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**DISCOURSE STRATEGIES IN BILL CLINTON'S
SPEECHES**

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DEDICATION

To you:

- My dear parents, mainly my late father **DJETON** and my late mother **MAHOULAHOUÉ** for all your sacrifice, affection and endeavour for my education.

- Who fought, who are fighting and who will fight for peace in the world, and in Africa in particular,

I dedicate this work.

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The corpus of the study

INTRODUCTION

The various studies carried out in communication nowadays are the evidence that language in use offers a very complex field of investigation. To give a few examples of publications in communication we can mention: PALETS (1987) *Political Communication Research*, MUELLER (1973), *The Politics of Communication* and KONE et al (1995) *La Communication pour le Développement Durable en Afrique*. There is increasing awareness that the nature of communication can determine the success or the failure of a given enterprise involving social interactions. Communicating randomly in certain circumstances can be highly risky. This is all the truer as any time a text, be it oral or written, is produced, its interpretation goes beyond the propositional meaning of the words used. This issue of the complexity of language is the main concern of most discourse analysts who approach language by describing the regularities and the harmony in the patterns that occur in what speakers/writers and hearers/readers do when they communicate. Discourse analysts are also concerned with pragmatics since language in use involves contextual features for its full interpretation.

I am particularly interested in the field of linguistic enquiry as it has to do with both the process of message production and message interpretation as well as the process of social interactions which can, among others, be the subject matter of a political discourse analysis. We have chosen to study ***Discourse Strategies in President Bill Clinton's Speeches*** insofar as political communication has remained a domain of great interest since the dawn of time. The feeling is generally being shared that any decision having to do with the welfare of a country directly or indirectly involves politics.

By this attempt to use linguistic tools to analyse the speeches of President Bill Clinton, we aim at focusing on the communication strategies the 42nd US president used to get his message across.

By choosing to address the issue in the framework of a DEA thesis, we wish to limit our ambition to setting up the foundation for further studies which will lead to the writing of our doctoral dissertation.

To achieve these goals, we have organized this research work into three chapters. The first one presents the problem statement, the objectives, the hypothesis and the methodological approach of the study. The second chapter provides, in the first section, some clarifications on the concepts of speech, discourse and discourse analysis. This section has also given a brief account of the linguistics and stylistics relationship before focusing on some cases of practical application of linguistics to literary and discourse analysis. The second section of the chapter provides an overview of the theoretical framework of the study. Here, an emphasis has been laid on Systemic Functional Linguistics, the scale of political discourse analysis suggested by Gilles Gauthier, the use of vocatives and characterization. In chapter three, comes a general analysis and interpretation of the corpus which is in the appendix of the document.

CHAPTER One: TOPIC SPECIFICATION AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1-1 Topic Specification

Under this subtitle, we wish not only to identify the problem and research questions but also to include the hypothesis and the objectives of the study as well as the expected results before laying an emphasis on the methodological approach of the study.

1.1.1 Problem statement

Our former training at the English Department of the University of Abomey-Calavi made it possible for us to discover the vast domain of African American studies. Having majored in Applied Linguistics, we are convinced that a linguist can draw inspiration from many sciences. For, as stated by Professor CAPO Hounkpati : *“La Linguistique Est au Carrefour des Sciences”* (CAPO H., 2004)¹. That is the reason why, in the framework of my post-graduate study in African American studies, I have made the decision to engage in the exercise of analysing the speeches of an American political leader.

What is the interest of analysing the speeches of an American President? In fact, the United States of America is commonly mentioned as a reference democratic country. Freedom of speech which is one of the main characteristics of democratisation has created a large scope of analysis. It is clear that the access to power through free and fair elections obliges candidates to convince the maximum number of people before, during and after the elections. As Mueller

¹ Linguistics, the meeting point of many different sciences (my own translation).

(1973) put it: “*en démocratie, seule triomphe la force du meilleur argument*” (ZOMAHOUN D., 1999, p 5)².

As a result, one can assert that the USA offers an important quantity of discourse in the political domain which deserves to be analysed in social and linguistic perspectives. Why is it relevant to focus our study on the speeches of Bill Clinton, the 42nd President of the United States of America?

First, despite the issue of impeachment he went through, Clinton remained popular with the public throughout his two terms as president, ending his presidential career with 65% approval rating, which is the highest end-of-term approval rating of any president in the post Eisenhower era. Second, Bill Clinton is said to be a courageous and a talented communicator. Kathleen Hayden (2008) is of the same viewpoint when in an article entitled *State of the Union Memorable for what Clinton didn't Say*, she had this to say: “If ever there was a President up to the mission, it would be Bill Clinton. He is a gifted public speaker whose forte is effectively communicating an agenda. And he has a proven history of staring crisis in the face” (Article source: [http:// EzineArticles.com](http://EzineArticles.com), 22/09/08).

As a matter of fact, President Bill Clinton seems to have developed discourse strategies which helped him to remain popular. It would, therefore, be very interesting to study the speeches of this emblematic political personality that has put his mark on the political scene at national, regional and international levels.

² In democracy, only the best argument triumphs (my translation).

Many researchers and political experts have devoted their research works to the presidential activities of Bill Clinton under various angles. Researchers like Kathleen Hayden, Thomas Murell and Stuart Rothenberg have respectively worked on what Clinton didn't say in some of his State of the Union Addresses and Clinton's writing secrets. Charles F. et al (1992) focused attention on the life and career of Bill Clinton. As for Elizabeth Drew (1994), she was interested in the Clinton Administration. Despite this abundant literature, we have noticed at this stage of our researches that nearly no specific study has been devoted to the linguistic strategies President Bill Clinton used to remain popular. Through this study, we wish to contribute to filling this gap with a clear hypothesis.

1.1.2 Hypothesis

This research work is carried out with the assumption that Bill Clinton uses discourse strategies to get his message across. This assumption will be proved or disproved through our analysis on the basis of specific questions.

1.1.3 Research Questions

- What were the discourse strategies of President Bill Clinton during his administration?
- What is the set of themes one can draw from his speeches?
- Was there any consistency or any variation in his speeches?

1.1.4. General objective

This thesis aims to study the discourse strategies President Bill Clinton made use of in order to get his message across.

1.1.5. Specific objectives

This study is meant to:

- Help to better understand political thought;
- carry out a critical literature review;
- lay down the theories that underpin our analysis;
- constitute the corpus which will serve as the basis of the analysis;
- lay down the findings;
- carry out the interpretation of the findings

1.2 Methodological considerations

Every scientific research should be based on a method. And it is the nature of the study that determines the choice of a method and the instruments that are necessary for the collection and treatment of data. It is exactly what Paul N'da (2000) means when he states: « *Ce n'est pas la stratégie ou la technique qui détermine le problème de recherche, c'est plutôt la nature du problème qui impose la stratégie et détermine la technique ou l'instrument de collecte des données à utiliser* » (p 57)³.

Given the nature of the study, our approach will mainly be concerned with carrying out practical applications of linguistics in political discourse analysis. In other words, on the basis of existing theories, we will focus on the collection and the analysis the data. Practically, we will go through the following steps.

³ It is not the strategy or the technique which determines the research problem; it is the nature of the problem which imposes the strategy and determines the technique or the data collection instrument to be used (my translation).

1.2.1 The corpus

The corpus of the study is made up of three speeches delivered by President Bill Clinton. All the speeches have been selected on the basis of a well-thought out sampling. As a matter of fact, one important argument has determined the choice of the three speeches. We have decided to choose one speech at the beginning of his mandate, one toward the middle and one at the end of his mandate so as to see whether there are any variations or changes in his discourse. The first speech is entitled “One America in the 21st Century”. The second one is entitled “Digital Divide” and the third one was the last address of Bill Clinton to the Democratic Party National Convention. The corpus is in the appendix.

1. 2.2. Content analysis

In order to carry out this analysis, we will use various theories among which we can mention the scale of analysis suggested by Gilles GAUTHIER, characterization approach laid down during the DEA seminars by Dr Leonard KOUSSOUHON, the use of vocatives and the systemic functional analysis.

CHAPTER Two: CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2-1 Critical literature review

2-1-1 Discourse and speech relationship

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, speech can be defined as a formal talk given or delivered to an audience whereas discourse is defined as a long and serious treatment of a subject in a speech or writing. The latter can also be defined as a spoken or written language. Michel Foucault quoted by Mark Wollacott (2003) holds discourse to be the acceptable statements made by a certain type of discourse community. For him, a discourse community can be defined as people who share similar thoughts and ideas. As for speech community, it is a group of people who share a set of norms and expectations regarding the use of language. Speech communities can be members of a profession with a specialized jargon, distinct social groups like high school students or hip hop fans or even tight-knit groups like families and friends. In addition, online and other mediated communities, such as many internet forums, often constitute speech communities. Members of speech communities will often develop slang or jargon to serve the group's special purposes and priorities.

According to Mark Wollacott, definitions of speech community tend to involve varying degrees of emphasis on the following: shared community membership and shared linguistic communication. Some would argue that a speech community must be a 'real' community, i.e. a group of people living in the same location (such as a city or a neighborhood), while more recent thinking

proposes that all people are indeed part of several communities (through home location, occupation, gender, class, religious belonging, and more), and that they are thus also part of simultaneous speech communities.

Similarly, what shared linguistic communication entails is also a variable concept. Some would argue that a shared first language, even dialect, is necessary while for others, the ability to communicate and interact (even across language barriers) is sufficient. The underlying concern in both of these is that members of the same speech community should share linguistic norms. That is, they share understanding, values and attitudes about language varieties present in their community. A person can belong to more than one speech community. For example, a gay Jewish waiter would likely speak and be spoken to differently when interacting with gay peers, Jewish peers, or his co-workers. If he found himself in a situation with a variety of in-group and/or out-group peers, he would likely modify his speech to appeal to speakers of all the speech communities represented at that moment. A variation on this concept is code-switching, which is usually observed among speakers of two or more languages who switch between them based on the content of their conversation. While the exact definition of speech community is debated, there is a broad consensus that the concept is immensely useful, if not crucial, for the study of language variation and change.

In a word, the special use of language by certain professions for particular activities is known in linguistics as register; in some analyses, the group of speakers of a register is known as a discourse community, while the phrase

"speech community" is reserved for varieties of a language or dialect that speakers inherit by birth or adoption.

Mark Wollacott also elaborated on discourse analysis. For him, discourse analysis studies all forms of written and spoken word. It usually concerns speeches, articles, letters and books composed by people within the area being studied. According to him, political discourse analysis is the study of politically-related writings and speeches. These can be by a single individual or by multiple individuals, but relating to a single event or topic. The aim of the analysis is to better understand political thought. During political discourse analysis, the researcher first identifies the exact subject matter to be studied. This can take two forms: a general overview of a particular event or a person's discourse, or a specific question relating to an event or a person. For example, a specific question might concern the influence of peace and unity on Bill Clinton's political speeches or the influence of race on US President Barack Obama's political speeches.

. The researcher examines the texts and looks for common elements and themes, signs of development or regression and influences. He may also look for bias, discrepancies and other evidence of doubt on the part of the reader.

A common and perhaps dominant strand of political discourse analysis, according to Mark Wollacott is critical discourse analysis (CDA), which is based on social sciences and linguistics. CDA focuses on areas such as the use of political discourse to examine the phenomena of abuse, inequality and dominance in society

2-1-2 Linguistics and stylistics relationship

Stylistics is one of the most recognizable interfaces between literature and linguistics. As a literary discipline, it uses linguistics as a tool for studying the uses of language in any work of art. As stated by Ngara (1982) quoted by KOUTCHADE (2006): *“Although a work of art consists of various elements such as plot, theme, character and idea, without language, these elements would not be what they are; in other words they are realized and given form through the medium of language”* (p 5).

This conception of linguistics and stylistics relationships directs the attention of scholars to the various methods and theories of linguistics to literature study. As a result, a number of theoretical essays have been developed and stylistics is finally used in an extended sense to refer to language use in general. Yet, the involvement of scholars in stylistics raises some controversy due to the fact that some linguists think it is part of linguistics and that as such, the analysis of texts should be done by applying linguistic techniques to the study of literature whereas literary critics, on their part, think the contrary and claim that stylistics is part of literature. But Halliday (1985 a), in the introductory part of his book has shown the interdependence between the two disciplines. As he put it:

In any piece of discourse analysis, there are two possible levels of achievement to aim at. One is a contribution to the understanding of the text: the linguistic analysis enables to show how and why the text means what it does... The higher level of achievement is a contribution to the evaluation of the text: the linguistic analysis may enable one to say why the text is, or is not an effective text for its own purposes (p.xv).

