

the century. And Time magazine selected Mr. Einstein, which I think is a good selection. They could have selected Gandhi; that would have been a good selection. They could have selected Franklin Roosevelt or Winston Churchill. I argued for Roosevelt. I spent a lot of time; I went back and I re-read a lot of the things I'd read about Roosevelt.

I'll tell you an interesting story. Shortly after Roosevelt contracted polio—keep in mind, he was almost 40 years old when he got it. He had run for Vice President of the United States at the tender age of 38. He was a dashing, handsome, thin man; he cut a great figure on the campaign trail in 1920. And he seemed to have the world at his finger tips. And there he was, just a couple of years later, hobbled by polio.

And he nourished the dream for many years that he would, in fact, walk again. And he also knew that, whatever happened, he had to keep fighting. So at length, he decided he would take an office in New York, in a highrise, and he would actually try to go to work there. But because he wanted to leave open the possibility of walking again, he would not be seen in his wheelchair.

So he had these big braces, and at the time they were heavy and awkward and impossible to navigate. And he walked into this New York highrise the first day, and he got up, and he fell flat on his face. And there was no one there to pick him up. And everyone was staring

at him. Now keep in mind, just a year or so ago he had run for Vice President. And even though the Democrats had lost, no one thought it was his fault. And he was alone, lying on his face in New York. And he pushed himself up off the floor and threw his head back and laughed and smiled and drug himself across the floor to the wall, straightened his braces out, and pulled himself up.

What is the lesson in that? Life is 50 percent what happens to you and 50 percent in how you respond to what happens to you. You can lose a lot of options in life, but as long as you're breathing and thinking, you've still got some left—a large number. The thing is to make the most of the moment, with heart.

I think that your Member of Congress has done that. I admire her, and I'm honored to be here for her tonight.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to reception hosts Jenard and Gail Gross; Mrs. Gross' mother, Ida Fink; Mayor Lee P. Brown of Houston; former Secretary of the Treasury Lloyd Bentsen and his wife, B.A.; Billie Carr, chair, Texas Democratic Committee; gospel singer Kathy Taylor-Brown; actress Goldie Hawn; Reform Party founder H. Ross Perot; actor Chevy Chase; and Representative Jackson Lee's husband, Elwyn C. Lee, and son, Jason C.B. Lee.

## Remarks to the Texas Legislative Victory Fund in Houston

January 11, 2000

You know, when Debbie got into that, how we were probably related to each other—[laughter]—I did not know where she was going with it. I thought she was going to do some hillbilly shtick about how our eyes were too close set—[laughter]—or I could offer to play you that banjo song from "Deliverance." I didn't know what was going on there for a while. [Laughter] And after I became President, I found that I had all these relatives I didn't know existed. [Laughter] They just kept cropping up all over, and most of them had more limited resources than I did.

I'll tell you one real quick story. I did get one letter from a woman way up in her eighties in northeast Louisiana who showed me how John Grisham and I were like tenth cousins. And I wrote him a letter and said, "Praise God, you're the first one that has any money"—[laughter]—"come to the White House tomorrow." [Laughter] And it was really funny. It turned out it was true. She wrote him identical letters. We checked our lineage, and we turned out to be kin. And one of us is still claiming it. [Laughter]