

Remarks at a Reception for Gubernatorial Candidate Garry Mauro in San Antonio, Texas  
September 27, 1998

*The President.* Thank you very much.

*Audience member.* Don't give up!

*The President.* Well, ladies and gentlemen—you don't have to worry about me giving up. [Applause] Thank you. Garry Mauro promised me that if I came to Texas in the wake of all this controversy, I would get a warm welcome. And he nearly overdid it today. [Laughter]

It's great to be back here. I want to thank Frank Herrera and his whole family for making us feel so welcome at their humble little home—stead here. We ought to give him a hand. Thank you. [Applause]

I want to thank all the people who provided our music and catered our food and made this such an enjoyable occasion. I want to thank the candidates who are here who are running for office—Jim Mattox, Charlie Gonzalez—Richard Raymond is not here—Joe Henderson. I want to thank Molly Beth Malcolm, your State chair, and all the members of the Texas House and Senate who are here.

I want to say a special word of appreciation for the life and career of a man who has been my friend for more than 25 years, Henry B. Gonzalez. You can be really proud of what he has done.

And I want to thank my friend Ann Richards for finding ways to say things no one else can say that make a point no one could misunderstand. [Laughter] She's unbelievable.

I want to tell you why I wanted to come here today, for reasons other than the fact that Garry Mauro has been my friend since 1972.

*Audience member.* Mango ice cream!

*The President.* And the mango ice cream. [Laughter]

First of all, many of you whom I've already met have said some wonderful personal things to me about my family, and I thank you for that. You know, it's easy to forget in Washington, but Presidents and their families are still people. And it meant more to me than you'll ever know, and I thank you for that.

But I also want to tell you that I desperately want this election year, all across America and in Texas, not to be about what's going on in

Washington, DC, but what's going on in San Antonio, in El Paso, in Lufkin, and towns like them all over America. You know, this is still a democracy; you're still in the driver's seat, but you have to get behind it and drive if you want to be heard.

Now, I ran for President—I started almost 7 years ago—in just about a week it will be the 7th anniversary of my declaration for President. When I started, nobody but my wife and my mother thought I could win. I had a lot of good friends in Texas and got two-thirds of the vote in the Democratic primary here on Super Tuesday, and it catapulted me on.

Now, I ran for President because I wanted to make this country work for ordinary citizens again; because I wanted us to be a leader for peace and prosperity and freedom in the rest of the world, to which we're closer and closer tied; and because I wanted to bring this country together in a spirit of harmony and unity across all the lines that divide us.

And in the last 6 years—Garry mentioned it, but I just want to reel it off to you—we tested the ideas that we brought to Washington. They're no longer the subject of debate. If you believe elections are about ideas, ideals, and the impact they have on ordinary people, in every election in this country and in every election in Texas, you ought to tell people we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the smallest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years. And Wednesday we'll have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years.

But the real question is, what will we do with it? I want you to remember what Garry said today. Our enemy is not adversity. Look at this crowd. Feel your own enthusiasm. Remember what many of you said to me today. Adversity is our friend. It forces us to dig deep, to ask ourselves what we believe in, what kind of people we are, what kind of people we want to be, where we want to go, and what we want to do with our lives. Adversity is our friend. Our enemies are complacency and cynicism. Those are our enemies, and don't misunderstand it.

The biggest problem Garry Mauro has got in this election is if people think, "Well, things are going well. Why do anything?" A lot of people think, "I had a tough time in the eighties, and things are going well now, and why don't we just relax and let things rock along?" And I can tell you that's appealing, but it's wrong. In Washington people think, "Things are going well; why don't we fight with each other and see who we can hurt?" [Laughter] And it's tempting, but it's wrong. It's wrong because the world is changing very fast.

I just got back from Silicon Valley, where all those computer companies are born, you know? Those people change for a living every day at blinding speed. But they understand something a lot of our fellow Americans don't, which is the world is changing for everyone. You pick up the papers; you know that we've got economic problems in Japan and the rest of Asia. There's a real risk that it will spread to our friends in Mexico and throughout Latin America who are doing a pretty good job managing their economies. If that happens, it will hurt Texas very, very badly, and our economy.

You see terrorism throughout the world; you see people fighting with each other throughout the world because of their racial, their ethnic, religious differences. We have challenges, and we have challenges at home. And the real question in this election in America and in Texas is, what are we going to do with this moment of prosperity?