This means that stylistics involves the analysis or description carried out through linguistics and the interpretation, which is closely related to literary criticism. But another question is to know, between description and interpretation, what should

be carried out first. To address the issue, Halliday (1970) in his article entitled “Descriptive Linguistic in Literary Style”, has argued that *“linguistics will never be the whole of literary analysis...”* (p70), which means, according to him, that the description of the language of a literary text cannot be separated from the interpretation. To illustrate this position, he has tried an interpretation in his work on W.B. Yeat’s poem entitled “Leda and the Swan”. After analysing the novel, he has mentioned that transitivity is the theme of the novel and made the point that transitivity patterns contribute to the artistic whole through the option which they express.

Hill (1987), disagrees with the separation of description from interpretation by showing that in a text, there are so many features to be described that the decision to describe certain ones constitutes a specific way of reading the text, whether the reasons for this decision are made explicit or not. On this basis, description may be considered merely an implicit form of interpretation. He came to the conclusion that *“within stylistics, linguistic description and literary interpretation cannot be separated”* (p8).

As for Spencer and Gregory (in Freeman 1970: 60), they show that the study of literature should not be restricted to the mere description of the linguistic features which are assumed to give the means of interpretation. From that point of view, we can infer that description precedes interpretation. This opinion is also shared by R. Carter and P. Simpson (1980) who claim that a distinguishing feature of work in literature is a provision of a basis for fuller understanding, appreciation and interpretation of any text. For them: *“The general impulse will be to draw eclectically on linguistic insights and to use them in the service of what is*

generally claimed to be fuller interpretation of language effects than is possible without the benefit of linguistics” (p7).

All the arguments developed above show that description and interpretation are both used to explain literary texts but they are different because the former is more objective whereas the latter is more prone to subjectivity. Moreover, it may be assumed that the collaboration between literary criticism and linguistics can be of a great advantage to any piece of writing. In that respect, some linguistic concepts have been suggested in literary analysis.

Spencer and Gregory in Freeman (1970) have suggested three levels of analysis of a text which are: *field of discourse* that is the subject matter and related linguistic feature, *mode of discourse* which accounts for linguistic differences between spoken and written texts and *tenor of discourse* which depends on the relationship between the speaker (writer) and the hearer (reader). These three dimensions are what Halliday (1978) refers to as register variables. They have also analysed two other concepts which are: context of situation and cultural contextualization

Context of situation relates notably to the situation in which a speech event takes place. As regards cultural contextualization which is also referred to as context of culture, it derives from the assumption that a text may be regarded as part of a complex social process. So, in order to carry out a relevant stylistic analysis of a text, it might be necessary to have recourse to the personal, social, linguistic and ideological circumstances in which it was written (Spencer et al. 1970: 92). Cultural contextualization is viewed by Fowler (1986: 12) in the following terms: “history, social structures, and ideology are major sources of

knowledge and hypothesis in the framework of linguistic criticism". According to him (Fowler), the linguistic relation produced by the text between authors and readers will in turn encode the determining socio-economic structures of particular contexts:

There is a dialectical interrelationship between language and social structure: the varieties of linguistic usage are both products of socio-economic forces and institutions reflexes of such factors as power relations, occupation roles, social stratifications, etc. and practices which are instrumental in forming and legitimating these same social forces and institutions (p 81).

These approaches advocated by Fowler have been developed by Halliday in terms of Systemic Functional Linguistics, which claims that the factors that create meanings in language are grouped into three levels: context, lexico-grammar and phonology. These approaches will be developed in the theoretical framework of our work.

2-1-3- Some cases of practical applications of linguistics in literary and discourse analysis

Using existing theories, many linguists have carried out some linguistic or stylistic analyses of pieces of writing such as poems, plays and novels.

Hasan, R. (1985) has used mood, transitivity patterns and tense selection to illustrate the themes of isolation and passivity in Murray's poem: "The widower in the country". In her analysis, she has shown that the doer role is played by the widower, which is only referred to as "I" and most processes are mental predicative, expressed by the simple future tense. The absence of verbal processes shows that there is no interaction. The use of declarative mood is an indication of soliloquy. For Hasan, the poem is about the isolation and the passivity of the widower.

In his essay entitled '*Descriptive linguistics in literary studies*', Halliday (1970) has carried out an analysis of the poem "*Leda and the Swan*" by W.B. Yeats (1928). First of all, he has based his analysis on the use of the definite article "the". He has found that this article has three functions (anaphoric, cataphoric and homophoric) and that the most important verbs in the poem do not function as verb, but rather as shifted to become other parts of speech such as nouns and adjectives. For Halliday, "*the verbal items have been considerably deverbilized*" (p 62). The instances of deverbilized items are: "loosening", "beating", "staggering".

Moreover, a certain number of researchers have analysed the communication of some political leaders by suggesting their own theories or using the existing ones.

In an article entitled "*Mots en Quête de Voix*", COTTERET and AYACHE (1981) lay an emphasis on the delivery speed of the candidates Mitterrand and Giscard during the presidential elections of 1981. After their observation and calculation, they came to the result that the delivery speed of Mitterrand is 138 words per minute whereas the one of Giscard is 150 words per minute. They pointed out that the delivery speed of both of them favors a good reception of the message. The advantage of the study has been to determine the optimal interval of a delivery speed. They made the point that comprehension of a message is imperfect if the speed is higher than 150 words per minute. But if the speed is lower than 138 words per minute the silence or blanks are boring for TV watchers who most often zap.

In 1976, COTTERET, EMERI, GERSTLE and MOREAU published a book entitled: "*Giscard d'Estaing, Mitterrand: 54.774 Mots pour Convaincre*" in which

they carried out a statistical discourse analysis. They pointed out the verbal performance of the two political actors in their monological and dialogical interventions. For the seven monological interventions and the three dialogical interventions, Giscard obtained a verbal performance of 19,250 words whereas Mitterrand scored 8,237 for the three dialogical interventions. The authors came to the conclusion that Giscard d'Estaing is used to debates on television and prefers monologues in front of a camera whereas Mitterrand is shy in front of a camera and prefers to discuss with his opponent.

Another researcher, MARTEL (1983) addressed the issues related to discourse and political debates in the United States of America through a strategic approach of discourse analysis. He tried to show that what the candidates say contributes to their discursive strategies and the building of their own personality

2-2 Theoretical framework

The theories that underpin this study are mainly that of Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday 1978, 1985a, Halliday and Hasan 1985) and the scale of political discourse analysis suggested by Gilles GAUTHIER (DOKPO, A.J. 2005). To those theories can be added the use of vocatives and characterization

2.2.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics

The fundamental advantage of this theory is that language is modelled as a social semiotics, in other words, as a meaning-making resource (Halliday 1978). Eggins (1994:22) provides the following explanation:

If language is a semiotic system, then the process of language is a process of making meaning by choosing. In making a choice from a linguistic system, what someone writes or says gets meaning by being seen

(interpreted) against the background of what could have been meant (said or written) in that context but was not.

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, the relationship of language to context is one of construal in the sense that it is seen to reflect and at the same time to construct contexts of meaning. As a comprehensive functional model of language, this approach also theorises language as a three fold system including context, lexico-grammar and phonology. These systemic linguistic concepts are generally applied to speeches or pieces of writing such as poetry, drama or novel. Given the scope of this study, we will mainly focus lexico-grammar and generic analysis.

2.2.1.1 Lexico-grammar

2.2.1.1.1 Mood analysis

Mood has to do with the linguistic expression of point of view, judgements, attitudes, and social relationship. Mood patterns mainly involve the use of mood types. The mood structure of a clause is divided into two parts:

- Mood = subject + finite
- Residue = predicator + complement + (adjuncts)

There are five main mood types:

- a- The declarative mood: giving information by saying what is going on or happening.
- b- The imperative mood: giving order or command.
- c- The interrogative mood: asking question for information.
- d- The modulated imperative mood: getting indirectly someone to do something by using polite modals.

e- The modulated interrogative mood: indirect request of information.

Modality is the expression of attitudes, judgements, and perspectives. There are two aspects of modality: Modalisation and Modulation. Modalisation consists of expressing probability or frequency through the use of modal verbs like “*can, may, might, will...*” or some mood adjuncts. Modulation is the expression of obligation, necessity or inclination. Finite verbal operators like “*must, could, would*” replace the direct command (imperative) forms or will be used in questions so as to make modulated interrogative clauses. Modality can also be achieved through the use of verbs of knowledge, prediction or evaluation like “*seem, believe, guess, foresee*” and adverbs expressing presumption such as *evidently, apparently, clearly* etc or adverbs of time like “*still, already, once, soon, just*”, etc.

2.2.1.1.2 Transitivity and Theme

Transitivity is the expression of processes that are recognized in language, and the structure by which they are expressed. Carrying out a transitivity analysis involves identifying the process-types, the participant roles, and the circumstances which can be associated with a particular process-type. A transitivity analysis consists in seeking to provide answer to the question “who does what, to whom, when, why and where...”?

There are six main types of process:

- Material processes are processes of doing or action.
- Mental processes are processes of cognition.
- Behavioural processes have to do with action or doing, like material processes, but actions that must be experienced by a conscious being.

- Verbal processes concern verbal actions performed by a sayer.
- Relational process is a process type in which a relationship is established between two terms. This relationship can be one of two sub-types, attributive or identifying.
- Existential processes, in contrast to relational processes, have only one participant, namely the existent, or the participant which is said to exist.

The theme is the element which serves as the point of departure of the message. The remainder of the message, the part in which the Theme is developed is called Rheme.

A clause may contain a single theme or a multiple theme. A single Theme can be called topical Theme. A topical theme is an element of the clause to which a transitivity function can be assigned and which occurs at the first position in the clause. When a constituent to which we could assign a mood label occurs at the beginning of a clause, we call it an interpersonal Theme. The textual theme is the departure point to which neither a transitivity nor a mood label can be assigned, but which does a rather cohesive work by relating a whole clause to its context.

2.2.1.2 Genre

Systemic grammar is one of several functional theories in the current discipline of linguistics which conceives of texts to be interpreted, but also for relating those texts to their context. Systemic functional linguists view language as systems of meaning potential in human interaction that are realized by various structures.

Halliday (1978) argues that the organizing concept is not structure described by rules, but by system:

With the notion of system we can represent language as a resource in terms of choices that are available, the interaction of these choices, and the conditions affecting their access. We can then relate these choices to recognizable and significant social contexts, using socio-semantic network... The data are the observed facts of text in situation, what people say in real life (p 192).

In other words, systemic linguists study text as communicative behaviour, as meaning production in the context of culture, the behavioural network in which social interaction takes place. The choice to engage in a culturally reorganized social process is made at the level of the genre. J.R. Martins quoted by Eggins (1994) defines genre as *“a staged, goal-oriented social process”*. The context of culture or genre, is the whole network of social and economic convention and institutions constituting the culture at a large, especially in so far as these bear on particular utterance context and influence the structure of discourse occurring with them (Fowler :1986). Actually, all discourse including literature or poetry has a definite context of culture which may be studied as an influence on the linguistic structures of literary texts and as guide to their interpretation. In short, it is the general context that gives meaning to culturally recognized activities.

Moreover, Systemic Functional Linguistics seeks to explain language by reference to the social structure in which language operates and which it acts to construe. That approach traces its genealogy through the British linguist Firth (1957) to the anthropological writings of Malinowski. Firth's notion of a social context which determines linguistic phenomena was derived from that of Malinowski, who coined the term *‘context of situation’* in the process of developing

methodologies for effectively translating and interpreting spoken texts of the people of Trobriand Islands. Then Halliday's theory of register develops Firth's notion of context of situation in three variables which are: Field, tenor and Mode.

Indeed, the field of discourse is what is going on in the context or the kind of activity in which language is playing some part. Eggins (1994: 54) defines the field of discourse as "*what the language is being used to talk about*". This variable includes not only the specific topic of the discourse, but also the degree of technicality or speciality, on the one hand, or everyday quality, on the other hand. Tenor is the role relation of power and solidarity between the interactants: speaker/listener, addresser/addressee, writer/reader etc. Tenor has impact on language use because we do not use language in the same way to talk or write. In other words, it has to do with how our distinction between formal and informal social situation shapes our use of language.

Mode of discourse is the role played by language in realizing social action including the channel (written or spoken) and the degree to which language constructs what is going on in the context or merely accompanies it.

2.2.2 The scale of political discourse analysis

In his article entitled "*L'analyse du Contenu des Débats politiques Télévisés*" Gilles GAUTHIER suggested six axes for a scientific analysis of any political discourse so as to discern the real communication intention of the speaker. These axes include lexical analysis, rhetorical analysis, argumentative analysis, strategic analysis, relational analysis and thematic analysis. What is every one of these techniques all about?

