

# CLARK FOR PRESIDENT

For Immediate Release  
September 24, 2003

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## **General Clark Announces Bold Jobs Creation Plan to Reverse Three Years of Failed Bush Policies**

**(As prepared for delivery)**

We're here today in East River Park in New York City - across the river from the Domino Sugar Refinery, in the shadow of the Williamsburg Bridge - to show people the effects of three years of Bush Administration policies and missed opportunities.

Mr. Bush has said his tax cuts for the rich will create jobs. The Domino Sugar Refinery across the river is closing; 200 workers are losing their jobs. That is hardship enough. But these workers have to look for new jobs in a Bush economy that is creating none.

This bridge is like thousands across the country that should be on a list of critical infrastructure needing reinforcement. Americans should know their government is identifying potential terrorist targets and making them more secure. Doing so will create good jobs. Today, I'm going to outline a three-part jobs plan that I will send to Congress in about 16 months to help protect our critical infrastructure and get America working again.

My name is Wes Clark. I'm running for President. And I want your support.

One week ago today, I stood up in my hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas, and said "YES" to thousands of people across the country who have spent their time and energy and money urging me to run for President. Like millions of Americans, they got tired of seeing hardworking mothers and fathers lose their jobs and fear for their families. They got tired of hearing about Americans losing health insurance, facing sickness, and falling into debt. They got tired of seeing the Administration do nothing to get us out of this mess but repeat the same old mistakes that got us into it. They got tired of hearing why we had to call time out in our war against Al Qaeda so we could start a war in Iraq.

And they got sick and tired of being told that you can't be a patriot if you don't support the President. If there's one point I want to make in this campaign it's this: Nothing is more American; nothing is more patriotic than speaking out, questioning authority and holding your leaders accountable.

I am running for President of the United States, and I am appealing to every citizen willing to open with me an era of New American Patriotism -- of Americans who speak their minds, serve their country, and demand more of their leaders. We are going to reclaim the label of patriotism; we're going to reclaim the right to challenge the President; we're going to have a rousing debate based on facts and results, and we're going to get answers about what's best for this country and who's best to lead it.

Years ago, when I was an eighteen-year old boy and a senior in high school in Little Rock, Cold War tensions were running high. Khrushchev and Kennedy had had a difficult summit in Vienna. We had just been through the Bay of Pigs. We were less than a year away from the Cuban Missile Crisis. It was in that climate that I decided to go to West Point – because I wanted to do something to protect my country. Now, more than 40 years later, we confront a new threat. On September 11, we saw the face of 21st century terror. Since then, I have watched very carefully the actions of the Commander-in-Chief, and they left me with the same thought I had forty years before: I want to do something to protect my country.

Protecting the country in the 21st century requires more than a strong military. It requires a strong economy that generates jobs, economic growth, and the revenues we need to defend American lives and property - wherever they are in the world. We simply cannot have strong security without a strong economy. A key source of our strength abroad is the hard work and high employment of Americans here at home.

Much of what I know about the United States, I learned in the United States Army. The Army has people of high rank and people of low rank. It has people in dangerous jobs and people in desk jobs. The risks are not always equally shared; the rewards are not always evenly divided. Yet anyone who is a soldier is a soldier by choice, and they join because they believe the Army will give them a chance. That's what holds us together. It's a big part of morale, and you can't have it unless you're fair, and you give everyone a chance to advance. The same ideal applies to our country. There are great inequalities in society - vast wealth and deep poverty. But that doesn't have to divide us - as long as everyone has a chance.

But you don't have a chance if you can't find a job. I don't think it penetrates the minds of this Administration what it must be like for a factory worker to arrive home to his family with the news that he's been laid off. What it must be like not to know what the future holds for your children, because you don't know what the future holds for you. What it must be like to see the government take hundreds of billions of dollars that could be used to fund job training, unemployment benefits, or jobs programs – and instead to send that money off to people who have such staggering wealth that the new money won't make the tiniest improvement in their lifestyle. What it must be like to be told that tax cuts for the rich are necessary to create jobs for working people, and then to see jobs fall month after month for more than 30 months. If that doesn't break your heart, you don't have a heart.

