

Partnership; morning radio show host Tom Joyner; talk show host Tavis Smiley; Ambassador Sheila Sisulu and former President Nelson

Mandela of South Africa; and author Toni Morrison.

Remarks at a Brunch for Hillary Clinton in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania September 17, 2000

Thank you very much. I was telling Ed that I left the Black Caucus dinner last night about 12:15—the Congressional Black Caucus—I was hoping that I would be *compos mentis* by the time I was introduced to speak, and you gave me such a warm welcome, I'm about to wake up. [Laughter]

Let me say, first of all, how grateful I am to all of you for being here, and so many of you have already helped Hillary. I appreciate you being here, and I'll explain in a minute why we're doing this.

I want to thank Congressmen Borski and Congressman Brady for being not only friends of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania but true friends of mine in the Congress. I'm very proud of what we've done together.

I can't say enough about Ed. It's been wonderful for me to close out my Presidency with a chairman of the Democratic Party who has as much energy as I do—[laughter]—because we knew we would have to work, and work we did. That first 7 months of this year, I don't think either one of us slept very much, but we worked very hard. And everybody was saying, "Oh, the Democrats didn't have a chance. We were all going to get wiped out. We couldn't hold the White House."

And people thought Rendell and I needed a dose of reality serum because we'd go around and say, "What do you mean? We're going to win this thing. It's"—[laughter]—didn't we? And we would go around, and these people in far-flung places, a long way from Philadelphia and Washington, would look at us like, "What have these guys been drinking tonight?" [Laughter]

You know, now all those people who were doubters think we're geniuses. And we just need about 50 more days of effort so that they'll be right. But I'm very grateful to you, Mr. Mayor, because after you did such a good job here, you could have taken a well-deserved rest,

and instead, you went on the road, and we've had a good run. I'm very grateful.

Let me say to—I don't even have the words to express the gratitude I feel to the people of Pennsylvania and especially the people of Philadelphia in this area who have given me and Al Gore such an overwhelming endorsement in 1992, and in 1996, the margin was truly breathtaking. I will never forget it. It does an amazing thing for a Democratic campaign for President not to have to worry about whether you're going to win in Pennsylvania.

What happens—I can just tell you, after the conventions are over, the candidates and their folks, they sit down and look at a map. And they look at where they're going to get to 270 electoral votes, what they have to carry that's up in the air, what they have to go take away, what they have to defend. And after the convention, there are only a relatively small number of days left. And the candidates accept their public funding, so they have a limited amount of resources to travel, to organize, to advertise.

And so it's like this elaborate chess game, quite apart from what we all see when we pick up the papers every day and they're talking about issues, debating issues—and, this year, debating the debates, of all things—and what's in the debates. Underneath it all there is the sure knowledge that we still have—since we're dedicating the Constitution Center today, we still have the same system we started with. We elect Presidents by States and by the electoral votes of States, which is all the House Members plus two Senators. That's how many electoral votes every State has. And even after reinforcement, when they get shifted around, it all still adds up to 538, and you have to have 270 to win.

And Pennsylvania has 23 votes. And it's also in the heartland of America, with Ohio and Michigan and Illinois and Wisconsin and Minnesota, and you go over to New Jersey and up to New York. If you have Pennsylvania, it

drastically increases your chances of carrying New Jersey and of carrying Ohio. No Republican has been elected since the Civil War without carrying Ohio. And it is very hard for a Democrat to be elected without carrying Pennsylvania.

So I am profoundly grateful, because for two Presidential elections we got to go play on their field. If you're playing on the other team's end of the field, you have a chance to score. And the people of Pennsylvania trusted me and Al Gore to deliver for America, and I hope you're not disappointed. It's been an honor. *[Applause]* Thank you.

There's something else I would like to say, and I won't give my standard speech because it's Sunday and a lot of you want to go do something else, and because you've heard it before, but I will say this. I promised myself between the first of the year and election day I would never, ever give a public speech without reminding people that it is sometimes more difficult to make the right decision when times are good than when times are bad. And I know the American people took a chance on me in '92, but maybe it wasn't such a big chance because the country was in trouble, right?

