

9/8/94
Kathleen Brown Fundraiser

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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REMARKS BY THE FIRST LADY
AT KATHLEEN BROWN FUNDRAISER

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you so much. I am just thrilled to be here, and especially to be here supporting the next governor of California. That sounds so good.

When I was asked to come, I immediately said yes. I said yes for a lot of reasons. One is because I am absolutely convinced, and I think all of us saw it today, that Kathleen Brown has the energy, the commitment, the fire in her belly that it takes to run a tough campaign and win. And she does it with humor and grace. And I think that combination will prove irresistible to the voters of California. And I hope you will do everything you can between now and election day to reach out to your friends and family and neighbors and coworkers to talk about this woman -- not just as a woman, because that's not the reason you should be supporting her. I think it helps. It's really nice. But it's not the reason. It's because she does have a vision for the future of this state. She's committed to it. She can articulate it. She cares.

So what she asked you to do at the end of her remarks must be taken to heart. It is great that you are here. It is great that you have contributed. And all who are the patrons of this event, it is wonderful that you have helped put it together. But this is an election that's going to be won on the ground -- person by person by person. And every one of you can bring five, 10, 20 voters to Kathleen in the next two months. And that's one of the reasons I wanted to be here, because I know she can win. And I know that if you believe it, she will.

The other reason is because California needs a Governor in Sacramento who will be a partner for the kind of positive, progressive change that this country is facing and needs to be addressing. Your current governor has become a pen pal of the President. He writes him all the time.

My husband was a governor for a long time. He didn't have all the time that your governor does has to sit down and write letters to the President. He got up everyday trying to figure out what he was

going to do to improve schools and create jobs. But, my goodness, we have to put on a whole extra mail delivery to take your governor's letters, because every time there's a problem, he doesn't know what to do about it, he figures, all right, I'll write to the President.

Well, we'd rather have a governor in Sacramento, just speaking from the outside looking in, who'd get up everyday and say, you know, I don't have time to write another letter or even put it in the newspaper; I ought to be figuring out what I could do to help improve life in California. It would be an enormous help. It would cut down our mail. It would really give us some extra time to deal with the problems that California faces as well.

Because, you know, what we're trying to do in Washington needs the kind of support that a governor Kathleen Brown would bring to the governor's office in Sacramento. We need somebody who understands that politics is not rhetoric; it's not writing letters to the President and doing grandstand kinds of little shows on the side of the road, racing to try to embarrass the Vice President by cutting a ribbon on a highway opening. That sort of stuff I thought went out with high school elections.

We need a governor of California who gets up everyday with a plan that needs to be implemented. And I hope you will read this plan that Kathleen has put together. I just flipped through it and I turned to just a few of the points that are throughout this plan.

It's very impressive. It makes a lot of sense. It doesn't overpromise. It lays out what needs to be done. It clearly, and I think fairly, evaluates what has happened to California in the last 12 years.

Of course, there are external factors that have determined to some extent what has happened in America and what has happened in California. But leadership does make a difference. It matters. It matters what kind of image and impression and vision one has of where you are going together.

Imagine, if you will, for just a minute, that it's not 1994, but it's 1992, and I were here not on behalf of Kathleen, but on behalf of my husband. And I stood before you and I said to you, imagine, we have the chance to elect a president who within two years will cut federal spending by \$255 billion by introducing the first responsible budget and deficit reduction plan that the country has seen in many years. Imagine that he will begin to cut back the size of the federal government so that our scarce dollars can be better used to invest in people and opportunities for them.

Imagine I had said, in this Democratic president, he will cut

taxes for more than 15 million working Americans. And, yes, he will raise taxes on the wealthiest 1.5 percent to help bring the deficit down and to balance the budget. But that seems fair after what we've gone through in the 1980s. And imagine that I had said 90 percent of small businesses will be eligible for new kinds of tax breaks if they, too, are investing in the future of their businesses and their employees.

And suppose I had gone on to say, and if you elect my husband president, he will make it possible for more young people, from California to the Atlantic Ocean to go to college by cutting out the red tape and the middle men who stand in the way of too many young people and college loans, and he will create a national service program that we will inaugurate this coming Monday that will give young people some way to give service back to their communities for the first time, recreating a domestic peace corps so that our young people today who so desperately need to feel involved will have a chance to prove their patriotism and concern for their country.

And then suppose I had gone on and said, and not only that, we'll have a president who really believes in education, because Kathleen Brown is right, without investing in your schools, starting in kindergarten, going through college, you cannot have a work force that will be ready for the 21st century.

And if I had said to you two years ago, we will have the most sweeping education legislation passed through the Congress, being implemented within two years that will include lifelong learning opportunities, will for the first time give young people who don't go onto college the chance to have apprenticeships and other ways of being trained for highly skilled workers. You'd say to yourself, well, that sounds good; but this is unrealistic. Nobody can get all of that done.