- **Lexical analysis:** It has to do with a statistical treatment of vocabulary. It helps to grasp the vocabulary, word order and word frequency in a discourse. It also deals with the address structure of the speaker. For example, on the basis of the personal pronouns used by the speaker, one can determine whether he / she gets involved, associates with others or interpellates others. So, the personal pronouns and possessive adjectives of the first person of singular such as “**I, me, my**” constitute textual indicators of involvement structure. The association structure is characterized by pronouns and adjectives of the first person of plural “**we, us, our** etc”. As for the interpellation structure, it is shown by the use of “**you, your, etc.**”
- **Rhetorical analysis:** rhetoric can be referred to as the art of saying or speaking well. As a result, carrying out a discourse analysis from a rhetorical point of view is meant to point out the figures of speech used by the speaker. The objective here is to show the way he/she speaks, presents and imparts and receives the message.
- **Argumentative analysis:** It helps to analyse the arguments the speaker uses to convince his/her audience. Argumentative analysis is based on evidence such as statistics, illustrations, comparisons and reference to a given authority.

- **Strategic analysis:** The purpose of every political communication is to convince the maximum number of people, and the strategy is determined on the basis of the audience. A political actor can resort to relational strategy, substantial strategy or forewarning strategy. In the relational strategy the political actor attacks verbally his/her opponent, defends himself/herself, justifies himself/herself. He/she can also ignore the attack from his/her opponent. As far as substantial strategy is concerned, the speaker seeks to value himself / herself / through his / her scientific, technical or diplomatic skills. Through forewarning strategy, a political actor can tackle an issue anticipated by his / her opponent so as to tone down its effects.
- **Relational analysis:** It is a technique which helps to focus on the nature of the relation that exists between the speaker and his/her audience. The relation can be symmetrical or complementary. The relationship is said to be symmetrical in case the speaker and the public are on the same grounding. On the other hand, the relationship is complementary when the speaker plays the role of a teacher, bringing to the public information the latter ignores. The objective is to inform the audience in order to bring the latter to adhere to a political choice.
- **Thematic analysis:** It consists in pointing out the stakes and the problems which are the subject matters of the discourse. One can

distinguish between general themes and specific themes (DOKPO, A., 2005, p 44).

2.2.3 Characterization

It includes many aspects. But given the nature of this study we will focus on indirect characterization and intertextual characterization.

Indirect characterization is a technique which helps to learn about a character through what he/she says, how he/she thinks, and what others say or think about him/her. In other words, a character's speech, whether in conversation or as a silent activity of the mind, can reveal much about the latter's personality and attitudes. Roger Fowler (1986-132) seems to agree with this when he writes: *"It has traditionally been assumed in stylistics that the different ways people express their thoughts indicate consciously or unconsciously their personalities and attitude"* (AMOUSSOU, C., 2006, p 8)

Intertextual characterization is mostly used to refer to the idea that we construct our texts in relation to other texts that we imitate, allude to or refer to.

2.2.4 The use of vocatives

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (1985) defines vocatives as the form of a word used when addressing somebody. In other words, they are addresses and callings made to a person or a group of persons to make a message solemn and vivid. They can be either a noun or a pronoun, a title associated with a position or a class. They are most used in the direct speech and in the beginning of sentences. They may sometimes be used at the end of a sentence.

CHAPTER Three: Analysis of the corpus

3.1 Lexico-grammatical analysis

I have tried to carry out this analysis by drawing on Eggins (1994) pp 334-347. The analysis is focused on two extracts from the corpus. The first text (*TEXT 1.1*) is an extract from speech 1 entitled “**One America in the 21st Century**” pp i-ii. The second text (*TEXT 1.2*) is an extract from speech 2 entitled “**Digital Divide**” pp xi-xii. Each text should have been analyzed twice, the first time for Mood and the second time for Transitivity and Theme. But at this stage where the work is meant to announce what should be done in the framework of a Doctoral dissertation, I have stopped at the Mood analysis.

3.1.1 Mood analysis

Keys:

S= Subject, F= finite, Fn= negative, Fms= modalized, fml= modulated

P= Predicator, Pml= modulated predicator, Pms= modalized predicator,

P/F= fused finite and predicator

C= Complement, Ca= attributive complement

A= Adjunct, Ac= circumstantial, Am= mood, Ao= Comment, Ap= polarity,

Av= vocative, Aj= conjunctive, At= continuity.

Wh= Wh element, Wh/S, Wh/C, WhAC= fused Wh element

Mn= minor clause

Mood element of ranking (non-embedded) clauses is shown in bold

TEXT 1.1

1. I (S) believe (F) the greatest challenge (C) [[we (S) face]] (S) is (F) also our greatest opportunity (C). 2. Of all the questions of discrimination and prejudice (S) that (Aj) still (Am) exist (F) in our society (Ac), the most perplexing one (S) is (F) the oldest, and in some ways today, the newest: the problem of race (C). 3. Can (Fms) we (S) fulfill (P) the promise of America by embracing all our citizens of all races (C), not just (Am) at a university (Ac) where (Aj) people (S) have (F) the benefit of enlightened teachers and the time to think (P) and (Aj) grow (P) (C), and (Aj) get (F) to know (P) each other within the daily life of every American community (C)? 4. In short (Aj), can (Fms) we (S) become (P) one America in the 21st century (C)? 5. I (S) know (F) and (Aj) I (S)'ve (F) said (P) before (Ac), that (Aj) money (S) cannot (Fms) buy (P) this goal (C), 6. power (S) cannot (Fms) compel (P) it (C), 7. and (Aj) technology (S) cannot (Fms) create (P) it (C). 8. This (S) is (F) something (C) that (Aj) can (Fms) come (P) only from the human spirit - the spirit we saw here today (C), when (Aj) the choir of many races (S) sang (F) as a gospel choir (Ac).

9. Today (Ac), the state of Hawaii, [[which (S) has (F) a senator and a congresswoman (C) present here (Ca)],], has (F) no majority racial or ethnic group (C). 10. It (S) is (F) a wonderful place of exuberance and friendship and patriotism (C). 11. Within the next three years, here in California (Ac) no single race or ethnic group (S) will (F) make up (P) a majority of the state's population (C). 12. Already (Ac), five of our largest school districts (S) draw (F) students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups (C). 13. Twelve Nobel Prize winners from nine different countries (S) have (F) studied (P) or taught (P) at this campus (Ac). 14. A

half-century from now (Ac), when (Aj) your own grandchildren (S) are (F) in college (Ac), there (S) will (Fms) be (P) no majority race in America (C).

TEXT 1.2

1.Today (Am), I (S) ask (F) you (C) to focus (P) on the challenges of the Information Age (C). 2. The dimensions of the Information Revolution and its limitless possibilities (S) are (F) widely (Am) accepted (P) and (Aj) generally (Am) understood (Am), even by lay people (Ac). 3. But (Aj) to make (P) the most of it (C), we (S) must (Fml) also acknowledge (P) that (Aj) there (S) are (F) challenges (C), 4. And (Aj) we (S) must (Fml) make (P) important choices (C). 5. We (S) can (Flm) extend (P) opportunity to all Americans (C), or (Aj) leave (P) many behind (C). 6.We (S) can (Flm) erase (P) lines of inequity (C) or (Aj) etch (P) them (C) indelibly (Ac). 7. We (S) can (Flm) accelerate (P) the most powerful engine of growth and prosperity the world has ever known (C), or (Aj) allow (P) the engine to stall (C).

8.History (S) has (F) taught (P) us (C) that (Aj) choices (S) cannot (Flm) be deferred (P); 9. They (S) are (F) made (P) by action or inaction (Ac). 10.There (S) is no (Fn) such thing as virtual opportunity (C). 11.We (S) cannot (Flm) point (P) and (Aj) click (P) our way to a better future (C), if (Aj) we (S) are (F) to fulfill (P) the complete promise of this new age (C), 12. we (S) must (Flm) do (P) more (C).

13.Already (Am), the Information Age (S) is (F) transforming (P) the way we work (C). 14. The high-tech industry (S) employs (F) more people today than the auto industry did at its height in the 1950s (C). 15. Auto and steel industries in turn (S) have (F) been revived (P) by new technologies (Ac). 16. Among those making the

most use of technology R & D (C) are (F) traditional American enterprises such as construction, transportation, and retail stores (S).

17. It (S) is (F) transforming (P) the way we live (C). 18. The typical American home now (S) has (F) much more – as much computing power as all of MIT did in the year most of the seniors here were born (C). 19. It (S) is (F) transforming (P) the way we communicate (C). 20. On any business day (Ac), more than 30 times as many messages (S) are (F) delivered (P) by e-mail as by the postal service (Ac). 21. And (Aj) today, this ceremony (S) is (F) being carried live (P) on the Internet (C) so that (Aj) people all over the world (S) can (Flm) join in (P). 22. It (S) is (F) transforming (P) the way we learn (C). 23. With the DVD technology available today (Ac), we (S) can (Fms) store (P) more reference material (C) a 3-inch stack of disk than in all the stacks of Hayden Library (Ac). 24. It (S) is (F) transforming (P) the way our society works (C), giving millions of Americans the opportunity to join in the enterprise of building our nation (Ac) as (Aj) they (S) fulfill (F) their dreams (C).

25. The tools [[we (S) develop (F) today]] (S) are (F) bringing down (P) barriers of race and gender, of income and age (C). 26. The disabled (S) are (F) opening (P) long closed doors of schools, work, and human possibility (C). 27. Small businesses (S) are (F) competing (P) in worldwide markets once reserved only for powerful corporations (Ac). 28. Before too long (Ac), our children (S) will (Fms) be able to stretch (Pml) a hand across a keyboard (C) and (Aj) reach (P) every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every symphony ever controlled (C).

29. For the very first time in our history (Ac), it (S) is (F) now (Am) possible for a child (in the most isolated inner-city neighborhood or rural community to have access to the same world of knowledge at the same instant as the child in the

most affluent suburb. 30. Imagine (P) the revolutionary democratizing potential [[this (S) can (Fms) bring (P)]] (C). 31. Imagine (P) the enormous benefits to our economy, our society (C), if not (Aj) just a fraction (Am), but (Aj) all young people (S) can (Fms) master (P) this set of 21st century skills (C).

3.2 Generic Analysis

In the following analysis, each text has been assigned a genre, and divided into functionally labeled stages.

TEXT 1.1

Genre: Explanation of Problematic Behaviour

Statement of Problem

1. I believe the greatest challenge we face is also our greatest opportunity. 2. Of all the questions of discrimination and prejudice that still exist in our society, the most perplexing one is the oldest, and in some ways today, the newest: the problem of race.

Explanation

3. Can we fulfill the promise of America by embracing all our citizens of all races, not just at a university where people have the benefit of enlightened teachers and the time to think and grow, and get to know each other within the daily life of every American community? 4. In short, can we become one America in the 21st century?

Suggested Alleviation Action 1

5. I know and I've said before, that money cannot buy this goal, 6. power cannot compel it, 7. and technology cannot create it. 8. This is something that can come

only from the human spirit - the spirit we saw here today, when the choir of many races sang as a gospel choir. 9.

Suggested Alleviation Action 2

Today, the state of Hawaii, which has a senator and a congresswoman present here, has no majority racial or ethnic group. 10. It is a wonderful place of exuberance and friendship and patriotism.

Suggested Alleviation Action 3

11. Within the next three years, here in California no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of the state's population. 12. Already, five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. 13. Twelve Nobel Prize winners from nine different countries have studied or taught at this campus.

Outlook: improvement to come

14. A half-century from now, when your own grandchildren are in college, there will be no majority race in America.

TEXT 1.2

Genre: Explanation of Problematic Behaviour

Statement of Problem

1. Today, I ask you to focus on the challenges of the Information Age.

Explanation 1

2. The dimensions of the Information Revolution and its limitless possibilities are widely accepted and generally understood, even by lay people. 3. But to make the

most of it, we must also acknowledge that there are challenges, 4. and we must make important choices.

Suggested Alleviation Action 1

5. We can extend opportunity to all Americans or leave many behind. 6. We can erase lines of inequity or etch them indelibly.

Suggested Alleviation Action 2

7. We can accelerate the most powerful engine of growth and prosperity the world has ever known, or allow the engine to stall.

Suggested Alleviation Action 3

8. History has taught us that choices cannot be deferred; 9. they are made by action or inaction. 10. There is no such thing as virtual opportunity. 11. We cannot point and click our way to a better future, if we are to fulfill the complete promise of this new age, 12. we must do more.

Explanation 2

13. Already, the Information Age is transforming the way we work. 14. The high-tech industry employs more people today than the auto industry did at its height in the 1950s. 15. Auto and steel industries in turn have been revived by new technologies. 16. Among those making the most use of technology R & D are traditional American enterprises such as construction, transportation, and retail stores.