But now things are going well, and there must be clarity. People have got to stop and think about what is it they want for their future. Because I can tell you, in my lifetime, we've never had such a good chance to build the future of our dreams for the children that are in this room today and all the other kids in this country. We could actually do things that were unthinkable when I ran for President. We could actually get the country out of debt for the first time since Andrew Jackson was President. We now know, without any question, what it takes to turn around a failing public school, and we could put in place a system if we had the will and were willing to commit the resources to do it, that would guarantee a world-class education to all the kids in this country.

We know how to do it now. When I started on this back in 1983, we had some ideas, but we didn't know. We now have mountains of evidence. I was in a school in Harlem the other day, a grade school. Two years ago 86 percent of the kids—80 percent of the kids, excuse me—were reading below grade level, doing math below grade level—2 years ago. This year 74 percent of the kids are doing reading and math at or above grade level—in 2 years. We know

how to do this. Then the question is, are we going to do it for all these kids? We've got more kids in schools than ever before; it's the most diverse student body. We could do this.

We could actually get rid of child poverty. We could provide health insurance to all the working families in the country, something we've never done. We could turn around the environmental problems of the country, in the world, including global warming, in a way that would generate hundreds of thousands—maybe even over a million—jobs for the American economy alone.

And all the best stuff is still out there. The human genome project, I believe, will have young mothers bringing babies home from the hospital within 10 years, with a life expectancy of 90 years. So all the best stuff is still out there. We've got to make the right decisions. And we need people who understand the future and understand the bedrock values and institutions that build the future of America and who are curious and thinking about what all these dizzying changes mean.

I know you can never make an ad out of it, but I really think one of the best reasons to vote for Al Gore is his relentless curiosity and passion about the future and the issues that are central to the future. And one of the best reasons to vote for Hillary is that she has always understood the importance of taking everybody along into the future.

So that's really important. But let me tell you why we're here. She has been very blessed. I thought she did great in that debate the other night, even though it was two on one half the time. *[Applause]* Thank you. I was really, really proud of her. I thought she did best when they got meanest, and that's good. It's a contact sport. *[Laughter]* But it also matters whether you're big or little, and she's nothing if not big, and I'm proud of her.

She's doing well in the campaign. She's been very successful with fundraising, both in New York, where an astonishing number of people who have never been really involved before have helped her, and around the country. But in order to maximize her impact between now and the election day, she has to raise more money for her campaign—in \$1,000 and \$2,000 contributions; if nobody has given to her at all before, they can give \$2,000—and for the Democratic Committee, more money in so-called hard money.

I think all of you know that there's a limit under our Federal laws how much soft money can be spent, unless there's a matching amount of hard money. And we need a lot of contributions at a more modest but generous level. So I told Ed I was coming here today, and he said that he would try to get us some more help in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia is one of the States, outside New York, that can be most beneficially impacted by having a good Senator from New York, because you can't be a responsible New York Senator unless you have a great urban policy. You can't serve there. But it's like Pennsylvania. You also can't be good unless you know something about agriculture. Most people don't know that both New York and Pennsylvania are huge agricultural States.

But it's very, very important, as we get down here in the stretch when—I think she said on her debate the other night there are 32—32—third party committees who can spend 100 percent soft money. If you set up one of these sort of front committees to attack someone—unless it's the Republican Party—if it's some other committee with some funny name that's misleading, 100 percent of their money can be soft money. They just throw the stuff on the air and lob those bombshells at you. And believe me, the better she does, the more they want to beat her. I know something about that.

So it's very important that she be able to make the most use of the resources that have already been committed to her and have enough to stand up to whatever comes in the next, how many, 50-odd days between now and the election.

But I think she's going to win if she has the horses to stay in the race until the end. And that's what this is about. And I think when she does, a huge number of people who don't even vote for her the first time will wonder what they were thinking about on election day. And people will see what I have known for 30 years. I have never seen anybody with the same combination of mind and passion and heart and, actually, ability to get her ideas transformed into reality that she does.

I get tickled. They attack her on health care. You might be interested to know that even though our health care plan didn't pass in '94, it got further than Richard Nixon's health care plan, further than Lyndon Johnson's health care plan—I mean, Jimmy Carter's health care

plan—and further than Harry Truman's health care plan. And the same people that attacked Harry Truman attacked Hillary and me, with the same results in the next congressional election.

But after a while, people decided he was right, and they'll decide we're right, too. It would be a better country if every working family could afford health insurance. And we've made a lot of progress. We're insuring over 2 million kids now. We have a law on the books that will allow 5 to get health insurance.

