

convictions that are different from theirs, especially if they're religious convictions, or if they are of different racial and ethnic origins which lead them into different cultural patterns of life. The great genius of America in the 21st century has got to be how to take the most diverse society we've ever had and the most diverse one in the world—although, interestingly enough, India is a pretty close competitor—and how to celebrate all this diversity and, at the same time, affirm our common humanity. Doing that in the context of all these cases that keep coming up to the Supreme Court requires a great deal of wisdom and understanding about what the real principles of our Constitution require and how the real world works and an

imagination about how it has to work in the 21st century.

So you're here discussing something profoundly important. I just don't want you—you don't have to wring your hands about it, but you do have to get your telephone ringing when you go home.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:19 p.m. at the National Education Association, prior to a panel discussion on the future of the Supreme Court. In his remarks, he referred to Ralph G. Neas, president, and Carole Shields, former president, People for the American Way.

Remarks at a Reception for Congressional Candidate Donald Dunn

October 24, 2000

Well, let me first of all say I'm delighted to see all of you here, and I'm delighted to be here, myself, for several reasons. I'd like to begin by thanking Ron and Beth Dozoretz for doing this, for their incredible generosity, and their support.

I'm here because I owe this guy. [*Laughter*] You know, he started out with me as an intern; then he went to work in the White House; then he went out of the cocoon of the White House, into the administration. And then he actually—he could have stayed here in a cushy job until I left, and then sort of written it all up on his resume and gone out and made a lot of money in Washington or New York or someplace. And instead, he made the decision that I made half my lifetime ago, when I turned down all the clerkships and all the things I was offered and I went home to Arkansas.

And when I ran for Congress in 1974 in Arkansas, I ran in a district where the previous Democratic candidate for President in the previous election had received 24 percent of the vote. So I know what he is going through. [*Laughter*] And half the people thought I was a communist, because I was a Democrat. [*Laughter*] And it was in 1970, so it was acceptable to have longer hair. [*Laughter*]

But I identify with this. And it was a real rural district, and I just—I admire you so much

for doing this. And nothing ever changes until someone like you steps out and takes a chance. I also want to say that sometimes things do change.

And I always tell people—this is the first election since 1974 that I haven't been on the ballot. And I think the really great campaigns of my life were the 1992 Presidential campaign; the 1982 campaign for Governor, where I got re-elected after I had been defeated, and that had never happened before; and that first campaign I ran for Congress. I learned how to listen. I learned how other people viewed Government. I learned the richness and texture of the story that every person has. It made me believe completely in democracy. And I also learned that you can turn a lot of people around if you take the trouble to do it and you believe in them and you give them respect to do it.

And I'm also glad to be here because I really care a lot about Utah, and I honor the heritage of Democrats in Utah. When I became Governor in 1978, the Governor of Utah was a man named Scott Matheson, who is now deceased, but he was a great—he was a great friend of mine, and I loved him. I appointed his son United States attorney, and now he's running for Congress, also in Utah. And his wife, Norma, was and remains a friend of mine.

And I've always wanted to see the Democrats come back in the Intermountain West. And it can be done. Fifty years ago, when everyone thought Harry Truman was defeated in his race for President in 1948, one of the reasons he won is that he swept the Intermountain West, the most Republican area of America today. And the reason he won then is the same reason we lose today—so much of the Intermountain West belongs to the Federal Government. And in the beginning, when all that was happening, it was just a boon to the people who lived there, nothing but a source of income and grazable land and mines to be mined.

Then, after the whole ownership of the Federal Government had matured and the resources had to be managed—and sometimes they had to say yes, as well as no, and sometimes the Federal Government was good at it, and sometimes they weren't very good at it—so, sort of a culture of having to hate the Federal Government that owned all the land built up, so that now it's sort of culturally unacceptable to be a Democrat, because they all think we're, by definition, nuts. *[Laughter]*

That's sort of what's happened. And the only way you can break that psychology in a State like Utah or Idaho or the other smaller States, Montana, is if one person, like him, will go home and say, "Listen, this is my place, too. I love it. Here's where I stand. Here's why I want to be in public office. Here's why I want to serve you."

So I just want to tell you, I think you've got a chance to win, too. And you have changed your life. You have changed the lives of the people that have worked with you. And you have changed the district in which you have worked forever, whatever happens. But I hope all the rest of you will take a little solace at what he's done.