In the eight years before Mr. Bush, the economy created nearly 21 million private-sector jobs. In the three years under Mr. Bush, the American economy has lost

more than 3 million private-sector jobs. Under Mr. Bush, we have lost 2.5 million manufacturing jobs. We have lost another half million jobs in telecom and high tech. Unemployment has jumped from 4 percent to 6 percent. Last year, more than 1.4 million Americans sank into poverty; 700,000 of them were children.

Three years ago, we were told we were getting a compassionate conservative. What we got instead were massive tax cuts for the rich, staggering deficits for the country, and the worst job losses since the Great Depression. That's not compassionate or conservative; it's heartless, it's reckless, and it's wrong.

And if you elect me President, I'll put it right.

Today, I'm announcing a Job Creation Plan that will direct \$100 billion over two years to strengthen homeland security, assist states with education and health care and create American jobs. This Job Creation Plan is part of my overall approach – one that I will be explaining over the course of the campaign – to invest in people and economic growth, while returning to a path of long-term fiscal discipline.

My Job Creation Plan is a clear alternative to the failed policies of Mr. Bush. In his first month in office Mr. Bush told America: "A tax cut now will stimulate our economy and create jobs." Two months later, he said: "We can proceed with tax relief without fear of budget deficits."

He was wrong twice. His tax cuts did not create jobs; they helped create the worst job losses in 70 years. His tax cuts not only created deficits; they helped create the worst deficits in history.

The Washington Post yesterday ran an item that explained how President Bush, urging the country to support his most recent tax cut, went to visit Timken Company, a company that makes steel bearings in Canton, Ohio. Mr. Bush predicted to factory workers that his tax cut would bring "more money for investment, more money for growth, and more money for jobs." A month later, Mr. Bush signed his \$350 billion tax cut, and just last week Timken announced it is cutting 900 jobs.

The workers have no jobs, and this White House has no plan. They say tax cuts for the rich will create jobs. They say drilling in the arctic will create jobs. They say a new energy plan will create jobs. They say easing environmental regulations will create jobs. They are flailing. They are desperate. They know they have a problem, and they know they don't have a solution. They came into office with one answer to everything. Tax cuts for the rich. But three years later – tax cuts for the rich have made us poor.

The most effective way to help an unemployed worker is not to run out and borrow billions of dollars to give to millionaires. That's what they're doing when they pass these massive tax cuts for the rich that deepen the deficit. They're borrowing billions of dollars to give to millionaires. It ought to be obvious by now – it just doesn't work. In the area of economics, this White House still needs some basic training.

My Job Creation Plan will directly fund job creation in a fiscally responsible way. Fiscal discipline requires not only reducing the deficit. It requires moving money from areas where it isn't advancing national goals, and directing it to areas where it is. So I will reduce the tax cuts Mr. Bush gave the richest households - those making more than \$200,000 a year, and directs that money to three job-creating funds.

First: The Homeland and Economic Security Fund would invest \$40 billion over two years to directly fund jobs that immediately improve our security. The Bush Administration has shortchanged vital areas of homeland security. The Council on Foreign Relations released a bipartisan study this summer that said that the nation is dramatically underfunding efforts to prepare police, fire and ambulance personnel for terrorist attacks. This fund would improve our defenses against terrorist attack by paying to train more firefighters and police officers, hire more Coast Guard, customs Service, and law enforcement personnel. The fund would also pay for construction projects to safeguard bridges, ports and tunnels; and fund high-tech efforts to develop ways to detect biological and chemical weapons and materials.

Second: Another \$40 billion will go to the State and Local Tax Rebate Fund. Mr. Bush's tax cuts have had a brutal effect on state governments. In some states, their tax code is linked directly to the federal tax code, so a tax cut at the federal level translates into automatic tax cuts at the state level. But the states, unlike the federal government, must balance their budgets - so the Bush tax cuts force state budget cuts in areas such as education and health - even in prisons. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities has concluded that state budget cuts could push nearly 2 million people off Medicaid - denying poor mothers the chance to take a sick baby to the doctor.

