

# Bush calls out to voters with 'Clinton fatigue; vows to uphold values

The presidential candidate said Clinton didn't live up to his potential.

BY BRIAN CARLSON

PHILADELPHIA - Accusing the Clinton administration of "coasting through prosperity," George W. Bush told the Republican National Convention on Aug. 3 that he wanted to usher in a "responsibility era."

## Election 2000

chance to reclaim some essential values - to show we have grown up before we grow old," Bush said. "But when the moment for leadership came, this administration did not teach our children, it disillusioned them. They had their chance. They have not led. We will."

"And now they come asking for another chance, another

shot," he said. "Our answer? Not this time. Not this year."

Bush repeatedly accused President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore, the Democratic presidential nominee, of failing to provide leadership.

"Our current president embodied the potential of a generation," he said. "So many talents. So much charm. Such great skill. But, in the end, to what end? So much promise, to no great purpose."

At last week's Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles, Clinton and Gore argued that the Democratic ticket of Gore and Connecticut Sen. Joseph Lieberman was best equipped to continue the economic prosperity of the Clinton years.

But Bush, promoting his message of "compassionate conservatism," said the country also demands character and leadership in its president.

"Prosperity can be a tool in

our hands, used to build and better our country," he said. "Or it can be a drug in our system, dulling our sense of urgency, of empathy, of duty. We will use these good times for great goals."

Arizona Sen. John McCain, who lost a bitterly contested primary campaign to Bush, put behind any lingering resentment at the convention and forcefully endorsed Bush.

"I am proud to join you this evening in commending to all

Americans the man who now represents your best wishes and mine for the future of our country, my friend, George W. Bush," said McCain, who has since been diagnosed with skin cancer and underwent surgery Saturday.

Bush heaped ridicule on Gore for claiming that many of Bush's proposals were "risky schemes."

He said Gore's message amounted to "the politics of the roadblock, the philosophy of the stop sign."

Among the Bush proposals that Gore has called "risky" are his plan to return federal budget surpluses through a tax cut of more than \$1 trillion and to allow workers to invest a portion of their Social Security payroll taxes in private investment accounts.

Bush vigorously defended both proposals. On principle, he said, no American should pay more than one-third of his or her income in federal income taxes.

"The surplus is not the government's money," he said. "The surplus is the people's money."

By allowing younger workers to invest 2 percentage points of their 12 percent payroll tax in private investments, the government can help those workers increase their retirement savings, he said.

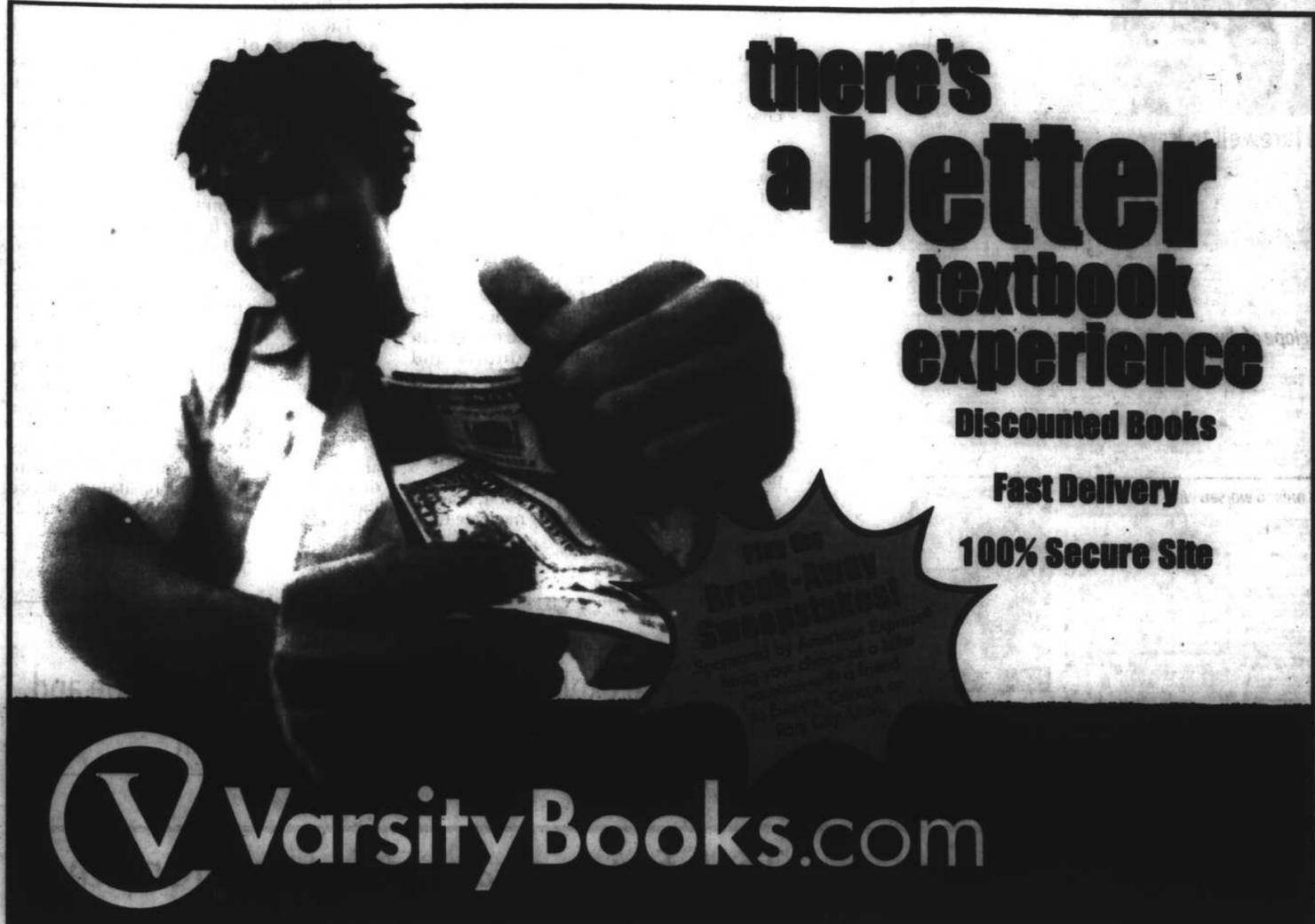
"This will mean a higher return on your money, and, over 30 or 40 years, a nest egg to help your retirement, or pass along to your children," he said.

Bush's speech capped a convention billed as the "reinvention" of the Republican Party.

In accordance with Bush's theme of compassionate conservatism, the convention consisted mostly of upbeat speeches and included a full slate of minority speakers.

For Bush, the speech was a chance to tap into a sense of "Clinton fatigue" among the public and urge voters to forge a new beginning.

"My fellow citizens, we can begin again," Bush said. "After all of the shouting, and all of the scandal, after all of the bitterness and broken faith, we can begin again."



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