

not just when the President comes to town but every day between now and November. I want you to work for Al Gore and the other Democrats. I want you to remind the people of California what it was like in 1992 and what it's like today. And I want you to say, "Look, we need somebody who will keep the prosperity going, who will spread it to more families and people who have been left behind, and who understands the future."

And remember, it's a big election; there are real differences and only the Democrats want you to know what they are.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. at the El Cortez Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Ms. Davis' husband, Steve; and George (Jorge) Barraza and Craig Barkacs, candidates for California's 51st and 52d Congressional Districts, respectively. Ms. Davis is a candidate for California's 49th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in San Diego

June 22, 2000

Let me say, first of all, Mike, you gave a wonderful talk, and you gave a wonderful toast. And I like it either way. *[Laughter]* And I want to thank you and Carol and all of you for the work you did to make this a success tonight. I'd like to thank California's first lady, Sharon Davis, for being here. I'd like to thank Representative Bob Filner and his wife, Jane, who are here. Thank you for being here. Former Representative and chief of staff to the Governor, Lynn Schenk, thank you for being here.

And I also would like to thank the leaders of the Barona and Viejas tribes for their support and for the example they're setting. We had a great talk around the table tonight about the differences among the tribes in terms of economic circumstances and potential in Indian country throughout America. And it's one of the great honors of my Presidency has been the opportunity I've had to spend more time with more people from the Native American tribes and the Tribal government than any President probably in history. I invited all the Tribal leaders to meet me at the White House, for the first time

since James Monroe was President in the 1820's, that happened. It was quite wonderful. So it's been a great thing.

I would like to thank Bertrand, the owner of Mr. A's Restaurant, for a wonderful dinner tonight. Was this great, or what? *[Applause]* When I used to do these back home and we didn't eat like this—*[laughter]*—I feel pretty great about it.

I'd like to thank Mayor Rendell, who I did—he was looking forward to a fairly peaceful retirement of a year or so, and then he was going to ascend to the Governorship of Pennsylvania, which I still hope he will do. So I told him I had this little part-time job I was interested in him doing. And he has part-timed himself all across America, exhausting himself, trying to make sure that we preserve the progress in this country and preserve the prosperity. And I'm very, very grateful to him. He's been a great leader for our party. And all these young people that work on these events, I'm grateful to them.

I'll tell you a story. I don't know about a joke, but I'll tell you a story. You gave the Irish blessing so—my people are from a place called Fermanagh. They were Irish Protestants living on the border. Fermanagh is a little village literally on the border of Northern Ireland and Ireland, in the west. And my mother was a Cassidy. So we found the Protestant Cassidys. We traced them all the way back to a farmhouse built in the 1750's. And I went to Ireland in '95; they actually gave me a watercolor of the farmhouse, which is the only—the oldest known residence of relatives of mine—at least, any relative that's willing to admit it still. *[Laughter]*

And you know I've had this remarkable love affair with Ireland, because I got the United States involved in the peace process, and it's worked out in a remarkable way. I went to Dublin in '95; we had 100,000 people in the street; it was really one of the great days of my life. I turned on the Christmas lights in Belfast, and there were 50,000 people there. It's just been unbelievable.

What happens, especially when you're not running anymore, you tend to get a little free with what you say. *[Laughter]* Sometimes you actually commit the sin of saying exactly what you think. *[Laughter]* I can say this because we've had a happy ending now.

[*Laughter*] You may remember, for a while we got the institutions of self-government up to Northern Ireland, and everybody is working along together, and then all of a sudden it all gets taken down because they can't agree on the decommissioning issue. And it was maddening. And all these people had been working for years, many of them a lot longer than I had though—that after we had actually ended the Irish civil war and we had got it all done, it was all going to pieces again.

And I said—not thinking about stereotyping the Irish, of which I am one—I said, this reminds me—I said these two sides in Northern Ireland remind me of two guys that are kind of drunk, and they decide they're going to quit drinking. And they walk out of the bar together, arm in arm, and right as they get to the swinging door they say, no, and they turn around and go back.

So I was blasted all over Ireland. "Clinton let us down. He's stereotyping the Irish." And I was really worried about it until about 3 days later I got in the mail a copy of a letter to the editor from the Irish Times saying, "I see all this criticism of President Clinton for comparing us, and all those things he said." And he said, "It is terrible what he said; I've been a drunk all my adult life, and I resent being compared to those people." [*Laughter*] So sometimes when you're uptight, you've just got to tell a joke and laugh it off and go on.

