



## Dale Bumpers



### *Closing Defense Arguments at the Impeachment Trial of William Jefferson Clinton*

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Mr. Chief Justice, our distinguished House managers from the House of Representatives, colleagues:

I have seen the look of disappointment on many faces because I know a lot of people thought you were rid of me once and for all. And I've taken a lot of ribbing this afternoon, but I have seriously negotiated with some people, particularly on this side by an offer to walk out and not deliver this speech in exchange for a few votes. I understand three have it under active consideration.

It is a great joy to see you, and it is especially pleasant to see an audience which represents about the size of the cumulative audience I had over a period of 24 years. And it is especially pleasant to see an audience which represents about the size of the cumulative audience I had over a period of 24 years.

I came here today for a lot of reasons. One was that I was promised a 40-foot cord -- and I've been shorted 28 feet. Chris Dodd said that he didn't want me in his lap, and I assume that he arranged for the cord to be shortened.

I want to especially thank some of you for your kind comments in the press when it received some publicity that I would be here to close the debate on behalf of the White House Counsel and the President. I was a little dismayed by Senator Bennett's remark. He said, "Yes, Senator Bumpers is a great speaker, but I never -- he was never persuasive with me because I never agreed with him." I thought he could have done better than that.



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You can take some comfort, colleagues, in the fact that I'm not being paid. And when I'm finished you will probably think the White House got their money's worth.

I have told audiences that over 24 years that I went home almost every weekend and returned usually about dusk on Sunday evening. And you know the plane ride into National Airport when you can see the magnificent Washington Monument and this building from the window of the airplane. And I've told these students at the university in a small, liberal arts school at home, Hendricks, after 24 years of that, literally hundreds of times, I never failed to get goose bumps.

Same thing is true about this chamber. I can still remember as though it were yesterday the awe I felt when I first stepped into this magnificent chamber so full of history. So beautiful. And last Tuesday, as I returned after only a short three-week absence, I still felt that same sense of awe that I did the first time I walked in this chamber.

Colleagues, I come here with some sense of reluctance.

The President and I have been close friends for 25 years. We've fought so many battles back home together in our beloved Arkansas, we tried mightily all of my years as Governor and his, and all of my years in the Senate when he was Governor, to raise the living standards in the Delta area of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana where poverty is unspeakable, with some measure of success -- not nearly enough. We tried to provide health care for the lesser among us, for those who are well-off enough they can't get on welfare, but not making enough to buy health insurance.

We have fought, above everything else, to improve the educational standards for a state that, for so many years, was at the bottom of the list or near the bottom of the list of income, and we have stood side-by-side to save beautiful, pristine areas in our state from environmental degradation.

We even crashed a twin-engine Beach Bonanza trying to get to the *Gillette Coon Supper*, a political event that one misses at his own risk. And we crashed this plane on a snowy evening on a rural airport, off the runway, sailing out across the snow, jumped out, jumped out and ran away unscathed, to the dismay of every budding politician in Arkansas.

The President and I have been together hundreds of times -- at parades, dedications, political events, social events. And in all of those years, and all those hundreds of times we've been together, both in public and in private, I have never one time seen the President conduct himself in a way that did not reflect the highest credit on him, his family, his state, and his beloved nation.

The reason I came here today with some reluctance -- please don't misconstrue that. It has nothing to do with my feelings about the President, as I've already said -- but it's because we are from the same state and we are long friends and I know that that necessarily diminishes to some extent the effectiveness of my words.



So if Bill Clinton the man, Bill Clinton the friend were the issue here, I'm quite sure I would not be doing this. But it is the weight of history on all of us and it is my reverence for that great document -- and you heard me rail about it for 24 years -- that we call our Constitution, the most sacred document to me next to the holy Bible.

These proceedings go right to the heart of our Constitution where it deals with impeachment, the part that provides the gravest punishment for just about anybody, the President, even though the framers said we're putting this in to protect the public, not to punish the President.

