



Selected Speeches of President George W. Bush

2001 – 2008

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THE FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FROM WEST FRONT, U.S. CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 20, 2001

Chief Justice Rehnquist, President Carter, President Bush,
President Clinton, distinguished guests and my fellow citizens:

The peaceful transfer of authority is rare in history, yet
common in our country. With a simple oath, we affirm old traditions
and make new beginnings.

As I begin, I thank President Clinton for his service to our
nation.

And I thank Vice President Gore for a contest conducted with
spirit and ended with grace.

I am honored and humbled to stand here, where so many of
America's leaders have come before me, and so many will follow.

We have a place, all of us, in a long story—a story we
continue, but whose end we will not see. It is the story of a new
world that became a friend and liberator of the old, a story of a
slave-holding society that became a servant of freedom, the story
of a power that went into the world to protect but not possess, to
defend but not to conquer.

It is the American story—a story of flawed and fallible people,
united across the generations by grand and enduring ideals.

The grandest of these ideals is an unfolding American promise
that everyone belongs, that everyone deserves a chance, that no
insignificant person was ever born.

Americans are called to enact this promise in our lives and
in our laws. And though our nation has sometimes halted, and
sometimes delayed, we must follow no other course.

Through much of the last century, America's faith in freedom
and democracy was a rock in a raging sea. Now it is a seed upon the
wind, taking root in many nations.

Our democratic faith is more than the creed of our country, it is

the inborn hope of our humanity, an ideal we carry but do not own, a trust we bear and pass along. And even after nearly 225 years, we have a long way yet to travel.

While many of our citizens prosper, others doubt the promise, even the justice, of our own country. The ambitions of some Americans are limited by failing schools and hidden prejudice and the circumstances of their birth. And sometimes our differences run so deep, it seems we share a continent, but not a country.

We do not accept this, and we will not allow it. Our unity, our union, is the serious work of leaders and citizens in every generation. And this is my solemn pledge: I will work to build a single nation of justice and opportunity.

I know this is in our reach because we are guided by a power larger than ourselves who creates us equal in His image.

And we are confident in principles that unite and lead us onward.

America has never been united by blood or birth or soil. We are bound by ideals that move us beyond our backgrounds, lift us above our interests and teach us what it means to be citizens. Every child must be taught these principles. Every citizen must uphold them. And every immigrant, by embracing these ideals, makes our country more, not less, American.

Today, we affirm a new commitment to live out our nation's promise through civility, courage, compassion and character.

America, at its best, matches a commitment to principle with a concern for civility. A civil society demands from each of us good will and respect, fair dealing and forgiveness.

Some seem to believe that our politics can afford to be petty because, in a time of peace, the stakes of our debates appear small.

But the stakes for America are never small. If our country does not lead the cause of freedom, it will not be led. If we do not turn the hearts of children toward knowledge and character, we will lose their gifts and undermine their idealism. If we permit our economy to drift and decline, the vulnerable will suffer most.

We must live up to the calling we share. Civility is not a tactic or a sentiment. It is the determined choice of trust over cynicism,

of community over chaos. And this commitment, if we keep it, is a way to shared accomplishment.

America, at its best, is also courageous.

Our national courage has been clear in times of depression and war, when defending common dangers defined our common good. Now we must choose if the example of our fathers and mothers will inspire us or condemn us. We must show courage in a time of blessing by confronting problems instead of passing them on to future generations.

Together, we will reclaim America's schools, before ignorance and apathy claim more young lives.

We will reform Social Security and Medicare, sparing our children from struggles we have the power to prevent. And we will reduce taxes, to recover the momentum of our economy and reward the effort and enterprise of working Americans.

We will build our defenses beyond challenge, lest weakness invite challenge.

We will confront weapons of mass destruction, so that a new century is spared new horrors.

The enemies of liberty and our country should make no mistake: America remains engaged in the world by history and by choice, shaping a balance of power that favors freedom. We will defend our allies and our interests. We will show purpose without arrogance. We will meet aggression and bad faith with resolve and strength. And to all nations, we will speak for the values that gave our nation birth.

America, at its best, is compassionate. In the quiet of American conscience, we know that deep, persistent poverty is unworthy of our nation's promise.

And whatever our views of its cause, we can agree that children at risk are not at fault. Abandonment and abuse are not acts of God, they are failures of love.

And the proliferation of prisons, however necessary, is no substitute for hope and order in our souls.

Where there is suffering, there is duty. Americans in need are

not strangers, they are citizens, not problems, but priorities. And all of us are diminished when any are hopeless.

Government has great responsibilities for public safety and public health, for civil rights and common schools. Yet compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government.

And some needs and hurts are so deep they will only respond to a mentor's touch or a pastor's prayer. Church and charity, synagogue and mosque lend our communities their humanity, and they will have an honored place in our plans and in our laws.

Many in our country do not know the pain of poverty, but we can listen to those who do.

And I can pledge our nation to a goal: When we see that wounded traveler on the road to Jericho, we will not pass to the other side.

America, at its best, is a place where personal responsibility is valued and expected.

Encouraging responsibility is not a search for scapegoats, it is a call to conscience. And though it requires sacrifice, it brings a deeper fulfillment. We find the fullness of life not only in options, but in commitments. And we find that children and community are the commitments that set us free.

Our public interest depends on private character, on civic duty and family bonds and basic fairness, on uncounted, unhonored acts of decency which give direction to our freedom.

Sometimes in life we are called to do great things. But as a saint of our times has said, every day we are called to do small things with great love. The most important tasks of a democracy are done by everyone.

I will live and lead by these principles: to advance my convictions with civility, to pursue the public interest with courage, to speak for greater justice and compassion, to call for responsibility and try to live it as well.

In all these ways, I will bring the values of our history to the care of our times.

What you do is as important as anything government does. I ask

you to seek a common good beyond your comfort; to defend needed reforms against easy attacks; to serve your nation, beginning with your neighbor. I ask you to be citizens: citizens, not spectators; citizens, not subjects; responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character.

Americans are generous and strong and decent, not because we believe in ourselves, but because we hold beliefs beyond ourselves. When this spirit of citizenship is missing, no government program can replace it. When this spirit is present, no wrong can stand against it.

After the Declaration of Independence was signed, Virginia statesman John Page wrote to Thomas Jefferson: "We know the race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong. Do you not think an angel rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm?"

Much time has passed since Jefferson arrived for his inauguration. The years and changes accumulate. But the themes of this day he would know: our nation's grand story of courage and its simple dream of dignity.

We are not this story's author, who fills time and eternity with his purpose. Yet his purpose is achieved in our duty, and our duty is fulfilled in service to one another.

Never tiring, never yielding, never finishing, we renew that purpose today, to make our country more just and generous, to affirm the dignity of our lives and every life.

This work continues. This story goes on. And an angel still rides in the whirlwind and directs this storm.

God bless you all, and God bless America.

REMARKS TO NEW WHITE HOUSE STAFF

THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 22, 2001

The First Lady and I are honored to be living here, and we're honored to be hosting this event—the first we've done in this glorious room since the Inauguration.

I want to thank the family members who are here. Thank you for your sacrifice. Thank you for the long hours, for accepting the long hours that your loved one is about to put in on behalf of the American people. Some of the folks that are here have worked in past administrations. For some of us, this is a new experience. But for all of us, it is an honor of a lifetime, and it is our privilege to share this together.

I am here to lead the executive branch of government. You all are here because you have my full confidence. And we are here with the same basic purpose, to serve the American people. We have all taken an oath, and from this moment on it is our job to honor it.

Today everything is so promising and new. My hope is that the day will never come when any of us take this place for granted and this honor for granted. As we serve, we must always remember three things.

First, we must remember the high standards that come with high office. This begins with careful adherence to the rules. I expect every member of this administration to stay well within the boundaries that define legal and ethical conduct. This means avoiding even the appearance of problems. This means checking and, if need be, double-checking that the rules have been obeyed. This means never compromising those rules. No one in the White House should be afraid to confront the people they work for, for ethical concerns. And no one should hesitate to confront me, as well. We're all accountable to one another. And above all, we're all accountable to the law and to the American people. My White

House Counsel, Al Gonzalez, is my point man on these issues. If you have even a hint of ethical doubt, I urge you to talk to Al.

Second, we must remember that high standards of conduct involve not only obeying the law but showing civility. As we go about our work, there is no excuse for arrogance and never a reason for disrespect toward others. People who work here are highly visible throughout the government. In many ways, in many of your dealings, you'll be the face and voice of the White House staff. You will be my representative. I expect each of you, as an official of this administration, to be an example of humility and decency and fairness.

And finally, we must all remember that we are here for a reason. You and I and the Vice President share the same goals for our country and the same commitment to achieving them. We are here to make progress. We are not here just to mark time. During the next few weeks, we'll affirm the central policy goals of this administration, beginning this week with education reform.

Everyone will know where we stand. Everyone will know where we're headed. Every morning I want you to remember these goals. Every evening I want you to review the progress we have made. I want it said of us, at the end of our service, that promises made were promises kept.

On a mantelpiece in this great house is inscribed the prayer of John Adams, that only the wise and honest may rule under this roof. He was speaking of those who live here. But wisdom and honesty are also required of those who work here. I know each of you is capable of meeting that charge. This is only our second day, but time moves fast around here. So let us begin the work we were hired to do and leave this a better place than we found it.

REMARKS ON THE EDUCATION PLAN SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS

THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 23, 2001

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Appreciate you being here. And it's good to see a former secretary of Education here. Lamar, thank you very much for coming. Surrounded by two fine Texans, I might add. You are in good position! I was going to say a rose between two thorns - but Diane Natalisio is not a thorn, she's a fabulous educator in the great state of Texas. Miller, on the other hand... at any rate, I'm glad you all are here. It's good to see so many faces of friends. Welcome you to our new temporary abode.

This is an important moment for my administration because I spent such amount of — a long amount of time campaigning on education reform. It's been the hallmark of my time as governor of Texas. My focus will be on making sure every child is educated, as the president of the United States as well.

Both parties have been talking about education reform for quite a while. It's time to come together to get it done so that we can truthfully say in America, "No child will be left behind — not one single child."

We share a moment of exceptional promise — a new administration, a newly sworn-in Congress, and we have a chance to think anew and act anew.

All of us are impatient with the old lines of division. All of us want a different attitude here in the nation's capital. All in this room, as well as across the country, know things must change.

We must confront the scandal of illiteracy in America, seen most clearly in high-poverty schools, where nearly 70 percent of fourth graders are unable to read at a basic level. We must address the low standing of America test scores amongst industrialized nations in math and science, the very subjects most likely to affect our future

competitiveness. We must focus the spending of federal tax dollars on things that work. Too often we have spent without regard for results, without judging success or failure from year to year.

We must face up to the plague of school violence, with an average of 3 million crimes committed against students and teachers inside public schools every year. That's unacceptable in our country. Change will not come by adding a few new federal programs to the old. If we work only at the edges, our influence will be confined to the margins. We need real reform.

Change will not come by disdaining or dismantling the federal role of education. I believe strongly in local control of schools. I trust local folks to chart the path to excellence. But educational excellence for all is a national issue, and at this moment is a presidential priority. I've seen how real education reform can lift up scores in schools and effectively change lives.

And real education reform reflects four basic commitments. First, children must be tested every year in reading and math. Every single year. Not just in the third grade or the eighth grade, but in the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh and eighth grade. I oppose a national test, one designed here in Washington, D.C., because I now it would undermine local control of schools and undermine state curricula. But states should test each student each year. Without yearly testing, we don't know who is falling behind and who needs help. Without yearly testing, too often we don't find failure until it is too late to fix.

Consider what some parents face under the current system in some states. A child may pass the third grade reading test.

He or she gets in the eighth grade and, lo and behold, fails the eighth grade test. And the parent says, "Who do I hold accountable? What happened? My child was successful in the third, and here he or she is in the eighth. What went wrong? How come? Where did the system let me down?"

Too much precious time has lapsed in this case for us to achieve what we want: every child being able to learn. Testing every child every year is the way to stop the cycle. We must care enough to

ask how our children are doing. We must have the data to know how poor and minority children are doing, to see if we're closing the achievement gap in America. Annual measurement is a special concern of mine. I understand it's crucial — it's a crucial part of — of a solid reform package.

But the good news is, I'm not alone. Take, for example, Congressman George Miller from California. Some might think it odd that the President — a Republican President be mentioning a Democrat member of the House. But he and I have had discussions already. He understands the importance of strong accountability. And we're going to work together to make sure this is an integral part of a reform package coming through the House and Senate.

Secondly, the agents of reform must be schools and school districts, not bureaucracies. Teachers and principals, local and state leaders must have the responsibility to succeed and the flexibility to innovate. One size does not fit all when it comes to educating the children in America. School districts, school officials, educational entrepreneurs should not be hindered by excessive rules and red tape and regulation.

The principle here is a basic one. If local schools do not have the freedom to change, they cannot be held accountable for failing to change. Authority and accountability must be aligned at the local level, or schools will have a convenient excuse for failure. "I would have done it this way, but some central office or Washington, D.C., caused me to do it another way."

Flexibility in education spending is a special concern of members of both parties with whom I've discussed. Today I had a good meeting with the chairman of the Education Committee in the House, John Boehner. I know he shares my passion for flexibility at the local level, as with people like Senator Judd Gregg or Tim Hutchinson.

Third, many of our schools, particularly low-income schools, will need help in the transition to higher standards. When a state sets standards, we must help schools achieve those standards.

We must measure, we must know; and if a school or school

district falls short, we must understand that help should be applied. Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico brought this up to our attention, about the need to make sure there is a transition period between the moment — the moment of consequence and the first indication of failure. Once failing schools are identified, we will help them improve. We'll help them help themselves. Our goal is to improve public education. We want success, and when schools are willing to accept the reality that the accountability system points out and are willing to change, we will help them.

Fourth, American children must not be left in persistently dangerous or failing schools. When schools do not teach and will not change, parents and students must have other meaningful options. And when children or teenagers go to school afraid of being threatened or attacked or worst, our society must make it clear it's the ultimate betrayal of adult responsibility.

Parents and children who have only bad options must eventually get good options, if we are to succeed all across the country. There are difference of opinions about what those options should be. I made my opinion very clear in the course of the campaign, and will take my opinion to the Hill and let folks debate it.

Today, I was pleased to see that Senator Joe Lieberman brought up his plan that includes different options for parents. It's a great place to begin. He and I understand that an accountability system must have a consequence; otherwise, it's not much of an accountability system.

These four principles are the guides to our education reform package. Yet today I'm offering more than principles. I'm sending a series of specific proposals to the United States Congress; my own blueprint for reform. I want to begin our discussion in detail with the members of the House and the Senate, because I know we need to act by this summer so that the people at the local level can take our initiatives and plan for the school year beginning next fall.

I'm going to listen to suggestions from folks. If somebody's got a better idea, I hope they bring it forward, because the secretary and I will listen.

We've got one thing in mind: an education system that's responsive to the children, an education system that educates every child, an education system that I'm confident can exist; one that's based upon sound fundamental curriculum, one that starts teaching children to read early in life, one that focuses on systems that do work, one that heralds our teachers and makes sure they've got the necessary tools to teach, but one that says every child can learn. And in this great land called America, no child will be left behind.

It's an honor to be here. I'm so thrilled you all came. God bless.

FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES ANNOUNCEMENT

INDIAN TREATY ROOM,
DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 29, 2001

Good morning. Thank you all for coming. I take great joy in making this announcement. It's going to be one of the most important initiatives that my administration not only discusses, but implements.

First, it's good to have so many groups represented here religious and non-religious; Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Muslim; foundations and other non-profits. I want to thank you all for coming.

This is a collection of some of the finest America has got to offer people who lead with their hearts, and in turn, have changed the communities in which they live for the better. This meeting is a picture of the strength and diversity and compassion of our country.

This is a diverse group, but we share things in common. They provide more than practical help to people in need. They touch and change hearts. And for this, America is deeply appreciative.

Everyone in this room knows firsthand that there are still deep needs and real suffering in the shadow of America's affluence. Problems like addiction and abandonment and gang violence, domestic violence, mental illness and homelessness. We are called by conscience to respond.

As I said in my inaugural address, compassion is the work of a nation, not just a government. It is more than the calling of politicians; it is the calling of citizens. It is citizens who turn mean streets into good neighborhoods. It is citizens who turn cold cities into real communities.

It is one of the great goals of my administration to invigorate the spirit of involvement and citizenship. We will encourage faith-based

and community programs without changing their mission. We will help all in their work to change hearts while keeping a commitment to pluralism.

I approach this goal with some basic principles: Government has important responsibilities for public health or public order and civil rights. Yet government — and government will never be replaced by charities and community groups. Yet when we see social needs in America, my administration will look first to faith-based programs and community groups, which have proven their power to save and change lives. We will not fund the religious activities of any group, but when people of faith provide social services, we will not discriminate against them.

As long as there are secular alternatives, faith-based charities should be able to compete for funding on an equal basis, and in a manner that does not cause them to sacrifice their mission. And we will make sure that help goes to large organizations and to small ones as well. We value large organizations with generations of experience. We also value neighborhood healers, who have only the scars and testimony of their own experience.

Tomorrow I will begin turning these principles into a legislative agenda. I will send to Congress a series of ideas and proposals. Today, I want to raise the priority and profile of these issues within my own administration. I want to ensure that faith-based and community groups will always have a place at the table in our deliberations.

In a few moments, I will sign two executive orders. The first executive order will create a new office, called the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives. The head of this office will report directly to me and be charged with important responsibilities. He will oversee our initiatives on this issue. He will make sure our government, where it works with private groups, is fair and supportive. And he will highlight groups as national models so others can learn from them.

The second executive order will clear away the bureaucratic barriers in several important agencies that make private groups

hesitate to work with government. It will establish centers in five agencies — Justice, HUD, HHS, Labor and Education — to ensure greater cooperation between the government and the independent sector. These centers will report back on regulatory barriers to working with non-profit groups, and make recommendations on how those barriers can be removed.

I have put this broad effort into the hands of two exceptional people — first, Steve Goldsmith, known as one of the most innovative mayors in America, who pioneered ways to promote community efforts. He will continue to advise me on these issues. And I have asked Steve to serve on the board of the Corporation for National Service.

This organization has done some good work in mobilizing volunteers of all ages. I've asked Steve to report to me on how we can make the corporation do better, and to get help where it's most needed.

And secondly, Professor John Dilulio will head the new office I am announcing today. He is one of the most influential social entrepreneurs in America. I can't tell you how honored I am for him to leave his post in academia to join us. He is the author of a respected textbook on American government. He has a servant's heart on the issues that we will confront. He's worked with disadvantaged children. He has been a major force in mobilizing the city of Philadelphia to support faith-based and community groups.

It's a fantastic team. I'm honored to have them on my team. I look forward to hearing from them, as well as I look forward to working with the people in this room and the social entrepreneurs all across America who have heard the universal call to love a neighbor like they'd like to be loved themselves; to exist and work hard, not out of the love of money, but out of the love of their fellow human beings. I'm absolutely convinced the great fabric of the nation exists in neighborhoods, amongst unsung heroes who do heroic acts on a daily and hourly basis. It's the fabric of the country that makes America unique. It is — the power of promise that makes the future so promising is the power of the missions that

stand behind me.

This is an effort that will be an effort from, now the second week of my administration to the last week of my administration, because I am confident that this initiative, when fully implemented, will help us realize the dream that America, its hopes, its promise, its greatness, will extend its reach throughout every single neighborhood, all across the land.

And now it is my honor to sign the two executive orders.

REMARKS AT THE NATIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FEBRUARY 1, 2001

Well, thank you all very much for that warm welcome. Laura and I are honored to be here this morning. I did a pretty good job when it came to picking my wife, by the way. She's going to be a fabulous First Lady.

Mr. Vice President, it's good to see you; of course, your wife, Lynn. And I want to thank the members of my Cabinet who are here. I appreciate you, Senator Frist, for your commitment and strong comments. And, Zach, thanks for your introduction. And thank you both for organizing this important event.

I want to thank the members of the House and Senate who are here. I appreciate the number of foreign dignitaries who are here. It just goes to show that faith crosses every border, and touches every heart in every nation.

Every President since the first one I can remember, Dwight Eisenhower, has taken part in this great tradition. It's a privilege for me to speak where they have spoken, and to pray where they have prayed. All Presidents of the United States have come to the National Prayer Breakfast, regardless of their religious views. No matter what our background, in prayer we share something universal — a desire to speak and listen to our Maker, and to know His plan for our lives.

America's Constitution forbids a religious test for office, and that's the way it should be. An American President serves people of every faith, and serves some of no faith at all. Yet I have found my faith helps me in the service to people. Faith teaches humility. As Laura would say, I could use a dose occasionally. A recognition that we are small in God's universe, yet precious in His sight. It has sustained me in moments of success, and in moments of disappointment. Without it I would be a different person, and

without it I doubt I'd be here today.

There are many experiences of faith in this room. But most of us share a belief that we are loved, and called to love; that our choices matter, now and forever; that there are purposes deeper than ambition and hopes greater than success. These beliefs shape our lives and help sustain the life of our nation. Men and women can be good without faith, but faith is a force of goodness. Men and women can be compassionate without faith, but faith often inspires compassion. Human beings can love without faith, but faith is a great teacher of love.

Our country, from its beginnings has recognized the contribution of faith. We do not impose any religion; we welcome all religions. We do not prescribe any prayer, we welcome all prayers. This is the tradition of our nation, and it will be the standard of my administration. We will respect every creed. We will honor the diversity of our country and the deep convictions of our people.

There's a good reason why many in our nation embrace the faith tradition. Throughout our history people of faith have often been our nation's voice of conscience. The foes of slavery could appeal to the standard that all are created equal in the sight of our Lord. The civil rights movement had the same conviction on its side — that men and women bearing God's image should not be exploited and set aside, and treated as insignificant. The same impulse over the years has reformed prisons and mental institutions, hospitals, hospices, and homeless shelters.

The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. said this: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state." As in his case, that sometimes means defying the times, challenging old ways and old assumptions. This influence has made our nation more just and generous and decent. And our nation has need of that today.

Faith remains important to the compassion of our nation. Millions of Americans serve their neighbor because they love their God. Their lives are characterized by kindness and patience, and service to others. They do for others what no government really can

ever do — no government program can really ever do: They provide love for another human being. They provide hope even when hope comes hard.

In my second week in office we have set out to promote the work of community and faith-based charities. We want to encourage the inspired, to help the helper. Government cannot be replaced by charities, but it can welcome them as partners instead of resenting them as rivals.

My administration will put the federal government squarely on the side of America's armies of compassion. Our plan will not favor religious institutions over non-religious institutions. As President, I'm interested in what is constitutional, and I'm interested in what works. The days of discriminating against religious institutions, simply because they are religious, must come to an end.

Faith is also important to the civility of our country. It teaches us not merely to tolerate one another, but to respect one another — to show a regard for different views and the courtesy to listen. This is essential to democracy. It is also the proper way to treat human beings created in the divine image.

We'll have our disagreements. Civility does not require us to abandon deeply-held beliefs. Civility does not demand casual creeds and colorless convictions. Americans have always believed that civility and firm resolve could live easily with one another. But civility does mean that our public debate ought to be free from bitterness and anger, rancor and ill-will. We have an obligation to make our case, not to demonize our opponents. As the Book of James reminds us, fresh water and salt water cannot flow from the same spring.

I am under no illusion that civility will triumph in this city all at once. Old habits die hard — and sometimes they never die at all. I can only pledge to you this; that I will do my very best to promote civility, and ask for the same in return.

These are some of the crucial contributions of faith to our nation: justice, and compassion, and a civil and generous society. I thank you for displaying these values, and defending them, here in

America and across the world. You strengthen the ties of friendship and the ties of nations. And I deeply appreciate your work.

I believe in the power of prayer. It's been said: "I would rather stand against the cannons of the wicked than against the prayers of the righteous." The prayers of a friend are one of life's most gracious gifts. My family and I are blessed by the prayers of countless Americans. Over the last several months, Laura and I have been touched by the number of people who come up and say, "We pray for you." Such comforting words. I hope Americans will continue to pray that everyone in my administration finds wisdom, and always remembers the common good.

When President Harry Truman took office in 1945, he said: "At this moment, I have in my heart a prayer. I ask only to be a good and faithful servant of my Lord and my people." This has been the prayer of many Presidents, and it is mine today. God bless.

ADDRESS TO THE JOINT SESSION OF THE 107TH CONGRESS

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FEBRUARY 27, 2001

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, members of Congress: It's a great privilege to be here to outline a new budget and a new approach for governing our great country. I thank you for your invitation to speak here tonight. I know Congress had to formally invite me, and it could have been a close vote. So, Mr. Vice President, I appreciate you being here to break the tie.

I want to thank so many of you who have accepted my invitation to come to the White House to discuss important issues. We're off to a good start. I will continue to meet with you and ask for your input. You have been kind and candid, and I thank you for making a new President feel welcome.

The last time I visited the Capitol, I came to take an oath on the steps of this building. I pledged to honor our Constitution and laws. And I asked you to join me in setting a tone of civility and respect in Washington.

I hope America is noticing the difference, because we're making progress. Together, we are changing the tone in the Nation's Capital. And this spirit of respect and cooperation is vital, because, in the end, we will be judged not only by what we say or how we say it, we will be judged by what we're able to accomplish.

America today is a nation with great challenges, but greater resources. An artist using statistics as a brush could paint two very different pictures of our country. One would have warning signs: increasing layoffs, rising energy prices, too many failing schools, persistent poverty, the stubborn vestiges of racism. Another picture would be full of blessings: a balanced budget, big surpluses, a military that is second to none, a country at peace with its neighbors, technology that is revolutionizing the world, and our greatest strength — concerned citizens who care for our country and

care for each other.

Neither picture is complete in and of itself. And tonight I challenge and invite Congress to work with me to use the resources of one picture to repaint the other; to direct the advantages of our time to solve the problems of our people. Some of these resources will come from government. Some, but not all.

Year after year in Washington, budget debates seem to come down to an old, tired argument: on one side, those who want more government, regardless of the cost; on the other, those who want less government, regardless of the need. We should leave those arguments to the last century, and chart a different course.

Government has a role, and an important role. Yet, too much government crowds out initiative and hard work, private charity and the private economy. Our new governing vision says government should be active, but limited; engaged, but not overbearing. And my budget is based on that philosophy.

It is reasonable, and it is responsible. It meets our obligations, and funds our growing needs. We increase spending next year for Social Security and Medicare, and other entitlement programs, by \$81 billion. We've increased spending for discretionary programs by a very responsible 4 percent, above the rate of inflation. My plan pays down an unprecedented amount of our national debt. And then, when money is still left over, my plan returns it to the people who earned it in the first place.

A budget's impact is counted in dollars, but measured in lives. Excellent schools, quality health care, a secure retirement, a cleaner environment, a stronger defense — these are all important needs, and we fund them. The highest percentage increase in our budget should go to our children's education. Education is not my top priority — education is my top priority and, by supporting this budget, you'll make it yours, as well.

Reading is the foundation of all learning. So during the next five years, we triple spending, adding \$5 billion to help every child in America learn to read. Values are important, so we've tripled funding for character education to teach our children not only

reading and writing, but right from wrong.

We've increased funding to train and recruit teachers, because we know a good education starts with a good teacher. And I have a wonderful partner in this effort. I like teachers so much, I married one. Laura has begun a new effort to recruit Americans to the profession that will shape our future — teaching. She will travel across America to promote sound teaching practices and early reading skills in our schools and in programs such as Head Start.

When it comes to our schools, dollars alone do not always make the difference. Funding is important, and so is reform. So we must tie funding to higher standards and accountability for results.

I believe in local control of schools. We should not, and we will not, run public schools from Washington, D.C. Yet when the federal government spends tax dollars, we must insist on results. Children should be tested on basic reading and math skills every year between grades three and eight. Measuring is the only way to know whether all our children are learning. And I want to know, because I refuse to leave any child behind in America.

Critics of testing contend it distracts from learning. They talk about teaching to the test. But let's put that logic to the test. If you test a child on basic math and reading skills, and you're teaching to the test, you're teaching math and reading. And that's the whole idea. As standards rise, local schools will need more flexibility to meet them. So we must streamline the dozens of federal education programs into five, and let states spend money in those categories as they see fit.

Schools will be given a reasonable chance to improve and the support to do so. Yet, if they don't, if they continue to fail, we must give parents and students different options — a better public school, a private school, tutoring or a charter school. In the end, every child in a bad situation must be given a better choice because, when it comes to our children, failure is simply not an option.

Another priority in my budget is to keep the vital promises of Medicare and Social Security, and together we will do so. To meet the health care needs of all America's seniors, we double

the Medicare budget over the next 10 years. My budget dedicates \$238 billion to Medicare next year alone, enough to fund all current programs and to begin a new prescription drug benefit for low-income seniors. No senior in America should have to choose between buying food and buying prescriptions.

To make sure the retirement savings of America's seniors are not diverted in any other program, my budget protects all \$2.6 trillion of the Social Security surplus for Social Security, and for Social Security alone.

My budget puts a priority on access to health care, without telling Americans what doctor they have to see or what coverage they must choose. Many working Americans do not have health care coverage, so we will help them buy their own insurance with refundable tax credits. And to provide quality care in low-income neighborhoods, over the next five years we will double the number of people served at community health care centers.

And we will address the concerns of those who have health coverage, yet worry their insurance company doesn't care and won't pay. Together this Congress and this President will find common ground to make sure doctors make medical decisions, and patients get the health care they deserve with a patients' bill of rights.

When it comes to their health, people want to get the medical care they need, not be forced to go to court because they didn't get it. We will ensure access to the courts for those with legitimate claims. But first, let's put in place a strong, independent review so we promote quality health care, not frivolous lawsuits.

My budget also increases funding for medical research, which gives hope to many who struggle with serious disease. Our prayers tonight are with one of your own who is engaged in his own fight against cancer — a fine representative, and a good man, Congressman Joe Moakley. I can think of no more appropriate tribute to Joe than to have the Congress finish the job of doubling the budget for the National Institutes of Health.

My new Freedom Initiative for Americans with Disabilities funds new technologies, expands opportunities to work, and

makes our society more welcoming. For the more than 50 million Americans with disabilities, we need to break down barriers to equality.

The budget I propose to you also supports the people who keep our country strong and free, the men and women who serve in the United States military. I'm requesting \$5.7 billion in increased military pay and benefits, and health care and housing. Our men and women in uniform give America their best and we owe them our support.

America's veterans honored their commitment to our country through their military service. I will honor our commitment to them with a million-dollar increase to ensure better access to quality care and faster decisions on benefit claims.

My budget will improve our environment by accelerating the cleanup of toxic brownfields. And I propose we make a major investment in conservation by fully funding the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Our national parks have a special place in our country's life. Our parks are places of great natural beauty and history. As good stewards, we must leave them better than we found them. So I propose providing \$4.9 billion over five years for the upkeep of these national treasures.

And my budget adopts a hopeful new approach to help the poor and the disadvantaged. We must encourage and support the work of charities and faith-based and community groups that offer help and love one person at a time. These groups are working in every neighborhood in America to fight homelessness and addiction and domestic violence; to provide a hot meal or a mentor or a safe haven for our children. Government should welcome these groups to apply for funds, not discriminate against them.

Government cannot be replaced by charities or volunteers. Government should not fund religious activities. But our nation should support the good works of these good people who are helping their neighbors in need. So I propose allowing all taxpayers, whether they itemize or not, to deduct their charitable contributions. Estimates show this could encourage as much as \$14

billion a year in new charitable giving, money that will save and change lives.

Our budget provides more than \$700 million over the next 10 years for a federal compassion capital fund, with a focused and noble mission, to provide a mentor to the more than 100 million children with a parent in prison, and to support other local efforts to fight illiteracy, teen pregnancy, drug addiction and other difficult problems.

With us tonight is the Mayor of Philadelphia. Please help me welcome Mayor John Street. Mayor Street has encouraged faith-based and community organizations to make a significant difference in Philadelphia. He's invited me to his city this summer to see compassionate action. I'm personally aware of just how effective the Mayor is. Mayor Street's a Democrat. Let the record show, I lost his city, big time. But some things are bigger than politics. So I look forward to coming to your city, to see your faith-based programs in action.

As government promotes compassion, it also must promote justice. Too many of our citizens have cause to doubt our nation's justice, when the law points a finger of suspicion at groups, instead of individuals. All our citizens are created equal, and must be treated equally.

Earlier today, I asked John Ashcroft, the Attorney General, to develop specific recommendations to end racial profiling. It's wrong and we will end it in America. In so doing, we will not hinder the work of our nation's brave police officers. They protect us every day — often at great risk. But by stopping the abuses of a few, we will add to the public confidence our police officers earn and deserve.

My budget has funded a responsible increase in our ongoing operations. It has funded our nation's important priorities. It has protected Social Security and Medicare. And our surpluses are big enough that there is still money left over.

Many of you have talked about the need to pay down our national debt. I listened, and I agree. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to act now, and I hope you will join me to pay down

\$2 trillion in debt during the next 10 years. At the end of those 10 years, we will have paid down all the debt that is available to retire. That is more debt, repaid more quickly than has ever been repaid by any nation at any time in history.

We should also prepare for the unexpected, for the uncertainties of the future. We should approach our nation's budget as any prudent family would, with a contingency fund for emergencies or additional spending needs. For example, after a strategic review, we may need to increase defense spending. We may need to increase spending for our farmers or additional money to reform Medicare. And so, my budget sets aside almost a trillion dollars over 10 years for additional needs. That is one trillion additional reasons you can feel comfortable supporting this budget.

We have increased our budget at a responsible 4 percent. We have funded our priorities. We paid down all the available debt. We have prepared for contingencies. And we still have money left over.

Yogi Berra once said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it." Now, we come to a fork in the road; we have two choices. Even though we have already met our needs, we could spend the money on more and bigger government. That's the road our nation has traveled in recent years.

Last year, government spending shot up 8 percent. That's far more than our economy grew, far more than personal income grew, and far more than the rate of inflation. If you continue on that road, you will spend the surplus and have to dip into Social Security to pay other bills. Unrestrained government spending is a dangerous road to deficits, so we must take a different path. The other choice is to let the American people spend their own money to meet their own needs.

I hope you will join me in standing firmly on the side of the people. You see, the growing surplus exists because taxes are too high and government is charging more than it needs. The people of America have been overcharged and, on their behalf, I am here asking for a refund.

Some say my tax plan is too big. Others say it's too small. I

respectfully disagree. This plan is just right. I didn't throw darts at the board to come up with a number for tax relief. I didn't take a poll or develop an arbitrary formula that might sound good. I looked at problems in the Tax Code and calculated the cost to fix them.

A tax rate of 15 percent is too high for those who earn low wages, so we must lower the rate to 10 percent. No one should pay more than a third of the money they earn in federal income taxes, so we lowered the top rate to 33 percent.

This reform will be welcome relief for America's small businesses, which often pay taxes at the highest rate. And help for small business means jobs for Americans. We simplified the Tax Code by reducing the number of tax rates from the current five rates to four lower ones, 10 percent, 15, 25 and 33 percent. In my plan, no one is targeted in or targeted out. Everyone who pays income taxes will get relief.

Our government should not tax, and thereby discourage marriage, so we reduced the marriage penalty. I want to help families rear and support their children, so we doubled the child credit to \$1,000 per child. It's not fair to tax the same earnings twice — once when you earn them, and again when you die — so we must repeal the death tax.

These changes add up to significant help. A typical family with two children will save \$1,600 a year on their federal income taxes. Now, \$1,600 may not sound like a lot to some, but it means a lot to many families: \$1,600 buys gas for two cars for an entire year; it pays tuition for a year at a community college; it pays the average family grocery bill for three months. That's real money.

With us tonight representing many American families are Steven and Josefina Ramos. They are from Pennsylvania. But they could be from any one of your districts. Steven is the network administrator for a school district. Josefina is a Spanish teacher at a charter school. And they have a two-year-old daughter.

Steven and Josefina tell me they pay almost \$8,000 a year in federal income taxes. My plan will save them more than \$2,000. Let me tell you what Steven says: "Two thousand dollars a year means

a lot to my family. If we had this money, it would help us reach our goal of paying off our personal debt in two years' time." After that, Steven and Josefina want to start saving for Lianna's college education.

My attitude is, government should never stand in the way of families achieving their dreams. And as we debate this issue, always remember, the surplus is not the government's money, the surplus is the people's money.

For lower-income families, my tax plan restores basic fairness. Right now, complicated tax rules punish hard work. A waitress supporting two children on \$25,000 a year can lose nearly half of every additional dollar she earns above the \$25,000. Her overtime, her hardest hours, are taxed at nearly 20 percent. This sends a terrible message: you'll never get ahead. But America's message must be different. We must honor hard work, never punish it. With tax relief, overtime will no longer be over-taxed time for the waitress. People with the smallest incomes will get the highest percentage of reductions. And millions of additional American families will be removed from the income tax rolls entirely.

Tax relief is right and tax relief is urgent. The long economic expansion that began almost 10 years ago is faltering. Lower interest rates will eventually help, but we cannot assume they will do the job all by themselves.

Forty years ago, and then 20 years ago, two Presidents, one Democrat, one Republican, John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan, advocated tax cuts to, in President Kennedy's words, get this country moving again. They knew then what we must do now. To create economic growth and opportunity, we must put money back into the hands of the people who buy goods and create jobs.

We must act quickly. The Chairman of the Federal Reserve has testified before Congress that tax cuts often come too late to stimulate economic recovery. So I want to work with you to give our economy an important jump-start by making tax relief retroactive.

We must act now because it is the right thing to do. We must also

act now because we have other things to do. We must show courage to confront and resolve tough challenges, to restructure our nation's defenses, to meet our growing need for energy, and to reform Medicare and Social Security.

America has a window of opportunity to extend and secure our present peace by promoting a distinctly American internationalism. We will work with our allies and friends to be a force for good and a champion of freedom. We will work for free markets, free trade and freedom from oppression. Nations making progress toward freedom will find America is their friend. We will promote our values. We will promote the peace. And we need a strong military to keep the peace.

But our military was shaped to confront the challenges of the past. So I've asked the Secretary of Defense to review America's Armed Forces and prepare to transform them to meet emerging threats. My budget makes a down payment on the research and development that will be required. Yet, in our broader transformation effort, we must put strategy first, then spending. Our defense vision will drive our defense budget, not the other way around.

Our nation also needs a clear strategy to confront the threats of the 21st century — threats that are more widespread and less certain. They range from terrorists who threaten with bombs to tyrants in rogue nations intent upon developing weapons of mass destruction. To protect our own people, our allies and friends, we must develop and we must deploy effective missile defenses.

And as we transform our military, we can discard Cold War relics, and reduce our own nuclear forces to reflect today's needs. A strong America is the world's best hope for peace and freedom.

Yet the cause of freedom rests on more than our ability to defend ourselves and our allies. Freedom is exported every day, as we ship goods and products that improve the lives of millions of people. Free trade brings greater political and personal freedom. Each of the previous five Presidents has had the ability to negotiate far reaching trade agreements. Tonight I ask you to give me the strong hand of

presidential trade promotion authority, and to do so quickly.

As we meet tonight, many citizens are struggling with the high cost of energy. We have a serious energy problem that demands a national energy policy. The West is confronting a major energy shortage that has resulted in high prices and uncertainty. I've asked federal agencies to work with California officials to help speed construction of new energy sources, and I have direct Vice President Cheney, Commerce Secretary Evans, Energy Secretary Abraham and other senior members in my administration to develop a national energy policy.

Our energy demand outstrips our supply. We can produce more energy at home while protecting our environment, and we must. We can produce more electricity to meet demand, and we must. We can promote alternative energy sources and conservation, and we must. America must become more energy-independent, and we will.

Perhaps the biggest test of our foresight and courage will be reforming Medicare and Social Security. Medicare's finances are strained and its coverage is outdated. Ninety-nine percent of employer-provided health plans offer some form of prescription drug coverage; Medicare does not. The framework for reform has been developed by Senators Frist and Breaux and Congressman Thomas, and now is the time to act.

Medicare must be modernized, and we must make sure that every senior on Medicare can choose a health care plan that offers prescription drugs.

Seven years from now, the baby boom generation will begin to claim Social Security benefits. Every one in this chamber knows that Social Security is not prepared to fully fund their retirement. And we only have a couple of years to get prepared. Without reform, this country will one day awaken to a stark choice: either a drastic rise in payroll taxes or a radical cut in retirement benefits.

There is a better way. This spring I will form a presidential commission to reform Social Security. The commission will make its recommendations by next fall. Reform should be based on these principles: It must preserve the benefits of all current retirees and

those nearing retirement. It must return Social Security to sound financial footing. And it must offer personal savings accounts to younger workers who want them.

Social Security now offers workers a return of less than 2 percent on the money they pay into the system. To save the system, we must increase that by allowing younger workers to make safe, sound investments that yield a higher rate of return. Ownership, access to wealth and independence should not be the privilege of the few. They are the hope of every American, and we must make them the foundation of Social Security.

By confronting the tough challenge of reform, by being responsible with our budget, we can earn the trust of the American people. And we can add to that trust by enacting fair and balanced election and campaign reforms.

The agenda I have set before you tonight is worthy of a great nation. America is a nation at peace, but not a nation at rest. Much has been given to us, and much is expected. Let us agree to bridge old divides. But let us also agree that our goodwill must be dedicated to great goals. Bipartisan is more than minding our matters. It is doing our duty.

No one can speak in this Capitol and not be awed by its history. As so many turning points, debates in these chambers have reflected the collected or divided conscience of our country. And when we walk through Statuary Hall and see those men and women of marble, we're reminded of their courage and achievement.

Yet America's purpose is never found only in statues or history. America's purpose always stands before us. Our generation must show courage in a time of blessing, as our nation has always shown in times of crisis. And our courage, issue by issue, can gather to greatness and serve our country. This is the privilege and responsibility we share. And if we work together, we can prove that public service is noble.

We all came here for a reason. We all have things we want to accomplish and promises to keep. Juntos podemos — together we can.

We can make Americans proud of their government. Together we can share in the credit of making our country more prosperous and generous and just, and earn from our conscience and from our fellow citizens the highest possible praise: Well done, good and faithful servants.

Thank you all. Good night and God bless.

DEDICATION OF THE POPE JOHN PAUL II CULTURAL CENTER

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 22, 2001

Your Excellency, thank you very much. You will be pleased to hear, my mother is still telling me what to do. And I'm listening most of the time.

Cardinal Maida, thank you for your vision, and thank you for your smile. What a great smile. Cardinal Szocha, thank you very much for your hospitality and, Cardinal McCarrick, let me congratulate you on becoming a cardinal last month. Though we're both new to our jobs, I'm the only one who is term-limited.

I may be just passing through and I may not be a parishioner, but I'm proud to live in your archdiocese. I'm pleased to join with all the church leaders and special guests here today to dedicate the cultural center. It is my high honor to be here.

When Cardinal Wojtyla spoke here at Catholic University in 1976, few imagined the course his life would take, or the history his life would shape. In 1978, most of the world knew him only as the Polish Pope. There were signs of something different and deeper.

One journalist, after hearing the new Pope's first blessing in St. Peter's Square wired back to his editors: "This is not a pope from Poland, this is a pope from Galilee." From that day to this, the Pope's life has written one of the great inspiring stories of our time.

We remember the Pope's first visit to Poland in 1979 when faith turned into resistance and began the swift collapse of imperial communism. The gentle, young priests, once ordered into forced labor by Nazis, became the foe of tyranny and a witness to hope.

The last leader of the Soviet Union would call him "the highest moral authority on earth." We remember his visit to a prison, comforting the man who shot him. By answering violence with forgiveness, the Pope became a symbol of reconciliation.

We remember the Pope's visit to Manila in 1995, speaking to one of the largest crowds in history, more than 5 million men and women and children. We remember that as a priest 50 years ago, he traveled by horse-cart to teach the children of small villages. Now he's kissed the ground of 123 countries and leads a flock of 1 billion into the Third Millennium.

We remember the Pope's visit to Israel and his mission of reconciliation and mutual respect between Christians and Jews. He is the first modern Pope to enter a synagogue or visit an Islamic country. He has always combined the practice of tolerance with a passion for truth.

John Paul, himself, has often said, "In the designs of Providence, there are no mere coincidences." And maybe the reason this man became Pope is that he bears the message our world needs to hear. To the poor, sick and dying he carries a message of dignity and solidarity with their suffering. Even when they are forgotten by men, he reminds them they are never forgotten by God.

"Do not give in to despair," he said, "in the South Bronx. God has your lives and His care, goes with you, calls you to better things, calls you to overcome."

To the wealthy, this Pope carries the message that wealth alone is a false comfort. The goods of the world, he teaches, are nothing without goodness. We are called, each and every one of us, not only to make our own way, but to ease the path of others.

To those with power, the Pope carries a message of justice and human rights. And that message has caused dictators to fear and to fall. His is not the power of armies or technology or wealth. It is the unexpected power of a baby in a stable, of a man on a cross, of a simple fisherman who carried a message of hope to Rome.

Pope John Paul II brings that message of liberation to every corner of the world. When he arrived in Cuba in 1998, he was greeted by signs that read, "Fidel is the Revolution!". But as the Pope's biographer put it, "In the next four days Cuba belonged to another revolutionary." We are confident that the revolution of hope the Pope began in that nation will bear fruit in our time.

And we're responsible to stand for human dignity and religious freedom wherever they are denied, from Cuba to China to Southern Sudan. And we, in our country, must not ignore the words the Pope addresses to us. On his four pilgrimages to America, he has spoken with wisdom and feeling about our strengths and our flaws, our successes and our needs.

The Pope reminds us that while freedom defines our nation, responsibility must define our lives. He challenges us to live up to our aspirations, to be a fair and just society where all are welcomed, all are valued, and all are protected. And he is never more eloquent than when he speaks for a culture of life. The culture of life is a welcoming culture, never excluding, never dividing, never despairing and always affirming the goodness of life in all its seasons.

In the culture of life we must make room for the stranger. We must comfort the sick. We must care for the aged. We must welcome the immigrant. We must teach our children to be gentle with one another. We must defend in love the innocent child waiting to be born.

The center we dedicate today celebrates the Pope's message, its comfort and its challenge. This place stands for the dignity of the human person, the value of every life and the splendor of truth. And, above all, it stands, in the Pope's words, for the "joy of faith in a troubled world."

I'm grateful that Pope John Paul II chose Washington as the site of this center. It brings honor and it fills a need. We are thankful for the message. We are also thankful for the messenger, for his personal warmth and prophetic strength; for his good humor and his bracing honesty; for his spiritual and intellectual gifts; for his moral courage, tested against tyranny and against our own complacency.

Always, the Pope points us to the things that last and the love that saves. We thank God for this rare man, a servant of God and a hero of history. And I thank all of you for building this center of conscience and reflection in our Nation's Capital.

God bless.

TAX RELIEF ADDRESS TO THE UNITED STATES
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
APRIL 16, 2001

Thank you very much. Kelly, thank you very much for that kind introduction. It's an honor for me to be here. Tom, thank you for opening up this fantastic facility. I am thrilled to know that some of my former governors are with members of the chambers in their respective states, and I want to say hello to them. I thank all those who are tuning in. It's kind of nice to be able to speak to so many folks in so many cities without having to fire up Air Force One.

I'm especially honored to be able to speak to the folks who really help our economy grow, the entrepreneurs, the business folks of America, the employers, the risk takers, the people who really work hard to realize the great America Dream.

As Kelly said, this is tax day. All across America, husbands and wives spent last weekend side-by-side at the kitchen table, trying to finish their 1040s. You have to say this for the income tax, it tends to bring families together.

The Internal Revenue Service asks our families in America a lot of questions: how much did you earn; did you move last year; how big is your mortgage payment. You know, the truth of the matter is, the IRS knows more about us than our neighbors do. In a lot of cases, they know more about us than our families do.

But while the tax system knows a lot about our citizens, there's a lot our citizens may not know about our tax system. In 2001, the federal government will take a bigger share of the U.S. economy in taxes than in any year since 1944. And I remind you, in 1944, we had 11.5 million people under arms.

The federal government will take more as a percentage of the national economy this year than it did during World War II, except for one year; more than any year of the Vietnam War or the Korean

conflict; more than it took to win World War I or prevail in the Cold War.

Our country is at peace, but our government is charging wartime prices. Enough is enough. The American people deserve tax relief.

You often hear it said, we cannot afford tax relief. But even after adjusting for inflation, the U.S. government will collect twice as much income tax revenue in 2001 as it did in 1981. Enough is enough, folks. It's time to give our folks some tax relief in America.

During the budget debates in Washington, some members of Congress complained that they did not have enough money to spend, but in 2001 the income tax will yield \$2 billion in revenues for each and every one of the 535 members of Congress. I think they should be able to get by on that. Even the senators. No, enough's enough. People in America deserve tax relief.

Thanks to the help of a lot of folks here and all around the country, tax relief is on the way. The American taxpayer won some important victories a couple of weeks ago. The House of Representatives voted in favor of a plan that I think is an important plan, \$1.6 trillion in tax relief over the next 10 years. The Senate approved most of my tax plan, but wants the government to spend far more.

Some members of the Senate are, unfortunately, proving the point I make all across the country — if you send it, they will spend it. Federal discretionary spending rose by 8 percent in 2001. The Senate has just voted to increase the discretionary spending by another 8 percent in 2002. At that rate, federal discretionary spending will double by 2010. Think about that. If we keep spending at the pace the Senate wants, in only nine years' time, government operations will cost twice as much as they do today.

Now, senators are in their home states this week listening to the taxpayers. I hope Americans will send a clear message: excessive federal spending threatens economic vitality. What we want is a stronger economy, not larger federal government.

There's a better way: increase discretionary spending by a moderate

and responsible 4 percent — by the way, at a rate larger than inflation — and then reduces — and then reduce taxes for everyone who pays taxes.

My plan does not puncture the tax code with loopholes. It doesn't give special treatment to special interests. My plan targets only one interest, the public interest. It directs help to individuals and families and small businesses. It is a plan for real people, and it will help produce real prosperity.

Let me tell you a little bit about what tax relief means for American families. My plan, when fully implemented, returns about \$1,600 to the typical family of four. Sixteen-hundred dollars pays the typical mortgage for more than a month. Sixteen-hundred dollars will buy the typical family nearly three months worth of groceries. Sixteen-hundred dollars will fuel two cars for a year.

There are a lot of American mothers and dads who wake up in America today anxious over bills they have to pay. Their worries don't get any easier when the federal government takes more of their income in taxes than they pay for food, shelter and clothing. For families with children to raise and debts to pay, tax relief will lift burdens and ease worries.

For small businesses, tax relief means more customers and improved cash flow, more money to hire more workers, more money to expand benefits, more money to invest in new technology. Tax relief will create new jobs. Tax relief will generate new wealth. And tax relief will open new opportunities.

If you read some of the news accounts of this budget debate, if you listen to what some of the members of Congress say, you'd think that little of value can ever happen in America unless the government makes it happen. You'd think that when we return money to the taxpayers it evaporates into the air.

Let me tell you some of the things \$1.6 trillion could mean to the private economy. It could buy 10 million new middle income homes. It could pay the tuitions of 26 million young people at a private college or university for four years each. It could purchase 76 million new automobiles. These are the kinds of things

Americans do with their own money. And there are many others.

Just ask Tommy and Sharen Winfield, for example. They're watching via closed circuit here from Atlanta, Georgia. The Winfields have three children. Tommy has been working as an operating engineer at Children's Hospital of Atlanta for the past three years. They pay \$1,380 in federal income taxes. Under my plan, they'd pay nothing.

I first met Tommy a few weeks ago, and we were having a round-table discussion about tax relief. I asked him whether he thought the relief would make a difference to his family — you see, there are some who say, \$1,380, that's nothing, that's not enough money for anybody.

But let me tell you what Tommy said loud and clear, and I hope the members of the United States Congress hear it. Tommy said, sir, if they don't believe you — meaning, whether or not tax relief means anything then they should just ask me. One thousand three hundred and eighty dollars means a lot to Tommy. It means a lot to a lot of folks in America: those who are struggling with higher energy bills, because we hadn't had an energy policy; those who have got big credit card debts.

We've got the Brake family with us from Alexandria, Virginia, Kelly and Pam. One less son. They pay \$4,000 in federal income tax. Under my plan, they will save \$1,700. That's real money for this hard-working couple. They and their two sons, I can assure you, will find good use for that tax relief. And whatever they do, I strongly believe they will spend it better and more productively than the federal government can.

This is an important debate for our country. It's a debate about how to make sure our economy continues to grow. But it's really a debate about who do we trust. Who do those of us who have been honored to serve our country at the federal level, who do we trust with the people's money? Do we trust our government, or do we trust the people? I believe after we meet priorities — and we meet priorities by growing the discretionary budget by 4 percent — that we always have got to remember whose money it is we're talking

about. It's not the government's money, it's the people's money.

And we've always got to remember, the role of government is not to create wealth. It's to create an environment in which the entrepreneur can flourish, in which the small business can grow to become a big business. That's the role of government. And that's why it's vital at this point in American history that we return money back to the people. Instead of returning money, we ought not to take it in the first place, with real meaningful tax relief.

I've learned that the people can make a big difference in a lot of debates, particularly the tax relief debate. We're making some pretty good progress. I saw a good Democrat Senator out of Georgia, the other day. Max Cleland said that he is interested in — when he comes back, interested in supporting the \$1.6 trillion plan. I think that's what he said. It certainly sounded like it to me. And that's a good sign. I appreciate the Senator going home and listening to the people.

You see, I think we've finally made the case that we can meet the obligations of the federal government, that we don't have to grow at 8 percent in order to meet obligations. We've also made the case that sending money back to the people is important for our economy and important for the American Dream. And I want to thank your help for it.

I want to invite all Americans to take a look at the budget plan, themselves. You can order the little book by calling 202-512-1800, and ask for the Citizen's Guide to the Federal Budget. Or you can download it for free at www.whitehouse.gov.

It's important for you to follow your government closely. It's important for you to not let the filter decide what's reality and what's not reality. It's important to get the facts. And it's always important to understand that tax relief will stimulate creativity and enterprise for individual Americans.

I firmly believe tax relief means a better life in a more prosperous America. So let the members of Congress know when they come back that you're watching, that you care for what they do because it will affect your life in a positive way.

I can't thank you all enough for your support, and I can't thank you enough for letting me come by and make my case. God bless you all.

DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE OBSERVANCE

UNITED STATES CAPITOL ROTUNDA
WASHINGTON, D.C.
APRIL 19, 2001

Members of Congress, members of my Cabinet, Ambassador Ivry, Elie Wiesel, Benjamin Meed and other survivors, Rabbi Greenberg and Dr. Mandel, ladies and gentlemen: Laura and I thank you for asking us to join you on this Day of Remembrance.

Some days are set aside to recall the great and hopeful moments of human experience. Other days, like today, we turn our minds to painful events. In doing so, we honor the courage and suffering of martyrs and heroes. We also seek the wisdom and courage to prevent future tragedies and future evils.

World War II ended and camps were liberated before many of us were born. The events we recall today have the safe distance of history. And there will come a time when the eye-witnesses are gone. And that is why we are bound by conscience to remember what happened, and to whom it happened.

During the war, a Nazi guard told Simon Wiesenthal that in time no one would believe his account of what he saw. Evil on so grand a scale would seem incredible. Yet, we do not just believe, we know. We know because the evidence has been kept, the record has been preserved.

It is fitting to remember the Holocaust under the dome of our Nation's Capital, with members of the United States Congress who are here. Some members had relatives among the victims. Some of you played a part in the liberation of Europe. One Congressman here today fought in the underground, and he, himself, was put into forced labor by the Nazis. We are honored by the presence of the gentleman from California, Tom Lantos.

We remember at the Capitol because the United States has accepted a special role; we strive to be a refuge for the persecuted. We are called by history and by conscience to defend the oppressed.

Our country stands on watch for the rise of tyranny, and history's worst tyrants have always reserved a special hatred for the Jewish people. Tyrants and dictators will accept no other gods before them. They require disobedience to the First Commandment. They seek absolute control and are threatened by faith in God. They fear only the power they cannot possess, the power of truth.

So they resent the living example of the devout, especially the devotion of a unique people, chosen by God. Through centuries of struggle, Jews across the world have been witnesses not only against the crimes of men, but for faith in God, and God alone. Theirs is a story of defiance and oppression, and patience and tribulation, reaching back to the Exodus and their exile. That story continued in the founding of the state of Israel. That story continues in the defense of the state of Israel.

When we remember the Holocaust and to whom it happened, we also must remember where it happened. It didn't happen in some remote or unfamiliar place; it happened right in the middle of the Western world. Trains carrying men, women, and children in cattle cars departed from Paris and Vienna, Frankfurt and Warsaw. And the orders came not from crude and uneducated men, but from men who regard themselves as cultured and well-schooled, modern and even forward-looking. They had all the outward traits of cultured men — except for conscience.

Their crimes show the world that evil can slip in and blend in, amid the most civilized of surroundings. In the end, only conscience can stop it, and moral discernment and decency and tolerance. These can never be assured in any time or in any society. They must always be taught.

Yesterday I had the honor of visiting the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, surrounded by the familiar buildings and symbols of our democratic government. Outside the museum are expressions of the best of mankind's earthly aspirations; inside are images realized of the worst possibilities of the human mind, the attempted elimination of a people and the millions more targeted for destruction. The pictures, the clothes, the toys all tell of genocide —

our word for 6 million acts of murder.

This Day of Remembrance marks more than a single historic tragedy, but 6 million important lives — all the possibilities, all the dreams, and all the innocence that died with them.

The Holocaust is defined as much by the courage of the lost as by the cruelty of the guilty. As Victor Frankel observed, man is that being who invented the gas chambers of Auschwitz. However, he's also the being who entered those chambers upright, with the Lord's Prayer or Shema Israel on his lips. When all the crimes are finished, the fears realized and the cries silenced, that was the hope that remained — to be remembered by the living and raised up by the living God. God bless.

STEM CELL ADDRESS TO THE NATION

THE BUSH RANCH
CRAWFORD, TEXAS
AUGUST 9, 2001

Good evening. I appreciate you giving me a few minutes of your time tonight so I can discuss with you a complex and difficult issue, an issue that is one of the most profound of our time.

The issue of research involving stem cells derived from human embryos is increasingly the subject of a national debate and dinner table discussions. The issue is confronted every day in laboratories as scientists ponder the ethical ramifications of their work. It is agonized over by parents and many couples as they try to have children, or to save children already born.

The issue is debated within the church, with people of different faiths, even many of the same faith coming to different conclusions. Many people are finding that the more they know about stem cell research, the less certain they are about the right ethical and moral conclusions.

My administration must decide whether to allow federal funds, your tax dollars, to be used for scientific research on stem cells derived from human embryos. A large number of these embryos already exist. They are the product of a process called in vitro fertilization, which helps so many couples conceive children. When doctors match sperm and egg to create life outside the womb, they usually produce more embryos than are planted in the mother. Once a couple successfully has children, or if they are unsuccessful, the additional embryos remain frozen in laboratories.

Some will not survive during long storage; others are destroyed. A number have been donated to science and used to create privately funded stem cell lines. And a few have been implanted in an adoptive mother and born, and are today healthy children.

Based on preliminary work that has been privately funded, scientists believe further research using stem cells offers great

promise that could help improve the lives of those who suffer from many terrible diseases — from juvenile diabetes to Alzheimer’s, from Parkinson’s to spinal cord injuries. And while scientists admit they are not yet certain, they believe stem cells derived from embryos have unique potential.

You should also know that stem cells can be derived from sources other than embryos — from adult cells, from umbilical cords that are discarded after babies are born, from human placenta. And many scientists feel research on these type of stem cells is also promising. Many patients suffering from a range of diseases are already being helped with treatments developed from adult stem cells.

However, most scientists, at least today, believe that research on embryonic stem cells offer the most promise because these cells have the potential to develop in all of the tissues in the body.

Scientists further believe that rapid progress in this research will come only with federal funds. Federal dollars help attract the best and brightest scientists. They ensure new discoveries are widely shared at the largest number of research facilities and that the research is directed toward the greatest public good.

The United States has a long and proud record of leading the world toward advances in science and medicine that improve human life. And the United States has a long and proud record of upholding the highest standards of ethics as we expand the limits of science and knowledge. Research on embryonic stem cells raises profound ethical questions, because extracting the stem cell destroys the embryo, and thus destroys its potential for life. Like a snowflake, each of these embryos is unique, with the unique genetic potential of an individual human being.

As I thought through this issue, I kept returning to two fundamental questions: First, are these frozen embryos human life, and therefore, something precious to be protected? And second, if they’re going to be destroyed anyway, shouldn’t they be used for a greater good, for research that has the potential to save and improve other lives?

I've asked those questions and others of scientists, scholars, bioethicists, religious leaders, doctors, researchers, members of Congress, my Cabinet, and my friends. I have read heartfelt letters from many Americans. I have given this issue a great deal of thought, prayer and considerable reflection. And I have found widespread disagreement.

On the first issue, are these embryos human life — well, one researcher told me he believes this five-day-old cluster of cells is not an embryo, not yet an individual, but a pre-embryo. He argued that it has the potential for life, but it is not a life because it cannot develop on its own.

An ethicist dismissed that as a callous attempt at rationalization. Make no mistake, he told me, that cluster of cells is the same way you and I, and all the rest of us, started our lives. One goes with a heavy heart if we use these, he said, because we are dealing with the seeds of the next generation.

And to the other crucial question, if these are going to be destroyed anyway, why not use them for good purpose — I also found different answers. Many argue these embryos are byproducts of a process that helps create life, and we should allow couples to donate them to science so they can be used for good purpose instead of wasting their potential. Others will argue there's no such thing as excess life, and the fact that a living being is going to die does not justify experimenting on it or exploiting it as a natural resource.

At its core, this issue forces us to confront fundamental questions about the beginnings of life and the ends of science. It lies at a difficult moral intersection, juxtaposing the need to protect life in all its phases with the prospect of saving and improving life in all its stages.

As the discoveries of modern science create tremendous hope, they also lay vast ethical mine fields. As the genius of science extends the horizons of what we can do, we increasingly confront complex questions about what we should do. We have arrived at that brave new world that seemed so distant in 1932, when Aldous Huxley wrote about human beings created in test tubes in what he

called a “hatchery.”

In recent weeks, we learned that scientists have created human embryos in test tubes solely to experiment on them. This is deeply troubling, and a warning sign that should prompt all of us to think through these issues very carefully.

Embryonic stem cell research is at the leading edge of a series of moral hazards. The initial stem cell researcher was at first reluctant to begin his research, fearing it might be used for human cloning. Scientists have already cloned a sheep. Researchers are telling us the next step could be to clone human beings to create individual designer stem cells, essentially to grow another you, to be available in case you need another heart or lung or liver.

I strongly oppose human cloning, as do most Americans. We recoil at the idea of growing human beings for spare body parts, or creating life for our convenience. And while we must devote enormous energy to conquering disease, it is equally important that we pay attention to the moral concerns raised by the new frontier of human embryo stem cell research. Even the most noble ends do not justify any means.

My position on these issues is shaped by deeply held beliefs. I’m a strong supporter of science and technology, and believe they have the potential for incredible good — to improve lives, to save life, to conquer disease. Research offers hope that millions of our loved ones may be cured of a disease and rid of their suffering. I have friends whose children suffer from juvenile diabetes. Nancy Reagan has written me about President Reagan’s struggle with Alzheimer’s. My own family has confronted the tragedy of childhood leukemia. And, like all Americans, I have great hope for cures.

I also believe human life is a sacred gift from our Creator. I worry about a culture that devalues life, and believe as your President I have an important obligation to foster and encourage respect for life in America and throughout the world. And while we’re all hopeful about the potential of this research, no one can be certain that the science will live up to the hope it has generated.

Eight years ago, scientists believed fetal tissue research offered great hope for cures and treatments — yet, the progress to date has not lived up to its initial expectations. Embryonic stem cell research offers both great promise and great peril. So I have decided we must proceed with great care.

As a result of private research, more than 60 genetically diverse stem cell lines already exist. They were created from embryos that have already been destroyed, and they have the ability to regenerate themselves indefinitely, creating ongoing opportunities for research. I have concluded that we should allow federal funds to be used for research on these existing stem cell lines, where the life and death decision has already been made.

Leading scientists tell me research on these 60 lines has great promise that could lead to breakthrough therapies and cures. This allows us to explore the promise and potential of stem cell research without crossing a fundamental moral line, by providing taxpayer funding that would sanction or encourage further destruction of human embryos that have at least the potential for life.

I also believe that great scientific progress can be made through aggressive federal funding of research on umbilical cord placenta, adult and animal stem cells which do not involve the same moral dilemma. This year, your government will spend \$250 million on this important research.

I will also name a President's council to monitor stem cell research, to recommend appropriate guidelines and regulations, and to consider all of the medical and ethical ramifications of biomedical innovation. This council will consist of leading scientists, doctors, ethicists, lawyers, theologians and others, and will be chaired by Dr. Leon Kass, a leading biomedical ethicist from the University of Chicago.

This council will keep us apprised of new developments and give our nation a forum to continue to discuss and evaluate these important issues. As we go forward, I hope we will always be guided by both intellect and heart, by both our capabilities and our conscience.

I have made this decision with great care, and I pray it is the right one.

Thank you for listening. Good night, and God bless America.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS

THE OVAL OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes, or in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror.

The pictures of airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. These acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong.

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shattered steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.

America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining.

Today, our nation saw evil, the very worst of human nature. And we responded with the best of America — with the daring of our rescue workers, with the caring for strangers and neighbors who came to give blood and help in any way they could.

Immediately following the first attack, I implemented our government's emergency response plans. Our military is powerful, and it's prepared. Our emergency teams are working in New York City and Washington, D.C. to help with local rescue efforts.

Our first priority is to get help to those who have been injured, and to take every precaution to protect our citizens at home and around the world from further attacks.

The functions of our government continue without interruption. Federal agencies in Washington which had to be evacuated today are reopening for essential personnel tonight, and will be open for business tomorrow. Our financial institutions remain strong, and the American economy will be open for business, as well.