But anyway, I'm delighted to be here and I'm delighted that—I sort of thought there would come a time this year when I'd show up at one of these dinners and no one would be there. [*Laughter*] And so I'm very grateful to you. I'm grateful to the people of California, and I'm very grateful to the people of San Diego. I've had a special relationship with this community from the beginning. I love it here. My family and I have had a wonderful set of experiences here. We had a wonderful vacation here one year around—a springtime vacation. And I'm particularly glad that I came here tonight and somebody showed up. [*Laughter*]

I got a call last week from a very distinguished citizen of the world who said, "Well, Mr. President, for a lame duck, you're still quacking rather loudly." [*Laughter*] So that's what I'm trying to do.

I would like to just say a couple of things to follow up on what Mayor Rendell said. I thank you for coming here, and we'll do our best to invest the funds you have given us wisely. But we need your help in telling people why you feel this way. People ask me all the time, they come up to me and they say, "Who do you think is going to get elected?" And I always say, "I think the Vice President is going to win." I do. I said it a year and a half ago when he was 18 points behind in the polls.

Then they kind of say, "Do you think Hillary is going to win?" I say, "Of course"—I mean, what do you expect me to say? But I actually believe it. But let me say what I think the real issue is in all these Senate and the House and the President's race. And I do think we're going to win. But the issue is, what do the voters think the election is about? This is one of those deals—we've got a lot of trial lawyers in this room. Sometimes the answers people give depends upon the way the question is asked, or what you think the real question is. And this election—really, the outcome of this election is going to be determined, by and large, by what people think this election is about.

And I think if we can demonstrate, number one, that we've been working here for 8 years with a core set of ideas designed to give opportunity to every responsible citizen and to create a community in which any American can be a part; and that we've tried to be a force for peace and freedom and prosperity and decency around the world; and that what we need to do is to build on that, not undo it—if we can make that point, then the second point we need to make is that we have to decide, we need to make a conscious decision about what to do with our prosperity. I mean, sometimes I feel like a broken record, but I will say this over and over and over again. Anybody who is over 30 years old can remember at least one time in his or her life when you have made a whopping mistake, not because you were faced with adverse circumstances but because things were rocking along so well you thought there was no penalty to the failure to concentrate. Anybody who is over 30 years old can remember at least one time in your

personal life or in your work life when a mistake has been made because it seemed that there were no consequences to the failure to concentrate because everything was rolling along.

And if you really listen to the two sides, the other side really seems to be saying, "Look, we need to just take this thing while it's coming because nobody can mess up this economy if they try." And I don't believe that. I think we need to make a conscious decision as a people that we have an obligation, a solemn obligation to our children's generation, to use this magic moment to deal with the big issues out there, the big challenges, the big opportunities of this century.

Now, if you get that far, then you have to say, what are those challenges; what do you think they ought to do; and are there any real differences between the parties? And I have to tell you that I think it's obvious what we ought to be doing. We need to figure out how to keep this prosperity going and spread its benefits to people and places who have been left behind.

We need to figure out how to make people who have jobs better able to balance their responsibilities at work and their responsibilities at home—something America still has not done enough on. Child care, preschool, after-school, health care for the families that are working out there that don't have it yet. All of those things.

We need to figure out how to continue to grow the economy and do even better at preserving and improving the environment, and especially dealing with the problem of climate change. We've proved that we can get the crime rate down. We ought to commit ourselves to making this the safest big country in the world. We can do that in 5 years if we made up our mind to do it. We ought to commit ourselves to paying America's debt off. We're not running deficits anymore; we're running surpluses. I think it ought to be a national policy goal to pay off the public debt. That's what I believe.

Now, I have to tell you, that's a very controversial position among Democrats, because we also want to spend more money to educate people, to provide health care to poor people. But here's why I'm for that. If we keep paying the debt down, we'll keep

interest rates down. It'll be easier for people to borrow money. It will be easier to invest. There will be more jobs. There will be higher incomes. And we'll keep the expansion going along. And the best social program any government can provide is a good private sector jobs. You've got to have a growing economy first.

We wouldn't be here having this conversation. This election wouldn't even be about all this stuff. We're sitting here arguing about how to spend the surplus, and is it \$1- or \$2-trillion over the next 10 years?

If I had told you in '92, if I had to come to California and I said, "I want you to vote for me, and I'll get rid of this deficit"—we'd been running a deficit for 30 years, and we quadrupled the national debt in the last 12 years—"now vote for me, and I'll get rid of it. And before I'm gone we'll have three different surpluses, and we'll know that we can pay off our debt in the first decade of the 21st century." Do you know what you would have said? You would have said, "He seems like such a nice man, but he's slightly daft, and we better send him home." [Laughter]

But it happened. People ask me all the time, what magical new idea did we bring to Washington in the economic area? And I always say, in one word, arithmetic. That is, we stopped playing games with the numbers. We stopped promising people something we couldn't deliver. We said if we're going to spend the money, we've got to have the money.

