

“Remarks to Burrill Lumber Employees in Medford, Oregon.”
Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: George
H. W. Bush, September 14, 1992.

Sept. 14 / Administration of George Bush, 1992

communities. And I have come here to tell you that I will not stand for a solution that puts at least 32,000 people out of work. I can tell you, that solution will not stand.

I have come here to tell you that we haven't forgotten about the human factor. Because in the end, no matter how you look at it, that's the most important factor of all.

I have come here today to tell you that we can restore the balance, and we must

restore the balance. And with your help, we will restore the balance.

Thank you, and may God bless you. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you all very much. Thank you.

Note: The President spoke at 1:09 p.m. at Vaagen Brothers Lumber, Inc. In his remarks, he referred to Duane Vaagen, president of the company.

Remarks to Burrill Lumber Employees in Medford, Oregon
September 14, 1992

The President. Mike, thank you, sir. Thank you very—He's getting our props ready for this presentation. [*Laughter*] Now, thank you so much, Mike, for the introduction. Thanks to your wonderful dad and to the entire Burrill family and all of you for letting me visit here today.

Last week in Detroit, I released my Agenda for American Renewal. And the agenda was based on a fundamental premise: that the challenges that America faces, foreign, domestic, economic, and yes, environmental, are connected. The solution to one cannot be divorced from the solution to the other, and we need an integrated approach.

We need to bring this integrated approach to the relationship between the economy and the environment, too. Environmental protection and economic growth must go hand in hand, and they cannot be divorced from each other. This morning, I spoke in California, down in San Diego, about ways to bring them together. But frankly, I believe that when it comes to the Endangered Species Act and its application here in the Northwest, the balance has been lost.

Like many of you, I love to hunt and hike and to fish. Like you, I have learned through a lifetime of experience to appreciate and respect the great outdoors, the wilderness. I know that you, you particularly who have chosen to live in these marvelous parts of the woods, respect and revere these forests as others never can. And you resent

the implication that earning your livelihood here, with sound management of the forest, makes you less of a conservationist than the city dweller or the suburbanite.

For the past 4 years, my administration and I have worked hard to protect the environment, and we've accomplished a great deal. Four years ago, I promised Americans a new Clean Air Act. For over a decade, no one could get it done, but we did. Our Clean Air Act reduces smog in our cities and gets toxic pollutants out of the air and will cut acid rain in half.

Four years ago, I promised that I would protect the environmentally sensitive areas of our coasts from the offshore drilling. And today, there is no drilling off the coast of California, off the coasts of Washington and Oregon, and off the Florida Keys and off the New England coast. We banned that ocean drilling until the year 2000.

Then, 4 years ago, I promised to be a good steward of our public lands. We have added thousands of miles of trails for Americans like you who love the outdoors, and we're reopening and upgrading campsites all across this great country. We've added a million and a half acres to our national parks and wildlife areas and forests and recreation lands.

But the fact is that every American cares about the environment, and most consider themselves environmentalists. That is particularly true here in the Pacific Northwest. Yet Americans today realize that we can protect our lands while also using them for

the people's benefit. They understand the need for wilderness and recreation areas, as well as the need for paper for our schools and offices and timber for new homes.

Being out here in the great Pacific, the Northwest, I'm reminded of Teddy Roosevelt, the very first President who focused the attention of the entire Nation on the condition of our natural resources. Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Wise forest protection does not mean the withdrawal of forest resources from contributing their full share to the welfare of the people." What President Roosevelt had in mind, and what the American people have always wanted, is balance.

Not far from here, in the State of Washington, is a timber town called Forks. Forks supported a mill, and the mill supported a community. And because of the lack of timber, the mill had to close. Today unemployment in Forks is at 20 percent. The car dealership is closed; clothing store is gone; movie theater, shut down. Domestic violence complaints have doubled, just in the past year. Now, Forks is in crisis for a simple reason: the balance has been lost. I've come here because we must restore the balance.

Listen to one of the Senators, Senator Mark Hatfield, from here, who was a co-sponsor of this original Endangered Species Act back in '72. This year he wrote, "There is no question that the act is being applied in a manner far beyond what any of us envisioned when we wrote it 20 years ago." The Endangered Species Act was intended as a shield for species against the effects of major construction projects like highways and dams, not a sword aimed at jobs, families, and communities of entire regions like the Northwest.