Ah, colleagues, you have such an awesome responsibility. My good friend, the senior senator from New York, has said it well. He says, this -- a decision to convict holds the potential for destabilizing the office of [the] presidency. And those 400 historians -- and I know some have made light of that about those historians -- are they just friends of Bill? And last evening, I went over that list of -- of historians, many of whom I know, among them .  
In the South we love him. He is the preeminent southern historian in the nation. I promise you, he may be a Democrat, he may even be a -- he may be even a friend of the President. When you talk about integrity, he is the walking personification, exemplification of integrity.

Well, colleagues, I have heard so many adjectives to describe this gathering and these proceedings. "Historic," "memorable," "unprecedented," "awesome" -- all of those words, all of those descriptions are apt. And to those I would add the word "dangerous" -- dangerous not only for the reasons I just stated, but because it's dangerous to the political process and it's dangerous to the unique mix of pure democracy and republican government Madison and his colleagues so brilliantly crafted, and which has sustained us for 210 years.

Mr. Chief Justice, this is what we lawyers call "dicta." This costs you nothing. It's extra. But the more I study that document and those four months at Philadelphia in 1787, the more awed I am. And you know what Madison did? The brilliance was in its simplicity. He simply said: Man's nature is to get other people to dance to their tune. Man's nature is to abuse his fellow man sometimes. And he said, the way to make sure that the majorities don't abuse the minorities, and the way to make sure that the bullies don't run over the weaklings is to provide the same rights for everybody.

And I had to think about that a long time before I delivered my first lecture at the University of Arkansas last week. And it made so much sense to me. But the danger, as I say, is to the political process. And dangerous for reasons feared by the framers about legislative control of the executive.

That single issue and how to deal with impeachment was debated off and on for the entire four months of the constitutional convention. But the word "dangerous" is not mine. It's Alexander Hamilton's -- brilliant, good-looking guy.

Mr. Ruff quoted extensively on Tuesday afternoon in his brilliant statement here. He quoted Alexander Hamilton precisely, and it's a little arcane; it isn't easy to understand. So if I may, at the expense of being slightly repetitious, let me paraphrase what Hamilton said. He said the Senate had a unique role in participating with the Executive branch in appointments.



And, two, it had a role -- it had a role in participating with the Executive in the character of a court for the trial of impeachments.

But he said -- and I must say this, and you all know it -- he said it would be difficult to get a - - what he called well constituted court from wholly elected members. He said passions would agitate the whole community and divide it between those who were friendly and those who had inimical interest to the accused, namely the President. And then he said -- and this is his words -- the greatest danger was that the decision would be based on the comparative strength of the parties rather than the innocence or guilt of the President.

You have a solemn oath. You have taken a solemn oath to be fair and impartial. I know you all. I know you as friends, and I know you as honorable men, and I am perfectly satisfied to put that in your hands under your oath.

This is the only caustic thing I will say in these remarks this afternoon, but the question is, "How did we come to be here?" We're here because of a five-year, relentless, unending investigation of the President. Fifty billion dollars, hundreds of FBI agents fanning across the nation examining in detail the microscopic lives of people. Maybe the most intense investigation not only of a President but of anybody -- ever.

I feel strongly about this state just because of my state, and what we have endured. So you'll have to excuse me, but that investigation has also shown that the judicial system in this country can and does get out of kilter, unless it's controlled, because there are innocent people -- innocent people who have been financially and mentally bankrupt[ed].

One woman told me two years ago that her legal fees were 95,000 dollars. She said I don't have \$95,000 and the only asset I have is the equity in my home, which just happens to correspond to my legal fees of 95,000 dollars. And she says the only thing I can think of to do is to deed my home. This woman was innocent; never charged; testified before the grand jury a number of times. And since that time, she has accumulated an additional \$200,000 in attorney fees. Javert's pursuit of Jean Valjean in "Les Miserables" pales by comparison.