The search is underway for those who are behind these evil acts. I've directed the full resources of our intelligence and law enforcement communities to find those responsible and to bring them to justice. We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them.

I appreciate so very much the members of Congress who have joined me in strongly condemning these attacks. And on behalf of the American people, I thank the many world leaders who have called to offer their condolences and assistance.

America and our friends and allies join with all those who want peace and security in the world, and we stand together to win the war against terrorism. Tonight, I ask for your prayers for all those who grieve, for the children whose worlds have been shattered, for all whose sense of safety and security has been threatened. And I pray they will be comforted by a power greater than any of us, spoken through the ages in Psalm 23: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me."

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day. Yet, we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

Thank you. Good night, and God bless America.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 14, 2001

We are here in the middle hour of our grief. So many have suffered so great a loss, and today we express our nation's sorrow. We come before God to pray for the missing and the dead, and for those who love them.

On Tuesday, our country was attacked with deliberate and massive cruelty. We have seen the images of fire and ashes, and bent steel.

Now come the names, the list of casualties we are only beginning to read. They are the names of men and women who began their day at a desk or in an airport, busy with life. They are the names of people who faced death, and in their last moments called home to say, be brave, and I love you.

They are the names of passengers who defied their murderers, and prevented the murder of others on the ground. They are the names of men and women who wore the uniform of the United States, and died at their posts.

They are the names of rescuers, the ones whom death found running up the stairs and into the fires to help others. We will read all these names. We will linger over them, and learn their stories, and many Americans will weep.

To the children and parents and spouses and families and friends of the lost, we offer the deepest sympathy of the nation. And I assure you, you are not alone.

Just three days removed from these events, Americans do not yet have the distance of history. But our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil.

War has been waged against us by stealth and deceit and murder. This nation is peaceful, but fierce when stirred to anger. This conflict was begun on the timing and terms of others. It will end in

a way, and at an hour, of our choosing.

Our purpose as a nation is firm. Yet our wounds as a people are recent and unhealed, and lead us to pray. In many of our prayers this week, there is a searching, and an honesty. At St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York on Tuesday, a woman said, "I prayed to God to give us a sign that He is still here." Others have prayed for the same, searching hospital to hospital, carrying pictures of those still missing.

God's signs are not always the ones we look for. We learn in tragedy that his purposes are not always our own. Yet the prayers of private suffering, whether in our homes or in this great cathedral, are known and heard, and understood.

There are prayers that help us last through the day, or endure the night. There are prayers of friends and strangers, that give us strength for the journey. And there are prayers that yield our will to a will greater than our own.

This world He created is of moral design. Grief and tragedy and hatred are only for a time. Goodness, remembrance, and love have no end. And the Lord of life holds all who die, and all who mourn.

It is said that adversity introduces us to ourselves. This is true of a nation as well. In this trial, we have been reminded, and the world has seen, that our fellow Americans are generous and kind, resourceful and brave. We see our national character in rescuers working past exhaustion; in long lines of blood donors; in thousands of citizens who have asked to work and serve in any way possible.

And we have seen our national character in eloquent acts of sacrifice. Inside the World Trade Center, one man who could have saved himself stayed until the end at the side of his quadriplegic friend. A beloved priest died giving the last rites to a firefighter. Two office workers, finding a disabled stranger, carried her down sixty-eight floors to safety. A group of men drove through the night from Dallas to Washington to bring skin grafts for burn victims.

In these acts, and in many others, Americans showed a deep commitment to one another, and an abiding love for our country. Today, we feel what Franklin Roosevelt called the warm courage of

national unity. This is a unity of every faith, and every background.

It has joined together political parties in both houses of Congress. It is evident in services of prayer and candlelight vigils, and American flags, which are displayed in pride, and wave in defiance.

Our unity is a kinship of grief, and a steadfast resolve to prevail against our enemies. And this unity against terror is now extending across the world.

America is a nation full of good fortune, with so much to be grateful for. But we are not spared from suffering. In every generation, the world has produced enemies of human freedom. They have attacked America, because we are freedom's home and defender. And the commitment of our fathers is now the calling of our time.

On this national day of prayer and remembrance, we ask almighty God to watch over our nation, and grant us patience and resolve in all that is to come. We pray that He will comfort and console those who now walk in sorrow. We thank Him for each life we now must mourn, and the promise of a life to come.

As we have been assured, neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, can separate us from God's love. May He bless the souls of the departed. May He comfort our own. And may He always guide our country.

God bless America.

REMARKS TO NEW YORK RESCUE WORKERS

MURRAY AND WEST STREETS
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
SEPTEMBER 14, 2001

CROWD: U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all. I want you all to know —

Q Can't hear you.

THE PRESIDENT: I can't talk any louder.

I want you all to know that America today — that America today is on bended knee in prayer for the people whose lives were lost here, for the workers who work here, for the families who mourn. This nation stands with the good people of New York City, and New Jersey and Connecticut, as we mourn the loss of thousands of our citizens.

Q I can't hear you.

THE PRESIDENT: I can hear you. I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you. And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon.

CROWD: U.S.A.! U.S.A.!

THE PRESIDENT: The nation sends its love and compassion to everybody who is here. Thank you for your hard work. Thank you for making the nation proud. And may God bless America.

ADDRESS TO THE JOINT SESSION OF THE 107TH CONGRESS

UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 20, 2001

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro Tempore, members of Congress, and fellow Americans:

In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight, no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people.

We have seen it in the courage of passengers, who rushed terrorists to save others on the ground — passengers like an exceptional man named Todd Beamer. And would you please help me to welcome his wife, Lisa Beamer, here tonight.

We have seen the state of our Union in the endurance of rescuers, working past exhaustion. We have seen the unfurling of flags, the lighting of candles, the giving of blood, the saying of prayers — in English, Hebrew, and Arabic. We have seen the decency of a loving and giving people who have made the grief of strangers their own.

My fellow citizens, for the last nine days, the entire world has seen for itself the state of our Union — and it is strong.

Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. Whether we bring our enemies to justice, or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done.

I thank the Congress for its leadership at such an important time. All of America was touched on the evening of the tragedy to see Republicans and Democrats joined together on the steps of this Capitol, singing “God Bless America.” And you did more than sing; you acted, by delivering \$40 billion to rebuild our communities and meet the needs of our military.

Speaker Hastert, Minority Leader Gephardt, Majority Leader Daschle and Senator Lott, I thank you for your friendship, for your leadership and for your service to our country.

And on behalf of the American people, I thank the world for its outpouring of support. America will never forget the sounds of our National Anthem playing at Buckingham Palace, on the streets of Paris, and at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate.

We will not forget South Korean children gathering to pray outside our embassy in Seoul, or the prayers of sympathy offered at a mosque in Cairo. We will not forget moments of silence and days of mourning in Australia and Africa and Latin America.

Nor will we forget the citizens of 80 other nations who died with our own: dozens of Pakistanis; more than 130 Israelis; more than 250 citizens of India; men and women from El Salvador, Iran, Mexico and Japan; and hundreds of British citizens. America has no truer friend than Great Britain. Once again, we are joined together in a great cause — so honored the British Prime Minister has crossed an ocean to show his unity of purpose with America. Thank you for coming, friend.

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars — but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war — but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks — but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day — and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

Americans have many questions tonight. Americans are asking: Who attacked our country? The evidence we have gathered all points to a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations known as al Qaeda. They are the same murderers indicted for bombing American embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and responsible for bombing the USS Cole.

Al Qaeda is to terror what the mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money; its goal is remaking the world — and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere.

The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that

has been rejected by Muslim scholars and the vast majority of Muslim clerics — a fringe movement that perverts the peaceful teachings of Islam. The terrorists' directive commands them to kill Christians and Jews, to kill all Americans, and make no distinction among military and civilians, including women and children.

This group and its leader — a person named Osama bin Laden — are linked to many other organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries. They are recruited from their own nations and neighborhoods and brought to camps in places like Afghanistan, where they are trained in the tactics of terror. They are sent back to their homes or sent to hide in countries around the world to plot evil and destruction.

The leadership of al Qaeda has great influence in Afghanistan and supports the Taliban regime in controlling most of that country. In Afghanistan, we see al Qaeda's vision for the world.

Afghanistan's people have been brutalized — many are starving and many have fled. Women are not allowed to attend school. You can be jailed for owning a television. Religion can be practiced only as their leaders dictate. A man can be jailed in Afghanistan if his beard is not long enough.

The United States respects the people of Afghanistan — after all, we are currently its largest source of humanitarian aid — but we condemn the Taliban regime. It is not only repressing its own people, it is threatening people everywhere by sponsoring and sheltering and supplying terrorists. By aiding and abetting murder, the Taliban regime is committing murder.

And tonight, the United States of America makes the following demands on the Taliban: Deliver to United States authorities all the leaders of al Qaeda who hide in your land. Release all foreign nationals, including American citizens, you have unjustly imprisoned. Protect foreign journalists, diplomats and aid workers in your country. Close immediately and permanently every terrorist training camp in Afghanistan, and hand over every terrorist, and

every person in their support structure, to appropriate authorities. Give the United States full access to terrorist training camps, so we can make sure they are no longer operating.

These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion. The Taliban must act, and act immediately. They will hand over the terrorists, or they will share in their fate.

I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans, and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends; it is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists, and every government that supports them.

Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.

Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber — a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms — our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other.

They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

These terrorists kill not merely to end lives, but to disrupt and end a way of life. With every atrocity, they hope that America grows fearful, retreating from the world and forsaking our friends. They stand against us, because we stand in their way.

We are not deceived by their pretenses to piety. We have seen their kind before. They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions — by abandoning every value except the will to power —

they follow in the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism. And they will follow that path all the way, to where it ends: in history's unmarked grave of discarded lies.

Americans are asking: How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command — every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war — to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network.

This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat.

Our response involves far more than instant retaliation and isolated strikes. Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign, unlike any other we have ever seen. It may include dramatic strikes, visible on TV, and covert operations, secret even in success. We will starve terrorists of funding, turn them one against another, drive them from place to place, until there is no refuge or no rest. And we will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.

Our nation has been put on notice: We are not immune from attack. We will take defensive measures against terrorism to protect Americans. Today, dozens of federal departments and agencies, as well as state and local governments, have responsibilities affecting homeland security. These efforts must be coordinated at the highest level. So tonight I announce the creation of a Cabinet-level position reporting directly to me — the Office of Homeland Security.

And tonight I also announce a distinguished American to lead this effort, to strengthen American security: a military veteran, an effective governor, a true patriot, a trusted friend — Pennsylvania's

Tom Ridge. He will lead, oversee and coordinate a comprehensive national strategy to safeguard our country against terrorism, and respond to any attacks that may come.

These measures are essential. But the only way to defeat terrorism as a threat to our way of life is to stop it, eliminate it, and destroy it where it grows.

Many will be involved in this effort, from FBI agents to intelligence operatives to the reservists we have called to active duty. All deserve our thanks, and all have our prayers. And tonight, a few miles from the damaged Pentagon, I have a message for our military: Be ready. I've called the Armed Forces to alert, and there is a reason. The hour is coming when America will act, and you will make us proud.

This is not, however, just America's fight. And what is at stake is not just America's freedom. This is the world's fight. This is civilization's fight. This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism, tolerance and freedom.

We ask every nation to join us. We will ask, and we will need, the help of police forces, intelligence services, and banking systems around the world. The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded — with sympathy and with support. Nations from Latin America, to Asia, to Africa, to Europe, to the Islamic world. Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all.

The civilized world is rallying to America's side. They understand that if this terror goes unpunished, their own cities, their own citizens may be next. Terror, unanswered, can not only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments. And you know what — we're not going to allow it.

Americans are asking: What is expected of us? I ask you to live your lives, and hug your children. I know many citizens have fears tonight, and I ask you to be calm and resolute, even in the face of a continuing threat.

I ask you to uphold the values of America, and remember why

so many have come here. We are in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith.

I ask you to continue to support the victims of this tragedy with your contributions. Those who want to give can go to a central source of information, libertyunites.org, to find the names of groups providing direct help in New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

The thousands of FBI agents who are now at work in this investigation may need your cooperation, and I ask you to give it.

I ask for your patience, with the delays and inconveniences that may accompany tighter security; and for your patience in what will be a long struggle.

I ask your continued participation and confidence in the American economy. Terrorists attacked a symbol of American prosperity. They did not touch its source. America is successful because of the hard work, and creativity, and enterprise of our people. These were the true strengths of our economy before September 11th, and they are our strengths today.

And, finally, please continue praying for the victims of terror and their families, for those in uniform, and for our great country. Prayer has comforted us in sorrow, and will help strengthen us for the journey ahead.

Tonight I thank my fellow Americans for what you have already done and for what you will do. And ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, I thank you, their representatives, for what you have already done and for what we will do together. Tonight, we face new and sudden national challenges. We will come together to improve air safety, to dramatically expand the number of air marshals on domestic flights, and take new measures to prevent hijacking. We will come together to promote stability and keep our airlines flying, with direct assistance during this emergency.

We will come together to give law enforcement the additional tools it needs to track down terror here at home. We will come together to strengthen our intelligence capabilities to know the plans

of terrorists before they act, and find them before they strike.

We will come together to take active steps that strengthen America's economy, and put our people back to work.

Tonight we welcome two leaders who embody the extraordinary spirit of all New Yorkers: Governor George Pataki, and Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. As a symbol of America's resolve, my administration will work with Congress, and these two leaders, to show the world that we will rebuild New York City.

After all that has just passed — all the lives taken, and all the possibilities and hopes that died with them — it is natural to wonder if America's future is one of fear. Some speak of an age of terror. I know there are struggles ahead, and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them. As long as the United States of America is determined and strong, this will not be an age of terror; this will be an age of liberty, here and across the world.

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom — the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time — now depends on us. Our nation — this generation — will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.

It is my hope that in the months and years ahead, life will return almost to normal. We'll go back to our lives and routines, and that is good. Even grief recedes with time and grace. But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day, and to whom it happened. We'll remember the moment the news came — where we were and what we were doing. Some will remember an image of a fire, or a story of rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever.

And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others. It was given to me by his mom, Arlene, as a proud memorial

to her son. This is my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end.

I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people.

The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.

Fellow citizens, we'll meet violence with patient justice — assured of the rightness of our cause, and confident of the victories to come. In all that lies before us, may God grant us wisdom, and may He watch over the United States of America.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON OPERATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

THE TREATY ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

OCTOBER 7, 2001

Good afternoon. On my orders, the United States military has begun strikes against al Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. These carefully targeted actions are designed to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations, and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.

We are joined in this operation by our staunch friend, Great Britain. Other close friends, including Canada, Australia, Germany and France, have pledged forces as the operation unfolds. More than 40 countries in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and across Asia have granted air transit or landing rights. Many more have shared intelligence. We are supported by the collective will of the world.

More than two weeks ago, I gave Taliban leaders a series of clear and specific demands: Close terrorist training camps; hand over leaders of the al Qaeda network; and return all foreign nationals, including American citizens, unjustly detained in your country. None of these demands were met. And now the Taliban will pay a price. By destroying camps and disrupting communications, we will make it more difficult for the terror network to train new recruits and coordinate their evil plans.

Initially, the terrorists may burrow deeper into caves and other entrenched hiding places. Our military action is also designed to clear the way for sustained, comprehensive and relentless operations to drive them out and bring them to justice.

At the same time, the oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and our allies. As we strike military targets, we'll also drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan.

The United States of America is a friend to the Afghan people,

and we are the friends of almost a billion worldwide who practice the Islamic faith. The United States of America is an enemy of those who aid terrorists and of the barbaric criminals who profane a great religion by committing murder in its name.

This military action is a part of our campaign against terrorism, another front in a war that has already been joined through diplomacy, intelligence, the freezing of financial assets and the arrests of known terrorists by law enforcement agents in 38 countries. Given the nature and reach of our enemies, we will win this conflict by the patient accumulation of successes, by meeting a series of challenges with determination and will and purpose.

Today we focus on Afghanistan, but the battle is broader. Every nation has a choice to make. In this conflict, there is no neutral ground. If any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocents, they have become outlaws and murderers, themselves. And they will take that lonely path at their own peril.

I'm speaking to you today from the Treaty Room of the White House, a place where American Presidents have worked for peace. We're a peaceful nation. Yet, as we have learned, so suddenly and so tragically, there can be no peace in a world of sudden terror. In the face of today's new threat, the only way to pursue peace is to pursue those who threaten it.

We did not ask for this mission, but we will fulfill it. The name of today's military operation is Enduring Freedom. We defend not only our precious freedoms, but also the freedom of people everywhere to live and raise their children free from fear.

I know many Americans feel fear today. And our government is taking strong precautions. All law enforcement and intelligence agencies are working aggressively around America, around the world and around the clock. At my request, many governors have activated the National Guard to strengthen airport security. We have called up Reserves to reinforce our military capability and strengthen the protection of our homeland.

In the months ahead, our patience will be one of our strengths; patience with the long waits that will result from tighter security;

patience and understanding that it will take time to achieve our goals; patience in all the sacrifices that may come.

Today, those sacrifices are being made by members of our Armed Forces who now defend us so far from home, and by their proud and worried families. A Commander-in-Chief sends America's sons and daughters into a battle in a foreign land only after the greatest care and a lot of prayer. We ask a lot of those who wear our uniform. We ask them to leave their loved ones, to travel great distances, to risk injury, even to be prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice of their lives. They are dedicated, they are honorable; they represent the best of our country. And we are grateful.

To all the men and women in our military — every sailor, every soldier, every airman, every coastguardsman, every Marine — I say this: Your mission is defined; your objectives are clear; your goal is just. You have my full confidence, and you will have every tool you need to carry out your duty.

I recently received a touching letter that says a lot about the state of America in these difficult times — a letter from a 4th-grade girl, with a father in the military: “As much as I don't want my Dad to fight,” she wrote, “I'm willing to give him to you.”

This is a precious gift, the greatest she could give. This young girl knows what America is all about. Since September 11, an entire generation of young Americans has gained new understanding of the value of freedom, and its cost in duty and in sacrifice.

The battle is now joined on many fronts. We will not waver; we will not tire; we will not falter; and we will not fail. Peace and freedom will prevail.

Thank you. May God continue to bless America.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE
AT THE PENTAGON

THE PENTAGON
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA
OCTOBER 11, 2001

Please be seated. President and Senator Clinton, thank you all for being here. We have come here to pay our respects to 125 men and women who died in the service of America. We also remember 64 passengers on a hijacked plane; those men and women, boys and girls who fell into the hands of evildoers, and also died here exactly one month ago.

On September 11th, great sorrow came to our country. And from that sorrow has come great resolve. Today, we are a nation awakened to the evil of terrorism, and determined to destroy it. That work began the moment we were attacked; and it will continue until justice is delivered.

Americans are returning, as we must, to the normal pursuits of life. Americans are returning, as we must, to the normal pursuits of life. But we know that if you lost a son or daughter here, or a husband, or a wife, or a mom or dad, life will never again be as it was. The loss was sudden, and hard, and permanent. So difficult to explain. So difficult to accept.

Three schoolchildren traveling with their teacher. An Army general. A budget analyst who reported to work here for 30 years. A lieutenant commander in the Naval Reserve who left behind a wife, a four-year-old son, and another child on the way.

One life touches so many others. One death can leave sorrow that seems almost unbearable. But to all of you who lost someone here, I want to say: You are not alone. The American people will never forget the cruelty that was done here and in New York, and in the sky over Pennsylvania.

We will never forget all the innocent people killed by the hatred of a few. We know the loneliness you feel in your loss. The entire

nation, entire nation shares in your sadness. And we pray for you and your loved ones. And we will always honor their memory.

The hijackers were instruments of evil who died in vain. Behind them is a cult of evil which seeks to harm the innocent and thrives on human suffering. Theirs is the worst kind of cruelty, the cruelty that is fed, not weakened, by tears. Theirs is the worst kind of violence, pure malice, while daring to claim the authority of God. We cannot fully understand the designs and power of evil. It is enough to know that evil, like goodness, exists. And in the terrorists, evil has found a willing servant.

In New York, the terrorists chose as their target a symbol of America's freedom and confidence. Here, they struck a symbol of our strength in the world. And the attack on the Pentagon, on that day, was more symbolic than they knew. It was on another September 11th — September 11th, 1941 — that construction on this building first began. America was just then awakening to another menace: The Nazi terror in Europe.

And on that very night, President Franklin Roosevelt spoke to the nation. The danger, he warned, has long ceased to be a mere possibility. The danger is here now. Not only from a military enemy, but from an enemy of all law, all liberty, all morality, all religion.

For us too, in the year 2001, an enemy has emerged that rejects every limit of law, morality, and religion. The terrorists have no true home in any country, or culture, or faith. They dwell in dark corners of earth. And there, we will find them.

This week, I have called the Armed Forces into action. One by one, we are eliminating power centers of a regime that harbors al Qaeda terrorists. We gave that regime a choice: Turn over the terrorists, or face your ruin. They chose unwisely.

The Taliban regime has brought nothing but fear and misery to the people of Afghanistan. These rulers call themselves holy men, even with their record of drawing money from heroin trafficking. They consider themselves pious and devout, while subjecting women to fierce brutality.

The Taliban has allied itself with murderers and gave them shelter. But today, for al Qaeda and the Taliban, there is no shelter. As Americans did 60 years ago, we have entered a struggle of uncertain duration. But now, as then, we can be certain of the outcome, because we have a number of decisive assets.

We have a unified country. We have the patience to fight and win on many fronts: Blocking terrorist plans, seizing their funds, arresting their networks, disrupting their communications, opposing their sponsors. And we have one more great asset in this cause: The brave men and women of the United States military.

From my first days in this office, I have felt and seen the strong spirit of the Armed Forces. I saw it at Fort Stewart, Georgia, when I first reviewed our troops as Commander-in-Chief, and looked into the faces of proud and determined soldiers. I saw it in Annapolis on a graduation day, at Camp Pendleton in California, Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo. And I have seen this spirit at the Pentagon, before and after the attack on this building.

You've responded to a great emergency with calm and courage. And for that, your country honors you. A Commander-in-Chief must know, must know that he can count on the skill and readiness of servicemen and women at every point in the chain of command. You have given me that confidence.

And I give you these commitments. The wound to this building will not be forgotten, but it will be repaired. Brick by brick, we will quickly rebuild the Pentagon. In the missions ahead for the military, you will have everything you need, every resource, every weapon, every means to assure full victory for the United States and the cause of freedom.

And I pledge to you that America will never relent on this war against terror. There will be times of swift, dramatic action. There will be times of steady, quiet progress. Over time, with patience, and precision, the terrorists will be pursued. They will be isolated, surrounded, cornered, until there is no place to run, or hide, or rest.

As military and civilian personnel in the Pentagon, you are an important part of the struggle we have entered. You know the risks

of your calling, and you have willingly accepted them. You believe in our country, and our country believes in you.

Within sight of this building is Arlington Cemetery, the final resting place of many thousands who died for our country over the generations. Enemies of America have now added to these graves, and they wish to add more. Unlike our enemies, we value every life, and we mourn every loss.

Yet we're not afraid. Our cause is just, and worthy of sacrifice. Our nation is strong of heart, firm of purpose. Inspired by all the courage that has come before, we will meet our moment and we will prevail.

May God bless you all, and may God bless America.

ADDRESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

NOVEMBER 10, 2001

Thank you. Mr. Secretary General, Mr. President, distinguished delegates, and ladies and gentlemen. We meet in a hall devoted to peace, in a city scarred by violence, in a nation awakened to danger, in a world uniting for a long struggle. Every civilized nation here today is resolved to keep the most basic commitment of civilization: We will defend ourselves and our future against terror and lawless violence.

The United Nations was founded in this cause. In a second world war, we learned there is no isolation from evil. We affirmed that some crimes are so terrible they offend humanity, itself. And we resolved that the aggressions and ambitions of the wicked must be opposed early, decisively, and collectively, before they threaten us all. That evil has returned, and that cause is renewed.

A few miles from here, many thousands still lie in a tomb of rubble. Tomorrow, the Secretary General, the President of the General Assembly, and I will visit that site, where the names of every nation and region that lost citizens will be read aloud. If we were to read the names of every person who died, it would take more than three hours.

Those names include a citizen of Gambia, whose wife spent their fourth wedding anniversary, September the 12th, searching in vain for her husband. Those names include a man who supported his wife in Mexico, sending home money every week. Those names include a young Pakistani who prayed toward Mecca five times a day, and died that day trying to save others.

The suffering of September the 11th was inflicted on people of many faiths and many nations. All of the victims, including Muslims, were killed with equal indifference and equal satisfaction by the terrorist leaders. The terrorists are violating the tenets of

every religion, including the one they invoke.

Last week, the Sheikh of Al-Azhar University, the world's oldest Islamic institution of higher learning, declared that terrorism is a disease, and that Islam prohibits killing innocent civilians. The terrorists call their cause holy, yet, they fund it with drug dealing; they encourage murder and suicide in the name of a great faith that forbids both. They dare to ask God's blessing as they set out to kill innocent men, women and children. But the God of Isaac and Ishmael would never answer such a prayer. And a murderer is not a martyr; he is just a murderer.

Time is passing. Yet, for the United States of America, there will be no forgetting September the 11th. We will remember every rescuer who died in honor. We will remember every family that lives in grief. We will remember the fire and ash, the last phone calls, the funerals of the children.

And the people of my country will remember those who have plotted against us. We are learning their names. We are coming to know their faces. There is no corner of the Earth distant or dark enough to protect them. However long it takes, their hour of justice will come.

Every nation has a stake in this cause. As we meet, the terrorists are planning more murder — perhaps in my country, or perhaps in yours. They kill because they aspire to dominate. They seek to overthrow governments and destabilize entire regions.

Last week, anticipating this meeting of the General Assembly, they denounced the United Nations. They called our Secretary General a criminal and condemned all Arab nations here as traitors to Islam.

Few countries meet their exacting standards of brutality and oppression. Every other country is a potential target. And all the world faces the most horrifying prospect of all: These same terrorists are searching for weapons of mass destruction, the tools to turn their hatred into holocaust. They can be expected to use chemical, biological and nuclear weapons the moment they are capable of doing so. No hint of conscience would prevent it.

This threat cannot be ignored. This threat cannot be appeased. Civilization, itself, the civilization we share, is threatened. History will record our response, and judge or justify every nation in this hall.

The civilized world is now responding. We act to defend ourselves and deliver our children from a future of fear. We choose the dignity of life over a culture of death. We choose lawful change and civil disagreement over coercion, subversion, and chaos. These commitments — hope and order, law and life — unite people across cultures and continents. Upon these commitments depend all peace and progress. For these commitments, we are determined to fight.

The United Nations has risen to this responsibility. On the 12th of September, these buildings opened for emergency meetings of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Before the sun had set, these attacks on the world stood condemned by the world. And I want to thank you for this strong and principled stand.

I also thank the Arab Islamic countries that have condemned terrorist murder. Many of you have seen the destruction of terror in your own lands. The terrorists are increasingly isolated by their own hatred and extremism. They cannot hide behind Islam. The authors of mass murder and their allies have no place in any culture, and no home in any faith.

The conspiracies of terror are being answered by an expanding global coalition. Not every nation will be a part of every action against the enemy. But every nation in our coalition has duties. These duties can be demanding, as we in America are learning. We have already made adjustments in our laws and in our daily lives. We're taking new measures to investigate terror and to protect against threats.

The leaders of all nations must now carefully consider their responsibilities and their future. Terrorist groups like al Qaeda depend upon the aid or indifference of governments. They need the support of a financial infrastructure, and safe havens to train and plan and hide.

Some nations want to play their part in the fight against terror,

but tell us they lack the means to enforce their laws and control their borders. We stand ready to help. Some governments still turn a blind eye to the terrorists, hoping the threat will pass them by. They are mistaken. And some governments, while pledging to uphold the principles of the U.N., have cast their lot with the terrorists. They support them and harbor them, and they will find that their welcome guests are parasites that will weaken them, and eventually consume them.

For every regime that sponsors terror, there is a price to be paid. And it will be paid. The allies of terror are equally guilty of murder and equally accountable to justice.

The Taliban are now learning this lesson — that regime and the terrorists who support it are now virtually indistinguishable. Together they promote terror abroad and impose a reign of terror on the Afghan people. Women are executed in Kabal's soccer stadium. They can be beaten for wearing socks that are too thin. Men are jailed for missing prayer meetings.

The United States, supported by many nations, is bringing justice to the terrorists in Afghanistan. We're making progress against military targets, and that is our objective. Unlike the enemy, we seek to minimize, not maximize, the loss of innocent life. I'm proud of the honorable conduct of the American military. And my country grieves for all the suffering the Taliban have brought upon Afghanistan, including the terrible burden of war. The Afghan people do not deserve their present rulers. Years of Taliban misrule have brought nothing but misery and starvation. Even before this current crisis, 4 million Afghans depended on food from the United States and other nations, and millions of Afghans were refugees from Taliban oppression.

I make this promise to all the victims of that regime: The Taliban's days of harboring terrorists and dealing in heroin and brutalizing women are drawing to a close. And when that regime is gone, the people of Afghanistan will say with the rest of the world: good riddance.

I can promise, too, that America will join the world in helping

the people of Afghanistan rebuild their country. Many nations, including mine, are sending food and medicine to help Afghans through the winter. America has air-dropped over 1.3 million packages of rations into Afghanistan. Just this week, we air-lifted 20,000 blankets and over 200 tons of provisions into the region. We continue to provide humanitarian aid, even while the Taliban tried to steal the food we send.

More help eventually will be needed. The United States will work closely with the United Nations and development banks to reconstruct Afghanistan after hostilities there have ceased and the Taliban are no longer in control. And the United States will work with the U.N. to support a post-Taliban government that represents all of the Afghan people.

In this war on terror, each of us must answer for what we have done or what we have left undone. After tragedy, there is a time for sympathy and condolence. And my country has been very grateful for both. The memorials and vigils around the world will not be forgotten. But the time for sympathy has now passed; the time for action has now arrived.

The most basic obligations in this new conflict have already been defined by the United Nations. On September the 28th, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1373. Its requirements are clear: Every United Nations member has a responsibility to crack down on terrorist financing. We must pass all necessary laws in our own countries to allow the confiscation of terrorist assets. We must apply those laws to every financial institution in every nation.

We have a responsibility to share intelligence and coordinate the efforts of law enforcement. If you know something, tell us. If we know something, we'll tell you. And when we find the terrorists, we must work together to bring them to justice. We have a responsibility to deny any sanctuary, safe haven or transit to terrorists. Every known terrorist camp must be shut down, its operators apprehended, and evidence of their arrest presented to the United Nations. We have a responsibility to deny weapons to terrorists and to actively prevent private citizens from providing

them.

These obligations are urgent and they are binding on every nation with a place in this chamber. Many governments are taking these obligations seriously, and my country appreciates it. Yet, even beyond Resolution 1373, more is required, and more is expected of our coalition against terror.

We're asking for a comprehensive commitment to this fight. We must unite in opposing all terrorists, not just some of them. In this world there are good causes and bad causes, and we may disagree on where the line is drawn. Yet, there is no such thing as a good terrorist. No national aspiration, no remembered wrong can ever justify the deliberate murder of the innocent. Any government that rejects this principle, trying to pick and choose its terrorist friends, will know the consequences.

We must speak the truth about terror. Let us never tolerate outrageous conspiracy theories concerning the attacks of September the 11th; malicious lies that attempt to shift the blame away from the terrorists, themselves, away from the guilty. To inflame ethnic hatred is to advance the cause of terror.

The war against terror must not serve as an excuse to persecute ethnic and religious minorities in any country. Innocent people must be allowed to live their own lives, by their own customs, under their own religion. And every nation must have avenues for the peaceful expression of opinion and dissent. When these avenues are closed, the temptation to speak through violence grows.

We must press on with our agenda for peace and prosperity in every land. My country is pledged to encouraging development and expanding trade. My country is pledged to investing in education and combating AIDS and other infectious diseases around the world. Following September 11th, these pledges are even more important. In our struggle against hateful groups that exploit poverty and despair, we must offer an alternative of opportunity and hope.

The American government also stands by its commitment to a just peace in the Middle East. We are working toward a day when

two states, Israel and Palestine, live peacefully together within secure and recognize borders as called for by the Security Council resolutions. We will do all in our power to bring both parties back into negotiations. But peace will only come when all have sworn off, forever, incitement, violence and terror.

And, finally, this struggle is a defining moment for the United Nations, itself. And the world needs its principled leadership. It undermines the credibility of this great institution, for example, when the Commission on Human Rights offers seats to the world's most persistent violators of human rights. The United Nations depends, above all, on its moral authority — and that authority must be preserved.

The steps I described will not be easy. For all nations, they will require effort. For some nations, they will require great courage. Yet, the cost of inaction is far greater. The only alternative to victory is a nightmare world where every city is a potential killing field.

As I've told the American people, freedom and fear are at war. We face enemies that hate not our policies, but our existence; the tolerance of openness and creative culture that defines us. But the outcome of this conflict is certain: There is a current in history and it runs toward freedom. Our enemies resent it and dismiss it, but the dreams of mankind are defined by liberty — the natural right to create and build and worship and live in dignity. When men and women are released from oppression and isolation, they find fulfillment and hope, and they leave poverty by the millions.

These aspirations are lifting up the peoples of Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas, and they can lift up all of the Islamic world.

We stand for the permanent hopes of humanity, and those hopes will not be denied. We're confident, too, that history has an author who fills time and eternity with his purpose. We know that evil is real, but good will prevail against it. This is the teaching of many faiths, and in that assurance we gain strength for a long journey.

It is our task — the task of this generation — to provide the

response to aggression and terror. We have no other choice, because there is no other peace.

We did not ask for this mission, yet there is honor in history's call. We have a chance to write the story of our times, a story of courage defeating cruelty and light overcoming darkness. This calling is worthy of any life, and worthy of every nation. So let us go forward, confident, determined, and unafraid.

Thank you very much.

ADDRESS AT THE CITADEL

THE CITADEL
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA
DECEMBER 11, 2001

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Thank you for that warm welcome. I'm glad to be back here at The Citadel.

I have come to talk about the future security of our country, in a place where I took up this subject two years ago when I was candidate for President. In September 1999, I said here at the Citadel that America was entering a period of consequences that would be defined by the threat of terror, and that we faced a challenge of military transformation. That threat has now revealed itself, and that challenge is now the military and moral necessity of our time.

So, today, I will set forth the commitments essential to victory in our war against terror.

I want to thank Major General John Grinalds for his hospitality. I want to thank the Citadel Board of Visitors, the staff, and the faculty. I understand the Governor is here. And I know my friends, the Lt. Governor, the Speaker and the Attorney General are here, and it was great to have seen them at the airport. I thank my friend, Adjutant General Stan Spears for being here.

I'm grateful that Senator Hollings and members of the South Carolina congressional delegation flew down on Air Force One. I only wish that the senior Senator was on the airplane so I could have wished him a happy 99th birthday.

But most of all, most of all, I want to say how much I appreciate being in the presence of some of America's finest, the South Carolina Corp of Cadets of Citadel.

Four days ago, I joined the men and women of the USS Enterprise to mark the 60th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. December 7th, 1941 was a decisive day that changed our nation forever. In a single moment, America's "splendid isolation" was ended. And the

four years that followed transformed the American way of war.

The age of battleships gave way to the offensive capability of aircraft carriers. The tank, once used only to protect infantry, now served to cut through enemy lines. At Guadalcanal, and Normandy, and Iwo Jima, amphibious warfare proved its worth. And by war's end, no one would ever again doubt the value of strategic air power.

Even more importantly, an American President and his successors shaped a world beyond a war. They rebuilt Europe with the Marshall Plan, formed a great alliance for freedom in NATO, and expressed the hope of collective security in the United Nations. America took the lead, becoming freedom's defender and assuming responsibilities that only we could bear.

September 11th, 2001 — three months and a long time ago — set another dividing line in our lives and in the life of our nation. An illusion of immunity was shattered. A faraway evil became a present danger. And a great cause became clear: We will fight terror and those who sponsor it, to save our children from a future of fear.

To win this war, we have to think differently. The enemy who appeared on September 11th seeks to evade our strength and constantly searches for our weaknesses. So America is required once again to change the way our military thinks and fights. And starting on October 7th, the enemy in Afghanistan got the first glimpses of a new American military that cannot, and will not, be evaded.

When I committed U.S. forces to this battle, I had every confidence that they would be up to the task. And they have proven me right. The Taliban and the terrorists set out to dominate a country and intimidate the world. Today, from their caves, it's all looking a little different. And no cave is deep enough to escape the patient justice of the United States of America.

We are also beginning to see the possibilities of a world beyond the war on terror. We have a chance, if we take it, to write a hopeful chapter in human history. All at once, a new threat to civilization is erasing old lines of rivalry and resentment between nations. Russia

and America are building a new cooperative relationship. India and the United States are increasingly aligned across a range of issues, even as we work closely with Pakistan. Germany and Japan are assuming new military roles, appropriate to their status as great democracies.

The vast majority of countries are now on the same side of a moral and ideological divide. We're making common cause with every nation that chooses lawful change over chaotic violence — every nation that values peace and safety and innocent life.

Staring across this divide are bands of murderers, supported by outlaw regimes. They are a movement defined by their hatreds. They hate progress, and freedom, and choice, and culture, and music, and laughter, and women, and Christians, and Jews, and all Muslims who reject their distorted doctrines. They love only one thing — they love power. And when they have it, they use it without mercy.

The great threat to civilization is not that the terrorists will inspire millions. Only the terrorists themselves would want to live in their brutal and joyless world. The great threat to civilization is that a few evil men will multiply their murders, and gain the means to kill on a scale equal to their hatred. We know they have this mad intent, and we're determined to stop them.

Our lives, our way of life, and our every hope for the world depend on a single commitment: The authors of mass murder must be defeated, and never allowed to gain or use the weapons of mass destruction.

America and our friends will meet this threat with every method at our disposal. We will discover and destroy sleeper cells. We will track terrorist movements, trace their communications, disrupt their funding, and take their network apart, piece by piece.

Above all, we're acting to end the state sponsorship of terror. Rogue states are clearly the most likely sources of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons for terrorists. Every nation now knows that we cannot accept — and we will not accept — states that harbor, finance, train, or equip the agents of terror. Those

nations that violate this principle will be regarded as hostile regimes. They have been warned, they are being watched, and they will be held to account.

Preventing mass terror will be the responsibilities of Presidents far into the future. And this obligation sets three urgent and enduring priorities for America. The first priority is to speed the transformation of our military.

When the Cold War ended, some predicted that the era of direct threats to our nation was over. Some thought our military would be used overseas — not to win wars, but mainly to police and pacify, to control crowds and contain ethnic conflict. They were wrong.

While the threats to America have changed, the need for victory has not. We are fighting shadowy, entrenched enemies — enemies using the tools of terror and guerrilla war — yet we are finding new tactics and new weapons to attack and defeat them. This revolution in our military is only beginning, and it promises to change the face of battle.

Afghanistan has been a proving ground for this new approach. These past two months have shown that an innovative doctrine and high-tech weaponry can shape and then dominate an unconventional conflict. The brave men and women of our military are rewriting the rules of war with new technologies and old values like courage and honor. And they have made this nation proud.

Our commanders are gaining a real-time picture of the entire battlefield, and are able to get targeting information from sensor to shooter almost instantly. Our intelligence professionals and special forces have cooperated in battle-friendly — with battle-friendly Afghan forces — fighters who know the terrain, who know the Taliban, and who understand the local culture. And our special forces have the technology to call in precision air strikes — along with the flexibility to direct those strikes from horseback, in the first cavalry charge of the 21st century.

This combination — real-time intelligence, local allied forces,

special forces, and precision air power — has really never been used before. The conflict in Afghanistan has taught us more about the future of our military than a decade of blue ribbon panels and think-tank symposiums.

The Predator is a good example. This unmanned aerial vehicle is able to circle over enemy forces, gather intelligence, transmit information instantly back to commanders, then fire on targets with extreme accuracy.

Before the war, the Predator had skeptics, because it did not fit the old ways. Now it is clear the military does not have enough unmanned vehicles. We're entering an era in which unmanned vehicles of all kinds will take on greater importance — in space, on land, in the air, and at sea.

Precision-guided munitions also offer great promise. In the Gulf War, these weapons were the exception — while in Afghanistan, they have been the majority of the munitions we have used. We're striking with greater effectiveness, at greater range, with fewer civilian casualties. More and more, our weapons can hit moving targets. When all of our military can continuously locate and track moving targets — with surveillance from air and space — warfare will be truly revolutionized.

The need for military transformation was clear before the conflict in Afghanistan, and before September the 11th. Here at the Citadel in 1999, I spoke of keeping the peace by redefining war on our terms. The same recommendation was made in the strategic review that Secretary Rumsfeld briefed me on last August — a review that I fully endorse. What's different today is our sense of urgency — the need to build this future force while fighting a present war. It's like overhauling an engine while you're going at 80 miles an hour. Yet we have no other choice.

Our military has a new and essential mission. For states that support terror, it's not enough that the consequences be costly — they must be devastating. The more credible this reality, the more likely that regimes will change their behavior — making it less likely that America and our friends will need to use overwhelming

force against them.

To build our future force, the Armed Services must continue to attract America's best people, with good pay and good living conditions. Our military culture must reward new thinking, innovation, and experimentation. Congress must give defense leaders the freedom to innovate, instead of micromanaging the Defense Department. And every service and every constituency of our military must be willing to sacrifice some of their own pet projects. Our war on terror cannot be used to justify obsolete bases, obsolete programs, or obsolete weapon systems. Every dollar of defense spending must meet a single test: It must help us build the decisive power we will need to win the wars of the future.

Our country is united in supporting a great cause — and in supporting those who fight for it. We will give our men and women in uniform every resource, every weapon, every tool they need to win the long battle that lies ahead.

America's next priority to prevent mass terror is to protect against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. I wish I could report to the American people that this threat does not exist — that our enemy is content with car bombs and box cutters — but I cannot.

One former al Qaeda member has testified in court that he was involved in an effort 10 years ago to obtain nuclear materials. And the leader of al Qaeda calls that effort “a religious duty.” Abandoned al Qaeda houses in Kabul contained diagrams for crude weapons of mass destruction. And as we all know, terrorists have put anthrax into the U.S. mail, and used sarin gas in a Tokyo subway.

And almost every state that actively sponsors terror is known to be seeking weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them at longer and longer ranges. Their hope is to blackmail the United States into abandoning our war on terror, and forsaking our friends and allies and security commitments around the world. Our enemies are bound for disappointment. America will never be blackmailed, and we will never forsake our commitment to liberty.

To meet our new threats, I have directed my National Security Advisor and my Homeland Security Director to develop a comprehensive strategy on proliferation. Working with other countries, we will strengthen nonproliferation treaties and toughen export controls. Together, we must keep the world's most dangerous technologies out of the hands of the world's most dangerous people.

A crucial partner in this effort is Russia — a nation we are helping to dismantle strategic weapons, reduce nuclear material, and increase security at nuclear sites. Our two countries will expand efforts to provide peaceful employment for scientists who formerly worked in Soviet weapons facilities. The United States will also work with Russia to build a facility to destroy tons of nerve agent. I'll request an over-all increase in funding to support this vital mission.

Even as we fight to prevent proliferation, we must prepare for every possibility. At home, we must be better prepared to detect, protect against, and respond to the potential use of weapons of mass destruction. Abroad, our military forces must have the ability to fight and win against enemies who would use such weapons against us.

Biodefense has become a major initiative of ours. This year we've already requested nearly \$3 billion additional dollars for biodefense, more than doubling the level of funding prior to September the 11th.

The attacks on our nation made it even more clear that we need to build limited and effective defenses against a missile attack. Our enemies seek every chance and every means to do harm to our country, our forces, and our friends. And we will not permit it.

Suppose the Taliban and the terrorists had been able to strike America or important allies with a ballistic missile. Our coalition would have become fragile, the stakes in our war much, much higher. We must protect Americans and our friends against all forms of terror, including the terror that could arrive on a missile.

Last week we conducted another promising test of our missile

defense technology. For the good of peace, we're moving forward with an active program to determine what works and what does not work. In order to do so, we must move beyond the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, a treaty that was written in a different era, for a different enemy.

America and our allies must not be bound to the past. We must be able to build the defenses we need against the enemies of the 21st century.

Our third and final priority in the fight against mass terror is to strengthen the advantage that good intelligence gives our country. Every day I make decisions influenced by the intelligence briefing of that morning. To reach decisions, a President needs more than data and information. A President needs real and current knowledge and analysis of the plans, intentions, and capabilities of our enemies.

The last several months have shown that there is no substitute for good intelligence officers, people on the ground. These are the people who find the targets, follow our enemies, and help us disrupt their evil plans.

The United States must rebuild our network of human intelligence. And we will apply the best new technology to gather intelligence on the new threats. Sophisticated systems like Global Hawk, an unmanned surveillance plane, are transforming our intelligence capabilities. Our technological strengths produce great advantages, and we will build on them.

Our intelligence services and federal law enforcement agencies must work more closely together, and share timely information with our state and local authorities. The more we know, the more terrorist plans we can prevent and disrupt, and the better we'll be able to protect the American people.

And in all they do, our intelligence agencies must attract the best people — the best collectors, the best analysts, the best linguists. We will give them the training they need and the compensation they deserve.

There have been times here in America when our intelligence

services were held in suspicion, and even contempt. Now, when we face this new war, we know how much we need them. And for their dedication and for their service, America is grateful.

We're also grateful to you, the students of the Citadel. Your uniforms symbolize a tradition of honor and sacrifice, renewed in your own lives. Many of you will enter our military — taking your place in the war against terror. That struggle may continue for many years, and it may bring great costs. But you will have chosen a great calling at a crucial hour for our nation.

The course we follow is a matter of profound consequence to many nations. If America wavers, the world will lose heart. If America leads, the world will show its courage. America will never waver. America will lead the world to peace.

Our cause is necessary. Our cause is just. And no matter how long it takes, we will defeat the enemies of freedom.

In all that is to come, I know the graduates of the Citadel will bring credit to America, to the military, and to this great institution. In the words of your school song, you will go where you've always gone — “in the paths our fathers showed us. Peace and Honor, God and Country — we will fight for thee.”

God bless.

THE WORLD WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER SEPTEMBER 11

THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
DECEMBER 11, 2001

A great writer has said that the struggle of humanity against tyranny is the struggle of memory against forgetting. When we fight terror, we fight tyranny; and so we remember. We remember the perfect blueness of the sky that Tuesday morning. We remember the children traveling without their mothers when their planes were hijacked.

We remember the cruelty of the murderers and the pain and anguish of the murdered. Every one of the innocents who died on September the 11th was the most important person on earth to somebody. Every death extinguished a world.

We remember the courage of the rescue workers and the outpouring of friendship and sympathy from nations around the world. We remember how we felt that day: our sadness, the surge of love for our country, our anger, and our determination to right this huge wrong.

Today, the wrong is being righted and justice is being done. We still have far to go. And many dangers lie ahead. Yet, there can be no doubt how this conflict will end. Our enemies have made the mistake that America's enemies always make. They saw liberty and thought they saw weakness. And now, they see defeat.

In time, this war will end. But our remembrance never will. All around this beautiful city are statues of our heroes, memorials, museums and archives that preserve our national experience, our achievements and our failures, our defeats and our victories.

This republic is young, but its memory is long. Now, we have inscribed a new memory alongside those others. It's a memory of tragedy and shock, of loss and mourning. But not only of loss and mourning. It's also a memory of bravery and self-sacrifice, and the love that lays down its life for a friend — even a friend whose name

it never knew.

We are privileged to have with us the families of many of the heroes on September the 11th, including the family of Jeremy Glick of Flight 93. His courage and self-sacrifice may have saved the White House. It is right and fitting that it is here we pay our respects.

In time, perhaps, we will mark the memory of September the 11th in stone and metal — something we can show children as yet unborn to help them understand what happened on this minute and on this day.

But for those of us who lived through these events, the only marker we'll ever need is the tick of a clock at the 46th minute of the eighth hour of the 11th day. We will remember where we were and how we felt. We will remember the dead and what we owe them. We will remember what we lost and what we found.

And in our time, we will honor the memory of the 11th day by doing our duty as citizens of this great country, freedom's home and freedoms defender. God bless.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 107TH CONGRESS

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 29, 2002

Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, fellow citizens: As we gather tonight, our nation is at war, our economy is in recession, and the civilized world faces unprecedented dangers. Yet the state of our Union has never been stronger.

We last met in an hour of shock and suffering. In four short months, our nation has comforted the victims, begun to rebuild New York and the Pentagon, rallied a great coalition, captured, arrested, and rid the world of thousands of terrorists, destroyed Afghanistan's terrorist training camps, saved a people from starvation, and freed a country from brutal oppression.

The American flag flies again over our embassy in Kabul. Terrorists who once occupied Afghanistan now occupy cells at Guantanamo Bay. And terrorist leaders who urged followers to sacrifice their lives are running for their own.

America and Afghanistan are now allies against terror. We'll be partners in rebuilding that country. And this evening we welcome the distinguished interim leader of a liberated Afghanistan: Chairman Hamid Karzai.

The last time we met in this chamber, the mothers and daughters of Afghanistan were captives in their own homes, forbidden from working or going to school. Today women are free, and are part of Afghanistan's new government. And we welcome the new Minister of Women's Affairs, Doctor Sima Samar.

Our progress is a tribute to the spirit of the Afghan people, to the resolve of our coalition, and to the might of the United States military. When I called our troops into action, I did so with complete confidence in their courage and skill. And tonight, thanks to them, we are winning the war on terror. The man and women

of our Armed Forces have delivered a message now clear to every enemy of the United States: Even 7,000 miles away, across oceans and continents, on mountaintops and in caves — you will not escape the justice of this nation.

For many Americans, these four months have brought sorrow, and pain that will never completely go away. Every day a retired firefighter returns to Ground Zero, to feel closer to his two sons who died there. At a memorial in New York, a little boy left his football with a note for his lost father: Dear Daddy, please take this to heaven. I don't want to play football until I can play with you again some day.

Last month, at the grave of her husband, Michael, a CIA officer and Marine who died in Mazur-e-Sharif, Shannon Spann said these words of farewell: "Semper Fi, my love." Shannon is with us tonight.

Shannon, I assure you and all who have lost a loved one that our cause is just, and our country will never forget the debt we owe Michael and all who gave their lives for freedom. Our cause is just, and it continues. Our discoveries in Afghanistan confirmed our worst fears, and showed us the true scope of the task ahead. We have seen the depth of our enemies' hatred in videos, where they laugh about the loss of innocent life. And the depth of their hatred is equaled by the madness of the destruction they design. We have found diagrams of American nuclear power plants and public water facilities, detailed instructions for making chemical weapons, surveillance maps of American cities, and thorough descriptions of landmarks in America and throughout the world.

What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, our war against terror is only beginning. Most of the 19 men who hijacked planes on September the 11th were trained in Afghanistan's camps, and so were tens of thousands of others. Thousands of dangerous killers, schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes, are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off without warning.

Thanks to the work of our law enforcement officials and

coalition partners, hundreds of terrorists have been arrested. Yet, tens of thousands of trained terrorists are still at large. These enemies view the entire world as a battlefield, and we must pursue them wherever they are. So long as training camps operate, so long as nations harbor terrorists, freedom is at risk. And America and our allies must not, and will not, allow it.

Our nation will continue to be steadfast and patient and persistent in the pursuit of two great objectives. First, we will shut down terrorist camps, disrupt terrorist plans, and bring terrorists to justice. And, second, we must prevent the terrorists and regimes who seek chemical, biological or nuclear weapons from threatening the United States and the world.

Our military has put the terror training camps of Afghanistan out of business, yet camps still exist in at least a dozen countries. A terrorist underworld — including groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad, Jaish-i-Mohammed — operates in remote jungles and deserts, and hides in the centers of large cities.

While the most visible military action is in Afghanistan, America is acting elsewhere. We now have troops in the Philippines, helping to train that country's armed forces to go after terrorist cells that have executed an American, and still hold hostages. Our soldiers, working with the Bosnian government, seized terrorists who were plotting to bomb our embassy. Our Navy is patrolling the coast of Africa to block the shipment of weapons and the establishment of terrorist camps in Somalia.

My hope is that all nations will heed our call, and eliminate the terrorist parasites who threaten their countries and our own. Many nations are acting forcefully. Pakistan is now cracking down on terror, and I admire the strong leadership of President Musharraf.

But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: If they do not act, America will.

Our second goal is to prevent regimes that sponsor terror from threatening America or our friends and allies with weapons of mass destruction. Some of these regimes have been pretty quiet since September the 11th. But we know their true nature. North Korea

is a regime arming with missiles and weapons of mass destruction, while starving its citizens.

Iran aggressively pursues these weapons and exports terror, while an unelected few repress the Iranian people's hope for freedom.

Iraq continues to flaunt its hostility toward America and to support terror. The Iraqi regime has plotted to develop anthrax, and nerve gas, and nuclear weapons for over a decade. This is a regime that has already used poison gas to murder thousands of its own citizens — leaving the bodies of mothers huddled over their dead children. This is a regime that agreed to international inspections — then kicked out the inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world. States like these, and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred. They could attack our allies or attempt to blackmail the United States. In any of these cases, the price of indifference would be catastrophic.

We will work closely with our coalition to deny terrorists and their state sponsors the materials, technology, and expertise to make and deliver weapons of mass destruction. We will develop and deploy effective missile defenses to protect America and our allies from sudden attack. And all nations should know: America will do what is necessary to ensure our nation's security.

We'll be deliberate, yet time is not on our side. I will not wait on events, while dangers gather. I will not stand by, as peril draws closer and closer. The United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons.

Our war on terror is well begun, but it is only begun. This campaign may not be finished on our watch — yet it must be and it will be waged on our watch.

We can't stop short. If we stop now — leaving terror camps intact and terror states unchecked — our sense of security would

be false and temporary. History has called America and our allies to action, and it is both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom's fight.

Our first priority must always be the security of our nation, and that will be reflected in the budget I send to Congress. My budget supports three great goals for America: We will win this war; we'll protect our homeland; and we will revive our economy.

September the 11th brought out the best in America, and the best in this Congress. And I join the American people in applauding your unity and resolve. Now Americans deserve to have this same spirit directed toward addressing problems here at home. I'm a proud member of my party — yet as we act to win the war, protect our people, and create jobs in America, we must act, first and foremost, not as Republicans, not as Democrats, but as Americans.

It costs a lot to fight this war. We have spent more than a billion dollars a month — over \$30 million a day — and we must be prepared for future operations. Afghanistan proved that expensive precision weapons defeat the enemy and spare innocent lives, and we need more of them. We need to replace aging aircraft and make our military more agile, to put our troops anywhere in the world quickly and safely. Our men and women in uniform deserve the best weapons, the best equipment, the best training — and they also deserve another pay raise.

My budget includes the largest increase in defense spending in two decades — because while the price of freedom and security is high, it is never too high. Whatever it costs to defend our country, we will pay.

The next priority of my budget is to do everything possible to protect our citizens and strengthen our nation against the ongoing threat of another attack. Time and distance from the events of September the 11th will not make us safer unless we act on its lessons. America is no longer protected by vast oceans. We are protected from attack only by vigorous action abroad, and increased vigilance at home.

My budget nearly doubles funding for a sustained strategy

of homeland security, focused on four key areas: bioterrorism, emergency response, airport and border security, and improved intelligence. We will develop vaccines to fight anthrax and other deadly diseases. We'll increase funding to help states and communities train and equip our heroic police and firefighters. We will improve intelligence collection and sharing, expand patrols at our borders, strengthen the security of air travel, and use technology to track the arrivals and departures of visitors to the United States.

Homeland security will make America not only stronger, but, in many ways, better. Knowledge gained from bioterrorism research will improve public health. Stronger police and fire departments will mean safer neighborhoods. Stricter border enforcement will help combat illegal drugs. And as government works to better secure our homeland, America will continue to depend on the eyes and ears of alert citizens.

A few days before Christmas, an airline flight attendant spotted a passenger lighting a match. The crew and passengers quickly subdued the man, who had been trained by al Qaeda and was armed with explosives. The people on that plane were alert and, as a result, likely saved nearly 200 lives. And tonight we welcome and thank flight attendants Hermis Moutardier and Christina Jones.

Once we have funded our national security and our homeland security, the final great priority of my budget is economic security for the American people. To achieve these great national objectives — to win the war, protect the homeland, and revitalize our economy — our budget will run a deficit that will be small and short-term, so long as Congress restrains spending and acts in a fiscally responsible manner. We have clear priorities and we must act at home with the same purpose and resolve we have shown overseas: We'll prevail in the war, and we will defeat this recession.

Americans who have lost their jobs need our help and I support extending unemployment benefits and direct assistance for health care coverage. Yet, American workers want more than unemployment checks — they want a steady paycheck. When America works, America prospers, so my economic security plan

can be summed up in one word: jobs.

Good jobs begin with good schools, and here we've made a fine start. Republicans and Democrats worked together to achieve historic education reform so that no child is left behind. I was proud to work with members of both parties: Chairman John Boehner and Congressman George Miller. Senator Judd Gregg. And I was so proud of our work, I even had nice things to say about my friend, Ted Kennedy. I know the folks at the Crawford coffee shop couldn't believe I'd say such a thing, but our work on this bill shows what is possible if we set aside posturing and focus on results.

There is more to do. We need to prepare our children to read and succeed in school with improved Head Start and early childhood development programs. We must upgrade our teacher colleges and teacher training and launch a major recruiting drive with a great goal for America: a quality teacher in every classroom.

Good jobs also depend on reliable and affordable energy. This Congress must act to encourage conservation, promote technology, build infrastructure, and it must act to increase energy production at home so America is less dependent on foreign oil.

Good jobs depend on expanded trade. Selling into new markets creates new jobs, so I ask Congress to finally approve trade promotion authority. On these two key issues, trade and energy, the House of Representatives has acted to create jobs, and I urge the Senate to pass this legislation.

Good jobs depend on sound tax policy. Last year, some in this hall thought my tax relief plan was too small; some thought it was too big. But when the checks arrived in the mail, most Americans thought tax relief was just about right. Congress listened to the people and responded by reducing tax rates, doubling the child credit, and ending the death tax. For the sake of long-term growth and to help Americans plan for the future, let's make these tax cuts permanent.

The way out of this recession, the way to create jobs, is to grow the economy by encouraging investment in factories and equipment,

and by speeding up tax relief so people have more money to spend. For the sake of American workers, let's pass a stimulus package.

Good jobs must be the aim of welfare reform. As we reauthorize these important reforms, we must always remember the goal is to reduce dependency on government and offer every American the dignity of a job.

Americans know economic security can vanish in an instant without health security. I ask Congress to join me this year to enact a patients' bill of rights to give uninsured workers credits to help buy health coverage, to approve an historic increase in the spending for veterans' health, and to give seniors a sound and modern Medicare system that includes coverage for prescription drugs.

A good job should lead to security in retirement. I ask Congress to enact new safeguards for 401K and pension plans. Employees who have worked hard and saved all their lives should not have to risk losing everything if their company fails. Through stricter accounting standards and tougher disclosure requirements, corporate America must be made more accountable to employees and shareholders and held to the highest standards of conduct.

Retirement security also depends upon keeping the commitments of Social Security, and we will. We must make Social Security financially stable and allow personal retirement accounts for younger workers who choose them.

Members, you and I will work together in the months ahead on other issues: productive farm policy, a cleaner environment, broader home ownership, especially among minorities, and ways to encourage the good work of charities and faith-based groups. I ask you to join me on these important domestic issues in the same spirit of cooperation we've applied to our war against terrorism.

During these last few months, I've been humbled and privileged to see the true character of this country in a time of testing. Our enemies believed America was weak and materialistic, that we would splinter in fear and selfishness. They were as wrong as they are evil.

The American people have responded magnificently, with

courage and compassion, strength and resolve. As I have met the heroes, hugged the families, and looked into the tired faces of rescuers, I have stood in awe of the American people.

And I hope you will join me — I hope you will join me in expressing thanks to one American for the strength and calm and comfort she brings to our nation in crisis, our First Lady, Laura Bush.

None of us would ever wish the evil that was done on September the 11th. Yet after America was attacked, it was as if our entire country looked into a mirror and saw our better selves. We were reminded that we are citizens, with obligations to each other, to our country, and to history. We began to think less of the goods we can accumulate, and more about the good we can do.

For too long our culture has said, “If it feels good, do it.” Now America is embracing a new ethic and a new creed: “Let’s roll.” In the sacrifice of soldiers, the fierce brotherhood of firefighters, and the bravery and generosity of ordinary citizens, we have glimpsed what a new culture of responsibility could look like. We want to be a nation that serves goals larger than self. We’ve been offered a unique opportunity, and we must not let this moment pass.

My call tonight is for every American to commit at least two years — 4,000 hours over the rest of your lifetime — to the service of your neighbors and your nation. Many are already serving, and I thank you. If you aren’t sure how to help, I’ve got a good place to start. To sustain and extend the best that has emerged in America, I invite you to join the new USA Freedom Corps. The Freedom Corps will focus on three areas of need: responding in case of crisis at home; rebuilding our communities; and extending American compassion throughout the world.

One purpose of the USA Freedom Corps will be homeland security. America needs retired doctors and nurses who can be mobilized in major emergencies; volunteers to help police and fire departments; transportation and utility workers well-trained in spotting danger.

Our country also needs citizens working to rebuild our communities. We need mentors to love children, especially children whose parents are in prison. And we need more talented teachers in troubled schools. USA Freedom Corps will expand and improve the good efforts of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps to recruit more than 200,000 new volunteers.

And America needs citizens to extend the compassion of our country to every part of the world. So we will renew the promise of the Peace Corps, double its volunteers over the next five years, and ask it to join a new effort to encourage development and education and opportunity in the Islamic world.

This time of adversity offers a unique moment of opportunity — a moment we must seize to change our culture. Through the gathering momentum of millions of acts of service and decency and kindness, I know we can overcome evil with greater good. And we have a great opportunity during this time of war to lead the world toward the values that will bring lasting peace.

All fathers and mothers, in all societies, want their children to be educated, and live free from poverty and violence. No people on Earth yearn to be oppressed, or aspire to servitude, or eagerly await the midnight knock of the secret police.

If anyone doubts this, let them look to Afghanistan, where the Islamic “street” greeted the fall of tyranny with song and celebration. Let the skeptics look to Islam’s own rich history, with its centuries of learning, and tolerance and progress. America will lead by defending liberty and justice because they are right and true and unchanging for all people everywhere.

No nation owns these aspirations, and no nation is exempt from them. We have no intention of imposing our culture. But America will always stand firm for the non-negotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the power of the state; respect for women; private property; free speech; equal justice; and religious tolerance.

America will take the side of brave men and women who advocate these values around the world, including the Islamic

world, because we have a greater objective than eliminating threats and containing resentment. We seek a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror.

In this moment of opportunity, a common danger is erasing old rivalries. America is working with Russia and China and India, in ways we have never before, to achieve peace and prosperity. In every region, free markets and free trade and free societies are proving their power to lift lives. Together with friends and allies from Europe to Asia, and Africa to Latin America, we will demonstrate that the forces of terror cannot stop the momentum of freedom.

The last time I spoke here, I expressed the hope that life would return to normal. In some ways, it has. In others, it never will. Those of us who have lived through these challenging times have been changed by them. We've come to know truths that we will never question: evil is real, and it must be opposed. Beyond all differences of race or creed, we are one country, mourning together and facing danger together. Deep in the American character, there is honor, and it is stronger than cynicism. And many have discovered again that even in tragedy — especially in tragedy — God is near.

In a single instant, we realized that this will be a decisive decade in the history of liberty, that we've been called to a unique role in human events. Rarely has the world faced a choice more clear or consequential.

Our enemies send other people's children on missions of suicide and murder. They embrace tyranny and death as a cause and a creed. We stand for a different choice, made long ago, on the day of our founding. We affirm it again today. We choose freedom and the dignity of every life.

Steadfast in our purpose, we now press on. We have known freedom's price. We have shown freedom's power. And in this great conflict, my fellow Americans, we will see freedom's victory.

Thank you all. May God bless.

PROMOTING COMPASSIONATE CONSERVATISM

PARKSIDE HALL
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA
APRIL 30, 2002

Well, thank you very much for that warm welcome. I am so grateful for the Commonwealth Club and the Churchill Club for inviting me here. I appreciate you all coming, and I appreciate your hospitality.

I want to thank Dr. Gloria Duffy for her generous introduction and for her invitation. I want to thank Silvia Fernandez, who's the President of the Churchill Club, for joining the Commonwealth Club to host this event. I want to thank all the elected officials who are here. I want to thank my fellow citizens for coming.

Whenever I visit California, I'm impressed by the beauty of this state and by the spirit of the people. Because of its size, the health of the California economy influences every American. And California has got a culture of optimism and energy that touches all of us, as well. This is a vital and a vibrant place. And I'm glad to be back.

The last time I visited San Jose, Silicon Valley was still in an economic boom, and America was at peace. For many in this valley, and across our country, those times are a world away. After a recession made worse by a national emergency, we have seen some good news. Our economy is beginning to grow. Just last week, we had the good news about strong growth in the first quarter. Yet this vital region reminds us that a lot of work remains to be done.

Business investment and job creation are not what they should be. We cannot be content with one quarter's news. We cannot be complacent. My attitude is that we'll let the statisticians talk about the numbers. But so long as somebody who wants to work can't find work, that's a problem for America.

We have a great task ahead of us. We must turn our short-term recovery into long-lasting expansion that reaches every part of our country. Our economy grows when trade barriers fall. I ask the

Senate to join the United States House of Representatives in giving me what's called trade promotion authority.

It's important to be a confident country. And I'm confident in the ability of American entrepreneurs and producers to compete in the world. I'm confident that our farmers and ranchers can compete in the world. And I know American technology companies are the best in the world. And we must open new markets so they can sell to the world.