But today, when harvesting on Federal timberland is stopped outright by 13 different lawsuits, under 7 different statutes, each inconsistent with the other, the balance has been lost. And it's time to fight for jobs, for families, and for communities. When hundreds of mills have been shut down, thousands of timber workers thrown out of work, and revenues for schools and other local services have been slashed, the balance has been lost. And it's time to fight for jobs, families, and communities.

So the time has come to talk sense about

the Endangered Species Act, about the spotted owl, and about the management of our forests, because it is my firm belief that people and their jobs deserve protection, too.

Let me be clear. The basic purpose of the Endangered Species Act is good and noble: save the rare and threatened species of this country. But today, the act and other laws are being used by people with extreme views, particularly here in this State, here in Oregon, to achieve in the courts what no sane elected official would ever vote for, the complete lockup of the most productive forests in the entire United States.

The entire Endangered Species Act, as rigidly interpreted by some courts and as driven by the Congress, has forced an extreme approach and created an unnecessarily tragic situation here in the Northwest. Massive areas of Federal land are being set aside for the owl, virtually ignoring the fact that two-thirds of the Northwest's old-growth forests are already designated as parks, wilderness, or other classifications that prevent harvesting. Each pair of owls gets 3,500 acres to itself. Meanwhile, jobs and families and communities are being wiped out in the process.

The other side has been talking about a "false choice." And they claim that this timber crisis is just politics. The simple fact is this: The false choice is being driven by extremists who are twisting the Endangered Species Act and its application to the northern spotted owl.

Now let's set the record straight. We've always worked within the parameters of the law to address this problem. But I can tell you this: The law is broken, and it must be fixed. And we have asked the Congress for funds to cut enough timber in this region to keep people employed. But these conflicting laws allow challenge after challenge. We convened the "God squad" to exempt 13 timber sales here in southern Oregon from jeopardy opinions from the Fish and Wildlife Service, and every one of those sales is now enjoined. So this year we sent Congress an alternative plan, a preservation plan, if you will, that would save 17,000 jobs compared to the recovery plan required by the act. And Congress has failed to act on

my plan.

My friends, it is time to consider the human factor in the spotted owl equation. My opponent talks about putting people first. Well, we can start right here in the Pacific Northwest.

So here is what I propose:

First, I will not sign an extension of the Endangered Species Act unless it gives greater consideration to jobs, to families, and to communities. I will not sign it without a specific plan in place to harvest enough timber to keep timber families working in 1993 and beyond. It is time to make people more important than owls.

Second, I will fight to end the injunctions that have put an economic stranglehold on the Northwest, in order to free up the timber that we need today, because the families and the timber communities of the Pacific Northwest need relief, and they need it now. I call upon the United States Congress to pass my plan to produce 2.6 billion board feet of timber from Forest Service lands in the Northwest region next year, and at least 500 million board feet on BLM land. And I ask Congress to tie that plan to language that prevents lawsuits from stopping reasonable harvests with reasonable species protection. It is time to put people ahead of process, and the Congress must understand that.

Third, my administration will speed the harvesting of dead or dying timber that has been dangerously building up during a 7-year drought. One step is our new rule to allow more timber salvage operations to occur without triggering some of the time-consuming requirements that are blocking progress. This will reduce the risk of fire, and it will provide up to 450 million board feet of timber for the mills in the near term. In other words, it's time to protect jobs with timber that's available now and put the mills back to work.

Finally, I call upon the Congress today to pass the spotted owl preservation plan. That's the bill sponsored by Senators Packwood and Hatfield and Slade Gorton, which they call "The Northern Spotted Owl Preservation and Northwest Economic Stabilization Act of 1992." It's a long name, but it's a good bill. And it's time to preserve both owls and jobs, jobs in the timber indus-

try and in agriculture, transportation, and in recreation as well, where they, too, are threatened by this Endangered Species Act.