This is Sunday, so I'll just make one Biblical reference. One of the most successful leaders in the Bible was Joseph. And what did he do? When Egypt was fat and sassy, he saved the grain. He made all those people go out and work and do things they'd just as soon not do. And they said, "This Joseph, why doesn't he let up on us?" But when the famine came, the people of Egypt were all right because a true leader did something in good times, understanding change.

When people ask you about Garry Mauro, you tell them about Joseph, and tell them what a mistake it would be for Texas to say, "We're just going to stand pat because things are good; who cares if anybody does anything? As long as I feel good, everything is all right."

Let me tell you what's going on in Washington. I believe as strongly as I can say that we have to use these good times as a responsibility to look to the future and deal with our

challenges. Let me just mention four of them. Number one—and I'll compare the positions of the two parties.

Number one, Wednesday we're going to have the first balanced budget and surplus for 29 years. I've worked hard for it for the last 6 years. In 1993 we had a vote, without a single member of the other party—not a one—that passed by one vote in both Houses, that brought the deficit down over 90 percent before we passed the bipartisan balanced budget amendment. And that started this recovery. Now, the guys that didn't vote to balance the budget say, "Well, we're going to have a surplus for the first time in 29 years; let's give everybody an election-year tax cut 6 weeks before the election." Now, it's very popular. It's very popular, but it's dead wrong. And I'll tell you why.

Number one, it's wrong because the rest of the world is in economic trouble, and we have to set a standard of being strong economically and responsible. If we want to keep growing, we've got to help them get back on their feet, not make the same mistakes others are making.

Number two, the Social Security system is solid now, but it is not sustainable when the baby boomers retire. I ought to know; I'm the oldest of the baby boomers. [Laughter] And when we retire—you look at all the young people here today—when the baby boomers retire, there will only be two people working for every one person drawing Social Security. If we start now, well ahead of time, we can make modest changes that save Social Security that will not require us to make the horrible choice of either putting seniors back into poverty or taxing our children so that we undermine their ability to raise our grandchildren.

Now, people say no one thinks that far ahead. But you know that I'm telling the truth, don't you? [Applause] So I say, I want you to support us when the Republicans say, "Here's the goody; it's election time," and I say no. I'm not against tax cuts. We've got tax cuts for education, for child care, and for the environment in our balanced budget bill. But I'm against using that surplus for tax cuts or for spending programs until we save Social Security for our parents and our children.

Number two, I never thought this would be an election year issue, but you know now that 30 percent of our growth comes from our trading with other countries. Texas knows how important it is that we sell our goods and our

products and our services to Latin America, to Asia, all over the world. We have got to lead the world back from the financial trouble they're in, or we will eventually get hurt. And it will be sooner rather than later.

In order for us to lead the world, we have to make our fair contribution to something called the International Monetary Fund. That's the fund we use to help the countries that are trying to help themselves and to keep the problems from spreading so we can keep selling our stuff. For 8 months I've been begging the Congress to do it, and they still haven't done it. So I say to you, if you like this economy and you want to keep it going, vote for us and our side because we will pay our fair share and lead the world back to prosperity.

Number three, in the balanced budget this year, I have given the Congress an education agenda. There has been no action for 8 months. Here's what it does: It puts 100,000 teachers in our classrooms to lower class size to 18 in the early grades; it repairs or builds 5,000 schools; it provides funds to hook up every classroom in the poorest schools in America to the Internet by the year 2000; it helps schools where the kids are poor and the neighborhoods are poor to adopt high standards, but to have after-school programs and summer school programs so the kids aren't deemed failures just because the system is failing them. It gives 35,000 young people college scholarships that they can pay off if they'll go out and teach in hard-pressed school districts for a few years after they get out of college. It is a good education program. It deserves to be passed. And our party is for it, and they're not.

Number four, Garry talked about the Patients' Bill of Rights. I want a national bill that says the following things: Number one, if you get hurt in an accident, they've got to take you to the nearest emergency room, not one halfway across town because it's covered by your plan. Number two, if your doctor tells you you need to see a specialist, you can. Number three, if you're in the middle of treatment and your company changes health insurance providers, they can't make you change doctors.

