

Shriver and Senator Edward M. (Teddy) Kennedy, and his wife, Vicki; brother Joseph P. Kennedy III; and aunts Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Patricia Kennedy.

Remarks at a Reception for Hillary Clinton in Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts

August 6, 2000

Thank you. Well, first of all, I want to thank the Biondis for having us back at their home this year and for raising all this money. And I want to thank the Iscols and the others who helped them. And I want to thank all of you for helping Hillary.

I can hardly add anything to what Carol said; I thought that was great. I hope we got it on tape somewhere. *[Laughter]* But I would like to say just a couple of things about Hillary and about the election in a larger sense.

It is not often that someone runs for the Senate to do work that he or she has been preparing to do for 30 years. When I met Hillary, in 1971 in the springtime, wearing a yellow shirt—that's why I wore it tonight—*[laughter]*—I can't believe I said that. *[Laughter]* Anyway, she was working on children's issues. She wrote an article when we were in law school on the best interests of the child and what they really meant—one, I might add, that the Republicans attacked her for in 1992 when I ran for President, and one I was only too happy to defend.

She took an extra year when we were in law school to work at the Yale Child Studies Center in the Yale hospital, so she could learn more about children's biological development and the nature of child development and how it would impact on the law and what we could do to better give our kids—all of our kids, including those that grew up in the most disadvantaged circumstances—a decent shot at life.

In the 8 years that I have been President she, pioneered sweeping changes to make adoption easier, including adoption across racial lines, to take better care of foster kids and help them when they move out of foster care just because they're 18 years old, and before we passed the recent legislation in most States of this country, there was nothing for them. They were just out there on their own, abandoned, lost, forgotten.

She held the first conference ever at the White House on early childhood and brain de-

velopment. She worked on violence against children and so many other issues that I think are central to what kind of country we're going to be. And along the way, she did a lot of other things.

On the way in here tonight, she gave a White House millennial treasures designation to the tabernacle here on Martha's Vineyard and the work that's been done there.

When we started thinking about how we ought to celebrate the year 2000, because we knew it would be our last year in the White House, Hillary came up with this idea that we ought to celebrate the millennium by honoring the past and imagining the future. So she launched this unbelievable lecture series that some of you have probably seen or logged on to your Internet site or seen publicized, on all the major topics that will dominate the 21st century, and at the same time a massive attempt to save the historic treasures of America from every little community like this one, all the way to the Star-Spangled Banner, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. And we recently announced the designation of the cottage that Abraham Lincoln and his family used at the Old Soldiers' Home in Washington, which many other First Families in the latter half of the 19th century used as a summer home.

And Dick Moe, the head of the National Historic Preservation Trust, got up and said that Hillary's millennial treasures effort was the largest single historic preservation effort in the entire history of the United States of America.

And there's 50 other things I could have said, I have forgotten, or left out. *[Laughter]* But the main point is that you couldn't have anybody who knows more and who cares more and who has shown more consistency in the Senate.

Now, the other thing I want to say is, as somebody who is not on the ballot this year, I've worked as hard as I know how to turn this country around from where it was in 1992—

[*applause*]*—stop—[laughter]**—timeout—*and if I might, in the metaphors of our two campaigns, to put the American people first and to build a bridge to the 21st century. But every election is about the future, and this election presents quite a stern test to the American people, because we have to decide what to do with the most momentous prosperity we've ever had, when all the social indicators are going in the right direction, when we face an absence of flaming crisis at home and glaring threat to our existence from beyond our borders.

And it is very easy at a time like this for people to believe, A, that the election is not important, and B, that it doesn't make much difference who gets elected. And differences tend to get blurred. I don't want to do anything to undermine the happy feeling the American people have now, the upbeat and the positive feeling, but you can make a huge mistake in good times by thinking there's no penalty in failing to analyze your situation and acting on what's out there.

We may never have another chance in our lifetimes to build the future of our dreams for our kids. And there are profound consequences to this election. And I'll just mention two, because I want Hillary to talk and I want you to hear from her, but I want you to think about two things that affect the Presidential race and the Senate race. I could mention 10, but I want you to focus on the two.

One is, if you like the fact that we're becoming a more just society where there is less discrimination against people because of their race, their gender, their income, their sexual orientation, where the crime rates are going down, the welfare rolls are going down, the single-parent household poverty rate's at a 46-year low, the female unemployment rate at a 40-year low, the minority unemployment rate the lowest ever recorded, it is important if you want to keep that going not only to have good social policies but to keep this economy going and to make extra efforts to spread its benefits to the people in places that are left behind. The number one economic issue in this race, a huge difference between Hillary and her opponent and between the Vice President and his opponent, is what we intend to do with the economy and the surplus.