And then suppose I'd gotten even more carried away, and I had said that not only will we have the most sweeping education legislation that we've had in more than a generation, that will truly open the doors, but also will set standards for the first time so that whether you're in Sacramento or San Diego or in Bangor, Maine, you'll know whether or not your schools and your children are performing. And then I'd say, you know, also will do some job retraining. We've had a lot of talk about the unemployment system in America. What we need is a reemployment system that keeps giving people the opportunities to go back to work and to stay employed.

And then suppose I had said, and not only that, after all the tough talk about crime, after six years of trying to pass a crime bill, we will finally have a president who wants to be both tough and smart about crime and will stand up to all of the various lobbies, most notably the National Rifle Association, and will not only beat them once, but twice and three times and four times. And that this

Democratic president in just two years will fulfill his campaign promises for 100,000 new police on the street, for three strikes and you're out for violent offenders; will do something that nobody has done before, and that is to pass in this Crime Bill the violence against women prevention act, which is a key element of stopping domestic violence and other violence against women.

But will also listen to the police. And I think this is a very important point. Guess who the police of California endorsed for governor? Did they endorse the tough talking, rhetorical, flame burning incumbent? Or did they endorse somebody who could look them straight in the eye and say, I have a plan. I know what it's like to be a woman. I know what it's like to worry about my children and my grandchildren. And I will not just use you as political props. I will walk day by day with you until we get what you need so that you can be the most effective police force. Guess who the police of California endorsed for governor? Kathleen Brown.

And then suppose I'd gone on and I'd said, and not only that, we're going to finally have a president who doesn't just talk about family values, but actually signs the Family and Medical Leave Act so that parents can be both workers and parents at the same time.

And we're going to have a Democratic president who, within the first year and a half of taking office, is going to take on two of the most difficult problems that we've confronted that have been pushed under the rug in previous years -- health care reform and welfare reform.

Now, after I'd said all this, and there's a whole lot more I could have said, and I can just imagine the looks on your faces two years ago. You know, this woman is up there ranting and raving about all these things that she says can get done if you just change presidents. Someone, I'm sure, would've turned to his or her neighbor and would have said, what is she smoking? And did she inhale? I mean, it would not have seemed realistic, right?

But that is what real leadership is all about. Everything I have just told you has occurred -- every single piece of legislation I have just referred to. And, you know, I didn't even get into a lot of other stuff because I -- you know, I came off of vacation. I can't remember everything

But even if you just take what I referred to and think about what it means to California, that you now have a president who cares about what happens to working people, who cares about the economy of California, who is not in the blame game. He doesn't have any pen pals, this president we've got in Washington. He takes responsibility. He gets up every day and says, what can I do to try to make things better.

And just since he's been in office, because of the budget bill that was passed, we have for the first time now a declining deficit for three years in a row. That hasn't happened since Harry Truman was President of the United States of America.

Do you know what that means? I'll tell you what it means for California. It means that by 1998 the national debt will be \$691.7 billion lower than it was projected to be before the President's economic plan was passed. That translates into \$10,800 of reduced federal debt for every family of four in California. That is real money that can be used productively in the private sector because it does not have to be used to fuel and feed the deficit that was created by Ronald Reagan and George Bush before this president got there and began to be responsible when it came to the federal budget.

It also means that more than 2,146,000 working families in California will receive and have received a tax cut because of the Earned Income Tax Credit. Any time you hear somebody -- and you hear it all the time -- talking about how the budget that the President passed raised taxes, say to yourself -- because there's a lot of us in this room -- that must be somebody in the top 1.5 percent of the income bracket -- and unfortunately many of the people in that bracket are not as generous and farsighted as many of you in this room who understand that if we do not have a fair tax system that rewards work, many of us can go on and become quite affluent and comfortable, but the democracy that is predicated in this country on people being able to believe in the American Dream, that they can get rewarded for work, will continue to be eroded. So part of what this President has done and what Kathleen Brown wants to do is to begin once again by rewarding people who work and play by the rules, making it a good investment for them to continue to work toward a future where they believe they and their children will be better off.

We also have tax cuts for 178,000 small businesses in California, nearly 5 million California workers protected by the Family and Medical Leave Act, and 1.65 million students and former students in California will benefit from student loan reforms. So when Kathleen Brown becomes governor and freezes tuition, the federal government will have a partner so that more students will be able to afford to go to the kind of colleges and community colleges that have always been the hallmark of excellence in education here in California.

There are so many ways a partnership between active, caring, committed leaders in our largest state and in our country can make a difference in the lives of real people who live here in this state. There's a lot at stake in this election.