I doubt that there are few people, maybe nobody in this body, who could withstand such scrutiny. And in this case those summoned were terrified not because of their guilt, but because they felt guilt or innocence was not really relevant.

But after all of those years and 50 million dollars of Whitewater, Travelgate, Filegate, you name it, nothing, nothing, the President was found guilty of nothing, official or personal.

We're here today because the President suffered a terrible moral lapse, a marital infidelity; not a breach of the public trust, not a crime against society, the two things Hamilton talked about in Federalist Paper number 65 -- I recommend it to you before you vote -- but it was a breach of his marriage vows.



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It was a breach of his family trust. It is a sex scandal. H.L. Mencken said one time, "When you hear somebody say, 'This is not about money' -- it's about money." And when you hear somebody say, "This is not about sex" -- it's about sex.

You pick your own adjective to describe the President's conduct. Here are some that I would use: "indefensible," "outrageous," "unforgivable," "shameless." I promise you the President would not contest any of those or any others.

But there's a human element in this case that has not even been mentioned, and that is the President and Hillary and Chelsea are human beings. This is intended only as a mild criticism of our distinguished friends in the House, but as I listened to the presenters -- to the managers make their opening statements, they were remarkably well prepared, and they spoke eloquently. More eloquent than I really had hoped.

But when I talk about the human element, I talk about what I thought was, on occasion, unnecessarily harsh and pejorative descriptions of the President. I thought that the language should have been tempered somewhat, to acknowledge that he is the President. To say constantly that the President lied about this and lied about that, as I say, I thought that was too much for a family that has already been about as decimated as a family can get.

The relationship between husband and wife, father and child has been incredibly strained, if not destroyed. There's been nothing but sleepless nights, mental agony for this family for almost five years -- day after day, from accusations of having assassinated, or had Vince Foster assassinated on down. It has been bizarre.

But I didn't sense any compassion, and perhaps none is deserved. The President has said for all to hear that he misled, he deceived, he did not want to be helpful to the prosecution. And he did all of those things to his family, to his friends, to his staff, to his cabinet and to the American people.

Why would he do that? Well, he knew this whole affair was about to bring unspeakable embarrassment and humiliation on himself, his wife whom he adored, and a child that he worshipped with every fiber in his body, and for whom he would happily have died to spare her this or to ameliorate her shame and her grief.

The House managers have said shame and embarrassment is no excuse for lying. Well, the question about lying, that's your decision. But I can tell you, you put yourself in his position, and you've already had this big moral lapse, as to what you would do. We are none of us perfect. Sure, you say, he should have thought of all that beforehand. And indeed he should. Just as Adam and Eve should have. Just as you and you and you and you, and millions of other people who have been caught in similar circumstances, should have thought of it before.

And I say none of us are perfect.



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I remember, Chaplain, the chaplain's not here, is he? It's too bad. He ought to hear this story. This evangelist was holding this great revival meeting, and at the close of one of his meetings he said, "Is there anybody in this audience who has ever known anybody who even comes close to the perfection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?" Nothing. He repeated the challenge, and finally a little bitty guy the in back of the audience kind of held up his hand. And he said, "You -- are you saying you've known such a person? Stand up." He stood up, and he said, "Tell us. Share it with us." Who was it?" He said, "My wife's first husband."

Make no mistake about it, removal from office is punishment; it is unbelievable punishment, even though the framers didn't quite see it that way. Again they said, and it bears repeating over and over again, they said they wanted to protect the people. But I can tell you this: the punishment of removing Bill Clinton from office would pale compared to the punishment he has already inflicted on himself.

There's a feeling in this country that somehow or other Bill Clinton's gotten away with something. Mr. Leader, I can tell you, he hasn't gotten away with anything. And the people are saying: Please don't protect us from this man; 76 percent of us think he's doing a fine job. Sixty-five to seventy percent of us don't want him removed from office.