Now, let me tell you what's happening in America today. Pregnant women, 6, 7 months into their pregnancy—their employer changes coverage, they say, "Get another obstetrician." Have you ever had anybody in your family on chemotherapy? A lot of us have. I have, and

it's pretty tough. And if somebody in your family—I bet you had the same experience we did when my mother had to do that. You sit around and you try to put on a brave face; you make a few jokes. You say, "Well, what are we going to do when you're running around bald?" And then you say, "Well, I'll finally get to wear that wig I've always wanted." You try to make fun of it to keep from the agony. And then you sit there and worry down deep inside, what's going to happen if you're so sick you can't eat anymore? Now, how would you feel in the middle of the chemotherapy treatment, if somebody said, "I'm sorry, your employer changed providers; you've got to get another doctor"? That happens.

And our bill would protect the privacy of your medical records, which is something people ought to care a lot more about today than ever before.

Now, in Congress, the Republicans passed a bill that didn't do any of that, and left 100 million Americans out of what little they did do. It is the symbol of the difference in the two parties in Washington and throughout the country today.

So I say to you, here's what we're for: We're for saving Social Security first; we're for keeping the economy going; we're for putting education first among all our investment priorities; and we're for a Patients' Bill of Rights. That's what we're for, and they're opposite us on all those issues. That is the choice nationally.

You want to know—Ann Richards asked if you could think of anything that Congress has done. Let me tell you what they've done this year, what our friends in the Republican Party have done with their majority. They killed campaign finance reform. They killed tobacco reform legislation to help us save our kids' health. They killed an increase in the minimum wage, with unemployment and inflation low, that would have helped 12 million hard-working Americans. They have gone backwards on saving Social Security first. They have gone backwards in protecting the environment. And they have done nothing on helping us to lead the international economy and nothing on the education agenda. That's what they have done less than a week before the end of this budget year. And that's the difference.

Well, what's that got to do with the Governor of Texas? I'll tell you what. For years and years and years, I heard the Republicans talk about

how there ought to be more power given to the States, how the Federal Government did too much. They talked about it; we did something about it. We have the smallest Federal Government in 35 years. But what that means is it matters a lot more who the Governor is. We have given Governors more responsibility in education, more responsibility in health care, more responsibility in managing the environment, and more responsibility in growing the economy. It matters. If Garry Mauro were not my friend, I would be here saying he has a plan for Texas, and just because you're doing well doesn't mean you can stand pat. You need to bear down and think about your children and the future and stand up for what's right.

Now, our friends in the other party think they're going to do real well this year because of complacency and cynicism and what I call the M&M syndrome: money and midterms. They always have more money than we do. And at midterm elections our folks—who work hard, have a lot of hassles, and it's more trouble for them to vote—don't vote in the same numbers their folks do. But we can surprise them if the American people know what's really at stake.

If they understand this is a question about progress over partisanship, people over politics, unity over division.

And I'm telling you, you go out there and they ask you what it's about, tell them it's about the economy. Tell them it's about saving Social Security. Tell them it's about the integrity of your health care. Tell them it's about the education of your children. That's what we're for. And they know—every voter knows what they're for. Make a decision for your future and our country's future.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:09 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception host Frank Herrera; Jim Mattox, candidate for State attorney general; Charlie Gonzalez, candidate for Texas' 20th Congressional District; State Representative Richard Raymond, candidate for State land commissioner; Joe B. Henderson, candidate for State railroad commissioner; Molly Beth Malcolm, State Democratic chair; and Ann Richards, former Governor of Texas.

## Statement on the Detention of Indicted War Criminal Stevan Todorovic in Bosnia

*September 27, 1998*

Early this morning in Bosnia, United States SFOR forces led a multinational effort to detain Stevan Todorovic, an indicted war criminal. The detention took place without incident, and Todorovic is now in the custody of the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague.

Todorovic, who served as chief of police for Bosanski Samac in 1992, is accused by the Tribunal of being personally responsible for some of the most heinous crimes that took place during the conflict in Bosnia.

This brings to 35 the number of indicted war criminals brought to justice. SFOR has assisted

in well over half of these cases. This action by U.S. and other SFOR troops shows our continued determination to bring to justice those responsible for war crimes in Bosnia. This message should not be lost on those indicted war criminals still at large.

I wish to express my admiration for the SFOR troops who were involved in this operation and who continue to work daily to consolidate the peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.