Kathleen has proven through her work as treasurer that she knows how to manage money. She was able to, even during the tough economic

times of the late '80s and early '90s here, turn in record earnings on California's investments, sell bonds so that there could be some construction activity and investments in schools and other kinds of needs here in the state. She helped launch new programs to give loans to small businesses, to help first-time home buyers to assist businesses in complying with environmental regulations. She knows what the cutting edge issues are, and she's willing to take a stand on them and to stand up for them.

I told Kathleen when we visited a few weeks ago that I sometimes just yearn for a watchdog in American politics. You know, the kind of watchdog that would just bark like crazy every time somebody misrepresented or mischaracterized a position of somebody else's. Given today's climate, that dog would just be barking its head off, day in and day out. Because it is hard getting a message across when the opposition to change is so willing to way what every they thing will get votes.

I asked somebody before I came out here, I said, what is the incumbent governor running on? And the answer was crime and immigrants. I said, well, where was he during the Crime Bill? My goodness, he writes to us about everything. He never wrote us about the Crime Bill. He was missing in action. He wasn't for it. He wasn't against it. I mean, you know, you couldn't quite figure it out -- our biggest state. And then you had our two senators from California just every day on the floor, every day, weren't they great standing up day in and day out?

And then when I learned that the police had endorsed Kathleen, I figured, you know, I don't know how crime can be his issue. This is going to be real interesting to watch. If you all do your work, most people will watch it kind of skeptically and then we'll get the dog barking in the background.

So then I said, well, what about immigrants? Has this been a long-standing concern of the incumbent governor's? Is this something he worried about when he was mayor and senator? I said, give me a little background here. And they said, well, no, as a matter of fact, part of his primary job when he was in the Senate was to encourage as much illegal immigration as he could. He stood up on the floor of the Senate all the time encouraging people to come across that border so you could have lot of labor in the fields.

And nobody's against people getting work, but it struck me as a little bit strange that he's like this born-again immigrant basher. And, you know, I couldn't figure that out, either.

And, once again, sort of in the back of my mind, I heard this dog just barking and barking and barking. We need a watchdog, don't we? We need packs of watchdogs because people are insecure and anxious

and confused. We have a President who's addressing crime; we have a President who's addressing immigration -- something, again, that nobody much cared about when the Republicans were in the White House. I don't think your governor wrote to them very often.

So we are trying to address the problems that affect people. But all of us must understand that there is a great deal of insecurity and anxiety when the world around you is changing. And we also must be sympathetic to that, because it isn't as easy and as predictable as we think it used to be. We don't have that sense of certainty that we'll have the same job. We don't even know if our kids can walk safely to school. We don't know what is going on from day to day because of all the forces at work.

I am very concerned and sympathetic about that, and I know that Kathleen is. Part of the reason she's focusing on middle-class and working-income families is because she knows like I do that if the great majority of Americans or Californians don't feel secure and good about their futures, our country will not be what it should be. But there are others who want to exploit that anxiety; who deal in the coin of cynicism and negativism; who believe they can get away with saying anything because nobody will hold them accountable -- the press won't bark, the opposition won't bark. They'll just keep saying whatever they want to say because it sounds good and it scores points, and if they get people insecure and anxious enough, it may translate into votes.

So there's more at stake in this election than may even appear at first. Yes, you've got a candidate who can do a good job, who has a plan, has a track record. You have a candidate who would be the kind of partner that we need California to have so that together we can continue to address the problems, whether they're earthquakes or fires or defense conversion or environmental problems. We need a partner who gets up every day worrying about how to fix the problems of California, not how to get votes by looking as though he's fixing the problems.

But we also need a governor who does not play to people's fears. We don't need political leaders in America who want to turn the clock back to a time when we were divided; we looked at each other across chasms of race and ethnicity and region. We need a governor who wants to bring California together, because we can't solve our problems if we're all not pulling in the same direction.

So with Kathleen, I would just thank you for what you have done already. But I would also ask you to think about what can be done between now and the election. I told you about the things that have already happened to make a difference with the new President. Talk to your friends about what could happen with a new governor. But talk also about how this is a race between a positive view of the future and a negative one; between optimism and hope, and cynicism and fear; and how

no great country or great state was ever built on cynicism and fear and negativism.

People did not get up and leave where they were living to come to California because they were afraid. They came, as Kathleen said, because they believed that it was a land of hope and the future. That's what those of us who grew up elsewhere always believed. That's what my mother, who grew up in California, told me about California from the time I was a little girl; as she talked about what it was like to walk through orange groves on the way to school, to go to the ocean, to know that you could always go to the best higher education system in the entire world if you lived in California. That's what we want the children of California to believe as well now. And your best bet for making that happen is doing everything you can to elect Kathleen Brown the next governor of California.

Thank you all very much.

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