And some have said, "We're not respected on the world scene." The truth of the matter is, this nation has never enjoyed greater prestige in the world than we do right now. You saw Carlos Menem, the President of Argentina, just here recently, say to the President, "Mr. President, the world needs you." The war in Bosnia is under control. The President has been as tenacious as anybody could be about Middle East peace. And in Ireland, actual peace, and maybe the Middle East will make it. And he has the Indians and the Pakistanis talking to each other as they've never talked to each other in recent times. Vaclav Havel said, "Mr. President, for the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization there's no doubt in my mind that it was your personal leadership that made this historic development possible." King Hussein: Mr. President, I've had the privilege of being a friend of the United States and Presidents since the late President Eisenhower. And throughout all the years that have passed, I've kept in touch.

But on the subject of peace, the peace we're seeking, I have never with all due respect and all the affection I held for your predecessors, have known someone with your dedication, clear-headedness, focus and determination to help resolve this issue in the best way possible. Well, I'm not -- I've got Nelson Mandela and other world leaders who have said similar things in the last six months. Our prestige, I promise you, in the world is as high as it's ever been.

When it comes to the question of perjury, you know, there's perjury and then there's perjury. Let me ask you if you think this is perjury. On November 23rd, 1997, President Clinton went to Vancouver, British Columbia. And when he returned, Monica Lewinsky was at the White House at some point, and he gave her a marble, carved marble bear. I don't know how big it was.

Question before the grand jury August 6th, 1998: "What was the Christmas present or presents that he got for you?"



Answer: "Everything was packaged in a big Black Dog or big canvass bag from the Black Dog store in Martha's Vineyard. And he got me a marble bear's head carving, sort of, you know, -- a little -- a little sculpture, I guess you'd call, maybe."

[Question]: "Was that the item from Vancouver?"

[Answer]: "Yes."

Question on the same day of the same grand jury -- Question: "Okay, good. When the President gave you the Vancouver Bear on the 26th -- 28th, I guess it is -- no, 26th --

[Meta-comments about problems with Bumper's microphone.]

[Question]: -- When the President gave you the Vancouver Bear on the 28th, did he say anything about what it means?"

[Answer]: "Mmmm."

[Question]: "Well, what did he say?"

Answer: "I think he -- I believe he said that the bear is the, maybe, Indian symbol for strength, you know, and to be strong like a bear."

[Question]: "And did you interpret that to be 'strong in your decision to continue to conceal the relationship?'"

[Answer]: "No."

House Judiciary Committee report to the full House:

*On the other hand, knowing the subpoena-requested gifts, his giving Ms. Lewinsky more gifts on December 28th seems odd, but Ms. Lewinsky's testimony reveals why he did so. She said that she, "Never questioned that we would ever do anything but keep this private and that meant to take whatever appropriate steps needed to be taken to keep it quiet." The only logical inference is that the gifts, including the bear symbolizing strength, were a tacit reminder to Ms. Lewinsky that they would deny the relationship even in the face of a federal subpoena.*

She just got through saying "No," and yet this report says that's the only logical inference.

And then the brief that came over here accompanying the articles of impeachment said, on the other hand:



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*...more gifts on December 28th. Ms. Lewinsky's testimony reveals the answer. She said she was never questioned -- she said that she, "Never questioned that we were ever going to do anything but keep this private, and that meant to take whatever appropriate steps needed to be taken to keep it quiet."*

Again, they say in their brief, the only logical inference is that the gifts, including the bear symbolizing strength, were a tacit reminder to Ms. Lewinsky that they would deny the relationship even in the face of a federal subpoena.

Is it perjury to say the only logical inference is something when the only shred of testimony in the record is, "No," that was not my interpretation. I didn't imply -- I didn't infer that.<sup>1</sup> And yet here you have it in the committee report and you have it in the brief.