Explanation 3

17. It is transforming the way we live. 18. The typical American home now has much more – as much computing power as all of MIT did in the year most of the seniors here were born.

Explanation 4

19. It is transforming the way we communicate. 20. On any business day, more than 30 times as many messages are delivered by e-mail as by the postal service. 21. And today, this ceremony is being carried live on the Internet so that people all over the world can join in.

Explanation 5

22. It is transforming the way we learn. 23. With the DVD technology available today, we can store more reference material in a 3-inch stack of disk than in all the stacks of Hayden Library.

Explanation 6

24. It is transforming the way our society works, giving millions of Americans the opportunity to join in the enterprise of building our nation as they fulfill their dreams.

Suggested Alleviation Action 4

25. The tools we develop today are bringing down barriers of race and gender, of income and age.

Suggested Alleviation Action 5

26. The disabled are opening long closed doors of schools, work, and human possibility.

Suggested Alleviation Action 6

27. Small businesses are competing in worldwide markets once reserved only for powerful corporations.

Suggested Alleviation Action 7

28. Before too long, our children will be able to stretch a hand across a keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every symphony ever controlled. 29. For the very first time in our history, it is now possible for a child in the most isolated inner-city neighborhood or rural community to have access to the same world of knowledge at the same instant as the child in the most affluent suburb.

Outlook: improvements to come

30. Imagine the revolutionary democratizing potential this can bring. 31. Imagine the enormous benefits to our economy, our society, if not just a fraction, but all young people can master this set of 21st century skills.

3-3- Thematic strategies

President Bill Clinton tackles a set of themes which shows that he is concerned with peace, unity and equality in society. To start with, it is important to mention that Clinton condemns digital divide. What does digital divide mean?

The term digital divide refers to the *“disparity between have nets and have nots”* (Daily Graphic, July 28, 1992, p 29). *“Have nets”* are those with regular effective access to digital and information technology whereas *“have nots”* are those without this access. In other words, digital divide encompasses both physical access to technological hardware and more broadly, skills and resources which allow for its use. Groups often discussed in the context of digital divide include socio-economic (rich / poor), racial (white / minority) or geographical (urban/ rural).

But the term global digital divide refers to the gap in technology access between countries. The difference in technology use between developed countries and the developing countries is very clear. For instance:

There are more internet hosts in Manhattan, a town in New York State, than there are in the whole of Africa. According to International Telecommunications Unions figures, there are nearly 30 PCs per 100 people in UK but in countries such as Malawi there is one computer for every 10.000 people (Daily Graphic, July 28, 2000, p 29).

As a matter of fact, President Clinton condemned digital divide of any kind and made the point that equal opportunity should be extended to all Americans. In his speech on digital divide, he had this to say:

We know from hard experience that unequal education hardens into unequal prospects. We know information age will accelerate this trend. The three fastest growing careers in America are all in computer related fields, offering far more than average pay. Happily, the digital divide has begun to narrow, but it will not disappear of its own accord. History teaches us that even as new technologies create growth and new opportunity, they can heighten economic inequalities and sharpen social divisions. That is after all, exactly what happened with the mechanization of agriculture and in the industrial revolution (appendix, p xiii).

This is also evidence that President Clinton lays an emphasis on the moral - dimension of development. We know that many political leaders tend to give priority to economic development to the detriment of social and moral values. What use is economic growth if citizens are starving to death? Many African leaders are reproached with neglecting moral and social dimension of development. It was the case of the former President of Benin Nicéphore Dieudonné SOGLO who made a lot of effort on the ground of economic development. During his presidency, many paved roads were built. But many people said it is good to build all those amenities but we are not going to eat paved roads. A careful analysis of President Clinton's discourse shows that the latter is aware that the most important growth is the one that avoids inequalities and social divisions. That is why he (Clinton) has invited his fellow citizens not to walk into the trap of mechanization of Agriculture and the Industrial Revolution.

For President Clinton, the information revolution should not introduce inequalities in American community. It should give the same opportunities to American citizens. In his speech entitled “digital divide”, he said: “...I come to MIT an epicentre of the seismic shifts in our economy and society, to talk about how we can and must apply enduring American values to this revolutionary time; about the responsibilities we all have as citizens to include every American in the promise of this new age” (appendix, p xi).

Even in his speech entitled *One America in the 21st century*, he insisted on the moral and social dimension of development. He tried to point out the conditions under which this type of development can be achieved. Here is what he said in this perspective: “I know and I’ve said before, that money cannot buy this goal, power cannot create it. This is something that can come only from human spirit. The spirit we saw (here today), when the choir of many races sang as a gospel choir” (appendix, p ii).

Another key theme in the discourse of President Clinton is racial segregation. It is undeniable that discrimination and prejudice still exist in most countries including the USA. Bill Clinton confessed that he had grown up in the drama of segregation. He declared: “...I went to segregated schools, swam in segregated public pools, sat in all-white sections at the movies, and traveled through small towns in my state that still marked restrooms and water fountains “white” and “colored”” (appendix, p iii)

As a matter of fact, he (President Bill Clinton) has constantly condemned racial segregation. His speech entitled *One America in the 21st century* has mainly focused on the issue. Clinton made the point that they should endeavour to build

one America in the 21st century rather than staying “*two Americas, one white, one black separate and unequal*” (appendix, p ix). He suggested three important things to do to achieve this goal. The first thing is to offer equal opportunity to Americans in every domain.

The second thing is to demand responsibility from every American. As he put it:

Our strength as a society depends upon people taking responsibility for themselves and their families, teaching their Children good values, working hard and obeying the law and giving back to those around us. The new economy offers fewer guarantees, more risks and more rewards. It calls upon all of us to take even greater responsibility for our education than ever before” (appendix, p vi).

The third imperative seems to be the most difficult of all according to President Clinton. It has to do with building one American community based on respect for one another and shared values. As suggested by President Clinton:

We must begin with a candid conversation on the state of race relations today and the implications of Americans of so many different races living and working together as we approach a new century. We must be honest with each other. We have talked at each other and about each other for a long time. It's high time we all began talking with each other (appendix, p vii).

As a whole, it is worth-mentioning that the discourse of President Bill Clinton is full of references. The ones we have developed above are among the main themes. In addition to the main themes, there are many sub-themes among which we can mention: peace, unity, solidarity, equality, integration, security, education of young people, security, and health care.

3-4- Lexical strategies

As we put it earlier, lexical analysis includes many aspects. But given the scope of this study, we will focus on the address structure of President Bill Clinton through the types of pronouns and possessive adjectives he uses.

In general, President Bill Clinton has used three structures in his discourse. First of all, the personal pronoun “**I**” and the possessive adjective “**my**” are frequently used by President Clinton. Those lexical items are textual indications of implication structure. It means that Bill Clinton likes to be involved in everything he says, in every suggestion he makes. He likes to take full responsibility for his deeds. He doesn’t hide behind other people. He faces difficult issues and in case of failure, he confesses he has failed. To illustrate this, I wish to quote the following paragraph from his speech entitled *Digital Divide*:

I want you to know that we are also working to address the threat to our prosperity posed by the year 2000 Bug. I tried and tried to find out what the class hack project was for the class of 98 and I failed. But I did learn that in the year 2000, the graduating class is proposing to roll all of our computers back by 100 years. And I am determined to thwart you. I will do my best (appendix, p xiv).

This attitude which consists in confessing openly one’s failure is not commonplace with political leaders. But it is a very good communicative strategy. It is an evidence of sincerity and reliability which creates harmony and confidence. And as everyone knows, where there is harmony, the atmosphere is tension-free, and peace is likely to prevail.

The second structure we can point out in the discourse of President Bill Clinton is the one of association. The textual indications of association structure

are the personal pronoun “**we**” and the possessive adjective “**our**”. These referential items are used throughout the discourse of President Bill Clinton. But I will quote only one paragraph from *One America in the 21st century*. It runs as follows:

Basing our self-esteem on the ability to look down on others is not the American way. Being satisfied if we have what we want and heedless of others who don't even have what they need deserve is not the American way. We have torn down the barriers in our laws. Now we must break down the barriers in our lives, our minds and our hearts (appendix, pp viii, ix).

The use of the structure of association refers to the idea of togetherness, the idea of unity. Nothing great can be achieved alone. President Bill Clinton associates his fellow citizens to the important decisions he takes. It is crystal clear that as a peacemaker, Clinton cannot do otherwise. For, he is aware that *together we stand; divided we lose*. That strategy of communication is an imperative for any good political leader and one can say that President Bill Clinton is not an exception to this rule.

The third structure is the one of interpellation. The textual indications of this structure are the personal pronoun “**you**” and the possessive adjective “**your**”. The structure of interpellation can also be demonstrated through the use of imperative form of verbs.

One of the passages that best illustrate the use of this structure by Bill Clinton is extracted from *One America in the 21st century*. It can be laid down as follows: “*That is the America you must make. It begins with your dreams. So dream large, live your dreams, challenge your parents, and teach your children well*” (appendix, p ix).

The interest of this strategy of communication is that it helps the speaker not only to invite or involve other people but also to assign responsibility to others. In other words, the structure of interpellation helps to tell one's reader / listener what he / she should do.

3-5- Relational strategies

Here, we wish to identify the nature of relationship between President Bill Clinton and his audience. In actual fact, the type of relationship varies according to the context. Our corpus is made up of three speeches. Let's consider the third speech. It is President Bill Clinton's last address to the Democratic Party National Convention. Bill Clinton and his party members belong to the same political group. They can be put at the same level. In this context, nobody is superior or inferior to the other. As a result, we can say that the relationship between the speaker and his audience is a symmetrical one and the communication in this context is said to be horizontal. It happens between people who belong to the same social group.

But the relationship is not the same when we consider the first two speeches of the corpus. The first one which is entitled *One America in the 21st Century* was an address to the graduating class of the University of California. As for the second speech, *Digital Divide*, it was an address to the graduating class of 1998 at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

In both contexts, President Bill Clinton was talking to students. Naturally, we cannot place the speaker and his audience at the same level. As a result, the relationship is said to be complementary. Because, during the two speeches,

President Bill Clinton can be considered as a lecturer who is giving pieces of information to his students. Here, the communication is vertical because the speaker is hierarchically superior to his audience. In either context, President Bill Clinton uses various argumentative strategies.

3-6 Argumentative strategies

Under this heading, we wish to analyse the arguments Bill Clinton uses to get his message across. In fact, argumentative analysis is meant to highlight the proofs or evidence the speaker uses. Among the proofs generally used by Bill Clinton, we can mention the use of statistical data and comparisons.

Clinton is fond of using statistical data to convince his audience. To illustrate this, we can consider three examples. First of all, Clinton used statistical data to impress people during his last speech to a party convention as President. He did so to insist on the effort his administration had made to improve the situation of young people. Here is part of what he said on the issue:

We are more hopeful because we're turning our schools around, with higher standards, more accountability and more investment. We have doubled funding for head start and provided after-school and mentoring to more than one million young people. We're putting 100,000 well trained teachers in the early grades to reduce class size. Ninety-five percent of our schools are connected to the Internet (appendix, p xviii).

Such figures as one million young people, 100,000 well-trained teachers, 95% schools connected to the internet are most convincing evidence.

Second, Bill Clinton also resorted to statistical data when addressing the issue of security. As he put it: *"We are more secure because we cut crime with tougher enforcement, more than 100,000 new community police officers, a ban on*

assault weapons, and the Brady Law, which has kept guns out of the hands of a half million felons, fugitives and stalkers. Today, crime is at a 25 year low” (appendix, p xix).

Third, Clinton used the same strategy to address the issues related to health care and employment. As he said: *“We have provided health coverage to 2 million children. And for the first time ever, more than 90 percent are immunized against major childhood diseases” (appendix, p xix).*

As for his argument concerning employment, here is what he said: *“The good news is that this morning we had our latest economic report: unemployment is 4.3 percent; there have been 16 million new jobs in the last five years; there are numerous job openings that pay well” (appendix, p x).*

But President Bill Clinton does not exclusively use quantitative data in his argumentation. He is also fond of comparisons. Though people generally say that *comparisons are odious*, they can help to convince one’s audience, and like many political leaders, President Bill Clinton has used them abundantly. One of the most telling examples I would like to give is extracted from Clinton speech on “Digital Divide”. It runs as follows:

You enter the world of your tomorrows at a remarkable moment for America. Our country has the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the smallest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years, and the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest national government in 35 years, and the highest rate of home ownership in our history” (appendix, p xi).

It appears clearly through this passage that President Bill Clinton is praising the effort of his administration by comparing its performance in many fields to what had been done many decades before.

