beat and they wouldn't have to appoint them at all. This year, I had a 4-year term; they still only confirmed 35 judges—slow walk and everything. It's like pulling teeth.

One of the finest people you ever met, this man, Bill Lee, that I've nominated to head the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, a Chinese immigrant raised in Harlem, devoted his entire life to the civil rights of people of all colors in this country. The Senate Judiciary Committee says they don't really think they should confirm him, even though he has sworn to uphold the letter of the law, even though he is unquestionably qualified—intellectually, in terms of experience and moral character—because he agrees with me that we shouldn't just throw out all affirmative action.

This is an unusual position they're taking: The President must appoint someone to the Civil Rights Division who is not committed to civil rights in the way the President is. Now, if the Democrats had felt that way, you wouldn't have half the people on the Supreme Court that are on there today. If the Democratic majority in the Senate had done a Republican President that way, you wouldn't have that.

There are differences in terms of what we do and how we do it. That's why I'm here tonight. I'm telling you, the next 50 years can be the best years this country ever had. If I told you 5 years ago, come back in 5 years and we'll have the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, the lowest crime rate in 24 years, the biggest drop in welfare in history, and the environment will be improving even though the economy is growing, you would have said, "I'll take that bet." And you'd be darn proud of it. And if I said, "Oh, and by the way, we'll have passed the family and medical leave law,

we'll give families tax cuts for their children and for their children's education, and if they'll adopt other children that need a home, we'll cut their taxes," you would like that. All that has happened because of choices that have been made. And I believe the direction that our party has taken has led the way toward building an American future where we can go forward together.

That's the last thing I'll say. Just look around the theater on your way out. How do you want to feel about America? How do you want to feel about American politics? Do you want to make it lift your eyes and you feel big and you want to take a deep breath? Or do you want it to be a mean-spirited, divisive, demeaning, diminishing experience? I have tried to give this country a unifying vision. I have tried to heal the divisions of the country. I have tried to minimize the sharpness of the partisan debate. But I am prouder tonight to be a Democrat than I was 5 years ago. And I am prouder tonight because I know things I could never have known before I became President about the importance of every single solitary vote in the United States Senate.

He is a good man, and if you will work for a year, you'll make him a Senator.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. on the stage at the Fox Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Leon and Mary Strauss, owners of the theater; and Mr. Nixon's opponent, incumbent Senator Christopher S. Bond.

## Joint Statement on U.S.-Kazakhstan Relations

*November 18, 1997*

During their November 18, 1997 meeting in Washington, D.C., Presidents Clinton and Nazarbayev underscored the special importance they attach to the close and productive relationship between the United States and Kazakhstan.

Deepening this partnership is key to promoting Kazakhstan's security, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and democratic development, as well as the stability and economic prosperity of the region as a whole.

The two Presidents restated their strong commitment to the goals set forth in the "Charter on Democratic Partnership Between the United States of America and the Republic of Kazakhstan," signed by the two Presidents in February 1994. Recognizing the growing economic and commercial ties between the two nations, the two Presidents expressed their strong support for the "Action Program on Economic Partnership," signed in Washington, November 18, 1997, by President Nazarbayev and Vice