Now of course that's not perjury. First of all, it isn't under oath, but as a trial lawyer, I'll tell you what it is: It's wanting to win too badly. I tried three, four, maybe 500 divorce cases -- incidentally, you're being addressed by the entire South Franklin County, Arkansas Bar Association; I can't believe there were that many cases in that little town, but I had a practice in surrounding communities, too -- and in all those divorce cases, I would guess that in 80 percent of the contested cases, perjury was committed. And you know what it was about? Sex. Extramarital affairs.

But there's a very big difference in perjury about a marital infidelity in a divorce case and perjury about whether I bought the murder weapon or whether I concealed the murder weapon or not. And to charge somebody with the first and punish them as though it were the second stands justice, our sense of justice, on its head. There's a total lack of proportionality, a total lack of balance in this thing. The charge and the punishment are totally out of sync.

All of you have heard or read the testimony of the five prosecutors who testified before the House Judiciary Committee. Five seasoned prosecutors. And each one of them, veterans, said under the identical circumstances, the identical circumstances of this case, we would never charge anybody because we'd know we couldn't get a conviction. And in this case, the charges brought and the punishment sought are totally out of sync. There is no balance, there is no proportionality.

But even stranger, you think about it, even if this case had originated in the courthouse rather than the capitol, you would never have heard of it. How do you reconcile what the prosecutors said with what we're doing here?

Impeachment was debated off and on in Philadelphia for the entire four months, as I said. The key players were Governor [Lewis] Morris, Senator Specter, a brilliant Pennsylvanian, George Mason, the only man to -- reputedly to have been so brilliant that Thomas Jefferson actually deferred to him. And he refused to sign the Constitution, incidentally, even though he was a delegate, because they didn't deal with slavery and he was a strict abolitionist.





And then there was Charles Pinkney [ph]. Senator Hollings from South Carolina, just a youngster, 29 years old, I believe. Edmund Randolph from Virginia, who had a big role in the Constitution in the beginning; the Virginia Plan. And then there was, of course, James Madison, the craftsman.

They were all key players in drafting this impeachment provision. And uppermost in their mind during the entire time they were composing was they did not want any kings. They had lived under despots, they had lived under kings, they had lived under autocrats, and they didn't want anymore of that. And they succeeded very admirably. We've had 46 presidents, and no kings.

But they kept talking about corruption. Maybe that ought to be the reason for impeachment, because they feared some President would corrupt the political process -- that's what the debate was about -- corrupt the political process and ensconce himself through a phony election, maybe as something close to a king.

They followed the British rule on impeachment, because the British said, the House of Commons may impeach, and the House of Lords must convict. And every one of the colonies had the same procedure: House, Senate. Though, in all fairness, House members, James -- or Alexander Hamilton was not very keen on the House participating.

But here was the sequence of events at Philadelphia that brought us here today. They started out with "maladministration," and Madison said that's too vague. What does that mean? So they dropped that. They went from that to "corruption" and they dropped that. Then they went to "malpractice." And they decided that was not definitive enough.

And they went to "treason, bribery and corruption." And they decided that still didn't suit them. But bear in mind one thing, during this entire process, they are narrowing -- they are narrowing the things you can impeach the President for. They were making it tougher. Madison said if we aren't careful, the President will serve at the pleasure of the legislature -- the Senate, he said.

And then they went to "treason and bribery" and somebody said that's still not quite enough. And so they went to treason, bribery -- George Mason added "or other high crimes and misdemeanors against the United States." And they voted on it, and on September 10th they sent the entire Constitution to a committee.

They called a committee on style and arrangement, which was the committee that would draft the language in a way that everybody would understand; it would be well-crafted from a grammatical standpoint. But that committee, which was dominated by Madison and Hamilton, dropped "against the United States." And historians will tell you that the reason they did that was because of redundancy, because that committee had no right to change the substance of anything. And they would not have -- they would not have dropped it if they hadn't felt that it was redundant.



And then, they put in for good measure -- and we can always be grateful -- the two-thirds majority.