Their line is, "It's your money. We're going to give it back to you in a tax cut, all of it." Now, that doesn't give them any money left

to pay for their own spending promises. It gives no money left to pay for their Social Security promises. And I can tell you this: If you partially privatize Social Security and you guarantee the benefits that are there and the people who are about to be there, that costs another trillion dollars, at least, that you've just got to put in there just to protect the benefits. And Dr. Modigliani is up there nodding his head. I have a Nobel Prize-winning laureate here, backing up my budgetary figures. So you've already spent—just with the tax cut promises and the Social Security promises, you already spent 50 percent more than the projected surplus.

What happens? Interest rates will go up at least a point over a decade, taking away the benefits of any tax cut from 80 percent of the American people, undermining the health of the economy, undermining our ability to grow, and undermining the security the American people need to deal forthrightly with our social problems and to build one America. Plus which, the most important thing is, this is a projected surplus.

Some of you were at the Kennedy event last night over in Hyannis Port, and I said this is kind of like one of those letters you get in the mail from Ed McMahon and the Publishers Clearing House. [*Laughter*] "You may have won \$10 million." And you may have. But then again, you may not. And if you spent the \$10 million when you got that letter, you should support them. [*Laughter*] But if you didn't, you should support Hillary and Al Gore and keep this economy going.

The only other thing I wanted to say is, this election is also a choice about choice—for the White House and for the Senate. I hope that no one in the Democratic Convention will do what some in the Republican Convention did by illusion in what they used to do to make a living, which is to criticize our opponents as people. I think we should assume that they're honorable, they're patriotic, they love their country, they love their families, and they'll do their best to do what they believe is right.

They don't believe that we should keep *Roe v. Wade*. That's what they honestly believe in their heart, and they have a perfect right to believe that. But there will be two to four appointments on the Supreme Court next time. And I hope Al Gore will be making them. But it's something you need to think about in the Presidential race. But you should never forget

that no one gets appointed to a major position like that who is not confirmed by the Senate. So it matters. Every last Senate seat is of critical importance in this Presidential race. Those are just two issues. As I said, there are 8 or 10 others that are of profound importance.

But if you want to do something for Hillary in this election, and I'll get down to the last here, one of the things that really hurts me the most—and if you listen to the tenor of the campaign against her—is basically, “Don't vote for her because she's not from here. Don't vote for her because, why is she doing this? Don't vote for her—let me see if I can get you to resent her.”

And you know that old aphorism, “Whom the Gods would destroy, they first make angry.” If the voters in New York can get really confused, that's the only way she can lose. Because if they vote for the strongest person, for the best qualified person, for the person who can do the most, and for the person with whom they agree, she wins. They know that.

That's why you have seen the campaign unfolding the way it is. If ever anybody deserves a chance to serve in public life, she does. But

no one—no one—but the truth is, no one deserves public office—no one—[*laughter*]*—she, more than anybody I know, but nobody. The reason that people in New York ought to vote for her is, it's good for them and for their kids and their future. That's what democracy is all about.*

So the last thing I want to tell you is, when you leave here tonight, if you're from New York or if you know anybody from New York, the thing she most needs is for people like you to tell other people they know, “I know this woman. She is a good person. She is a great public servant, and she ought to be the next Senator.”

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:30 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Frank J. Biondi, Jr., and his wife, Carol; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush of Texas; 1985 Nobel Prize in Economics recipient Franco Modigliani; and Ed McMahon, Publishers Clearing House spokesman.

Remarks on Signing the Oceans Act of 2000 in Martha's Vineyard

August 7, 2000

Save the bill! [*Laughter*] Another triumph for the Secret Service. Give him a hand. [*Applause*] That was great.

Let me welcome all of you here and thank you for joining me today. I want to begin by just thanking the people of Martha's Vineyard for once again making all of my family, Hillary and Chelsea and I, feel so much at home. We love coming back to this place year after year. And in the years that I have served as President, it's meant more to us than I can possibly say, to be able to come here for refuge, to enjoy this beautiful, beautiful place, and to have the contacts we've had with our old friends and meet a lot of new people, as well. So I want to thank you for that.

This year, because of the year it is and the activities of my wife and the things that I have to do, our vacation is a lot shorter than it normally is. But I think it's a wonderful thing that

we can do this today here on our last day. I want to thank the Coast Guard personnel for making this beautiful site available to us, in the shadow of this great old lighthouse.

I'd also like to mention a couple of people who can't be with us today that I want to pay homage to. The first and foremost is Senator Fritz Hollings of South Carolina. He sponsored the legislation that I am signing today, and he has been a champion of our oceans for his entire career. And Hillary and I want to thank him. Hillary and I and the Vice President and Tipper Gore were all part of our Oceans Conference in Monterey 2 years ago, and it was a very moving event which led to the passage of this bill today.

I also want to acknowledge the contributions of a sometime resident of Martha's Vineyard, my friend Ted Danson, who has also been a great champion of the oceans and who was a