And let me just say one other thing. This election is unfolding against the backdrop of the national election. I have always felt, I will say again—I've been saying this for 2 years. I will say it one more time—when the votes are counted on November 7th, Al Gore will be the next President of the United States. That's what I believe, because in the end, people will have to decide whether we want to continue the economic prosperity and expand it or adopt a whole different economic theory that has already been tried once and didn't work as well as ours. They'll have to decide whether

they want to continue to build on the social progress of the last 8 years. Compared to 8 years ago, the crime rate is down; the welfare rolls are cut in half; the environment is cleaner. For the first time in a dozen years, fewer people are uninsured; the schools are getting better, we have a record number of people going on to college. You have to decide if you want to build on that or take down a lot of those policies.

And finally, the thing that makes those of us who are Democrats, Democrats: Do we want to go forward together as one America? Do we really believe that everybody counts, everybody should have a chance, we all do better when we help each other? We ought to have hate crimes legislation because hate crimes are bad for a society like ours, that has to accept everybody that obeys the law and plays by the rules. We ought to have equal pay enforcement because it's bad in a society like ours, where women and men both have to work, if the women don't get paid for what they do. We ought to grow together.

So I believe that the next 2 weeks will be a fertile period for him to go back to Utah and put his message out there, because I think the American people will begin to focus on the big things. What has happened big in America in the last 8 years? He was a part of it. He was there. We changed the economic policy, the environmental policy, the education policy, the health care policy, the crime policy, and the welfare policy of the country. And compared to 8 years ago, everything is better.

The question now is not whether we will change but how. This country is changing so fast, the young women in this audience today that haven't had their children yet, within a decade they'll be bringing home babies from the hospital with a little gene card that tells them all the good things and all the bad things and what to do about the bad things. And within a decade, maybe—certainly not much longer—women will have little babies that will have a life expectancy of 90 years. The world is going to change dramatically. And it's very, very important that we keep changing but in the right direction.

I was looking at Don making his talk, and I was trying to remember what I might have been like 27 years ago—half my lifetime ago, when I was your age. I'm quite sure I wasn't nearly as well-dressed. *[Laughter]* Of course, we

were all sort of cosmetically challenged in the early seventies, if you've ever—[laughter]—most men wore clothes that looked like they came off the seat covers of old 1950's automobiles.

I doubt if I made as much sense as you did, but I'm quite sure I was as optimistic and idealistic as you are. And what I want to say to all of you today is that I think that you'll always be proud you gave this young man a hand up when he needed it. And I hope you'll look forward for other opportunities to do the same for other young people. This is a great country, but we have to keep bringing young people into the system. We have to empower them. We have to give them a chance to serve. And we've got to keep changing in the right direction.

I think he's got a great career ahead of him. I think he's done a brave thing. And I won't be terribly surprised if lightning strikes and he wins, because he's always had a clear idea of what he was doing and he's always had a message that he could take out there that people who share his roots could hear. And I just want you to know I'm really proud of you. And I'm really grateful to all of you for helping him.

And you remember what I told you about this election. We've got 2 weeks. You get out there and tell people, whether it's the race for the House in Utah or the race for the Senate in New York or the race for the White House, there are three big questions: Do you want to keep this prosperity going and extend it to people who haven't felt it, or abandon it for a theory that won't work, and it won't pay down the debt? Do you want to keep building on the social progress of the last 8 years, or reverse policies that are proving to work? And do you think we ought to go forward together as one America? Those are the three great questions we have to ask and answer. If people understand that those are the questions, I know what the answers will be, and we'll all be celebrating 2 weeks from tonight.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:42 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Ronald I. and Beth Dozoretz; and Jim Matheson, candidate for Utah's Second Congressional District, and his mother, Norma. Donald Dunn was a candidate for Utah's Third Congressional District.

Remarks on the Budget and Legislative Agenda and an Exchange With Reporters

October 25, 2000

The President. Good morning. I want to say just a few words about the budget and the work we still have ahead of us if we want all our children to have a first-class education.

Way back in February, I sent to Congress a budget that keeps America on the path of fiscal discipline. It would strengthen Social Security and Medicare, pay down the debt by 2012, and make key investments in education, health care, the environment, and national security. It would also modernize Medicare with a voluntary prescription drug benefit available and affordable to all seniors who need it.

That was in February. Now we've come to the end of October, nearly a month past the end of the fiscal year, and we still have not seen from Congress a completed budget. Four times they've asked me for an extension of time

to finish the work. Today the latest extension runs out, and Congress is about to ask for another. But from this point forward, as I've said, I will agree only to a day-by-day extension, until Congress finishes the job.

From this point forward, Congress should work every day and every night to put progress over partisanship, to make the investments in education our schools need and our children deserve. Congress should pass a budget that reduces class size in the early grades; that contains tax credits to repair old, crumbling schools and build new, modern ones; a budget that invests in after-school programs that mean more learning, lower crime, and fewer drugs. It should ensure the hiring of new, highly trained teachers, and help States turn around failing schools or shut them down and open them under new