And we made hard choices. I got rid of hundreds of programs so that we could double our investment in education while we were cutting the deficit. And those things had to be done.

Now, what's all this got to do with where we are? So here we are now. If you believe these big challenges ought to be faced, then you have to say, well, are there consequences to the decision of who gets to be President? Are there consequences to the decision who gets elected to the Senate, who gets elected to the Congress? And I would argue that there are big differences between these candidates, and if you'll listen very closely to the debate, the Democrats are a lot more interested in you knowing what the differences are than the Republicans are. Because they

know if you really understand the differences, two-thirds of the people agree with us.

For example, should we say, okay, now we have the surplus at \$2 trillion over 10 years, estimated, projected, over the next 10 years. So their policy is to spend over half of it on a tax cut, \$1.3 trillion, and then to partially privatize Social Security, which—and guarantee the benefits of everybody still in the system, which will cost about another \$800 billion. So there's \$2 billion there. And then to pay for "star wars" and school vouchers and some other promises, so that we'll be back into deficits sooner or later in the next decade if we get the whole \$2 trillion.

Our policy, as reflected in the Vice President's position, is we may not get the \$2 trillion. That great line from "Jerry McGuire"—"Show me the money!" The problem with all this tax cut stuff, it sounds great and most of you would be better off in the short run with their policy. But I emphasize, in the short run, because if we have a big tax cut with 4 percent unemployment, it will be perceived as inflationary; interest rates will go up more than they've already gone up; it will slow the economy; it will cut the profitability of your investments; and therefore, the projected surplus will not materialize, and we'll be right back in the deficit suit.

So we're put in a position of telling you things you may not want to hear, like the Vice President said the other day, why don't we just start by saying we're going to save 20 percent of this projected surplus, because \$400 billion of this projected surplus are taxes you're paying for Medicare. So let's just wall it off, use it to pay down the debt until we need it, and then Medicare will last a lot longer.

Why don't we have a tax cut, but less than—and a sizable one, but still less than half the one they propose, so we can focus on wealth creation for people that can't do it otherwise, help them establish their own savings account, child care, sending kids to college, long-term care when you've got an elderly or disabled relative who is sick, and then save some money to invest in our future—in education, in science and technology, in new environmental technologies,

in health care, and the things that will change our future?

Now, there's a huge difference. What do you propose to do with the surplus? What do you propose to do with this moment of prosperity? It will affect economic policy; it will affect social policy. What are the other differences?

Well, we think we ought to bend over backwards and let everybody participate. We think the people that served this food tonight, if they're working hard and obeying the law, have just as much right as we do to benefit from this new economy. That's what we think. And so we think we ought to raise the minimum wage; they don't. We think we also ought to have a tax cut for working people that have modest wages with children at home. We think that we ought to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, and they don't. We think we ought to have a Medicare-based, broad-based prescription program for seniors so that people can get medicine that can't afford it today, and they don't.

If we were creating Medicare today, we'd never create Medicare without a drug program today. It was a doctor-and-hospital program in 1965 because that's what medicine was. Now anybody that lives to be 65 years old has got a life expectancy of 82. And if they take care of themselves and they have access to good health care, they could live longer.

In a few days, we'll have an announcement that the human genome project is essentially completed, its basic mapping. You will then see in the next couple of years this breathtaking explosion of discoveries about the pattern and genes that make you more likely to get certain kinds of cancer or Parkinson's or Alzheimer's, or become overweight, or have a heart attack, or whatever. You'll see all this stuff. And you will begin to see kind of individualized plans develop for little babies when the mothers bring them home from the hospital that will change the whole landscape of health care. And it wouldn't surprise me a bit to see children being born within the next 10 years in our country and other developed countries that are being born with a life expectancy of 90 years. That is going to change everything.

So if you're going to live that long, it seems to me that the society's obligation is for people not only to live as long but to live as well as possible. One thing the Congress did on the bipartisan fashion—and I applaud everybody who did, including the Republicans, and take the earnings limit off Social Security. We need to do that. You can't have—if a huge percentage of your population is over 65 and a bunch of them are healthy as can be and they want to work, you don't want to have an economic incentive for them not to work when you're going to have a ratio of people on Social Security to not—of only two to one.