Our economy grows when the tax burden goes down, and stays down. Much of the growth we have seen this quarter is the result of consumer spending, fueled by well-timed tax deductions. To encourage growth in job creation, we must protect the lower tax rates we've enacted, and we must make them permanent. And to make sure there is economic vitality around our country, our government must control its appetite for excessive spending.

Our economy grows entrepreneurs are rewarded for their success, not hounded by regulations and needless litigation. We must enact reforms that free entrepreneurs from pointless regulation and endless litigation, and to restore trust in our economy. Corporate leaders must be held to the highest ethical standards. And, as your state knows, our economy grows when we have steady, stable and affordable sources of energy.

In Washington, we must adopt — finally adopt — a comprehensive strategy to conserve more, to produce more, and to deliver the energy that keeps our economy running. Both Houses have passed energy legislation. I expect them to get a bill to my desk soon for the good of American economy and American jobs. By acting in the above way, we confirm that the role of government is not to create wealth; the role of government is to create the conditions for economic growth.

Since I was last here, America has also accepted a great challenge in the world: to wage a relentless and systematic campaign against global terror. The security of the American people is the central commitment of the American government. We are in for a long and difficult war. It will be conducted on many

fronts. But as long as it takes, we will prevail.

In the first phase of our military operation, American and coalition forces have liberated — have liberated — the people of Afghanistan from a barbaric regime. Our Armed Forces performed with skill and success and honor. A regime has fallen. Terrorists in that country are now scattered, and the children of Afghanistan have returned to school, boys and girls. Our work in that country is not over. We are helping the Afghan people to rebuild their nation. And in every cave, in every dark corner of that country, we will hunt down the killers and bring them to justice.

We have entered the next phase of the war, with a sustained international effort, to rout out terrorists in other countries, and deny al Qaeda the chance to regroup in other places. Across the world, governments have heard this message: You're either with us, or you're with the terrorists.

And for the long-term security of America and civilization itself, we must confront the great threat of biological and chemical and nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists or hostile regimes. We will not allow the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten America or our friends and allies with the world's most destructive weapons.

History has called us to these responsibilities, and we accept them. America has always had a special mission to defend justice and advance freedom around the world. Whatever the difficulties ahead, we are confident about the outcome of this struggle. Tyranny and terror and lawless violence will not decide the world's future. As Ronald Reagan said and as every generation of Americans has believed, the future belongs to the free.

In a time of war, we reassert the essential values and beliefs of our country. In the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln pointed toward a new birth of freedom. Leading America into global war, Franklin D. Roosevelt defined the four freedoms: freedom of speech and religion, freedom from fear and want. Whenever America fights for the security of our country, we also fight for the values of our country. In our time, we will defend the land we love and we will

act on the ideals that gave it birth.

In America, we've not always lived up to our ideals, yet we always reached for them. We believe that everyone deserves a chance, that everyone has value, that no insignificant person was ever born. We believe that all are diminished when any are hopeless. We are one people, committed to building a single nation of justice and opportunity.

America rejects bigotry. We reject every act of hatred against people of Arab background or Muslim faith. We reject the ancient evil of anti-Semitism, whether it is practiced by the killers of Daniel Pearl, or by those who burn synagogues in France.

America values and welcomes peaceful people of all faiths — Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and many others. Every faith is practiced and protected here, because we are one country. Every immigrant can be fully and equally American because we're one country. Race and color should not divide us, because America is one country.

These American ideals of opportunity and equality come to us across the generations. And they have attracted millions from across the world. Yet there are young Americans growing up here, under this flag, who doubt the promise and justice of our country. They live in neighborhoods occupied by gangs and ruled by fear. They are entitled by law to an education, yet do not receive an education. They hear talk of opportunity and see little evidence of opportunity around them.

Every American must believe in the promise of America. And to reach this noble, necessary goal, there is a role for government. America doesn't need more big government, and we've learned that more money is not always the answer. If a program is failing to serve people, it makes little difference if we spend twice as much or half as much. The measure of true compassion is results.

Yet we cannot have an indifferent government either. We are a generous and caring people. We don't believe in a sink-or-swim society. The policies of our government must heed the universal call of all faiths to love a neighbor as we would want to be loved

ourselves. We need a different approach than either big government or indifferent government. We need a government that is focused, effective, and close to the people; a government that does a few things, and does them well.

Government cannot solve every problem, but it can encourage people and communities to help themselves and to help one another. Often the truest kind of compassion is to help citizens build lives of their own. I call my philosophy and approach “compassionate conservatism.” It is compassionate to actively help our fellow citizens in need. It is conservative to insist on responsibility and on results. And with this hopeful approach, we can make a real difference in people’s lives.

Compassionate conservatism places great hope and confidence in public education. Our economy depends on higher and higher skills, requiring every American to have the basic tools of learning. Every public school should be the path of upward mobility.

Yet, sadly enough, many are the dead-end of dreams. Public schools are some of the most important institutions of democracy. They take children of every background, from every part of the world, and prepare them for the obligations and opportunities of a free society. Public schools are Americans great hope, and making them work for every child is America’s great duty.

The new education reforms we have passed in Washington give the federal government a new role in public education. Schools must meet new and high standards of performance in reading and math that will be proven on tests and posted on the Internet for parents and everyone to see. And we’re giving local schools and teachers unprecedented freedom and resources and training to meet these goals.

It is conservative to let local communities chart their own path to excellence. It is compassionate to insist that every child learns, so that no child is left behind. By insisting on results, and challenging failure where we find it, we’ll make an incredible difference in the lives of every child in America.

Compassionate conservatism offers a new vision for fighting

poverty in America. For decades, our nation has devoted enormous resources to helping the poor, with some great successes to show for it: basic medical care for those in need, a better life for elderly Americans. However, for millions of younger Americans, welfare became a static and destructive way of life.

In 1996, we began transforming welfare with time limits and job training and work requirements. And the nation's welfare rolls have been cut by more than half. But even more importantly, many lives have been dramatically improved.

One former welfare recipient here in California, happened to be a mother of a chronically-ill child and the victim of domestic violence, describes her experience upon leaving welfare. She said, "I feel like an adult again. I have my dignity back."

We need to continue to fully transform welfare in America. As Congress takes up welfare reform again in the coming weeks, we must strengthen the work requirements that prevent dependency and despair. Millions of Americans once on welfare are finding that a job is more than a source of income. It is a source of dignity. And by helping people find work, by helping them prepare for work, we practice compassion.

Welfare reform must also, wherever possible, encourage the commitments of family. Not every child has two devoted parents at home — I understand that. And not every marriage can, or should be saved. But the evidence shows that strong marriages are good for children.

When a couple on welfare wants to break bad patterns and start or strengthen a marriage, we should help local groups give them counseling that teaches commitment and respect. By encouraging family, we practice compassion.

In overcoming poverty and dependence, we must also promote the work of charities and community groups and faith-based institutions. These organizations, such as shelters for battered women or mentoring programs for fatherless children or drug treatment centers, inspire hope in a way that government never can. Often, they inspire life-changing faith in a way that government

never should.

Our government should view the good Americans that work in faith-based charities as partners, not rivals. We must provide new incentives for charitable giving and, when it comes to providing federal resources to effective programs, we should not discriminate against private and religious groups.

I urge the Senate to pass the faith-based initiative for the good of America. It is compassionate to aggressively fight poverty in America. It is conservative to encourage work and community spirit and responsibility and the values that often come from faith. And with this approach, we can change lives one soul at a time, and make a real difference in the lives of our citizens.

The same principles of compassion and responsibility apply when America offers assistance to other nations. Nearly half of the world's people still live on less than \$2 a day. When we help them, we show our values, our belief in universal human dignity. We serve our interests and gain economic partners. And by helping the developing nations of the world, we offer an alternative to resentment and conflict and terror.

Yet the old way of pouring vast amounts of money into development aid without any concern for results has failed, often leaving behind misery and poverty and corruption. America's offering a new compact for global development. Greater aid contributions from America must be and will be linked to greater responsibility from developing nations.

I have proposed a 50-percent increase in our core development assistance over the next three budget years. Money that will be placed in a new Millennium Challenge Account. At the end of this three-year period, the level of our annual development assistance will be \$5 billion higher than current levels.

This is a record amount of spending. And in return for these funds, we expect nations to rout out corruption, to open their markets, to respect human rights, and to adhere to the rule of law. And these are the keys to progress in any nation, and they will be the conditions for any new American aid.

It is compassionate to increase our international aid. It is conservative to require the hard reforms that lead to prosperity and independence. And with this approach, we'll make a real difference in the lives of people around the world.

Compassionate conservatism guides my administration in many other areas. Our health care policies must help low-income Americans to buy health insurance they choose, they own and they control. Our environmental policy set high standards for stewardship, while allowing local cooperation and innovation to meet those standards. Our housing programs moved beyond rental assistance to the pride and stability of home ownership. Our reforms in Social Security must allow and encourage and help working Americans to build up their own asset base and achieve independence for their retirement years.

All of these policies and all of these areas serve the same vision. We are using an active government to promote self-government. We're encouraging individuals and communities and families to take more and more responsibility for themselves, for their neighbors, for our nation. The aim of these policies is not to spend more money or spend less money; it is to spend on what works.

The measure of compassion is more than good intentions, it is good results. Sympathy is not enough. We need solutions in America, and we know where solutions are found. When schools are teaching, when families are strong, when neighbors look after their neighbors, when our people have the tools and the skills and the resources they need to improve their lives, there is no problem that cannot be solved in America.

By being involved and by taking responsibility upon ourselves, we gain something else, as well: We contribute to the life of our country. We become more than taxpayers and occasional voters, we become citizens. Citizens, not spectators. Citizens who hear the call of duty, who stand up for their beliefs, who care for their families, who control their lives, and who treat their neighbors with respect and compassion. We discover a satisfaction that is only found in service, and we show our gratitude to America and to those who

came before us.

In the last seven months, we've been tested, and the struggle of our time has revealed the spirit of our people. Since September the 11th, we have been the kind of nation our founders had in mind, a nation of strong and confident and self-governing people. And we've been the kind of nation our fathers and mothers defended in World War II; a great and diverse country, united by common dangers and by common resolve.

We in our time will defend our nation, and we will deliver our nation's promise to all who seek it. In our war on terror, we are showing the world the strength of our country, and by our unity and tolerance and compassion, we will show the world the soul of our country. May God bless America.

WEST POINT COMMENCEMENT

UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY
WEST POINT, NEW YORK
JUNE 1, 2002

Thank you very much, General Lennox. Mr. Secretary, Governor Pataki, members of the United States Congress, Academy staff and faculty, distinguished guests, proud family members, and graduates: I want to thank you for your welcome. Laura and I are especially honored to visit this great institution in your bicentennial year.

In every corner of America, the words “West Point” command immediate respect. This place where the Hudson River bends is more than a fine institution of learning. The United States Military Academy is the guardian of values that have shaped the soldiers who have shaped the history of the world.

A few of you have followed in the path of the perfect West Point graduate, Robert E. Lee, who never received a single demerit in four years. Some of you followed in the path of the imperfect graduate, Ulysses S. Grant, who had his fair share of demerits, and said the happiest day of his life was “the day I left West Point.” During my college years I guess you could say I was — During my college years I guess you could say I was a Grant man.

You walk in the tradition of Eisenhower and MacArthur, Patton and Bradley - the commanders who saved a civilization. And you walk in the tradition of second lieutenants who did the same, by fighting and dying on distant battlefields.

Graduates of this academy have brought creativity and courage to every field of endeavor. West Point produced the chief engineer of the Panama Canal, the mind behind the Manhattan Project, the first American to walk in space. This fine institution gave us the man they say invented baseball, and other young men over the years who perfected the game of football.

You know this, but many in America don't — George C. Marshall, a VMI graduate, is said to have given this order: “I want

an officer for a secret and dangerous mission. I want a West Point football player.”

As you leave here today, I know there’s one thing you’ll never miss about this place: Being a plebe. But even a plebe at West Point is made to feel he or she has some standing in the world. I’m told that plebes, when asked whom they outrank, are required to answer this: “Sir, the Superintendent’s dog, the Commandant’s cat, and all the admirals in the whole damn Navy.” I probably won’t be sharing that with the Secretary of the Navy.

West Point is guided by tradition, and in honor of the “Golden Children of the Corps,” I will observe one of the traditions you cherish most. As the Commander-in-Chief, I hereby grant amnesty to all cadets who are on restriction for minor conduct offenses. Those of you in the end zone might have cheered a little early. Because, you see, I’m going to let General Lennox define exactly what “minor” means.

Every West Point class is commissioned to the Armed Forces. Some West Point classes are also commissioned by history, to take part in a great new calling for their country. Speaking here to the class of 1942 — six months after Pearl Harbor — General Marshall said, “We’re determined that before the sun sets on this terrible struggle, our flag will be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom on the one hand, and of overwhelming power on the other.”

Officers graduating that year helped fulfill that mission, defeating Japan and Germany, and then reconstructing those nations as allies. West Point graduates of the 1940s saw the rise of a deadly new challenge — the challenge of imperial communism — and opposed it from Korea to Berlin, to Vietnam, and in the Cold War, from beginning to end. And as the sun set on their struggle, many of those West Point officers lived to see a world transformed.

History has also issued its call to your generation. In your last year, America was attacked by a ruthless and resourceful enemy. You graduate from this Academy in a time of war, taking your place in an American military that is powerful and is honorable. Our war

on terror is only begun, but in Afghanistan it was begun well.

I am proud of the men and women who have fought on my orders. America is profoundly grateful for all who serve the cause of freedom, and for all who have given their lives in its defense. This nation respects and trusts our military, and we are confident in your victories to come.

This war will take many turns we cannot predict. Yet I am certain of this: Wherever we carry it, the American flag will stand not only for our power, but for freedom. Our nation's cause has always been larger than our nation's defense. We fight, as we always fight, for a just peace — a peace that favors human liberty. We will defend the peace against threats from terrorists and tyrants. We will preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers. And we will extend the peace by encouraging free and open societies on every continent.

Building this just peace is America's opportunity, and America's duty. From this day forward, it is your challenge, as well, and we will meet this challenge together. You will wear the uniform of a great and unique country. America has no empire to extend or utopia to establish. We wish for others only what we wish for ourselves — safety from violence, the rewards of liberty, and the hope for a better life.

In defending the peace, we face a threat with no precedent. Enemies in the past needed great armies and great industrial capabilities to endanger the American people and our nation. The attacks of September the 11th required a few hundred thousand dollars in the hands of a few dozen evil and deluded men. All of the chaos and suffering they caused came at much less than the cost of a single tank. The dangers have not passed. This government and the American people are on watch, we are ready, because we know the terrorists have more money and more men and more plans.

The gravest danger to freedom lies at the perilous crossroads of radicalism and technology. When the spread of chemical and biological and nuclear weapons, along with ballistic missile technology — when that occurs, even weak states and small

groups could attain a catastrophic power to strike great nations. Our enemies have declared this very intention, and have been caught seeking these terrible weapons. They want the capability to blackmail us, or to harm us, or to harm our friends — and we will oppose them with all our power.

For much of the last century, America's defense relied on the Cold War doctrines of deterrence and containment. In some cases, those strategies still apply. But new threats also require new thinking. Deterrence — the promise of massive retaliation against nations — means nothing against shadowy terrorist networks with no nation or citizens to defend. Containment is not possible when unbalanced dictators with weapons of mass destruction can deliver those weapons on missiles or secretly provide them to terrorist allies.

We cannot defend America and our friends by hoping for the best. We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants, who solemnly sign non-proliferation treaties, and then systemically break them. If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long.

Homeland defense and missile defense are part of stronger security, and they're essential priorities for America. Yet the war on terror will not be won on the defensive. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act.

Our security will require the best intelligence, to reveal threats hidden in caves and growing in laboratories. Our security will require modernizing domestic agencies such as the FBI, so they're prepared to act, and act quickly, against danger. Our security will require transforming the military you will lead — a military that must be ready to strike at a moment's notice in any dark corner of the world. And our security will require all Americans to be forward-looking and resolute, to be ready for preemptive action when necessary to defend our liberty and to defend our lives.

The work ahead is difficult. The choices we will face are

complex. We must uncover terror cells in 60 or more countries, using every tool of finance, intelligence and law enforcement. Along with our friends and allies, we must oppose proliferation and confront regimes that sponsor terror, as each case requires. Some nations need military training to fight terror, and we'll provide it. Other nations oppose terror, but tolerate the hatred that leads to terror — and that must change. We will send diplomats where they are needed, and we will send you, our soldiers, where you're needed.

All nations that decide for aggression and terror will pay a price. We will not leave the safety of America and the peace of the planet at the mercy of a few mad terrorists and tyrants. We will lift this dark threat from our country and from the world.

Because the war on terror will require resolve and patience, it will also require firm moral purpose. In this way our struggle is similar to the Cold War. Now, as then, our enemies are totalitarians, holding a creed of power with no place for human dignity. Now, as then, they seek to impose a joyless conformity, to control every life and all of life.

America confronted imperial communism in many different ways — diplomatic, economic, and military. Yet moral clarity was essential to our victory in the Cold War. When leaders like John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan refused to gloss over the brutality of tyrants, they gave hope to prisoners and dissidents and exiles, and rallied free nations to a great cause.

Some worry that it is somehow undiplomatic or impolite to speak the language of right and wrong. I disagree. Different circumstances require different methods, but not different moralities. Moral truth is the same in every culture, in every time, and in every place. Targeting innocent civilians for murder is always and everywhere wrong. Brutality against women is always and everywhere wrong. There can be no neutrality between justice and cruelty, between the innocent and the guilty. We are in a conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name. By confronting evil and lawless regimes, we do not create a problem,

we reveal a problem. And we will lead the world in opposing it.

As we defend the peace, we also have an historic opportunity to preserve the peace. We have our best chance since the rise of the nation state in the 17th century to build a world where the great powers compete in peace instead of prepare for war. The history of the last century, in particular, was dominated by a series of destructive national rivalries that left battlefields and graveyards across the Earth. Germany fought France, the Axis fought the Allies, and then the East fought the West, in proxy wars and tense standoffs, against a backdrop of nuclear Armageddon.

Competition between great nations is inevitable, but armed conflict in our world is not. More and more, civilized nations find ourselves on the same side — united by common dangers of terrorist violence and chaos. America has, and intends to keep, military strengths beyond challenge, thereby making the destabilizing arms races of other eras pointless, and limiting rivalries to trade and other pursuits of peace.

Today the great powers are also increasingly united by common values, instead of divided by conflicting ideologies. The United States, Japan and our Pacific friends, and now all of Europe, share a deep commitment to human freedom, embodied in strong alliances such as NATO. And the tide of liberty is rising in many other nations.

Generations of West Point officers planned and practiced for battles with Soviet Russia. I've just returned from a new Russia, now a country reaching toward democracy, and our partner in the war against terror. Even in China, leaders are discovering that economic freedom is the only lasting source of national wealth. In time, they will find that social and political freedom is the only true source of national greatness.

When the great powers share common values, we are better able to confront serious regional conflicts together, better able to cooperate in preventing the spread of violence or economic chaos. In the past, great power rivals took sides in difficult regional problems, making divisions deeper and more complicated. Today,

from the Middle East to South Asia, we are gathering broad international coalitions to increase the pressure for peace. We must build strong and great power relations when times are good; to help manage crisis when times are bad. America needs partners to preserve the peace, and we will work with every nation that shares this noble goal.

And finally, America stands for more than the absence of war. We have a great opportunity to extend a just peace, by replacing poverty, repression, and resentment around the world with hope of a better day. Through most of history, poverty was persistent, inescapable, and almost universal. In the last few decades, we've seen nations from Chile to South Korea build modern economies and freer societies, lifting millions of people out of despair and want. And there's no mystery to this achievement.

The 20th century ended with a single surviving model of human progress, based on non-negotiable demands of human dignity, the rule of law, limits on the power of the state, respect for women and private property and free speech and equal justice and religious tolerance. America cannot impose this vision — yet we can support and reward governments that make the right choices for their own people. In our development aid, in our diplomatic efforts, in our international broadcasting, and in our educational assistance, the United States will promote moderation and tolerance and human rights. And we will defend the peace that makes all progress possible.

When it comes to the common rights and needs of men and women, there is no clash of civilizations. The requirements of freedom apply fully to Africa and Latin America and the entire Islamic world. The peoples of the Islamic nations want and deserve the same freedoms and opportunities as people in every nation. And their governments should listen to their hopes.

A truly strong nation will permit legal avenues of dissent for all groups that pursue their aspirations without violence. An advancing nation will pursue economic reform, to unleash the great entrepreneurial energy of its people. A thriving nation will respect

the rights of women, because no society can prosper while denying opportunity to half its citizens. Mothers and fathers and children across the Islamic world, and all the world, share the same fears and aspirations. In poverty, they struggle. In tyranny, they suffer. And as we saw in Afghanistan, in liberation they celebrate.

America has a greater objective than controlling threats and containing resentment. We will work for a just and peaceful world beyond the war on terror.

The bicentennial class of West Point now enters this drama. With all in the United States Army, you will stand between your fellow citizens and grave danger. You will help establish a peace that allows millions around the world to live in liberty and to grow in prosperity. You will face times of calm, and times of crisis. And every test will find you prepared — because you're the men and women of West Point. You leave here marked by the character of this Academy, carrying with you the highest ideals of our nation.

Toward the end of his life, Dwight Eisenhower recalled the first day he stood on the plain at West Point. "The feeling came over me," he said, "that the expression 'the United States of America' would now and henceforth mean something different than it had ever before. From here on, it would be the nation I would be serving, not myself."

Today, your last day at West Point, you begin a life of service in a career unlike any other. You've answered a calling to hardship and purpose, to risk and honor. At the end of every day you will know that you have faithfully done your duty. May you always bring to that duty the high standards of this great American institution. May you always be worthy of the long gray line that stretches two centuries behind you.

On behalf of the nation, I congratulate each one of you for the commission you've earned and for the credit you bring to the United States of America. May God bless you all.

MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS

THE ROSE GARDEN OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 24, 2002

For too long, the citizens of the Middle East have lived in the midst of death and fear. The hatred of a few holds the hopes of many hostage. The forces of extremism and terror are attempting to kill progress and peace by killing the innocent. And this casts a dark shadow over an entire region. For the sake of all humanity, things must change in the Middle East.

It is untenable for Israeli citizens to live in terror. It is untenable for Palestinians to live in squalor and occupation. And the current situation offers no prospect that life will improve. Israeli citizens will continue to be victimized by terrorists, and so Israel will continue to defend herself.

In the situation the Palestinian people will grow more and more miserable. My vision is two states, living side by side in peace and security. There is simply no way to achieve that peace until all parties fight terror. Yet, at this critical moment, if all parties will break with the past and set out on a new path, we can overcome the darkness with the light of hope. Peace requires a new and different Palestinian leadership, so that a Palestinian state can be born.

I call on the Palestinian people to elect new leaders, leaders not compromised by terror. I call upon them to build a practicing democracy, based on tolerance and liberty. If the Palestinian people actively pursue these goals, America and the world will actively support their efforts. If the Palestinian people meet these goals, they will be able to reach agreement with Israel and Egypt and Jordan on security and other arrangements for independence.

And when the Palestinian people have new leaders, new institutions and new security arrangements with their neighbors, the United States of America will support the creation of a Palestinian state whose borders and certain aspects of its sovereignty will be

provisional until resolved as part of a final settlement in the Middle East.

In the work ahead, we all have responsibilities. The Palestinian people are gifted and capable, and I am confident they can achieve a new birth for their nation. A Palestinian state will never be created by terror — it will be built through reform. And reform must be more than cosmetic change, or veiled attempt to preserve the status quo. True reform will require entirely new political and economic institutions, based on democracy, market economics and action against terrorism.

Today, the elected Palestinian legislature has no authority, and power is concentrated in the hands of an unaccountable few. A Palestinian state can only serve its citizens with a new constitution which separates the powers of government. The Palestinian parliament should have the full authority of a legislative body. Local officials and government ministers need authority of their own and the independence to govern effectively.

The United States, along with the European Union and Arab states, will work with Palestinian leaders to create a new constitutional framework, and a working democracy for the Palestinian people. And the United States, along with others in the international community will help the Palestinians organize and monitor fair, multi-party local elections by the end of the year, with national elections to follow.

Today, the Palestinian people live in economic stagnation, made worse by official corruption. A Palestinian state will require a vibrant economy, where honest enterprise is encouraged by honest government. The United States, the international donor community and the World Bank stand ready to work with Palestinians on a major project of economic reform and development. The United States, the EU, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund are willing to oversee reforms in Palestinian finances, encouraging transparency and independent auditing.

And the United States, along with our partners in the developed world, will increase our humanitarian assistance to relieve

Palestinian suffering. Today, the Palestinian people lack effective courts of law and have no means to defend and vindicate their rights. A Palestinian state will require a system of reliable justice to punish those who prey on the innocent. The United States and members of the international community stand ready to work with Palestinian leaders to establish justice — establish justice and monitor a truly independent judiciary.

Today, Palestinian authorities are encouraging, not opposing, terrorism. This is unacceptable. And the United States will not support the establishment of a Palestinian state until its leaders engage in a sustained fight against the terrorists and dismantle their infrastructure. This will require an externally supervised effort to rebuild and reform the Palestinian security services. The security system must have clear lines of authority and accountability and a unified chain of command.

America is pursuing this reform along with key regional states. The world is prepared to help, yet ultimately these steps toward statehood depend on the Palestinian people and their leaders. If they energetically take the path of reform, the rewards can come quickly. If Palestinians embrace democracy, confront corruption and firmly reject terror, they can count on American support for the creation of a provisional state of Palestine.

With a dedicated effort, this state could rise rapidly, as it comes to terms with Israel, Egypt and Jordan on practical issues, such as security. The final borders, the capital and other aspects of this state's sovereignty will be negotiated between the parties, as part of a final settlement. Arab states have offered their help in this process, and their help is needed.

I've said in the past that nations are either with us or against us in the war on terror. To be counted on the side of peace, nations must act. Every leader actually committed to peace will end incitement to violence in official media, and publicly denounce homicide bombings. Every nation actually committed to peace will stop the flow of money, equipment and recruits to terrorist groups seeking the destruction of Israel — including Hamas,

Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah. Every nation actually committed to peace must block the shipment of Iranian supplies to these groups, and oppose regimes that promote terror, like Iraq. And Syria must choose the right side in the war on terror by closing terrorist camps and expelling terrorist organizations.

Leaders who want to be included in the peace process must show by their deeds an undivided support for peace. And as we move toward a peaceful solution, Arab states will be expected to build closer ties of diplomacy and commerce with Israel, leading to full normalization of relations between Israel and the entire Arab world.

Israel also has a large stake in the success of a democratic Palestine. Permanent occupation threatens Israel's identity and democracy. A stable, peaceful Palestinian state is necessary to achieve the security that Israel longs for. So I challenge Israel to take concrete steps to support the emergence of a viable, credible Palestinian state.

As we make progress towards security, Israel forces need to withdraw fully to positions they held prior to September 28, 2000. And consistent with the recommendations of the Mitchell Committee, Israeli settlement activity in the occupied territories must stop.

The Palestinian economy must be allowed to develop. As violence subsides, freedom of movement should be restored, permitting innocent Palestinians to resume work and normal life. Palestinian legislators and officials, humanitarian and international workers, must be allowed to go about the business of building a better future. And Israel should release frozen Palestinian revenues into honest, accountable hands.

I've asked Secretary Powell to work intensively with Middle Eastern and international leaders to realize the vision of a Palestinian state, focusing them on a comprehensive plan to support Palestinian reform and institution-building.

Ultimately, Israelis and Palestinians must address the core issues that divide them if there is to be a real peace, resolving all claims and ending the conflict between them. This means that the Israeli

occupation that began in 1967 will be ended through a settlement negotiated between the parties, based on U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, with Israeli withdrawal to secure and recognize borders.

We must also resolve questions concerning Jerusalem, the plight and future of Palestinian refugees, and a final peace between Israel and Lebanon, and Israel and a Syria that supports peace and fights terror.

All who are familiar with the history of the Middle East realize that there may be setbacks in this process. Trained and determined killers, as we have seen, want to stop it. Yet the Egyptian and Jordanian peace treaties with Israel remind us that with determined and responsible leadership progress can come quickly.

As new Palestinian institutions and new leaders emerge, demonstrating real performance on security and reform, I expect Israel to respond and work toward a final status agreement. With intensive effort by all, this agreement could be reached within three years from now. And I and my country will actively lead toward that goal.

I can understand the deep anger and anguish of the Israeli people. You've lived too long with fear and funerals, having to avoid markets and public transportation, and forced to put armed guards in kindergarten classrooms. The Palestinian Authority has rejected your offer at hand, and trafficked with terrorists. You have a right to a normal life; you have a right to security; and I deeply believe that you need a reformed, responsible Palestinian partner to achieve that security.

I can understand the deep anger and despair of the Palestinian people. For decades you've been treated as pawns in the Middle East conflict. Your interests have been held hostage to a comprehensive peace agreement that never seems to come, as your lives get worse year by year. You deserve democracy and the rule of law. You deserve an open society and a thriving economy. You deserve a life of hope for your children. An end to occupation and a peaceful democratic Palestinian state may seem distant, but America and our partners throughout the world stand ready to

help, help you make them possible as soon as possible.

If liberty can blossom in the rocky soil of the West Bank and Gaza, it will inspire millions of men and women around the globe who are equally weary of poverty and oppression, equally entitled to the benefits of democratic government.

I have a hope for the people of Muslim countries. Your commitments to morality, and learning, and tolerance led to great historical achievements. And those values are alive in the Islamic world today. You have a rich culture, and you share the aspirations of men and women in every culture. Prosperity and freedom and dignity are not just American hopes, or Western hopes. They are universal, human hopes. And even in the violence and turmoil of the Middle East, America believes those hopes have the power to transform lives and nations.

This moment is both an opportunity and a test for all parties in the Middle East: an opportunity to lay the foundations for future peace; a test to show who is serious about peace and who is not. The choice here is stark and simple. The Bible says, "I have set before you life and death; therefore, choose life." The time has arrived for everyone in this conflict to choose peace, and hope, and life.

Thank you very much.

ADDRESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
SEPTEMBER 12, 2002

Mr. Secretary General, Mr. President, distinguished delegates, and ladies and gentlemen: We meet one year and one day after a terrorist attack brought grief to my country, and brought grief to many citizens of our world. Yesterday, we remembered the innocent lives taken that terrible morning. Today, we turn to the urgent duty of protecting other lives, without illusion and without fear.

We've accomplished much in the last year — in Afghanistan and beyond. We have much yet to do — in Afghanistan and beyond. Many nations represented here have joined in the fight against global terror, and the people of the United States are grateful.

The United Nations was born in the hope that survived a world war — the hope of a world moving toward justice, escaping old patterns of conflict and fear. The founding members resolved that the peace of the world must never again be destroyed by the will and wickedness of any man. We created the United Nations Security Council, so that, unlike the League of Nations, our deliberations would be more than talk, our resolutions would be more than wishes. After generations of deceitful dictators and broken treaties and squandered lives, we dedicated ourselves to standards of human dignity shared by all, and to a system of security defended by all.

Today, these standards, and this security, are challenged. Our commitment to human dignity is challenged by persistent poverty and raging disease. The suffering is great, and our responsibilities are clear. The United States is joining with the world to supply aid where it reaches people and lifts up lives, to extend trade and the prosperity it brings, and to bring medical care where it is

desperately needed.

As a symbol of our commitment to human dignity, the United States will return to UNESCO. This organization has been reformed and America will participate fully in its mission to advance human rights and tolerance and learning.

Our common security is challenged by regional conflicts — ethnic and religious strife that is ancient, but not inevitable. In the Middle East, there can be no peace for either side without freedom for both sides. America stands committed to an independent and democratic Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security. Like all other people, Palestinians deserve a government that serves their interests and listens to their voices. My nation will continue to encourage all parties to step up to their responsibilities as we seek a just and comprehensive settlement to the conflict.

Above all, our principles and our security are challenged today by outlaw groups and regimes that accept no law of morality and have no limit to their violent ambitions. In the attacks on America a year ago, we saw the destructive intentions of our enemies. This threat hides within many nations, including my own. In cells and camps, terrorists are plotting further destruction, and building new bases for their war against civilization. And our greatest fear is that terrorists will find a shortcut to their mad ambitions when an outlaw regime supplies them with the technologies to kill on a massive scale.

In one place — in one regime — we find all these dangers, in their most lethal and aggressive forms, exactly the kind of aggressive threat the United Nations was born to confront.

Twelve years ago, Iraq invaded Kuwait without provocation. And the regime's forces were poised to continue their march to seize other countries and their resources. Had Saddam Hussein been appeased instead of stopped, he would have endangered the peace and stability of the world. Yet this aggression was stopped — by the might of coalition forces and the will of the United Nations.

To suspend hostilities, to spare himself, Iraq's dictator accepted a series of commitments. The terms were clear, to him and to all.

And he agreed to prove he is complying with every one of those obligations.

He has proven instead only his contempt for the United Nations, and for all his pledges. By breaking every pledge — by his deceptions, and by his cruelties — Saddam Hussein has made the case against himself.

In 1991, Security Council Resolution 688 demanded that the Iraqi regime cease at once the repression of its own people, including the systematic repression of minorities — which the Council said, threatened international peace and security in the region. This demand goes ignored.

Last year, the U.N. Commission on Human Rights found that Iraq continues to commit extremely grave violations of human rights, and that the regime's repression is all pervasive. Tens of thousands of political opponents and ordinary citizens have been subjected to arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, summary execution, and torture by beating and burning, electric shock, starvation, mutilation, and rape. Wives are tortured in front of their husbands, children in the presence of their parents — and all of these horrors concealed from the world by the apparatus of a totalitarian state.

In 1991, the U.N. Security Council, through Resolutions 686 and 687, demanded that Iraq return all prisoners from Kuwait and other lands. Iraq's regime agreed. It broke its promise. Last year the Secretary General's high-level coordinator for this issue reported that Kuwait, Saudi, Indian, Syrian, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Bahraini, and Omani nationals remain unaccounted for — more than 600 people. One American pilot is among them.

In 1991, the U.N. Security Council, through Resolution 687, demanded that Iraq renounce all involvement with terrorism, and permit no terrorist organizations to operate in Iraq. Iraq's regime agreed. It broke this promise. In violation of Security Council Resolution 1373, Iraq continues to shelter and support terrorist organizations that direct violence against Iran, Israel, and Western governments. Iraqi dissidents abroad are targeted for murder. In 1993, Iraq attempted to assassinate the Emir of Kuwait and a

former American President. Iraq's government openly praised the attacks of September the 11th. And al Qaeda terrorists escaped from Afghanistan and are known to be in Iraq.

In 1991, the Iraqi regime agreed to destroy and stop developing all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, and to prove to the world it has done so by complying with rigorous inspections. Iraq has broken every aspect of this fundamental pledge.

From 1991 to 1995, the Iraqi regime said it had no biological weapons. After a senior official in its weapons program defected and exposed this lie, the regime admitted to producing tens of thousands of liters of anthrax and other deadly biological agents for use with Scud warheads, aerial bombs, and aircraft spray tanks. U.N. inspectors believe Iraq has produced two to four times the amount of biological agents it declared, and has failed to account for more than three metric tons of material that could be used to produce biological weapons. Right now, Iraq is expanding and improving facilities that were used for the production of biological weapons.

United Nations' inspections also revealed that Iraq likely maintains stockpiles of VX, mustard and other chemical agents, and that the regime is rebuilding and expanding facilities capable of producing chemical weapons.

And in 1995, after four years of deception, Iraq finally admitted it had a crash nuclear weapons program prior to the Gulf War. We know now, were it not for that war, the regime in Iraq would likely have possessed a nuclear weapon no later than 1993.

Today, Iraq continues to withhold important information about its nuclear program — weapons design, procurement logs, experiment data, an accounting of nuclear materials and documentation of foreign assistance. Iraq employs capable nuclear scientists and technicians. It retains physical infrastructure needed to build a nuclear weapon. Iraq has made several attempts to buy high-strength aluminum tubes used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should Iraq acquire fissile material, it would be able to

build a nuclear weapon within a year. And Iraq's state-controlled media has reported numerous meetings between Saddam Hussein and his nuclear scientists, leaving little doubt about his continued appetite for these weapons.

Iraq also possesses a force of Scud-type missiles with ranges beyond the 150 kilometers permitted by the U.N. Work at testing and production facilities shows that Iraq is building more long-range missiles that it can inflict mass death throughout the region.

In 1990, after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the world imposed economic sanctions on Iraq. Those sanctions were maintained after the war to compel the regime's compliance with Security Council resolutions. In time, Iraq was allowed to use oil revenues to buy food. Saddam Hussein has subverted this program, working around the sanctions to buy missile technology and military materials. He blames the suffering of Iraq's people on the United Nations, even as he uses his oil wealth to build lavish palaces for himself, and to buy arms for his country. By refusing to comply with his own agreements, he bears full guilt for the hunger and misery of innocent Iraqi citizens.

In 1991, Iraq promised U.N. inspectors immediate and unrestricted access to verify Iraq's commitment to rid itself of weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles. Iraq broke this promise, spending seven years deceiving, evading, and harassing U.N. inspectors before ceasing cooperation entirely. Just months after the 1991 cease-fire, the Security Council twice renewed its demand that the Iraqi regime cooperate fully with inspectors, condemning Iraq's serious violations of its obligations. The Security Council again renewed that demand in 1994, and twice more in 1996, deploring Iraq's clear violations of its obligations. The Security Council renewed its demand three more times in 1997, citing flagrant violations; and three more times in 1998, calling Iraq's behavior totally unacceptable. And in 1999, the demand was renewed yet again.

As we meet today, it's been almost four years since the last U.N. inspectors set foot in Iraq, four years for the Iraqi regime to plan,

and to build, and to test behind the cloak of secrecy.

We know that Saddam Hussein pursued weapons of mass murder even when inspectors were in his country. Are we to assume that he stopped when they left? The history, the logic, and the facts lead to one conclusion: Saddam Hussein's regime is a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence. To assume this regime's good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. And this is a risk we must not take.

Delegates to the General Assembly, we have been more than patient. We've tried sanctions. We've tried the carrot of oil for food, and the stick of coalition military strikes. But Saddam Hussein has defied all these efforts and continues to develop weapons of mass destruction. The first time we may be completely certain he has a — nuclear weapons is when, God forbids, he uses one. We owe it to all our citizens to do everything in our power to prevent that day from coming.

The conduct of the Iraqi regime is a threat to the authority of the United Nations, and a threat to peace. Iraq has answered a decade of U.N. demands with a decade of defiance. All the world now faces a test, and the United Nations a difficult and defining moment. Are Security Council resolutions to be honored and enforced, or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?

The United States helped found the United Nations. We want the United Nations to be effective, and respectful, and successful. We want the resolutions of the world's most important multilateral body to be enforced. And right now those resolutions are being unilaterally subverted by the Iraqi regime. Our partnership of nations can meet the test before us, by making clear what we now expect of the Iraqi regime.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately and unconditionally forswear, disclose, and remove or destroy all weapons of mass destruction, long-range missiles, and all related material.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately end all support for terrorism and act to suppress it, as all states are required to do by U.N. Security Council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will cease persecution of its civilian population, including Shi'a, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkomans, and others, again as required by Security Council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will release or account for all Gulf War personnel whose fate is still unknown. It will return the remains of any who are deceased, return stolen property, accept liability for losses resulting from the invasion of Kuwait, and fully cooperate with international efforts to resolve these issues, as required by Security Council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately end all illicit trade outside the oil-for-food program. It will accept U.N. administration of funds from that program, to ensure that the money is used fairly and promptly for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

If all these steps are taken, it will signal a new openness and accountability in Iraq. And it could open the prospect of the United Nations helping to build a government that represents all Iraqis — a government based on respect for human rights, economic liberty, and internationally supervised elections.

The United States has no quarrel with the Iraqi people; they've suffered too long in silent captivity. Liberty for the Iraqi people is a great moral cause, and a great strategic goal. The people of Iraq deserve it; the security of all nations requires it. Free societies do not intimidate through cruelty and conquest, and open societies do not threaten the world with mass murder. The United States supports political and economic liberty in a unified Iraq.

We can harbor no illusions — and that's important today to remember. Saddam Hussein attacked Iran in 1980 and Kuwait in 1990. He's fired ballistic missiles at Iran and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Israel. His regime once ordered the killing of every person between the ages of 15 and 70 in certain Kurdish villages in northern Iraq. He has gassed many Iranians, and 40 Iraqi villages.

My nation will work with the U.N. Security Council to meet our common challenge. If Iraq's regime defies us again, the world must move deliberately, decisively to hold Iraq to account. We will work with the U.N. Security Council for the necessary resolutions. But the purposes of the United States should not be doubted. The Security Council resolutions will be enforced — the just demands of peace and security will be met — or action will be unavoidable. And a regime that has lost its legitimacy will also lose its power.

Events can turn in one of two ways: If we fail to act in the face of danger, the people of Iraq will continue to live in brutal submission. The regime will have new power to bully and dominate and conquer its neighbors, condemning the Middle East to more years of bloodshed and fear. The regime will remain unstable — the region will remain unstable, with little hope of freedom, and isolated from the progress of our times. With every step the Iraqi regime takes toward gaining and deploying the most terrible weapons, our own options to confront that regime will narrow. And if an emboldened regime were to supply these weapons to terrorist allies, then the attacks of September the 11th would be a prelude to far greater horrors.

If we meet our responsibilities, if we overcome this danger, we can arrive at a very different future. The people of Iraq can shake off their captivity. They can one day join a democratic Afghanistan and a democratic Palestine, inspiring reforms throughout the Muslim world. These nations can show by their example that honest government, and respect for women, and the great Islamic tradition of learning can triumph in the Middle East and beyond. And we will show that the promise of the United Nations can be fulfilled in our time.

Neither of these outcomes is certain. Both have been set before us. We must choose between a world of fear and a world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security, and for the permanent rights and the hopes of mankind. By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. And, delegates to the United

Nations, you have the power to make that stand, as well.
Thank you very much.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 108TH CONGRESS

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 28, 2003

Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished citizens and fellow citizens: Every year, by law and by custom, we meet here to consider the state of the union. This year, we gather in this chamber deeply aware of decisive days that lie ahead.

You and I serve our country in a time of great consequence. During this session of Congress, we have the duty to reform domestic programs vital to our country; we have the opportunity to save millions of lives abroad from a terrible disease. We will work for a prosperity that is broadly shared, and we will answer every danger and every enemy that threatens the American people.

In all these days of promise and days of reckoning, we can be confident. In a whirlwind of change and hope and peril, our faith is sure, our resolve is firm, and our union is strong.

This country has many challenges. We will not deny, we will not ignore, we will not pass along our problems to other Congresses, to other presidents, and other generations. We will confront them with focus and clarity and courage.

During the last two years, we have seen what can be accomplished when we work together. To lift the standards of our public schools, we achieved historic education reform — which must now be carried out in every school and in every classroom, so that every child in America can read and learn and succeed in life. To protect our country, we reorganized our government and created the Department of Homeland Security, which is mobilizing against the threats of a new era. To bring our economy out of recession, we delivered the largest tax relief in a generation. To insist on integrity in American business we passed tough reforms, and we are holding corporate criminals to account.

Some might call this a good record; I call it a good start. Tonight I ask the House and Senate to join me in the next bold steps to serve our fellow citizens.

Our first goal is clear: We must have an economy that grows fast enough to employ every man and woman who seeks a job. After recession, terrorist attacks, corporate scandals and stock market declines, our economy is recovering — yet it's not growing fast enough, or strongly enough. With unemployment rising, our nation needs more small businesses to open, more companies to invest and expand, more employers to put up the sign that says, "Help Wanted."

Jobs are created when the economy grows; the economy grows when Americans have more money to spend and invest; and the best and fairest way to make sure Americans have that money is not to tax it away in the first place.

I am proposing that all the income tax reductions set for 2004 and 2006 be made permanent and effective this year. And under my plan, as soon as I sign the bill, this extra money will start showing up in workers' paychecks. Instead of gradually reducing the marriage penalty, we should do it now. Instead of slowly raising the child credit to \$1,000, we should send the checks to American families now.

The tax relief is for everyone who pays income taxes — and it will help our economy immediately: 92 million Americans will keep, this year, an average of almost \$1,000 more of their own money. A family of four with an income of \$40,000 would see their federal income taxes fall from \$1,178 to \$45 per year. Our plan will improve the bottom line for more than 23 million small businesses.

You, the Congress, have already passed all these reductions, and promised them for future years. If this tax relief is good for Americans three, or five, or seven years from now, it is even better for Americans today.

We should also strengthen the economy by treating investors equally in our tax laws. It's fair to tax a company's profits. It is

not fair to again tax the shareholder on the same profits. To boost investor confidence, and to help the nearly 10 million senior who receive dividend income, I ask you to end the unfair double taxation of dividends.

Lower taxes and greater investment will help this economy expand. More jobs mean more taxpayers, and higher revenues to our government. The best way to address the deficit and move toward a balanced budget is to encourage economic growth, and to show some spending discipline in Washington, D.C.

We must work together to fund only our most important priorities. I will send you a budget that increases discretionary spending by 4 percent next year — about as much as the average family's income is expected to grow. And that is a good benchmark for us. Federal spending should not rise any faster than the paychecks of American families.

A growing economy and a focus on essential priorities will also be crucial to the future of Social Security. As we continue to work together to keep Social Security sound and reliable, we must offer younger workers a chance to invest in retirement accounts that they will control and they will own.

Our second goal is high quality, affordable health care for all Americans. The American system of medicine is a model of skill and innovation, with a pace of discovery that is adding good years to our lives. Yet for many people, medical care costs too much — and many have no coverage at all. These problems will not be solved with a nationalized health care system that dictates coverage and rations care.

Instead, we must work toward a system in which all Americans have a good insurance policy, choose their own doctors, and seniors and low-income Americans receive the help they need. Instead of bureaucrats and trial lawyers and HMOs, we must put doctors and nurses and patients back in charge of American medicine.

Health care reform must begin with Medicare; Medicare is the binding commitment of a caring society. We must renew that

commitment by giving seniors access to preventive medicine and new drugs that are transforming health care in America.

Seniors happy with the current Medicare system should be able to keep their coverage just the way it is. And just like you — the members of Congress, and your staffs, and other federal employees — all seniors should have the choice of a health care plan that provides prescription drugs.

My budget will commit an additional \$400 billion over the next decade to reform and strengthen Medicare. Leaders of both political parties have talked for years about strengthening Medicare. I urge the members of this new Congress to act this year.

To improve our health care system, we must address one of the prime causes of higher cost, the constant threat that physicians and hospitals will be unfairly sued. Because of excessive litigation, everybody pays more for health care, and many parts of America are losing fine doctors. No one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit. I urge the Congress to pass medical liability reform.

Our third goal is to promote energy independence for our country, while dramatically improving the environment. I have sent you a comprehensive energy plan to promote energy efficiency and conservation, to develop cleaner technology, and to produce more energy at home. I have sent you Clear Skies legislation that mandates a 70-percent cut in air pollution from power plants over the next 15 years. I have sent you a Healthy Forests Initiative, to help prevent the catastrophic fires that devastate communities, kill wildlife, and burn away millions of acres of treasured forest.

I urge you to pass these measures, for the good of both our environment and our economy. Even more, I ask you to take a crucial step and protect our environment in ways that generations before us could not have imagined.

In this century, the greatest environmental progress will come about not through endless lawsuits or command-and-control regulations, but through technology and innovation. Tonight I'm proposing \$1.2 billion in research funding so that America can lead

the world in developing clean, hydrogen-powered automobiles.

A single chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen generates energy, which can be used to power a car — producing only water, not exhaust fumes. With a new national commitment, our scientists and engineers will overcome obstacles to taking these cars from laboratory to showroom, so that the first car driven by a child born today could be powered by hydrogen, and pollution-free.

Join me in this important innovation to make our air significantly cleaner, and our country much less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Our fourth goal is to apply the compassion of America to the deepest problems of America. For so many in our country — the homeless and the fatherless, the addicted — the need is great. Yet there's power, wonder-working power, in the goodness and idealism and faith of the American people.

Americans are doing the work of compassion every day — visiting prisoners, providing shelter for battered women, bringing companionship to lonely seniors. These good works deserve our praise; they deserve our personal support; and when appropriate, they deserve the assistance of the federal government.

I urge you to pass both my faith-based initiative and the Citizen Service Act, to encourage acts of compassion that can transform America, one heart and one soul at a time.

Last year, I called on my fellow citizens to participate in the USA Freedom Corps, which is enlisting tens of thousands of new volunteers across America. Tonight I ask Congress and the American people to focus the spirit of service and the resources of government on the needs of some of our most vulnerable citizens — boys and girls trying to grow up without guidance and attention, and children who have to go through a prison gate to be hugged by their mom or dad.

I propose a \$450-million initiative to bring mentors to more than a million disadvantaged junior high students and children of prisoners. Government will support the training and recruiting of

mentors; yet it is the men and women of America who will fill the need. One mentor, one person can change a life forever. And I urge you to be that one person.

Another cause of hopelessness is addiction to drugs. Addiction crowds out friendship, ambition, moral conviction, and reduces all the richness of life to a single destructive desire. As a government, we are fighting illegal drugs by cutting off supplies and reducing demand through anti-drug education programs. Yet for those already addicted, the fight against drugs is a fight for their own lives. Too many Americans in search of treatment cannot get it. So tonight I propose a new \$600-million program to help an additional 300,000 Americans receive treatment over the next three years.

Our nation is blessed with recovery programs that do amazing work. One of them is found at the Healing Place Church in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. A man in the program said, “God does miracles in people’s lives, and you never think it could be you.” Tonight, let us bring to all Americans who struggle with drug addiction this message of hope: The miracle of recovery is possible, and it could be you.

By caring for children who need mentors, and for addicted men and women who need treatment, we are building a more welcoming society — a culture that values every life. And in this work we must not overlook the weakest among us. I ask you to protect infants at the very hour of their birth and end the practice of partial-birth abortion. And because no human life should be started or ended as the object of an experiment, I ask you to set a high standard for humanity, and pass a law against all human cloning.

The qualities of courage and compassion that we strive for in America also determine our conduct abroad. The American flag stands for more than our power and our interests. Our founders dedicated this country to the cause of human dignity, the rights of every person, and the possibilities of every life. This conviction leads us into the world to help the afflicted, and defend the peace, and confound the designs of evil men.

In Afghanistan, we helped liberate an oppressed people. And

we will continue helping them secure their country, rebuild their society, and educate all their children — boys and girls. In the Middle East, we will continue to seek peace between a secure Israel and a democratic Palestine. Across the Earth, America is feeding the hungry — more than 60 percent of international food aid comes as a gift from the people of the United States. As our nation moves troops and builds alliances to make our world safer, we must also remember our calling as a blessed country is to make this world better.

Today, on the continent of Africa, nearly 30 million people have the AIDS virus — including 3 million children under the age 15. There are whole countries in Africa where more than one-third of the adult population carries the infection. More than 4 million require immediate drug treatment. Yet across that continent, only 50,000 AIDS victims — only 50,000 — are receiving the medicine they need.

Because the AIDS diagnosis is considered a death sentence, many do not seek treatment. Almost all who do are turned away. A doctor in rural South Africa describes his frustration. He says, “We have no medicines. Many hospitals tell people, you’ve got AIDS, we can’t help you. Go home and die.” In an age of miraculous medicines, no person should have to hear those words.

AIDS can be prevented. Anti-retroviral drugs can extend life for many years. And the cost of those drugs has dropped from \$12,000 a year to under \$300 a year — which places a tremendous possibility within our grasp. Ladies and gentlemen, seldom has history offered a greater opportunity to do so much for so many.

We have confronted, and will continue to confront, HIV/AIDS in our own country. And to meet a severe and urgent crisis abroad, tonight I propose the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief — a work of mercy beyond all current international efforts to help the people of Africa. This comprehensive plan will prevent 7 million new AIDS infections, treat at least 2 million people with life-extending drugs, and provide humane care for millions of people suffering from AIDS, and for children orphaned by AIDS.

I ask the Congress to commit \$15 billion over the next five years, including nearly \$10 billion in new money, to turn the tide against AIDS in the most afflicted nations of Africa and the Caribbean.

This nation can lead the world in sparing innocent people from a plague of nature. And this nation is leading the world in confronting and defeating the man-made evil of international terrorism.

There are days when our fellow citizens do not hear news about the war on terror. There's never a day when I do not learn of another threat, or receive reports of operations in progress, or give an order in this global war against a scattered network of killers. The war goes on, and we are winning.

To date, we've arrested or otherwise dealt with many key commanders of al Qaeda. They include a man who directed logistics and funding for the September the 11th attacks; the chief of al Qaeda operations in the Persian Gulf, who planned the bombings of our embassies in East Africa and the USS Cole; an al Qaeda operations chief from Southeast Asia; a former director of al Qaeda's training camps in Afghanistan; a key al Qaeda operative in Europe; a major al Qaeda leader in Yemen. All told, more than 3,000 suspected terrorists have been arrested in many countries. Many others have met a different fate. Let's put it this way — they are no longer a problem to the United States and our friends and allies.

We are working closely with other nations to prevent further attacks. America and coalition countries have uncovered and stopped terrorist conspiracies targeting the American embassy in Yemen, the American embassy in Singapore, a Saudi military base, ships in the Straits of Hormuz and the Straits the Gibraltar. We've broken al Qaeda cells in Hamburg, Milan, Madrid, London, Paris, as well as, Buffalo, New York.

We have the terrorists on the run. We're keeping them on the run. One by one, the terrorists are learning the meaning of American justice.

As we fight this war, we will remember where it began — here, in our own country. This government is taking unprecedented measures to protect our people and defend our homeland. We've intensified security at the borders and ports of entry, posted more than 50,000 newly-trained federal screeners in airports, begun inoculating troops and first responders against smallpox, and are deploying the nation's first early warning network of sensors to detect biological attack. And this year, for the first time, we are beginning to field a defense to protect this nation against ballistic missiles.

I thank the Congress for supporting these measures. I ask you tonight to add to our future security with a major research and production effort to guard our people against bioterrorism, called Project Bioshield. The budget I send you will propose almost \$6 billion to quickly make available effective vaccines and treatments against agents like anthrax, botulinum toxin, Ebola, and plague. We must assume that our enemies would use these diseases as weapons, and we must act before the dangers are upon us.

Since September the 11th, our intelligence and law enforcement agencies have worked more closely than ever to track and disrupt the terrorists. The FBI is improving its ability to analyze intelligence, and is transforming itself to meet new threats. Tonight, I am instructing the leaders of the FBI, the CIA, the Homeland Security, and the Department of Defense to develop a Terrorist Threat Integration Center, to merge and analyze all threat information in a single location. Our government must have the very best information possible, and we will use it to make sure the right people are in the right places to protect all our citizens.

Our war against terror is a contest of will in which perseverance is power. In the ruins of two towers, at the western wall of the Pentagon, on a field in Pennsylvania, this nation made a pledge, and we renew that pledge tonight: Whatever the duration of this struggle, and whatever the difficulties, we will not permit the triumph of violence in the affairs of men — free people will set the course of history.

Today, the gravest danger in the war on terror, the gravest danger facing America and the world, is outlaw regimes that seek and possess nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. These regimes could use such weapons for blackmail, terror, and mass murder. They could also give or sell those weapons to terrorist allies, who would use them without the least hesitation.

This threat is new; America's duty is familiar. Throughout the 20th century, small groups of men seized control of great nations, built armies and arsenals, and set out to dominate the weak and intimidate the world. In each case, their ambitions of cruelty and murder had no limit. In each case, the ambitions of Hitlerism, militarism, and communism were defeated by the will of free peoples, by the strength of great alliances, and by the might of the United States of America.

Now, in this century, the ideology of power and domination has appeared again, and seeks to gain the ultimate weapons of terror. Once again, this nation and all our friends are all that stand between a world at peace, and a world of chaos and constant alarm. Once again, we are called to defend the safety of our people, and the hopes of all mankind. And we accept this responsibility.

America is making a broad and determined effort to confront these dangers. We have called on the United Nations to fulfill its charter and stand by its demand that Iraq disarm. We're strongly supporting the International Atomic Energy Agency in its mission to track and control nuclear materials around the world. We're working with other governments to secure nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union, and to strengthen global treaties banning the production and shipment of missile technologies and weapons of mass destruction.

In all these efforts, however, America's purpose is more than to follow a process — it is to achieve a result: the end of terrible threats to the civilized world. All free nations have a stake in preventing sudden and catastrophic attacks. And we're asking them to join us, and many are doing so. Yet the course of this nation does not depend on the decisions of others. Whatever action is

required, whenever action is necessary, I will defend the freedom and security of the American people.

Different threats require different strategies. In Iran, we continue to see a government that represses its people, pursues weapons of mass destruction, and supports terror. We also see Iranian citizens risking intimidation and death as they speak out for liberty and human rights and democracy. Iranians, like all people, have a right to choose their own government and determine their own destiny — and the United States supports their aspirations to live in freedom.

On the Korean Peninsula, an oppressive regime rules a people living in fear and starvation. Throughout the 1990s, the United States relied on a negotiated framework to keep North Korea from gaining nuclear weapons. We now know that that regime was deceiving the world, and developing those weapons all along. And today the North Korean regime is using its nuclear program to incite fear and seek concessions. America and the world will not be blackmailed.

America is working with the countries of the region — South Korea, Japan, China, and Russia — to find a peaceful solution, and to show the North Korean government that nuclear weapons will bring only isolation, economic stagnation, and continued hardship. The North Korean regime will find respect in the world and revival for its people only when it turns away from its nuclear ambitions.

Our nation and the world must learn the lessons of the Korean Peninsula and not allow an even greater threat to rise up in Iraq. A brutal dictator, with a history of reckless aggression, with ties to terrorism, with great potential wealth, will not be permitted to dominate a vital region and threaten the United States.

Twelve years ago, Saddam Hussein faced the prospect of being the last casualty in a war he had started and lost. To spare himself, he agreed to disarm of all weapons of mass destruction. For the next 12 years, he systematically violated that agreement. He pursued chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, even while inspectors were in his country. Nothing to date has restrained him

from his pursuit of these weapons — not economic sanctions, not isolation from the civilized world, not even cruise missile strikes on his military facilities.

Almost three months ago, the United Nations Security Council gave Saddam Hussein his final chance to disarm. He has shown instead utter contempt for the United Nations, and for the opinion of the world. The 108 U.N. inspectors were sent to conduct — were not sent to conduct a scavenger hunt for hidden materials across a country the size of California. The job of the inspectors is to verify that Iraq's regime is disarming. It is up to Iraq to show exactly where it is hiding its banned weapons, lay those weapons out for the world to see, and destroy them as directed. Nothing like this has happened.

The United Nations concluded in 1999 that Saddam Hussein had biological weapons sufficient to produce over 25,000 liters of anthrax — enough doses to kill several million people. He hasn't accounted for that material. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed it.

The United Nations concluded that Saddam Hussein had materials sufficient to produce more than 38,000 liters of botulinum toxin — enough to subject millions of people to death by respiratory failure. He hadn't accounted for that material. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed it.

Our intelligence officials estimate that Saddam Hussein had the materials to produce as much as 500 tons of sarin, mustard and VX nerve agent. In such quantities, these chemical agents could also kill untold thousands. He's not accounted for these materials. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed them.

U.S. intelligence indicates that Saddam Hussein had upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents. Inspectors recently turned up 16 of them — despite Iraq's recent declaration denying their existence. Saddam Hussein has not accounted for the remaining 29,984 of these prohibited munitions. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed them.

From three Iraqi defectors we know that Iraq, in the late 1990s,

had several mobile biological weapons labs. These are designed to produce germ warfare agents, and can be moved from place to a place to evade inspectors. Saddam Hussein has not disclosed these facilities. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed them.

The International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed in the 1990s that Saddam Hussein had an advanced nuclear weapons development program, had a design for a nuclear weapon and was working on five different methods of enriching uranium for a bomb. The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa. Our intelligence sources tell us that he has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes suitable for nuclear weapons production. Saddam Hussein has not credibly explained these activities. He clearly has much to hide.

The dictator of Iraq is not disarming. To the contrary; he is deceiving. From intelligence sources we know, for instance, that thousands of Iraqi security personnel are at work hiding documents and materials from the U.N. inspectors, sanitizing inspection sites and monitoring the inspectors themselves. Iraqi officials accompany the inspectors in order to intimidate witnesses.

Iraq is blocking U-2 surveillance flights requested by the United Nations. Iraqi intelligence officers are posing as the scientists inspectors are supposed to interview. Real scientists have been coached by Iraqi officials on what to say. Intelligence sources indicate that Saddam Hussein has ordered that scientists who cooperate with U.N. inspectors in disarming Iraq will be killed, along with their families.

Year after year, Saddam Hussein has gone to elaborate lengths, spent enormous sums, taken great risks to build and keep weapons of mass destruction. But why? The only possible explanation, the only possible use he could have for those weapons, is to dominate, intimidate, or attack.

With nuclear arms or a full arsenal of chemical and biological weapons, Saddam Hussein could resume his ambitions of conquest in the Middle East and create deadly havoc in that region. And this

Congress and the America people must recognize another threat. Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of al Qaeda. Secretly, and without fingerprints, he could provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists, or help them develop their own.

Before September the 11th, many in the world believed that Saddam Hussein could be contained. But chemical agents, lethal viruses and shadowy terrorist networks are not easily contained. Imagine those 19 hijackers with other weapons and other plans — this time armed by Saddam Hussein. It would take one vial, one canister, one crate slipped into this country to bring a day of horror like none we have ever known. We will do everything in our power to make sure that that day never comes.

Some have said we must not act until the threat is imminent. Since when have terrorists and tyrants announced their intentions, politely putting us on notice before they strike? If this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late. Trusting in the sanity and restraint of Saddam Hussein is not a strategy, and it is not an option.

The dictator who is assembling the world's most dangerous weapons has already used them on whole villages — leaving thousands of his own citizens dead, blind, or disfigured. Iraqi refugees tell us how forced confessions are obtained — by torturing children while their parents are made to watch. International human rights groups have catalogued other methods used in the torture chambers of Iraq: electric shock, burning with hot irons, dripping acid on the skin, mutilation with electric drills, cutting out tongues, and rape. If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning.

And tonight I have a message for the brave and oppressed people of Iraq: Your enemy is not surrounding your country — your enemy is ruling your country. And the day he and his regime are removed from power will be the day of your liberation.

The world has waited 12 years for Iraq to disarm. America will not accept a serious and mounting threat to our country, and our friends and our allies. The United States will ask the U.N. Security Council to convene on February the 5th to consider the facts of Iraq's ongoing defiance of the world. Secretary of State Powell will present information and intelligence about Iraqi's legal — Iraq's illegal weapons programs, its attempt to hide those weapons from inspectors, and its links to terrorist groups.

We will consult. But let there be no misunderstanding: If Saddam Hussein does not fully disarm, for the safety of our people and for the peace of the world, we will lead a coalition to disarm him.

Tonight I have a message for the men and women who will keep the peace, members of the American Armed Forces: Many of you are assembling in or near the Middle East, and some crucial hours may lay ahead. In those hours, the success of our cause will depend on you. Your training has prepared you. Your honor will guide you. You believe in America, and America believes in you.

Sending Americans into battle is the most profound decision a President can make. The technologies of war have changed; the risks and suffering of war have not. For the brave Americans who bear the risk, no victory is free from sorrow. This nation fights reluctantly, because we know the cost and we dread the days of mourning that always come.

We seek peace. We strive for peace. And sometimes peace must be defended. A future lived at the mercy of terrible threats is no peace at all. If war is forced upon us, we will fight in a just cause and by just means — sparing, in every way we can, the innocent. And if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full force and might of the United States military — and we will prevail.

And as we and our coalition partners are doing in Afghanistan, we will bring to the Iraqi people food and medicines and supplies — and freedom.

Many challenges, abroad and at home, have arrived in a single season. In two years, America has gone from a sense of

invulnerability to an awareness of peril; from bitter division in small matters to calm unity in great causes. And we go forward with confidence, because this call of history has come to the right country.

Americans are a resolute people who have risen to every test of our time. Adversity has revealed the character of our country, to the world and to ourselves. America is a strong nation, and honorable in the use of our strength. We exercise power without conquest, and we sacrifice for the liberty of strangers.

Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America's gift to the world, it is God's gift to humanity.

We Americans have faith in ourselves, but not in ourselves alone. We do not know — we do not claim to know all the ways of Providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in the loving God behind all of life, and all of history.

May He guide us now. And may God continue to bless the United States of America.

REMARKS ON THE LOSS OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE COLUMBIA

THE CABINET ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 1, 2003

My fellow Americans, this day has brought terrible news and great sadness to our country. At 9:00 a.m. this morning, Mission Control in Houston lost contact with our Space Shuttle Columbia. A short time later, debris was seen falling from the skies above Texas. The Columbia is lost; there are no survivors.

On board was a crew of seven: Colonel Rick Husband; Lt. Colonel Michael Anderson; Commander Laurel Clark; Captain David Brown; Commander William McCool; Dr. Kalpana Chawla; and Ilan Ramon, a Colonel in the Israeli Air Force. These men and women assumed great risk in the service to all humanity.

In an age when space flight has come to seem almost routine, it is easy to overlook the dangers of travel by rocket, and the difficulties of navigating the fierce outer atmosphere of the Earth. These astronauts knew the dangers, and they faced them willingly, knowing they had a high and noble purpose in life. Because of their courage and daring and idealism, we will miss them all the more.

All Americans today are thinking, as well, of the families of these men and women who have been given this sudden shock and grief. You're not alone. Our entire nation grieves with you. And those you loved will always have the respect and gratitude of this country.

The cause in which they died will continue. Mankind is led into the darkness beyond our world by the inspiration of discovery and the longing to understand. Our journey into space will go on.

In the skies today we saw destruction and tragedy. Yet farther than we can see there is comfort and hope. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Lift your eyes and look to the heavens. Who

created all these? He who brings out the starry hosts one by one and calls them each by name. Because of His great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.”