Now a word about my opponent. My opponent's approach to this problem—and I'll try to be fair—no, but his approach to this problem, to your jobs, really is—and look at the record—double-speak. When he spoke in Pennsylvania, Governor Clinton spoke in Pennsylvania, he said what the Sierra Club wanted to hear. They concluded that Governor Clinton was, quote, "promising the protection of old-growth forests in the Pacific Northwest." And then, when he heard I was coming here, Mr. Clinton cynically held out false hope to timber families by promising another meeting.

There have already been more than 40 bipartisan meetings of the Northwest congressional delegation on this issue for 3 years. Now, look, here are the studies. We've produced a pile of studies and proposals this high. And the only good reason for the timber industry—the only good news is all the trees it took to print all these darn reports. Look at them. And so I say to Governor Clinton: No more studies.

Help me change the law; that's what needs to happen. The difference on this is clear. I will; I will change it. It's as simple as this: My opponent will not fight to change the law to restore balance.

Now I know that Mr. Clinton, and Governor Doublespeak, I call him—[laughter]—but nevertheless is getting famous for being on both sides of these issues. But do you want to know the real views of the other ticket? I hate to bring this word up, but Senator Gore—

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. He wrote it in black and white in his book before he knew that he'd be out there pandering for votes. And in his book, Senator Gore said this, and I quote, "I helped lead"—I want to get it right here—"I helped lead the successful fight to prevent the overturning of protections for the spotted owl." And he wrote, and this is an exact quote, "the jobs will be lost anyway." I challenge Governor Clinton: Do you agree with your running mate? Do you endorse the book that you once called "magnificent"? It is time we worried not only about

endangered species but about endangered jobs.

I am here to tell you that I'm the one who will respect the wildlife, yes. I think we all do. We all agree. But I'm also the one who will fight for jobs, for families, and for communities.

I have come here to tell you that I will not stand for a solution that puts at least 32,000 people out of work. It will not stand. I mean it.

I've come here to tell you that we haven't forgotten about the human factor. Because in the end, in the final analysis when all the campaigns are over and all the charge and countercharge takes place, the human factor, that is the most important factor of all.

I've come here today to tell you that we can restore the balance. We must restore the balance. And with your help, we will restore the balance.

May God bless your families, your jobs, your hopes for our great country. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you all very, very much. Thank you. Thank you all.

Note: The President spoke at 6:30 p.m. at Burrill Lumber Co. In his remarks, he referred to company officers Michael Burrill, president and general manager, and Eugene Burrill, owner. The President also referred to the Endangered Species Act Exemption Committee ("God squad").

Remarks to the National Guard Association in Salt Lake City, Utah *September 15, 1992*

Thank you all so much. May I first thank General Ensslin for being my host here today, and all of you for that wonderful reception. And of course, I want to single out Utah's Governor, Norm Bangerter, who's just done a superb job for this—[*ap- plause*]. I see we have some Utah Guard folks here. And while you're clapping, Jim Hanson, a Member of the United States Congress, doing a great job for our country. And may I salute all the leaders of the National Guard.

I understand, with some embarrassment, I understand that some of you may have had to go through room changes to—[*laughter*—sorry about that. I really feel badly about that. I apologize for any inconvenience. But I really am very, very pleased to be here with you.

I was thinking of giving a political speech, a real stemwinder with catchy sound bites, the usual biting insults. Then I got to thinking: I'm not going to do that; you've already sacrificed enough for your country. [*Laughter*]

Instead, I'd like to talk about a more serious subject: America's national defense and, really, our place in the world. I firmly believe that just because we face stiff chal-

lenges at home, and we do, it doesn't mean that America can pull in its wings and ignore the world outside our borders. Think of the world of change that we've seen the past few years. Today, the Berlin Wall, the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet Union itself, Soviet empire, all are gone, swept away by the most powerful idea known to man, the undeniable desire of every individual to be free. Remember the Communists' claim that history was on their side? Well, today, the "dominoes" all fall in democracy's way.

We must recognize these events for what they were: a vindication of our ideals, but also a victory for the men and women who fought for freedom, because this triumph didn't just happen. Imperial communism didn't just fall. It was pushed, and the National Guard was pushing every inch of the way. From Concord and Lexington Green to the sands of Desert Storm, guardsmen or their forefathers have served with distinction in every major war that America ever fought.

In August of 1990, within days of my decision to draw a line in the sand, more than 4,000 volunteers from National Guard units all across America were activated, airborne