So we have to think of all these things. Now, why am I for Al Gore for President? Not just on all these issues. I could go through—let me just talk about crime a minute. I want to talk about crime. I want to talk about welfare. We got a bipartisan welfare reform bill through, but I had to veto two bills. Why? Because I agreed with the Republicans that people who were able-bodied on welfare who could work should work, but what I did not agree with is that we should abandon the national guarantee of health care and nutrition to their children.

So we finally got a bill. And I said, we've got work requirements in here. This is not going to be a disincentive. But we've got to take care of these children. So I vetoed two bills, and we finally got one we agreed on. I signed it, and they were saying, "Well, maybe it was too weak." All I know is, since I became President, we've got the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, and they're less than half the size they were in '93.

On the crime bill, the first time I ever did an event with Ed Rendell when he was mayor was on an anti-drug, anti-crime, anti-gang event. Ed and I were so dumb, we didn't know crime was a Republican issue; we thought it was an American issue. *[Laughter]* All this idea that it's a Republican issue is like that's what's the matter with Washington; it's all about words and stuff instead of what are you really producing.

So we had a crime program: put more cops in the streets, do more things to keep kids off the street and out of trouble, and take steps to get guns out of the hands of criminals and kids. It wasn't rocket science. Yes, the

improving economy helped the crime rate. Yes, the aging population in some places helped the crime rate. Yes, the sort of waning of the crack epidemic helped the crime rate. But put more police on the streets, giving the kids something positive to do, and doing more to take guns out of the hands of criminals and children also had something to do with it.

Now, I realize that it was a political risk. We lost a dozen Members of our caucus in the '94 election because they had the guts to vote for the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban, because the NRA convinced people we were going to come and take their guns away. A dozen gave up their careers so that your kids could be safer. And these people are still talking about—now they say if Governor Bush wins, they'll have an office in the White House. And figuratively, they will, because they've made their commitments, and they'll have to honor them.

But look here, not a single hunter has missed a day in the deer woods because of the Brady bill or the assault weapons ban. *[Laughter]* And when we banned those cop-killer bullets, they still haven't found the first deer wearing a Kevlar vest. *[Laughter]* I mean, there are no problems here. What is the deal here? I mean, what is this about? I mean, I can say it. One of the reasons that they dislike me so intensely is that I grew up in one of the all-time hunting cultures of the world.

But this is crazy. You can't have a society where you take no sensible steps to keep criminals and little children from having access to guns. So the Brady bill has kept a half million felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting guns. We've got a 35-year low on gun crime.

So what do we want to do? Well, we want to close the gun show loophole. That means if somebody goes to a gun show, we think we ought to do a background check. We want child trigger locks on the guns. We want not to import large capacity ammunition clips which can be used by people in America to get around the assault weapons ban.

Now, there is still not anybody going to miss a day in the deer woods. All this rhetoric about gun control is crazy. You know, in America, we have a constitutional right to

travel, too. The Supreme Court says there is a constitutional right to travel. But if you leave here and you get in your car and you go home, you'll have seatbelts; you'll have a speed limit. If you've got a little baby, you'd have a child restraint law. And you don't ever hear anybody griping about car control, do you? Car control, it's a threat to the constitutional rights of travel. *[Laughter]* Car control is if I come get your car and put it in my garage. *[Laughter]* Otherwise, it's highway safety.

So there is a big difference between our two parties in this. And I think it's a huge issue. I'm glad we've got a lower crime rate, but this country is nowhere near as safe as it needs to be. And I don't think we ought to quit until we're the safest big country in the world. Just like I don't think we ought to quit paying down the debt until we're out of debt. And these are big ideas. You get the drift here. And we're different on these issues.

So the last thing I want to say is, I hope this election will be an honest, open debate where we posit the fact that the candidates for President and Senate and Congress are basically honorable people who intend to keep their commitments and talk about their differences and have an honest debate. I think if we do that, I think Al Gore will be elected President. I think that all these great candidates we've got in California, we've got a chance to pick up several House seats here. I think we'll win all of the ones we've got a chance to win because they're good candidates and because the voters will agree with us, because we've got a record that proves that in the areas where we're different we've gotten results, and because we've got new ideas.

And I just want to say one word about the Vice President. I think I probably know him better than anybody outside his family now. There are three reasons that I'd be for him if he weren't my Vice President, and I didn't feel obligated in a profound and wonderful sense. One is, I agree with the economic policy he's articulated. I don't think we ought to risk giving away the whole projected surplus on tax cuts and long-term spending commitments. I think it's a risky strategy, and it's not worth it, and you wouldn't run your

family business that way, and you wouldn't run your business that way. And we shouldn't run our Government that way. We worked a long time to turn this thing around, and we don't want to just squander it again.