The same Creator who names the stars also knows the names of the seven souls we mourn today. The crew of the shuttle Columbia did not return safely to Earth; yet we can pray that all are safely home.

May God bless the grieving families, and may God continue to bless America.

REMARKS ON THE FUTURE OF IRAQ

WASHINGTON HILTON HOTEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

FEBRUARY 26, 2003

Thanks for the warm welcome. I'm proud to be with the scholars, and the friends, and the supporters of the American Enterprise Institute. I want to thank you for overlooking my dress code violation. They were about to stop me at the door, but Irving Kristol said, "I know this guy, let him in."

Chris, thank you for your very kind introduction, and thank you for your leadership. I see many distinguished guests here tonight — members of my Cabinet, members of Congress, Justice Scalia, Justice Thomas, and so many respected writers and policy experts. I'm always happy to see your Senior Fellow, Dr. Lynne Cheney. Lynne is a wise and thoughtful commentator on history and culture, and a dear friend to Laura and me. I'm also familiar with the good work of her husband — You may remember him, the former director of my vice presidential search committee. Thank God Dick Cheney said yes.

Thanks for fitting me into the program tonight. I know I'm not the featured speaker. I'm just a warm-up act for Allan Meltzer. But I want to congratulate Dr. Meltzer for a lifetime of achievement, and for tonight's well-deserved honor. Congratulations.

At the American Enterprise Institute, some of the finest minds in our nation are at work on some of the greatest challenges to our nation. You do such good work that my administration has borrowed 20 such minds. I want to thank them for their service, but I also want to remind people that for 60 years, AEI scholars have made vital contributions to our country and to our government, and we are grateful for those contributions.

We meet here during a crucial period in the history of our nation, and of the civilized world. Part of that history was written by others; the rest will be written by us. On a September morning,

threats that had gathered for years, in secret and far away, led to murder in our country on a massive scale. As a result, we must look at security in a new way, because our country is a battlefield in the first war of the 21st century.

We learned a lesson: The dangers of our time must be confronted actively and forcefully, before we see them again in our skies and in our cities. And we set a goal: we will not allow the triumph of hatred and violence in the affairs of men.

Our coalition of more than 90 countries is pursuing the networks of terror with every tool of law enforcement and with military power. We have arrested, or otherwise dealt with, many key commanders of al Qaeda. Across the world, we are hunting down the killers one by one. We are winning. And we're showing them the definition of American justice. And we are opposing the greatest danger in the war on terror: outlaw regimes arming with weapons of mass destruction.

In Iraq, a dictator is building and hiding weapons that could enable him to dominate the Middle East and intimidate the civilized world — and we will not allow it. This same tyrant has close ties to terrorist organizations, and could supply them with the terrible means to strike this country — and America will not permit it. The danger posed by Saddam Hussein and his weapons cannot be ignored or wished away. The danger must be confronted. We hope that the Iraqi regime will meet the demands of the United Nations and disarm, fully and peacefully. If it does not, we are prepared to disarm Iraq by force. Either way, this danger will be removed.

The safety of the American people depends on ending this direct and growing threat. Acting against the danger will also contribute greatly to the long-term safety and stability of our world. The current Iraqi regime has shown the power of tyranny to spread discord and violence in the Middle East. A liberated Iraq can show the power of freedom to transform that vital region, by bringing hope and progress into the lives of millions. America's interests in security, and America's belief in liberty, both lead in

the same direction: to a free and peaceful Iraq.

The first to benefit from a free Iraq would be the Iraqi people, themselves. Today they live in scarcity and fear, under a dictator who has brought them nothing but war, and misery, and torture. Their lives and their freedom matter little to Saddam Hussein — but Iraqi lives and freedom matter greatly to us.

Bringing stability and unity to a free Iraq will not be easy. Yet that is no excuse to leave the Iraqi regime's torture chambers and poison labs in operation. Any future the Iraqi people choose for themselves will be better than the nightmare world that Saddam Hussein has chosen for them.

If we must use force, the United States and our coalition stand ready to help the citizens of a liberated Iraq. We will deliver medicine to the sick, and we are now moving into place nearly 3 million emergency rations to feed the hungry.

We'll make sure that Iraq's 55,000 food distribution sites, operating under the Oil For Food program, are stocked and open as soon as possible. The United States and Great Britain are providing tens of millions of dollars to the U.N. High Commission on Refugees, and to such groups as the World Food Program and UNICEF, to provide emergency aid to the Iraqi people.

We will also lead in carrying out the urgent and dangerous work of destroying chemical and biological weapons. We will provide security against those who try to spread chaos, or settle scores, or threaten the territorial integrity of Iraq. We will seek to protect Iraq's natural resources from sabotage by a dying regime, and ensure those resources are used for the benefit of the owners — the Iraqi people.

The United States has no intention of determining the precise form of Iraq's new government. That choice belongs to the Iraqi people. Yet, we will ensure that one brutal dictator is not replaced by another. All Iraqis must have a voice in the new government, and all citizens must have their rights protected.

Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own: we will remain in Iraq as long

as necessary, and not a day more. America has made and kept this kind of commitment before — in the peace that followed a world war. After defeating enemies, we did not leave behind occupying armies, we left constitutions and parliaments. We established an atmosphere of safety, in which responsible, reform-minded local leaders could build lasting institutions of freedom. In societies that once bred fascism and militarism, liberty found a permanent home.

There was a time when many said that the cultures of Japan and Germany were incapable of sustaining democratic values. Well, they were wrong. Some say the same of Iraq today. They are mistaken. The nation of Iraq — with its proud heritage, abundant resources and skilled and educated people — is fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom.

The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit of a better life. And there are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the Middle East. Arab intellectuals have called on Arab governments to address the “freedom gap” so their peoples can fully share in the progress of our times. Leaders in the region speak of a new Arab charter that champions internal reform, greater politics participation, economic openness, and free trade. And from Morocco to Bahrain and beyond, nations are taking genuine steps toward politics reform. A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region.

It is presumptuous and insulting to suggest that a whole region of the world — or the one-fifth of humanity that is Muslim — is somehow untouched by the most basic aspirations of life. Human cultures can be vastly different. Yet the human heart desires the same good things, everywhere on Earth. In our desire to be safe from brutal and bullying oppression, human beings are the same. In our desire to care for our children and give them a better life, we are the same. For these fundamental reasons, freedom and democracy will always and everywhere have greater appeal than the slogans of hatred and the tactics of terror.

Success in Iraq could also begin a new stage for Middle Eastern peace, and set in motion progress towards a truly democratic Palestinian state. The passing of Saddam Hussein's regime will deprive terrorist networks of a wealthy patron that pays for terrorist training, and offers rewards to families of suicide bombers. And other regimes will be given a clear warning that support for terror will not be tolerated.

Without this outside support for terrorism, Palestinians who are working for reform and long for democracy will be in a better position to choose new leaders. True leaders who strive for peace; true leaders who faithfully serve the people. A Palestinian state must be a reformed and peaceful state that abandons forever the use of terror.

For its part, the new government of Israel — as the terror threat is removed and security improves — will be expected to support the creation of a viable Palestinian state and to work as quickly as possible toward a final status agreement. As progress is made toward peace, settlement activity in the occupied territories must end. And the Arab states will be expected to meet their responsibilities to oppose terrorism, to support the emergence of a peaceful and democratic Palestine, and state clearly they will live in peace with Israel.

The United States and other nations are working on a road map for peace. We are setting out the necessary conditions for progress toward the goal of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. It is the commitment of our government — and my personal commitment — to implement the road map and to reach that goal. Old patterns of conflict in the Middle East can be broken, if all concerned will let go of bitterness, hatred, and violence, and get on with the serious work of economic development, and political reform, and reconciliation. America will seize every opportunity in pursuit of peace. And the end of the present regime in Iraq would create such an opportunity.

In confronting Iraq, the United States is also showing our commitment to effective international institutions. We are a

permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. We helped to create the Security Council. We believe in the Security Council — so much that we want its words to have meaning.

The global threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction cannot be confronted by one nation alone. The world needs today and will need tomorrow international bodies with the authority and the will to stop the spread of terror and chemical and biological and nuclear weapons. A threat to all must be answered by all. High-minded pronouncements against proliferation mean little unless the strongest nations are willing to stand behind them — and use force if necessary. After all, the United Nations was created, as Winston Churchill said, to “make sure that the force of right will, in the ultimate issue, be protected by the right of force.”

Another resolution is now before the Security Council. If the council responds to Iraq’s defiance with more excuses and delays, if all its authority proves to be empty, the United Nations will be severely weakened as a source of stability and order. If the members rise to this moment, then the Council will fulfill its founding purpose.

I’ve listened carefully, as people and leaders around the world have made known their desire for peace. All of us want peace. The threat to peace does not come from those who seek to enforce the just demands of the civilized world; the threat to peace comes from those who flout those demands. If we have to act, we will act to restrain the violent, and defend the cause of peace. And by acting, we will signal to outlaw regimes that in this new century, the boundaries of civilized behavior will be respected.

Protecting those boundaries carries a cost. If war is forced upon us by Iraq’s refusal to disarm, we will meet an enemy who hides his military forces behind civilians, who has terrible weapons, who is capable of any crime. The dangers are real, as our soldiers, and sailors, airmen, and Marines fully understand. Yet, no military has ever been better prepared to meet these challenges.

Members of our Armed Forces also understand why they may be called to fight. They know that retreat before a dictator

guarantees even greater sacrifices in the future. They know that America's cause is right and just: liberty for an oppressed people, and security for the American people. And I know something about these men and women who wear our uniform: they will complete every mission they are given with skill, and honor, and courage.

Much is asked of America in this year 2003. The work ahead is demanding. It will be difficult to help freedom take hold in a country that has known three decades of dictatorship, secret police, internal divisions, and war. It will be difficult to cultivate liberty and peace in the Middle East, after so many generations of strife. Yet, the security of our nation and the hope of millions depend on us, and Americans do not turn away from duties because they are hard. We have met great tests in other times, and we will meet the tests of our time.

We go forward with confidence, because we trust in the power of human freedom to change lives and nations. By the resolve and purpose of America, and of our friends and allies, we will make this an age of progress and liberty. Free people will set the course of history, and free people will keep the peace of the world.

Thank you all, very much.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON MILITARY OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

THE OVAL OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MARCH 19, 2003

My fellow citizens, at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger.

On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war. These are opening stages of what will be a broad and concerted campaign. More than 35 countries are giving crucial support — from the use of naval and air bases, to help with intelligence and logistics, to the deployment of combat units. Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of serving in our common defense.

To all the men and women of the United States Armed Forces now in the Middle East, the peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you. That trust is well placed.

The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military. In this conflict, America faces an enemy who has no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality. Saddam Hussein has placed Iraqi troops and equipment in civilian areas, attempting to use innocent men, women and children as shields for his own military — a final atrocity against his people.

I want Americans and all the world to know that coalition forces will make every effort to spare innocent civilians from harm. A campaign on the harsh terrain of a nation as large as California could be longer and more difficult than some predict. And helping Iraqis achieve a united, stable and free country will require our

sustained commitment.

We come to Iraq with respect for its citizens, for their great civilization and for the religious faiths they practice. We have no ambition in Iraq, except to remove a threat and restore control of that country to its own people.

I know that the families of our military are praying that all those who serve will return safely and soon. Millions of Americans are praying with you for the safety of your loved ones and for the protection of the innocent. For your sacrifice, you have the gratitude and respect of the American people. And you can know that our forces will be coming home as soon as their work is done.

Our nation enters this conflict reluctantly — yet, our purpose is sure. The people of the United States and our friends and allies will not live at the mercy of an outlaw regime that threatens the peace with weapons of mass murder. We will meet that threat now, with our Army, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard and Marines, so that we do not have to meet it later with armies of fire fighters and police and doctors on the streets of our cities.

Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory.

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others and we will prevail.

May God bless our country and all who defend her.

REMARKS ON THE FREEDOM AGENDA

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
NOVEMBER 6, 2003

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome, and thanks for inviting me to join you in this 20th anniversary of the National Endowment for Democracy. The staff and directors of this organization have seen a lot of history over the last two decades, you've been a part of that history. By speaking for and standing for freedom, you've lifted the hopes of people around the world, and you've brought great credit to America.

I appreciate Vin for the short introduction. I'm a man who likes short introductions. And he didn't let me down. But more importantly, I appreciate the invitation. I appreciate the members of Congress who are here, senators from both political parties, members of the House of Representatives from both political parties. I appreciate the ambassadors who are here. I appreciate the guests who have come. I appreciate the bipartisan spirit, the nonpartisan spirit of the National Endowment for Democracy. I'm glad that Republicans and Democrats and independents are working together to advance human liberty.

The roots of our democracy can be traced to England, and to its Parliament — and so can the roots of this organization. In June of 1982, President Ronald Reagan spoke at Westminster Palace and declared, the turning point had arrived in history. He argued that Soviet communism had failed, precisely because it did not respect its own people — their creativity, their genius and their rights.

President Reagan said that the day of Soviet tyranny was passing, that freedom had a momentum which would not be halted. He gave this organization its mandate: to add to the momentum of freedom across the world. Your mandate was important 20 years ago; it is equally important today.

A number of critics were dismissive of that speech by the

President. According to one editorial of the time, “It seems hard to be a sophisticated European and also an admirer of Ronald Reagan.” Some observers on both sides of the Atlantic pronounced the speech simplistic and naive, and even dangerous. In fact, Ronald Reagan’s words were courageous and optimistic and entirely correct.

The great democratic movement President Reagan described was already well underway. In the early 1970s, there were about 40 democracies in the world. By the middle of that decade, Portugal and Spain and Greece held free elections. Soon there were new democracies in Latin America, and free institutions were spreading in Korea, in Taiwan, and in East Asia. This very week in 1989, there were protests in East Berlin and in Leipzig. By the end of that year, every communist dictatorship in Central [Europe] had collapsed. Within another year, the South African government released Nelson Mandela. Four years later, he was elected president of his country — ascending, like Walesa and Havel, from prisoner of state to head of state.

As the 20th century ended, there were around 120 democracies in the world — and I can assure you more are on the way. Ronald Reagan would be pleased, and he would not be surprised.

We’ve witnessed, in little over a generation, the swiftest advance of freedom in the 2,500 year story of democracy. Historians in the future will offer their own explanations for why this happened. Yet we already know some of the reasons they will cite. It is no accident that the rise of so many democracies took place in a time when the world’s most influential nation was itself a democracy.

The United States made military and moral commitments in Europe and Asia, which protected free nations from aggression, and created the conditions in which new democracies could flourish. As we provided security for whole nations, we also provided inspiration for oppressed peoples. In prison camps, in banned union meetings, in clandestine churches, men and women knew that the whole world was not sharing their own nightmare.

They knew of at least one place — a bright and hopeful land — where freedom was valued and secure. And they prayed that America would not forget them, or forget the mission to promote liberty around the world.

Historians will note that in many nations, the advance of markets and free enterprise helped to create a middle class that was confident enough to demand their own rights. They will point to the role of technology in frustrating censorship and central control — and marvel at the power of instant communications to spread the truth, the news, and courage across borders.

Historians in the future will reflect on an extraordinary, undeniable fact: Over time, free nations grow stronger and dictatorships grow weaker. In the middle of the 20th century, some imagined that the central planning and social regimentation were a shortcut to national strength. In fact, the prosperity, and social vitality and technological progress of a people are directly determined by extent of their liberty. Freedom honors and unleashes human creativity — and creativity determines the strength and wealth of nations. Liberty is both the plan of Heaven for humanity, and the best hope for progress here on Earth.

The progress of liberty is a powerful trend. Yet, we also know that liberty, if not defended, can be lost. The success of freedom is not determined by some dialectic of history. By definition, the success of freedom rests upon the choices and the courage of free peoples, and upon their willingness to sacrifice. In the trenches of World War I, through a two-front war in the 1940s, the difficult battles of Korea and Vietnam, and in missions of rescue and liberation on nearly every continent, Americans have amply displayed our willingness to sacrifice for liberty.

The sacrifices of Americans have not always been recognized or appreciated, yet they have been worthwhile. Because we and our allies were steadfast, Germany and Japan are democratic nations that no longer threaten the world. A global nuclear standoff with the Soviet Union ended peacefully — as did the Soviet Union. The nations of Europe are moving towards unity, not dividing into

armed camps and descending into genocide. Every nation has learned, or should have learned, an important lesson: Freedom is worth fighting for, dying for, and standing for — and the advance of freedom leads to peace.

And now we must apply that lesson in our own time. We've reached another great turning point — and the resolve we show will shape the next stage of the world democratic movement.

Our commitment to democracy is tested in countries like Cuba and Burma and North Korea and Zimbabwe — outposts of oppression in our world. The people in these nations live in captivity, and fear and silence. Yet, these regimes cannot hold back freedom forever — and, one day, from prison camps and prison cells, and from exile, the leaders of new democracies will arrive. Communism, and militarism and rule by the capricious and corrupt are the relics of a passing era. And we will stand with these oppressed peoples until the day of their freedom finally arrives.

Our commitment to democracy is tested in China. That nation now has a sliver, a fragment of liberty. Yet, China's people will eventually want their liberty pure and whole. China has discovered that economic freedom leads to national wealth. China's leaders will also discover that freedom is indivisible — that social and religious freedom is also essential to national greatness and national dignity. Eventually, men and women who are allowed to control their own wealth will insist on controlling their own lives and their own country.

Our commitment to democracy is also tested in the Middle East, which is my focus today, and must be a focus of American policy for decades to come. In many nations of the Middle East — countries of great strategic importance — democracy has not yet taken root. And the questions arise: Are the peoples of the Middle East somehow beyond the reach of liberty? Are millions of men and women and children condemned by history or culture to live in despotism? Are they alone never to know freedom, and never even to have a choice in the matter? I, for one, do not believe it. I believe every person has the ability and the right to be free.

Some skeptics of democracy assert that the traditions of Islam are inhospitable to the representative government. This “cultural condescension,” as Ronald Reagan termed it, has a long history. After the Japanese surrender in 1945, a so-called Japan expert asserted that democracy in that former empire would “never work.” Another observer declared the prospects for democracy in post-Hitler Germany are, and I quote, “most uncertain at best” — he made that claim in 1957. Seventy-four years ago, *The Sunday London Times* declared nine-tenths of the population of India to be “illiterates not caring a fig for politics.” Yet when Indian democracy was imperiled in the 1970s, the Indian people showed their commitment to liberty in a national referendum that saved their form of government.

Time after time, observers have questioned whether this country, or that people, or this group, are “ready” for democracy — as if freedom were a prize you win for meeting our own Western standards of progress. In fact, the daily work of democracy itself is the path of progress. It teaches cooperation, the free exchange of ideas, and the peaceful resolution of differences. As men and women are showing, from Bangladesh to Botswana, to Mongolia, it is the practice of democracy that makes a nation ready for democracy, and every nation can start on this path.

It should be clear to all that Islam — the faith of one-fifth of humanity — is consistent with democratic rule. Democratic progress is found in many predominantly Muslim countries — in Turkey and Indonesia, and Senegal and Albania, Niger and Sierra Leone. Muslim men and women are good citizens of India and South Africa, of the nations of Western Europe, and of the United States of America.

More than half of all the Muslims in the world live in freedom under democratically constituted governments. They succeed in democratic societies, not in spite of their faith, but because of it. A religion that demands individual moral accountability, and encourages the encounter of the individual with God, is fully compatible with the rights and responsibilities of self-government.

Yet there's a great challenge today in the Middle East. In the words of a recent report by Arab scholars, the global wave of democracy has — and I quote — “barely reached the Arab states.” They continue: “This freedom deficit undermines human development and is one of the most painful manifestations of lagging political development.” The freedom deficit they describe has terrible consequences, of the people of the Middle East and for the world. In many Middle Eastern countries, poverty is deep and it is spreading, women lack rights and are denied schooling. Whole societies remain stagnant while the world moves ahead. These are not the failures of a culture or a religion. These are the failures of political and economic doctrines.

As the colonial era passed away, the Middle East saw the establishment of many military dictatorships. Some rulers adopted the dogmas of socialism, seized total control of political parties and the media and universities. They allied themselves with the Soviet bloc and with international terrorism. Dictators in Iraq and Syria promised the restoration of national honor, a return to ancient glories. They've left instead a legacy of torture, oppression, misery, and ruin.

Other men, and groups of men, have gained influence in the Middle East and beyond through an ideology of theocratic terror. Behind their language of religion is the ambition for absolute political power. Ruling cabals like the Taliban show their version of religious piety in public whippings of women, ruthless suppression of any difference or dissent, and support for terrorists who arm and train to murder the innocent. The Taliban promised religious purity and national pride. Instead, by systematically destroying a proud and working society, they left behind suffering and starvation.

Many Middle Eastern governments now understand that military dictatorship and theocratic rule are a straight, smooth highway to nowhere. But some governments still cling to the old habits of central control. There are governments that still fear and repress independent thought and creativity, and private enterprise

— the human qualities that make for a — strong and successful societies. Even when these nations have vast natural resources, they do not respect or develop their greatest resources — the talent and energy of men and women working and living in freedom.

Instead of dwelling on past wrongs and blaming others, governments in the Middle East need to confront real problems, and serve the true interests of their nations. The good and capable people of the Middle East all deserve responsible leadership. For too long, many people in that region have been victims and subjects — they deserve to be active citizens.

Governments across the Middle East and North Africa are beginning to see the need for change. Morocco has a diverse new parliament; King Mohammed has urged it to extend the rights to women. Here is how His Majesty explained his reforms to parliament: “How can society achieve progress while women, who represent half the nation, see their rights violated and suffer as a result of injustice, violence, and marginalization, notwithstanding the dignity and justice granted to them by our glorious religion?” The King of Morocco is correct: The future of Muslim nations will be better for all with the full participation of women.

In Bahrain last year, citizens elected their own parliament for the first time in nearly three decades. Oman has extended the vote to all adult citizens; Qatar has a new constitution; Yemen has a multiparty political system; Kuwait has a directly elected national assembly; and Jordan held historic elections this summer. Recent surveys in Arab nations reveal broad support for political pluralism, the rule of law, and free speech. These are the stirrings of Middle Eastern democracy, and they carry the promise of greater change to come.

As changes come to the Middle Eastern region, those with power should ask themselves: Will they be remembered for resisting reform, or for leading it? In Iran, the demand for democracy is strong and broad, as we saw last month when thousands gathered to welcome home Shirin Ebadi, the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. The regime in Teheran must heed the

democratic demands of the Iranian people, or lose its last claim to legitimacy.

For the Palestinian people, the only path to independence and dignity and progress is the path of democracy. And the Palestinian leaders who block and undermine democratic reform, and feed hatred and encourage violence are not leaders at all. They're the main obstacles to peace, and to the success of the Palestinian people.

The Saudi government is taking first steps toward reform, including a plan for gradual introduction of elections. By giving the Saudi people a greater role in their own society, the Saudi government can demonstrate true leadership in the region.

The great and proud nation of Egypt has shown the way toward peace in the Middle East, and now should show the way toward democracy in the Middle East. Champions of democracy in the region understand that democracy is not perfect, it is not the path to utopia, but it's the only path to national success and dignity.

As we watch and encourage reforms in the region, we are mindful that modernization is not the same as Westernization. Representative governments in the Middle East will reflect their own cultures. They will not, and should not, look like us. Democratic nations may be constitutional monarchies, federal republics, or parliamentary systems. And working democracies always need time to develop — as did our own. We've taken a 200-year journey toward inclusion and justice — and this makes us patient and understanding as other nations are at different stages of this journey.

There are, however, essential principles common to every successful society, in every culture. Successful societies limit the power of the state and the power of the military — so that governments respond to the will of the people, and not the will of an elite. Successful societies protect freedom with the consistent and impartial rule of law, instead of selecting applying — selectively applying the law to punish political opponents. Successful societies allow room for healthy civic institutions — for

political parties and labor unions and independent newspapers and broadcast media. Successful societies guarantee religious liberty — the right to serve and honor God without fear of persecution. Successful societies privatize their economies, and secure the rights of property. They prohibit and punish official corruption, and invest in the health and education of their people. They recognize the rights of women. And instead of directing hatred and resentment against others, successful societies appeal to the hopes of their own people.

These vital principles are being applied in the nations of Afghanistan and Iraq. With the steady leadership of President Karzai, the people of Afghanistan are building a modern and peaceful government. Next month, 500 delegates will convene a national assembly in Kabul to approve a new Afghan constitution. The proposed draft would establish a bicameral parliament, set national elections next year, and recognize Afghanistan's Muslim identity, while protecting the rights of all citizens. Afghanistan faces continuing economic and security challenges — it will face those challenges as a free and stable democracy.

In Iraq, the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi Governing Council are also working together to build a democracy — and after three decades of tyranny, this work is not easy. The former dictator ruled by terror and treachery, and left deeply ingrained habits of fear and distrust. Remnants of his regime, joined by foreign terrorists, continue their battle against order and against civilization. Our coalition is responding to recent attacks with precision raids, guided by intelligence provided by the Iraqis, themselves. And we're working closely with Iraqi citizens as they prepare a constitution, as they move toward free elections and take increasing responsibility for their own affairs. As in the defense of Greece in 1947, and later in the Berlin Airlift, the strength and will of free peoples are now being tested before a watching world. And we will meet this test.

Securing democracy in Iraq is the work of many hands. American and coalition forces are sacrificing for the peace of

Iraq and for the security of free nations. Aid workers from many countries are facing danger to help the Iraqi people. The National Endowment for Democracy is promoting women's rights, and training Iraqi journalists, and teaching the skills of political participation. Iraqis, themselves — police and borders guards and local officials — are joining in the work and they are sharing in the sacrifice.

This is a massive and difficult undertaking — it is worth our effort, it is worth our sacrifice, because we know the stakes. The failure of Iraqi democracy would embolden terrorists around the world, increase dangers to the American people, and extinguish the hopes of millions in the region. Iraqi democracy will succeed — and that success will send forth the news, from Damascus to Teheran — that freedom can be the future of every nation. The establishment of a free Iraq at the heart of the Middle East will be a watershed event in the global democratic revolution.

Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe — because in the long run, stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty. As long as the Middle East remains a place where freedom does not flourish, it will remain a place of stagnation, resentment, and violence ready for export. And with the spread of weapons that can bring catastrophic harm to our country and to our friends, it would be reckless to accept the status quo.

Therefore, the United States has adopted a new policy, a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East. This strategy requires the same persistence and energy and idealism we have shown before. And it will yield the same results. As in Europe, as in Asia, as in every region of the world, the advance of freedom leads to peace.

The advance of freedom is the calling of our time; it is the calling of our country. From the Fourteen Points to the Four Freedoms, to the Speech at Westminster, America has put our power at the service of principle. We believe that liberty is the design of nature; we believe that liberty is the direction of history.

We believe that human fulfillment and excellence come in the responsible exercise of liberty. And we believe that freedom — the freedom we prize — is not for us alone, it is the right and the capacity of all mankind.

Working for the spread of freedom can be hard. Yet, America has accomplished hard tasks before. Our nation is strong; we're strong of heart. And we're not alone. Freedom is finding allies in every country; freedom finds allies in every culture. And as we meet the terror and violence of the world, we can be certain the author of freedom is not indifferent to the fate of freedom.

With all the tests and all the challenges of our age, this is, above all, the age of liberty. Each of you at this Endowment is fully engaged in the great cause of liberty. And I thank you. May God bless your work. And may God continue to bless America.

REMARKS AT SIGNING OF MEDICARE REFORM LEGISLATION

DAR CONSTITUTION HALL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
DECEMBER 8, 2003

Good morning, thanks for the warm welcome. In a few moments I will have the honor of signing an historic act of Congress into law. I'm pleased that all of you are here to witness the greatest advance in health care coverage for America's seniors since the founding of Medicare.

With the Medicare Act of 2003, our government is finally bringing prescription drug coverage to the seniors of America. With this law, we're giving older Americans better choices and more control over their health care, so they can receive the modern medical care they deserve. With this law, we are providing more access to comprehensive exams, disease screenings, and other preventative care, so that seniors across this land can live better and healthier lives. With this law, we are creating Health Savings Accounts so that all Americans can put money away for their health care tax-free.

Our nation has the best health care system in the world. And we want our seniors to share in the benefits of that system. Our nation has made a promise, a solemn promise to America's seniors. We have pledged to help our citizens find affordable medical care in the later years of life. Lyndon Johnson established that commitment by signing the Medicare Act of 1965. And today, by reforming and modernizing this vital program, we are honoring the commitments of Medicare to all our seniors.

The point man in my administration on this issue was Secretary Tommy Thompson, and he and his team did a fabulous job of working with the Congress to get this important piece of legislation passed. Tommy, I want to thank you for your leadership.

This bill passed the Congress because of the strong leadership

of a handful of members, starting with the Speaker of the House Denny Hastert. Mr. Speaker — Mr. Speaker was joined by Senator Bill Frist, the Senate Majority Leader of the Senate, in providing the leadership necessary to get this bill done. I want to thank you both.

I appreciate the hard work of the House Majority Leader, Tom DeLay, in seeing that this bill was passed. I also appreciate the hard work of the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Chairman Bill Thomas, for his good work. The Chairman of the Finance Committee in the Senate, Senator Chuck Grassley, did a noble job. And he was joined in this task by the Ranking Member of the Finance Committee, Senator Max Baucus of Montana.

And the entire Senate effort was boosted by the efforts of a man from Louisiana, Senator John Breaux. And speaking about Louisiana, Billy Tauzin of the House of Representatives did great work on this bill. Senator Orrin Hatch from Utah made a significant contribution. Nancy Johnson, the House member from Connecticut, did a great job. Mike Bilirakis from Florida worked hard on this piece of legislation. I want to thank all the other members of the Congress and the Senate who have joined us. Thank you all for taking time out of your busy schedules to share in this historic moment.

I appreciate Tom Scully, the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, for his good work. The Director of the CDC, Julie Gerberding, is with us today. Julie, thank you for coming. The Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Mark McClellan is here. Jo Anne Barnhart, the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration, is with us. Thank you for coming, Jo Anne. Kay James who is the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, is with us. Thank you for coming, Kay.

A lot of this happened — this bill happened because of grassroots work. A lot of our fellow citizens took it upon themselves to agitate for change, to lobby on behalf of what's right. We had some governor support around the country — Governor Craig Benson from New Hampshire is with us today. Governor,

thank you for coming.

But the groups that speak for the elderly did fantastic work on this legislation. See, there was a lot of pressure not to get something done — for the wrong reasons, I might add. But Bill Novelli, the CEO of AARP, stood strong in representing the people he was supposed to represent and he worked hard to get this legislation passed. And, Bill, I want to thank you for your leadership. You were joined by Jim Parkel, who is the President of the AARP. Jim, I want to thank you, as well, for doing what was right, for focusing on the needs of the seniors of our country.

Jim Martin, the President of 60 Plus Association, worked hard. Charlie Jarvis, the Chairman and CEO of United Seniors Association, worked hard. Mike Maves, the Executive Vice President and CEO of the AMA, worked hard on this piece of legislation. Mary Martin, the Chairman of the Board of The Seniors Coalition, worked hard. The truth of the matter is, a lot of good people worked hard to get this important legislation done, and I thank you for your work.

Medicare is a great achievement of a compassionate government and it is a basic trust we honor. Medicare has spared millions of seniors from needless hardship. Each generation benefits from Medicare. Each generation has a duty to strengthen Medicare. And this generation is fulfilling our duty.

First and foremost, this new law will provide Medicare coverage for prescription drugs. Medicare was enacted to provide seniors with the latest in modern medicine. In 1965, that usually meant house calls, or operations, or long hospital stays. Today, modern medicine includes out-patient care, disease screenings, and prescription drugs.

Medicine has changed, but Medicare has not — until today. Medicare today will pay for extended hospital stays for ulcer surgery. That's at a cost of about \$28,000 per patient. Yet Medicare will not pay for the drugs that eliminate the cause of most ulcers, drugs that cost about \$500 a year. It's a good thing that Medicare pays when seniors get sick. Now, you see, we're taking this a step

further — Medicare will pay for prescription drugs, so that fewer seniors will get sick in the first place.

Drug coverage under Medicare will allow seniors to replace more expensive surgeries and hospitalizations with less expensive prescription medicine. And even more important, drug coverage under Medicare will save our seniors from a lot of worry. Some older Americans spend much of their Social Security checks just on their medications. Some cut down on the dosage, to make a bottle of pills last longer. Elderly Americans should not have to live with those kinds of fears and hard choices. This new law will ease the burden on seniors and will give them the extra help they need.

Seniors will start seeing help quickly. During the transition to the full prescription benefit, seniors will receive a drug discount card. This Medicare-approved card will deliver savings of 10 to 25 percent off the retail price of most medicines. Low-income seniors will receive the same savings, plus a \$600 credit on their cards to help them pay for the medications they need.

In about two years, full prescription coverage under Medicare will begin. In return for a monthly premium of about \$35, most seniors without any prescription drug coverage can now expect to see their current drug bills cut roughly in half. This new law will provide 95 percent coverage for out-of-pocket drug spending that exceeds \$3,600 a year. For the first time, we're giving seniors peace of mind that they will not have to face unlimited expenses for their medicine.

The new law offers special help to one-third of older Americans with low incomes, such as a senior couple with low savings and an annual income of about \$18,000 or less. These seniors will pay little or no premium for full drug coverage. Their deductible will be no higher than \$50 per year, and their co-payment on each prescription will be as little as \$1. Seniors in the greatest need will have the greatest help under the modernized Medicare system.

I visited with seniors around the country and heard many of

their stories. I'm proud that this legislation will give them practical and much needed help. Mary Jane Jones from Midlothian, Virginia, has a modest income. Her drug bills total nearly \$500 a month. Things got so tight for a while she had to use needles twice or three times for her insulin shots. With this law, Mary Jane won't have to go to such extremes. In exchange for a monthly premium of about \$35, Mary Jane Jones would save nearly \$2,700 in annual prescription drug spending.

Hugh Iverson from West Des Moines, Iowa, just got his Medicare membership. And that's a good thing, because he hasn't had health insurance for more than three years. His drug bills total at least \$400 a month. Within two years, with the \$35 a month coverage, he will be able to cut those bills nearly in half, saving him about \$2,400 a year.

Neil LeGrow from Culpepper, Virginia, takes 15 medications, costing him at least \$700 a month. To afford all those medications, Neil has to stay working. And thanks to this law, once he is enrolled in the drug benefit, he will be able to cut back his work hours and enjoy his retirement more because he'll have coverage that saves him about \$4,700 a year.

I promised these seniors when I met with them that we would work hard to give them the help they need. They are all here today. So I am happy to report to them in person — Mary Jane, Hugh, and Neil, we are keeping our promise.

In addition to providing coverage for prescription drugs, this legislation achieves a second great goal. We're giving our seniors more health care choices so they can get the coverage and care that meets their needs. Every senior needs to know if you don't want to change your current coverage, you don't have to change. You're the one in charge. If you want to keep your Medicare the way it is, along with the new prescription benefit, that is your right. If you want to improve benefits — maybe dental coverage, or eyeglass coverage, or managed care plans that reduce out-of-pocket costs — you'll be free to make those choices, as well.

And when seniors have the ability to make choices, health

care plans within Medicare will have to compete for their business by offering higher quality service. For the seniors of America, more choices and more control will mean better health care. These are the kinds of health care options we give to the members of Congress and federal employees. They have the ability to pick plans to — that are right for their own needs. What's good for members of Congress is also good for seniors. Our seniors are fully capable of making health care choices, and this bill allows them to do just that.

A third purpose achieved by this legislation is smarter medicine within the Medicare system. For years, our seniors have been denied Medicare coverage — have been denied Medicare coverage for a basic physical exam. Beginning in 2005, all newly-enrolled Medicare beneficiaries will be covered for a complete physical.

The Medicare system will now help seniors and their doctors diagnose health problems early, so they can treat them early and our seniors can have a better quality life. For example, starting next year, all people on Medicare will be covered for blood tests that can diagnose heart diseases. Those at high risk for diabetes will be covered for blood sugar screening tests. Modern health care is not complete without prevention — so we are expanding preventive services under Medicare.

Fourth, the new law will help all Americans pay for out-of-pocket health costs. This legislation will create health savings accounts, effective January 1, 2004, so Americans can set aside up to \$4,500 every year, tax free, to save for medical expenses. Depending on your tax bracket, that means you'll save between 10 to 35 percent on any costs covered by money in your account. Our laws encourage people to plan for retirement and to save for education. Now the law will make it easier for Americans to save for their future health care, as well.

A health savings account is a good deal, and all Americans should consider it. Every year, the money not spent would stay in the account and gain interest tax-free, just like an IRA. And people will have an incentive to live more healthy lifestyles because they want to see their health savings account grow. These accounts

will be good for small business owners, and employees. More businesses can focus on covering workers for major medical problems, such as hospitalization for an injury or illness. And at the same time, employees and their families will use these accounts to cover doctors visits or lab tests or other smaller costs. Some employers will contribute to employee health accounts. This will help more American families get the health care they need at the price they can afford.

The legislation I'm about to sign will set in motion a series of improvements in the care available to all America's senior citizens. And as we begin, it is important for seniors and those approaching retirement to understand their new benefits.

This coming spring, seniors will receive a letter to explain the drug discount card. In June, these cards, including the \$600 annual drug credit for low-income seniors, will be activated. This drug card can be used until the end of 2005. In the fall of that year, seniors will receive an information booklet giving simple guidance on changes in the program and the new choices they will have. Then in January of 2006, seniors will have their new coverage, including permanent coverage for prescription drugs.

These reforms are the act of a vibrant and compassionate government. We show our concern for the dignity of our seniors by giving them quality health care. We show our respect for seniors by giving them more choices and more control over their decision-making. We're putting individuals in charge of their health care decisions. And as we move to modernize and reform other programs of this government, we will always trust individuals and their decisions, and put personal choice at the heart of our efforts.

The challenges facing seniors on Medicare were apparent for many years. And those years passed with much debate and a lot of politics, and little reform to show for it. And that changed with the 108th Congress. This year we met our challenge with focus and perseverance. We confronted problems, instead of passing them along to future administrations and future Congresses. We overcame old partisan differences. We kept our promise, and found

a way to get the job done. This legislation is the achievement of members in both political parties. And this legislation is a victory for all of America's seniors.

Now I'm honored and pleased to sign this historic piece of legislation: the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 108TH CONGRESS,
SECOND SESSION

UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 20, 2004

Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens: America this evening is a nation called to great responsibilities. And we are rising to meet them.

As we gather tonight, hundreds of thousands of American servicemen and women are deployed across the world in the war on terror. By bringing hope to the oppressed, and delivering justice to the violent, they are making America more secure.

Each day, law enforcement personnel and intelligence officers are tracking terrorist threats; analysts are examining airline passenger lists; the men and women of our new Homeland Security Department are patrolling our coasts and borders. And their vigilance is protecting America.

Americans are proving once again to be the hardest working people in the world. The American economy is growing stronger. The tax relief you passed is working.

Tonight, members of Congress can take pride in the great works of compassion and reform that skeptics had thought impossible. You're raising the standards for our public schools, and you are giving our senior citizens prescription drug coverage under Medicare.

We have faced serious challenges together, and now we face a choice: We can go forward with confidence and resolve, or we can turn back to the dangerous illusion that terrorists are not plotting and outlaw regimes are no threat to us. We can press on with economic growth, and reforms in education and Medicare, or we can turn back to old policies and old divisions.

We've not come all this way — through tragedy, and trial and

war — only to falter and leave our work unfinished. Americans are rising to the tasks of history, and they expect the same from us. In their efforts, their enterprise, and their character, the American people are showing that the state of our union is confident and strong.

Our greatest responsibility is the active defense of the American people. Twenty-eight months have passed since September 11th, 2001 — over two years without an attack on American soil. And it is tempting to believe that the danger is behind us. That hope is understandable, comforting — and false. The killing has continued in Bali, Jakarta, Casablanca, Riyadh, Mombasa, Jerusalem, Istanbul, and Baghdad. The terrorists continue to plot against America and the civilized world. And by our will and courage, this danger will be defeated.

Inside the United States, where the war began, we must continue to give our homeland security and law enforcement personnel every tool they need to defend us. And one of those essential tools is the Patriot Act, which allows federal law enforcement to better share information, to track terrorists, to disrupt their cells, and to seize their assets. For years, we have used similar provisions to catch embezzlers and drug traffickers. If these methods are good for hunting criminals, they are even more important for hunting terrorists.

Key provisions of the Patriot Act are set to expire next year. The terrorist threat will not expire on that schedule. Our law enforcement needs this vital legislation to protect our citizens. You need to renew the Patriot Act.

America is on the offensive against the terrorists who started this war. Last March, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, a mastermind of September the 11th, awoke to find himself in the custody of U.S. and Pakistani authorities. Last August the 11th brought the capture of the terrorist Hambali, who was a key player in the attack in Indonesia that killed over 200 people. We're tracking al Qaeda around the world, and nearly two-thirds of their known leaders have now been captured or killed. Thousands of very skilled and

determined military personnel are on the manhunt, going after the remaining killers who hide in cities and caves, and one by one, we will bring these terrorists to justice.

As part of the offensive against terror, we are also confronting the regimes that harbor and support terrorists, and could supply them with nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. The United States and our allies are determined: We refuse to live in the shadow of this ultimate danger.

The first to see our determination were the Taliban, who made Afghanistan the primary training base of al Qaeda killers. As of this month, that country has a new constitution, guaranteeing free elections and full participation by women. Businesses are opening, health care centers are being established, and the boys and girls of Afghanistan are back in school. With the help from the new Afghan army, our coalition is leading aggressive raids against the surviving members of the Taliban and al Qaeda. The men and women of Afghanistan are building a nation that is free and proud and fighting terror — and America is honored to be their friend.

Since we last met in this chamber, combat forces of the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Poland and other countries enforced the demands of the United Nations, ended the rule of Saddam Hussein, and the people of Iraq are free.

Having broken the Baathist regime, we face a remnant of violent Saddam supporters. Men who ran away from our troops in battle are now dispersed and attack from the shadows. These killers, joined by foreign terrorists, are a serious, continuing danger. Yet we're making progress against them. The once all-powerful ruler of Iraq was found in a hole, and now sits in a prison cell. Of the top 55 officials of the former regime, we have captured or killed 45. Our forces are on the offensive, leading over 1,600 patrols a day and conducting an average of 180 raids a week. We are dealing with these thugs in Iraq, just as surely as we dealt with Saddam Hussein's evil regime.

The work of building a new Iraq is hard, and it is right. And America has always been willing to do what it takes for what is

right. Last January, Iraq's only law was the whim of one brutal man. Today our coalition is working with the Iraqi Governing Council to draft a basic law, with a bill of rights. We're working with Iraqis and the United Nations to prepare for a transition to full Iraqi sovereignty by the end of June.

As democracy takes hold in Iraq, the enemies of freedom will do all in their power to spread violence and fear. They are trying to shake the will of our country and our friends, but the United States of America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins. The killers will fail, and the Iraqi people will live in freedom.

Month by month, Iraqis are assuming more responsibility for their own security and their own future. And tonight we are honored to welcome one of Iraq's most respected leaders: the current President of the Iraqi Governing Council, Adnan Pachachi.

Sir, America stands with you and the Iraqi people as you build a free and peaceful nation.

Because of American leadership and resolve, the world is changing for the better. Last month, the leader of Libya voluntarily pledged to disclose and dismantle all of his regime's weapons of mass destruction programs, including a uranium enrichment project for nuclear weapons. Colonel Qadhafi correctly judged that his country would be better off and far more secure without weapons of mass murder.

Nine months of intense negotiations involving the United States and Great Britain succeeded with Libya, while 12 years of diplomacy with Iraq did not. And one reason is clear: For diplomacy to be effective, words must be credible, and no one can now doubt the word of America.

Different threats require different strategies. Along with nations in the region, we're insisting that North Korea eliminate its nuclear program. America and the international community are demanding that Iran meet its commitments and not develop nuclear weapons. America is committed to keeping the world's most dangerous weapons out of the hands of the most dangerous regimes.

When I came to this rostrum on September the 20th, 2001, I brought the police shield of a fallen officer, my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end. I gave to you and to all Americans my complete commitment to securing our country and defeating our enemies. And this pledge, given by one, has been kept by many.

You in the Congress have provided the resources for our defense, and cast the difficult votes of war and peace. Our closest allies have been unwavering. America's intelligence personnel and diplomats have been skilled and tireless. And the men and women of the American military — they have taken the hardest duty. We've seen their skill and their courage in armored charges and midnight raids, and lonely hours on faithful watch. We have seen the joy when they return, and felt the sorrow when one is lost. I've had the honor of meeting our servicemen and women at many posts, from the deck of a carrier in the Pacific to a mess hall in Baghdad.

Many of our troops are listening tonight. And I want you and your families to know: America is proud of you. And my administration, and this Congress, will give you the resources you need to fight and win the war on terror.

I know that some people question if America is really in a war at all. They view terrorism more as a crime, a problem to be solved mainly with law enforcement and indictments. After the World Trade Center was first attacked in 1993, some of the guilty were indicted and tried and convicted, and sent to prison. But the matter was not settled. The terrorists were still training and plotting in other nations, and drawing up more ambitious plans. After the chaos and carnage of September the 11th, it is not enough to serve our enemies with legal papers. The terrorists and their supporters declared war on the United States, and war is what they got.

Some in this chamber, and in our country, did not support the liberation of Iraq. Objections to war often come from principled motives. But let us be candid about the consequences of leaving Saddam Hussein in power. We're seeking all the facts. Already,

the Kay Report identified dozens of weapons of mass destruction-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations. Had we failed to act, the dictator's weapons of mass destruction programs would continue to this day. Had we failed to act, Security Council resolutions on Iraq would have been revealed as empty threats, weakening the United Nations and encouraging defiance by dictators around the world. Iraq's torture chambers would still be filled with victims, terrified and innocent. The killing fields of Iraq — where hundreds of thousands of men and women and children vanished into the sands — would still be known only to the killers. For all who love freedom and peace, the world without Saddam Hussein's regime is a better and safer place.

Some critics have said our duties in Iraq must be internationalized. This particular criticism is hard to explain to our partners in Britain, Australia, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Italy, Spain, Poland, Denmark, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Romania, the Netherlands, Norway, El Salvador, and the 17 other countries that have committed troops to Iraq. As we debate at home, we must never ignore the vital contributions of our international partners, or dismiss their sacrifices.

From the beginning, America has sought international support for our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and we have gained much support. There is a difference, however, between leading a coalition of many nations, and submitting to the objections of a few. America will never seek a permission slip to defend the security of our country.

We also hear doubts that democracy is a realistic goal for the greater Middle East, where freedom is rare. Yet it is mistaken, and condescending, to assume that whole cultures and great religions are incompatible with liberty and self-government. I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom. And even when that desire is crushed by tyranny for decades, it will rise again.

As long as the Middle East remains a place of tyranny and

despair and anger, it will continue to produce men and movements that threaten the safety of America and our friends. So America is pursuing a forward strategy of freedom in the greater Middle East. We will challenge the enemies of reform, confront the allies of terror, and expect a higher standard from our friend. To cut through the barriers of hateful propaganda, the Voice of America and other broadcast services are expanding their programming in Arabic and Persian — and soon, a new television service will begin providing reliable news and information across the region. I will send you a proposal to double the budget of the National Endowment for Democracy, and to focus its new work on the development of free elections, and free markets, free press, and free labor unions in the Middle East. And above all, we will finish the historic work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, so those nations can light the way for others, and help transform a troubled part of the world.

America is a nation with a mission, and that mission comes from our most basic beliefs. We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions of empire. Our aim is a democratic peace — a peace founded upon the dignity and rights of every man and woman. America acts in this cause with friends and allies at our side, yet we understand our special calling: This great republic will lead the cause of freedom.

In the last three years, adversity has also revealed the fundamental strengths of the American economy. We have come through recession, and terrorist attack, and corporate scandals, and the uncertainties of war. And because you acted to stimulate our economy with tax relief, this economy is strong, and growing stronger.

You have doubled the child tax credit from \$500 to \$1,000, reduced the marriage penalty, begun to phase out the death tax, reduced taxes on capital gains and stock dividends, cut taxes on small businesses, and you have lowered taxes for every American who pays income taxes.

Americans took those dollars and put them to work, driving this economy forward. The pace of economic growth in the third

quarter of 2003 was the fastest in nearly 20 years; new home construction, the highest in almost 20 years; home ownership rates, the highest ever. Manufacturing activity is increasing. Inflation is low. Interest rates are low. Exports are growing. Productivity is high, and jobs are on the rise.

These numbers confirm that the American people are using their money far better than government would have — and you were right to return it.

America's growing economy is also a changing economy. As technology transforms the way almost every job is done, America becomes more productive, and workers need new skills. Much of our job growth will be found in high-skilled fields like health care and biotechnology. So we must respond by helping more Americans gain the skills to find good jobs in our new economy.

All skills begin with the basics of reading and math, which are supposed to be learned in the early grades of our schools. Yet for too long, for too many children, those skills were never mastered. By passing the No Child Left Behind Act, you have made the expectation of literacy the law of our country. We're providing more funding for our schools — a 36-percent increase since 2001. We're requiring higher standards. We are regularly testing every child on the fundamentals. We are reporting results to parents, and making sure they have better options when schools are not performing. We are making progress toward excellence for every child in America.

But the status quo always has defenders. Some want to undermine the No Child Left Behind Act by weakening standards and accountability. Yet the results we require are really a matter of common sense: We expect third graders to read and do math at the third grade level — and that's not asking too much. Testing is the only way to identify and help students who are falling behind. This nation will not go back to the days of simply shuffling children along from grade to grade without them learning the basics. I refuse to give up on any child — and the No Child Left Behind Act is opening the door of opportunity to all of America's children.

At the same time, we must ensure that older students and adults

can gain the skills they need to find work now. Many of the fastest growing occupations require strong math and science preparation, and training beyond the high school level. So tonight, I propose a series of measures called Jobs for the 21st Century. This program will provide extra help to middle and high school students who fall behind in reading and math, expand advanced placement programs in low-income schools, invite math and science professionals from the private sector to teach part-time in our high schools. I propose larger Pell grants for students who prepare for college with demanding courses in high school. I propose increasing our support for America's fine community colleges, so they can — I do so, so they can train workers for industries that are creating the most new jobs. By all these actions, we'll help more and more Americans to join in the growing prosperity of our country. Job training is important, and so is job creation.

We must continue to pursue an aggressive, pro-growth economic agenda. Congress has some unfinished business on the issue of taxes. The tax reductions you passed are set to expire. Unless you act, the unfair tax on marriage will go back up. Unless you act, millions of families will be charged \$300 more in federal taxes for every child. Unless you act, small businesses will pay higher taxes. Unless you act, the death tax will eventually come back to life. Unless you act, Americans face a tax increase. What Congress has given, the Congress should not take away. For the sake of job growth, the tax cuts you passed should be permanent.

Our agenda for jobs and growth must help small business owners and employees with relief from needless federal regulation, and protect them from junk and frivolous lawsuits.

Consumers and businesses need reliable supplies of energy to make our economy run — so I urge you to pass legislation to modernize our electricity system, promote conservation, and make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

My administration is promoting free and fair trade to open up new markets for America's entrepreneurs and manufacturers and farmers — to create jobs for American workers. Younger workers

should have the opportunity to build a nest egg by saving part of their Social Security taxes in a personal retirement account. We should make the Social Security system a source of ownership for the American people. And we should limit the burden of government on this economy by acting as good stewards of taxpayers' dollars.

In two weeks, I will send you a budget that funds the war, protects the homeland, and meets important domestic needs, while limiting the growth in discretionary spending to less than 4 percent. This will require that Congress focus on priorities, cut wasteful spending, and be wise with the people's money. By doing so, we can cut the deficit in half over the next five years.

Tonight, I also ask you to reform our immigration laws so they reflect our values and benefit our economy. I propose a new temporary worker program to match willing foreign workers with willing employers when no Americans can be found to fill the job. This reform will be good for our economy because employers will find needed workers in an honest and orderly system. A temporary worker program will help protect our homeland, allowing Border Patrol and law enforcement to focus on true threats to our national security.

I oppose amnesty, because it would encourage further illegal immigration, and unfairly reward those who break our laws. My temporary worker program will preserve the citizenship path for those who respect the law, while bringing millions of hardworking men and women out from the shadows of American life.

Our nation's health care system, like our economy, is also in a time of change. Amazing medical technologies are improving and saving lives. This dramatic progress has brought its own challenge, in the rising costs of medical care and health insurance. Members of Congress, we must work together to help control those costs and extend the benefits of modern medicine throughout our country.

Meeting these goals requires bipartisan effort, and two months ago, you showed the way. By strengthening Medicare and adding a prescription drug benefit, you kept a basic commitment to our

seniors: You are giving them the modern medicine they deserve.

Starting this year, under the law you passed, seniors can choose to receive a drug discount card, saving them 10 to 25 percent off the retail price of most prescription drugs — and millions of low-income seniors can get an additional \$600 to buy medicine. Beginning next year, seniors will have new coverage for preventive screenings against diabetes and heart disease, and seniors just entering Medicare can receive wellness exams.

In January of 2006, seniors can get prescription drug coverage under Medicare. For a monthly premium of about \$35, most seniors who do not have that coverage today can expect to see their drug bills cut roughly in half. Under this reform, senior citizens will be able to keep their Medicare just as it is, or they can choose a Medicare plan that fits them best — just as you, as members of Congress, can choose an insurance plan that meets your needs. And starting this year, millions of Americans will be able to save money tax-free for their medical expenses in a health savings account.

I signed this measure proudly, and any attempt to limit the choices of our seniors, or to take away their prescription drug coverage under Medicare, will meet my veto.

On the critical issue of health care, our goal is to ensure that Americans can choose and afford private health care coverage that best fits their individual needs. To make insurance more affordable, Congress must act to address rapidly rising health care costs. Small businesses should be able to band together and negotiate for lower insurance rates, so they can cover more workers with health insurance. I urge you to pass association health plans. I ask you to give lower-income Americans a refundable tax credit that would allow millions to buy their own basic health insurance.

By computerizing health records, we can avoid dangerous medical mistakes, reduce costs, and improve care. To protect the doctor-patient relationship, and keep good doctors doing good work, we must eliminate wasteful and frivolous medical lawsuits. And tonight I propose that individuals who buy catastrophic health care coverage, as part of our new health savings accounts, be

allowed to deduct 100 percent of the premiums from their taxes.

A government-run health care system is the wrong prescription. By keeping costs under control, expanding access, and helping more Americans afford coverage, we will preserve the system of private medicine that makes America's health care the best in the world.

We are living in a time of great change — in our world, in our economy, in science and medicine. Yet some things endure — courage and compassion, reverence and integrity, respect for differences of faith and race. The values we try to live by never change. And they are instilled in us by fundamental institutions, such as families and schools and religious congregations. These institutions, these unseen pillars of civilization, must remain strong in America, and we will defend them. We must stand with our families to help them raise healthy, responsible children. When it comes to helping children make right choices, there is work for all of us to do.

One of the worst decisions our children can make is to gamble their lives and futures on drugs. Our government is helping parents confront this problem with aggressive education, treatment, and law enforcement. Drug use in high school has declined by 11 percent over the last two years. Four hundred thousand fewer young people are using illegal drugs than in the year 2001. In my budget, I proposed new funding to continue our aggressive, community-based strategy to reduce demand for illegal drugs. Drug testing in our schools has proven to be an effective part of this effort. So tonight I proposed an additional \$23 million for schools that want to use drug testing as a tool to save children's lives. The aim here is not to punish children, but to send them this message: We love you, and we don't want to lose you.

To help children make right choices, they need good examples. Athletics play such an important role in our society, but, unfortunately, some in professional sports are not setting much of an example. The use of performance-enhancing drugs like steroids in baseball, football, and other sports is dangerous, and it sends

the wrong message — that there are shortcuts to accomplishment, and that performance is more important than character. So tonight I call on team owners, union representatives, coaches, and players to take the lead, to send the right signal, to get tough, and to get rid of steroids now.

To encourage right choices, we must be willing to confront the dangers young people face — even when they're difficult to talk about. Each year, about 3 million teenagers contract sexually-transmitted diseases that can harm them, or kill them, or prevent them from ever becoming parents. In my budget, I propose a grassroots campaign to help inform families about these medical risks. We will double federal funding for abstinence programs, so schools can teach this fact of life: Abstinence for young people is the only certain way to avoid sexually-transmitted diseases.

Decisions children now make can affect their health and character for the rest of their lives. All of us — parents and schools and government — must work together to counter the negative influence of the culture, and to send the right messages to our children.

A strong America must also value the institution of marriage. I believe we should respect individuals as we take a principled stand for one of the most fundamental, enduring institutions of our civilization. Congress has already taken a stand on this issue by passing the Defense of Marriage Act, signed in 1996 by President Clinton. That statute protects marriage under federal law as a union of a man and a woman, and declares that one state may not redefine marriage for other states.

Activist judges, however, have begun redefining marriage by court order, without regard for the will of the people and their elected representatives. On an issue of such great consequence, the people's voice must be heard. If judges insist on forcing their arbitrary will upon the people, the only alternative left to the people would be the constitutional process. Our nation must defend the sanctity of marriage.

The outcome of this debate is important — and so is the way

we conduct it. The same moral tradition that defines marriage also teaches that each individual has dignity and value in God's sight.

It's also important to strengthen our communities by unleashing the compassion of America's religious institutions. Religious charities of every creed are doing some of the most vital work in our country — mentoring children, feeding the hungry, taking the hand of the lonely. Yet government has often denied social service grants and contracts to these groups, just because they have a cross or a Star of David or a crescent on the wall. By executive order, I have opened billions of dollars in grant money to competition that includes faith-based charities. Tonight I ask you to codify this into law, so people of faith can know that the law will never discriminate against them again.

In the past, we've worked together to bring mentors to children of prisoners, and provide treatment for the addicted, and help for the homeless. Tonight I ask you to consider another group of Americans in need of help. This year, some 600,000 inmates will be released from prison back into society. We know from long experience that if they can't find work, or a home, or help, they are much more likely to commit crime and return to prison. So tonight, I propose a four-year, \$300 million prisoner re-entry initiative to expand job training and placement services, to provide transitional housing, and to help newly released prisoners get mentoring, including from faith-based groups. America is the land of second chance, and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.

For all Americans, the last three years have brought tests we did not ask for, and achievements shared by all. By our actions, we have shown what kind of nation we are. In grief, we have found the grace to go on. In challenge, we rediscovered the courage and daring of a free people. In victory, we have shown the noble aims and good heart of America. And having come this far, we sense that we live in a time set apart.

I've been witness to the character of the people of America, who have shown calm in times of danger, compassion for one

another, and toughness for the long haul. All of us have been partners in a great enterprise. And even some of the youngest understand that we are living in historic times. Last month a girl in Lincoln, Rhode Island, sent me a letter. It began, “Dear George W. Bush. If there’s anything you know, I, Ashley Pearson, age 10, can do to help anyone, please send me a letter and tell me what I can do to save our country.” She added this P.S.: “If you can send a letter to the troops, please put, ‘Ashley Pearson believes in you.’”

Tonight, Ashley, your message to our troops has just been conveyed. And, yes, you have some duties yourself. Study hard in school, listen to your mom or dad, help someone in need, and when you and your friends see a man or woman in uniform, say, “thank you.” And, Ashley, while you do your part, all of us here in this great chamber will do our best to keep you and the rest of America safe and free.

My fellow citizens, we now move forward, with confidence and faith. Our nation is strong and steadfast. The cause we serve is right, because it is the cause of all mankind. The momentum of freedom in our world is unmistakable — and it is not carried forward by our power alone. We can trust in that greater power who guides the unfolding of the years. And in all that is to come, we can know that His purposes are just and true.

May God continue to bless America.

REMARKS ON OPENING NEW MARKETS FOR AMERICA'S WORKERS

CLEVELAND CONVENTION CENTER
CLEVELAND, OHIO
MARCH 10, 2004

Thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate so very much the invitation to come today. I'm really glad to be back in the great city of Cleveland, Ohio. It's good to be in a room full of accomplished women. As the husband of Laura and the son of Barbara, I feel right at home.

I enjoy being in the company of entrepreneurs, risk-takers, dreamers and doers. You all share a lot of common experiences. You've met challenges of starting a business. And that's hard. It required more time than you had in a day, more money than you kept in your bank, and more energy than you thought you had. But you chose an interesting life — you chose to lead. You chose to follow your dreams. And I appreciate your spirit. You're making the country a better place by working as hard as you do.

As the Governor said, nearly half of all small businesses are owned by women. That's powerful. That's a beautiful statement. Firms owned by women are being started at more than twice the national rate. The entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well.

This is a land of great wealth, and it's a land of great opportunity, and you're seizing the opportunity. Through the hard work of our people, the innovation of our businesses, and the good policies now in place, we have put a recession behind us. Thanks in large part to your hard work, our economy is expanding, productivity is strong, unemployment has been falling, incomes are rising — and we're going to stay on this path of growth and prosperity in this country. Our economy has challenges, and we know how to meet them. We'll continue making the finest products, and selling those products not only here at home, but across the world. We'll make sure that American workers have the

education and the skills to succeed in the jobs of the future. And we'll remain the leading economy in the world, because America will remain the best place to do business in the world.

I want to thank Jennette Bradley, the Lt. Governor, for her hospitality. And I want to thank the other officials from the state of Ohio who are with us. I appreciate Elaine Chao, a member of my Cabinet, for joining us today. Elaine is doing a great job for the United States. Es un placer to be here with Hector Barreto, the head of the SBA.

I traveled today with Steve LaTourette, the Congressman from this area. Steve, I'm honored you're here. He's a pro-growth guy. He knows the role of government is not to try to create wealth, but to create an environment in which the entrepreneurial spirit can flourish. I appreciate you being here. He's a great Congressman from this part of the world.

I appreciate the sponsors. Thanks for putting up with me and the entourage. Most of all, thank you for being here.

Today when I landed at the airport, I met Judi Firestone. Some of you may know Judi. She's owned her own computer business since 1986. She's an entrepreneur, she's a visionary. She works hard. As well, she is the Northeast Ohio chairman for the "Race For The Cure," Komen Foundation "Race For The Cure." She is a breast cancer survivor.

The reason I bring her up is the true strength of America is the hearts and souls of our citizens. The true strength of this country is the fact there are people like Judi Firestone who are willing to volunteer their time to make the community in which she lives a better place. It's really the strength, isn't it? I mean, the truth of the matter is we can change this country one heart and one soul at a time when citizens like Judi take time out of her life, her busy life, to help somebody who hurts.

And so the reason I herald Judi Firestone is to really talk about the strength of the country. I know many of you here heard the call to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself. I want to thank you for what you do to make your community

a loving place. I want to thank you for what you do to heal the souls that hurt. I want to thank you for what you do to be a part of the incredibly important fabric of America, that it saves lives not because of government, but because people are volunteering their time. And if you're not volunteering, please do so. The country needs you. But, Judi, thanks for coming.

This economy of ours has faced challenges over the last three years. Think back about what we have been through. Not long before I took office in January of 2001, I invited business leaders from around our country to come to Austin. They told me that factories and workers were seeing the first signs of recession. That's what they said. They said that the economy was troubled, that things weren't feeling too good. And they were right. In fact, the manufacturing sector had started losing jobs in August of 2000. By January of 2001, orders for equipment and software were falling, the stock market had been declining for several months.

And as we started to come out of the recession, and the economy, because of the entrepreneurial spirit and the fact we got great workers, started to recover, the enemy hit us on September the 11th, 2001. It was a day of terrible loss, deep mourning. It was also a serious blow to our economy. The attacks closed the New York Stock Exchange for nearly a week. Remember back to what it was like after September the 11th — the U.S. airspace was entirely closed for the first time. In the three months after September the 11th, the economy lost nearly one million jobs.

The enemy hurt us. But we're plenty tough and determined as a nation. And as a result of the American people's resolution and determination, we began to recover. And then we learned about fraud and wrongdoing in corporate America. And that hurt our economy, as well. There were scandals that were in the years in making, shook the energy industry; it affected the telecommunications industry; it hurt the accounting profession, and other key sectors of our economy. A lot of innocent workers and investors lost their jobs and their savings.

Those scandals hurt. But we acted, and we passed the strongest

corporate reforms since Franklin Roosevelt held the office that I'm honored to hold. Federal prosecutors are holding corporate executives to account. We have made it clear, we will not tolerate dishonesty in the boardrooms of America.

This economy of ours had been through recession, had been through emergency, had been through corporate scandals, and then I made the necessary decision to deal with Saddam Hussein. September the 11th taught a lesson I will never forget, and our country must never forget. America must confront threats before they fully materialize. That's the lesson of that fateful day.

In Iraq, this administration looked at the intelligence and we saw a threat to the American people. The Congress looked at the same intelligence, and they saw a threat. The United Nations Security Council looked at the intelligence and it saw a threat. And then the United Nations Security Council, in 2002, gave Saddam Hussein a final chance to comply with U.N. resolutions and disarm. We all saw a threat and we put out, through resolutions, the demand that he disclose and disarm. And once again, he chose defiance. He made the choice. I had a choice, as well: either to trust the word of a madman, or to defend the American people. Faced with that choice, I will defend America every time.

And therefore, in 2002 and early 2003, the television screens across America had banners saying, "March to war" — and, as business leaders, you understand that's not very conducive to investing capital. Marching to war is not a positive thought. But we overcame that challenge. Thanks to hardworking people and leaders, entrepreneurs, we overcame that challenge. And now we're marching to peace.

This week, the Iraqi Governing Council approved the new fundamental law, which will be the basis for a free constitutional democracy in the heart of the Middle East. Because we acted, because we did the right thing, the world is becoming more peaceful, and America is more secure.

My point is this: We faced challenge after challenge during the past three years, and we're overcoming them all. Inflation is

low; interest rates are low; manufacturing activity is up; home ownership is at an all-time high. The unemployment rate today is lower than the average rate in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Thanks to our productive workers, thanks to business leaders such as yourself, the United States of America is the fastest-growing major industrialized economy in the world.