Moreover, in his last speech to a party convention as president, Bill Clinton has insisted that his administration worked for peace, freedom and prosperity in the world more than any other administration. As he put it: “*We are more secure and free because of our leadership for peace, freedom, and prosperity in the world...*” (Appendix, p xx).

It is certainly the reason why many people said that the terrorist attack of September 11th, 2001 would probably not have taken place if Bill Clinton had been in office.

3-7 Rhetorical strategies

Rhetoric is the art of saying things very well or the art of speaking very well. As a result, carrying out the rhetorical analysis of a discourse means pointing out the stylistic devices the speaker uses. The objective is to show the way the speaker conceives, presents and delivers his message so as to make it attractive. In this work, we are going to identify what specifically characterizes Bill Clinton's manipulation of language to convey his message.

President Bill Clinton has used many figures of speech among which we can mention personification, humour, the use of vocatives, and gradation.

Personification is a reference to inanimate or abstract things as if they were human beings. In President Clinton's last speech to a party convention, we can read: “Time has not been kind to those predictions” (appendix, p xviii). Here, “**time**” is personified to underline the irrelevance of the criticism formulated by the

leaders of Republican Party. “**Time**” is used as if it were a human agent who would demonstrate the moral personality or the moral attitude of kindness.

Another figure of speech that is present in the discourse of President Bill Clinton’s speech is gradation. It presents an idea of progression. In his last address to a party convention as President, he had this to say: “*I can tell you that their strength, their spirit, their courage and their commitment to freedom have never been greater*” (appendix, p xx).

As one can see it, there is a progression when we consider the strength of the four words he used to describe the American military: “*strength, spirit, courage and commitment*”.

The use of this stylistic device is to show the importance of the armed forces in a country where the President is concerned about a leadership for peace, freedom and prosperity. This is once more a sound illustration of the fact that Bill Clinton is a peacemaker and an incarnation of unity.

The third figure of style worth mentioning is humour. Humour is a manipulation of language wherein the writer / speaker plays on words, sounds, meanings, meta-messages and syntactic structures to create or provoke amusement and laughter.

President Bill Clinton is fond of humour. It is rare to listen to a speech delivered by Clinton without laughing. There are many cases of humour but I would like to give one example. The audience could not help laughing when, in his last speech to a party convention as president, he said: “*...If you want to live like a Republican, you should vote for the Democrats*” (appendix, p xviii).

This is a contradiction which provokes laughter because the question one can ask himself is: what use is it to be a Republican if the condition is to vote for democrats? But it is important to mention that above this humoristic consideration the declaration can bear a deeper meaning because Republicans and democrats are more complementary than contradictory.

3-8 The use of vocatives

One of the vocatives that are frequently used by Bill Clinton is “*My fellow Americans*”. That vocative has been reiterated many times in Clinton’s last speech to a party convention as President. The other one is “class of 97” which is used in Clinton’s speech entitled “One America in the 21st Century”

The function of those vocatives is to establish an atmosphere of closeness, of familiarity and a sense of brotherhood. This atmosphere, which is tension-free, favours the communicative event since the audience feels more concerned by the issues at stake and is more likely to get involved.

One can understand the reason why many people generally adhere to the discourse of President Bill Clinton who, in spite of the issue of impeachment he went through, remained very popular with the public throughout his two terms, ending his presidential career with 65% approval rating; that is the highest end-of-term approval rating of any president in the post Eisenhower era.

3-9 Characterisation

Simply put, characterisation is generally referred to as the conception and presentation of characters in a literary work. The speech which serves as the

basis for our analysis is not a fictional work. It has to do with a real world. But the author (the speaker) has provided the presentation / description of some political personalities that is worth-mentioning.

We learn much about Hillary Clinton and Al Gore through Bill Clinton's description of them. For example, in Clinton's last speech to a party convention, the following description is given of Hillary Clinton:

When I became President, she became a full-time advocate for her lifetime cause. What a job she's done. She championed the family leave law, children's health insurance, and increased support for foster children and adoption. She wrote a best-selling book caring for children and then she took care of them by giving all the profits to children charities. For thirty years, she's been there for all our kids. She's been a great first lady... (Appendix, p xxi)

Similarly, Bill Clinton describes Al Gore in the same speech as follows:

Everybody knows Al Gore is thoughtful and hard-working. I can tell you personally he is one strong leader. In 1993, there was nobody around the table more willing to make the tough choices to balance the budget the right way and take the tough stands against those who would do it the wrong way on the backs of the poor and working people. I've seen it time and again. Whether it was reforming welfare; protecting the environment; closing the digital divide; or bringing jobs to rural and urban America, there has been no stronger champion than Al Gore.....

Finally, I'd like you to know Al Gore is a profoundly good man, who loves his children more than life. He has a wonderful wife who fought against homelessness and for the cause of mental health, bringing it into the sunlight of our national life. America owes Tipper Gore our thanks" (Appendix, p xxi).

These two examples illustrate the technique of direct characterization used by President Bill Clinton. In both cases, he presents explicitly the moral, professional and relational description of the two personalities, minimizing the reader / hearer's effort to get at such pictures. One can draw two conclusions from the description Bill Clinton's has given.

First, it shows Clinton's humility. By so doing, he is trying to demonstrate that no man however great can lead a country alone. As a result, he does not hesitate to express his profound gratitude to those who have helped him in a way or another.

Second, one can say that the choice of the personalities he has described (Hillary and Al Gore) is not a matter of chance. They were chosen on purpose. Bill Clinton undoubtedly intended to prepare his "*fellow Americans*" to vote for them in the future. The proof is that both of them had been candidate for the presidential elections in America.

It may be useful to mention that Al Gore failed against George W. Bush in 2000 and Hillary Clinton failed democratic nomination against Barack OBAMA in 2008.

CONCLUSION

To top this exploration all, it is important to mention that attempts have been made to examine the various aspects of the topic. The work has clarified the relationship existing between speech and discourse, on the one hand, and the one existing between linguistics and stylistics, on the other. After that, it has provided an overview of Systemic Functional Linguistics by focusing on the explanation of concepts such as genre and lexico-grammar. The systemic linguistics analysis has shown that the three speeches which have been studied are rich in meaning. They revealed that democracy, which is characterised by liberty and plurality of expression, offers a large field of investigation in terms of linguistic implications of political speeches. Because, if democracy means the triumph of the best argument, it remains true that linguistic creativity seems to be an ideal attitude for most political figures.

Bill Clinton has used many linguistic strategies to get his message across. Among these strategies we can mention moods, genre, lexical and thematic strategies to mention only a few. Words are chosen on purpose to express irony, humour and to provoke laughter. Many other figures of style have been used and always with a simplicity of language and expression. The subject matter of Bill Clinton's discourse as seen through the three speeches is the same: the promotion of peace, equality and unity. In other words, he constructs his speeches to facilitate unity and peace, to create harmony and to tone down tension. Better still, with the election of Barack OBAMA, a Black American, as the President of the USA, one can say that President Bill Clinton is not only a gifted public speaker

but also a visionary. His speech entitled “*One America in the 21st Century*” is a dream that became true. As a result, the hypothesis of the study is proved.

Through this work, I find it necessary to appeal to democratic organizations and peoples in the world in general and particularly in Africa regardless of the colour of their skins to promote unity and peace, to establish and consolidate true democracy in Africa rather than sham democracies as we notice in most African countries nowadays. And one of the best ways to achieve this goal is not only through meaningful actions but also through sound communication.

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Speech 1

One America in the 21st Century

President Bill Clinton's address to the class of the University of California at San Diego, June 14, 1997

I want to thank you for offering our nation a shining example of excellence rooted in the many backgrounds that make up this great land. You have blazed new paths in science and technology, explored the new horizons of the Pacific Rim and Latin America. This is a great university for the 21st century.

Today we celebrate your achievements at a truly golden moment for America. The Cold War is over and freedom is now ascendant around the globe, with more than half of the people in this whole world living under governments of their own choosing for the very first time.

Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and the strongest in the world. Our culture, our science, our technology, promises unimagined advances and exciting new careers. Our social problems, from crime to poverty, are finally bending to our efforts.

Of course, there are still challenges for you out there. Beyond our borders, we must battle terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the prospect of new diseases and environmental disaster.

Here at home, we must ensure that every child has the chance you have had to develop your God-given capacities. We cannot wait for them to get in trouble to notice them.

We must continue to fight the scourge of gangs and crime and drugs. We must prepare for the retirement of the baby boom generation [and] reduce the child poverty rate ... We must harness the forces of science and technology for the public good, the entire American public.

But I believe the greatest challenge we face is also our greatest opportunity. Of all the questions of discrimination and prejudice that still exist in our society, the most perplexing one is the oldest, and in some ways today, the newest: the problem of race. [Can we fulfill the promise of America by embracing all our citizens of all races, not just at a university where people have the benefit of enlightened teachers and the time to think and grow, and get to know each other within the daily life of every American community? In short, can we become one America in the 21st century?](#)

I know, and I've said before, that money cannot buy this goal, power cannot compel it, technology cannot create it. This is something that can come only from the human spirit - the spirit we saw [here today], when the choir of many races sang as a gospel choir.

Today, the state of Hawaii, which has a senator and a congresswoman present here, has no majority racial or ethnic group. It is a wonderful place of exuberance and friendship and patriotism. Within the next three years, here in California no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of the state's population. Already, five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. Twelve Nobel Prize winners from nine different countries have studied or taught at this campus. A half-century from now, when your own grandchildren are in college, there will be no majority race in America.

Now we know what we will look like, **but what will we be like? Can we be one America respecting, even celebrating, our differences, but embracing even more what we have in common? Can we define what it means to be an American, not just in terms of the hyphen showing our ethnic origins but in terms of our primary allegiance to the values America stands for and values we really live by?** Our hearts long to answer yes, but our history reminds us that it will be hard. The ideals that bind us together are as old as our nation, but so are the forces that pull us apart. Our founders sought to form «a more perfect union»; the humility and hope of that phrase is the story of America and it is our mission today.

Consider this: We were born with a Declaration of Independence which asserted that we were all created equal and a Constitution that enshrined slavery. We fought a bloody civil war to abolish slavery and preserve the union, but we remained a house divided and unequal by law for another century. We advanced across the continent in the name of freedom, yet in so doing we pushed Native Americans off their land, often crushing their culture and their livelihood. Our Statue of Liberty welcomes poor, tired, huddled masses of immigrants to our borders, but each new wave has felt the sting of discrimination.

In World War II, Japanese-Americans fought valiantly for freedom in Europe, taking great casualties, while at home their families were herded into internment camps. The famed Tuskegee Airmen lost none of the bombers they guarded during the war, but their African-American heritage cost them many rights when they came back home in peace.

Though minorities have more opportunities than ever today, we still see evidence of bigotry — from the desecration of houses of worship, whether they be churches, synagogues or mosques, to demeaning talk in corporate suites. There is still much work to be done by you, the members of the class of 1997.

But those who say we cannot transform the problem of prejudice into the promise of unity forget how far we have come, and I cannot believe they have ever seen a crowd like you.

When I look at you, it is almost impossible for me even to remember my own life. I grew up in the high drama of the Cold War, in the patriotic South. Black and white southerners alike wore our nation's uniform in defense of freedom against communism. They fought and died together, from Korea to Vietnam. But back home, I went to segregated schools, swam in segregated public pools, sat in all-white sections at the movies, and traveled through small towns in my state that still marked restrooms and water fountains «white» and «colored.»

By the grace of God, I had a grandfather with just a grade school education but the heart of a true American, who taught me that it [segregation] was wrong. And by the grace of God, there were brave African-Americans like Congressman John Lewis, who risked their lives time and time again to make it right. And there were white Americans like Congressman Bob Filner, a freedom rider on the bus with John Lewis, in the long, noble struggle for civil rights, who knew that it was a struggle to free white people, too.

To be sure, there is old, unfinished business between black and white Americans, but the classic American dilemma has now become many dilemmas of race and ethnicity. We see it in the tension between black and Hispanic customers and their Korean or Arab grocers; in a resurgent anti-Semitism even on some college campuses; in a hostility toward new immigrants from Asia to the Middle East to the former communist countries to Latin America and the Caribbean – even those whose hard work and strong families have brought them success in the American Way.

We see a disturbing tendency to wrongly attribute to entire groups, including the white majority, the objectionable conduct of a few members. If a black American commits a crime, condemn the act — but remember that most African-Americans are hard-working, law-abiding citizens. If a Latino gang member deals drugs, condemn the act — but remember the vast majority of Hispanics are responsible citizens who also deplore the scourge of drugs in our life. If white teenagers beat a young African American boy almost to death just because of his race, for God's sake condemn the act — but remember the overwhelming majority of white people will find it just as hateful. If an Asian merchant discriminates against her customers of another minority group, call her on it — but remember, too, that many, many Asians have borne the burden of prejudice and do not want anyone else to feel it.