Now this is one of the most important points of this entire presentation: the term -- first of all -- "treason and bribery," nobody quarrels with that, and we're not debating treason and bribery here in this chamber. We're talking about "other high crimes and misdemeanors."

[Unidentified meta-comments]

Thank you.

And where did "high crimes and misdemeanors" come from? It came from the English law, and they found it in English law under a category which said, "distinctly political offenses against the state." Let me repeat that. They said, "high crimes and misdemeanors was to be," because they took it from English law, where they found it in the category that said, "offenses distinctly political against the state."

So colleagues, please, for just one moment, forget the complexities of the facts and the tortured legalisms. And we've heard them all brilliantly presented on both sides, and I'm not getting into that. But ponder this. If high crimes and misdemeanors was taken from English law by George Mason, which listed high crimes and misdemeanors as political offenses against the state, what are we doing here? If, as Hamilton said, it had to be a crime against society or a breach of the public trust, what are we doing here? Even perjury. Concealing or deceiving. An unfaithful relationship does not even come close to being an impeachable offense.

Nobody has suggested that Bill Clinton committed a political crime against the state. So, colleagues, if you honor the Constitution, you must look at the history of the Constitution and how we got to the impeachment clause. And if you do that and you do that honestly according to the oath you took, you cannot -- you can censure Bill Clinton; you can hand him over to the prosecutor for him to be prosecuted, but you cannot convict him. And you cannot indulge yourselves the luxury or the right to ignore this history.

There's been a suggestion that a vote to acquit would be something of a breach of faith with those who lie in Flanders Field and Anzio and Bunker Hill and Gettysburg and wherever. I didn't hear that; I read about it. But I want to say -- and, incidentally, I think it was Chairman Hyde who alluded to this and said: those men fought and died for the rule of law.

I can remember a cold November 3rd morning in my little home town of Charleston, Arkansas. I was 18 years old. I'd just gotten one semester in at the university when I went into the Marine Corps. And so, I was to report to Little Rock to be inducted. My, it was cold. The drug store was the bus stop. I had to be there by eight o'clock to be sworn in, and I had to catch the bus down at the drug store at three o'clock in the morning so my mother and father and I got up at two o'clock and got dressed and went down there.

I'm not sure I can tell you this story. [Overcome somewhat with emotion]



And the bus came over the hill -- I was rather frightened anyway about going in. I was quite sure I was going to be killed, only slightly less frightened that Betty would find somebody else while I was gone. And the bus came over Schoolhouse Hill, and my parents started crying. I had never seen my father cry. I knew I was in some difficulty.

Now, as a parent at my age, I know he thought he was giving not his only begotten son, but one of his forgotten -- begotten sons. Can you imagine? You know that scene. It was repeated across this nation millions of times.

And then happily, I survived that war; saw no combat; was on my way to Japan when it all ended. I'd never had a terrible problem with dropping the bomb, though that's been a terrible moral dilemma for me, because that the estimates were that we would lose as many as a million men in that invasion.

But I came home into a generous government who provided me, under the GI Bill, an education in a fairly prestigious law school which my father could never have afforded. And I practiced law in this little town for 18 years; loved every minute of it.

But I didn't practice constitutional law, and I knew very little about the Constitution. But when I went into law school, I did study constitutional law, though Mr. Chief Justice, it was fairly arcane to me. And trying read The Federalist Papers and Tocqueville -- all of those things law students are expected to do, that was tough for me, I confess.

So after 18 years in law practice I jumped up and ran for governor and I served for governor - - as governor for four years, and I still -- I guess I knew what the rule of law was -- but I still didn't really have much reverence for the Constitution. I just did not understand any of the things I just got through telling you. No. My love for that document came day after day and debate after debate right here in this chamber.

Some of you perhaps read an op-ed piece I did a couple of weeks ago when I said I was perfectly happy for my legacy of a 24-year-senator-to-be I never voted for a constitutional amendment. And it isn't that I wouldn't. I think they made a mistake in not giving you fellows four years.