One of the main reasons the recession was one of the shortest in modern history is because we acted. The tax relief I signed left money in the pockets of families and job creators at just the right time. We cut the taxes on our families; we lowered tax rates on everybody who paid taxes. We didn't play the old political game of winners and losers in the tax code. We increased the child credit, and we reduced the marriage penalty. This helped to lift after-tax incomes in America by 8.4 percent since 2001 and the spending and investing of Americans is driving this economy forward. That's what's happening.

Most of the new jobs in America are created by small businesses. I understand that. And so that is why we focused a lot of our tax relief on small businesses. The majority of small businesses are either sole proprietorships or sub-chapter S corporations, which means many of you pay business taxes at the individual rates. And so, therefore, when you lower rates on individuals, you lower rates on small businesses. You allow small business owners to keep more of their own money to invest, and therefore, create more jobs.

As well, to encourage investment, we increased the annual deduction for equipment purchases by small businesses, from \$25,000 to \$100,000. You see, I understand you can't have a healthy economy without a healthy small business sector — and the tax relief we passed is reinvigorating small businesses all across this country.

We did something else that will help the entrepreneurial spirit in this country. We're phasing out the death tax. Small business owners and ranchers and farmers shouldn't have their assets taxed twice. The death tax is unfair. You ought to be able to pass your

assets on to whoever you want.

Pro-growth policies are working. They're helping this economy — the economic recovery to turn into lasting prosperity. That's what I want, and that's what's happening. Yet, the job report last week shows that while the economy is dynamic and growing, it's experiencing some fundamental change. Productivity has grown faster over the last two years than at any time in more than 50 years, in part because technology is changing the way we do things. You know what I'm talking about. You're more productive in your companies.

In some fields, one person can do the work that used to be done by many. That's what being more productive means. At one semiconductor plant in New Mexico, new technology is allowing the same number of workers to produce 20 times as many computer chips as they used to.

Higher productivity is a good thing. It's good for our workers, it is good for our economy. If you're more productive, you're better able to compete and survive and expand and grow. People think — when they think about productivity, you think of it this way: Operating heavy equipment every day is hard work, but operating a shovel every day is harder work. I don't think many people here want to trade in your laptop for one of those old hunt-and-peck typewriters.

Advances in productivity lead to higher wages — that is a fact. The more productive a worker becomes, the better wages that person will receive. A more productive society means lower prices for consumers. A more productive society is one that generates greater national wealth. And small businesses are leading the way in this productivity revolution. And for that, I'm grateful.

Higher productivity also presents us a challenge, and here's the challenge: Many companies fill new orders and expand operations without needing to hire new workers. Because we're a productive work force, the economy can expand, and in some cases, they don't need to add additional workers to meet that expansion, to meet the additional demand. Manufacturing output, for instance, increased

sixfold between 1950 and 2000 — a sixfold increase. Yet, because of high productivity, all this manufacturing is done by about the same number of workers. And because of the new technologies throughout the economy, another challenge is the fact we've got to make sure people have got the skills necessary to become productive workers.

In Ohio, you know firsthand the effects of economic change. Manufacturers are more productive, so they aren't creating as many jobs as they used to. Ohio's unemployment rate is higher than the national average; manufacturing communities like Youngstown and Cleveland have been hit especially hard. I understand that. I know there are workers here concerned about their jobs going overseas. I share that concern. I know they're wondering whether they'll ever be able to find new skills necessary to fill the new jobs of the 21st century. I understand that. There are those with good jobs who worry about their health care and their retirement benefits. There are a lot of moms and dads who wonder whether or not their child will be able to find a job in the community in which they were raised. There are legitimate concerns amongst people here in Ohio and elsewhere around the country.

And one reason why there's concern is because, as the economists say, this is a time of transition, it's a time of change. And if you're one going through transition, it's not an easy experience. But then we have a responsibility to help. We have a responsibility to help with more than just unemployment insurance. We have a responsibility in government to create an environment that increases more jobs and helps people find the skills to fill those jobs. That's a responsibility that we must do in government.

Some politicians in Washington see this new challenge, and yet they want to respond in old ways. Their agenda is to increase federal taxes, to build a wall around this country and to isolate America from the rest of the world. They never get around to explaining how higher taxes would help create a single job in America — except maybe at the IRS. They don't explain how closing off markets, closing off markets abroad would help the

millions of Americans who produce goods for export, or work for foreign companies right here in the United States.

That old policy of tax-and-spend is the enemy of job creation. The old policy of economic isolationism is a recipe for economic disaster. America has moved beyond that tired, defeatist mind-set, and we're not going back. There's a better way, and that's what I want to talk about today. To expand the creation of new jobs, and to see our workers through our transition, government must meet basic responsibilities.

First, instead of building barriers to trade, we must break down those barriers so that good products, American products, are welcomed and sold on every continent. Look at it this way: America has got 5 percent of the world's population. That means 95 percent of potential customers are in other countries. We cannot expect to sell our goods and services, and create jobs, if America and our partners, trading partners, start raising barriers and closing off markets.

Millions of American jobs are supported by exports. That's a fact. One in five factory jobs in this country directly depends on trade. The surest way to threaten those jobs is a policy of economic isolation. The surest way to add more jobs is a confident policy, a confident economic policy that trades with the world.

The economic isolationists have a pessimistic outlook; they don't show much faith in the American worker or the American entrepreneur. They don't think we can compete. But here in Ohio, you're proving them wrong. People all over the world are buying products from Ohio — cars and tires, and batteries and jet engines, and ball bearings and electronics, and crops from your farms. Since 1996, under NAFTA, Ohio's exports to Mexico have tripled, and last year came to more than \$2 billion — \$2 billion of exports means it's more likely somebody will have a job in the state of Ohio. Since the end of 2000, Ohio's exports have increased more than any state in the country. And why is that? Because this state has got great entrepreneurs who are making high-quality products that the world wants to buy. And another reason why is because

you've got great workers, who, if given a level playing field, can out-produce any worker, anywhere on the Earth.

Foreign companies recognize the quality of American workers, and that is one of the reasons why so many have chosen to locate plants in our country. More than 900 foreign facilities employ people here in the state of Ohio — including major companies like Honda. Ten percent of Honda's international work force lives in this state. About 16,000 Ohioans work for Honda, with good, high-paying jobs. That's a lot of your fellow citizens employed by a company that has chosen to do business in America. And that's not counting the people who work at 165 different Ohio companies that supply Honda with parts and material.

When politicians in Washington attack trade for political reasons, they don't mention these workers, or the 6.4 million other Americans who draw their paychecks from foreign companies. Economic isolationism would lead to retaliation from abroad, and put many of those jobs at risk. Those who play on fear and criticize trade are not serving the interests of our workers. Across America — from Marysville, Ohio, to Seattle, Washington — workers are better off — better off — because this country is an optimistic, successful trading nation.

My administration is committed to creating the jobs that trade brings. It's a commitment of my administration. Remember this: Presidents of both parties since World War II have made the decision to open up our markets, for the good of American workers and for the good of American consumers. If we're opening up our markets, it makes sense to get others to open up theirs. And so we're dedicated to making sure that other nations treat us fairly. That's why I pressed for free trade agreements with Singapore and Chile. We want them to open up their markets to America's goods and services. We've recently completed negotiations with Morocco and Central America.

I just completed a negotiation with Australia. I want you to understand this important aspect of the trade agreement. Almost all manufacturing exports to that country will be duty-free

immediately. That means this could help America's manufacturers sell another \$2 billion worth of goods to Australia every year. If we're going to let people sell here, we ought to be encouraging them to let — open up their markets, as well. It's good for jobs, and it's good for America.

I want the world to “buy America.” The best products are those — Listen: The best product on any shelf anywhere in the world says, “Made in the USA.”

To create more jobs, government must meet a second basic responsibility. If we want to continue to out-perform the world, if we want to be able to compete, America must remain the best place in the world to do business. If we want to be competitive with other places, we've got to be a good place for people to invest capital. We've got to make sure that people who invest capital are not penalized by lousy government policy. Tax cuts were vital to creating the environment for growth and innovation, and there are more steps that need to be done.

There needs to be fewer regulations on business owners in America. I bet you spend a lot of time filling out paperwork. I bet not much of your paperwork is ever read. The government needs to let you focus on your business, on developing goods and services. It needs to let you focus on hiring people, rather than spending hours filling out paperwork. In order for us to keep jobs here at home and expand the job base, we need better regulatory policy at the federal, state, and local level.

In order to make sure that we're able to create jobs here at home, and to prevent jobs from going overseas, this country must have tort reform. Frivolous lawsuits, or the threat of a frivolous lawsuit, create an environment that is not conducive to job creation and job expansion. There's a role at the federal level for tort reform. The trial lawyers are tough up there, though. Members of the Senate need to hear from you. The House has passed good tort legislation, but the Senate has got to hear from you. Tort reform will help make it easier to keep jobs here at home.

We need to do something about the high cost of health care, as

well. I'm a strong proponent of association health plans to allow small business to pool risk so you can better afford health care plans for your employees. We've introduced a new concept called health savings accounts, which will make a big difference for small business owners and employees, as well. And the market has taken hold. We ought to — listen, frivolous lawsuits are running up the cost of health care in America. Frivolous lawsuits against docs and hospitals are making it harder for you to be able to afford health care. We need medical liability reform at the federal level now.

We're interested in making sure our jobs don't go overseas, and that there's jobs available for citizens all across our country. We need affordable and reliable supplies of energy. Here in Ohio, you know what I'm talking about. You've experienced the disruption and high cost when factories and cities lose power. It's time for our nation to modernize the electricity systems. We need to promote clean coal technology so we've got abundant supplies of energy. We need to explore for more natural gas. We need to promote conservation. There's a lot of things we need to do. One thing is for certain: In order to expand our job base, we need to become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Finally, to make sure this economy grows, to make sure the entrepreneurial spirit is strong, we must have certainty in the tax code. It's important for elected officials to understand that if you're a business leader, if you're the CEO of a corporation, and you're uncertain about your taxes from year to year, because of — because the tax policy is haphazard, it's hard for you to plan. It's hard for you to think ahead. It's hard for you to be confident in your investment strategy.

Part of the issues we face here in the future of this country is the fact that the tax relief we passed is going to expire. The marriage penalty will go back up. By the way, that doesn't make any sense to have a marriage penalty in the tax code when you're trying to encourage marriage in the country. The child credit will go back down if Congress doesn't act. The death tax will eventually come back to life. Imagine what it's going to be like

in 2011, when it's supposed to come back to life. There's going to be a lot of people maybe trying to die a little earlier to avoid the — It's unbelievable when you think about it. Think about public policy that says: Your taxes are going to be down this year, but not. We may have increased expensing allowances, or not. Uncertainty in the tax code makes it hard for the job base to continue to expand. For the sake of job creation, Congress needs to make tax relief permanent.

The third basic responsibility is to make sure American workers are prepared for successful careers in the new economy. Some sectors are producing fewer jobs, but in other areas, jobs are growing. They're multiplying. There's a lot of opportunity in a changing economy. Here in Ohio, there's a shortage of nurses and pharmacists and other skilled professionals. And so any viable economic strategy, pro-growth strategy, must be to help people find new skills, to gain new skills, to be able to fill the new jobs of the 21st century. If you're in a period of transition, you must help people make that transition.

All skills start with education. I'm a strong proponent of the legislation we passed in Washington called the No Child Left Behind Act. This is a good piece of legislation which is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We've raised the bar. See, we believe every child can learn to read and write and add and subtract. That's what we believe. And therefore, we expect every child to achieve those skills. And therefore, we're expecting, in return for federal money, the school districts to measure, because if you don't measure, how do you know. We've just got to stop this practice of shuffling kids through the school as if they don't matter. What matters is every child gets a basic education. And if you can't read, you're not going to be able to take advantage of the new jobs of the 21st century. And that's why — that's why we're focused on secondary schools, and that's why we've got plans to help high school students who've fallen behind in reading and math to gain the skills necessary to be able to work in this new economy.

We've got programs to help workers who've been displaced

by the effects of trade, by giving them assistance in job training and health care and relocation. I proposed what's called personal reemployment accounts for people who need extra help so they can pay for child care and transportation and other costs of finding work. In other words, we're trying to help people.

But we've got a plan, as well — it's an important plan that's going to make a big difference, and that is to help the community colleges train workers for jobs which actually exist. Community colleges need to listen to the business community and the community in which they live. They need to ask the question, what do we need to do to train workers? What are you looking for? What kind of skill set is necessary for you to hire this person? They need to be flexible. The curriculums must be willing to change. The community college system has got a fantastic opportunity to make sure workers gain the skills necessary to become employable in this changing economy.

I was in Toledo recently and talked with a guy named Mike Potter. He lost a manufacturing job. He went back to the community college to get retrained. He got help. The government paid. And he got retrained and he found a new job because he was willing to go back to school, and the community college listened to the employers in the community in which he lived.

I was in Northern Virginia, and went to a community college system. I met Connie Mitchell. She heard there was jobs available in the health industry. And by the way, there's a lot of jobs being created in the health industry. And so she went to the community college, and they gave her the skills necessary to become a nurse. And now she's employed.

In Mesa, Arizona, I met a Stacey Leedom, who's a single mom — which, by the way, is the hardest job in America, being a single mom. She was a graphic artist. She had worked for a company, I think, for 12 or 13 years. She got help to go back to Mesa Community College. She learned a new skill in the computer industry. And in her first year of a new job, she made more than she did after 12 years as a graphic artist.

You see, if you become a more productive citizen, you'll make more money. Better productivity, better skills means higher pay. And our country must focus our education system on helping workers learn the new skills of the 21st century so we can increase the job base of this country.

You know, it wasn't all that long ago that some people said that America was not up to global competition. I don't know if you remember back in the '70s and '80s — that's what we heard, though, wasn't it — that we couldn't compete with the Japanese, that they were too good at being automobile makers, that foreign companies would soon overtake our own, that we just weren't up to it. That's what a lot of people said in that period. We were told that American companies weren't flexible enough; American workers were not disciplined enough; and American products weren't good enough.

Well, the pessimists were wrong. American companies remade themselves to beat the competition. Great ideas for improvement came from our work force, workers who are on the line. And the leaders of those companies listened. The entrepreneurial spirit was strong in America, and it was the American entrepreneur that invented new technologies, technologies that have made this country the most productive in the world. Our economy performed like never before, and today, no one doubts what nation's economy leads this world.

Our nation in 2004 is vibrant. As opposed to retreating like the pessimists thought, we're selling computer chips to Japan. We're producing BMWs in Greer, South Carolina, for export to Germany. We're even exporting California wine to France.

There are people who doubt our ability to compete. There are economic isolationists who surrender and wall us off. It's bad for the country, bad for consumers. It's bad for workers. We'll prove the pessimists wrong again. We'll continue to open up untapped markets for American workers and businesses. We'll keep this government on the side of growth and job creation, so American businesses can compete and prosper. We'll focus on job training

and education, so Americans can improve their skills and improve their lives. We'll get the policies right, and the American people will do the rest. You will show, once again, that this nation has the energy and the confidence and the creativity to meet every challenge.

I want to thank you for your leadership. I want to thank you for your spirit. I want to thank you for working hard to realize the American Dream and own your own business. I want to thank you for employing people. I want to thank you for the faith of your country.

May God bless you, and may God continue to bless America.

REMARKS ON EDUCATION

BUTTERFIELD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS

MAY 11, 2004

Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. I appreciate it. Go ahead and be seated. Thanks for coming. Todd, thanks for having us. That story he told reminds me of the time when I had just got elected governor of Texas, and a friend of mine said, why don't you call old Bascom Bentley on the phone? He's an East Texas guy. And he said, why don't you call Bascom Bentley on the phone and just wish him the best. So I picked up the phone and dialed old Judge Bentley. He's one of these East Texas judges — you probably know the kind I'm talking about here in Arkansas. I said, "Judge, this is George W. Bush calling." He said, "Come on, Cliff, quit pulling my leg."

So, Todd, I understand how those phone calls can go. But we are serious about coming here because Butterfield Junior High is a place of academic achievement. That's why I'm here. It's a place — I'm here to congratulate this school and to hold you up as an example to the country. You're raising the bar. You see, this is a school that expects the best for every student. You're reaching for high standards, and more importantly, you're making progress toward meeting those standards. You're doing your job.

I know the school year ends on May 27th. And I bet some of the students are kind of looking forward to that date. As a matter of fact, I remember the feeling, myself. But summer vacation has got to feel better for you after a year of accomplishment. And this past year, students at Butterfield have accomplished a lot.

Not only am I here to hold up the school and talk about setting high standards and making sure people achieve those standards, I'm here also to thank the teachers and the staff members and the parents, who believe in the potential of every young person, and are willing to work hard to make sure every young person achieves

that potential.

Not only do we want to thank Todd for being a principal; it turns out that really good schools have got really good principals, people that are smart and capable and who believe the best. But really good principals also have got hardworking staffs, and I know how hard it is to welcome the President. Take a look at those light fixtures — I don't — I'm not sure if that's a permanent part of the gymnasium. But for all those who put on this event and put up with my entourage, I thank you for letting me come by.

I appreciate your Governor showing up. He's a good friend of mine. He's an excellent person — Mike Huckabee is with us today. In case you don't recognize him, I'm proud of Mike. He said, look, I'm going to set an example by taking care of my own body before I ask others to do the same. He's exercising and he's eating smart, and his health is a lot better for it.

I appreciate Lt. Governor Win Rockefeller joining us, as well. Thank you, Governor. I'm proud to be able to work with a really fine member of Congress from this district, in John Boozman. Where are you, John? Yes, there he is. I know Cathy and Kristen and Lauren are here, as well — his wife Cathy, and two daughters. I'm glad you all are here. The only problem I've got with Boozman is he keeps talking about the Arkansas-Texas game. I know it, I shouldn't have brought it up.

I appreciate Dr. Merle Dickerson, who is the Superintendent of the Van Buren School District. Merle, thank you for your hospitality; thank you for your leadership. I appreciate so very much — I know the importance of a good school superintendent. See, when it came time to name the Secretary of Education, I picked a superintendent in Rod Paige. He was the superintendent of the Houston Independent School District. I saw him in action in implementing policies that raise standards and encourage the best for every student. So I know the importance of a good superintendent. And I appreciate you, Merle.

Ray Simon is with us today. Where are you, Ray? Oh, there you go. Blending in nicely. Ray is the Assistant Secretary for

Elementary and Secondary Education. He's the former director of the Arkansas Department of Education. He works for Rod Paige. In other words, what I'm telling you is we pick good people to staff the federal offices, people who understand the principles of the No Child Left Behind Act, which I'm about to describe to you.

I appreciate Ken James, the Director of the Arkansas Department of Education. Thank you for coming, Ken. Mayor John Riggs is with us. Where are you, Mr. Mayor? Mr. Mayor, I'm glad you're here. People give me advice all the time, so sometimes I like to give people advice. And, Mr. Mayor, my only advice to you is, fill the potholes.

I want to thank the Junior High Trailblazers for hosting me today. I appreciate the students letting us come on your campus. I hope you don't mind having the classes cancelled for a while today.

I also met Alyse Eady today. Where are you, Alyse? There she is. Alyse, thanks for coming. Let me tell you about Alyse. She's a sophomore at Southside High, and she is a tutor at the Boys and Girls Club. The reason I bring up Alyse, is because I want to remind everybody here what the strength of this country is.

Now, a lot of people talk about the military being the strength of this country, and I see we've got some fine troops here. Thanks for coming. And the military is an important part of our strength. As a matter of fact, we're counting on the military in theaters overseas to make us more secure. We're counting on brave men and women to help spread freedom in parts of the world that desperately need freedom. We're counting on our military to make America more secure by spreading peace.

And that's what you're seeing right now. On your TV screens, you're seeing tough work, because there are people who can't stand the thought of free societies springing up in the middle — in the midst of hatred and violence in the Middle East. But our troops are making sacrifices for our short-term and long-term security — a peaceful Iraq, a free Iraq, which is going to happen, will make America more secure.

Part of our strength is the military. I intend to keep the military

strong. Our men and women are going to have what it needs to keep the peace. Part of a strong America is a prosperous America. That's part of our strength. It's not the strength. It's part of the reason we're strong and we'll keep our prosperity strong.

But the real strength of America is in the hearts and souls of our citizens, and that's important for our — our country to understand. The true strength of this country happens when people hear the universal call to love a neighbor just like they'd like to be loved themselves. And here is a 10th grader in high school, who's heard that call, has taken time out of her life to mentor and tutor children who may not have as much love in their life as she has had because of her mom and dad, Lewis and Lady.

My call to the citizens of this country, whether they be in Fort Smith, Arkansas or Van Buren, Arkansas, or anywhere else in the country, is to take time out of your life and follow your heart and help somebody who hurts: feed the hungry, provide shelter for the homeless, surround somebody with love who wonders whether or not their future is bright. No, the strength of this country, as witnessed by this young soldier in the army of compassion, is the heart and soul of the American people.

And another part of the strength of America is the fact we've got a lot of teachers who care deeply about the students. It's probably going to take the students a little while to appreciate the teachers. But I think when you look back, you're going to find out these people are some of the most important people you'll ever have in your life. And I'm not saying that just because I married a teacher. By the way, Laura is doing fabulous.

The teachers here need to know that our nation appreciates every man and woman who devotes a lifetime to building knowledge and character of the young people of this country. Teaching is one of the great callings, one of the most noble professions, and America deeply appreciates the service of America's teachers. For those of you who are a teacher at this school, thank you for what you do.

I'm here today to talk about making sure our schools work. A

little over two years ago, I signed into law an historic, bipartisan act of Congress called the No Child Left Behind Act. And the theory of this law was straightforward. And here's what it said — it said: The federal government is spending more money on education, but for the first time, we're asking for results. That's a change. In the past, we used to send checks from Washington. And by the way, Washington should not be primary funder of schools in America. That's up to the states and the local people.

But we had targeted money, particularly for the poorer students. And we helped to send the checks, and we just hoped something good happened. That was the old way — here's your money, and maybe something positive will happen. Now we're sending the checks, and we're asking the question, are the children learning to read and write and add and subtract? That's not that tough a question, is it? It seems like it makes sense for taxpayers' money — in return for taxpayers' money, to determine whether or not we're meeting some basic goals. If you don't ask the question, you never find out the answer. If you don't say, we're sending you more money, now please show us whether or not a child can read. If you don't ask, you'll never know until it's too late, until it's too late.

As well, we better figure out who needs help early before it's too late. I mean, one of the reasons you ask the question, can you read or write and add and subtract, is you want to diagnose early. You can't solve a problem unless you diagnose it. The importance of the No Child Left Behind Act is to find out who needs help.

And so, we've left behind an old attitude. See, I think some schools — there was this attitude that certain students can't learn. And so this — might as well shuffle them on from grade to grade. It's easy to shuffle the so-called — what they call, hard-to-educate students through the system. It's easy to quit on families who might live in inner-cities, or rural areas. It's easy to quit on kids whose parents don't speak English as a first language. It's easy, but it is not fair. And that's not how we do things in the United States of America.

I believe every child can learn. That's what I believe. And so do the people here at this school. So we've raised the standards for every public school. We're challenging what I call the soft bigotry of low expectations. We're — we require testing in the basics, and holding schools accountable for results. An accountability system is how you determine whether or not what you're doing in the classrooms is working.

Under the new law, when children are falling behind, the schools that need the most attention get extra help, extra money, so the children can catch up. Let me repeat what I just said. Under the new law, when we discover that children are falling behind, that are not meeting standards, those schools get extra help, extra money to make sure that people are brought up to the standards. Schools will have time to improve. They will be able to use the accountability system to determine if they have the right curricula. Sometimes schools use the wrong curriculum. Sometimes they think this kind of reading program works, when, in fact, it doesn't. And they must have times to adjust. But at some point, there has to be an end to mediocrity.

The attitude in this bill says, no child should be trapped in a school that does not teach and will not change. In other words, there is time to change. There is time to change, but if you refuse to change, and somebody is still trapped in the school that is not meeting standards, then something has to happen. Parents need options to help their child. Federal dollars will follow the child.

For example, if a school — a child is trapped in a school for several years that is — that's not meeting standards, the federal government will pay for after-school tutoring, and the parent can choose all kind of tutoring options, whether they be public or private. One parent — a parent can send the school — a child to a different public school. In other words, when — there has to be accountability in order for a — I mean, there has to be a consequence in order for an accountability system to work. When schools do not improve year after year, without consequences, we will not see change. That's just a fact of life.

And so the new law says, you've got time to meet the standards, which we have raised. You've got time to improve. But because there's now consequences, parents will have more say in their child's education. And that's important, because we want parents to be at the center of the education system in America. We want our parents more involved. There's no better way to get parents involved than by publishing test results for each school. Think about this — first of all, under the old system, a lot of parents believed their local schools were doing just fine because that's what they were told. Oh, don't worry, Johnnie is doing just fine, our school is, too. But they never measured.

And sometimes, that wasn't the case. Now parents don't have to take anybody's word for it. They can see the results themselves. An accountability system says, we'll measure, but we're going to post the results for everybody to see. If they see excellence, just like at this school, it will give solid ground to thank the teachers and the principals for doing the job we expect. But if they see failure, like any good parent, they're going to want to know why. Why can't my school be like Butterfield? What is it about our school that doesn't match the performance of Butterfield Junior High? In other words, an accountability system, when properly used, will help people achieve a greater standards and will encourage more parental involvement.

Now, let me make sure you understand one thing: I strongly believe in local control of schools. I believe firmly — There is a difference between asking the question about whether or not a child is learning, and insisting that teachers and principals are free to — are free to teach the way they see fit. Superintendents and school boards are free to make change where they see change is necessary.

The No Child Left Behind Act raises expectations, but leaves control where it belongs, at the local level. See, you can't provide people excuses. There's no better excuse than saying, I would have done it this way, but the federal government told me to do it this way. I fully understand that. In order to make sure that there is an

accountability system that works, you not only measure, but you then say to people, it's up to you to chart the path to excellence. You don't want federal bureaucrats who you've never seen in Crawford County, Arkansas making the decision for the classrooms in county — Crawford County, Arkansas. You need local control of schools so people who are making those decisions are accountable to the parents and the local citizens.

For more than two years we've been putting the new reforms into action. All 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have now drawn up plans to measure performance in every school. Notice — they drew up the plans. See, the state of Arkansas drew up its accountability plans. People in Puerto Rico decided the accountability system to use. This isn't a federal test; the local people, the state people made the decision as to how to measure. And every state is reporting the information to the parents.

And we're seeing progress. Let me tell you the facts. The test scores for 4th grade math around the nation went up 9 points between the years 2000 and 2003. See, I'm able to tell you that because we measure. If we hadn't measured, I couldn't tell you that. Eighth graders improved by 5 points in the same period. In other words, math scores are beginning to go up. Still too low, but they're heading toward higher standards. Reading scores for 4th graders increased in the vast majority of states that tested between 1998 and 2003, including the state of Arkansas. See, your reading scores are going up here.

I'll never forget the day a woman looked at me — she's an African American friend of mine — and she said, you've got to understand something, Governor Bush — at the time — reading is the new civil right. See, if you can't read, you can't realize the great promise of America. That's why we want every child reading. The good news is the reading scores are going up.

Since 2000, average math scores in Arkansas went up 13 points in 4th grade, and 9 points in 8th grade. By the way, that's higher than the national average.

Things are happening in the country. When you raise the bar and you hold people to account, it's amazing the results you can get. And that's incredibly positive. Here at Butterfield Junior High, you have every reason to be proud. In 2003, this school met the adequate yearly progress standard expected under No Child Left Behind. In other words, the state put out a set of criterion and measurement standards, and you met it, right here at this school.

Let me tell you what Traci Sellers said. Is Traci here, by the way? Probably not. Traci — I'm about to quote you. She's an English teacher. She said, "The No Child Left Behind makes us aware of what we're doing and how we can improve. It encourages us as teachers to go that extra step, so that every child can succeed." I appreciate your attitude. I appreciate your hope.

Think about what she said — "it makes us aware of what we're doing." In other words, are we doing the right thing; are we meeting expectations? Am I doing my job, she says, and the accountability system helps me understand whether I am or not. She said, how can I improve. What a fantastic attitude. Here's a teacher who loves her children, says, I want to make sure I'm doing the job, and if not, I want to figure out how to do the job better.

That's why you have an accountability system. It says, it encourages us. In other words, instead of being discouraged by the system, it encourages. That's not the way everybody feels in America. There are people that don't like to change, and there are some complaints that I'd like to address today. Let me first by telling you, I think it's easier to make excuses sometimes than needed improvements. That's just human nature, isn't it? But the problem is we don't need people making excuses for educational failures in America. We need change.

When it comes to testing, I've heard every excuse in the book. I bet the Governor has, too. See, we put strong accountability measures in when I was the governor of Texas, and I went around the state explaining it. And then the No Child Left Behind brought an avalanche of complaints, as well. Some object to regular testing because they believe schools will just teach the test — that's what

you hear. I'm sure you've heard it. Well, think about that for a minute. If a test measures basic knowledge, the basics in math or reading, then teaching the test means you're teaching a child the basic knowledge of reading and math.

In other words, for a child to pass a reading test, you had better understand how to read. And therefore, in order to help the child pass the test, they've got to know how to read in the first place. And the reading accountability systems help people determine whether or not the child has got the basic tools necessary to be a good reader. That's what we're talking about here.

The whole point is this: It is not enough to hope that students are learning. I mean, that's just, to me, an excuse why not to measure. We need to know the ones who are learning and the ones who are not learning. Some believe that the standards of No Child Left Behind are too high. They say that if you raise expectations, all you're doing is setting up children to fail. Yet this law requires students to perform at grade level, which doesn't seem like it's too high a bar to cross.

I mean, we're asking children to read at 3rd grade level if you're in the 3rd grade. Why is that raising expectations too high? I mean, my goodness, that's what society should expect. If you want the kids to learn to read at grade level, then you better insist they learn to read at grade level. That's the standard that is important. And it's the standard that we must hold true to if we want to make sure every child has a chance to succeed in our great country.

Teachers and parents here today know this when it comes to standards: If you expect nothing from a child, if you expect low — if you have low standards for every child, don't be surprised at what you get. That's a fact of life. When you have high expectations, children have a way of rising to meet those expectations. High standards do not set children on a path to failure; high standards set our children on the path to success.

Other critics say it is unfair to measure the performance of minority groups, and unfair to require schools to improve the

scores amongst all groups. That's a complaint you hear. These critics say we shouldn't fault a whole school just because some African American or Spanish students are not progressing. They're missing the — the people who say that missed the entire purpose of the law, and that is, to make sure that no child of any background is left behind. See, that's the purpose of this law.

The reason we measure success and problems group by group — that's what's called disaggregating data. In other words, we want to know — we don't want to look at the school as a whole; we want to look at the people in the school. And that's the difference. We want to look at the data based upon individuals. We want to know student performance. See, you've got to make sure the schools are serving every student. So in other words, when you look at the school as a whole, you don't know whether or not certain children are being left behind. You don't know whether certain children need extra help.

And there's an achievement gap here in America today that we've got to close. There's an achievement gap between the test scores of white and minority students. Nationally, on reading tests, black and Hispanic 4th graders score at least 26 percentage points lower than white students in the same grade. We've got to do something about that. If we want this country to be a hopeful country for every citizen, if we want to make sure every person can realize the American Dream, we've got to close this gap. And what the accountability system — they'll help us close that gap by determining who needs help. We want America to be promising for every single child of every background so that not one single child in America is left behind.

Another claim is that under the new law, we're punishing schools that are not making progress. See, sometimes when you change, people are quick to criticize. And one of the complaints is that schools get punished that aren't making progress. But people who make that claim ought to read the law. The truth is, the lowest-performing schools are getting extra money to improve. That's what — that's the truth.

In 2003, we spent \$234 million to assist underperforming schools to make sure people aren't left behind. In other words, we said, here's a problem, and here's some extra money to help you fix it. In 2004, we'll at least double that amount. In other words, the federal government is saying, measure, and, oh, by the way, when we find mediocrity, we'll help. But the local people have got to change. You've got to change what you're doing in order to make sure that children can learn. We expect schools to do their job and we're helping them do their job.

We also understand it can take some time to get there. Some say the No Child Left Behind Act doesn't provide enough money to meet our goals. First, let me tell you again what I said: It's the primary responsibility of the state and local governments to fund schools, not the federal government. But the additional testing required by the law — in other words, the federal government did say, okay, you've got to test in return for money. We're helping to pay for the tests. People say, well, it's an unfunded mandate to put accountability systems in place. No, the accountability systems are largely funded by the federal government.

Second, if my 2005 budget is enacted, federal spending on elementary and high school education will have increased by 49 percent since 2001. In Arkansas, that's an extra \$112 million federal dollars for your public schools compared to 2001.

Nationwide, since 2001, we've already increased funding for low-income schools, under Title I — that's the money for the poorest of students — by 41 percent. That will rise to 52 percent if Congress approves my budget, which would mean an additional \$37 million to help people in this state.

In other words, we're doing our duty. We understand that people need extra help when it comes time to addressing problems early, before they're too late. And the federal government is responding. And I also want to remind you that we've done another thing — and Laura is very much involved with this. We've kicked off a major initiative to make sure our children can read at grade level by the 3rd grade. We have quadrupled federal funding since

2001 for America's reading programs — by the way, making sure that when we fund programs, that they used — that they use scientifically-based programs, reading — not programs that sound like they might work, but programs which actually do work in teaching the children of America how to read.

This No Child Left Behind Act is a good law. It's a good, solid law. But I understand some adjustments need to be made, even in the best laws. So we've listened to schools and teachers, and we're responding in practical ways. We're making sure that the progress of special ed students is judged by standards appropriate to their development. In other words, as you measure a special ed student, there must be some flexibility in the measurement standards. And we know that.

We're giving schools more time to bring students who don't speak English as a first language into the accountability system. If a fellow shows up at school and can't speak Spanish — I mean English — and only speaks Spanish, they need some time to learn the language before they become a part of the accountability system. They don't need a lifetime of learning, but there needs to be some flexibility in the accountability systems.

We're giving schools in rural areas more latitude in meeting teacher qualification standards. In other words, we're flexible in the application of the law. Yet I will never compromise on this goal: Every child can learn the basics, and every school must teach the basics.

A lot of the No Child Left Behind Act is — focuses on early grades, and that's good. In other words, my attitude is, and I think the attitude of the experts is, when we get it right early in the grades and stay focused, we're going to have a bunch of kids getting into high school who are literate, smart and capable.

But right now we've got some people that need help when it comes to reading. I mean, there have been some kids that have been shuffled through that are now in high school, and they're struggling to learn how to read. And we'd better get it right now, before they get out. And so I'm asking Congress to pass

\$100 million Striving Reading Initiative, intensive intervention in children's lives who cannot read, before they get out of high school. It's an essential part — I mean, that's the minimum we can do. That's the basic part of making sure that a child has hope.

We'll use resources to help the school districts to train teachers so they can get the right kind of help and use a curriculum that works. I mean, there are good curriculum that can work. The school districts need the help of implementing those curriculum, and that's what this money will be for.

I also proposed a \$120 million increase for the Mathematics and Science Partnership Program. In other words, we want to make sure kids can read; we also want to make sure they can do math and science. But we've got some new jobs that are being created that require new skill sets, and it's not good enough to shuffle kids out of the schools that don't know anything about math and science. And so the creation of these partnerships will help school districts set up effective math and science programs.

I believe that in every school we ought to continue to raise the bar, and one way to do so is to make sure that the Advanced Placement Programs are vibrant and active across our country. Right here at Butterfield, you offer pre-8 AP courses, which is good — preparing these children to take advanced placement. Advance placement means you're raising the bar as high as you can possibly go.

I proposed increasing money from the federal government, double the current amount we spend, for teacher training, to help good-hearted teachers become AP teachers. And I full recognize, as well, there are some low-income students. When they go home and say, look, I'm getting ready to take the AP exam, and the mother or father say, how much does it cost, and they lay out the cost of the AP exam. The mother or dad says, no, I think we'll use the money for something else, see. So the child prepares to take the AP, and then mom or dad look at the fund — look at the cost, they say, no, we'd like for you to take the AP exam, but we need this money for rent or food. The federal government ought to help

low-income students pay for the fee so they can take the AP exam. We want to be raising the bar for every student and the entry fee should not be an excuse.

One of the things we need to do is encourage math and science professionals from the private sector to teach part-time in our high schools. And so we've got what's called the Adjunct Teacher Corps, which is a neat program, when you think about it. We've got somebody here in Fort Smith, Arkansas who's an engineer. They may have — he or she may have worked for awhile, and they may be retired, and the school district —

I don't know — I don't know if the high school principal is looking for a science teacher or not, he may be. But it makes sense to have — to encourage citizens to get back in the classroom as a second career, to lend their talents.

You've got what you call a State Scholars Program here in Arkansas. Governor, thanks for implementing it. It's an initiative that we announced here two years ago, which brings businesses and college officials in the middle and — middle schools and high schools to encourage students to take a more demanding course work load.

In other words, when you get — people can get inspired to take tougher courses, we ought to try to do so. The program is raising the completion rates in algebra II and chemistry and physics among Arkansas high school students. In other words, you've got more students now taking algebra II and chemistry and physics, and that's going to benefit your state.

See, when you've got people with those skills getting out of high school, and somebody is looking to put a business here, they can say, look at this — look at the base of knowledge amongst people that we can employ in this state. People are likely to bring work here if the potential work force has got the basics in math and science.

And that's what you're doing. I want to expand the State Scholars Program nationwide, just like we've done here in Arkansas. It's effective. It works. And there ought to be incentives

to encourage students. And one way to do so, is to give those students who finish a State Scholars Program a boost in their Pell Grant scholarship.

In other words, we're saying to kids in high school, reach higher; here's some people to help you reach higher, some local college folks or business people. And by the way, when you take a tougher course load and pass, you get additional scholarship money from the Pell Grant. We've expanded Pell Grants. I want to enrich them to encourage students to reach for the stars.

So I've sent a proposal to Congress where they would receive an additional \$1,000 during each of their first two years of college. This will help 4,000 Arkansas seniors a year. This will provide incentive for people to say, I want to do a better job in high school. What I'm here to tell you is, I understand that public education is essential to the future of this country. It's essential we get it right.

I'm here at Butterfield because I understand a good school is the gateway to hope. And we want that gate open all across America. After decades of missed opportunities, after missing chances to make sure every child has got — got the basics to succeed, we finally reformed the public schools of America. It took a lot of work. It took a lot of work to convince people that change is needed.

But Congress — listen, we passed a bill. Let me tell you something, when you get a “yes” vote from both senators of Arkansas and both senators from Texas and both senators from Massachusetts, you've got yourself a bipartisan piece of legislation. And we're not backing down. I don't care how much pressure they try to put on the process. I'm not changing my mind about high standards and the need for accountability, because I know the promise that holds out for the —

We're not going back to those days where we just kind of hope something happens. We're not going back to the days where kids just got moved through and they weren't sure whether or not they could read, and at the end of the system, they said, oops, they can't read. Those days were too pessimistic for me, and they don't represent the great values of the United States of America. See,

we believe in the dignity of every human being. We believe in the worth of every child. We're optimistic people. We believe in raising the standards. We believe in giving schools the resources and flexibility they need. We have begun a new era in public education for the good of the United States of America.

I better quit before some of us fall out. I know it. When you get the President, and he blows a lot of hot air — But I do want to thank you for your hospitality. I want to thank the people of this good school for believing in — believing in the best, for having such a clear vision about what's possible, about believing in the worth of every child. I want to thank the teachers. I appreciate your love and compassion. I want to thank you for never settling for mediocrity, for always aiming high.

I want to thank the citizens who are here, the moms and dads. By the way, a child's first teacher is a mother or a father. That's the first teacher a child has. I like to remind people that we need to promote a culture of personal responsibility in America that starts with — moms and dads understand, they're responsible for loving their child with all their heart.

And by the way, a part of that personal responsibility society is one that says, if you've got a problem with the school in the community in which you live, you do something about it. See? You don't rely on some far away government to take care of it. Do something about it.

Part of the responsibility era says if you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And finally, a responsibility society is one in which each of us loves our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself. It's such an honor to be here at Butterfield, in Van Buren, Arkansas. I'm proud to be here. Thanks for coming out to say hello. May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

COMMEMORATING RONALD WILSON REAGAN,
FORTIETH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 11, 2004

Mrs. Reagan, Patti, Michael, and Ron; members of the Reagan family; distinguished guests, including our Presidents and First Ladies; Reverend Danforth; fellow citizens:

We lost Ronald Reagan only days ago, but we have missed him for a long time. We have missed his kindly presence, that reassuring voice, and the happy ending we had wished for him. It has been ten years since he said his own farewell; yet it is still very sad and hard to let him go. Ronald Reagan belongs to the ages now, but we preferred it when he belonged to us.

In a life of good fortune, he valued above all the gracious gift of his wife, Nancy. During his career, Ronald Reagan passed through a thousand crowded places; but there was only one person, he said, who could make him lonely by just leaving the room.

America honors you, Nancy, for the loyalty and love you gave this man on a wonderful journey, and to that journey's end. Today, our whole nation grieves with you and your family.

When the sun sets tonight off the coast of California, and we lay to rest our 40th President, a great American story will close. The second son of Nell and Jack Reagan first knew the world as a place of open plains, quiet streets, gas-lit rooms, and carriages drawn by horse. If you could go back to the Dixon, Illinois of 1922, you'd find a boy of 11 reading adventure stories at the public library, or running with his brother, Neil, along Rock River, and coming home to a little house on Hennepin Avenue. That town was the kind of place you remember where you prayed side by side with your neighbors, and if things were going wrong for them, you prayed for them, and knew they'd pray for you if things went wrong for you.

The Reagan family would see its share of hardship, struggle and uncertainty. And out of that circumstance came a young man of steadiness, calm, and a cheerful confidence that life would bring good things. The qualities all of us have seen in Ronald Reagan were first spotted 70 and 80 years ago. As a lifeguard in Lowell Park, he was the protector keeping an eye out for trouble. As a sports announcer on the radio, he was the friendly voice that made you see the game as he did. As an actor, he was the handsome, all-American, good guy, which, in his case, required knowing his lines — and being himself.

Along the way, certain convictions were formed and fixed in the man. Ronald Reagan believed that everything happened for a reason, and that we should strive to know and do the will of God. He believed that the gentleman always does the kindest thing. He believed that people were basically good, and had the right to be free. He believed that bigotry and prejudice were the worst things a person could be guilty of. He believed in the Golden Rule and in the power of prayer. He believed that America was not just a place in the world, but the hope of the world.

And he believed in taking a break now and then, because, as he said, there's nothing better for the inside of a man than the outside of a horse.

Ronald Reagan spent decades in the film industry and in politics, fields known, on occasion, to change a man. But not this man. From Dixon to Des Moines, to Hollywood to Sacramento, to Washington, D.C., all who met him remembered the same sincere, honest, upright fellow. Ronald Reagan's deepest beliefs never had much to do with fashion or convenience. His convictions were always politely stated, affably argued, and as firm and straight as the columns of this cathedral.

There came a point in Ronald Reagan's film career when people started seeing a future beyond the movies. The actor, Robert Cummings, recalled one occasion. "I was sitting around the set with all these people and we were listening to Ronnie, quite absorbed. I said, 'Ron, have you ever considered someday becoming

President?’ He said, ‘President of what?’ ‘President of the United States,’ I said. And he said, ‘What’s the matter, don’t you like my acting either?’”

The clarity and intensity of Ronald Reagan’s convictions led to speaking engagements around the country, and a new following he did not seek or expect. He often began his speeches by saying, “I’m going to talk about controversial things.” And then he spoke of communist rulers as slavemasters, of a government in Washington that had far overstepped its proper limits, of a time for choosing that was drawing near. In the space of a few years, he took ideas and principles that were mainly found in journals and books, and turned them into a broad, hopeful movement ready to govern.

As soon as Ronald Reagan became California’s governor, observers saw a star in the West — tanned, well-tailored, in command, and on his way. In the 1960s, his friend, Bill Buckley, wrote, “Reagan is indisputably a part of America, and he may become a part of American history.”

Ronald Reagan’s moment arrived in 1980. He came out ahead of some very good men, including one from Plains, and one from Houston. What followed was one of the decisive decades of the century, as the convictions that shaped the President began to shape the times.

He came to office with great hopes for America, and more than hopes — like the President he had revered and once saw in person, Franklin Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan matched an optimistic temperament with bold, persistent action. President Reagan was optimistic about the great promise of economic reform, and he acted to restore the reward and spirit of enterprise. He was optimistic that a strong America could advance the peace, and he acted to build the strength that mission required. He was optimistic that liberty would thrive wherever it was planted, and he acted to defend liberty wherever it was threatened.

And Ronald Reagan believed in the power of truth in the conduct of world affairs. When he saw evil camped across the

horizon, he called that evil by its name. There were no doubters in the prisons and gulags, where dissidents spread the news, tapping to each other in code what the American President had dared to say. There were no doubters in the shipyards and churches and secret labor meetings, where brave men and women began to hear the creaking and rumbling of a collapsing empire. And there were no doubters among those who swung hammers at the hated wall as the first and hardest blow had been struck by President Ronald Reagan.

The ideology he opposed throughout his political life insisted that history was moved by impersonal ties and unalterable fates. Ronald Reagan believed instead in the courage and triumph of free men. And we believe it, all the more, because we saw that courage in him.

As he showed what a President should be, he also showed us what a man should be. Ronald Reagan carried himself, even in the most powerful office, with a decency and attention to small kindnesses that also defined a good life. He was a courtly, gentle and considerate man, never known to slight or embarrass others. Many people across the country cherish letters he wrote in his own hand — to family members on important occasions; to old friends dealing with sickness and loss; to strangers with questions about his days in Hollywood. A boy once wrote to him requesting federal assistance to help clean up his bedroom.

The President replied that, “unfortunately, funds are dangerously low.” He continued, “I’m sure your mother was fully justified in proclaiming your room a disaster. Therefore, you are in an excellent position to launch another volunteer program in our nation. Congratulations.”

Sure, our 40th President wore his title lightly, and it fit like a white Stetson. In the end, through his belief in our country and his love for our country, he became an enduring symbol of our country. We think of his steady stride, that tilt of a head and snap of a salute, the big-screen smile, and the glint in his Irish eyes when a story came to mind.

We think of a man advancing in years with the sweetness and

sincerity of a Scout saying the Pledge. We think of that grave expression that sometimes came over his face, the seriousness of a man angered by injustice — and frightened by nothing. We know, as he always said, that America's best days are ahead of us, but with Ronald Reagan's passing, some very fine days are behind us, and that is worth our tears.

Americans saw death approach Ronald Reagan twice, in a moment of violence, and then in the years of departing light. He met both with courage and grace. In these trials, he showed how a man so enchanted by life can be at peace with life's end.

And where does that strength come from? Where is that courage learned? It is the faith of a boy who read the Bible with his mom. It is the faith of a man lying in an operating room, who prayed for the one who shot him before he prayed for himself. It is the faith of a man with a fearful illness, who waited on the Lord to call him home.

Now, death has done all that death can do. And as Ronald Wilson Reagan goes his way, we are left with the joyful hope he shared. In his last years, he saw through a glass darkly. Now he sees his Savior face to face.

And we look to that fine day when we will see him again, all weariness gone, clear of mind, strong and sure, and smiling again, and the sorrow of his parting gone forever.

May God bless Ronald Reagan, and the country he loved.

UNVEILING OF PRESIDENT CLINTON AND SENATOR CLINTON'S PORTRAITS

THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 14, 2004

Good morning. Thank you, Henry. Laura and I appreciate you all coming. President Clinton and Senator Clinton, welcome home. All who live here are temporary residents; the portraits that are presented today will be held permanently in the White House collection for all the ages. And so beginning today, the likenesses of President William Jefferson Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton will take their place in a line that began with George and Martha Washington.

Laura and I are pleased to welcome members of the Clinton and Rodham family, thank you all for coming. It's great to see Chelsea. The fact that you survived your teenage years in the White House speaks to the fact that you had a great mom and dad

We are pleased that Mrs. Dorothy Rodham is here. Welcome, we're glad you're here. And those two boys you're still trying to raise. Hugh and Tony, thank you for coming, we're glad you're here. It's good to see so many who served our nation so ably in the Clinton administration. Thank you all for coming back. Thanks for your service to the country, and welcome back to the White House. We're really glad you're here and I know the President is, as well.

As you might know, my father and I have decided to call each other by numbers. He's 41, I'm 43. It's a great honor to — it's a great pleasure to honor number 42. We're glad you're here, 42. The years have done a lot to clarify the strengths of this man. As a candidate for any office, whether it be the state attorney general or the President, Bill Clinton showed incredible energy and great personal appeal. As chief executive, he showed a deep and far-ranging knowledge of public policy, a great compassion for people in need, and the forward-looking spirit the Americans like in a

President. Bill Clinton could always see a better day ahead — and Americans knew he was working hard to bring that day closer.

Over eight years, it was clear that Bill Clinton loved the job of the presidency. He filled this house with energy and joy. He's a man of enthusiasm and warmth, who could make a compelling case and effectively advance the causes that drew him to public service.

People saw those gifts very early in Bill Clinton. He is remembered in Hope, Arkansas, and other places along the way, as an eager, good-hearted boy who seemed destined for big things. I was particularly struck by the story of a nun at St. John's School in Hot Springs who decided that Billy Clinton should get a C in deportment. That was a rare grade for the future Rhodes Scholar and President. So Bill's mother gave the nun a call to see what was wrong. The sister replied, "Oh, nothing much. But let me tell you, this boy knows the answer to every question and he just leaps to his feet before anyone else can." She went on, you know, "I know he'll not tolerate this C, but it'll be good for him. And I promise you, if he wants to be, he will be President someday."

People in Bill Clinton's life have always expected him to succeed — and, more than that, they wanted him to succeed. And meeting those expectations took more than charm and intellect — it took hard work and drive and determination and optimism. And after all, you've got to be optimistic to give six months of your life running the McGovern campaign in Texas.

He won his first statewide office at age 30, sworn in as governor at 32. He was a five-time governor of Arkansas, the first man from that state to become the President. He's also the first man in his party since Franklin Roosevelt to win a second term in the White House. And I could tell you more of the story, but it's coming out in fine bookstores all over America.

At every stage in the extraordinary rise of Bill Clinton, from the little ranch house on Scully Street to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, he and Roger had a wonderful, loving mother. And I am certain that Virginia Kelley would be filled with incredible pride

this morning.

And so would Hugh Rodham, Senior. Mr. Rodham did have the joy of seeing his only daughter become America's First Lady. And I know he would not be surprised to see her as she is today, an elected United States Senator, and a woman greatly admired in our country. From the earliest days of her youth in Park Ridge, Illinois, Hillary Rodham impressed her family and friends as a person of great ability and serious purpose. At Maine Township High School South, at Wellesley College, and at Yale Law School, classmates saw her not just an achiever, but as a role model and as a leader. She inspires respect and loyalty from those who know her, and it was a good day in both their lives when they met at the library at Yale Law School Library.

Hillary's commitment to public service continued when she left this house. Listen, New York politics is a serious business — it's rough business. It takes an extraordinary person to campaign and win the United States Senate. She has proven herself more equal to the challenge. And she takes an interesting spot on American history today, for she is the only sitting senator whose portrait hangs in the White House.

The paintings of the Clintons are the work of a fine American artist, Simmie Knox. Mr. Knox has rendered portraits of a Supreme Court Justice, a Cabinet minister, a mayor and members of Congress. And today we thank him for putting his skilled hand to the portraits that are about to be unveiled.

More than 40 years have passed since a boy of 16 came here to the White House with a group from the American Legion Boys Nation. On that day in the summer of 1963, Bill Clinton of Arkansas looked into the face of John F. Kennedy, and left the Rose Garden feeling very proud that he had shaken the hand of a President. Today he can be even prouder of decades of service, and effort, and perseverance that brought him back to this place as the 42nd President of the United States.

My congratulations to you both. And now will you to join me on stage for the presentation.

ADDRESS TO THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
SEPTEMBER 2, 2004

Thank you all. Mr. Chairman — Mr. Chairman, delegates, fellow citizens: I am honored by your support, and I accept your nomination for President of the United States.

When I — when I said those words four years ago, none of us could have envisioned what these years would bring. In the heart of this great city, we saw tragedy arrive on a quiet morning. We saw the bravery of rescuers grow with danger. We learned of passengers on a doomed plane who died with a courage that frightened their killers. We have seen a shaken economy rise to its feet. And we have seen Americans in uniform storming mountain strongholds, and charging through sandstorms, and liberating millions, with acts of valor that would make the men of Normandy proud.

Since 2001, Americans have been given hills to climb, and found the strength to climb them. Now, because we have made the hard journey, we can see the valley below. Now, because we have faced challenges with resolve, we have historic goals within our reach, and greatness in our future. We will build a safer world and a more hopeful America — and nothing will hold us back.

In the work we have done, and the work we will do, I am fortunate to have a superb Vice President. I have counted on Dick Cheney's calm and steady judgment in difficult days, and I am honored to have him at my side.

I am grateful to share my walk in life with Laura Bush. Americans — Americans have come to see the goodness and kindness and strength I first saw 26 years ago, and we love our First Lady.

I'm a fortunate father of two spirited, intelligent, and lovely young women. I'm blessed with a sister and brothers who are my closest friends. And I will always be the proud and grateful son of

George and Barbara Bush.

My father served eight years at the side of another great American — Ronald Reagan. His spirit of optimism and goodwill and decency are in this hall, and are in our hearts, and will always define our party.

Two months from today, voters will make a choice based on the records we have built, the convictions we hold, and the vision that guides us forward. A presidential election is a contest for the future. Tonight I will tell you where I stand, what I believe, and where I will lead this country in the next four years.

I believe — I believe every child can learn, and every school must teach — so we passed the most important federal education reform in history. Because we acted, children are making sustained progress in reading and math, America's schools are getting better, and nothing will hold us back.

I believe we have a moral responsibility to honor America's seniors — so I brought Republicans and Democrats together to strengthen Medicare. Now seniors are getting immediate help buying medicine. Soon every senior will be able to get prescription drug coverage, and nothing will hold us back.

I believe in the energy and innovative spirit of America's workers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and ranchers — so we unleashed that energy with the largest tax relief in a generation. Because we acted, our economy is growing again, and creating jobs, and nothing will hold us back.

I believe the most solemn duty of the American President is to protect the American people. If America shows uncertainty or weakness in this decade, the world will drift toward tragedy. This will not happen on my watch.

I'm running for President with a clear and positive plan to build a safer world, and a more hopeful America. I'm running with a compassionate conservative philosophy: that government should help people improve their lives, not try to run their lives. I believe this nation wants steady, consistent, principled leadership — and that is why, with your help, we will win this election. The story of

America is the story of expanding liberty: an ever-widening circle, constantly growing to reach further and include more. Our nation's founding commitment is still our deepest commitment: In our world, and here at home, we will extend the frontiers of freedom.

The times in which we live and work are changing dramatically. The workers of our parents' generation typically had one job, one skill, one career, often with one company that provided health care and a pension. And most of those workers were men. Today, workers change jobs, even careers, many times during their lives, and in one of the most dramatic shifts our society has seen, two-thirds of all moms also work outside the home.

This changed world can be a time of great opportunity for all Americans to earn a better living, support your family, and have a rewarding career. And government must take your side. Many of our most fundamental systems — the tax code, health coverage, pension plans, worker training — were created for the world of yesterday, not tomorrow. We will transform these systems so that all citizens are equipped, prepared — and thus truly free — to make your own choices and pursue your own dreams.

My plan begins with providing the security and opportunity of a growing economy. We now compete in a global market that provides new buyers for our goods, but new competition for our workers. To create more jobs in America, America must be the best place in the world to do business. To create jobs, my plan will encourage investment and expansion by restraining federal spending, reducing regulation, and making the tax relief permanent. To create jobs, we will make our country less dependent on foreign sources of energy. To create jobs, we will expand trade and level the playing field to sell American goods and services across the globe. And we must protect small business owners and workers from the explosion of frivolous lawsuits that threaten jobs across America.

Another drag on our economy is the current tax code, which is a complicated mess — filled with special interest loopholes,

saddling our people with more than six billion hours of paperwork and headache every year. The American people deserve — and our economic future demands — a simpler, fairer, pro-growth system. In a new term, I will lead a bipartisan effort to reform and simplify the federal tax code.

Another priority in a new term will be to help workers take advantage of the expanding economy to find better and higher-paying jobs. In this time of change, many workers want to go back to school to learn different or higher-level skills. So we will double the number of people served by our principal job training program and increase funding for our community colleges. I know that with the right skills, American workers can compete with anyone, anywhere in the world.

In this time of change, opportunity in some communities is more distant than in others. To stand with workers in poor communities — and those that have lost manufacturing, textile, and other jobs — we will create American opportunity zones. In these areas, we will provide tax relief and other incentives to attract new business, and improve housing and job training to bring hope and work throughout all of America.

As I've traveled the country, I've met many workers and small business owners who have told me they are worried they cannot afford health care. More than half of the uninsured are small business employees and their families. In a new term, we must allow small firms to join together to purchase insurance at the discounts available to big companies.

We will offer a tax credit to encourage small businesses and their employees to set up health savings accounts, and provide direct help for low-income Americans to purchase them. These accounts give workers the security of insurance against major illness, the opportunity to save tax-free for routine health expenses, and the freedom of knowing you can take your account with you whenever you change jobs. We will provide low-income Americans with better access to health care: In a new term, I will ensure every poor county in America has a community or rural health center.

As I have traveled our country, I have met too many good doctors, especially OB/GYNs, who are being forced out of practice because of the high cost of lawsuits. To make health care more affordable and accessible, we must pass medical liability reform now. And in all we do to improve health care in America, we will make sure that health decisions are made by doctors and patients, not by bureaucrats in Washington, D.C.

In this time of change, government must take the side of working families. In a new term, we will change outdated labor laws to offer comp-time and flex-time. Our laws should never stand in the way of a more family-friendly workplace.

Another priority for a new term is to build an ownership society, because ownership brings security, and dignity, and independence.

Thanks to our policies, homeownership in America is at an all-time high. Tonight we set a new goal: seven million more affordable homes in the next 10 years so more American families will be able to open the door and say: Welcome to my home.

In an ownership society, more people will own their health care plans, and have the confidence of owning a piece of their retirement. We'll always keep the promise of Social Security for our older workers. With the huge Baby Boom generation approaching retirement, many of our children and grandchildren understandably worry whether Social Security will be there when they need it. We must strengthen Social Security by allowing younger workers to save some of their taxes in a personal account — a nest egg you can call your own, and government can never take away.

In all these proposals, we seek to provide not just a government program, but a path — a path to greater opportunity, more freedom, and more control over your own life.

And the path begins with our youngest Americans. To build a more hopeful America, we must help our children reach as far as their vision and character can take them. Tonight, I remind every parent and every teacher, I say to every child: No matter what your

circumstance, no matter where you live, your school will be the path to promise of America.

We are transforming our schools by raising standards and focusing on results. We are insisting on accountability, empowering parents and teachers, and making sure that local people are in charge of their schools. By testing every child, we are identifying those who need help — and we are providing a record level of funding to get them that help. In northeast Georgia, Gainesville Elementary School is mostly Hispanic and 90 percent poor — and this year 90 percent of the students passed state tests in reading and math. The principal — the principal expresses the philosophy of his school this way: “We don’t focus on what we can’t do at this school; we focus on what we can do. And we do whatever it takes to get kids across the finish line.” See, this principal is challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. And that is the spirit of our education reform, and the commitment of our country: No dejaremos a ningn nio atrs. We will leave no child behind.

We are making progress — we are making progress, and there is more to do.

In this time of change, most new jobs are filled by people with at least two years of college, yet only about one in four students gets there. In our high schools, we will fund early intervention programs to help students at risk. We will place a new focus on math and science. As we make progress, we will require a rigorous exam before graduation. By raising performance in our high schools, and expanding Pell grants for low and middle income families, we will help more Americans start their career with a college diploma.

America’s children must also have a healthy start in life. In a new term, we will lead an aggressive effort to enroll millions of poor children who are eligible but not signed up for the government’s health insurance programs. We will not allow a lack of attention, or information, to stand between these children and the health care they need.

Anyone who wants more details on my agenda can find them

online. The web address is not very imaginative, but it's easy to remember: GeorgeWBush.com.

These changing times can be exciting times of expanded opportunity. And here, you face a choice. My opponent's policies are dramatically different from ours. Senator Kerry opposed Medicare reform and health savings accounts. After supporting my education reforms, he now wants to dilute them. He opposes legal and medical liability reform. He opposed reducing the marriage penalty, opposed doubling the child credit, opposed lowering income taxes for all who pay them.

Wait a minute, wait a minute: To be fair, there are some things my opponent is for. He's proposed more than two trillion dollars in new federal spending so far, and that's a lot, even for a senator from Massachusetts. And to pay for that spending, he's running on a platform of increasing taxes — and that's the kind of promise a politician usually keeps.

His tax — his policies of tax and spend — of expanding government rather than expanding opportunity — are the policies of the past. We are on the path to the future — and we're not turning back.

In this world of change, some things do not change: the values we try to live by, the institutions that give our lives meaning and purpose. Our society rests on a foundation of responsibility and character and family commitment.

Because family and work are sources of stability and dignity, I support welfare reform that strengthens family and requires work. Because a caring society will value its weakest members, we must make a place for the unborn child. Because — because religious charities provide a safety net of mercy and compassion, our government must never discriminate against them. Because the union of a man and woman deserves an honored place in our society, I support the protection of marriage against activist judges. And I will continue to appoint federal judges who know the difference between personal opinion and the strict interpretation of the law.

My opponent recently announced that he is the conservative — the candidate of “conservative values,” which must have come as a surprise to a lot of his supporters. There’s some problems with this claim. If you say the heart and soul of America is found in Hollywood, I’m afraid you’re not the candidate of conservative values. If you voted against the bipartisan Defense of Marriage Act, which President Clinton signed, you are not the candidate of conservative values. If you gave a speech, as my opponent did, calling the Reagan presidency eight years of “moral darkness,” then you may be a lot of things, but the candidate of conservative values is not one of them.

This election will also determine how America responds to the continuing danger of terrorism — and you know where I stand. Three days after September the 11th, I stood where Americans died, in the ruins of the Twin Towers. Workers in hard hats were shouting to me, “Whatever it takes.” A fellow grabbed me by the arm and he said, “Do not let me down.” Since that day, I wake up every morning thinking about how to better protect our country. I will never relent in defending America, whatever it takes.

So we have fought the terrorists across the earth — not for pride, not for power, but because the lives of our citizens are at stake. Our strategy is clear. We have tripled funding for homeland security and trained a half a million first responders, because we are determined to protect our homeland. We are transforming our military and reforming and strengthening our intelligence services. We are staying on the offensive — striking terrorists abroad — so we do not have to face them here at home. And we are working to advance liberty in the broader Middle East, because freedom will bring a future of hope, and the peace we all want. And we will prevail.

Our strategy is succeeding.

Four years ago, Afghanistan was the home base of al-Qaeda, Pakistan was a transit point for terrorist groups, Saudi Arabia was fertile ground for terrorist fundraising, Libya was secretly pursuing nuclear weapons, Iraq was a gathering threat, and al-Qaeda was

largely unchallenged as it planned attacks. Today, the government of a free Afghanistan is fighting terror, Pakistan is capturing terrorist leaders, Saudi Arabia is making raids and arrests, Libya is dismantling its weapons programs, the army of a free Iraq is fighting for freedom, and more than three-quarters of al-Qaeda's key members and associates have been detained or killed. We have led, many have joined, and America and the world are safer.

This progress involved careful diplomacy, clear moral purpose, and some tough decisions. And the toughest came on Iraq. We knew Saddam Hussein's record of aggression and support for terror. We knew his long history of pursuing, even using, weapons of mass destruction. And we know that September the 11th requires our country to think differently: We must, and we will, confront threats to America before it is too late.

In Saddam Hussein, we saw a threat. Members of both political parties, including my opponent and his running mate, saw the threat, and voted to authorize the use of force. We went to the United Nations Security Council, which passed a unanimous resolution demanding the dictator disarm, or face serious consequences. Leaders in the Middle East urged him to comply. After more than a decade of diplomacy, we gave Saddam Hussein another chance, a final chance, to meet his responsibilities to the civilized world. He again refused, and I faced the kind of decision that comes only to the Oval Office — a decision no president would ask for, but must be prepared to make. Do I forget the lessons of September the 11th and take the word of a madman, or do I take action to defend our country? Faced with that choice, I will defend America every time.

Because we acted to defend our country, the murderous regimes of Saddam Hussein and the Taliban are history, more than 50 million people have been liberated, and democracy is coming to the broader Middle East. In Afghanistan, terrorists have done everything they can to intimidate people — yet more than 10 million citizens have registered to vote in the October presidential election — a resounding endorsement for democracy. Despite

ongoing acts of violence, Iraq now has a strong Prime Minister, a national council, and national elections are scheduled for January. Our nation is standing with the people of Afghanistan and Iraq, because when America gives its word, America must keep its word.

As importantly, we are serving a vital and historic cause that will make our country safer. Free societies in the Middle East will be hopeful societies, which no longer feed resentments and breed violence for export. Free governments in the Middle East will fight terrorists instead of harboring them, and that helps us keep the peace. So our mission in Afghanistan and Iraq is clear: We will help new leaders to train their armies, and move toward elections, and get on the path of stability and democracy as quickly as possible. And then our troops will return home with the honor they have earned.

Our troops know the historic importance of our work. One Army Specialist wrote home: “We are transforming a once sick society into a hopeful place. The various terrorist enemies we are facing in Iraq,” he continued, “are really aiming at you back in the United States. This is a test of will for our country. We soldiers of yours are doing great and scoring victories and confronting the evil terrorists.”

That young man is right — our men and women in uniform are doing a superb job for America. Tonight I want to speak to all of them, and to their families: You are involved in a struggle of historic proportion. Because of your service and sacrifice, we are defeating the terrorists where they live and plan, and you’re making America safer. Because of you, women in Afghanistan are no longer shot in a sports stadium. Because of you, the people of Iraq no longer fear being executed and left in mass graves. Because of you, the world is more just and will be more peaceful. We owe you our thanks, and we owe you something more. We will give you all the resources, all the tools, and all the support you need for victory.