Number two, I think he'll work harder to extend the benefits of this prosperity to people in places that aren't part of it now, and to help average families balance work and child rearing, open the doors of college to everybody.

Number three, I think he understands the future. This is a big deal. Al Gore was talking about global warming before most people even knew the two words went together. I'm talking years and years and years ago he was talking about it. Now, even the major oil companies admit that it's real. The first time we ever had lunch together he showed me this chart he's got about greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere and how much they've gone up. And in the 8 years we've been here in the White House, 7 of them were 7 of the 10 hottest years recorded since 1400.

Al Gore was talking about the Internet before other people in Congress. He's been falsely accused of claiming he created it. That's not true. That's like another one of those bum raps. Once somebody says something in the press, they just keep on playing it. It doesn't matter if it's not true anymore; it sort of acquires it.

What he said was that he introduced legislation which helped to create it, and it did create it as a phenomenon that went beyond a small private government research project. Do you know how many sites there were on the World Wide Web when I became President? Fifty. How many are there now, everyone? Fifty million? Fifty, and now 50 million. He understood that.

He understands that there is all these fabulous possibilities to close the digital divide and to do things that we haven't even imagined, but we also are going to have to work hard to protect our old-fashioned values. For example, if all of our health records and all of our financial records are on somebody's computer somewhere, I think that you ought to have some privacy protection. And there are some things I don't think other people ought to be able to get unless you say okay.

And somebody that understands all the competing the considerations, it would be a good thing to have a President that understood that.

So I think his economic policy is right. I think he'll do more to try to help everybody benefit from the things that are going on. And I think he really understands the future. And I think that's what you want.

So what I'd like to ask you to do is to go out and tell people who want to know why you came here tonight—not to hear me tell Irish jokes—that, well, California is a better place than it was 8 years ago. They had some ideas, and they turned out to be pretty good, that you agree with Gore's economic policy and you think we ought to spread the benefits to more people and build one American community. And you want somebody who understands the future and can lead us there.

And on the critical issues, there really are differences between the parties, and it's important that they be clarified and uplifted. But if the people believe that this election is about whether we can build the future of our dreams for our children, we'll be just fine.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:37 p.m. in Dining Room B at Mr. A's Restaurant. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Mike and Carol Thorsness; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Democratic National Committee; Bertrand Hug, owner, Mr. A's Restaurant; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

**Remarks to the United States
Olympic Training Center
Community in Chula Vista,
California**

June 23, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you, Deena, for the wonderful introduction and for the way you represent our country—and for the little local reference to Arkansas, I liked that. [Laughter]

Thank you, Bill Hybl, for the work you do with the Olympic Committee. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Pat Milkovich for the wonderful tour of the train-

ing center today. We had a great time, and I thank you so much.

I want to thank Representative Bob Filner, the Congressman from this district for being with me today and for his support. Someone just thanked him on the way for being against having all that cargo noise coming over here and interrupting your training center. So, I figure he'll take a lot of heat for that position. So, somebody who likes it might as well clap. [Laughter]

I want to thank the Venita Vista High School Marching Band for playing; let's give them a hand, they're great. [Applause] Some of their members have been selected to perform at the opening ceremonies in Sydney, and I know they'll have a good time. I'd like to thank Mayor Morton from Chula Vista and the Chula Vista council members who are here and the county officials who are here. And Representative Susan Davis, the candidate for Congress. Thank you for coming. I'm glad to see all of you here.

Most of all, I'd like to thank the athletes and the coaches and the trainers that gave me a tour around this magnificent facility today. I had a great time. And I realize that most of these things I can't do anymore—[laughter]—but I really had a great time.

Deena talked about perseverance and hard work, but I want to tell you a little something about her. She was too humble to mention her own experience with cross country championships in Portugal this year. About 100 yards into the race her throat closed up, and she couldn't breathe. After 5 kilometers, she blacked out and fell. It turned out a bee had flown into her mouth and stung her in the throat.

But she got up and kept going, and thanks to her, the women's team still left Portugal with a medal. She gave new meaning to the term "making a beeline." Give her a hand, she was great. [Applause]

One of the real highlights of our White House years for Hillary, Chelsea, and me has been the chance to be a part of the Olympic experience, cheering on our teams from Lillehammer to Atlanta to Nagano and now to Sydney, where at least I know my daughter is going. My wife is in a competition of her own, and I am informed that my services may