Remember too, in spite of the persistence of prejudice, we are more integrated than ever. More of us share neighborhoods and work and school and social activities, religious life, even love and marriage across racial lines than ever before. More of us enjoy each other's company and distinctive cultures than ever before. And more than ever, we understand the benefits of our racial, linguistic and cultural diversity in a global society,

where networks of commerce and communications draw us closer and bring rich rewards to those who truly understand life beyond their nation's borders.

With just a twentieth of the world's population, but a fifth of the world's income, we in America simply have to sell to the other 95 percent of the world's consumers just to maintain our standard of living. Because we are drawn from every culture on Earth, we are uniquely positioned to do it. Beyond commerce, the diverse backgrounds and talents of our citizens can help America to light the globe, showing nations deeply divided by race, religion and tribe that there is a better way.

Finally, as you have shown us today, our diversity will enrich our lives in non-material ways — deepening our understanding of human nature differences, making our communities more exciting, more enjoyable, more meaningful. That is why I have come here today to ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union.

Now, when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven to it by some emergency or social cataclysm, now is the time we should learn together, talk together and act together to build one America.

Let me say that I know that for many white Americans, this conversation may seem to exclude them or threaten them. That must not be so. I believe white Americans have just as much to gain as anybody else from being a part of this endeavor — as much to gain from an America where we finally take responsibility for all our children so that they, at last, can be judged as Martin Luther King hoped, «not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.»

What is it that we must do? For four and one-half years now, I have worked to prepare America for the 21st century with a strategy of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and an American community of all our citizens. To succeed in each of these areas, we must deal with the realities and the perceptions affecting all racial groups in America.

First, we must continue to expand opportunity. Full participation in our strong and growing economy is the best antidote to envy, despair and racism. We must press forward to move millions more from poverty and welfare to work; to bring the spark of enterprise to inner cities; to redouble our efforts to reach those rural communities prosperity has passed by. And most important of all, we simply must give our young people the finest education in the world.

There are no children who, because of their ethnic or racial background, cannot meet the highest academic standards if we set them and measure our students against them, if we give them well-trained teachers and well-equipped classrooms, and if we continue to support reasoned reforms to achieve excellence, like the charter school movement.

At a time when college education means stability, a good job, a passport to the middle class, we must open the doors of college to all Americans and we must make at least two years of college as universal at the dawn of the next century as a high school diploma is today.

In our efforts to extend economic and educational opportunity to all our citizens, we must consider the role of affirmative action. I know affirmative action has not been perfect in America — that's why two years ago we began an effort to fix the things that are wrong with it — but when used in the right way, it has worked.

It has given us a whole generation of professionals in fields that used to be exclusive clubs — where people like me got the benefit of 100 percent affirmative action. There are now more women-owned businesses than ever before. There are more African-American, Latino and Asian-American lawyers and judges, scientists and engineers, accountants and executives than ever before.

But the best example of successful affirmative action is our military. Our armed forces are diverse from top to bottom — perhaps the most integrated institution in our society and certainly the most integrated military in the world. And, more important, no one questions that they are the best in the world. So much for the argument that excellence and diversity do not go hand in hand.

There are those who argue that scores on standardized tests should be the sole measure of qualification for admissions to colleges and universities. But many would not apply the same standard to the children of alumni or those with athletic ability.

I believe a student body that reflects the excellence and the diversity of the people we will live and work with has independent educational value. **Look around this crowd today. Don't you think you have learned a lot more than you would have if everybody sitting around you looked just like you?** I think you have.

And beyond the educational value to you, it has a public interest because you will learn to live and work better in the world that you will live in. When young people sit side by side with people of many different backgrounds, they do learn something that they can take out into the world. And they will be more effective citizens.

Many affirmative action students excel. They work hard, they achieve, they go out and serve the communities that need them for their expertise and as a role model. If [we] close the door on them, we will weaken our greatest universities and it will be more difficult to build the society we need in the 21st century.

Let me say, I know that the people of California voted to repeal affirmative action without any ill motive. The vast majority of them simply did it with a conviction that discrimination and isolation are no longer barriers to achievement. **But consider the results.** Minority enrollments in law school and other graduate programs are plummeting for the first time in decades. The same will likely happen in undergraduate education. We must not re-segregate higher education or leave it to the private universities to do the public's work.

At the very time when we need to do a better job of living and learning together, we should not stop trying to equalize economic opportunity. To those who oppose affirmative action, I ask you to come up with an alternative. I would embrace it [that alternative] if I could find a better way. And to those of us who still support affirmative action, I say we should continue to stand for it, we should reach out to those who disagree or are uncertain and talk about the practical impact of these issues, and we should never be thought unwilling to work with those who disagree with us, so that we will find new ways to lift people up and bring people together.

Beyond opportunity, we must demand responsibility from every American. Our strength as a society depends upon people taking responsibility for themselves and their families, teaching their children good values, working hard and obeying the law, and giving back to those around us. The new economy offers fewer guarantees, more risks, and more rewards. It calls upon all of us to take even greater responsibility for our education than ever before.

In the current economic boom, only one racial or ethnic group in America has actually experienced a decline in income — Hispanic-Americans. One big reason is that Hispanic high school drop-out rates are well above — indeed, far above — those of whites and blacks. Some of the drop-outs actually reflect a strong commitment to work. We admire the legendary willingness to take the hard job at long hours for low pay. In the old economy, that was a responsible thing to do. But in the new economy, where education is the key, responsibility means staying in school.

No responsibility is more fundamental than obeying the law. It is not racist to insist that every American do so. The fight against crime and drugs is a fight for the freedom of all our people, including those — perhaps especially those — minorities living in our poorest neighborhoods. But respect for the law must run both ways. The shocking difference in perceptions of the fairness of our criminal justice system grows out of the real experiences that too many minorities have had with law enforcement officers. Part of the answer is to have all our citizens respect the law, but the basic rule must be that the law must respect all our citizens.

And that applies, too, to the enforcement of our civil rights laws. For example, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has a huge backlog of cases of discrimination claims — though we have reduced the backlog by 25 percent over the last four years. We cannot do much better without more resources. It is imperative that Congress — especially those members who say they're for civil rights but against affirmative action — at least give us the money necessary to enforce the law of the land, and they must do it soon.

Our third imperative is perhaps the most difficult of all. We must build one American community based on respect for one another and our shared values. We must begin with a candid conversation on the state of race relations today and the implications of Americans of so many different races living and working together as we approach a new century. We must be honest with each other. We have talked at each other and about each other for a long time. It's high time we all began talking with each other.

Over the coming year I want to lead the American people in a great and unprecedented conversation about race. In community efforts from Lima, Ohio, to Billings, Montana, in remarkable experiments in cross-racial communications like the uniquely named ERACISM, I have seen what Americans can do if they let down their guards and reach out their hands.

I have asked one of America's greatest scholars, Dr. John Hope Franklin, to chair an advisory panel of seven distinguished Americans to help me in this endeavor. He will be joined by former Governors Thomas Kean of New Jersey and William Winter of Mississippi, both great champions of civil rights; by Linda Chavez-Thompson, the Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO; by Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook, a minister from the Bronx and former White House Fellow; by Angela Oh, an attorney and Los Angeles community leader; and Robert Thompson, the chief executive officer of Nissan U.S.A. — distinguished leaders; leaders in their community.

I want this panel to help educate Americans about the facts surrounding issues of race; to promote a dialogue in every community of the land to confront and work through these issues; to recruit and encourage leadership at all levels to help breach racial divides, and to find, develop and recommend how to implement concrete solutions to our problems — solutions that will involve all of us in government, business and communities, and as individual citizens.

I will make periodic reports to the American people about our findings and what actions we all have to take to move America forward. This board will seek out and listen to Americans from all races and all walks of life. They are performing a great citizen service, but in the cause of building one America all citizens must serve.

As I said at the President's Summit on Service in Philadelphia, in our new era such acts of service are basic acts of citizenship. Government must play its role, but much of the work must be done by the American people as citizen service. The very effort will strengthen us and bring us closer together.

Honest dialogue will not be easy at first. We'll all have to get past defensiveness and fear and political correctness and other barriers to honesty. Emotions may be rubbed raw, but we must begin.

What do I really hope we will achieve as a country? If we do nothing more than talk, it will be interesting but it won't be enough. If we do nothing more than propose disconnected acts of policy, it would be helpful, but it won't be enough.

But if 10 years from now people can look back and see that this year of honest dialogue and concerted action helped to lift the heavy burden of race from our children's future, we will have given a precious gift to America.

I ask you all to remember just for a moment, as we have come through the difficult trial on the Oklahoma City bombing, remember that terrible day when we saw and wept for Americans and forgot for a moment that there were a lot of them from different races....

Remember the many faces and races of the Americans who did not sleep and put their lives at risk to engage in the rescue, the helping and the healing. **Remember how you have seen things like that in the natural disasters here in California.** That is the face of the real America. That is the face I have seen over and over again. That is the America, somehow, some way, we have to make real in daily American life.

Members of the graduating class, you will have a greater opportunity to live your dreams than any generation in our history, if we can make of our many different strands, one America — a nation at peace with itself, bound together by shared values and aspirations and opportunities and real respect for our differences.

I am a Scotch-Irish Southern Baptist, and I'm proud of it. But my life has been immeasurably enriched by the power of the Torah, the beauty of the Koran, the piercing wisdom of the religions of East and South Asia — all embraced by my fellow Americans. I have felt indescribable joy and peace in black and Pentecostal churches. I have come to love the intensity and selflessness of my Hispanic fellow Americans toward la familia. As a Southerner, I grew up on country music and county fairs and I still like them. But I have also revealed in the festivals and the food, the music and the art and the culture of Native Americans and Americans from every region in the world.

In each land I have visited as your President, I have felt more at home because some of their people have found a home in America. For two centuries, wave upon wave of immigrants have come to our shores to build a new life, drawn by the promise of freedom and a fair chance. Whatever else they found, even bigotry and violence, most of them never gave up on America. Even African-Americans, the first of whom we brought here in chains, never gave up on America.

Well-placed. Living in islands of isolation – some splendid and some sordid — is not the American way. Basing our self-esteem on the ability to look down on others is not the American way. Being satisfied if we have what we want and heedless of others who don't even have what they need and deserve is not the American way. We have torn down the barriers in our laws. Now we must break down the barriers in our lives, our minds and our hearts.

More than 30 years ago, at the high tide of the civil rights movement, the Kerner Commission said we were becoming two Americas, one white, one black, separate and unequal. Today, we face a different choice: [Will we become not two, but many Americas, separate, unequal and isolated? Or will we draw strength from all our people and our ancient faith in the quality of human dignity, to become the world's first truly multi-racial democracy?](#) That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America.

Class of 1997, I grew up in the shadows of a divided America, but I have seen glimpses of one America. You U.S. Society & Values have shown me [such a glimpse] today. That is the America you must make. It begins with your dreams. **So dream large, live your dreams, challenge your parents, and teach your children well.**

Source: USIA Electronic Journal, Vol. 2, No. 3, August 1997

Speech 2

Digital Divide

*Remarks by President Bill Clinton at Massachusetts Institute of Technology
June 5, 1998.*

Thank you, Dr. Vest. I think you're the real thing. (Laughter) Chairman d'Arbeloff, Dr. Gray, members of the Corporation, the faculty, especially to the members of the Class of 1998 and your families, the Class of 1948 and 1973, Mayor Duahay, members of the City Council. I thank the Brass Ensemble for the wonderful music before.

Let me say I am profoundly honored to be here on the same platform with Dr. David Ho, and grateful for the work he has done for humanity. (Applause)

When we met a few moments ago, in President Vest's office, with a number of the students and other officials of the university, I said you had a good representation of speakers today — the scientists and the scientifically challenged. (Laughter)

But my administration has been able to carry on in no small measure because of contributions from MIT. Sixteen MIT alumni and faculty members have served in important positions in this administration, including at least two who are here today — the former Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila Widnoll, and the Deputy Secretary of Energy Ernie Monic. Four of your faculty members and your President have done important work for us. I thank them all.

And I come here today with good news and bad news for the graduates. The good news is that this morning we had our latest economic report: unemployment is 4.3 percent; there have been 16 million new jobs in the last five years; there are numerous job openings that pay well. The bad news is that you now have no excuse to your parents if you don't go to work. (Laughter)

MIT is admired around the world as a crucible of creative thought, a force for progress, a place where dreams of generations become reality. The remarkable discoveries and inventions of the MIT community have transformed America. Early in your history, MIT was known for advances in geology and mining. By mid-century, MIT pioneered X rays and radar. Today, it's atomic lasers, artificial intelligence and biotechnology. MIT has done much to make this the American century. And MIT will do more to make America and the world a

better place in the 21st century, as we continue our astonishing journey through the information revolution — a revolution that began not as our own did here in Massachusetts, with a single shot heard around the world, but instead was sparked by many catalysts — in labs and libraries, start-ups and blue chips, homes and even dorm rooms across America and around the world.