Again, my opponent and I have different approaches. I

proposed, and the Congress overwhelmingly passed, \$87 billion in funding needed by our troops doing battle in Afghanistan and Iraq. My opponent and his running mate voted against this money for bullets, and fuel, and vehicles, and body armor.

When asked to explain his vote, the Senator said, “I actually did vote for the 87 billion dollars before I voted against it.”

Then he said he was “proud” of that vote. Then, when pressed, he said it was a “complicated” matter. There’s nothing complicated about supporting our troops in combat.

Our allies also know the historic importance of our work. About 40 nations stand beside us in Afghanistan, and some 30 in Iraq. And I deeply appreciate the courage and wise counsel of leaders like Prime Minister Howard, and President Kwasniewski, and Prime Minister Berlusconi — and, of course, Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Again, my opponent takes a different approach. In the midst of war, he has called American allies, quote, a “coalition of the coerced and the bribed.” That would be nations like Great Britain, Poland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Denmark, El Salvador, Australia, and others — allies that deserve the respect of all Americans, not the scorn of a politician. I respect every soldier, from every country, who serves beside us in the hard work of history. America is grateful, and America will not forget.

The people we have freed won’t forget either. Not long ago, seven Iraqi men came to see me in the Oval Office. They had X’s branded into their foreheads, and their right hands had been cut off, by Saddam Hussein’s secret police, the sadistic punishment for imaginary crimes. During our emotional visit one of the Iraqi men used his new prosthetic hand to slowly write out, in Arabic, a prayer for God to bless America. I am proud that our country remains the hope of the oppressed, and the greatest force for good on this earth.

Others understand the historic importance of our work. The terrorists know. They know that a vibrant, successful democracy at the heart of the Middle East will discredit their radical ideology of

hate. They know that men and women with hope and purpose and dignity do not strap bombs on their bodies and kill the innocent. The terrorists are fighting freedom with all their cunning and cruelty because freedom is their greatest fear — and they should be afraid, because freedom is on the march.

I believe in the transformational power of liberty: The wisest use of American strength is to advance freedom. As the citizens of Afghanistan and Iraq seize the moment, their example will send a message of hope throughout a vital region. Palestinians will hear the message that democracy and reform are within their reach, and so is peace with our good friend, Israel. Young women across the Middle East will hear the message that their day of equality and justice is coming. Young men will hear the message that national progress and dignity are found in liberty, not tyranny and terror. Reformers, and political prisoners, and exiles will hear the message that their dream of freedom cannot be denied forever. And as freedom advances — heart by heart, and nation by nation — America will be more secure and the world more peaceful.

America has done this kind of work before — and there have always been doubters. In 1946, 18 months after the fall of Berlin to Allied forces, a journalist wrote in the *New York Times*, “Germany is — a land in an acute stage of economic, political and moral crisis. [European] capitals are frightened. In every [military] headquarters, one meets alarmed officials doing their utmost to deal with the consequences of the occupation policy that they admit has failed.” End quote. Maybe that same person is still around, writing editorials. Fortunately, we had a resolute president named Truman, who, with the American people, persevered, knowing that a new democracy at the center of Europe would lead to stability and peace. And because that generation of Americans held firm in the cause of liberty, we live in a better and safer world today.

The progress we and our friends and allies seek in the broader Middle East will not come easily, or all at once. Yet Americans, of all people, should never be surprised by the power of liberty to transform lives and nations. That power brought settlers on

perilous journeys, inspired colonies to rebellion, ended the sin of slavery, and set our nation against the tyrannies of the 20th century. We were honored to aid the rise of democracy in Germany and Japan and Nicaragua and Central Europe and the Baltics — and that noble story goes on. I believe that America is called to lead the cause of freedom in a new century. I believe that millions in the Middle East plead in silence for their liberty. I believe that given the chance, they will embrace the most honorable form of government ever devised by man. I believe all these things because freedom is not America's gift to the world, it is the almighty God's gift to every man and woman in this world.

This moment in the life of our country will be remembered. Generations will know if we kept our faith and kept our word. Generations will know if we seized this moment, and used it to build a future of safety and peace. The freedom of many, and the future security of our nation, now depend on us. And tonight, my fellow Americans, I ask you to stand with me.

In the last four years, you and I have come to know each other. Even when we don't agree, at least you know what I believe and where I stand. You may have noticed I have a few flaws, too. People sometimes have to correct my English. I knew I had a problem when Arnold Schwarzenegger started doing it. Some folks look at me and see a certain swagger, which in Texas is called "walking." Now and then I come across as a little too blunt — and for that we can all thank the white-haired lady sitting right up there.

One thing — one thing I have learned about the presidency is that whatever shortcomings you have, people are going to notice them, and whatever strengths you have, you're going to need them. These four years have brought moments I could not foresee and will not forget. I've tried to comfort Americans who lost the most on September the 11th — people who showed me a picture or told me a story, so I would know how much was taken from them. I've learned first-hand that ordering Americans into battle is the hardest decision, even when it is right. I have returned the salute of wounded soldiers, some with a very tough road ahead, who say

they were just doing their job. I've held the children of the fallen, who are told their dad or mom is a hero, but would rather just have their mom or dad.

I've met with the wives and husbands who have received a folded flag, and said a final goodbye to a soldier they loved. I am awed that so many have used those meetings to say that I'm in their prayers and to offer encouragement to me. Where does strength like that come from? How can people so burdened with sorrow also feel such pride? It is because they know their loved one was last seen doing good. Because they know that liberty was precious to the one they lost. And in those military families, I have seen the character of a great nation: decent, idealistic, and strong.

The world saw that spirit three miles from here, when the people of this city faced peril together, and lifted a flag over the ruins, and defied the enemy with their courage. My fellow Americans, for as long as our country stands, people will look to the resurrection of New York City and they will say: Here buildings fell, here a nation rose.

We see America's character in our military, which finds a way or makes one. We see it in our veterans, who are supporting military families in their days of worry. We see it in our young people, who have found heroes once again. We see that character in workers and entrepreneurs, who are renewing our economy with their effort and optimism. And all of this has confirmed one belief beyond doubt: Having come this far, our tested and confident nation can achieve anything.

To everything we know there is a season — a time for sadness, a time for struggle, a time for rebuilding. And now we have reached a time for hope. This young century will be liberty's century. By promoting liberty abroad, we will build a safer world. By encouraging liberty at home, we will build a more hopeful America. Like generations before us, we have a calling from beyond the stars to stand for freedom. This is the everlasting dream of America — and tonight, in this place, that dream is renewed. Now we go forward — grateful for our freedom, faithful

to our cause, and confident in the future of the greatest nation on earth.

God bless you, and may God continue to bless our great country.

THE SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

FROM WEST FRONT, THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 20, 2005

Vice President Cheney, Mr. Chief Justice, President Carter, President Bush, President Clinton, reverend clergy, distinguished guests, fellow citizens:

On this day, prescribed by law and marked by ceremony, we celebrate the durable wisdom of our Constitution, and recall the deep commitments that unite our country. I am grateful for the honor of this hour, mindful of the consequential times in which we live, and determined to fulfill the oath that I have sworn and you have witnessed.

At this second gathering, our duties are defined not by the words I use, but by the history we have seen together. For a half century, America defended our own freedom by standing watch on distant borders. After the shipwreck of communism came years of relative quiet, years of repose, years of sabbatical - and then there came a day of fire.

We have seen our vulnerability - and we have seen its deepest source. For as long as whole regions of the world simmer in resentment and tyranny - prone to ideologies that feed hatred and excuse murder - violence will gather, and multiply in destructive power, and cross the most defended borders, and raise a mortal threat. There is only one force of history that can break the reign of hatred and resentment, and expose the pretensions of tyrants, and reward the hopes of the decent and tolerant, and that is the force of human freedom.

We are led, by events and common sense, to one conclusion: The survival of liberty in our land increasingly depends on the success of liberty in other lands. The best hope for peace in our world is the expansion of freedom in all the world.

America's vital interests and our deepest beliefs are now one.

From the day of our Founding, we have proclaimed that every man and woman on this earth has rights, and dignity, and matchless value, because they bear the image of the Maker of Heaven and earth. Across the generations we have proclaimed the imperative of self-government, because no one is fit to be a master, and no one deserves to be a slave. Advancing these ideals is the mission that created our Nation. It is the honorable achievement of our fathers. Now it is the urgent requirement of our nation's security, and the calling of our time.

So it is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.

This is not primarily the task of arms, though we will defend ourselves and our friends by force of arms when necessary. Freedom, by its nature, must be chosen, and defended by citizens, and sustained by the rule of law and the protection of minorities. And when the soul of a nation finally speaks, the institutions that arise may reflect customs and traditions very different from our own. America will not impose our own style of government on the unwilling. Our goal instead is to help others find their own voice, attain their own freedom, and make their own way.

The great objective of ending tyranny is the concentrated work of generations. The difficulty of the task is no excuse for avoiding it. America's influence is not unlimited, but fortunately for the oppressed, America's influence is considerable, and we will use it confidently in freedom's cause.

My most solemn duty is to protect this nation and its people against further attacks and emerging threats. Some have unwisely chosen to test America's resolve, and have found it firm.

We will persistently clarify the choice before every ruler and every nation: The moral choice between oppression, which is always wrong, and freedom, which is eternally right. America will not pretend that jailed dissidents prefer their chains, or that women welcome humiliation and servitude, or that any human being aspires to live at the mercy of bullies.

We will encourage reform in other governments by making clear that success in our relations will require the decent treatment of their own people. America's belief in human dignity will guide our policies, yet rights must be more than the grudging concessions of dictators; they are secured by free dissent and the participation of the governed. In the long run, there is no justice without freedom, and there can be no human rights without human liberty.

Some, I know, have questioned the global appeal of liberty - though this time in history, four decades defined by the swiftest advance of freedom ever seen, is an odd time for doubt. Americans, of all people, should never be surprised by the power of our ideals. Eventually, the call of freedom comes to every mind and every soul. We do not accept the existence of permanent tyranny because we do not accept the possibility of permanent slavery. Liberty will come to those who love it.

Today, America speaks anew to the peoples of the world:

All who live in tyranny and hopelessness can know: the United States will not ignore your oppression, or excuse your oppressors. When you stand for your liberty, we will stand with you.

Democratic reformers facing repression, prison, or exile can know: America sees you for who you are: the future leaders of your free country.

The rulers of outlaw regimes can know that we still believe as Abraham Lincoln did: "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it."

The leaders of governments with long habits of control need to know: To serve your people you must learn to trust them. Start on this journey of progress and justice, and America will walk at your side.

And all the allies of the United States can know: we honor your friendship, we rely on your counsel, and we depend on your help. Division among free nations is a primary goal of freedom's enemies. The concerted effort of free nations to promote democracy is a prelude to our enemies' defeat.

Today, I also speak anew to my fellow citizens:

From all of you, I have asked patience in the hard task of securing America, which you have granted in good measure. Our country has accepted obligations that are difficult to fulfill, and would be dishonorable to abandon. Yet because we have acted in the great liberating tradition of this nation, tens of millions have achieved their freedom. And as hope kindles hope, millions more will find it. By our efforts, we have lit a fire as well - a fire in the minds of men. It warms those who feel its power, it burns those who fight its progress, and one day this untamed fire of freedom will reach the darkest corners of our world.

A few Americans have accepted the hardest duties in this cause - in the quiet work of intelligence and diplomacy ... the idealistic work of helping raise up free governments ... the dangerous and necessary work of fighting our enemies. Some have shown their devotion to our country in deaths that honored their whole lives - and we will always honor their names and their sacrifice.

All Americans have witnessed this idealism, and some for the first time. I ask our youngest citizens to believe the evidence of your eyes. You have seen duty and allegiance in the determined faces of our soldiers. You have seen that life is fragile, and evil is real, and courage triumphs. Make the choice to serve in a cause larger than your wants, larger than yourself - and in your days you will add not just to the wealth of our country, but to its character.

America has need of idealism and courage, because we have essential work at home - the unfinished work of American freedom. In a world moving toward liberty, we are determined to show the meaning and promise of liberty.

In America's ideal of freedom, citizens find the dignity and security of economic independence, instead of laboring on the edge of subsistence. This is the broader definition of liberty that motivated the Homestead Act, the Social Security Act, and the G.I. Bill of Rights. And now we will extend this vision by reforming great institutions to serve the needs of our time. To give every American a stake in the promise and future of our country, we will

bring the highest standards to our schools, and build an ownership society. We will widen the ownership of homes and businesses, retirement savings and health insurance - preparing our people for the challenges of life in a free society. By making every citizen an agent of his or her own destiny, we will give our fellow Americans greater freedom from want and fear, and make our society more prosperous and just and equal.

In America's ideal of freedom, the public interest depends on private character - on integrity, and tolerance toward others, and the rule of conscience in our own lives. Self-government relies, in the end, on the governing of the self. That edifice of character is built in families, supported by communities with standards, and sustained in our national life by the truths of Sinai, the Sermon on the Mount, the words of the Koran, and the varied faiths of our people. Americans move forward in every generation by reaffirming all that is good and true that came before - ideals of justice and conduct that are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

In America's ideal of freedom, the exercise of rights is ennobled by service, and mercy, and a heart for the weak. Liberty for all does not mean independence from one another. Our nation relies on men and women who look after a neighbor and surround the lost with love. Americans, at our best, value the life we see in one another, and must always remember that even the unwanted have worth. And our country must abandon all the habits of racism, because we cannot carry the message of freedom and the baggage of bigotry at the same time.

From the perspective of a single day, including this day of dedication, the issues and questions before our country are many. From the viewpoint of centuries, the questions that come to us are narrowed and few. Did our generation advance the cause of freedom? And did our character bring credit to that cause?

These questions that judge us also unite us, because Americans of every party and background, Americans by choice and by birth, are bound to one another in the cause of freedom. We have known divisions, which must be healed to move forward in great purposes

- and I will strive in good faith to heal them. Yet those divisions do not define America. We felt the unity and fellowship of our nation when freedom came under attack, and our response came like a single hand over a single heart. And we can feel that same unity and pride whenever America acts for good, and the victims of disaster are given hope, and the unjust encounter justice, and the captives are set free.

We go forward with complete confidence in the eventual triumph of freedom. Not because history runs on the wheels of inevitability; it is human choices that move events. Not because we consider ourselves a chosen nation; God moves and chooses as He wills. We have confidence because freedom is the permanent hope of mankind, the hunger in dark places, the longing of the soul. When our Founders declared a new order of the ages; when soldiers died in wave upon wave for a union based on liberty; when citizens marched in peaceful outrage under the banner "Freedom Now" - they were acting on an ancient hope that is meant to be fulfilled. History has an ebb and flow of justice, but history also has a visible direction, set by liberty and the Author of Liberty.

When the Declaration of Independence was first read in public and the Liberty Bell was sounded in celebration, a witness said, "It rang as if it meant something." In our time it means something still. America, in this young century, proclaims liberty throughout all the world, and to all the inhabitants thereof. Renewed in our strength - tested, but not weary - we are ready for the greatest achievements in the history of freedom.

May God bless you, and may He watch over the United States of America.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 109TH CONGRESS

THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 2, 2005

Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, fellow citizens:

As a new Congress gathers, all of us in the elected branches of government share a great privilege: We've been placed in office by the votes of the people we serve. And tonight that is a privilege we share with newly-elected leaders of Afghanistan, the Palestinian Territories, Ukraine, and a free and sovereign Iraq.

Two weeks ago, I stood on the steps of this Capitol and renewed the commitment of our nation to the guiding ideal of liberty for all. This evening I will set forth policies to advance that ideal at home and around the world.

Tonight, with a healthy, growing economy, with more Americans going back to work, with our nation an active force for good in the world — the state of our union is confident and strong.

Our generation has been blessed — by the expansion of opportunity, by advances in medicine, by the security purchased by our parents' sacrifice. Now, as we see a little gray in the mirror — or a lot of gray — and we watch our children moving into adulthood, we ask the question: What will be the state of their union? Members of Congress, the choices we make together will answer that question. Over the next several months, on issue after issue, let us do what Americans have always done, and build a better world for our children and our grandchildren.

First, we must be good stewards of this economy, and renew the great institutions on which millions of our fellow citizens rely. America's economy is the fastest growing of any major industrialized nation. In the past four years, we provided tax relief to every person who pays income taxes, overcome a recession, opened up new markets abroad, prosecuted corporate criminals,

raised homeownership to its highest level in history, and in the last year alone, the United States has added 2.3 million new jobs. When action was needed, the Congress delivered — and the nation is grateful.

Now we must add to these achievements. By making our economy more flexible, more innovative, and more competitive, we will keep America the economic leader of the world.

America's prosperity requires restraining the spending appetite of the federal government. I welcome the bipartisan enthusiasm for spending discipline. I will send you a budget that holds the growth of discretionary spending below inflation, makes tax relief permanent, and stays on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009. My budget substantially reduces or eliminates more than 150 government programs that are not getting results, or duplicate current efforts, or do not fulfill essential priorities. The principle here is clear: Taxpayer dollars must be spent wisely, or not at all.

To make our economy stronger and more dynamic, we must prepare a rising generation to fill the jobs of the 21st century. Under the No Child Left Behind Act, standards are higher, test scores are on the rise, and we're closing the achievement gap for minority students. Now we must demand better results from our high schools, so every high school diploma is a ticket to success. We will help an additional 200,000 workers to get training for a better career, by reforming our job training system and strengthening America's community colleges. And we'll make it easier for Americans to afford a college education, by increasing the size of Pell Grants.

To make our economy stronger and more competitive, America must reward, not punish, the efforts and dreams of entrepreneurs. Small business is the path of advancement, especially for women and minorities, so we must free small businesses from needless regulation and protect honest job-creators from junk lawsuits. Justice is distorted, and our economy is held back by irresponsible class-actions and frivolous asbestos claims — and I urge Congress to pass legal reforms this year.

To make our economy stronger and more productive, we must make health care more affordable, and give families greater access to good coverage and more control over their health decisions. I ask Congress to move forward on a comprehensive health care agenda with tax credits to help low-income workers buy insurance, a community health center in every poor county, improved information technology to prevent medical error and needless costs, association health plans for small businesses and their employees expanded health savings accounts and medical liability reform that will reduce health care costs and make sure patients have the doctors and care they need.

To keep our economy growing, we also need reliable supplies of affordable, environmentally responsible energy. Nearly four years ago, I submitted a comprehensive energy strategy that encourages conservation, alternative sources, a modernized electricity grid, and more production here at home — including safe, clean nuclear energy. My Clear Skies legislation will cut power plant pollution and improve the health of our citizens. And my budget provides strong funding for leading-edge technology — from hydrogen-fueled cars, to clean coal, to renewable sources such as ethanol. Four years of debate is enough: I urge Congress to pass legislation that makes America more secure and less dependent on foreign energy.

All these proposals are essential to expand this economy and add new jobs — but they are just the beginning of our duty. To build the prosperity of future generations, we must update institutions that were created to meet the needs of an earlier time. Year after year, Americans are burdened by an archaic, incoherent federal tax code. I've appointed a bipartisan panel to examine the tax code from top to bottom. And when their recommendations are delivered, you and I will work together to give this nation a tax code that is pro-growth, easy to understand, and fair to all.

America's immigration system is also outdated — unsuited to the needs of our economy and to the values of our country. We should not be content with laws that punish hardworking people

who want only to provide for their families, and deny businesses willing workers, and invite chaos at our border. It is time for an immigration policy that permits temporary guest workers to fill jobs Americans will not take, that rejects amnesty, that tells us who is entering and leaving our country, and that closes the border to drug dealers and terrorists.

One of America's most important institutions — a symbol of the trust between generations — is also in need of wise and effective reform. Social Security was a great moral success of the 20th century, and we must honor its great purposes in this new century. The system, however, on its current path, is headed toward bankruptcy. And so we must join together to strengthen and save Social Security.

Today, more than 45 million Americans receive Social Security benefits, and millions more are nearing retirement — and for them the system is sound and fiscally strong. I have a message for every American who is 55 or older: Do not let anyone mislead you; for you, the Social Security system will not change in any way. For younger workers, the Social Security system has serious problems that will grow worse with time. Social Security was created decades ago, for a very different era. In those days, people did not live as long. Benefits were much lower than they are today. And a half-century ago, about sixteen workers paid into the system for each person drawing benefits.

Our society has changed in ways the founders of Social Security could not have foreseen. In today's world, people are living longer and, therefore, drawing benefits longer. And those benefits are scheduled to rise dramatically over the next few decades. And instead of sixteen workers paying in for every beneficiary, right now it's only about three workers. And over the next few decades that number will fall to just two workers per beneficiary. With each passing year, fewer workers are paying ever-higher benefits to an ever-larger number of retirees.

So here is the result: Thirteen years from now, in 2018, Social Security will be paying out more than it takes in. And every year

afterward will bring a new shortfall, bigger than the year before. For example, in the year 2027, the government will somehow have to come up with an extra \$200 billion to keep the system afloat — and by 2033, the annual shortfall would be more than \$300 billion. By the year 2042, the entire system would be exhausted and bankrupt. If steps are not taken to avert that outcome, the only solutions would be dramatically higher taxes, massive new borrowing, or sudden and severe cuts in Social Security benefits or other government programs.

I recognize that 2018 and 2042 may seem a long way off. But those dates are not so distant, as any parent will tell you. If you have a five-year-old, you're already concerned about how you'll pay for college tuition 13 years down the road. If you've got children in their 20s, as some of us do, the idea of Social Security collapsing before they retire does not seem like a small matter. And it should not be a small matter to the United States Congress. You and I share a responsibility. We must pass reforms that solve the financial problems of Social Security once and for all.

Fixing Social Security permanently will require an open, candid review of the options. Some have suggested limiting benefits for wealthy retirees. Former Congressman Tim Penny has raised the possibility of indexing benefits to prices rather than wages. During the 1990s, my predecessor, President Clinton, spoke of increasing the retirement age. Former Senator John Breaux suggested discouraging early collection of Social Security benefits. The late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan recommended changing the way benefits are calculated. All these ideas are on the table.

I know that none of these reforms would be easy. But we have to move ahead with courage and honesty, because our children's retirement security is more important than partisan politics. I will work with members of Congress to find the most effective combination of reforms. I will listen to anyone who has a good idea to offer. We must, however, be guided by some basic principles. We must make Social Security permanently sound, not leave that task for another day. We must not jeopardize our economic strength

by increasing payroll taxes. We must ensure that lower-income Americans get the help they need to have dignity and peace of mind in their retirement. We must guarantee there is no change for those now retired or nearing retirement. And we must take care that any changes in the system are gradual, so younger workers have years to prepare and plan for their future.

As we fix Social Security, we also have the responsibility to make the system a better deal for younger workers. And the best way to reach that goal is through voluntary personal retirement accounts. Here is how the idea works. Right now, a set portion of the money you earn is taken out of your paycheck to pay for the Social Security benefits of today's retirees. If you're a younger worker, I believe you should be able to set aside part of that money in your own retirement account, so you can build a nest egg for your own future.

Here's why the personal accounts are a better deal. Your money will grow, over time, at a greater rate than anything the current system can deliver — and your account will provide money for retirement over and above the check you will receive from Social Security. In addition, you'll be able to pass along the money that accumulates in your personal account, if you wish, to your children and — or grandchildren. And best of all, the money in the account is yours, and the government can never take it away.

The goal here is greater security in retirement, so we will set careful guidelines for personal accounts. We'll make sure the money can only go into a conservative mix of bonds and stock funds. We'll make sure that your earnings are not eaten up by hidden Wall Street fees. We'll make sure there are good options to protect your investments from sudden market swings on the eve of your retirement. We'll make sure a personal account cannot be emptied out all at once, but rather paid out over time, as an addition to traditional Social Security benefits. And we'll make sure this plan is fiscally responsible, by starting personal retirement accounts gradually, and raising the yearly limits on contributions over time, eventually permitting all workers to set

aside four percentage points of their payroll taxes in their accounts.

Personal retirement accounts should be familiar to federal employees, because you already have something similar, called the Thrift Savings Plan, which lets workers deposit a portion of their paychecks into any of five different broadly-based investment funds. It's time to extend the same security, and choice, and ownership to young Americans.

Our second great responsibility to our children and grandchildren is to honor and to pass along the values that sustain a free society. So many of my generation, after a long journey, have come home to family and faith, and are determined to bring up responsible, moral children. Government is not the source of these values, but government should never undermine them.

Because marriage is a sacred institution and the foundation of society, it should not be re-defined by activist judges. For the good of families, children, and society, I support a constitutional amendment to protect the institution of marriage.

Because a society is measured by how it treats the weak and vulnerable, we must strive to build a culture of life. Medical research can help us reach that goal, by developing treatments and cures that save lives and help people overcome disabilities — and I thank the Congress for doubling the funding of the National Institutes of Health. To build a culture of life, we must also ensure that scientific advances always serve human dignity, not take advantage of some lives for the benefit of others. We should all be able to agree on some clear standards. I will work with Congress to ensure that human embryos are not created for experimentation or grown for body parts, and that human life is never bought and sold as a commodity. America will continue to lead the world in medical research that is ambitious, aggressive, and always ethical.

Because courts must always deliver impartial justice, judges have a duty to faithfully interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. As President, I have a constitutional responsibility to nominate men and women who understand the role of courts in our democracy, and are well-qualified to serve on the bench —

and I have done so. The Constitution also gives the Senate a responsibility: Every judicial nominee deserves an up or down vote.

Because one of the deepest values of our country is compassion, we must never turn away from any citizen who feels isolated from the opportunities of America. Our government will continue to support faith-based and community groups that bring hope to harsh places. Now we need to focus on giving young people, especially young men in our cities, better options than apathy, or gangs, or jail. Tonight I propose a three-year initiative to help organizations keep young people out of gangs, and show young men an ideal of manhood that respects women and rejects violence. Taking on gang life will be one part of a broader outreach to at-risk youth, which involves parents and pastors, coaches and community leaders, in programs ranging from literacy to sports. And I am proud that the leader of this nationwide effort will be our First Lady, Laura Bush.

Because HIV/AIDS brings suffering and fear into so many lives, I ask you to reauthorize the Ryan White Act to encourage prevention, and provide care and treatment to the victims of that disease. And as we update this important law, we must focus our efforts on fellow citizens with the highest rates of new cases, African American men and women.

Because one of the main sources of our national unity is our belief in equal justice, we need to make sure Americans of all races and backgrounds have confidence in the system that provides justice. In America we must make doubly sure no person is held to account for a crime he or she did not commit — so we are dramatically expanding the use of DNA evidence to prevent wrongful conviction. Soon I will send to Congress a proposal to fund special training for defense counsel in capital cases, because people on trial for their lives must have competent lawyers by their side.

Our third responsibility to future generations is to leave them an America that is safe from danger, and protected by peace. We

will pass along to our children all the freedoms we enjoy — and chief among them is freedom from fear.

In the three and a half years since September the 11th, 2001, we have taken unprecedented actions to protect Americans. We've created a new department of government to defend our homeland, focused the FBI on preventing terrorism, begun to reform our intelligence agencies, broken up terror cells across the country, expanded research on defenses against biological and chemical attack, improved border security, and trained more than a half-million first responders. Police and firefighters, air marshals, researchers, and so many others are working every day to make our homeland safer, and we thank them all.

Our nation, working with allies and friends, has also confronted the enemy abroad, with measures that are determined, successful, and continuing. The al Qaeda terror network that attacked our country still has leaders — but many of its top commanders have been removed. There are still governments that sponsor and harbor terrorists — but their number has declined. There are still regimes seeking weapons of mass destruction — but no longer without attention and without consequence. Our country is still the target of terrorists who want to kill many, and intimidate us all — and we will stay on the offensive against them, until the fight is won.

Pursuing our enemies is a vital commitment of the war on terror — and I thank the Congress for providing our servicemen and women with the resources they have needed. During this time of war, we must continue to support our military and give them the tools for victory.

Other nations around the globe have stood with us. In Afghanistan, an international force is helping provide security. In Iraq, 28 countries have troops on the ground, the United Nations and the European Union provided technical assistance for the elections, and NATO is leading a mission to help train Iraqi officers. We're cooperating with 60 governments in the Proliferation Security Initiative, to detect and stop the transit of dangerous materials. We're working closely with the governments in Asia to

convince North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and nine other countries have captured or detained al Qaeda terrorists. In the next four years, my administration will continue to build the coalitions that will defeat the dangers of our time.

In the long-term, the peace we seek will only be achieved by eliminating the conditions that feed radicalism and ideologies of murder. If whole regions of the world remain in despair and grow in hatred, they will be the recruiting grounds for terror, and that terror will stalk America and other free nations for decades. The only force powerful enough to stop the rise of tyranny and terror, and replace hatred with hope, is the force of human freedom. Our enemies know this, and that is why the terrorist Zarqawi recently declared war on what he called the “evil principle” of democracy. And we’ve declared our own intention: America will stand with the allies of freedom to support democratic movements in the Middle East and beyond, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world.

The United States has no right, no desire, and no intention to impose our form of government on anyone else. That is one of the main differences between us and our enemies. They seek to impose and expand an empire of oppression, in which a tiny group of brutal, self-appointed rulers control every aspect of every life. Our aim is to build and preserve a community of free and independent nations, with governments that answer to their citizens, and reflect their own cultures. And because democracies respect their own people and their neighbors, the advance of freedom will lead to peace.

That advance has great momentum in our time — shown by women voting in Afghanistan, and Palestinians choosing a new direction, and the people of Ukraine asserting their democratic rights and electing a president. We are witnessing landmark events in the history of liberty. And in the coming years, we will add to that story.

The beginnings of reform and democracy in the Palestinian

territories are now showing the power of freedom to break old patterns of violence and failure. Tomorrow morning, Secretary of State Rice departs on a trip that will take her to Israel and the West Bank for meetings with Prime Minister Sharon and President Abbas. She will discuss with them how we and our friends can help the Palestinian people end terror and build the institutions of a peaceful, independent, democratic state. To promote this democracy, I will ask Congress for \$350 million to support Palestinian political, economic, and security reforms. The goal of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace, is within reach — and America will help them achieve that goal.

To promote peace and stability in the broader Middle East, the United States will work with our friends in the region to fight the common threat of terror, while we encourage a higher standard of freedom. Hopeful reform is already taking hold in an arc from Morocco to Jordan to Bahrain. The government of Saudi Arabia can demonstrate its leadership in the region by expanding the role of its people in determining their future. And the great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East.

To promote peace in the broader Middle East, we must confront regimes that continue to harbor terrorists and pursue weapons of mass murder. Syria still allows its territory, and parts of Lebanon, to be used by terrorists who seek to destroy every chance of peace in the region. You have passed, and we are applying, the Syrian Accountability Act — and we expect the Syrian government to end all support for terror and open the door to freedom. Today, Iran remains the world's primary state sponsor of terror — pursuing nuclear weapons while depriving its people of the freedom they seek and deserve. We are working with European allies to make clear to the Iranian regime that it must give up its uranium enrichment program and any plutonium reprocessing, and end its support for terror. And to the Iranian

people, I say tonight: As you stand for your own liberty, America stands with you.

Our generational commitment to the advance of freedom, especially in the Middle East, is now being tested and honored in Iraq. That country is a vital front in the war on terror, which is why the terrorists have chosen to make a stand there. Our men and women in uniform are fighting terrorists in Iraq, so we do not have to face them here at home. And the victory of freedom in Iraq will strengthen a new ally in the war on terror, inspire democratic reformers from Damascus to Tehran, bring more hope and progress to a troubled region, and thereby lift a terrible threat from the lives of our children and grandchildren.

We will succeed because the Iraqi people value their own liberty — as they showed the world last Sunday. Across Iraq, often at great risk, millions of citizens went to the polls and elected 275 men and women to represent them in a new Transitional National Assembly. A young woman in Baghdad told of waking to the sound of mortar fire on election day, and wondering if it might be too dangerous to vote. She said, “Hearing those explosions, it occurred to me — the insurgents are weak, they are afraid of democracy, they are losing. So I got my husband, and I got my parents, and we all came out and voted together.”

Americans recognize that spirit of liberty, because we share it. In any nation, casting your vote is an act of civic responsibility; for millions of Iraqis, it was also an act of personal courage, and they have earned the respect of us all.

One of Iraq’s leading democracy and human rights advocates is Safia Taleb al-Suhail. She says of her country, “We were occupied for 35 years by Saddam Hussein. That was the real occupation. Thank you to the American people who paid the cost, but most of all, to the soldiers.” Eleven years ago, Safia’s father was assassinated by Saddam’s intelligence service. Three days ago in Baghdad, Safia was finally able to vote for the leaders of her country — and we are honored that she is with us tonight.

The terrorists and insurgents are violently opposed to

democracy, and will continue to attack it. Yet, the terrorists' most powerful myth is being destroyed. The whole world is seeing that the car bombers and assassins are not only fighting coalition forces, they are trying to destroy the hopes of Iraqis, expressed in free elections. And the whole world now knows that a small group of extremists will not overturn the will of the Iraqi people.

We will succeed in Iraq because Iraqis are determined to fight for their own freedom, and to write their own history. As Prime Minister Allawi said in his speech to Congress last September, "Ordinary Iraqis are anxious to shoulder all the security burdens of our country as quickly as possible." That is the natural desire of an independent nation, and it is also the stated mission of our coalition in Iraq. The new political situation in Iraq opens a new phase of our work in that country.

At the recommendation of our commanders on the ground, and in consultation with the Iraqi government, we will increasingly focus our efforts on helping prepare more capable Iraqi security forces — forces with skilled officers and an effective command structure. As those forces become more self-reliant and take on greater security responsibilities, America and its coalition partners will increasingly be in a supporting role. In the end, Iraqis must be able to defend their own country — and we will help that proud, new nation secure its liberty.

Recently an Iraqi interpreter said to a reporter, "Tell America not to abandon us." He and all Iraqis can be certain: While our military strategy is adapting to circumstances, our commitment remains firm and unchanging. We are standing for the freedom of our Iraqi friends, and freedom in Iraq will make America safer for generations to come. We will not set an artificial timetable for leaving Iraq, because that would embolden the terrorists and make them believe they can wait us out. We are in Iraq to achieve a result: A country that is democratic, representative of all its people, at peace with its neighbors, and able to defend itself. And when that result is achieved, our men and women serving in Iraq will return home with the honor they have earned.

Right now, Americans in uniform are serving at posts across the world, often taking great risks on my orders. We have given them training and equipment; and they have given us an example of idealism and character that makes every American proud. The volunteers of our military are unrelenting in battle, unwavering in loyalty, unmatched in honor and decency, and every day they're making our nation more secure. Some of our servicemen and women have survived terrible injuries, and this grateful country will do everything we can to help them recover. And we have said farewell to some very good men and women, who died for our freedom, and whose memory this nation will honor forever.

One name we honor is Marine Corps Sergeant Byron Norwood of Pflugerville, Texas, who was killed during the assault on Fallujah. His mom, Janet, sent me a letter and told me how much Byron loved being a Marine, and how proud he was to be on the front line against terror. She wrote, "When Byron was home the last time, I said that I wanted to protect him like I had since he was born. He just hugged me and said, 'You've done your job, Mom. Now it is my turn to protect you.'" Ladies and gentlemen, with grateful hearts, we honor freedom's defenders, and our military families, represented here this evening by Sergeant Norwood's mom and dad, Janet and Bill Norwood.

In these four years, Americans have seen the unfolding of large events. We have known times of sorrow, and hours of uncertainty, and days of victory. In all this history, even when we have disagreed, we have seen threads of purpose that unite us. The attack on freedom in our world has reaffirmed our confidence in freedom's power to change the world. We are all part of a great venture: To extend the promise of freedom in our country, to renew the values that sustain our liberty, and to spread the peace that freedom brings.

As Franklin Roosevelt once reminded Americans, "Each age is a dream that is dying, or one that is coming to birth." And we live in the country where the biggest dreams are born. The abolition of slavery was only a dream — until it was fulfilled.

The liberation of Europe from fascism was only a dream — until it was achieved. The fall of imperial communism was only a dream — until, one day, it was accomplished. Our generation has dreams of its own, and we also go forward with confidence. The road of Providence is uneven and unpredictable — yet we know where it leads: It leads to freedom.

Thank you, and may God bless America.

REMARKS ON STRENGTHENING SOCIAL SECURITY

SOUTH CAROLINA STATEHOUSE
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA
APRIL 18, 2005

Thank you all very much. Mr. Speaker, thank you for that kind and short introduction. I appreciate Governor Sanford being here. I want to thank the Lt. Governor. I appreciate President Pro Tem McConnell, Majority Leader Leatherman, members of the South Carolina legislature. I appreciate my traveling party from Washington. Hope you appreciate them, too. That would be Senator Lindsey Graham, Senator DeMint, members of the United States House of Representatives from the great state of South Carolina. I appreciate the justices of the South Carolina Supreme Court being here. I thank those of you who have taken time to come and listen. I appreciate your warm welcome.

It is an honor to be speaking in this chamber. It is great to be back in the capital of South Carolina. The last time I came to this city I gave the commencement speech at USC. I was proud to have received an honorary degree. When I told Laura about it, she said, "I thought your first degree was honorary." She sends her best and she sends her love. She's, by the way, a fabulous First Lady.

I appreciate our escort committee. I told the members that this is the first time I have spoken to a legislative body, state legislative body since I was the governor of Texas. So thank you for having me. It's — there's some differences, of course. There are a lot of cowboy hats back in Austin. And I'll be honest with you, a lot of us didn't know anything about dancing the shag. And I imagine we could have a pretty good debate about which of our states has the best barbecue. Now is not the time.

But one thing is, no matter whether you serve at the federal level or the state level, we share serious responsibilities. See, our constituents have put us into office to solve problems now. That's what they've done. They said, we've elected you to go to your

statehouse, or in my case, Washington, D.C., to solve problems. The people expect us to confront problems without illusion. They expect us to lead with conviction and confidence, not by reading the latest poll or listening to the latest focus group. And above all, they expect us to deliver results.

And here in South Carolina, you've delivered results. You've faced serious challenges, especially in your economy. Listen, we've had a stock market decline, we've had a recession, we've had corporate scandals, we had a terrorist attack on September the 11th, 2001, we've had the demands of war. And all these have tested our nation's economy. And they hit particularly hard here in your state. South Carolina's economic growth slowed; small businesses moved out or shut down; workers lost their jobs; and state finances were headed toward a free fall.

The people of South Carolina look to you and they look to your Governor for leadership. And you delivered. You set clear priorities for your budget, and you made hard decisions when it came to spending. To rein in the rising costs of health care, you became one of the first states in the nation to offer health savings accounts to state employees. To reward hardworking families and job creators, you refused to raise taxes on the working people of South Carolina. You focused bipartisan actions; you've lifted your state out of fiscal crisis; you've erased a \$155 million deficit, and you've done it two years ahead of schedule. Today South Carolina families are planning for the future with confidence.

I found this to be an interesting statistic about your state: More than 76 percent of the people in your state own their own home, one of the highest rates in the United States. Small businesses are investing and expanding, exports are on the rise. Thanks to your leadership, thanks to your hard work, thanks to your willingness to set aside partisan differences, jobs are coming back to the great state of South Carolina.

In Washington, we're moving forward with an ambitious agenda to keep this country safe, prosperous and free. The war on terror goes on. There are still ruthless enemies that would like to do harm

to our people. We will continue to keep the pressure on these folks. We'll work with our friends and allies to be unrelenting in our search to bring them to justice. We will not rest until America is safe.

We'll continue to work to improve security here at home, but in the long-term, in the long run, the best way to protect America and to keep the peace is to change the conditions that give rise to hopelessness and extremism. And the best way to do that is to spread freedom around the world.

I don't believe freedom is America's gift to the world. I believe freedom is the Almighty God's gift to each man and woman in this world. My administration will continue to pursue pro-growth policies to ensure that America is the best place in the world to do business. To keep the economy growing and create jobs, we will keep the taxes low. We'll continue to confront the problems of junk lawsuits by pushing for meaningful asbestos and medical liability reform. We'll work with Congress to pass an energy bill that will make America less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

I sent to Congress a disciplined federal budget, and both the House and the Senate have passed budget resolutions. And now they need to work out their differences and send me a budget that meets America's priorities, that restrains federal spending, and that keeps us on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009. In Washington, and in Columbia, South Carolina, government needs to follow a straightforward principle, a taxpayer's dollar must be spent wisely, or not spent at all.

Strong leadership means rising to the challenges of the day. It also means looking down the road. There will always be problems that arise unexpectedly; yet problems — some problems are completely predictable. And as leaders, you and I have a responsibility to confront those problems today, and not pass them on to future generations.

Over the past few weeks I've been traveling around the country talking about one of the most serious and most predictable challenges which face our nation, and that is the long-term fiscal

health of Social Security. Social Security has been a great success. Franklin Roosevelt did a really smart thing in setting up the Social Security system. It has provided an important safety net for millions of Americans. Seniors in South Carolina and seniors across this country depend on their monthly checks as an important part of their lives, as an important source of income for their retirement.

And today I have a message for every senior in South Carolina, and every senior across this country: Do not pay attention to the propaganda and scare ads. If you're receiving a Social Security check this month, you will continue receiving a Social Security next month, and the month after that, and every month for the rest of your life.

There are other Americans who are now approaching retirement and have been paying into Social Security throughout their lives. These workers are counting on Social Security as part of their retirement plans, and there's money in the system for them. If you were born prior to 1950, America will honor the promise of Social Security for you. The problem is that the government is making promises for younger Americans that it cannot pay for. In other words, there's a hole in the safety net for younger Americans.

See, Social Security is a pay-as-you-go system — you pay and we go ahead and spend here in Washington. We spend on — to provide benefits for current retirees, and with money left over, we have spent your payroll taxes on government programs. Some people think there's a Social Security trust, where the government is holding your money, in an account with your name on it. It just doesn't work that way. That's not the way the system works. There is no vault holding your cash, waiting for you to retire. Instead, because we spend Social Security taxes on current retirees and other government programs, all that is left over in the so-called security trust is a bunch of filing cabinets with IOUs in them.

As a matter of fact, I went to West Virginia the other day to look at the filing cabinets, to make sure the IOUs were there — paper. And it's there. And it's, frankly, not a very encouraging

sight. It's not encouraging especially when you consider that times are changing in America, that the math for Social Security is changing significantly. By the math I mean this: In 1950, there were about 16 workers paying taxes for every beneficiary — 16 workers for beneficiary. And today, there's 3.3 workers for every beneficiary. By the time our children and grandchildren are ready to retire, there will only be 2 workers paying for every beneficiary in the system.

That's only part of the problem. To compound the problem, the first baby boomers will soon start retiring. I happen to be one of them. As a matter of fact, I'm eligible to start collecting benefits in 2008 — which happens to be a convenient year for me. The retirement of the baby boomer generation is going to have a huge impact on Social Security, because my generation is about 50-percent larger than my parents' generation. Today there are about 40 million retirees receiving benefits. By the time all the baby boomers have retired, there will be more than 72 million retirees receiving benefits. And thanks to advances in modern medicine, these retirees will live longer and collect benefits over longer retirements than the previous generation.

And to compound the problem even further, Congress has ensured that benefits to my generation will grow faster than our economy or the rate of inflation. In other words, people went around the country saying, vote for me, I'll make sure your benefits are higher. And so this sets up an enormous fiscal challenge facing Social Security. With each passing year, there will be fewer workers paying ever higher benefits to a larger number of retirees who are living longer.

And so here's the result: Three years from now, when the first baby boomers start collecting Social Security benefits, the system will start heading toward the red. Less than a decade later, in 2017, Social Security will go negative. And by that I mean it will be paying out more in benefits than it collects in payroll taxes. More money going out than coming in. And every year after that the shortfall will get worse.

In the year 2027, the government will somehow have to come up with an extra \$200 billion to fund the system — \$200 billion more going out than coming in through payroll taxes. In 2034, the annual shortfall will be more than \$300 billion a year. And by the year 2041, the entire system will be bankrupt. Now, think about that. If we don't do something to fix the system now, the students graduating this spring from the University of South Carolina, or, in deference to the Speaker, Clemson will spend their entire careers paying Social Security taxes only to see the system go bankrupt a few years before they retire.

And I don't care if you're a Republican or Democrat, these are the facts. And the question is, do we have the will to do something about them. Now, in South Carolina, you know that once you're in the red, the options of getting out are never very appealing. If we allow Social Security to continue on its current path toward bankruptcy, we will leave our children and grandchildren with only a few drastic options to keep the system afloat. In other words, the longer you wait, the longer we don't do anything in Washington, the more drastic the solutions become.

For example, some estimate if we don't do anything, the payroll tax will get up to 18 percent. Is that a legacy we want to leave on younger generations of Americans? I don't think so. Or we're going to have to dramatically slash benefits, or cut other federal programs. The Social Security trust reported this: They said, every year we wait to fix the system will add an additional \$600 billion to the cost of reform.

I understand why some in Washington don't want to take on this issue. I guess they calculate there's a political cost when dealing with a tough issue. I think there's a political cost for not dealing with the issue. And so I've been traveling this country of ours, making it absolutely clear what the problems are. See, my strategy is pretty simple: Take the message to the people and define the facts of the problem, and let the people draw their own conclusions. I've been to 22 states to explain the facts. I've been to those states to explain the urgent need for the United States

Congress to work with the administration to get something done now. And more and more Americans are beginning to hear the message.

I'm just starting, I'm just warming up. As a matter of fact, I like getting out of Washington, D.C. I like coming to places like South Carolina, to put the facts on the table so the people can make their own mind about what's happening in Social Security.

I don't know if you've ever heard of Dutch Fork High School in Irmo. I met a very innovative teacher who assigned her students this assignment: Why don't you write letters to the editor about their impressions of Social Security? Here's what one of her students wrote: "By the time my generation gets to the age to draw Social Security, there will be no money left for us to draw on." This is a young high school student writing that. This isn't a professor in economics. This is a high school student. He said, "I don't know about other people, but I don't like the sound of that." People are beginning to get the message that there is a problem in Social Security.

Today I met an 80-year-old — 80-year-old young woman from Silverstreet named Shirley. She said she's counting on Social Security. She gets a Social Security check every month, and she's confident she'll keep getting her checks. And there's no doubt in her mind she's going to get her checks, but there's a doubt in her mind as to whether or not her granddaughters are going to have comfort in their retirement, whether or not the safety net will be there for them. Here's what she said: She said, "I don't know what I would do without it. It's my granddaughters that I'm worried about, and I want to do whatever is possible to fix the system for them."

Folks, we're talking about a generational issue here in America. The grandfolks are going to get their checks, and the fundamental question is, do we have the will in Washington, D.C. to make sure the system works for the grandchildren of America. And that's what I'm here talking about.

I believe I have a duty to ask people to bring ideas forward.

I brought a few myself, and I appreciate the response of Senator Lindsey Graham. He's brought some ideas forward, as has Senator Jim DeMint, as has your Governor. These men have been leaders in the debate. They've stepped up, and said, here are some ideas I'd like you to consider. But they're not the only ones who have set up good ideas. Former Congressman Tim Penny, a Democrat from Minnesota, has suggested tying Social Security benefits to prices rather than wages. My predecessor, Bill Clinton, had time — had meetings all around the country on Social Security and he spoke of increasing the retirement age at one time.

I put together a commission of Republicans and Democrats, headed by the late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York. And they did fine work. They recommended changing the way benefits are calculated. In other words, people are putting ideas on the table. An interesting idea was put forward by a Democrat Social Security expert named Robert Pozen, who has proposed a progressive way of structuring benefits that will be more generous to low-income workers. And that's an important idea.

In other words, all these ideas are on the table, but they have one thing in common — they all require us to act now. Saving Social Security is not a Republican goal, it is not a Democrat goal; it is a vital goal to all our country. And people of both political parties need to get the job done now.

There are some basic principles that must guide our efforts to fix Social Security. We should not raise the payroll tax rate. That would hurt the economy and cost jobs. We must ensure that Social Security continues to provide dignity and peace of mind for Americans in retirement, and include extra protections for those with low incomes. We must reject temporary measures that put off Social Security problems for another day.

You need to be skeptical about any talk that talks about a 75-year fix. Back in 1983, Republicans and Democrats came together on what they thought was a 75-year fix. You know, I like the spirit of people of both parties coming together, and that was great. President Reagan and Speaker O'Neill said, we got a problem,

let's come together to fix it. But they thought it was a 75-year fix; here we are, 22 years later. It's time to come up with a permanent solution. When people bring forth their ideas in Congress I will insist that we not have a band-aid approach to Social Security, that we have a permanent fix. And I'm optimistic about the chances for meaningful Social Security reform.

You know, a few weeks ago the United States Senate voted on a resolution guaranteeing that any Social Security fix must be permanent. The vote has the agreement of the two senators from South Carolina, the two senators from Texas, the two senators from Massachusetts. Anytime that happens you've got yourself a bipartisan agreement. In fact, the vote in Congress was unanimous. Think about that. Every single United States senator is on the record supporting a permanent fix. Now those senators need to keep their word and make Social Security solvent once and for all.

Bringing permanent solvency to Social Security is an important start, but it's only part of our duty. Preserving Social Security should not mean preserving its problems. Today we have an opportunity to offer younger Americans a better deal than the current system. Today we can give every American the chance to tap into the power of compound interest, so they can get a higher rate of return on their money than the current system allows. You might notice I said, "their money." See, we're not spending the government's money. The payroll taxes are the people's money. It's coming from hardworking people.

We can build this opportunity into Social Security by giving younger workers the option to set aside some of their own money in a personal retirement account. The account would be a conservative mix of bonds and stocks that grows over time and can deliver a greater return than the Social Security system does. That would be a good deal for younger workers.

Since 1983, since that reform took place, stock investments have returned about 9 percent more than inflation per year, while the real return on Social Security is about 2 percent a year. That means that a dollar invested in the market in 1983 would be worth \$11 today —

one dollar would grow to eleven — while the same dollar would be worth about three if it had been put in Social Security. Every young American should have the opportunity to take advantage of the compounding rate of interest, to earn a better return on his or her own money.

Personal accounts would be completely voluntary; younger workers could choose to join or choose not to join. That seems to make sense for government to provide opportunities of choice for individual Americans. Workers opting to open an account would be able to put about a third of their payroll taxes in investments, instead of sending their money to Washington. For example, a younger worker earning an average of \$35,000 a year over a career, because of the growth of money, would be able to retire with a nest egg of nearly a quarter-million dollars. That would be a nice addition to the other Social Security benefits.

These voluntary accounts would come with strict guidelines to make sure they're secure. You couldn't take — put them in the lottery — sorry to say, Speaker. You could make sure the earnings aren't eaten up by hidden Wall Street fees. We'll make sure there are good options to protect investments from sudden market swings on the eve of retirement. You won't be able to withdraw all your money and take it to the racetrack. These accounts will offer straightforward investment choices that are easy to understand.

By the way, this concept isn't new. After all, in South Carolina, all state employees can choose to put part of their retirement savings in a traditional retirement plan, or in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks that can deliver a better rate of return. So when I talk about personal accounts available for younger workers, you know what I'm talking about right here in South Carolina. You've already made that decision for people who are serving the state.

I don't know if you know this or not, but federal employees have that same opportunity to watch their money grow, through a program called the Thrift Savings Plan. It's a plan that allows members of the United States Congress and the United States Senate to set aside some of their own money, if they so choose

to do so, in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks. It seems fair to me that if setting up a personal savings account is good enough for a member of the United States Congress, it is good enough for workers all across America.

By giving younger workers an option to set up a personal savings account, we have an opportunity to modernize and strengthen a great American program. We have a chance to bring the Social Security system into the 21st century.

The reason I say that is, today young people are comfortable investing in bonds and stocks. Millions of workers now choose to plan for retirement with their own savings accounts, through programs like 401(k)s. I don't remember growing up hearing the word 401(k) — I don't think you remember that. You're old enough to be around when they didn't have 401(k)s or IRAs. We're not talking about a new culture, we're talking about a culture that's already taken hold in our society, where workers from all walks of life are watching their money grow and making decisions on behalf of their families with where they invest.

See, telling younger workers they have to save money in a 1930s retirement system is like telling them that they have to use a cell phone with a rotary dial. If young people are confident they can improve their retirement by investing in a conservative mix of bonds and stocks, the government should not stand in their way.

Creating these accounts will also give our children and grandchildren a chance to replace a burden of uncertainty with a new opportunity. Instead of leaving their full retirement in the hands of future politicians, younger workers will be able to take part of their retirement into their own hands. Instead of sending all the payroll taxes to Washington, younger workers would be able to transfer part of their money directly into an account they own and that the government can never take away. Instead of forfeiting years of Social Security contributions if they die before retirement, younger workers would have peace of mind that their personal accounts could be passed on to a loved one.

Young people are learning more about the opportunity to own

part of their retirement, and they're making their opinion pretty clear. I met Philip Meador today. He's a graduating senior from The Citadel. He told me he's going to be starting a new job in June. He knows he's going to start paying Social Security taxes. What he's not sure about is whether or not he'll ever be seeing a Social Security check. He certainly will be paying in; he's not so sure what's going to be coming out. He likes the idea of keeping part of his money in an account that he controls. He said, "I like the options. You choose what to put in, you choose the investments. It depends on what you're looking for. I think every individual should be able to choose a plan that fits them."

A lot of young people are beginning to say that. A lot of young people want this United States government to come together of young people want the government to give them the option of making choices with their own money.

And I know you all feel the same way in this chamber. That's why you passed resolutions calling the United States Congress to strengthen this important program, Social Security, and to give younger workers the option of voluntary personal retirement accounts. You recognize that a Social Security system that includes personal accounts will give all Americans — not just a few, but all Americans — a stake in the greatest creator of wealth the world has ever known. You recognize that personal accounts will bring the security and independence of ownership to millions of our citizens. And you recognize that personal accounts are critical to building an ownership society, a more optimistic and more hopeful America, in which more people own their own homes, more people own their own businesses, more people have a ownership in a retirement account, more people have an asset base they call their own that they can pass on to whomever they choose.

You see, owning assets ought not to be confined to a few people in our society. Owning an asset and being able to pass it on to your son or daughter ought not to be the purview of a few. In this great land, it ought to be spread — ownership ought to be spread to everybody who is lucky enough to be an American. You

recognize that when people own something, they have a vital stake in the future of our country, and that personal accounts will help give every citizen the chance, the opportunity to realize the dreams of this land.

The legislature of this great state of South Carolina has shown leadership on this important issue, and now the United States Congress needs to do the same. I understand that Social Security is a tough issue, but Congress has tackled tough issues before. We've seen in the past how leaders from both parties can rise above partisan politics to meet great responsibilities. And now is the time for them to do so again.

I am confident that members of Congress will come together to reach a permanent solution. And when they do, our children and grandchildren will one day look back and be grateful that our generation made the difficult choices and the necessary choices to renew the great promise of the Social Security system for the 21st century.

I want to thank you all for the invitation to come to your great state. I appreciate you giving me a chance to come and visit. It's an honor to talk about such an important topic with those who have been willing to serve. May God bless you in your efforts, and may God bless your families, and may God continue to bless the United States of America.

NOMINATION OF JOHN ROBERTS TO THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES

THE STATE FLOOR OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 19, 2005

Good evening. One of the most consequential decisions a President makes is his appointment of a Justice to the Supreme Court. When a President chooses a Justice, he's placing in human hands the authority and majesty of the law. The decisions of the Supreme Court affect the life of every American.

And so a nominee to that Court must be a person of superb credentials and the highest integrity; a person who will faithfully apply the Constitution and keep our founding promise of equal justice under law. I have found such a person in Judge John Roberts.

And tonight, I'm honored to announce that I am nominating him to serve as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. John Roberts currently serves on one of the most influential courts in the nation, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

Before he was a — before he was a respected judge, he was known as one of the most distinguished and talented attorneys in America. John Roberts has devoted his entire professional life to the cause of justice and is widely admired for his intellect, his sound judgment, and personal decency.

Judge Roberts was born in Buffalo and grew up in Indiana. In high school, he captained his football team, and he worked summers in a steel mill to help pay his way through college. He's an honors graduate of both Harvard College and Harvard Law School. In his career, he has served as a law clerk to Justice William Rehnquist, as an Associate Counsel to President Ronald Reagan, and as the Principal Deputy Solicitor General in the Department of Justice.

In public service and in private practice, he has argued 39 cases before the Supreme Court and earned a reputation as one of the best legal minds of his generation. Judge Roberts has earned the respect of people from both political parties. After he was nominated for the Court of Appeals in 2001, a bipartisan group of more than 150 lawyers sent a letter to the Senate Judiciary Committee. They wrote:

“Although as individuals we reflect a wide spectrum of political party affiliation and ideology, we are united in our belief that John Roberts will be an outstanding federal court appeals judge and should be confirmed by the United States Senate.”

The signers of this letter included a former counsel to a Republican President, a former counsel to two Democratic Presidents, and a former — and former high-ranking Justice Department officials of both parties.

My decision to nominate Judge Roberts to the Supreme Court came after a thorough and deliberative process. My staff and I consulted with more than 70 members of the United States Senate. I received good advice from both Republicans and Democrats. I appreciate the care they took. I’m grateful for their advice. I reviewed the credentials of many well-qualified men and women. I met personally with a number of potential nominees.

In my meetings with Judge Roberts, I have been deeply impressed. He’s a man of extraordinary accomplishment and ability. He has a good heart. He has the qualities Americans expect in a judge: experience, wisdom, fairness, and civility. He has profound respect for the rule of law and for the liberties guaranteed to every citizen. He will strictly apply the Constitution and laws, not legislate from the bench.

He’s also a man of character who loves his country and his family. I’m pleased that his wife, Jane, and his two beautiful children, Jack and Josie, could be with us tonight. Judge Roberts has served his fellow citizens well, and he is prepared for even greater service.

Under the Constitution, Judge Roberts now goes before the

United States Senate for confirmation. I've recently spoken with leaders Senator First and Senator Reid, and with senior members of the Judiciary Committee, Chairman Specter and Senator Leahy. These senators share my goal of a dignified confirmation process that is conducted with fairness and civility. The appointments of the two most recent Justices to the Supreme Court prove that this confirmation can be done in a timely manner.

So I have full confidence that the Senate will rise to the occasion and act promptly on this nomination. It is important that the newest Justice be on the bench when the Supreme Court reconvenes in October. I believe that Democrats and Republicans alike will see the strong qualifications of this fine judge as they did when they confirmed him by unanimous consent to the judicial seat he now holds.

I look forward to the Senate voting to confirm Judge John Roberts as the 109th Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Judge Roberts, thank you for agreeing to serve, and congratulations.

PROMOTING THE CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JULY 21, 2005

Thank you all. Siéntese. Thank you very much for the warm welcome. Thank you to the Hispanic Alliance For Free Trade for inviting me here today. And thanks to the Organization of American States for providing this fantastic forum.

What a beautiful building. What makes it even more beautiful is that the Organization of American States promotes democracy and freedom. There's nothing more beautiful than freedom. And I appreciate your commitment to democracy and freedom. And I appreciate the chance to come to talk about a treaty — CAFTA — that will not only provide more prosperity in our hemisphere, it's not only a good deal for American workers and business owners and farmers, this treaty will help spread democracy and peace.

Thanks for letting me come by. Raul, thank you. Muchos gracias. It's good to see you again. Raul is such a strong leader in the Latino community in my state of Texas that he had the high honor of having a school named for him. I can't thank you enough for being the leader you have been. And thank you Anne Alonzo for inviting me here today, and for helping us get the bill passed.

For those of you who are members of the Hispanic Alliance For Free Trade, I want to remind you, it's one thing to come and listen to a President speak; it's another thing to work the halls of Congress, so people speak by their votes, people that listen to you in a concrete way. So thanks for coming. Thanks for being a part of passing CAFTA.

I want to thank the Secretary General, General Insulza. Thank you, sir, for you. I want to thank the Vice President, Samuel Lewis, of the Republic of Panama. I appreciate the members of the Diplomatic Corps who are here. I particularly want to thank

the diplomats from Central America and the Dominican Republic. I urge you to work the bill. I urge you to let people know the consequence of passage and the consequences of failure. It's important for people to understand the stakes.

I want to thank the Permanent Representatives to the Organization of American States. I want to thank my friend, Ambassador Juan Maisto — Embajador. Thank you, Juan, for being here.

I appreciate the members of my Cabinet who are working hard on this piece of legislation. We got the Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Johanns, who is with us. Secretary Carlos Gutierrez is with us here. Ambassador Rob Portman, who is the point person from my administration on this important piece of legislation. They're working hard; I'm working hard.

I want to thank the people from the United States Congress who've joined us: Ileana Ros-Lehtinen from Florida, I'm glad you're here, thanks for coming. Randy Neugebauer from West Texas, thank you for coming, Randy. Henry Cuellar, south Texas — sur de Tejas. And, finally, Charlie Dent, thanks for coming. I'm proud you all are here. Thanks for lending your support to this important occasion. I've made my decision to support this bill because I think it's in the best interest of the country.

As a matter of fact, I make a lot of decisions as your President. I made one the other night, when I announced my nomination of Judge John Roberts to the Supreme Court. I appreciate so very much the reception he's receiving in the United States Senate. I want to thank the senators from both political parties who are giving Judge Roberts a chance to talk about his heart, to talk about his philosophy.

He is a person that will make all Americans proud to be a member of the Supreme Court. He is a — he's got the experience, wisdom, fairness and civility to be a really good judge. He has a profound respect for the rule of law. He respects the liberties guaranteed in our Constitution to all Americans, from — people from all walks of life. He'll strictly apply the Constitution; he's not

going to legislate from the bench.

The United States Senate can show our country that it's able to have a civil debate on this very important nomination — not only a civil debate, but a timely debate. It's important for Judge Roberts to be confirmed by the time the Court reconvenes in October. I thank the Senate for their action today. I urge the Senate to do its duty to have a fair, timely hearing, and get this good man confirmed in time for the October reconvening of the Court.

We'll be talking about our economy and liberty in our neighborhood here in a minute, but I want to remind you all, want to remind leaders from our country, and of course the leaders from other countries that are here, that we're living in historic times. And one of the reasons I say that is we're still at war, see. And it's important for all of us who love freedom to understand that this is a war being fought against ideologues that use terror to advance an agenda. This is a war against killers, cold-blooded killers who embrace an ideology of hatred. Their vision of the world is the opposite of our vision of the world. We believe in human rights, human dignity, minority rights and religious rights. We believe in universal freedoms.

They have a different view of the world. They don't believe in women's rights. They have usurped a great religion and defined it in their terms. And if you happen to live in a society in which they're dominant, like the Taliban was in Afghanistan, and if you don't adhere to their view of religion, you're punished. They have territorial designs. They have the desire to use their terrorist techniques to frighten us. In other words, they understand when they kill in cold blood it ends up on our TV screens. And they're trying to shake our will. And they're trying to create vacuums into which their ideology can move.

They don't understand our country, though. They don't understand that when it comes to the defense of universal freedoms, this country won't be frightened. We will defend ourselves by staying on the offense against these killers. We will find them overseas so we don't have to face them here at home.

And at the same time we understand that to defeat an ideology of hate, you work to spread an ideology of hope. And there's nothing more hopeful than a system which recognizes the rights of people, in which government is accountable to the people. And that system is democracy, based upon universal freedom.

We are laying the foundation for peace for generations to come. As we fight the terrorists and defend this homeland, we're also working to make sure this economy is strong and vibrant — and we've got reason for optimism. The tax relief we delivered is working. This economy of ours has overcome a lot and now it's the fastest-growing economy of any major industrialized nation in the world. Inflation is low. We're well ahead of reaching our goal to cut our deficit in half by 2009. We've had 25 consecutive months of job gains. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent. More people are working today in America than ever before in our nation's history.

And one of the reasons why is because this administration recognizes that the way you grow an economy is you stimulate the entrepreneurial sector. Government doesn't create wealth, government creates an environment in which the entrepreneur is willing to take risks. And I'm pleased to report the entrepreneurial spirit in our Latino communities across the country is strong, vibrant and doing well.

We believe in encouraging ownership. The more people own something, the better off this country will be. We want more people owning their own business. Because of the vibrancy of our economy, the Hispanic unemployment rate has dropped to 5.8 percent, down from 8.4 percent two years ago. More people are working. More Hispanics own their home than ever before in our nation's history, and that's great news for the American society. SBA loans to Hispanic-owned businesses are up by —doubled since I took office. In other words, there is a role for government to help. But the Hispanic community is an entrepreneurial community to begin with, and it's responding and it's really good news for the country.

Therefore, it doesn't surprise me to learn that many Hispanic entrepreneurs and business owners and leaders understand the importance of expanding trade within our hemisphere. And that is why you have come to lend your support to the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement, and I'm grateful. By eliminating barriers to exports from our country, CAFTA will help keep the U.S. economy growing. In other words, this is a jobs program. This will help jobs.

By opening up Central America and the Dominican Republic to U.S. trade and investment, CAFTA will help those countries develop a better life for their citizens. That seems to make sense to me. I mean, if you're living in a neighborhood, you want your neighbors doing well. If you're a good neighbor you say, gosh, I hope everybody in the neighborhood is succeeding. And by helping those economies improve, CAFTA will help the nations strengthen their democracies. And that's in our national security interest. That's makes us all more secure.

So this bill is more than a trade bill. This bill is a commitment of freedom-loving nations to advance peace and prosperity throughout the Western hemisphere. And that's important for members of Congress to understand.

CAFTA begins by ensuring that free trade is fair trade. I mean — you know, I traveled the country quite extensively in the recent past and said, I'm a free trader. But I reminded people in our country I'm also for fair trade. It's one thing to advocate free trade; I believe the government has a role to make sure that trade is fair for all of us. In other words, we want people treating us the way we treat them.