My plan will give \$20 billion to states to help keep tuition increases down and help state and local government train workers for new jobs. Another ten billion will go to states to help them meet the increasing cost of health care. The final ten billion will help states fund important jobs in law enforcement, corrections and social services.

Finally, my plan will set aside \$20 billion over two years for Tax Incentives for Job Creation. Businesses are not hiring new employees even though the economy is growing, partly because the growth is weak and businesses aren't sure it will last. I'm proposing a new job creation tax credit that will reduce the cost for a business to hire a new employee. The plan will offer up to \$5,000 tax credit for each additional full-time employee any business hires in 2004 and 2005. The plan will also encourage small and medium-sized businesses to invest in new equipment by allowing these firms to write-off up to \$150,000 in investments over the next two years.

If any businesses are thinking of buying major new equipment over the next several years, this tax change will encourage them to do it now, and create the stimulus when the economy most needs it. As President, I will also order an immediate review to determine whether any tax and spending provisions provide manufacturing firms an incentive to move jobs overseas. No tax incentives offered by the government of the United States should harm the workers of the United States. At the same time, we will review trade agreements to make sure our trading partners have opened their markets to our goods. We will insist that China should play by international norms and not set its

currency at artificially low levels that give their exports unfair advantage, and we will reverse the cuts Mr. Bush has made to the Manufacturing Extension partnership - a project that is shown to help firms increase or retain jobs.

Again, this \$100 billion, two-year Job Creation Plan will not increase the deficit. It simply moves \$100 billion from tax cuts for households making more than \$200,000 a year and directs it to job creating funds that will help middle-income and working class families.

The next President will have to restart the economy and improve our security; this Job Creation Plan will help do both. It's a good idea that can get quick results, and I'm eager to talk to the voters around the country about it.

Let me close with a story from the years after World War II. General Eisenhower and General MacArthur met after the war in Tokyo. MacArthur was predicting that one of the two of them would become President. General Eisenhower objected. He said he believed strongly in the separation of politics and the military and had no interest in higher office. General MacArthur reportedly said: "That's the way to play it Ike."

General Eisenhower, as we know, came to see it differently. I believe personally there is an important place in the public debate today for a candidate who has high-level military experience. Our national debate has lost its vitality. The catastrophic events of September 11 stunned many Americans into silence, and when they began to find their voices again, and began to question their leaders, this Administration and its cohorts questioned their patriotism.

I have worn the uniform of my country for 34 years. I joined the military when it was not popular thing to do among young men my age. In the 1960s, I defended my nation's policy on Vietnam to groups in and outside this country. I then went to Vietnam. I have led men into combat, faced enemy fire, and have been wounded in battle. I can stand up to the people who believe that if you don't like their views, you can't love your country. I can reclaim the mantle of patriotism for those who care for their country and don't care for the policies of this President.

I'm promoting a New American Patriotism – because it is vital to the life and health of this country that we criticize our leaders fairly – but freely. Some ask: How can you criticize the President at a time of war? I answer: "How can you not?" Eighteen months ago, Mr. Bush said in his State of the Union Address: "My economic security plan can be summed up in one word: "jobs." We can now sum it up in one word: "failure." We cannot afford failure. We can't be forced to accept failure just because we're at war. In fact, we cannot tolerate failure precisely because we are at war.

I am not making a partisan comment. The chance to earn a living is not a partisan issue. Yet when we point out the facts, they will call us unpatriotic; or they will call us left-wing liberals – even though I have been non-partisan my whole professional life. I don't oppose the President's policies because they are Republican policies. I

oppose them because they don't work. If they worked, I wouldn't be here. If he admitted they didn't work and changed them, I wouldn't be here.

But the President won't change his policies, so we have to change the President. I have the qualifications to replace him. I have the best chance to beat him. And I ask for your support. Together we can make America what it is destined to be: a nation that is fair and just and prosperous at home – strong and kind and admired around the world.

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