One of the things that went in her health care plan was a strong Patients' Bill of Rights. One of the reasons the health insurance companies campaigned against it was because there was a strong Patients' Bill of Rights in it. And now, 70-something percent of the American people want a strong Patients' Bill of Rights because they've been, or they know someone who's been, on the receiving end of a medical decision being made by somebody other than a medical professional.

So these are big, big issues here. The country is in great shape. We're doing right. If everybody is serious about what the choice is, I feel wonderful about what's going to happen in the Presidential race, the Senate races, the House races.

I want to say one other thing, since I'm in Pennsylvania. We're trying to win—if we just win six or seven House seats, the Democrats will win back the House. And we probably will, and then a few. But what you should know is, today, if Mr. Corzine wins in New Jersey—and I believe he will—and Hillary wins—and we will have two Senate seats that are in some question, one in Nevada, where we're still behind, but we have a chance; one in Virginia, where Chuck Robb is running against the former Governor, and I believe with all my heart Senator Robb is going to win because he's one of the bravest people I've ever known in public life. He's got more courage than is good for him sometimes, given his State. But those are the only two seats we have in play. We are 11 points ahead in Florida for a Republican seat; almost 10 points ahead in Delaware for a Republican seat. We are 25 points ahead in Georgia for a seat previously held by a Republican. We are ahead today, only 5 days after the Minnesota primary, for a seat held by a Republican. One of the two candidates for the Democratic nomination in Florida—I mean, in

Washington State, is already ahead of the incumbent Republican Senator, and the other one is nearly ahead. We are even, to a little ahead, in Missouri. We are within five points in Michigan, where our candidate is fabulous but has been badly outspent, and if she can get back up and go all the way, she'll be fine. And I believe we can do right well here if our candidate had enough money.

So it's something I want you to think about because the future of the Supreme Court is at stake; the future of all these policies is at stake. And I can tell you, every single Senate seat really does matter. As President, I know. I mean every single one of them has an enormous impact on the way Americans live and the framework within which we build our future.

So that's it. If you can help Hillary with some more of these contributions, if you know anybody that hasn't made one, may be willing to make a modest contribution to her campaign, it could make a big difference to her. Because

remember, in New York, it's the Democratic Party against the Republican Party, Hillary against her Republican opponent, and then they have 32 other committees, bringing pleasant messages—[*laughter*—of every conceivable stripe.

She'll do just fine with it. She showed last week she could take a punch, and she can take a lot of them. But she needs to have something to respond, and if you can help, I'll be profoundly grateful.

Thanks again for everything you've done for Hillary.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:40 a.m. at the City Tavern. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Jon S. Corzine, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate in New Jersey; and former Gov. George Allen, Republican candidate for U.S. Senate in Virginia.

Remarks at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia

September 17, 2000

Thank you very much. The final sentence of the preamble: "We do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States." Today we come to ordain and establish this Constitution Center, so I begin by thanking Senator Specter, Senator Santorum; Representatives Brady, Borski, and Hoeffel, who are here; Mayor Street and Mayor Rendell; Chairman Bogle; President Torsella; Judge Giles, Judge Becker; Park Service Director Marie Rust and all of your employees; President Rodin; and Lee Annenberg, we thank you and Walter so much for your continuing generosity and vision. And most of all, I'd like to thank the people of Philadelphia, who have contributed so much to make this center a reality.

This is an appropriate thing to do, I think, in the millennial year and in the political season. I thank Senator Specter for the plug for First Lady, and I hope he will not be too severely rebuked at the Republican caucus in a few days. [*Laughter*]

But if it is the season of political olympics in America, we shouldn't forget that we have over 600 of our athletes halfway across the world in Australia. And I think we ought to give a big hand to the female 400-meter free style relay team, who set a world record in winning a gold medal yesterday. [*Applause*] I might say, just as an aside, I saw a television special which said that this is the oldest women's swimming team we have ever fielded, and the first time the women's team has ever been older than the men. But I don't think they meant that in the same way I do. I think their average is about 21 years and 6 months. [*Laughter*]

I bring you greetings, also, from the First Lady, who wanted to be here today, because of her efforts to save the charters of our freedom.

As you may have read, and I hope you have, this weekend at the National Archives in Washington, scientists and engineers unveiled new, state-of-the-art technology to display and better preserve the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and