I come today not to talk about the new marvels of science and engineering. You know far more about them than I do. Instead I come to MIT, an epicenter of the seismic shifts in our economy and society, to talk about how we can and must apply enduring American values to this revolutionary time; about the responsibilities we all have as citizens to include every American in the promise of this new age.

From the start, our nation's greatest mission has been the fulfillment of our founders' vision — opportunity for all, best secured by free people, working together toward better tomorrows and what they called «a more perfect union.»

Americans believe the spark of possibility burns deep within every child, that ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Our history can be understood as a constant striving on foreign fields and factory floors, in town halls and the corridors of Congress, to widen that circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to perfect our union to make real the promise of America. Every previous generation has been called upon to meet this challenge. And as we approach a new century and a new millennium, your generation must answer the call.

You enter the world of your tomorrows at a remarkable moment for America. Our country has the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the smallest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest national government in 35 years, and the highest rate of home ownership in our history. Such a remarkable time, a period of renewal, comes along all too rarely in life, as you will see. It gives us both the opportunity and the profound responsibility to address the larger, longer-term challenges to your future.

This spring I am speaking to graduates around the country about three of those challenges. Last month I went to the Naval Academy to talk about the new security challenges of the 21st century — terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, global climate change, the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Next week at Portland State in Oregon I will discuss how our nation's third great wave of immigration can either strengthen and unite America or weaken and divide it. And I thank Dr. Ho for what he said about immigration and our immigrants.

Today, I ask you to focus on the challenges of the Information Age. The dimensions of the Information Revolution and its limitless possibilities are widely accepted and generally understood, even by lay people. But to make the most of it we must also acknowledge that there are challenges, and we must make important

choices. We can extend opportunity to all Americans or leave many behind. We can erase lines of inequity or etch them indelibly. We can accelerate the most powerful engine of growth and prosperity the world has ever known, or allow the engine to stall.

History has taught us that choices cannot be deferred; they are made by action or inaction. There is no such thing as virtual opportunity. We cannot point and click our way to a better future. If we are to fulfill the complete promise of this new age, we must do more.

Already the Information Age is transforming the way we work. The high-tech industry employs more people today than the auto industry did at its height in the 1950s. Auto and steel industries in turn have been revived by new technologies. Among those making the most use of technology R&D are traditional American enterprises such as construction, transportation, and retail stores.

It's transforming the way we live. The typical American home now has much more — as much computing power as all of MIT did in the year most of the seniors here were born. It is transforming the way we communicate. On any business day, more than 30 times as many messages are delivered by e-mail as by the postal service. And today, this ceremony is being carried live on the Internet so that people all over the world can join in. It is transforming the way we learn. With the DVD technology available today, we can store more reference material in a 3-inch stack of disks than in all the stacks of Hayden Library. It is transforming the way our society works, giving millions of Americans the opportunity to join in the enterprise of building our nation as they fulfill their dreams.

The tools we develop today are bringing down barriers of race and gender, of income and age. The disabled are opening long closed doors of school, work, and human possibility. Small businesses are competing in worldwide markets once reserved only for powerful corporations. Before too long, our children will be able to stretch a hand across a keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting every painted, every symphony ever controlled.

For the very first time in our history, it is now possible for a child in the most isolated inner-city neighborhood or rural community to have access to the same world of knowledge at the same instant as the child in the most affluent suburb. Imagine the revolutionary democratizing potential this can bring. Imagine the enormous benefits to our economy, our society, if not just a fraction, but all young people can master this set of 21st century skills.

Just a few miles of here is the working class community of East Sommerville. It has sometimes struggled to meet the needs of population that is growing more diverse by the day. But at East Sommerville Community School, well-trained technology teachers with equipment and support from Time Warner Cable have begun to give 1st to 8th-graders and early and enormous boost in life. First graders are producing small books on

computers. Sixth graders are producing documentaries. The technology has so motivated them that almost all the 6th graders showed up at school to work on their computer projects over winter break.

That small miracle can be replicated in every school, rich and poor, across America. Yet, today, affluent schools are almost three times as likely to have Internet access in the classroom; white students more than twice as likely as black students to have computers in their homes.

We know from hard experience that unequal education hardens into unequal prospects. We know the Information Age will accelerate this trend. The three fastest growing careers in America are all in computer related fields, offering far more than average pay. Happily, the digital divide has begun to narrow, but it will not disappear of its own accord. History teaches us that even as new technologies create growth and new opportunity, they can heighten economic inequalities and sharpen social divisions. That is, after all, exactly what happened with the mechanization of agriculture and in the Industrial Revolution.

As we move into the Information Age we have it within our power to avoid these developments. We can reap the growth that comes from revolutionary technologies and use them to eliminate, not to widen, the disparities that exist. But until every child has a computer in the classroom and a teacher well-trained to help, until every student has the skills to tap the enormous resources of the Internet, until every high-tech company can find skilled workers to fill its high-wage jobs, America will miss the full promise of the Information Age.

We cannot allow this age of opportunity to be remembered also for the opportunities that were missed. Every day, we wake up and know that we have a challenge; now we must decide how to meet it. **Let me suggest three things.**

First, we must help you to ensure that America continues to lead the revolution in science and technology. Growth is a prerequisite for opportunity, and scientific research is a basic prerequisite for growth. Just yesterday in Japan, physicists announced a discovery that tiny neutrinos have mass. Now, that may not mean much to most Americans, but it may change our most fundamental theories — from the nature of the smallest subatomic particles to how the universe itself works, and indeed how it expands.

This discovery was made, in Japan, yes, but it had the support of the investment of the U.S. Department of Energy. This discovery calls into question the decision made in Washington a couple of years ago to disband the super-conducting supercollider, and it reaffirms the importance of the work now being done at the Fermi National Acceleration Facility in Illinois.

The larger issue is that these kinds of findings have implications that are not limited to the laboratory. They affect the whole of society — not only our economy, but our very view of life, our understanding of our relations with others, and our place in time.

In just the past four years, information technology has been responsible for more than a third of our economic expansion. Without government-funded research, computers, the Internet, communications satellites wouldn't have gotten started. When I became President, the Internet was the province of physicists, funded by a government research project. There were only 50 sites in the world. Now, as all of you know, we are adding pages to the Worldwide Web at users will come on this year. It all started with research, and we must do more. In the budget I submit to Congress for the year 2000 I will call for significant increases in computing and communications research. I have directed Dr. Neal Lane, my new Advisor for Science and Technology, to work with our nation's research community to prepare a detailed plan for my review.

Over the past 50 years our commitment to science has strengthen this country in countless ways. Scientific research has created vast new industries, millions of jobs, allowed America to produce the world's most bountiful food supplies and remarkable tools for fighting disease. Think of what today's investments will yield. Dr. Ho will unravel the agonizing riddles of AIDS. There will be a cure for cancer; a flourishing economy that will produce much less pollution and move back from the brink of potentially devastating global warming. High-speed wireless networks that bring distance learning, tele-medicine and economic opportunity to every rural community in America.

That is why, even as we balanced our budget for the first time in 29 years, we have increased our investments in science. This year I asked Congress for the largest increase in research funding in history — not just for a year, but sustained over five years. It is a core commitment that must be part of how every American, regardless of political party or personal endeavor, thinks about our nation and its mission. (Applause) Thank you — those are the people who received the research grants over there. (Laughter)

I want you to know that we are also working to address the threat to our prosperity posed by the Year 2000 Bug. I tried and tried to find out what the class hack project was for the Class of '98 and I failed. But I did learn that in the year 2000, the graduating class is proposing to roll all of our computers back by 100 years. And I am determined to thwart you. I will do my best. (Laughter).

The second thing we have to do is to make sure that the opportunities of the Information Age belong to all our children. Every young American must have access to these technologies. Two years ago in my State of the Union address, I challenged our nation to connect every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000. Thanks to unprecedented cooperation at national, state, and local levels, an outpouring of support from active citizens, and the decreasing costs of computers, we're on track to meet this goal.

Four years ago when you came to MIT, barely three percent of America's classrooms were connected. By this time next year, we will have connected well over half our classrooms including 100 percent of the classrooms in the nation's 50 largest urban school districts. (Applause)

But it is not enough to connect the classrooms. The services have to be accessed. You may have heard recently about something called the e-rate. It's the most crucial initiative we've launched to help connect our schools, our libraries, and our rural health centers to the Internet. Now some businesses have called on Congress to repeal the initiative. They say our nation cannot afford to provide discounts to these institutions of learning and health by raising a billion dollars or so a year from service charges on telecommunications companies — something that was agreed to in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that passed with overwhelming bipartisan majorities in both Houses.

I say we cannot afford not to have an e-rate. Thousands of poor schools and libraries and rural health centers are in desperate need of discounts. If we really believed that we all belong in the Information Age, then, at this sunlit moment of prosperity, we can't leave anyone behind in the dark.

Every one of you who understands this I urge to support the e-rate. Every one of you here who came from a poor inner-city neighborhood, who came from a small rural school district, who came perhaps from another country where this was just a distant dream, you know that there are poor children now who may never have a chance to go to MIT unless someone reaches out and gives them this kind of opportunity. Every child in America deserves the chance to participate in the information revolution. (Applause)

The third thing we have to do is to make sure that all the computers and the connections in the world don't go to waste because our children actually have 21st century skills. For five years now I've done my best to make education our number one domestic priority, creating HOPE Scholarships, expanding Pell Grants, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first 12 are today. We've passed tax credits, reformed the student loan program, expanded work-study, created AmeriCorps to open the doors of college to every young person who is willing to work for it.

We're working to make our public schools the best in the world, with smaller classes, better facilities, more master teachers and charter schools, higher standards, and end to social promotion. But the new economy also demands that our nation commit to technology literacy for every child. We shouldn't let a child graduate from middle school anymore without knowing how to use new technologies to learn.

Already, 10 states with an eye to the future have made technology literacy a requirement of graduation from high school. I believe we should meet this goal in the middle school years. I believe every child in every state

should leave middle school able to use the most current tools for learning, research, communication, and collaboration. And we will help every state to meet this goal.

If a state commits to adopt a technology literacy requirement, then we will help to provide the training that the teachers need. I propose to create a team of trained technology experts for every American middle school in every one of these states, and to create competitions over the next three years to encourage the development of high-quality educational software and educational web sites by students and professors in commercial software companies.

All students should feel as comfortable with a keyboard as a chalkboard; as comfortable with a laptop as a textbook. It is critical to ensuring that they all have opportunity in the world of the 21st century.

Today I pledge the resources and unrelenting efforts of our nation to renew our enduring values in the Information Age. But the challenges that we face cannot be met by government alone. We can only fulfil the promise of this revolution if we work together in the same way it was launched together, with creativity, resolve, a restless spirit of innovation.

While this mission requires the efforts of every citizen, those who fuel and enjoy the unparalleled prosperity of this moment have special responsibilities. The thriving new companies that line Route 128 in Silicon Valley — I challenge them to use their power to empower others, to invest in a school, embrace a community in need, endow an eager young mind with opportunity; not to rest until every one of our children is technology literate. Many of you are doing such work already and many of them are; but America needs all such companies to participate.

And, finally, to the graduates of the class of 1998, I, too, offer my congratulations and, as your President, my gratitude for your commitment, for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached and even surpassed. You, your parents and your friends should be very proud today, and very hopeful, for all the possibilities of this new age are open to you. You are at the peak of your powers and the world will rightly reward you for the work you do.

But to make the very most of your life and the opportunities you have been given, you, too, must rise to your responsibility to give something back to America of what you have been given. As the years pass your generation will be judged and you will begin to judge yourselves not only on what you do for yourself and your family, but on the contributions you make to others — to your country, your communities, your generation of children. When you turn your good fortune into a chance for others, you then will not only be leaders in science and industry, you will become the leaders of America. Twenty-first century America belongs to you — **take good care of it.**

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause)

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki> (21 July, 2008)

Speech3

President Clinton's Speech to the Democratic Party National Convention

August 14, 2000

This is the text of President Bill Clinton's address to the Democratic Party National Convention in Los Angeles. It was his last speech to a party convention as President.

Thank you. [Isn't it great to be in California?](#) Forty years ago Los Angeles launched John Kennedy and the New Frontier. Now, Los Angeles is launching the first President of the new century: Al Gore.