It turns out that exports from Central America into the United States face almost no tariffs. Now, I don't see how a member of Congress can go back to his or her district and say this is a good deal for America, when our exports to Central America face hefty tariffs. In other words, if you're for free trade you ought to be insisting that the trade be fair. And the only thing that makes the trade fair to me, seems like, is to say to our friends in Central

America, just treat us the way we treat you.

And that's what CAFTA does — it eliminates tariffs on our goods and services going into Central America. In other words, they treat us the way we treat them. It levels the playing field, which makes this a good deal for America's farmers and small business owners and manufacturers.

Last year, United States businesses exported more than \$15 billion of goods to Central America. Now, when I say "export goods," people got to understand that means somebody is more likely to have a job. It means somebody is producing something that somebody wants in Central America, which is part of the employment picture in our country. Our business leaders say that CAFTA would significantly increase exports to the region. That's why I say this is a job program. As exports go up, somebody is either more likely to find a job or somebody is more likely to retain a job.

Take this example. California's Haas Automation Company, it is the largest machine tool manufacturer in the United States. They strongly support this piece of legislation. It says that with CAFTA, it expects to increase sales to Central America tenfold. In other words, they see business opportunity, which means job opportunity for somebody who's helping Haas Automation manufacture equipment that somebody in Central America wants to purchase.

Again, another company example here. It's called, "Bush Hog." I don't know why they would have put this example in this speech. I hope it wasn't named after me. But it is an Alabama company that makes farm equipment like backhoes and tillers and rotary cutters. And the folks at Bush Hog say that farmers in Central America would find their high-quality, made-in-the-United States machinery attractive — if the tariffs on that equipment would be eliminated. So when you hear me say "tariff," that really means it's pricing our equipment out of the reach of the market. That's what a tariff does. It's like a tax.

So the good folks at Bush Hog manufacture something somebody wants to buy, but it's too pricey — not because of the

cost of the product they produce, but because of government action. And so the purpose of NAFTA [sic] is to remove the trade barriers. Now, we've had people look at this piece of legislation, the National Association of Manufacturers — people that represent people who manufacture something here in America, say that CAFTA would increase our manufacture exports to the region by a billion dollars, a 7 percent increase. That's good news for the manufacturing sector of the American economy.

The American Farm Bureau — they represent farmers, needless to say — estimate that by the time CAFTA is fully implemented, it would increase U.S. farm exports by as much as \$1.5 billion. Let me talk about farming real quick. We produce more than we consume in the United States. And, therefore, it makes sense for government policy and for our Secretary of Agriculture to work to find markets for that which we produce. And if the products we produce are taxed via tariff, it makes those products more expensive than need be. And, therefore, by reducing tariffs on agricultural exports from the United States, it opened up markets for our ranchers and farmers.

The U.S. International Trade Commission says that by passing CAFTA we will reduce the trade deficit by more than \$750 million. So this bill is good for the overall financial picture of the United States. That's why the United States House of Representatives, next week, ought to understand the economic wisdom of this bill, and open up the market of 44 million consumers to U.S. businesses, U.S. farms, and U.S. manufacturers.

CAFTA includes strong enforcement provisions that go further than previous trade agreements. To protect our textile workers from unfair competition, CAFTA gives our Custom agents the ability to conduct surprise visits on Central American factories. It's one way you make sure trade is fair, you're being treated fairly.

To promote a cleaner environment, CAFTA includes provisions that will monitor and enforce environmental progress. To ensure that Central American factories abide by acceptable labor standards, CAFTA insists on stiff fines for violations. And the

United States government has committed about \$180 million over five years to ensure that labor laws are enforced. CAFTA is a trade agreement that will be enforced. And we've got the money in the budget to do so.

CAFTA will help the nations of Central America deliver prosperity and opportunity for their citizens. Let me repeat that. CAFTA is not only good for us, it's good for their partners. That's a fair deal. That's what you want. You want an agreement to be balanced and fair. We want the agreement to be good for us, but we also want the agreement to be good for our friends. It's a lousy deal if it's a zero-sum deal. This is a good deal for CAFTA nations.

CAFTA will help nations attract investment they need for their economies to grow. In other words, with a stable trading agreement with the United States, it will make it much easier for investment to flow to our CAFTA friends. And investment means growth and opportunity. That's what that means.

By reducing tariffs on our products, CAFTA will allow consumers in their countries to enjoy goods and services at better prices. If a country doesn't produce a lot of a particular product and they need it, and it's got a tariff on it, it means the consumers pay an additional price. By reducing tariffs, it means that consumers in the CAFTA nations will be able to more likely purchase that which they want at a better price. It seems like to make sense to me that if you lower the cost of food products coming from the United States to CAFTA, that's beneficial for a mom trying to buy food for her child. This is consumer-friendly in the CAFTA countries.

By lowering tariffs, CAFTA will give Central American businesses less — less costly access to high-quality machinery. In other words, it's going to be beneficial for the small business owner, or the large business owner, the person who employs people in the CAFTA country to be able to buy machinery necessary to stay competitive.

By bringing economic growth — in other words, these are all elements of creating growth — increasing consumer demand by lowering prices, increasing investment make it more likely

people will be able to purchase the equipment they need to stay competitive — all this leads to more growth, which will help contribute to a vibrant middle class. And that's what we want in our neighborhood. We want there to be prosperity. We want people to have a better chance at a better life. It's in our nation's advantage that prosperity grow throughout the neighborhood.

Elected leaders of Central America know that by opening up their nations' markets to competition they're helping to raise standards for their own businesses and farmers. In other words, if you protect industries, it tends to become non-competitive. It's very important for our societies to remain productive, and productivity increases happen because of competition.

By giving their garment makers an incentive to use U.S. fabrics and materials, our partners are creating really a regional partnership that will help both of us — both the CAFTA nations and the Dominican Republic and the United States — compete with Asian producers that are using Asian materials. And that's important for members of Congress to understand, that if we want to — this agreement will help us remain competitive with Asian producers on certain products.

People of Central America have made their choice. They know their economic future lies in free and fair trade with the United States. They've said, we want to join with the United States. And that's important. When this bill is passed, this country will be sending a strong message: We want to join with you, as well. You want to join with us in free and fair trade; we want to join with you. And it's that alliance of interest that will make this neighborhood better. And it's important for members of Congress to understand that.

We cannot, and should not, reject these young democracies. We must support democracy in our neighborhood. And CAFTA will strengthen democracies. CAFTA nations a while ago were struggling with dictatorship and tyranny and civil strife. It wasn't all that long ago that a lot of our foreign policy was occupied by actions that had been taken by governments in Central America.

Today, I'm more than proud to welcome democracies to the Oval Office. These are peaceful countries. These are freedom-loving countries.

The leaders of these nations have made impressive gains toward establishing — firmly establishing democracy. But these gains cannot be taken for granted. And that's important for members of the United States House of Representatives to understand clearly. Democracy cannot be taken for granted. We must provide the foundation for democracy through smart policy, CAFTA's smart policy. It's good trade policy. It makes it more likely somebody is going to be able to work in America when we pass CAFTA, but it also helps the neighborhood.

You see, there's no democracy — those new democracies in Central America still face forces that oppose democratic government. Make no mistake about it — there are people in our own neighborhood that oppose democracy; they're trying to separate our friends from the United States by sewing resentment and anger. People of this region need to see that democracy produces more than just free elections, that democracy produces measurable progress in their lives. As the oldest democracy in this hemisphere, we have a moral obligation and a vital interest in helping the Central American economies and societies succeed. And, therefore, CAFTA needs to be passed.

By strengthening democracy in the region, CAFTA will lead to greater security and stability. I appreciate so very much the hard work of the Central American leadership. I've had a chance to visit with these good folks. As a matter of fact, they've been coming to America quite often, and I've been going there sometimes. And that's important; that's what friends do, they strategize, they talk. The American people have got to understand, we've got friends in the leadership in Central America. And they're working hard to punish corruption and keep the streets safe. They're working hard to make sure they have a society that respects human rights and the rule of law. We're working together to nail the drug traffickers and terrorists and criminal gangs who feed on lawlessness and

instability.

CAFTA will strengthen those who are taking on the forces of radicalism and violence in this hemisphere, and it will make our country more secure. As former governor of a state that shares a long border with Mexico, I know first-hand the importance of improving ties with our neighbors. It's really important that you've got strong ties in a neighborhood in which you live. I understand the importance of removing trade barriers that make it difficult for our businesses and farmers to compete.

This bill that the House of Representatives will be voting on next week is pro-jobs, pro-growth, and pro-democracy. It is important that we pass this piece of legislation. And I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come and talk about its importance. And I encourage you to keep doing what you're doing, is talking to members of the United States Congress and remind them, set aside partisan politics for the good of the United States of America. It's in our economic interests, it's in our national security interests that the House of Representatives join the United States Senate and pass that CAFTA bill, which I'll proudly sign on behalf of America's workers and small businesses and those of us who love and cherish democracy.

May God bless you.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON HURRICANE KATRINA

JACKSON SQUARE
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
SEPTEMBER 15, 2005

Good evening. I'm speaking to you from the city of New Orleans — nearly empty, still partly under water, and waiting for life and hope to return. Eastward from Lake Pontchartrain, across the Mississippi coast, to Alabama into Florida, millions of lives were changed in a day by a cruel and wasteful storm.

In the aftermath, we have seen fellow citizens left stunned and uprooted, searching for loved ones, and grieving for the dead, and looking for meaning in a tragedy that seems so blind and random. We've also witnessed the kind of desperation no citizen of this great and generous nation should ever have to know — fellow Americans calling out for food and water, vulnerable people left at the mercy of criminals who had no mercy, and the bodies of the dead lying uncovered and untended in the street.

These days of sorrow and outrage have also been marked by acts of courage and kindness that make all Americans proud. Coast Guard and other personnel rescued tens of thousands of people from flooded neighborhoods. Religious congregations and families have welcomed strangers as brothers and sisters and neighbors. In the community of Chalmette, when two men tried to break into a home, the owner invited them to stay — and took in 15 other people who had no place to go. At Tulane Hospital for Children, doctors and nurses did not eat for days so patients could have food, and eventually carried the patients on their backs up eight flights of stairs to helicopters.

Many first responders were victims themselves, wounded healers, with a sense of duty greater than their own suffering. When I met Steve Scott of the Biloxi Fire Department, he and his colleagues were conducting a house-to-house search for survivors. Steve told me this: "I lost my house and I lost my cars, but I still

got my family ... and I still got my spirit.”

Across the Gulf Coast, among people who have lost much, and suffered much, and given to the limit of their power, we are seeing that same spirit — a core of strength that survives all hurt, a faith in God no storm can take away, and a powerful American determination to clear the ruins and build better than before.

Tonight so many victims of the hurricane and the flood are far from home and friends and familiar things. You need to know that our whole nation cares about you, and in the journey ahead you’re not alone. To all who carry a burden of loss, I extend the deepest sympathy of our country. To every person who has served and sacrificed in this emergency, I offer the gratitude of our country. And tonight I also offer this pledge of the American people: Throughout the area hit by the hurricane, we will do what it takes, we will stay as long as it takes, to help citizens rebuild their communities and their lives. And all who question the future of the Crescent City need to know there is no way to imagine America without New Orleans, and this great city will rise again.

The work of rescue is largely finished; the work of recovery is moving forward. In nearly all of Mississippi, electric power has been restored. Trade is starting to return to the Port of New Orleans, and agricultural shipments are moving down the Mississippi River. All major gasoline pipelines are now in operation, preventing the supply disruptions that many feared. The breaks in the levees have been closed, the pumps are running, and the water here in New Orleans is receding by the hour. Environmental officials are on the ground, taking water samples, identifying and dealing with hazardous debris, and working to get drinking water and waste water treatment systems operating again. And some very sad duties are being carried out by professionals who gather the dead, treat them with respect, and prepare them for their rest.

In the task of recovery and rebuilding, some of the hardest work is still ahead, and it will require the creative skill and generosity of a united country.

Our first commitment is to meet the immediate needs of those who had to flee their homes and leave all their possessions behind. For these Americans, every night brings uncertainty, every day requires new courage, and in the months to come will bring more than their fair share of struggles.

The Department of Homeland Security is registering evacuees who are now in shelters and churches, or private homes, whether in the Gulf region or far away. I have signed an order providing immediate assistance to people from the disaster area. As of today, more than 500,000 evacuee families have gotten emergency help to pay for food, clothing, and other essentials. Evacuees who have not yet registered should contact FEMA or the Red Cross. We need to know who you are, because many of you will be eligible for broader assistance in the future. Many families were separated during the evacuation, and we are working to help you reunite. Please call this number: 1-877-568-3317 — that's 1-877-568-3317 — and we will work to bring your family back together, and pay for your travel to reach them.

In addition, we're taking steps to ensure that evacuees do not have to travel great distances or navigate bureaucracies to get the benefits that are there for them. The Department of Health and Human Services has sent more than 1,500 health professionals, along with over 50 tons of medical supplies — including vaccines and antibiotics and medicines for people with chronic conditions such as diabetes. The Social Security Administration is delivering checks. The Department of Labor is helping displaced persons apply for temporary jobs and unemployment benefits. And the Postal Service is registering new addresses so that people can get their mail.

To carry out the first stages of the relief effort and begin rebuilding at once, I have asked for, and the Congress has provided, more than \$60 billion. This is an unprecedented response to an unprecedented crisis, which demonstrates the compassion and resolve of our nation.

Our second commitment is to help the citizens of the Gulf

Coast to overcome this disaster, put their lives back together, and rebuild their communities. Along this coast, for mile after mile, the wind and water swept the land clean. In Mississippi, many thousands of houses were damaged or destroyed. In New Orleans and surrounding parishes, more than a quarter-million houses are no longer safe to live in. Hundreds of thousands of people from across this region will need to find longer-term housing.

Our goal is to get people out of the shelters by the middle of October. So we're providing direct assistance to evacuees that allows them to rent apartments, and many already are moving into places of their own. A number of states have taken in evacuees and shown them great compassion — admitting children to school, and providing health care. So I will work with the Congress to ensure that states are reimbursed for these extra expenses.

In the disaster area, and in cities that have received huge numbers of displaced people, we're beginning to bring in mobile homes and trailers for temporary use. To relieve the burden on local health care facilities in the region, we're sending extra doctors and nurses to these areas. We're also providing money that can be used to cover overtime pay for police and fire departments while the cities and towns rebuild.

Near New Orleans, and Biloxi, and other cities, housing is urgently needed for police and firefighters, other service providers, and the many workers who are going to rebuild these cities. Right now, many are sleeping on ships we have brought to the Port of New Orleans — and more ships are on their way to the region. And we'll provide mobile homes, and supply them with basic services, as close to construction areas as possible, so the rebuilding process can go forward as quickly as possible.

And the federal government will undertake a close partnership with the states of Louisiana and Mississippi, the city of New Orleans, and other Gulf Coast cities, so they can rebuild in a sensible, well-planned way. Federal funds will cover the great majority of the costs of repairing public infrastructure in the disaster zone, from roads and bridges to schools and water systems. Our

goal is to get the work done quickly. And taxpayers expect this work to be done honestly and wisely — so we'll have a team of inspectors general reviewing all expenditures.

In the rebuilding process, there will be many important decisions and many details to resolve, yet we're moving forward according to some clear principles. The federal government will be fully engaged in the mission, but Governor Barbour, Governor Blanco, Mayor Nagin, and other state and local leaders will have the primary role in planning for their own future. Clearly, communities will need to move decisively to change zoning laws and building codes, in order to avoid a repeat of what we've seen. And in the work of rebuilding, as many jobs as possible should go to the men and women who live in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Our third commitment is this: When communities are rebuilt, they must be even better and stronger than before the storm. Within the Gulf region are some of the most beautiful and historic places in America. As all of us saw on television, there's also some deep, persistent poverty in this region, as well. That poverty has roots in a history of racial discrimination, which cut off generations from the opportunity of America. We have a duty to confront this poverty with bold action. So let us restore all that we have cherished from yesterday, and let us rise above the legacy of inequality. When the streets are rebuilt, there should be many new businesses, including minority-owned businesses, along those streets. When the houses are rebuilt, more families should own, not rent, those houses. When the regional economy revives, local people should be prepared for the jobs being created.

Americans want the Gulf Coast not just to survive, but to thrive; not just to cope, but to overcome. We want evacuees to come home, for the best of reasons — because they have a real chance at a better life in a place they love.

When one resident of this city who lost his home was asked by a reporter if he would relocate, he said, "Naw, I will rebuild — but I will build higher." That is our vision for the future, in this city

and beyond: We'll not just rebuild, we'll build higher and better. To meet this goal, I will listen to good ideas from Congress, and state and local officials, and the private sector. I believe we should start with three initiatives that the Congress should pass.

Tonight I propose the creation of a Gulf Opportunity Zone, encompassing the region of the disaster in Louisiana and Mississippi and Alabama. Within this zone, we should provide immediate incentives for job-creating investment, tax relief for small businesses, incentives to companies that create jobs, and loans and loan guarantees for small businesses, including minority-owned enterprises, to get them up and running again. It is entrepreneurship that creates jobs and opportunity; it is entrepreneurship that helps break the cycle of poverty; and we will take the side of entrepreneurs as they lead the economic revival of the Gulf region.

I propose the creation of Worker Recovery Accounts to help those evacuees who need extra help finding work. Under this plan, the federal government would provide accounts of up to \$5,000, which these evacuees could draw upon for job training and education to help them get a good job, and for child care expenses during their job search.

And to help lower-income citizens in the hurricane region build new and better lives, I also propose that Congress pass an Urban Homesteading Act. Under this approach, we will identify property in the region owned by the federal government, and provide building sites to low-income citizens free of charge, through a lottery. In return, they would pledge to build on the lot, with either a mortgage or help from a charitable organization like Habitat for Humanity. Home ownership is one of the great strengths of any community, and it must be a central part of our vision for the revival of this region.

In the long run, the New Orleans area has a particular challenge, because much of the city lies below sea level. The people who call it home need to have reassurance that their lives will be safer in the years to come. Protecting a city that sits

lower than the water around it is not easy, but it can, and has been done. City and parish officials in New Orleans, and state officials in Louisiana will have a large part in the engineering decisions to come. And the Army Corps of Engineers will work at their side to make the flood protection system stronger than it has ever been.

The work that has begun in the Gulf Coast region will be one of the largest reconstruction efforts the world has ever seen. When that job is done, all Americans will have something to be very proud of — and all Americans are needed in this common effort. It is the armies of compassion — charities and houses of worship, and idealistic men and women — that give our reconstruction effort its humanity. They offer to those who hurt a friendly face, an arm around the shoulder, and the reassurance that in hard times, they can count on someone who cares. By land, by sea, and by air, good people wanting to make a difference deployed to the Gulf Coast, and they've been working around the clock ever since.

The cash needed to support the armies of compassion is great, and Americans have given generously. For example, the private fundraising effort led by former Presidents Bush and Clinton has already received pledges of more than \$100 million. Some of that money is going to the Governors to be used for immediate needs within their states. A portion will also be sent to local houses of worship to help reimburse them for the expense of helping others. This evening the need is still urgent, and I ask the American people to continue donating to the Salvation Army, the Red Cross, other good charities, and religious congregations in the region.

It's also essential for the many organizations of our country to reach out to your fellow citizens in the Gulf area. So I've asked USA Freedom Corps to create an information clearinghouse, available at usafreedomcorps.gov, so that families anywhere in the country can find opportunities to help families in the region, or a school can support a school. And I challenge existing organizations — churches, and Scout troops, or labor union locals to get in touch with their counterparts in Mississippi, Louisiana, or Alabama, and learn what they can do to help. In this great national enterprise,

important work can be done by everyone, and everyone should find their role and do their part.

The government of this nation will do its part, as well. Our cities must have clear and up-to-date plans for responding to natural disasters, and disease outbreaks, or a terrorist attack, for evacuating large numbers of people in an emergency, and for providing the food and water and security they would need. In a time of terror threats and weapons of mass destruction, the danger to our citizens reaches much wider than a fault line or a flood plain. I consider detailed emergency planning to be a national security priority, and therefore, I've ordered the Department of Homeland Security to undertake an immediate review, in cooperation with local counterparts, of emergency plans in every major city in America.

I also want to know all the facts about the government response to Hurricane Katrina. The storm involved a massive flood, a major supply and security operation, and an evacuation order affecting more than a million people. It was not a normal hurricane — and the normal disaster relief system was not equal to it. Many of the men and women of the Coast Guard, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the United States military, the National Guard, Homeland Security, and state and local governments performed skillfully under the worst conditions. Yet the system, at every level of government, was not well-coordinated, and was overwhelmed in the first few days. It is now clear that a challenge on this scale requires greater federal authority and a broader role for the armed forces — the institution of our government most capable of massive logistical operations on a moment's notice.

Four years after the frightening experience of September the 11th, Americans have every right to expect a more effective response in a time of emergency. When the federal government fails to meet such an obligation, I, as President, am responsible for the problem, and for the solution. So I've ordered every Cabinet Secretary to participate in a comprehensive review of the government response to the hurricane. This government will learn the lessons of Hurricane Katrina. We're going to review every

action and make necessary changes, so that we are better prepared for any challenge of nature, or act of evil men, that could threaten our people.

The United States Congress also has an important oversight function to perform. Congress is preparing an investigation, and I will work with members of both parties to make sure this effort is thorough.

In the life of this nation, we have often been reminded that nature is an awesome force, and that all life is fragile. We're the heirs of men and women who lived through those first terrible winters at Jamestown and Plymouth, who rebuilt Chicago after a great fire, and San Francisco after a great earthquake, who reclaimed the prairie from the Dust Bowl of the 1930s. Every time, the people of this land have come back from fire, flood, and storm to build anew — and to build better than what we had before. Americans have never left our destiny to the whims of nature — and we will not start now.

These trials have also reminded us that we are often stronger than we know — with the help of grace and one another. They remind us of a hope beyond all pain and death, a God who welcomes the lost to a house not made with hands. And they remind us that we're tied together in this life, in this nation — and that the despair of any touches us all.

I know that when you sit on the steps of a porch where a home once stood, or sleep on a cot in a crowded shelter, it is hard to imagine a bright future. But that future will come. The streets of Biloxi and Gulfport will again be filled with lovely homes and the sound of children playing. The churches of Alabama will have their broken steeples mended and their congregations whole. And here in New Orleans, the street cars will once again rumble down St. Charles, and the passionate soul of a great city will return.

In this place, there's a custom for the funerals of jazz musicians. The funeral procession parades slowly through the streets, followed by a band playing a mournful dirge as it moves to the cemetery. Once the casket has been laid in place, the band breaks into a joyful

“second line” — symbolizing the triumph of the spirit over death.
Tonight the Gulf Coast is still coming through the dirge — yet we
will live to see the second line.

Thank you, and may God bless America.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 109TH CONGRESS,
SECOND SESSION

UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 31, 2006

Thank you all. Mr. Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, members of the Supreme Court and diplomatic corps, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens: Today our nation lost a beloved, graceful, courageous woman who called America to its founding ideals and carried on a noble dream. Tonight we are comforted by the hope of a glad reunion with the husband who was taken so long ago, and we are grateful for the good life of Coretta Scott King.

Every time I'm invited to this rostrum, I'm humbled by the privilege, and mindful of the history we've seen together. We have gathered under this Capitol dome in moments of national mourning and national achievement. We have served America through one of the most consequential periods of our history — and it has been my honor to serve with you.

In a system of two parties, two chambers, and two elected branches, there will always be differences and debate. But even tough debates can be conducted in a civil tone, and our differences cannot be allowed to harden into anger. To confront the great issues before us, we must act in a spirit of goodwill and respect for one another — and I will do my part. Tonight the state of our Union is strong — and together we will make it stronger.

In this decisive year, you and I will make choices that determine both the future and the character of our country. We will choose to act confidently in pursuing the enemies of freedom — or retreat from our duties in the hope of an easier life. We will choose to build our prosperity by leading the world economy — or shut ourselves off from trade and opportunity. In a complex and challenging time, the road of isolationism and protectionism may

seem broad and inviting — yet it ends in danger and decline. The only way to protect our people, the only way to secure the peace, the only way to control our destiny is by our leadership — so the United States of America will continue to lead.

Abroad, our nation is committed to an historic, long-term goal — we seek the end of tyranny in our world. Some dismiss that goal as misguided idealism. In reality, the future security of America depends on it. On September the 11th, 2001, we found that problems originating in a failed and oppressive state 7,000 miles away could bring murder and destruction to our country. Dictatorships shelter terrorists, and feed resentment and radicalism, and seek weapons of mass destruction. Democracies replace resentment with hope, respect the rights of their citizens and their neighbors, and join the fight against terror. Every step toward freedom in the world makes our country safer — so we will act boldly in freedom's cause.

Far from being a hopeless dream, the advance of freedom is the great story of our time. In 1945, there were about two dozen lonely democracies in the world. Today, there are 122. And we're writing a new chapter in the story of self-government — with women lining up to vote in Afghanistan, and millions of Iraqis marking their liberty with purple ink, and men and women from Lebanon to Egypt debating the rights of individuals and the necessity of freedom. At the start of 2006, more than half the people of our world live in democratic nations. And we do not forget the other half — in places like Syria and Burma, Zimbabwe, North Korea, and Iran — because the demands of justice, and the peace of this world, require their freedom, as well.

No one can deny the success of freedom, but some men rage and fight against it. And one of the main sources of reaction and opposition is radical Islam — the perversion by a few of a noble faith into an ideology of terror and death. Terrorists like bin Laden are serious about mass murder — and all of us must take their declared intentions seriously. They seek to impose a heartless system of totalitarian control throughout the Middle East, and arm

themselves with weapons of mass murder.

Their aim is to seize power in Iraq, and use it as a safe haven to launch attacks against America and the world. Lacking the military strength to challenge us directly, the terrorists have chosen the weapon of fear. When they murder children at a school in Beslan, or blow up commuters in London, or behead a bound captive, the terrorists hope these horrors will break our will, allowing the violent to inherit the Earth. But they have miscalculated: We love our freedom, and we will fight to keep it.

In a time of testing, we cannot find security by abandoning our commitments and retreating within our borders. If we were to leave these vicious attackers alone, they would not leave us alone. They would simply move the battlefield to our own shores. There is no peace in retreat. And there is no honor in retreat. By allowing radical Islam to work its will — by leaving an assaulted world to fend for itself — we would signal to all that we no longer believe in our own ideals, or even in our own courage. But our enemies and our friends can be certain: The United States will not retreat from the world, and we will never surrender to evil.

America rejects the false comfort of isolationism. We are the nation that saved liberty in Europe, and liberated death camps, and helped raise up democracies, and faced down an evil empire. Once again, we accept the call of history to deliver the oppressed and move this world toward peace. We remain on the offensive against terror networks. We have killed or captured many of their leaders — and for the others, their day will come.

We remain on the offensive in Afghanistan, where a fine President and a National Assembly are fighting terror while building the institutions of a new democracy. We're on the offensive in Iraq, with a clear plan for victory. First, we're helping Iraqis build an inclusive government, so that old resentments will be eased and the insurgency will be marginalized.

Second, we're continuing reconstruction efforts, and helping the Iraqi government to fight corruption and build a modern economy, so all Iraqis can experience the benefits of freedom. And, third,

we're striking terrorist targets while we train Iraqi forces that are increasingly capable of defeating the enemy. Iraqis are showing their courage every day, and we are proud to be their allies in the cause of freedom.

Our work in Iraq is difficult because our enemy is brutal. But that brutality has not stopped the dramatic progress of a new democracy. In less than three years, the nation has gone from dictatorship to liberation, to sovereignty, to a constitution, to national elections. At the same time, our coalition has been relentless in shutting off terrorist infiltration, clearing out insurgent strongholds, and turning over territory to Iraqi security forces. I am confident in our plan for victory; I am confident in the will of the Iraqi people; I am confident in the skill and spirit of our military. Fellow citizens, we are in this fight to win, and we are winning.

The road of victory is the road that will take our troops home. As we make progress on the ground, and Iraqi forces increasingly take the lead, we should be able to further decrease our troop levels — but those decisions will be made by our military commanders, not by politicians in Washington, D.C.

Our coalition has learned from our experience in Iraq. We've adjusted our military tactics and changed our approach to reconstruction. Along the way, we have benefitted from responsible criticism and counsel offered by members of Congress of both parties. In the coming year, I will continue to reach out and seek your good advice. Yet, there is a difference between responsible criticism that aims for success, and defeatism that refuses to acknowledge anything but failure. Hindsight alone is not wisdom, and second-guessing is not a strategy.

With so much in the balance, those of us in public office have a duty to speak with candor. A sudden withdrawal of our forces from Iraq would abandon our Iraqi allies to death and prison, would put men like bin Laden and Zarqawi in charge of a strategic country, and show that a pledge from America means little. Members of Congress, however we feel about the decisions and debates of the past, our nation has only one option: We must keep

our word, defeat our enemies, and stand behind the American military in this vital mission.

Our men and women in uniform are making sacrifices — and showing a sense of duty stronger than all fear. They know what it's like to fight house to house in a maze of streets, to wear heavy gear in the desert heat, to see a comrade killed by a roadside bomb. And those who know the costs also know the stakes. Marine Staff Sergeant Dan Clay was killed last month fighting in Fallujah. He left behind a letter to his family, but his words could just as well be addressed to every American. Here is what Dan wrote: "I know what honor is. ... It has been an honor to protect and serve all of you. I faced death with the secure knowledge that you would not have to.... Never falter! Don't hesitate to honor and support those of us who have the honor of protecting that which is worth protecting."

Staff Sergeant Dan Clay's wife, Lisa, and his mom and dad, Sara Jo and Bud, are with us this evening. Welcome.

Our nation is grateful to the fallen, who live in the memory of our country. We're grateful to all who volunteer to wear our nation's uniform — and as we honor our brave troops, let us never forget the sacrifices of America's military families.

Our offensive against terror involves more than military action. Ultimately, the only way to defeat the terrorists is to defeat their dark vision of hatred and fear by offering the hopeful alternative of political freedom and peaceful change. So the United States of America supports democratic reform across the broader Middle East. Elections are vital, but they are only the beginning. Raising up a democracy requires the rule of law, and protection of minorities, and strong, accountable institutions that last longer than a single vote.

The great people of Egypt have voted in a multi-party presidential election — and now their government should open paths of peaceful opposition that will reduce the appeal of radicalism. The Palestinian people have voted in elections. And now the leaders of Hamas must recognize Israel, disarm, reject

terrorism, and work for lasting peace. Saudi Arabia has taken the first steps of reform — now it can offer its people a better future by pressing forward with those efforts. Democracies in the Middle East will not look like our own, because they will reflect the traditions of their own citizens. Yet liberty is the future of every nation in the Middle East, because liberty is the right and hope of all humanity.

The same is true of Iran, a nation now held hostage by a small clerical elite that is isolating and repressing its people. The regime in that country sponsors terrorists in the Palestinian territories and in Lebanon — and that must come to an end. The Iranian government is defying the world with its nuclear ambitions, and the nations of the world must not permit the Iranian regime to gain nuclear weapons. America will continue to rally the world to confront these threats.

Tonight, let me speak directly to the citizens of Iran: America respects you, and we respect your country. We respect your right to choose your own future and win your own freedom. And our nation hopes one day to be the closest of friends with a free and democratic Iran.

To overcome dangers in our world, we must also take the offensive by encouraging economic progress, and fighting disease, and spreading hope in hopeless lands. Isolationism would not only tie our hands in fighting enemies, it would keep us from helping our friends in desperate need. We show compassion abroad because Americans believe in the God-given dignity and worth of a villager with HIV/AIDS, or an infant with malaria, or a refugee fleeing genocide, or a young girl sold into slavery. We also show compassion abroad because regions overwhelmed by poverty, corruption, and despair are sources of terrorism, and organized crime, and human trafficking, and the drug trade.

In recent years, you and I have taken unprecedented action to fight AIDS and malaria, expand the education of girls, and reward developing nations that are moving forward with economic and political reform. For people everywhere, the United States

is a partner for a better life. Short-changing these efforts would increase the suffering and chaos of our world, undercut our long-term security, and dull the conscience of our country. I urge members of Congress to serve the interests of America by showing the compassion of America.

Our country must also remain on the offensive against terrorism here at home. The enemy has not lost the desire or capability to attack us. Fortunately, this nation has superb professionals in law enforcement, intelligence, the military, and homeland security. These men and women are dedicating their lives, protecting us all, and they deserve our support and our thanks. They also deserve the same tools they already use to fight drug trafficking and organized crime — so I ask you to reauthorize the Patriot Act.

It is said that prior to the attacks of September the 11th, our government failed to connect the dots of the conspiracy. We now know that two of the hijackers in the United States placed telephone calls to al Qaeda operatives overseas. But we did not know about their plans until it was too late. So to prevent another attack — based on authority given to me by the Constitution and by statute — I have authorized a terrorist surveillance program to aggressively pursue the international communications of suspected al Qaeda operatives and affiliates to and from America. Previous Presidents have used the same constitutional authority I have, and federal courts have approved the use of that authority. Appropriate members of Congress have been kept informed. The terrorist surveillance program has helped prevent terrorist attacks. It remains essential to the security of America. If there are people inside our country who are talking with al Qaeda, we want to know about it, because we will not sit back and wait to be hit again.

In all these areas — from the disruption of terror networks, to victory in Iraq, to the spread of freedom and hope in troubled regions — we need the support of our friends and allies. To draw that support, we must always be clear in our principles and willing to act. The only alternative to American leadership is a

dramatically more dangerous and anxious world. Yet we also choose to lead because it is a privilege to serve the values that gave us birth. American leaders — from Roosevelt to Truman to Kennedy to Reagan — rejected isolation and retreat, because they knew that America is always more secure when freedom is on the march.

Our own generation is in a long war against a determined enemy — a war that will be fought by Presidents of both parties, who will need steady bipartisan support from the Congress. And tonight I ask for yours. Together, let us protect our country, support the men and women who defend us, and lead this world toward freedom.

Here at home, America also has a great opportunity: We will build the prosperity of our country by strengthening our economic leadership in the world.

Our economy is healthy and vigorous, and growing faster than other major industrialized nations. In the last two-and-a-half years, America has created 4.6 million new jobs — more than Japan and the European Union combined. Even in the face of higher energy prices and natural disasters, the American people have turned in an economic performance that is the envy of the world.

The American economy is preeminent, but we cannot afford to be complacent. In a dynamic world economy, we are seeing new competitors, like China and India, and this creates uncertainty, which makes it easier to feed people's fears. So we're seeing some old temptations return. Protectionists want to escape competition, pretending that we can keep our high standard of living while walling off our economy. Others say that the government needs to take a larger role in directing the economy, centralizing more power in Washington and increasing taxes. We hear claims that immigrants are somehow bad for the economy — even though this economy could not function without them. All these are forms of economic retreat, and they lead in the same direction — toward a stagnant and second-rate economy.

Tonight I will set out a better path: an agenda for a nation that

competes with confidence; an agenda that will raise standards of living and generate new jobs. Americans should not fear our economic future, because we intend to shape it.

Keeping America competitive begins with keeping our economy growing. And our economy grows when Americans have more of their own money to spend, save, and invest. In the last five years, the tax relief you passed has left \$880 billion in the hands of American workers, investors, small businesses, and families — and they have used it to help produce more than four years of uninterrupted economic growth. Yet the tax relief is set to expire in the next few years. If we do nothing, American families will face a massive tax increase they do not expect and will not welcome. Because America needs more than a temporary expansion, we need more than temporary tax relief. I urge the Congress to act responsibly, and make the tax cuts permanent.

Keeping America competitive requires us to be good stewards of tax dollars. Every year of my presidency, we've reduced the growth of non-security discretionary spending, and last year you passed bills that cut this spending. This year my budget will cut it again, and reduce or eliminate more than 140 programs that are performing poorly or not fulfilling essential priorities. By passing these reforms, we will save the American taxpayer another \$14 billion next year, and stay on track to cut the deficit in half by 2009.

I am pleased that members of Congress are working on earmark reform, because the federal budget has too many special interest projects. And we can tackle this problem together, if you pass the line-item veto.

We must also confront the larger challenge of mandatory spending, or entitlements. This year, the first of about 78 million baby boomers turn 60, including two of my Dad's favorite people — me and President Clinton. This milestone is more than a personal crisis, it is a national challenge. The retirement of the baby boom generation will put unprecedented strains on the federal government. By 2030, spending for Social Security, Medicare

and Medicaid alone will be almost 60 percent of the entire federal budget. And that will present future Congresses with impossible choices — staggering tax increases, immense deficits, or deep cuts in every category of spending. Congress did not act last year on my proposal to save Social Security, yet the rising cost of entitlements is a problem that is not going away. And every year we fail to act, the situation gets worse.

So tonight, I ask you to join me in creating a commission to examine the full impact of baby boom retirements on Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. This commission should include members of Congress of both parties, and offer bipartisan solutions. We need to put aside partisan politics and work together and get this problem solved.

Keeping America competitive requires us to open more markets for all that Americans make and grow. One out of every five factory jobs in America is related to global trade, and we want people everywhere to buy American. With open markets and a level playing field, no one can out-produce or out-compete the American worker.

Keeping America competitive requires an immigration system that upholds our laws, reflects our values, and serves the interests of our economy. Our nation needs orderly and secure borders. To meet this goal, we must have stronger immigration enforcement and border protection. And we must have a rational, humane guest worker program that rejects amnesty, allows temporary jobs for people who seek them legally, and reduces smuggling and crime at the border.

Keeping America competitive requires affordable health care. Our government has a responsibility to provide health care for the poor and the elderly, and we are meeting that responsibility. For all Americans — for all Americans, we must confront the rising cost of care, strengthen the doctor-patient relationship, and help people afford the insurance coverage they need.

We will make wider use of electronic records and other health information technology, to help control costs and reduce

dangerous medical errors. We will strengthen health savings accounts — making sure individuals and small business employees can buy insurance with the same advantages that people working for big businesses now get. We will do more to make this coverage portable, so workers can switch jobs without having to worry about losing their health insurance. And because lawsuits are driving many good doctors out of practice — leaving women in nearly 1,500 American counties without a single OB/GYN — I ask the Congress to pass medical liability reform this year.

Keeping America competitive requires affordable energy. And here we have a serious problem: America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world. The best way to break this addiction is through technology. Since 2001, we have spent nearly \$10 billion to develop cleaner, cheaper, and more reliable alternative energy sources — and we are on the threshold of incredible advances.

So tonight, I announce the Advanced Energy Initiative — a 22-percent increase in clean-energy research — at the Department of Energy, to push for breakthroughs in two vital areas. To change how we power our homes and offices, we will invest more in zero-emission coal-fired plants, revolutionary solar and wind technologies, and clean, safe nuclear energy.

We must also change how we power our automobiles. We will increase our research in better batteries for hybrid and electric cars, and in pollution-free cars that run on hydrogen. We'll also fund additional research in cutting-edge methods of producing ethanol, not just from corn, but from wood chips and stalks, or switch grass. Our goal is to make this new kind of ethanol practical and competitive within six years.

Breakthroughs on this and other new technologies will help us reach another great goal: to replace more than 75 percent of our oil imports from the Middle East by 2025. By applying the talent and technology of America, this country can dramatically improve our environment, move beyond a petroleum-based economy, and make our dependence on Middle Eastern oil a thing of the past.

And to keep America competitive, one commitment is necessary above all: We must continue to lead the world in human talent and creativity. Our greatest advantage in the world has always been our educated, hardworking, ambitious people — and we're going to keep that edge. Tonight I announce an American Competitiveness Initiative, to encourage innovation throughout our economy, and to give our nation's children a firm grounding in math and science.

First, I propose to double the federal commitment to the most critical basic research programs in the physical sciences over the next 10 years. This funding will support the work of America's most creative minds as they explore promising areas such as nanotechnology, supercomputing, and alternative energy sources.

Second, I propose to make permanent the research and development tax credit to encourage bolder private-sector initiatives in technology. With more research in both the public and private sectors, we will improve our quality of life — and ensure that America will lead the world in opportunity and innovation for decades to come.

Third, we need to encourage children to take more math and science, and to make sure those courses are rigorous enough to compete with other nations. We've made a good start in the early grades with the No Child Left Behind Act, which is raising standards and lifting test scores across our country. Tonight I propose to train 70,000 high school teachers to lead advanced-placement courses in math and science, bring 30,000 math and science professionals to teach in classrooms, and give early help to students who struggle with math, so they have a better chance at good, high-wage jobs. If we ensure that America's children succeed in life, they will ensure that America succeeds in the world.

Preparing our nation to compete in the world is a goal that all of us can share. I urge you to support the American Competitiveness Initiative, and together we will show the world what the American people can achieve.

America is a great force for freedom and prosperity. Yet our

greatness is not measured in power or luxuries, but by who we are and how we treat one another. So we strive to be a compassionate, decent, hopeful society.

In recent years, America has become a more hopeful nation. Violent crime rates have fallen to their lowest levels since the 1970s. Welfare cases have dropped by more than half over the past decade. Drug use among youth is down 19 percent since 2001. There are fewer abortions in America than at any point in the last three decades, and the number of children born to teenage mothers has been falling for a dozen years in a row.

These gains are evidence of a quiet transformation — a revolution of conscience, in which a rising generation is finding that a life of personal responsibility is a life of fulfillment. Government has played a role. Wise policies, such as welfare reform and drug education and support for abstinence and adoption have made a difference in the character of our country. And everyone here tonight, Democrat and Republican, has a right to be proud of this record.

Yet many Americans, especially parents, still have deep concerns about the direction of our culture, and the health of our most basic institutions. They're concerned about unethical conduct by public officials, and discouraged by activist courts that try to redefine marriage. They worry about children in our society who need direction and love, and about fellow citizens still displaced by natural disaster, and about suffering caused by treatable diseases.

As we look at these challenges, we must never give in to the belief that America is in decline, or that our culture is doomed to unravel. The American people know better than that. We have proven the pessimists wrong before — and we will do it again.

A hopeful society depends on courts that deliver equal justice under the law. The Supreme Court now has two superb new members — new members on its bench: Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Sam Alito. I thank the Senate for confirming both of them. I will continue to nominate men and women who understand that judges must be servants of the law, and not

legislate from the bench.

Today marks the official retirement of a very special American. For 24 years of faithful service to our nation, the United States is grateful to Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

A hopeful society has institutions of science and medicine that do not cut ethical corners, and that recognize the matchless value of every life. Tonight I ask you to pass legislation to prohibit the most egregious abuses of medical research: human cloning in all its forms, creating or implanting embryos for experiments, creating human-animal hybrids, and buying, selling, or patenting human embryos. Human life is a gift from our Creator — and that gift should never be discarded, devalued or put up for sale.

A hopeful society expects elected officials to uphold the public trust. Honorable people in both parties are working on reforms to strengthen the ethical standards of Washington — I support your efforts. Each of us has made a pledge to be worthy of public responsibility — and that is a pledge we must never forget, never dismiss, and never betray.

As we renew the promise of our institutions, let us also show the character of America in our compassion and care for one another.

A hopeful society gives special attention to children who lack direction and love. Through the Helping America's Youth Initiative, we are encouraging caring adults to get involved in the life of a child — and this good work is being led by our First Lady, Laura Bush. This year we will add resources to encourage young people to stay in school, so more of America's youth can raise their sights and achieve their dreams.

A hopeful society comes to the aid of fellow citizens in times of suffering and emergency — and stays at it until they're back on their feet. So far the federal government has committed \$85 billion to the people of the Gulf Coast and New Orleans. We're removing debris and repairing highways and rebuilding stronger levees. We're providing business loans and housing assistance. Yet as we meet these immediate needs, we must also address deeper

challenges that existed before the storm arrived.

In New Orleans and in other places, many of our fellow citizens have felt excluded from the promise of our country. The answer is not only temporary relief, but schools that teach every child, and job skills that bring upward mobility, and more opportunities to own a home and start a business. As we recover from a disaster, let us also work for the day when all Americans are protected by justice, equal in hope, and rich in opportunity.

A hopeful society acts boldly to fight diseases like HIV/AIDS, which can be prevented, and treated, and defeated. More than a million Americans live with HIV, and half of all AIDS cases occur among African Americans. I ask Congress to reform and reauthorize the Ryan White Act, and provide new funding to states, so we end the waiting lists for AIDS medicines in America. We will also lead a nationwide effort, working closely with African American churches and faith-based groups, to deliver rapid HIV tests to millions, end the stigma of AIDS, and come closer to the day when there are no new infections in America.

Fellow citizens, we've been called to leadership in a period of consequence. We've entered a great ideological conflict we did nothing to invite. We see great changes in science and commerce that will influence all our lives. Sometimes it can seem that history is turning in a wide arc, toward an unknown shore. Yet the destination of history is determined by human action, and every great movement of history comes to a point of choosing.

Lincoln could have accepted peace at the cost of disunity and continued slavery. Martin Luther King could have stopped at Birmingham or at Selma, and achieved only half a victory over segregation. The United States could have accepted the permanent division of Europe, and been complicit in the oppression of others. Today, having come far in our own historical journey, we must decide: Will we turn back, or finish well?

Before history is written down in books, it is written in courage. Like Americans before us, we will show that courage and we will finish well. We will lead freedom's advance. We will compete and

excel in the global economy. We will renew the defining moral commitments of this land. And so we move forward — optimistic about our country, faithful to its cause, and confident of the victories to come.

May God bless America.

REMARKS ON THE ADVANCED ENERGY INITIATIVE

JOHNSON CONTROLS
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN
FEBRUARY 20, 2006

John, thanks. Thanks for letting me come by to say “hello.” I’ve got something on my mind I want to share with you. First, Happy President’s Day. It turns out most folks in Washington don’t work on President’s Day. The only one working is the President.

I want to talk to you about the fact that I think we’re in an important moment in history, and that we have a chance to transform the way we power our economy and how we lead our lives. That’s what I’m here to talk about. It’s a good place to come to talk about it because, the truth of the matter is, in order to seize the moment, this country has got to remain technologically advanced.

Johnson Controls has been on the cutting edge of energy technology and other technologies for more than a century. And the innovators that work here and the smart folks who work here are on the leading edge of change, and that’s why I’ve come. And there’s a role for government to help and I want to explain that role. Before I do, again, I want to thank you, John. I want to thank all the folks who work for Johnson Controls. It’s not easy to host the President.

I had the honor of touring the laboratory on the other side of town there, and it was really neat to see the engineers and the scientists and the Ph.D.s all working hard to apply their God-given talents to help this country remain on the leading edge of technology. It reminded me of one of the challenges we have in America, and that’s to make sure a new generation of our citizens are interested in science and engineering and physics. And part of making sure this country is the leader in the world, we’ve got to make sure our children are properly educated so they’ll be ready for the jobs of the 21st century.

I want to thank Congresswoman Gwen Moore for joining us;

I appreciate you coming, nice to see you. They tell me this is your congressional district, so it's awfully kind of you to let two other congress persons join us — that would be Congressman Mark Green and Congressman Paul Ryan. Thank you both for coming. We have eaten a lot of custard in the past. I'm still recovering, I want you to know.

I want to thank the Speaker of the House who has joined us. The Mayor of the great city of Milwaukee has joined us; and the County Executive has joined us. Thank you all for coming, proud you're here.

By the way, it's always important, if any of you ever run for office, to always remember to recognize the sheriff. Sheriff Clarke, thank you for being here, good to see you again. Thank you.

Our economy is strong. It's gaining steam, too. We're now in our fifth year of uninterrupted economic growth. Last year our economy grew at a healthy rate of 3.5 percent, in spite of high energy prices and devastating storms. Real after-tax income is up nearly 8 percent per American since 2001. And that's one of the explanations, one of the reasons why retail sales last month made their biggest gain in more than four years. Homeownership is at record levels. That's a good sign. We want people owning things in America. More minorities own a home than ever before in our nation's history. America's unemployment rate is down to 4.7 percent. That's the lowest level since 2001. We've added 4.7 million new jobs over the last two-and-a-half years. We're doing fine.

The fundamental question is, how do we keep doing fine? The challenge that faces us is — is how we make sure that the economic growth today carries over for tomorrow. And that's what I want to talk about. In order to understand what to do you've got to understand what got us to where we are today. Part of it is keeping taxes low, by the way, and that's exactly what I intend to do so long as I'm the President, is keep taxes low. Part of it is being wise about how we spend our money. Part of it is

understanding how technology plays in the future of the country.

Think back 25 years ago, in the start of the 1980s. It's not all that long ago, really. Some of us remember the '80s pretty clearly. A lot of kind of grey-haired folks here that lived through the '80s. Then most Americans used typewriters, instead of the computers. They used payphones — you remember what those were — instead of cell phones. They used carbon paper instead of laser printers, bank tellers instead of ATMs, and they played the license plate game on trips, as opposed to DVDs. Times have changed a lot in 25 years, because of technology.

We're seeing new developments all the time — new developments — advanced battery technology allows cell phones to last about 50 percent longer than they did just five years ago. In your laboratory we're seeing — firsthand seeing the progress being made because of your scientists and engineers in lighter, more potent battery technology. Lightweight parts and better engines allow cars to travel 60 percent farther on a gallon of gas than they did three decades ago.

Technologies are helping this economy become more efficient. Listen to this: Over the last 30 years our economy has grown three times faster than our energy consumption. The economy has grown three times faster than energy consumption. During that period of time, we created 56 million jobs, while cutting air pollution by 50 percent. Technology is really important for the future of this country. And so in the State of the Union, I said that by using technology, we can help make sure this country remains a world leader. And that starts with making sure we change our energy habits.

I know it came as a shock to some to hear a Texan stand up there in front of the country and say, we've got a real problem, America is addicted to oil. But I meant it, because it's a true fact, and we've got to do something about it now. Oil is the primary source of gasoline; it is the primary source of diesel; it is the primary source of jet fuel. And that means that oil accounts for virtually all energy consumption in the vital transportation sector of

our economy.

The oil we consume in this important sector comes from foreign countries, most of it does. In 1985, three-quarters of the crude oil used in U.S. refineries came from America; today that equation has changed dramatically. Less than half the crude oil used in our refineries is produced here at home, 60 percent comes from foreign countries. Things have changed since 1985.

Some of the nations we rely on for oil have unstable governments, or fundamental differences with the United States. These countries know we need their oil and that reduces influence. It creates a national security issue when we're held hostage for energy by foreign nations that may not like us.

Energy is also part of our economic security, as well. That's obvious. I mean, the global demand for oil has been rising faster than supply because there's new economies that are beginning to gin up, new economies growing, like China and India. Oil prices rise sharply when demand is greater than supply. And when they do, it strains your budgets. It hurts our families, it hurts our small entrepreneurs. It's like a hidden tax. And so we're vulnerable to high prices of oil, and we're vulnerable to sudden disruptions of oil. What I'm telling you is oil — the dependence upon oil is a national security problem, and an economic security problem. And here's what we intend to do about it.

First, Congress passed a good energy bill last summer; I was pleased to sign it. It took a little bit of work. It's kind of hard to get things done in Washington, there's a lot of sharp partisan elbows up there these days. But we got something done, and it's a good bill. It encourages conservation and new technologies and alternative sources of energy. But there's a lot more that needs to be done.

The first thing that needs to be done is to make sure that there's an incentive for private business to invest in research and development. If technology is going to help us change our energy habits and change the way we live, it makes sense for the government to incent people to invest in research and development. Right now we've got what we call a research and development

tax credit, which is a major incentive for private companies such as yourselves, to invest in research and development, which will yield new technologies. The problem is, is that the R&D tax credit expires. As a matter of fact, they've only renewed it on an annual basis.

Now, I don't know how in the heck Congress thinks that people can plan properly if they're uncertain as to whether or not the tax credit is going to exist. So, therefore, if we want to be on the leading edge of research and development, then Congress needs to make the R&D tax credit a permanent part of the tax code.

Secondly, government can help. Government provides about a third of the dollars for research and development. Two-thirds come from the private sector, one-third comes from the government. And so I propose to double the federal commitment to the most critical basic research programs in the physical sciences over the next decade.

Let me explain our strategy when it comes to energy. So in other words, part of our strategy is to make sure people continue to invest. The research you're doing at Johnson Labs will change people's lives appreciably. But we've got to continue to make sure we conduct research and development if we want to be a leader in the world. If we don't want to be a leader in the world, fine, we'll just quit. That's not how I view America. I want America to lead the world, because by leading the world when it comes to the economy, we're helping our people, we're making our people more productive and productivity increases enhance standard of living. And increased standards of living means the American people are doing better.

Now, I laid out what's called an Advanced Energy Initiative. And a cornerstone of the initiative is a 22 percent increase in funding for clean energy research at the Department of Energy. And it's got two major goals, or two objectives. First, to transform the way we power our cars and trucks. And, secondly, to transform the way we power our homes and offices.

So let me talk to you about the first one. Our nation is on the

threshold of some new energy technologies that I think will startle the American people. It's not going to startle you here at Johnson Controls because you know what I'm talking about. You take it for granted. But the American people will be amazed at how far our technology has advanced in order to meet an important goal, which is to reduce our imports from the Middle East by 75 percent by 2025, and eventually getting rid of our dependence totally.

The first objective is to change the way we power our cars and trucks. Today's cars and trucks are fueled almost exclusively by gasoline and diesel fuel, which, of course, comes from oil. To transform the way we power the vehicles, we have got to diversify away from oil. I just gave you a reason from a national security perspective, as well as economic security perspective why reliance upon oil is not good for the United States.

And so here are three ways that we can do that, change our reliance from oil. First, invest in new kinds of vehicles that require much less gasoline. It's a practical thing to do. Secondly, find new fuels that will replace gasoline and, therefore, dependence on oil. And, finally, develop new ways to run a car without gasoline at all.

The most promising ways to reduce gasoline consumption quickly is through hybrid vehicles. Hybrid vehicles have both a gasoline-powered engine and an electric battery based on technologies that were developed by the Department of Energy. In other words, this technology came to be because the federal government made a research commitment. That's why I think it's double — important to double research as we go down the next decade. The gasoline engine charges the battery, which helps drive the vehicle. And the twin sources of power allow hybrid cars and trucks to travel about twice as far on a gallon of fuel as gasoline-only vehicles. That is a good start when something that can go twice as far on a gallon of gasoline than the conventional vehicle can.

Hybrid vehicles are a good deal for consumers and the American people are figuring it out. More than 200,000 hybrids were sold in the United States last year — the highest sales on record. There's growing demand for hybrid automobiles. And

working with the Congress, we came up with an additional incentive, and that is we provide a tax credit up to \$3,400 per hybrid vehicle purchaser. In other words, we want to stimulate demand. In the marketplace when there is demand, suppliers will meet that demand, and that's positive, because if you can go twice as far on a gallon of gasoline than otherwise it means we're becoming less dependent on oil. Hybrid vehicles on the road today are delivering impressive gasoline savings.

But there is more to be done, and that's why I'm here at Johnson Controls, because engineers here are working on ways to replace the current hybrid battery technology with advanced lithium ion batteries that are now used in cell phones and laptops. These batteries are lighter, they are more powerful, and they can be recharged quickly. Using new lithium ion batteries, engineers will be able to design the next generation of hybrid vehicles, called plug-in hybrids, that can be recharged through a standard electrical outlet. Start picturing what I'm talking about: you've got your car, you pull in, you plug it right in the wall.

Development will make a big difference in the performance of hybrid cars and trucks. Instead of depending on the gasoline engine to recharge the electric battery, the plug-in hybrids will have fully charged batteries as soon as you get in the automobile. And that means plug-in hybrids will be able to travel much greater distances on electricity alone, thereby saving more gas for our consumers, thereby making us less dependent on oil.

The plug-in hybrid, they estimate, can initially go 40 miles on electricity alone. So you've got a lot of folks living in cities like Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who generally don't drive more than 40 miles a day. Therefore, within 40 miles you'll be on electricity and using no gasoline. Eventually, plug-in hybrids with lithium ion batteries will be able to get 100 miles per gallon. And now all of a sudden you're beginning to see the effects of this important technology on our national security and on our economic security. But, more important, for the pocketbook of our consumers.

Plug-in hybrids are a really important part of the strategy I've

announced, and we're going to provide \$31 million to speed up research on these advanced technologies — this is a 27-percent increase over current funding levels. In other words, we like to — the experts tell me this is a very good chance to have major breakthroughs and we want to accelerate those breakthroughs. And, again, I want to thank you all for being on the leading edge of change.

We're also supporting the development of advanced fuels that can replace regular gasoline. Here again I'm talking to folks who know what I'm talking about — I'm talking about ethanol. You've got a lot of it here in Wisconsin because you've got corn. Ethanol is produced — primarily produced from corn; it's blended with gasoline to produce clean and efficient fuel. And blends with that ethanol concentration of less than 10 percent, ethanol can be used in any vehicle. With minor modifications — I emphasize “minor modifications” — cars and trucks can become what we call flex-fuel vehicles that run on a fuel blend called E85, which is a mix of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. That's a positive development.

Ethanol, by the way, can be used in hybrid vehicles. So the more ethanol we use, the less crude oil we consume. And using ethanol has the added benefit of supporting our farmers. I like to kind of tease in a way, but beneath the tease is serious — it will be good one day when the President is given the crop report. It says, “Mr. President, corn is up.” And we're less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

America produced a record 3.9 billion gallons of ethanol in 2005, was the record levels. That's twice the level produced when I got sworn in first time. There are five ethanol that plants up and running here in Wisconsin, and more are coming. We offer a tax credit to ethanol blenders of 51 cents per gallon. We're committed to ethanol. It makes sense. Ethanol benefits a lot of folks, but, most importantly, it benefits those who are driving cars.

Now, we're on the edge of advancing additional ethanol production. New technology is going to make it possible to produce

ethanol from wood chips and stalks and switch grass, and other natural materials. Researchers at the Energy Department tell me we're five or six years away from breakthroughs in being able to produce fuels from those waste products. In other words, we're beginning to — we're coming up with a way to make something out of nothing. And this is important because it's — economics are such that it's important to have your ethanol-producing factories or plants close to where the product is grown.

That's why E85 has spread throughout the Midwest, that's where you're growing the corn. Pretty soon, you know, if you're able to grow switch grass and convert that into ethanol, then you're going to have availability for ethanol in other parts of the country. I mean, there's a lot of stuff that gets thrown away that may be converted into fuel, but it's not just located in one part of the country — it's located around the country. And one of the goals is to make sure that ethanol is widespread. If we want to affect our consumption of oil, we want ethanol to be readily available for consumers outside certain parts of the — certain regions of the country.

And so we proposed spending \$150 million for government and private research into these homegrown fuels. It's an important initiative. We want to provide our consumers with reasonable, cost-effective ways to help us become less dependent on foreign sources of oil.

And we've got another initiative that I find interesting, and it's important. And that is we're spending money — your hard-earned money — on research to develop a vehicle that will not use gasoline and it won't produce any pollution whatsoever. And that's through hydrogen. When hydrogen is used in a device called a fuel cell, it can deliver enough electricity that could power a car that emits pure water instead of exhaust fumes. It's an exciting new technology. We're a ways down the road from bringing it to fruition, but we are spending \$1.2 billion over five years to research this important opportunity.

We're seeing some progress, by the way, when it comes to

hydrogen fuel cells. They tell me that the cost of manufacturing hydrogen fuel cells has been cut in half, which is good. Research is taking place. There could be a new technology available so that when your children take their first driver's test — or when some of your children take their first driver's test, they will do so in a hydrogen-powered automobile.

And so those are three steps, three important steps, three steps in which we can help change our driving habits. And by changing our driving habits, we've changed our dependency on foreign sources of oil.

Now, the second objective of the Advanced Energy Initiative is to transform the way we power our homes and offices. And so we've got to diversify our electricity supply is what I'm about to — I'll give you the bottom line first: We must diversify. Right now, American electricity is generated by four principle sources. Coal accounts for about 50 percent; nuclear power, about 20 percent; natural gas about 18 percent; and renewable sources, like hydro electric, solar and wind power account for the rest.

The most versatile of these fuels is natural gas. And there we have a problem. We have a problem because natural gas is used for more than just heating your homes. Natural gas is important for — to help create fertilizer for farmers. Natural gas powers heavy duty machinery used for manufacturing and chemical production. In other words, there's a lot of uses for natural gas. And, yet, natural gas has become really popular for electricity generation in recent years and the price has tripled recently. And these price increases obviously affect our farmers, they affect our ranchers, they affect our consumers.

And they affect our businesses. Businesses that rely upon natural gas feedstocks have found that in order to stay in business they've got to move their plants closer to where vast quantities of natural gas are being discovered — and that's not here in the United States, that's elsewhere.

And so we've got to figure out how to confront this issue. And here's two ways to do it. First, we've got to make sure that we've

got enough natural gas to meet our home heating and industrial needs. And one of the best ways to secure supply is to expand our ability to receive liquefied natural gas. It's a super cool form of natural gas that can be transported from overseas on tankers. Natural gas inside of America is generally transported by pipeline. Huge supplies of gas exist outside the reach of pipelines. And technology is being developed that can cool the gas, they can bring the gas over in tankers in liquefied form, de-liquefy it and put it into our pipeline system.

The problem is, is that we didn't have enough sites to set up terminals to receive the LNG. And until there's a place for the LNG to unload, the liquefied natural gas, what I'm talking about isn't going to come to fruition. And so one of the things in the energy bill that was important is it clarified federal authority to site new receiving terminals for LNG. And that's good. In other words, if we need more natural gas to make sure that we take the pressure off the heating bills, as well as meet our industrial needs, we've got to have places for the liquefied natural gas to come into the country.

And the bill also did another important thing, and that is to streamline permitting processes for on-shore natural — off — on-shore, off-shore natural gas exploration. In other words, we've got to make it easier and at the same time protect our environment to make sure that we can find natural gas that fits into the pipeline to help take the pressure off of price.

Secondly, we need to reduce our reliance on natural gas for electricity generation. In other words, we've got to substitute other forms of power for natural gas if we expect to be able to maintain a manufacturing base that relies upon natural gas. And the best way to do that is to expand our use of coal, nuclear power and renewable sources of energy, like wind and solar.

Let me start with coal. Coal is by far our country's most abundant and affordable energy resource. It's estimated we've got more than 250 years of reserves. That's a lot, that's a lot. And I'm sure you recognize this, or realize this, but in Wisconsin, when you flip on the light switch, there's a 75-percent chance that electricity is

generated by coal-powered plants. In other words, you use it here in Wisconsin.

Coal has the potential to reduce our reliance on natural gas. The problem is we've got to make sure that we can keep our commitment to the environment. Coal requires investment to make sure that we don't pollute our air. And that's the conundrum, that's the difficulty with coal. This country is — I told you we've reduced our air pollution by 50 percent, in spite of the fact that our economy has grown substantially. We want to continue that commitment.

I told folks when I was running for President the first time around that we would invest \$2 billion over 10 years to promote clean coal technology. In other words, I believed, as did many others, that technology will help us deal with this dilemma. And we're on our way, by the way, to complete the promise several years ahead of schedule. In other words, we are committing research dollars to see if we can't use this abundant resource and, at the same time, protect our environment.

The coal research has helped pioneer more effective pollution controls. We're helping coal plant efficiency. We've also implemented new clean air regulations that use a cap and trade system, which gives utility companies incentives to continue investing in clean coal technology. Congress needs to pass my Clear Skies legislation.

But we're getting closer to an interesting, important goal — that by continuing to invest at the federal level, as well as encourage private investment, we will build the world's first power plant to run on coal that produces zero emissions by 2015. That will be a positive development for future generations of Americans.

I'd like to talk about nuclear power. Today there are more than 100 nuclear plants in America that operate in 31 states, including right here in Wisconsin. The plants are producing electricity safely, and they don't emit any air pollution or greenhouse gases. America hasn't ordered a nuclear plant since the 1970s, and that's the result of litigation — or because of litigation — and complex regulations.

It's interesting when you think about a country like France,

however, they have built 58 plants since the 1970s; they get 78 percent of their electricity from nuclear power. It's an interesting contrast, isn't it? We haven't done anything since the '70s; this country has decided to recognize the importance of having renewable sources of energy that protect the environment, and 78 percent of their electricity comes from this form of energy. China has eight nuclear plants in the works, by the way, and plans to build at least 40 more over the next two decades.

I'm going to India later on — at the beginning of next month, March 1st; I'm going to talk about a civilian nuclear power program for India. I'll tell you why I am in a minute, but first let's talk about here at home.

I think we ought to start building nuclear power plants again. I think it makes sense to do so. Technology is such that we can do so and say to the American people, these are safe — and they're important. To encourage construction of nuclear power plants, there's new federal risk insurance for the first six new plants that will be built in the country. That's part of the energy bill I signed. This insurance helps protect the builders of these plants against lawsuits or bureaucratic obstacles and other delays beyond their control. In other words, there's an incentive to say, let's get six of them started.

The administration has also launched what's called Nuclear Power 2010 Initiative. It's a \$1.1 billion partnership between the government and industry to facilitate new plant orders. Chairman Niles Diaz of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is taking steps to streamline the licensing process for new plant construction. In other words, we're analyzing barriers and hurdles and trying to eliminate them so we can start this process.

If we're trying to become less dependent on foreign sources of oil or energy like natural gas, we want to free up our natural gas to keep our manufacturing base intact, we need to move forward when it comes to alternative sources like nuclear power. And there's some encouraging results and the mind-set is beginning to change. After all, the mind-set needed to change; we haven't built a plant since the

1970s. That's a fairly long period of time.

This time last year, only two companies were seeking to build nuclear power plants; now nine companies have expressed a new interest in new — interest in new construction. They're considering as many as 19 new plants. This progress is going to help an important goal. We'll start building nuclear power plants again by the end of this decade. As part of our strategy, as part of our way to make sure that the future is bright and that America remains a leader in the world is to understand the promise of nuclear power.

We're also going to work with other nations to help them build nuclear power industries. And the reason why is this is a global world in which we live and demand for oil in China and India affects price here in America. And so, therefore, if we can help relieve the pressure off of demand for fossil fuels, it helps the entire world.

And so we've got some challenges, however, in dealing with this issue. And that's why I put together what's called a global nuclear energy partnership. It's a partnership that works with countries that have got advanced nuclear energy programs, or civilian nuclear energy programs like France and Great Britain and Japan and Russia. And here are the objectives of the partnership.

