

I just—let me just close with this story. I had an amazing day a couple days ago in Flint, Michigan. I went to one of the community computer centers that we set up. And this one—we're trying to set up a thousand around America so that people who aren't connected in their own homes or in their own businesses can come in, get training, and turn their lives around.

The one in Flint is especially focused on the needs of disabled Americans, and oh, it was quite a kick. I got to see people who were blind work in braille and then put it into the computer and have the computer speak back to them. I got to see people who were deaf work with a computer, and it spoke to those who could hear and wrote to those who couldn't. And I got to see an amazing laser technology where people who had no movement in their bodies and could only use their eyes, could use their eyes on a computer screen to turn the lights on and off in their house, to turn the music on and off on their tape deck, to write messages to their relatives.

And I actually got to use this, and I realize this is about way more than money. I've got a friend with Lou Gehrig's disease, with whom I used to work 20 years ago. He lives in North Carolina. We used to work on economic development in the South. He has no movement anywhere, except in his eyes. And in the next month or two, his latest book will be published, that he wrote with his eyes.

Now, he counts, too. He deserves a chance. We're a better country because he can live and communicate and because he has been empowered. That's what we stand for. So I want you to help Mike, because most of you know him, like him, trust him; he's your friend. But you have to understand, most people who vote on election day never come to one of these events. Most people who vote on election day, no matter how many hands he shakes, have not met the candidate.

And you, every one of you, will see a lot of people between now and the election, and you have got to talk to them and tell them this is the chance of a lifetime for America. And we can meet these really big challenges, and they ought to be for Mike Honda, and

they ought to be for Al Gore and Joe Lieberman, because we believe that we all do better when we help each other.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:11 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to barbecue hosts Jessie and Surinder Singh; Paul Pelosi, husband of Representative Nancy Pelosi; and State Senator Liz Figueroa. State Assemblymember Mike Honda is a candidate for California's 15th Congressional District. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of Carl Rowan

September 23, 2000

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of Carl Rowan, one of America's most prolific columnists and social commentators.

Carl Rowan called his autobiography "Breaking Barriers," and that was exactly what he did. He was, without a doubt, one of our Nation's most eloquent voices for human rights and racial justice. Carl's passion for progress led him from a struggling coal mining town to the U.S. Navy, where he served as one of its first African-American commissioned officers. It led him from the newsroom to the corridors of power and back again, to the pages of our Nation's newspapers.

Carl Rowan served two Presidents and represented the United States abroad. But he saw himself first and foremost as a journalist. His gentle, civil tone only heightened the power of his commentary, and he felt a special obligation not only to inform his readers but to enrich them with new ways of thinking.

Hillary and I will miss Carl Rowan and the special perspective that he shared with his Nation. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Vivien, and their three children.

**Remarks at a Democratic
Congressional Campaign Committee
Dinner in Brentwood, California**

September 23, 2000

The President. Thank you.

Audience member. Four more years!
[Laughter]

The President. That's one song we won't sing tonight. [Laughter] Wow. Well, first, let me thank Michael and Jena and everyone who brought us all together for a perfectly wonderful evening. I think you've actually had a good time. I hope you have. I have.

And my friend David Foster, thank you for putting together that show. It was wonderful. I love Richard Marx's songs. I'm glad I got to hear Kayla. Nita was stunning. Jessica took my breath away. Those of you who love opera know there's no 19-year-old in the world who has an opera voice like that, anywhere. She's amazing.

I love the band. I like the sax player over here. [Laughter] I don't know that I like that Christian Slater can also sing and that Rob Lowe plays saxophone better than me. I don't think I like that. [Laughter] But we all had a lot of laughs tonight. And I'm grateful for what has been said and for the songs that have been sung.

But I'm especially—I'm just grateful to be here on behalf of my friend Dick Gephardt. He and Jane have been friends of Hillary's and mine a long time—and Charlie Rangel, Bob Matsui, Henry Waxman. Brad Sherman is here. I think Javier Becerra is here. Patrick Kennedy, thank you for doing such a good job. I know we've got Jane Harman, Mike Honda, Adam Schiff, Janice Nelson, and Gerrie Schipske here, at least those candidates, maybe some more.

I want to just talk to you—I won't take long tonight. But I want to ask you to do something besides give your money. So you have to listen a little bit.

You might ask yourself why, in the last year of my Presidency, when things are going so well, I would do what is now 138 events. And you might say, "Well, maybe he did a few for Hillary. He had to do that, but why did he do the others?" [Laughter]

And I told somebody the other day, this is a strange time in my life. It's the first time

in 26 years I haven't been on the ballot. My party has a new leader. My family has a new candidate. I'm kind of trading in the title of Commander in Chief for Cheerleader in Chief. [Laughter] But I like it. I like it because the whole essence of freedom and democracy is that nobody is indispensable, but the principles and the ideals and the energy and the vision of the vast masses of people, that is indispensable.

I'm doing this partly because we lost the majority because of what the Democrats were willing to do for you in '93 and '94, and the members of the other party wouldn't help them. When we adopted the economic plan and not a one of them would vote for it, they said we were raising taxes on people we weren't raising taxes on. They said we were going to break the economy and drive up unemployment and explode the deficit. And we did it in late '93. And in '94, when the voters were voting, they didn't yet know whether it would work or not.

We adopted a crime bill in '94, after we passed the Brady bill in '93 requiring handgun owners to do background checks. Then we adopted a crime bill to put 100,000 police on the street and banned assault weapons. And the NRA said we were going to interfere with the hunters. And we didn't adopt the crime bill until '94, and so when the people voted, it was—they didn't know whether they were telling the truth or not.

We tried to provide health care to all Americans. Like Harry Truman and Jimmy Carter and Richard Nixon before us, everybody who ever tried it, we got beat. We got further, actually, even than Harry Truman did, and we didn't lose quite as many seats as he did for exactly the same reason.

And I've had to listen to 8 years of misrepresentation now about what we proposed. But the people that wanted it were disappointed they didn't get it. And the people that thought it was a bad deal were inflamed. And all those things happened, and we lost the majority in the House of Representatives and the Senate in '94—because they did what was right for America.

And we've gone from a \$290 billion deficit to a \$250 billion surplus because they were willing to lay down their majority. And there were good people who gave up their careers