I am here tonight, above all, to say thank you. Thank you for giving me the chance to serve. Thank you for being so good to Hillary and Chelsea. I'm so proud of both of them. And thank you for supporting the New Democratic agenda that has taken our country to new heights of prosperity, progress, and peace. As always, the lion's share of credit goes to the American people - who do the work, raise the kids, dream the dreams.

Now, at this moment of unprecedented good fortune, our people face a fundamental choice - [are we going to keep this progress and prosperity going?](#)

There's only one answer: yes, we are.

But we can't take our future for granted. **Let's remember how we got here.**

Eight years ago, when our party met in New York, it was a far different time for America. Our economy was in trouble, our society was divided, our political system was paralyzed. Ten million of our fellow citizens were out of work. Interest rates were high. The deficit was \$290 billion and rising. After 12 years of Republican rule, the federal debt had quadrupled, imposing a crushing burden on our economy and our children.

Welfare rolls, crime, teen pregnancy, income inequality - all had been skyrocketing. And our government was part of the problem, not part of the solution.

I saw all this in very human terms when I traveled America in 1992: a child telling me her father broke down at the dinner table after losing his job; an older couple who had to choose between filling their shopping carts and filling their prescriptions; a hardworking immigrant in a hotel kitchen who said his son wasn't really free, because it wasn't safe for him to play in his neighborhood park.

I ran for President to change the future for those people. With new ideas rooted in enduring values: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and a community of all Americans.

You gave me that chance to turn those ideas and values into action, after I made one of the best decisions of my life: asking Al Gore to be my partner.

First, we proposed a new economic strategy: **Get rid of the deficit to reduce interest rates. Invest more in our people. And sell more American products abroad.**

We sent our plan to Congress. It passed by a single vote in both houses. In a deadlocked Senate, Al Gore cast the deciding vote. Not a single Republican supported it. Their leaders said it would increase the deficit, kill jobs, and give us a one-way ticket to recession. Time has not been kind to those predictions.

The Republicans said then they would not be held responsible for the results of our economic policies. I hope the American people will take them at their word.

Today, we are in the midst of the longest economic expansion in our history. More than 22 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 30 years, the lowest female unemployment in 40 years, the lowest Hispanic and African American unemployment on record, the highest home ownership rate in our history. In 1995, we turned back the largest cuts in history in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment; and proved two years later that we could find the way to balance the budget and protect our values. Today, we have gone from the largest deficits in history to the largest surpluses in history - and if we stay on course, we can make America debt-free for the first time since 1835.

For the first time in decades, wages are rising at all income levels. We have the lowest child poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest poverty rate for single mothers on record. The average family's income has gone up more than \$5,000 and, for African American families, even more. The number of families who own stock has grown by 40 percent.

Harry Truman's old saying has never been more true: If you want to live like a Republican, you should vote for the Democrats.

Our progress is about far more than economics. America is also more hopeful, more secure and more free.

We are more hopeful because we're turning our schools around, with higher standards, more accountability, and more investment. We have doubled funding for Head Start and provided after-school and mentoring to more than one million young people. We're putting 100,000 well-trained teachers in the early grades to reduce class size. Ninety-five percent of our schools are connected to the Internet.

Reading, math and SAT scores are up. And more students than ever are going on to college, thanks to the biggest expansion of college aid since the GI Bill.

Don't let anybody tell you that all children can't learn or that our public schools can't make the grade. Yes they can!

We are more hopeful because we ended welfare as we knew it. Now, those who can work, must work. On that, we and the Republicans agreed. But we Democrats also insisted on supporting good parenting - so that poor children don't go hungry or lose their health care, unmarried teens stay in school, and people get the job training, child care and transportation they need. It worked. Today, there are 7.5 million fewer Americans on welfare - and the welfare rolls have been cut in half.

We are more hopeful because of the way we cut taxes - to help Americans meet the challenges of work and child rearing. This year, our HOPE scholarship and Lifelong Learning tax cuts will help 10 million families pay for college. Our Earned Income Tax Credit will help 15 million families work their way into the middle class. Twenty-five million families will get a \$500 child tax credit. Our empowerment zone tax credits are bringing new business and new jobs to our hardest pressed communities. Today, the typical American family is paying a lower share of its income in federal income taxes than at any point during the last thirty-five years.

We are more hopeful because of the Family and Medical Leave Act, a bill that the previous Administration vetoed. They said it would cost jobs. Well, today, 22 million new jobs later, more than 20 million Americans have been able to take time off from work to care for a newborn or sick loved one. That's what it really means to be pro-family.

We are more secure because we cut crime - with tougher enforcement, more than 100,000 new community police officers, a ban on assault weapons, and the Brady Law, which has kept guns out of the hands of a half million felons, fugitives and stalkers. Today, crime is at a 25-year low.

We are more secure because of advances in health care - extending the life of the Medicare trust fund for 26 years; adding coverage for cancer screenings and cutting-edge clinical trials; coming closer to cures for dreaded diseases. We made sure people with disabilities could go to work without losing their health care and that people who switch jobs don't lose coverage. We dramatically improved diabetes care. We have provided health coverage to 2 million children. And for the first time ever, more than 90 percent are immunized against major childhood diseases.

We are more secure because our environment is cleaner. We've set aside more land in the lower 48 states than any administration since Teddy Roosevelt, saving national treasures like Yellowstone, the ancient California Redwoods, and the Florida Everglades. Our air is cleaner; our water is cleaner; our food is safer. And our economy is stronger.

We are more free because we are closer to One America of our dreams - celebrating our diversity, affirming our common humanity, opposing all forms of bigotry from church burnings to racial profiling, to murderous hate crimes. We're fighting for Employment Nondiscrimination and equal pay for women. We found ways to mend, not end, affirmative action. And we created AmeriCorps, which has given more than 150,000 of our young people a chance to earn money for college by serving our communities.

We are more secure and free because of our leadership for peace, freedom, and prosperity in the world - helping to end a generation of conflict in Northern Ireland; stopping brutal ethnic cleansing in the Balkans; and bringing the Middle East closer than ever to a comprehensive peace. We have built stronger ties to Africa, Asia, and our Latin American and Caribbean neighbors. We brought Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic into NATO. We are working with Russia to destroy nuclear weapons and materials. We are fighting head-on the new threats and injustices of the global age: terrorism, narco-trafficking, biological and chemical warfare, and the spread of AIDS. And in the great tradition of Jimmy Carter, who is here tonight, we are the leading force for human rights around the world.

The American military is the best trained, best equipped, most effective fighting force in the world. Our men and women in uniform have shown it time and again: in Bosnia, Kosovo, Haiti, and Iraq. I can tell you that their strength, their spirit, their courage, and their commitment to freedom have never been greater. Any adversary who believes those who say otherwise is making a grave mistake.

That's the record. As that LA detective Joe Friday used to say, «just the facts ma'am.» **Let's remember the standard the Republicans used** to have for whether a party should continue in office - my fellow Americans, [are we better off today than we were eight years ago?](#)

You bet we are.

But we're not just better off, we're also a better country - more decent, more humane, more united. Now, that's the purpose of prosperity.

Since 1992, America has grown not just economically, but as a community. Jobs are up, but so are adoptions. The debt is down, but so is teen pregnancy. We are becoming more diverse and more united.

My fellow Americans, tonight we can say with confidence: we built our bridge to the 21st Century. We crossed it together. And we're not going back.

To those who say the progress of these eight years was an accident, that we just coasted along, let's be clear: America's success was not a matter of chance; it was a matter of choice.

Today America faces another choice, every bit as momentous as the one eight years ago. For what a nation does with good fortune is just as stern a test of its character, values and vision as how it deals with adversity.

This is a big election - with great consequences for every American - because the differences between our candidates and their visions are so profound.

Consider this: America would already have a real patients' bill of rights, a minimum wage increase, stronger equal pay laws for women, and middle class tax cuts for college tuition and long-term care for elderly and disabled family members, if the Democratic Party were in the majority today, led by Speaker Gephardt and Majority Leader Daschle. Come November, we will be.

Every House and Senate race is important. But if you'll give me one moment of personal privilege, I'd like to say a word about Hillary. When I first met her 30 years ago, she already had an abiding passion to help children. She's pursued it ever since. Her first job was with the Children's Defense Fund.

Every year I was governor she took lots of time away from her law practice to work for better schools, children's health and jobs for parents who lived in poor areas. When I became President she became a full-time advocate for her lifetime cause. What a job she's done. She championed the Family Leave law, children's health insurance, and increased support for foster children and adoptions. She wrote a best-selling book about caring for our children, and then she took care of them by giving all the profits to children's charities. For thirty years, she's been there for all our kids.

She's been a great First Lady. She's always been there for our family. And she'll always be there for the families of New York and America.

The biggest choice you have to make is in the presidential race. Now, you know how I feel. But it's not my decision to make. It's yours. I just want to tell you a few things I know about Al Gore.

Al and I have worked closely together for eight years now. In the most challenging moments, when we faced the most difficult issues - of war and peace, of taking on powerful special interests - he was always there. He always told me what he thought was right.

Everybody knows Al Gore is thoughtful and hard-working. I can tell you personally he is one strong leader. In 1993, there was nobody around the table more willing to make the tough choices to balance the budget the right way - and take the tough stands against those who would do it the wrong way on the backs of the poor and working people. I've seen it time and again. Whether it was reforming welfare; protecting the environment; closing the digital divide; or bringing jobs to rural and urban America, there has been no stronger champion than Al Gore.

More than anybody else I've known in public life, Al Gore understands the future and how sweeping changes and scientific breakthroughs affect Americans' daily lives.

Finally, I'd like you to know Al Gore is a profoundly good man, who loves his children more than life. He has a wonderful wife who has fought against homelessness and for the cause of mental health, bringing it into the sunlight of our national life. America owes Tipper Gore our thanks.

Al has picked a great partner in Joe Lieberman. Hillary and I have known Joe for 30 years. I supported him in his first race for public office in 1970, when I learned he'd been a Freedom Rider, going into danger, to register black voters in the then segregated South. It's no surprise Al Gore picked the leader of the New Democrats to be his Vice President. Joe Lieberman has supported our efforts to reform welfare, reduce crime, protect the environment and grow the economy. Together they will keep working to put people and progress over partisanship.

Most important, Al Gore and Joe Lieberman will keep our prosperity going by paying down the debt, investing in education and health care, moving more people from welfare to work, and providing family tax cuts that we can afford. In stark contrast, Republicans want to spend every dime of our projected surplus and then some on big tax cuts - leaving nothing for education or Medicare prescription drugs, nothing to extend the life of Medicare and Social Security, nothing in case the projected surpluses don't come in.

You wouldn't sign a binding contract today to spend all your projected income for the next ten years, leaving nothing for your families' basic needs, for emergencies, or for a cushion in case the raise you expect doesn't come in. You wouldn't do that. And America shouldn't, either.

Al Gore and Joe Lieberman embody the Democratic commitment to building One America: they believe in civil rights and equal opportunity. They will protect a woman's right to choose. They believe the people you're buying your soft drinks and popcorn from here at the Staples Center deserve the same chance they have to send their children to college.

My fellow Americans, to serve as President at the dawn of a new era in human history has been a joy, an honor, and a privilege. I have done everything I could to empower the American people - with their amazing optimism, imagination, and hard work — to turn our country around and move us forward together. But the best is yet to be - if we make the right choices.

In February the American people achieved the longest economic expansion in history. The last time we had an expansion this long was in the 1960s. I remember it well. When I graduated from high school in 1964, I assumed, like most Americans, that our economy was on automatic - nothing could derail it. We thought our civil rights problems would be solved in Congress and the courts. We never dreamed Vietnam would so divide and wound our nation.

Before we knew it, there were riots in the streets. Leaders I adored as a young man - Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King - were killed. Lyndon Johnson, a President I admired for all he did for civil rights, the elderly and the poor, said he would not run again because our land was so divided. The next election took America on a far different, more divisive course. And within months after that election, the last longest economic expansion in history was, itself, history.

My fellow Americans, I have waited over 30 years to see my country once again in a position to build the future of our dreams for our children. We are a great and good people. We have an even better chance this time, with no great internal crisis and no great external threat. Still, I have lived long enough to know that opportunities must be seized or they will be lost.

Fifty-four years ago this week, I was born in a summer storm to a young widow in a small southern town. America gave me the chance to live my dreams. I have tried to give you a better chance to live yours. Now, with

hair grayer and wrinkles deeper, but with the same optimism and hope I brought to the work I love eight years ago, my heart is filled with gratitude.

My fellow Americans, the future of our country is in your hands. You must think hard, feel deeply, and choose wisely.

Remember, keep putting people first. Keep building those bridges. And don't stop thinking about tomorrow.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki> (July 7, 2008).