You're about to cause me to rethink that one.

And the reason I developed this love of it is because I saw Madison's magic working time and time again, keeping bullies from running over weak people, keeping majorities from running over minorities. And I thought about all the unfettered freedoms we had. The oldest organic law in existence made us the envy of the world.

Mr. Chairman, we've also learned that the rule of law includes presidential elections. That's a part of the rule of law in this country. We have an event, a quadrennial event in this country



which we call "Presidential Elections." And that's the day when we reach across this aisle and hold hands, Democrats and Republicans.

And we say, "Win or lose, we will abide by the decision." It is a solemn event, presidential elections, and it should not -- they should not be undone lightly; or just because one side has the clout and the other one doesn't.

And if you want to know what men fought for in World War II, for example, or in Vietnam, ask Senator Inouye. He left an arm in Italy. He and I were in the presence at Normandy on the 50th anniversary. But we started off on Anzil [ph].

Senator Domenici, were you with us?

It was one of the most awesome experiences I've ever had in my life -- certified war hero. I think his relatives were in a internment camp, so ask him what he was fighting for? Or ask Bob Kerrey, certified Medal of Honor winner -- what was he fighting for? Probably get a quite different answer. Or Senator Chafee, one of the finest men ever to grace this body and certified marine hero of Guadalcanal -- ask him. And Senator McCain, a genuine hero -- ask him.

You don't have to guess. They're with us, and they're living. And they can tell you. And one who is not with us here in the Senate anymore, Robert Dole. Ask Senator Dole what he was fighting for. Senator Dole had what I thought was a very reasonable solution to this whole thing that would handle it fairly and expeditiously.

The American people are now and for some time have been asking to be allowed a good night's sleep. They're asking for an end to this nightmare. It is a legitimate request.

I'm not suggesting that you vote for or against the polls. I understand that. Nobody should vote against the polls just to show their mettle and their courage. I have cast plenty of votes against the polls and it's cost me politically a lot of times. This has been going on for a year, though.

And in that same op-ed piece I talked about meeting Harry Truman my first year as governor of Arkansas. Spent an hour with him. An indelible experience. People at home kid me about this, because I very seldom make a speech that I don't mention this meeting. But I will never forget what he said, "Put your faith in the people. Trust the people. They can handle it." They have shown conclusively time and time again that they can handle it.

Colleagues, this is easily the most important vote you will ever cast. If you have difficulty because of an intense dislike of the president -- and that's understandable -- rise above it. He is not the issue. He will be gone. You won't. So don't leave a precedent from which we may never recover and almost surely will regret.



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If you vote to acquit, Mr. Leader, you know exactly what's going to happen. You're going to back to your committees. You're going to get on this legislative agenda. You're going to start dealing with Medicare and Social Security and tax cuts and all those things which the people of the country have a non-negotiable demand that you do. If you vote to acquit, you go immediately to the people's agenda.

But if you vote to convict, you can't be sure what's going to happen. James G. Blaine was a member of the Senate when Andrew Johnson was tried in 1868, and 20 years later he recanted. And he said: "I made a bad mistake." And he says "as I reflect back on it, all I can think about is having convicted Andrew Johnson would have caused much more chaos and confusion in this country than Andrew Johnson could ever conceivably have tried."

And so it is with William Jefferson Clinton. If you vote to convict, in my opinion you're going to be creating more havoc than he could ever possibly create. After all, he's only got two years left. So don't, for God's sakes heighten people's alienation that is at an all time high toward their government.

The people have a right and they are calling on you to rise above politics, rise above partisanship. They're calling on you to do your solemn duty. And I pray you will.

Thank you, Mr. Chief Justice.

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<sup>1</sup>The sender or source of a message may "imply." The receivers of a message may "infer." Senders do NOT infer and receivers do NOT imply.