First, supplier nations will provide fuel for non-supplier nations so they can start up a civilian nuclear energy program. In other words, a lot of countries don't know how to enrich; a handful do, and it makes sense that we share that — share the benefits of our knowledge with others, but not share the knowledge because there's concern about proliferation.

One of the concerns you hear from the critics of expanding nuclear power is all this will do to create proliferation concerns. Well, here's one way to address those concerns — to say, we'll provide the fuel for you — and we'll collect the fuel from you, by the way. And after we collect the fuel from you, we need to reprocess the spent nuclear material. By reprocessing you can continue to use the fuel base, but equally importantly, we'll reduce the amount of nuclear waste that needs to be stored.

So here is an initiative that affects us here at home, and an initiative that will help others develop nuclear power so they can generate their economic growth. We want people growing in the world. We want people — economies to be in good shape. And we also expect others to help us protect the environment, as well.

Another electricity source with enormous potential is solar power. Today Americans use small amounts of solar power, mainly to heat water or to power small consumer products like outdoor lights. After spending some time with you all here, I'm going over to Michigan to go to a company that manufactures thin film, photovoltaic cells. That's kind of a fancy word for cells that can generate electricity directly from sunlight.

The technology — solar technology has the potential to change the way we live and work, if you really think about it. For example, roof makers will one day be able to create a solar roof that protects you from the elements and, at the same time, powers your house. And that's what these folks are working on.

The vision is this: that you will have — that the technology will become so efficient that you'll become a little power generator in your home, and that if you don't use the energy you generate, you'll be able to feed it back into the electricity grid. The whole purpose of spending money on solar power — and we intend to spend \$150 million next year in funding for both government and private research — is to bring to market as quickly as possible this important and impressive technology. It's really going to help change the way we live, we think, and we want solar power to become competitive by 2015.

Another promising renewable is wind. You're getting — as Laura says, when you speak too long you're a little windy. I'm not saying I'm wind power, but I am telling you I recognize the importance of wind power. More than \$3 billion worth of equipment to generate electricity from wind was installed in America last year. In other words, it's a new industry, it's beginning to grow — \$3 billion is a good investment, good amount of investment. Obviously, people think there's potential when it comes to wind energy.

About 6 percent of the continental U.S. has been identified as highly suitable for construction of wind turbines. Some have estimated that this area alone has the potential to supply up to 20 percent of our nation's electricity. In other words, they've identified 6 percent of the country's landmass as a good place for wind turbines that, if installed with the right technology, could have a major effect on the electricity that we all use. So we're proposing additional money for research and development.

I think you're beginning to get the drift of what I'm talking about. We're on the edge of some amazing breakthroughs — breakthroughs all aimed at enhancing our national security and our economic security, and the quality of life for the folks who live here in the United States. And so, therefore, now is the time for Congress to join me in spending this money. I think it's a good use of your money, to help us achieve major breakthroughs in how we live and how we can reduce our dependency on oil. This is an issue that Republicans and Democrats can, and must, come together on.

Think about how your children or your grandchildren may be able to spend a President's Day in the future. If you're planning a trip to visit relatives, you can plug in your hybrid car the night before and drive the first 40 miles on your lithium ion battery. If you've got more distance to go, you can fill up at your local ethanol station. If you're in Wisconsin, you'll be filling it up with corn product. In Crawford, it may just be switch grass. You may decide to travel in a hydrogen-powered minivan, and refuel at a station with hydrogen generated by a local nuclear power plant. When you finally make it to where you're going, you can sit at a house that is lit by clean coal, or wind energy, or solar-powered roof over your head.

We're close. We're close to having this vision realized in America. And by the way, this can all be done — the whole trip can be done without consuming a single drop of oil. It's within our reach. There was a lot of time when most Americans would never have imagined that we'd be traveling long distance in our automobile instead of a buggy, or sending emails instead of letters.

In the life of this nation we have seen incredible and rapid advances in technology — in the history of this country.

I believe the greatest advances are yet to come. And I want to thank the good folks here at Johnson for helping them come. Thanks for your time. God bless.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON IMMIGRATION

THE OVAL OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 15, 2006

Good evening. I've asked for a few minutes of your time to discuss a matter of national importance — the reform of America's immigration system.

The issue of immigration stirs intense emotions, and in recent weeks, Americans have seen those emotions on display. On the streets of major cities, crowds have rallied in support of those in our country illegally. At our southern border, others have organized to stop illegal immigrants from coming in. Across the country, Americans are trying to reconcile these contrasting images. And in Washington, the debate over immigration reform has reached a time of decision. Tonight, I will make it clear where I stand, and where I want to lead our country on this vital issue.

We must begin by recognizing the problems with our immigration system. For decades, the United States has not been in complete control of its borders. As a result, many who want to work in our economy have been able to sneak across our border, and millions have stayed.

Once here, illegal immigrants live in the shadows of our society. Many use forged documents to get jobs, and that makes it difficult for employers to verify that the workers they hire are legal. Illegal immigration puts pressure on public schools and hospitals, it strains state and local budgets, and brings crime to our communities. These are real problems. Yet we must remember that the vast majority of illegal immigrants are decent people who work hard, support their families, practice their faith, and lead responsible lives. They are a part of American life, but they are beyond the reach and protection of American law.

We're a nation of laws, and we must enforce our laws. We're also a nation of immigrants, and we must uphold that tradition,

which has strengthened our country in so many ways. These are not contradictory goals. America can be a lawful society and a welcoming society at the same time. We will fix the problems created by illegal immigration, and we will deliver a system that is secure, orderly, and fair. So I support comprehensive immigration reform that will accomplish five clear objectives.

First, the United States must secure its borders. This is a basic responsibility of a sovereign nation. It is also an urgent requirement of our national security. Our objective is straightforward: The border should be open to trade and lawful immigration, and shut to illegal immigrants, as well as criminals, drug dealers, and terrorists.

I was a governor of a state that has a 1,200-mile border with Mexico. So I know how difficult it is to enforce the border, and how important it is. Since I became President, we've increased funding for border security by 66 percent, and expanded the Border Patrol from about 9,000 to 12,000 agents. The men and women of our Border Patrol are doing a fine job in difficult circumstances, and over the past five years, they have apprehended and sent home about six million people entering America illegally.

Despite this progress, we do not yet have full control of the border, and I am determined to change that. Tonight I'm calling on Congress to provide funding for dramatic improvements in manpower and technology at the border. By the end of 2008, we'll increase the number of Border Patrol officers by an additional 6,000. When these new agents are deployed, we'll have more than doubled the size of the Border Patrol during my presidency.

At the same time, we're launching the most technologically advanced border security initiative in American history. We will construct high-tech fences in urban corridors, and build new patrol roads and barriers in rural areas. We'll employ motion sensors, infrared cameras, and unmanned aerial vehicles to prevent illegal crossings. America has the best technology in the world, and we will ensure that the Border Patrol has the technology they need to do their job and secure our border.

Training thousands of new Border Patrol agents and bringing the

most advanced technology to the border will take time. Yet the need to secure our border is urgent. So I'm announcing several immediate steps to strengthen border enforcement during this period of transition:

One way to help during this transition is to use the National Guard. So, in coordination with governors, up to 6,000 Guard members will be deployed to our southern border. The Border Patrol will remain in the lead. The Guard will assist the Border Patrol by operating surveillance systems, analyzing intelligence, installing fences and vehicle barriers, building patrol roads, and providing training. Guard units will not be involved in direct law enforcement activities — that duty will be done by the Border Patrol. This initial commitment of Guard members would last for a period of one year. After that, the number of Guard forces will be reduced as new Border Patrol agents and new technologies come online. It is important for Americans to know that we have enough Guard forces to win the war on terror, to respond to natural disasters, and to help secure our border.

The United States is not going to militarize the southern border. Mexico is our neighbor, and our friend. We will continue to work cooperatively to improve security on both sides of the border, to confront common problems like drug trafficking and crime, and to reduce illegal immigration.

Another way to help during this period of transition is through state and local law enforcement in our border communities. So we'll increase federal funding for state and local authorities assisting the Border Patrol on targeted enforcement missions. We will give state and local authorities the specialized training they need to help federal officers apprehend and detain illegal immigrants. State and local law enforcement officials are an important part of our border security and they need to be a part of our strategy to secure our borders.

The steps I've outlined will improve our ability to catch people entering our country illegally. At the same time, we must ensure that every illegal immigrant we catch crossing our southern border is

returned home. More than 85 percent of the illegal immigrants we catch crossing the southern border are Mexicans, and most are sent back home within 24 hours. But when we catch illegal immigrants from other country [sic] it is not as easy to send them home. For many years, the government did not have enough space in our detention facilities to hold them while the legal process unfolded. So most were released back into our society and asked to return for a court date. When the date arrived, the vast majority did not show up. This practice, called “catch and release,” is unacceptable, and we will end it.

We’re taking several important steps to meet this goal. We’ve expanded the number of beds in our detention facilities, and we will continue to add more. We’ve expedited the legal process to cut the average deportation time. And we’re making it clear to foreign governments that they must accept back their citizens who violate our immigration laws. As a result of these actions, we’ve ended “catch and release” for illegal immigrants from some countries. And I will ask Congress for additional funding and legal authority, so we can end “catch and release” at the southern border once and for all. When people know that they’ll be caught and sent home if they enter our country illegally, they will be less likely to try to sneak in.

Second, to secure our border, we must create a temporary worker program. The reality is that there are many people on the other side of our border who will do anything to come to America to work and build a better life. They walk across miles of desert in the summer heat, or hide in the back of 18-wheelers to reach our country. This creates enormous pressure on our border that walls and patrols alone will not stop. To secure the border effectively, we must reduce the numbers of people trying to sneak across.

Therefore, I support a temporary worker program that would create a legal path for foreign workers to enter our country in an orderly way, for a limited period of time. This program would match willing foreign workers with willing American employers for jobs Americans are not doing. Every worker who applies for the program would be required to pass criminal background checks.

And temporary workers must return to their home country at the conclusion of their stay.

A temporary worker program would meet the needs of our economy, and it would give honest immigrants a way to provide for their families while respecting the law. A temporary worker program would reduce the appeal of human smugglers, and make it less likely that people would risk their lives to cross the border. It would ease the financial burden on state and local governments, by replacing illegal workers with lawful taxpayers. And above all, a temporary worker program would add to our security by making certain we know who is in our country and why they are here.

Third, we need to hold employers to account for the workers they hire. It is against the law to hire someone who is in this country illegally. Yet businesses often cannot verify the legal status of their employees because of the widespread problem of document fraud. Therefore, comprehensive immigration reform must include a better system for verifying documents and work eligibility. A key part of that system should be a new identification card for every legal foreign worker. This card should use biometric technology, such as digital fingerprints, to make it tamper-proof. A tamper-proof card would help us enforce the law, and leave employers with no excuse for violating it. And by making it harder for illegal immigrants to find work in our country, we would discourage people from crossing the border illegally in the first place.

Fourth, we must face the reality that millions of illegal immigrants are here already. They should not be given an automatic path to citizenship. This is amnesty, and I oppose it. Amnesty would be unfair to those who are here lawfully, and it would invite further waves of illegal immigration.

Some in this country argue that the solution is to deport every illegal immigrant, and that any proposal short of this amounts to amnesty. I disagree. It is neither wise, nor realistic to round up millions of people, many with deep roots in the United States, and send them across the border. There is a rational middle ground between granting an automatic path to citizenship for every illegal

immigrant, and a program of mass deportation. That middle ground recognizes there are differences between an illegal immigrant who crossed the border recently, and someone who has worked here for many years, and has a home, a family, and an otherwise clean record.

I believe that illegal immigrants who have roots in our country and want to stay should have to pay a meaningful penalty for breaking the law, to pay their taxes, to learn English, and to work in a job for a number of years. People who meet these conditions should be able to apply for citizenship, but approval would not be automatic, and they will have to wait in line behind those who played by the rules and followed the law. What I've just described is not amnesty, it is a way for those who have broken the law to pay their debt to society, and demonstrate the character that makes a good citizen.

Fifth, we must honor the great American tradition of the melting pot, which has made us one nation out of many peoples. The success of our country depends upon helping newcomers assimilate into our society, and embrace our common identity as Americans. Americans are bound together by our shared ideals, an appreciation of our history, respect for the flag we fly, and an ability to speak and write the English language. English is also the key to unlocking the opportunity of America. English allows newcomers to go from picking crops to opening a grocery, from cleaning offices to running offices, from a life of low-paying jobs to a diploma, a career, and a home of their own. When immigrants assimilate and advance in our society, they realize their dreams, they renew our spirit, and they add to the unity of America.

Tonight, I want to speak directly to members of the House and the Senate: An immigration reform bill needs to be comprehensive, because all elements of this problem must be addressed together, or none of them will be solved at all. The House has passed an immigration bill. The Senate should act by the end of this month so we can work out the differences between the two bills, and Congress can pass a comprehensive bill for me to sign into law.

America needs to conduct this debate on immigration in a reasoned and respectful tone. Feelings run deep on this issue, and as we work it out, all of us need to keep some things in mind. We cannot build a unified country by inciting people to anger, or playing on anyone's fears, or exploiting the issue of immigration for political gain. We must always remember that real lives will be affected by our debates and decisions, and that every human being has dignity and value no matter what their citizenship papers say.

I know many of you listening tonight have a parent or a grandparent who came here from another country with dreams of a better life. You know what freedom meant to them, and you know that America is a more hopeful country because of their hard work and sacrifice. As President, I've had the opportunity to meet people of many backgrounds, and hear what America means to them. On a visit to Bethesda Naval Hospital, Laura and I met a wounded Marine named Guadalupe Denogean. Master Gunnery Sergeant Denogean came to the United States from Mexico when he was a boy. He spent his summers picking crops with his family, and then he volunteered for the United States Marine Corps as soon as he was able. During the liberation of Iraq, Master Gunnery Sergeant Denogean was seriously injured. And when asked if he had any requests, he made two: a promotion for the corporal who helped rescue him, and the chance to become an American citizen. And when this brave Marine raised his right hand, and swore an oath to become a citizen of the country he had defended for more than 26 years, I was honored to stand at his side.

We will always be proud to welcome people like Guadalupe Denogean as fellow Americans. Our new immigrants are just what they've always been — people willing to risk everything for the dream of freedom. And America remains what she has always been: the great hope on the horizon, an open door to the future, a blessed and promised land. We honor the heritage of all who come here, no matter where they come from, because we trust in our country's genius for making us all Americans — one nation under God.

Thank you, and good night.

ADDRESS TO AMERICAN LEGION NATIONAL CONVENTION:
THE IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

SALT PALACE CONVENTION CENTER
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
AUGUST 31, 2006

Thank you all very much. Please be seated. Thanks for the warm welcome. It's great to join you here in one of America's most beautiful cities. I appreciate your hospitality. I'm proud to stand before some of our country's finest patriots, our veterans and their families. And I'm pleased to call you my fellow Legionnaires. I suspect I may be the only one here, though, from Post 77, Houston, Texas. That's what I thought. If you're from Post 77, behave yourself here in Salt Lake.

Laura did remind me the other night, though, that a few of my fellow members — at least I've joined a few of my fellow members in another illustrious organization, the "Over 60 Club."

For almost 90 years, Legionnaires have stood proudly "for God and country." From big cities to small towns, the American Legion name brings to mind the best of our nation — decency, generosity, and character. I thank you for a lifetime of service. I thank you for the positive contributions you make to our nation, and I'm proud to join you today.

First, I want to thank Tom Bock, the National Commander, for his kind introduction and his strong leadership. I always am pleased to welcome the Commander to the Oval Office to discuss common issues, and you've done a fine job leading this organization, Tom. I also want to thank your wife, Elaine, and I particularly want to pay respect to your son, Captain Bock, of the United States Army, who's joined us today.

I appreciate being here with Carol Van Kirk, the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary. And I want to thank all the Auxiliary members who are with us here today, as well.

I'm proud that the Governor of this great state, Jon Huntsman,

and his wife Mary Kaye, have joined us. Governor, thank you for your time. I'm also proud to be joined by two United States Senators who are strong supporters of the United States military, Senator Orrin Hatch, and Senator Bob Bennett.

Members of the congressional delegation from the state of Utah have joined us: Congressman Rob Bishop, and Congressman Chris Cannon. Thank you both for coming. Proud you're here. I thank the state Senator, John Valentine, who is the President of the Utah State Senate. I appreciate Speaker Greg Curtis. I want to thank all the state and local officials who have joined us here today. Most particularly, I want to thank you all for giving me a chance to come and speak to you. I particularly want to thank all the Gold Star families who have joined us today. May God bless you. May God bless you.

As veterans, all of you stepped forward when America needed you most. From North Africa to Normandy, Iwo Jima to Inchon, from Khe Sanh to Kuwait, your courage and service have made it possible for generations to live in liberty. And we owe you more than just thanks. We owe you the support of the federal government. And so, in my first four years as President, we increased funding for veterans more than the previous administration did in eight years. Since then, we've increased it even more. My budget for this year provides more than \$80 billion for veterans — that's a 75-percent increase since I took office. It's the highest level of support for veterans in American history.

For many veterans, health care is a top priority, and it's a top priority of my administration. When Congress passes my 2007 budget, we will have increased the VA health care budget by 69 percent since 2001. We've extended treatment to a million additional veterans, including more than 300,000 men and women returning from Afghanistan and Iraq. We're building new VA facilities in places where veterans are retiring, so that more veterans can get top-quality health care closer to their homes.

I appreciate the Legion's strong history of care and compassion for your fellow veterans. Earlier this week, I traveled

to Mississippi and Louisiana to mark the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. Veterans were hit hard by this storm, and American Legion posts all across the United States responded with vital relief. In an hour of suffering, you showed the good heart of our nation, and you showed the world that America can always count on Legionnaires.

I also appreciate the Legion's long history of supporting wise legislation in the Nation's Capital. Earlier this year, the Senate voted on a constitutional amendment to ban flag desecration — we came within a single vote of passing it. The administration looks forward to continuing working with the American Legion to make sure we get this important protection in the Constitution of the United States of America.

Your organization supported another good piece of legislation called the Respect for America's Fallen Heroes Act. This bill ensures that families of fallen service members will not have to endure protests during military funerals.

My administration will also continue to work to locate the men and women in uniform whose fate is still undetermined — our prisoners of war and personnel missing in action. We will not forget these brave Americans. We must not rest until we've accounted for every soldier, sailor, airman, Coast Guardsman, and Marine. And we will always honor their courage.

At this hour, a new generation of Americans in uniform is showing great courage in defending our freedom in the first war of the 21st century. I know that Legionnaires are following this war closely, especially those of you with family and friends who wear our uniform. The images that come back from the front lines are striking, and sometimes unsettling. When you see innocent civilians ripped apart by suicide bombs, or families buried inside their homes, the world can seem engulfed in purposeless violence. The truth is there is violence, but those who cause it have a clear purpose. When terrorists murder at the World Trade Center, or car bombers strike in Baghdad, or hijackers plot to blow up planes over the Atlantic, or terrorist militias shoot rockets at Israeli

towns, they are all pursuing the same objective — to turn back the advance of freedom, and impose a dark vision of tyranny and terror across the world.

The enemies of liberty come from different parts of the world, and they take inspiration from different sources. Some are radicalized followers of the Sunni tradition, who swear allegiance to terrorist organizations like al Qaeda. Others are radicalized followers of the Shia tradition, who join groups like Hezbollah and take guidance from state sponsors like Syria and Iran. Still others are “homegrown” terrorists — fanatics who live quietly in free societies they dream to destroy. Despite their differences, these groups from — form the outlines of a single movement, a worldwide network of radicals that use terror to kill those who stand in the way of their totalitarian ideology. And the unifying feature of this movement, the link that spans sectarian divisions and local grievances, is the rigid conviction that free societies are a threat to their twisted view of Islam.

The war we fight today is more than a military conflict; it is the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century. On one side are those who believe in the values of freedom and moderation — the right of all people to speak, and worship, and live in liberty. And on the other side are those driven by the values of tyranny and extremism — the right of a self-appointed few to impose their fanatical views on all the rest. As veterans, you have seen this kind of enemy before. They’re successors to Fascists, to Nazis, to Communists, and other totalitarians of the 20th century. And history shows what the outcome will be: This war will be difficult; this war will be long; and this war will end in the defeat of the terrorists and totalitarians, and a victory for the cause of freedom and liberty.

We’re now approaching the fifth anniversary of the day this war reached our shores. As the horror of that morning grows more distant, there is a tendency to believe that the threat is receding and this war is coming to a close. That feeling is natural and comforting — and wrong. As we recently saw, the enemy still

wants to attack us. We're in a war we didn't ask for, but it's a war we must wage, and a war we will win.

In the coming days, I'll deliver a series of speeches describing the nature of our enemy in the war on terror, the insights we've gained about their aims and ambitions, the successes and setbacks we've experienced, and our strategy to prevail in this long war. Today, I'll discuss a critical aspect of this war: the struggle between freedom and terror in the Middle East, including the battle in Iraq, which is the central front in our fight against terrorism.

To understand the struggle unfolding in the Middle East, we need to look at the recent history of the region. For a half-century, America's primary goal in the Middle East was stability. This was understandable at the time; we were fighting the Soviet Union in the Cold War, and it was important to support Middle Eastern governments that rejected communism. Yet, over the decades, an undercurrent of danger was rising in the Middle East. Much of the region was mired in stagnation and despair. A generation of young people grew up with little hope to improve their lives, and many fell under the sway of radical extremism. The terrorist movement multiplied in strength, and resentment that had simmered for years boiled over into violence across the world.

Extremists in Iran seized American hostages. Hezbollah terrorists murdered American troops at the Marine barracks in Beirut and Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. Terrorists set off a truck bomb at the World Trade Center. Al Qaeda blew up two U.S. embassies in East Africa, and bombed the USS Cole. Then came the nightmare of September the 11, 2001, when 19 hijackers killed nearly 3,000 men, women, and children.

In the space of a single morning, it became clear that the calm we saw in the Middle East was only a mirage. We realized that years of pursuing stability to promote peace had left us with neither. Instead, the lack of freedom in the Middle East made the region an incubator for terrorist movements.

The status quo in the Middle East before September the 11th was dangerous and unacceptable, so we're pursuing a new strategy.

First, we're using every element of national power to confront al Qaeda, those who take inspiration from them, and other terrorists who use similar tactics. We have ended the days of treating terrorism simply as a law enforcement matter. We will stay on the offense. We will fight the terrorists overseas so we do not have to face them here at home.

Second, we have made it clear to all nations, if you harbor terrorists, you are just as guilty as the terrorists; you're an enemy of the United States, and you will be held to account. And third, we've launched a bold new agenda to defeat the ideology of the enemy by supporting the forces of freedom in the Middle East and beyond.

The freedom agenda is based upon our deepest ideals and our vital interests. Americans believe that every person, of every religion, on every continent, has the right to determine his or her own destiny. We believe that freedom is a gift from an almighty God, beyond any power on Earth to take away. And we also know, by history and by logic, that promoting democracy is the surest way to build security. Democracies don't attack each other or threaten the peace. Governments accountable to the voters focus on building roads and schools — not weapons of mass destruction. Young people who have a say in their future are less likely to search for meaning in extremism. Citizens who can join a peaceful political party are less likely to join a terrorist organization. Dissidents with the freedom to protest around the clock are less likely to blow themselves up during rush hour. And nations that commit to freedom for their people will not support terrorists — they will join us in defeating them.

So America has committed its influence in the world to advancing freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism. We will take the side of democratic leaders and reformers across the Middle East. We will support the voices of tolerance and moderation in the Muslim world. We stand with the mothers and fathers in every culture who want to see their children grow up in a caring and peaceful world. And by

supporting the cause of freedom in a vital region, we'll make our children and our grandchildren more secure.

Over the past five years, we've begun to see the results of our actions — and we have seen how our enemies respond to the advance of liberty. In Afghanistan, we saw a vicious tyranny that harbored the terrorists who planned the September the 11th attacks. Within weeks, American forces were in Afghanistan. Along with Afghan allies, we captured or killed hundreds of al Qaeda and Taliban fighters; we closed down their training camps, and we helped the people of Afghanistan replace the Taliban with a democratic government that answers to them.

Our enemies saw the transformation in Afghanistan, and they've responded by trying to roll back all the progress. Al Qaeda and the Taliban lost a coveted base in Afghanistan and they know they will never reclaim it when democracy succeeds. And so they're trying to return to power by attacking Afghanistan's free institutions. And they will fail. Forces from 40 nations, including every member of NATO, are now serving alongside American troops to support the new Afghan government. The days of the Taliban are over. The future of Afghanistan belongs to the people of Afghanistan. And the future of Afghanistan belongs to freedom.

In Lebanon, we saw a sovereign nation occupied by the Syrian dictatorship. We also saw the courageous people of Lebanon take to the streets to demand their independence. So we worked to enforce a United Nations resolution that required Syria to end its occupation of the country. The Syrians withdrew their armed forces, and the Lebanese people elected a democratic government that began to reclaim their country.

Our enemies saw the transformation in Lebanon and set out to destabilize the young democracy. Hezbollah launched an unprovoked attack on Israel that undermined the democrat government in Beirut. Yet their brazen action caused the world to unite in support for Lebanon's democracy. Secretary Rice worked with the Security Council to pass Resolution 1701, which will strengthen Lebanese forces as they take control of southern

Lebanon — and stop Hezbollah from acting as a state within a state.

I appreciate the troops pledged by France and Italy and other allies for this important international deployment. Together, we're going to make it clear to the world that foreign forces and terrorists have no place in a free and democratic Lebanon.

This summer's crisis in Lebanon has made it clearer than ever that the world now faces a grave threat from the radical regime in Iran. The Iranian regime arms, funds, and advises Hezbollah, which has killed more Americans than any terrorist network except al Qaeda. The Iranian regime interferes in Iraq by sponsoring terrorists and insurgents, empowering unlawful militias, and supplying components for improvised explosive devices. The Iranian regime denies basic human rights to millions of its people. And the Iranian regime is pursuing nuclear weapons in open defiance of its international obligations.

We know the death and suffering that Iran's sponsorship of terrorists has brought, and we can imagine how much worse it would be if Iran were allowed to acquire nuclear weapons. Many nations are working together to solve this problem. The United Nations passed a resolution demanding that Iran suspend its nuclear enrichment activities. Today is the deadline for Iran's leaders to reply to the reasonable proposal the international community has made. If Iran's leaders accept this offer and abandon their nuclear weapons ambitions, they can set their country on a better course. Yet, so far, the Iranian regime has responded with further defiance and delay. It is time for Iran to make a choice. We've made our choice: We will continue to work closely with our allies to find a diplomatic solution — but there must be consequences for Iran's defiance, and we must not allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon.

In Iraq, we saw a dictator who harbored terrorists, fired at military planes, paid the families of Palestinian suicide bombers, invaded a neighbor, and pursued and used weapons of mass destruction. The United Nations passed more than a dozen

resolutions demanding that Saddam Hussein fully and openly abandon his weapons of mass destruction. We gave him a last chance to comply — and when he refused, we enforced the just demands of the world. And now Saddam Hussein is in prison and on trial. Soon he will have the justice he denied to so many for so long. And with this tyrant gone from power, the United States, Iraq, the Middle East, and the world are better off.

In the three years since Saddam's fall the Iraqi people have reclaimed sovereignty of their country. They cast their ballots in free elections. They drafted and approved a democratic constitution and elected a constitutional democracy at the heart of the Middle East. Over the same period, Iraq has seen a rise of terrorist and insurgent movements that use brutal and indiscriminate violence to frustrate the desire of the Iraqi people for freedom and peace. Al Qaeda terrorists, former elements of Saddam's regime, illegal militias and unlawful armed groups are all working to undermine Iraq's new democracy. These groups have different long-term ambitions, but the same immediate goals. They want to drive America and our coalition out of Iraq and the Middle East, so they can stop the advance of freedom and impose their dark vision on the people of the Middle East.

Our enemies in Iraq have employed ruthless tactics to achieve those goals. They've targeted American and coalition troops with ambushes and roadside bombs. They've taken hostage and beheaded civilians on camera. They've blown up Iraqi army posts and assassinated government leaders. We've adapted to the tactics — and thanks to the skill and professionalism of Iraqi and American forces, many of these enemies have met their end. At every step along the way, our enemies have failed to break the courage of the Iraqi people; they have failed to stop the rise of Iraqi democracy — and they will fail in breaking the will of the American people.

Now these enemies have launched a new effort. They have embarked on a bloody campaign of sectarian violence, which they hope will plunge Iraq into a civil war. The outbreak of sectarian

violence was encouraged by the terrorist Zarqawi, al Qaeda's man in Iraq who called for an "all-out war" on Iraqi Shia. The Shia community resisted the impulse to seek revenge for a while. But after this February bombing of the Shia Golden Dome Mosque in Samarra, extremist groups mobilized and sectarian death squads formed on the streets of Baghdad and other areas. Our Ambassador reports that thousands of Iraqis were murdered in Baghdad last month, and large numbers of them were victims of sectarian violence.

This cruelty and carnage has led some to question whether Iraq has descended into civil war. Our commanders and our diplomats on the ground in Iraq believe that's not the case. They report that only a small number of Iraqis are engaged in sectarian violence, while the overwhelming majority want peace and a normal life in a unified country. Iraqi leaders from all backgrounds remember the elections that brought them to power, in which 12 million Iraqis defied the car bombers and killers to claim, "We want to be free."

Iraq's government is working tirelessly to hold the nation together and to heal Iraq's divisions, not to exploit them. The Iraqi people have come a long way. They are not going to let their country fall apart or relapse into tyranny. As Prime Minister Maliki told the United States Congress, "Iraqis have tasted freedom and we will defend it absolutely."

America has a clear strategy to help the Iraqi people protect their new freedom, and build a democracy that can govern itself, and sustain itself, and defend itself. On the political side, we're working closely with Prime Minister Maliki to strengthen Iraq's unity government and develop — and to deliver better services to the Iraqi people. This is a crucial moment for the new Iraqi government; its leaders understand the challenge. They believe that now is the time to hammer out compromises on Iraq's most contentious issues.

I've been clear with each Iraqi leader I meet: America is a patient nation, and Iraq can count on our partnership, as long as the new government continues to make the hard decisions necessary

to advance a unified, democratic and peaceful Iraq. Prime Minister Maliki has shown courage in laying out an agenda to do just that — and he can count on an ally, the United States of America, to help him promote this agenda.

On the security side, we're refining our tactics to meet the threats on the ground. I've given our commanders in Iraq all the flexibility they need to make adjustments necessary to stay on the offense and defeat the enemies of freedom. We've deployed Special Operation forces to kill or capture terrorists operating in Iraq. Zarqawi found out what they can do. We continue to train Iraqi police forces to defend their own nation. We've handed over security responsibility for a southern province to Iraqi forces. Five of Iraq's 10 army divisions are now taking the lead in their areas of operation. The Iraqi security forces are determined; they're becoming more capable; and together, we will defeat the enemies of a free Iraq.

Recently, we also launched a major new campaign to end the security crisis in Baghdad. Side by side, Iraqi and American forces are conducting operations in the city's most violent areas to disrupt al Qaeda, to capture enemy fighters, crack down on IED makers, and break up the death squads. These forces are helping Iraq's national police force undergo retraining to better enforce law in Baghdad. And these forces are supporting the Iraqi government as it provides reconstruction assistance.

The Baghdad Security Plan is still in its early stages. We cannot expect immediate success. Yet, the initial results are encouraging. According to one military report, a Sunni man in a diverse Baghdad neighborhood said this about the Shia soldiers on patrol: "Their image has changed. Now you feel they're there to protect you." Over the coming weeks and months, the operation will expand throughout Baghdad. until Iraq's democratic government is in full control of its capital. The work is difficult and dangerous, but the Iraqi government and their forces are determined to reclaim their country. And the United States is determined to help them succeed.

Here at home we have a choice to make about Iraq. Some

politicians look at our efforts in Iraq and see a diversion from the war on terror. That would come as news to Osama bin Laden, who proclaimed that the “third world war is raging” in Iraq. It would come as news to the number two man of al Qaeda, Zawahiri, who has called the struggle in Iraq, quote, “the place for the greatest battle.” It would come as news to the terrorists from Syria, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Yemen and other countries, who have to come to Iraq to fight the rise of democracy.

It’s hard to believe that these terrorists would make long journeys across dangerous borders, endure heavy fighting, or blow themselves up in the streets of Baghdad, for a so-called “diversion.” Some Americans didn’t support my decision to remove Saddam Hussein; many are frustrated with the level of violence. But we should all agree that the battle for Iraq is now central to the ideological struggle of the 21st century. We will not allow the terrorists to dictate the future of this century — so we will defeat them in Iraq.

Still, there are some in our country who insist that the best option in Iraq is to pull out, regardless of the situation on the ground. Many of these folks are sincere and they’re patriotic, but they could be — they could not be more wrong. If America were to pull out before Iraq can defend itself, the consequences would be absolutely predictable — and absolutely disastrous. We would be handing Iraq over to our worst enemies — Saddam’s former henchmen, armed groups with ties to Iran, and al Qaeda terrorists from all over the world who would suddenly have a base of operations far more valuable than Afghanistan under the Taliban. They would have a new sanctuary to recruit and train terrorists at the heart of the Middle East, with huge oil riches to fund their ambitions. And we know exactly where those ambitions lead. If we give up the fight in the streets of Baghdad, we will face the terrorists in the streets of our own cities.

We can decide to stop fighting the terrorists in Iraq and other parts of the world, but they will not decide to stop fighting us. General John Abizaid, our top commander in the Middle East

region, recently put it this way: “If we leave, they will follow us.” And he is right. The security of the civilized world depends on victory in the war on terror, and that depends on victory in Iraq. So the United States of America will not leave until victory is achieved.

Victory in Iraq will be difficult and it will require more sacrifice. The fighting there can be as fierce as it was at Omaha Beach or Guadalcanal. And victory is as important as it was in those earlier battles. Victory in Iraq will result in a democracy that is a friend of America and an ally in the war on terror. Victory in Iraq will be a crushing defeat for our enemies, who have staked so much on the battle there. Victory in Iraq will honor the sacrifice of the brave Americans who have given their lives. And victory in Iraq would be a powerful triumph in the ideological struggle of the 21st century. From Damascus to Tehran, people will look to a democratic Iraq as inspiration that freedom can succeed in the Middle East, and as evidence that the side of freedom is the winning side. This is a pivotal moment for the Middle East. The world is watching — and in Iraq and beyond, the forces of freedom will prevail.

For all the debate, American policy in the Middle East comes down to a straightforward choice. We can allow the Middle East to continue on its course — on the course it was headed before September the 11th, and a generation from now, our children will face a region dominated by terrorist states and radical dictators armed with nuclear weapons. Or we can stop that from happening, by rallying the world to confront the ideology of hate, and give the people of the Middle East a future of hope. And that is the choice America has made.

We see a day when people across the Middle East have governments that honor their dignity, unleash their creativity, and count their votes. We see a day when leaders across the Middle East reject terror and protect freedom. We see a day when the nations of the Middle East are allies in the cause of peace. The path to that day will be uphill and uneven, but we can be confident of

the outcome, because we know that the direction of history leads toward freedom.

In the early years of our republic, Thomas Jefferson said that we cannot expect to move “from despotism to liberty in a featherbed.” That’s been true in every time and place. No one understands that like you, our veterans, understand that. With the distance of history, it can be easy to look back at the wars of the 20th century and see a straight path to victory. You know better than that. You waged the hard battles, you suffered the wounds, you lost friends and brothers. You were there for dark times and the moments of uncertainty. And you know that freedom is always worth the sacrifice.

You also know what it takes to win. For all that is new about this war, one thing has not changed: Victory still depends on the courage and the patience and the resolve of the American people. Above all, it depends on patriots who are willing to fight for freedom. Our nation is blessed to have these men and women in abundance. Our military forces make this nation strong; they make this nation safe; and they make this nation proud.

We thank them and their families for their sacrifice. We will remember all those who have given their lives in this struggle — and I vow that we will give our men and women in uniform all the resources they need to accomplish their missions.

One brave American we remember is Marine Corporal Adam Galvez, from here in Salt Lake City. Yesterday Adam’s mom and dad laid their son to rest. We’re honored by their presence with us today. About a month ago, Adam was wounded by a suicide bomb in Iraq’s Anbar Province. When he regained consciousness, he found he was buried alive, so he dug himself out of the rubble. And then ran through gunfire to get a shovel to dig out his fellow Marines. As soon as he recovered from his injuries, Adam volunteered to go back to the front lines. and 11 days ago, he was killed when a roadside bomb hit his convoy.

Here is what Adam’s mom and dad said about the cause for which their son gave his life: “Though many are debating the

justification of this war, Adam believed in his country — Adam’s belief in his country did not waver, even to the point of the ultimate sacrifice. It’s our hope and our prayer that people share the same conviction and dedication to our troops and fellow Americans.”

Our nation will always remember the selflessness and sacrifice of Americans like Adam Galvez. We will honor their lives by completing the good and noble work they have started. And we can be confident that one day, veterans of the war on terror will gather at American Legion halls across the country, and say the same things you say: We made our nation safer; we made a region more peaceful; and we left behind a better world for our children and our grandchildren.

Thanks for having me. May God bless our veterans. May God bless our troops. And may God continue to bless the United States of America.

REMARKS ON THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR:
THE ENEMY IN THEIR OWN WORDS

CAPITAL HILTON HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 5, 2006

Thank you all very much. Thank you all. Please be seated. General Hendrix, thank you for the invitation to be here. Thanks for the kind introduction. I'm honored to stand with the men and women of the Military Officers Association of America. I appreciate the Board of Directors who are here, and the leaders who have given me this platform from which to speak. I'm proud to be here with active members of the United States military. Thank you for your service. I'm proud to be your Commander-in-Chief.

I am pleased also to stand with members of the diplomatic corps, including many representing nations that have been attacked by al Qaeda and its terrorist allies since September the 11th, 2001. Your presence here reminds us that we're engaged in a global war against an enemy that threatens all civilized nations. And today the civilized world stands together to defend our freedom; we stand together to defeat the terrorists; and were working to secure the peace for generations to come.

I appreciate my Attorney General joining us today, Al Gonzales. Thank you for being here. The Secretary of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, is with us. Three members of the United States Senate — I might say, three important members of the United States Senate — Senate President Pro Tem Ted Stevens of Alaska. Thank you for joining us, Senator. Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi. The Chairman of the Armed Services Committee, John Warner of Virginia.

I thank Norb Ryan, as well, for his leadership. I do appreciate all the folks that are at Walter Reed who have joined us today. I'm

going to tell the parents of our troops, we provide great health care to those who wear the uniform. I'm proud of those folks at Bethesda and Walter Reed — are providing you the best possible care to help you recover from your injuries. Thank you for your courage. Thank you for joining us here today. May God bless you in your recovery.

Next week, America will mark the fifth anniversary of September the 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. As this day approaches, it brings with it a flood of painful memories. We remember the horror of watching planes fly into the World Trade Center, and seeing the towers collapse before our eyes. We remember the sight of the Pentagon, broken and in flames. We remember the rescue workers who rushed into burning buildings to save lives, knowing they might never emerge again. We remember the brave passengers who charged the cockpit of their hijacked plane, and stopped the terrorists from reaching their target and killing more innocent civilians. We remember the cold brutality of the enemy who inflicted this harm on our country — an enemy whose leader, Osama bin Laden, declared the massacre of nearly 3,000 people that day — I quote — “an unparalleled and magnificent feat of valor, unmatched by any in humankind before them.”

In five years since our nation was attacked, al Qaeda and terrorists it has inspired have continued to attack across the world. They've killed the innocent in Europe and Africa and the Middle East, in Central Asia and the Far East, and beyond. Most recently, they attempted to strike again in the most ambitious plot since the attacks of September the 11th — a plan to blow up passenger planes headed for America over the Atlantic Ocean.

Five years after our nation was attacked, the terrorist danger remains. We're a nation at war — and America and her allies are fighting this war with relentless determination across the world. Together with our coalition partners, we've removed terrorist sanctuaries, disrupted their finances, killed and captured key operatives, broken up terrorist cells in America and other nations, and stopped new attacks before they're carried out. We're on the offense against the terrorists on every battlefield — and we'll

accept nothing less than complete victory.

In the five years since our nation was attacked, we've also learned a great deal about the enemy we face in this war. We've learned about them through videos and audio recordings, and letters and statements they've posted on websites. We've learned about them from captured enemy documents that the terrorists have never meant for us to see. Together, these documents and statements have given us clear insight into the mind of our enemies — their ideology, their ambitions, and their strategy to defeat us.

We know what the terrorists intend to do because they've told us — and we need to take their words seriously. So today I'm going to describe — in the terrorists' own words, what they believe... what they hope to accomplish, and how they intend to accomplish it. I'll discuss how the enemy has adapted in the wake of our sustained offensive against them, and the threat posed by different strains of violent Islamic radicalism. I'll explain the strategy we're pursuing to protect America, by defeating the terrorists on the battlefield, and defeating their hateful ideology in the battle of ideas.

The terrorists who attacked us on September the 11th, 2001, are men without conscience — but they're not madmen. They kill in the name of a clear and focused ideology, a set of beliefs that are evil, but not insane. These al Qaeda terrorists and those who share their ideology are violent Sunni extremists. They're driven by a radical and perverted vision of Islam that rejects tolerance, crushes all dissent, and justifies the murder of innocent men, women and children in the pursuit of political power. They hope to establish a violent political utopia across the Middle East, which they call a "Caliphate" — where all would be ruled according to their hateful ideology. Osama bin Laden has called the 9/11 attacks — in his words — "a great step towards the unity of Muslims and establishing the Righteous... [Caliphate]."

This caliphate would be a totalitarian Islamic empire encompassing all current and former Muslim lands, stretching from Europe to North Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. We know this because al Qaeda has told us. About two months ago,

the terrorist Zawahiri — he's al Qaeda's second in command — declared that al Qaeda intends to impose its rule in “every land that was a home for Islam, from [Spain] to Iraq. He went on to say, “The whole world is an open field for us.”

We know what this radical empire would look like in practice, because we saw how the radicals imposed their ideology on the people of Afghanistan. Under the rule of the Taliban and al Qaeda, Afghanistan was a totalitarian nightmare — a land where women were imprisoned in their homes, men were beaten for missing prayer meetings, girls could not go to school, and children were forbidden the smallest pleasures like flying kites. Religious police roamed the streets, beating and detaining civilians for perceived offenses. Women were publicly whipped. Summary executions were held in Kabul's soccer stadium in front of cheering mobs. And Afghanistan was turned into a launching pad for horrific attacks against America and other parts of the civilized world — including many Muslim nations.

The goal of these Sunni extremists is to remake the entire Muslim world in their radical image. In pursuit of their imperial aims, these extremists say there can be no compromise or dialogue with those they call “infidels” — a category that includes America, the world's free nations, Jews, and all Muslims who reject their extreme vision of Islam. They reject the possibility of peaceful coexistence with the free world. Again, hear the words of Osama bin Laden earlier this year: “Death is better than living on this Earth with the unbelievers among us.”

These radicals have declared their uncompromising hostility to freedom. It is foolish to think that you can negotiate with them. We see the uncompromising nature of the enemy in many captured terrorist documents. Here are just two examples: After the liberation of Afghanistan, coalition forces searching through a terrorist safe house in that country found a copy of the al Qaeda charter. This charter states that “there will be continuing enmity until everyone believes in Allah. We will not meet [the enemy] halfway. There will be no room for dialogue with them.” Another

document was found in 2000 by British police during an anti-terrorist raid in London — a grisly al Qaeda manual that includes chapters with titles such as “Guidelines for Beating and Killing Hostages.” This manual declares that their vision of Islam “does not... make a truce with unbelief, but rather confronts it.” The confrontation... calls for... the dialogue of bullets, the ideals of assassination, bombing, and destruction, and the diplomacy of the cannon and machine gun.”

Still other captured documents show al Qaeda’s strategy for infiltrating Muslim nations, establishing terrorist enclaves, overthrowing governments, and building their totalitarian empire. We see this strategy laid out in a captured al Qaeda document found during a recent raid in Iraq, which describes their plans to infiltrate and take over Iraq’s western Anbar Province. The document lays out an elaborate al Qaeda governing structure for the region that includes an Education Department, a Social Services Department, a Justice Department, and an “Execution Unit” responsible for “Sorting out, Arrest, Murder, and Destruction.”

According to their public statements, countries that have — they have targeted stretch from the Middle East to Africa, to Southeast Asia. Through this strategy, al Qaeda and its allies intend to create numerous, decentralized operating bases across the world, from which they can plan new attacks, and advance their vision of a unified, totalitarian Islamic state that can confront and eventually destroy the free world.

These violent extremists know that to realize this vision, they must first drive out the main obstacle that stands in their way — the United States of America. According to al Qaeda, their strategy to defeat America has two parts: First, they’re waging a campaign of terror across the world. They’re targeting our forces abroad, hoping that the American people will grow tired of casualties and give up the fight. And they’re targeting America’s financial centers and economic infrastructure at home, hoping to terrorize us and cause our economy to collapse.

Bin Laden calls this his “bleed-until-bankruptcy plan.” And he

cited the attacks of 9/11 as evidence that such a plan can succeed. With the 9/11 attacks, Osama bin Laden says, “al Qaeda spent \$500,000 on the event, while America... lost — according to the lowest estimate — \$500 billion... Meaning that every dollar of al Qaeda defeated a million dollars” of America. Bin Laden concludes from this experience that “America is definitely a great power, with... unbelievable military strength and a vibrant economy, but all of these have been built on a very weak and hollow foundation.” He went on to say, “Therefore, it is very easy to target the flimsy base and concentrate on their weak points, and even if we’re able to target one-tenth of these weak points, we will be able [to] crush and destroy them.”

Secondly, along with this campaign of terror, the enemy has a propaganda strategy. Osama bin Laden laid out this strategy in a letter to the Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, that coalition forces uncovered in Afghanistan in 2002. In it, bin Laden says that al Qaeda intends to “[launch],” in his words, “a media campaign... to create a wedge between the American people and their government.” This media campaign, bin Laden says, will send the American people a number of messages, including “that their government [will] bring them more losses, in finances and casualties.” And he goes on to say that “they are being sacrificed... to serve... the big investors, especially the Jews.” Bin Laden says that by delivering these messages, al Qaeda “aims at creating pressure from the American people on the American government to stop their campaign against Afghanistan.”

Bin Laden and his allies are absolutely convinced they can succeed in forcing America to retreat and causing our economic collapse. They believe our nation is weak and decadent, and lacking in patience and resolve. And they’re wrong. Osama bin Laden has written that the “defeat of... American forces in Beirut” in 1983 is proof America does not have the stomach to stay in the fight. He’s declared that “in Somalia... the United States [pulled] out, trailing disappointment, defeat, and failure behind it.” And last year, the terrorist Zawahiri declared that Americans “know better than others

that there is no hope in victory. The Vietnam specter is closing every outlet.”

These terrorists hope to drive America and our coalition out of Afghanistan, so they can restore the safe haven they lost when coalition forces drove them out five years ago. But they’ve made clear that the most important front in their struggle against America is Iraq — the nation bin Laden has declared the “capital of the Caliphate.” Hear the words of bin Laden: “I now address... the whole... Islamic nation: Listen and understand... The most... serious issue today for the whole world is this Third World War... [that] is raging in [Iraq].” He calls it “a war of destiny between infidelity and Islam.” He says, “The whole world is watching this war,” and that it will end in “victory and glory or misery and humiliation.” For al Qaeda, Iraq is not a distraction from their war on America — it is the central battlefield where the outcome of this struggle will be decided.

Here is what al Qaeda says they will do if they succeed in driving us out of Iraq: The terrorist Zawahiri has said that al Qaeda will proceed with “several incremental goals. The first stage: Expel the Americans from Iraq. The second stage: Establish an Islamic authority or amirate, then develop it and support it until it achieves the level of Caliphate... The third stage: Extend the jihad wave to the secular countries neighboring Iraq. And the fourth stage: ...the clash with Israel.”

These evil men know that a fundamental threat to their aspirations is a democratic Iraq that can govern itself, sustain itself, and defend itself. They know that given a choice, the Iraqi people will never choose to live in the totalitarian state the extremists hope to establish. And that is why we must not, and we will not, give the enemy victory in Iraq by deserting the Iraqi people.

Last year, the terrorist Zarqawi declared in a message posted on the Internet that democracy “is the essence of infidelity and deviation from the right path.” The Iraqi people disagree. Last December, nearly 12 million Iraqis from every ethnic and religious community turned out to vote in their country’s third free election

in less than a year. Iraq now has a unity government that represents Iraq's diverse population — and al Qaeda's top commander in Iraq breathed his last breath.

Despite these strategic setbacks, the enemy will continue to fight freedom's advance in Iraq, because they understand the stakes in this war. Again, hear the words of bin Laden, in a message to the American people earlier this year. He says: "The war is for you or for us to win. If we win it, it means your defeat and disgrace forever."

Now, I know some of our country hear the terrorists' words, and hope that they will not, or cannot, do what they say. History teaches that underestimating the words of evil and ambitious men is a terrible mistake. In the early 1900s, an exiled lawyer in Europe published a pamphlet called "What Is To Be Done?" — in which he laid out his plan to launch a communist revolution in Russia. The world did not heed Lenin's words, and paid a terrible price. The Soviet Empire he established killed tens of millions, and brought the world to the brink of thermonuclear war. In the 1920s, a failed Austrian painter published a book in which he explained his intention to build an Aryan super-state in Germany and take revenge on Europe and eradicate the Jews. The world ignored Hitler's words, and paid a terrible price. His Nazi regime killed millions in the gas chambers, and set the world aflame in war, before it was finally defeated at a terrible cost in lives.

Bin Laden and his terrorist allies have made their intentions as clear as Lenin and Hitler before them. The question is: Will we listen? Will we pay attention to what these evil men say? America and our coalition partners have made our choice. We're taking the words of the enemy seriously. We're on the offensive, and we will not rest, we will not retreat, and we will not withdraw from the fight, until this threat to civilization has been removed.

Five years into this struggle, it's important to take stock of what's been accomplished — and the difficult work that remains. Al Qaeda has been weakened by our sustained offensive against them, and today it is harder for al Qaeda's leaders to operate

freely, to move money, or to communicate with their operatives and facilitators. Yet al Qaeda remains dangerous and determined. Bin Laden and Zawahiri remain in hiding in remote regions of this world. Al Qaeda continues to adapt in the face of our global campaign against them. Increasingly, al Qaeda is taking advantage of the Internet to disseminate propaganda, and to conduct “virtual recruitment” and “virtual training” of new terrorists. Al Qaeda’s leaders no longer need to meet face-to-face with their operatives. They can find new suicide bombers, and facilitate new terrorist attacks, without ever laying eyes on those they’re training, financing, or sending to strike us.

As al Qaeda changes, the broader terrorist movement is also changing, becoming more dispersed and self-directed. More and more, we’re facing threats from locally established terrorist cells that are inspired by al Qaeda’s ideology and goals, but do not necessarily have direct links to al Qaeda, such as training and funding. Some of these groups are made up of “homegrown” terrorists, militant extremists who were born and educated in Western nations, were indoctrinated by radical Islamists or attracted to their ideology, and joined the violent extremist cause. These locally established cells appear to be responsible for a number of attacks and plots, including those in Madrid, and Canada, and other countries across the world.

As we continue to fight al Qaeda and these Sunni extremists inspired by their radical ideology, we also face the threat posed by Shia extremists, who are learning from al Qaeda, increasing their assertiveness, and stepping up their threats. Like the vast majority of Sunnis, the vast majority of Shia across the world reject the vision of extremists — and in Iraq, millions of Shia have defied terrorist threats to vote in free elections, and have shown their desire to live in freedom. The Shia extremists want to deny them this right. This Shia strain of Islamic radicalism is just as dangerous, and just as hostile to America, and just as determined to establish its brand of hegemony across the broader Middle East. And the Shia extremists have achieved something that al Qaeda has

so far failed to do: In 1979, they took control of a major power, the nation of Iran, subjugating its proud people to a regime of tyranny, and using that nation's resources to fund the spread of terror and pursue their radical agenda.

Like al Qaeda and the Sunni extremists, the Iranian regime has clear aims: They want to drive America out of the region, to destroy Israel, and to dominate the broader Middle East. To achieve these aims, they are funding and arming terrorist groups like Hezbollah, which allow them to attack Israel and America by proxy. Hezbollah, the source of the current instability in Lebanon, has killed more Americans than any terrorist organization except al Qaeda. Unlike al Qaeda, they've not yet attacked the American homeland. Yet they're directly responsible for the murder of hundreds of Americans abroad. It was Hezbollah that was behind the 1983 bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut that killed 241 Americans. And Saudi Hezbollah was behind the 1996 bombing of Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia that killed 19 Americans, an attack conducted by terrorists who we believe were working with Iranian officials.

Just as we must take the words of the Sunni extremists seriously, we must take the words of the Shia extremists seriously. Listen to the words of Hezbollah's leader, the terrorist Nasrallah, who has declared his hatred of America. He says, "Let the entire world hear me. Our hostility to the Great Satan [America] is absolute... Regardless of how the world has changed after 11 September, Death to America will remain our reverberating and powerful slogan: Death to America."

Iran's leaders, who back Hezbollah, have also declared their absolute hostility to America. Last October, Iran's President declared in a speech that some people ask — in his words — "whether a world without the United States and Zionism can be achieved... I say that this... goal is achievable." Less than three months ago, Iran's President declared to America and other Western powers: "open your eyes and see the fate of pharaoh... if you do not abandon the path of falsehood... your doomed destiny

will be annihilation.” Less than two months ago, he warned: “The anger of Muslims may reach an explosion point soon. If such a day comes... [America and the West] should know that the waves of the blast will not remain within the boundaries of our region.” He also delivered this message to the American people: “If you would like to have good relations with the Iranian nation in the future... bow down before the greatness of the Iranian nation and surrender. If you don’t accept [to do this], the Iranian nation will... force you to surrender and bow down.”

America will not bow down to tyrants.

The Iranian regime and its terrorist proxies have demonstrated their willingness to kill Americans — and now the Iranian regime is pursuing nuclear weapons. The world is working together to prevent Iran’s regime from acquiring the tools of mass murder. The international community has made a reasonable proposal to Iran’s leaders, and given them the opportunity to set their nation on a better course. So far, Iran’s leaders have rejected this offer. Their choice is increasingly isolating the great Iranian nation from the international community, and denying the Iranian people an opportunity for greater economic prosperity. It’s time for Iran’s leader to make a different choice. And we’ve made our choice. We’ll continue to work closely with our allies to find a diplomatic solution. The world’s free nations will not allow Iran to develop a nuclear weapon.

The Shia and Sunni extremists represent different faces of the same threat. They draw inspiration from different sources, but both seek to impose a dark vision of violent Islamic radicalism across the Middle East. They oppose the advance of freedom, and they want to gain control of weapons of mass destruction. If they succeed in undermining fragile democracies, like Iraq, and drive the forces of freedom out of the region, they will have an open field to pursue their dangerous goals. Each strain of violent Islamic radicalism would be emboldened in their efforts to topple moderate governments and establish terrorist safe havens.

Imagine a world in which they were able to control

governments, a world awash with oil and they would use oil resources to punish industrialized nations. And they would use those resources to fuel their radical agenda, and pursue and purchase weapons of mass murder. And armed with nuclear weapons, they would blackmail the free world, and spread their ideologies of hate, and raise a mortal threat to the American people. If we allow them to do this, if we retreat from Iraq, if we don't uphold our duty to support those who are desirous to live in liberty, 50 years from now history will look back on our time with unforgiving clarity, and demand to know why we did not act.

I'm not going to allow this to happen — and no future American President can allow it either. America did not seek this global struggle, but we're answering history's call with confidence and a clear strategy. Today we're releasing a document called the "National Strategy for Combating Terrorism." This is an unclassified version of the strategy we've been pursuing since September the 11th, 2001. This strategy was first released in February 2003; it's been updated to take into account the changing nature of this enemy. This strategy document is posted on the White House website — whitehouse.gov. And I urge all Americans to read it.

Our strategy for combating terrorism has five basic elements:

First, we're determined to prevent terrorist attacks before they occur. So we're taking the fight to the enemy. The best way to protect America is to stay on the offense. Since 9/11, our coalition has captured or killed al Qaeda managers and operatives, and scores of other terrorists across the world. The enemy is living under constant pressure, and we intend to keep it that way — and this adds to our security. When terrorists spend their days working to avoid death or capture, it's harder for them to plan and execute new attacks.

We're also fighting the enemy here at home. We've given our law enforcement and intelligence professionals the tools they need to stop the terrorists in our midst. We passed the Patriot Act to break down the wall that prevented law enforcement and intelligence from

sharing vital information. We created the Terrorist Surveillance Program to monitor the communications between al Qaeda commanders abroad and terrorist operatives within our borders. If al Qaeda is calling somebody in America, we need to know why, in order to stop attacks.

I want to thank these three Senators for working with us to give our law enforcement and intelligence officers the tools necessary to do their jobs. And over the last five years, federal, state, and local law enforcement have used those tools to break up terrorist cells, and to prosecute terrorist operatives and supporters in New York, and Oregon, and Virginia, and Texas, and New Jersey, and Illinois, Ohio, and other states. By taking the battle to the terrorists and their supporters on our own soil and across the world, we've stopped a number of al Qaeda plots.

Second, we're determined to deny weapons of mass destruction to outlaw regimes and terrorists who would use them without hesitation. Working with Great Britain and Pakistan and other nations, the United States shut down the world's most dangerous nuclear trading cartel, the AQ Khan network. This network had supplied Iran and Libya and North Korea with equipment and know-how that advanced their efforts to obtain nuclear weapons. And we launched the Proliferation Security Initiative, a coalition of more than 70 nations that is working together to stop shipments related to weapons of mass destruction on land, at sea, and in the air. The greatest threat this world faces is the danger of extremists and terrorists armed with weapons of mass destruction — and this is a threat America cannot defeat on her own. We applaud the determined efforts of many nations around the world to stop the spread of these dangerous weapons. Together, we pledge we'll continue to work together to stop the world's most dangerous men from getting their hands on the world's most dangerous weapons.

Third, we're determined to deny terrorists the support of outlaw regimes. After September the 11th, I laid out a clear doctrine: America makes no distinction between those who commit acts of

terror, and those that harbor and support them, because they're equally guilty of murder. Thanks to our efforts, there are now three fewer state sponsors of terror in the world than there were on September the 11th, 2001. Afghanistan and Iraq have been transformed from terrorist states into allies in the war on terror. And the nation of Libya has renounced terrorism, and given up its weapons of mass destruction programs, and its nuclear materials and equipment. Over the past five years, we've acted to disrupt the flow of weapons and support from terrorist states to terrorist networks. And we have made clear that any government that chooses to be an ally of terror has also chosen to be an enemy of civilization.

Fourth, we're determined to deny terrorist networks control of any nation, or territory within a nation. So, along with our coalition and the Iraqi government, we'll stop the terrorists from taking control of Iraq, and establishing a new safe haven from which to attack America and the free world. And we're working with friends and allies to deny the terrorists the enclaves they seek to establish in ungoverned areas across the world. By helping governments reclaim full sovereign control over their territory, we make ourselves more secure.

Fifth, we're working to deny terrorists new recruits, by defeating their hateful ideology and spreading the hope of freedom — by spreading the hope of freedom across the Middle East. For decades, American policy sought to achieve peace in the Middle East by pursuing stability at the expense of liberty. The lack of freedom in that region helped create conditions where anger and resentment grew, and radicalism thrived, and terrorists found willing recruits. And we saw the consequences on September the 11th, when the terrorists brought death and destruction to our country. The policy wasn't working.

The experience of September the 11th made clear, in the long run, the only way to secure our nation is to change the course of the Middle East. So America has committed its influence in the world to advancing freedom and liberty and democracy as the

great alternatives to repression and radicalism. We're taking the side of democratic leaders and moderates and reformers across the Middle East. We strongly support the voices of tolerance and moderation in the Muslim world. We're standing with Afghanistan's elected government against al Qaeda and the Taliban remnants that are trying to restore tyranny in that country. We're standing with Lebanon's young democracy against the foreign forces that are seeking to undermine the country's sovereignty and independence. And we're standing with the leaders of Iraq's unity government as they work to defeat the enemies of freedom, and chart a more hopeful course for their people. This is why victory is so important in Iraq. By helping freedom succeed in Iraq, we will help America, and the Middle East, and the world become more secure.

During the last five years we've learned a lot about this enemy. We've learned that they're cunning and sophisticated. We've witnessed their ability to change their methods and their tactics with deadly speed — even as their murderous obsessions remain unchanging. We've seen that it's the terrorists who have declared war on Muslims, slaughtering huge numbers of innocent Muslim men and women around the world.

We know what the terrorists believe, we know what they have done, and we know what they intend to do. And now the world's free nations must summon the will to meet this great challenge. The road ahead is going to be difficult, and it will require more sacrifice. Yet we can have confidence in the outcome, because we've seen freedom conquer tyranny and terror before. In the 20th century, free nations confronted and defeated Nazi Germany. During the Cold War, we confronted Soviet communism, and today Europe is whole, free and at peace.

And now, freedom is once again contending with the forces of darkness and tyranny. This time, the battle is unfolding in a new region — the broader Middle East. This time, we're not waiting for our enemies to gather in strength. This time, we're confronting them before they gain the capacity to inflict unspeakable damage

on the world, and we're confronting their hateful ideology before it fully takes root.

We see a day when people across the Middle East have governments that honor their dignity, and unleash their creativity, and count their votes. We see a day when across this region citizens are allowed to express themselves freely, women have full rights, and children are educated and given the tools necessary to succeed in life. And we see a day when all the nations of the Middle East are allies in the cause of peace.

We fight for this day, because the security of our own citizens depends on it. This is the great ideological struggle of the 21st century — and it is the calling of our generation. All civilized nations are bound together in this struggle between moderation and extremism. By coming together, we will roll back this grave threat to our way of life. We will help the people of the Middle East claim their freedom, and we will leave a safer and more hopeful world for our children and grandchildren.

God bless.

ADDRESS ON THE CREATION OF MILITARY COMMISSIONS
TO TRY SUSPECTED TERRORISTS

THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 6, 2006

Thank you. Thanks for the warm welcome. Welcome to the White House. Mr. Vice President, Secretary Rice, Attorney General Gonzales, Ambassador Negroponte, General Hayden, members of the United States Congress, families who lost loved ones in the terrorist attacks on our nation, and my fellow citizens: Thanks for coming.

On the morning of September the 11th, 2001, our nation awoke to a nightmare attack. Nineteen men, armed with box cutters, took control of airplanes and turned them into missiles. They used them to kill nearly 3,000 innocent people. We watched the Twin Towers collapse before our eyes — and it became instantly clear that we'd entered a new world, and a dangerous new war.

The attacks of September the 11th horrified our nation. And amid the grief came new fears and urgent questions: Who had attacked us? What did they want? And what else were they planning? Americans saw the destruction the terrorists had caused in New York, and Washington, and Pennsylvania, and they wondered if there were other terrorist cells in our midst poised to strike; they wondered if there was a second wave of attacks still to come.

With the Twin Towers and the Pentagon still smoldering, our country on edge, and a stream of intelligence coming in about potential new attacks, my administration faced immediate challenges: We had to respond to the attack on our country. We had to wage an unprecedented war against an enemy unlike any we had fought before. We had to find the terrorists hiding in America and across the world, before they were able to strike our country again. So in the early days and weeks after 9/11, I directed our

government's senior national security officials to do everything in their power, within our laws, to prevent another attack.

Nearly five years have passed since these — those initial days of shock and sadness — and we are thankful that the terrorists have not succeeded in launching another attack on our soil. This is not for the lack of desire or determination on the part of the enemy. As the recently foiled plot in London shows, the terrorists are still active, and they're still trying to strike America, and they're still trying to kill our people. One reason the terrorists have not succeeded is because of the hard work of thousands of dedicated men and women in our government, who have toiled day and night, along with our allies, to stop the enemy from carrying out their plans. And we are grateful for these hardworking citizens of ours.

Another reason the terrorists have not succeeded is because our government has changed its policies — and given our military, intelligence, and law enforcement personnel the tools they need to fight this enemy and protect our people and preserve our freedoms.

The terrorists who declared war on America represent no nation, they defend no territory, and they wear no uniform. They do not mass armies on borders, or flotillas of warships on the high seas. They operate in the shadows of society; they send small teams of operatives to infiltrate free nations; they live quietly among their victims; they conspire in secret, and then they strike without warning. In this new war, the most important source of information on where the terrorists are hiding and what they are planning is the terrorists, themselves. Captured terrorists have unique knowledge about how terrorist networks operate. They have knowledge of where their operatives are deployed, and knowledge about what plots are underway. This intelligence — this is intelligence that cannot be found any other place. And our security depends on getting this kind of information. To win the war on terror, we must be able to detain, question, and, when appropriate, prosecute terrorists captured here in America, and on the battlefields around the world.

After the 9/11 attacks, our coalition launched operations across the world to remove terrorist safe havens, and capture or kill terrorist operatives and leaders. Working with our allies, we've captured and detained thousands of terrorists and enemy fighters in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and other fronts of this war on terror. These enemy — these are enemy combatants, who were waging war on our nation. We have a right under the laws of war, and we have an obligation to the American people, to detain these enemies and stop them from rejoining the battle.

Most of the enemy combatants we capture are held in Afghanistan or in Iraq, where they're questioned by our military personnel. Many are released after questioning, or turned over to local authorities — if we determine that they do not pose a continuing threat and no longer have significant intelligence value. Others remain in American custody near the battlefield, to ensure that they don't return to the fight.

In some cases, we determine that individuals we have captured pose a significant threat, or may have intelligence that we and our allies need to have to prevent new attacks. Many are al Qaeda operatives or Taliban fighters trying to conceal their identities, and they withhold information that could save American lives. In these cases, it has been necessary to move these individuals to an environment where they can be held secretly [sic], questioned by experts, and — when appropriate — prosecuted for terrorist acts.

Some of these individuals are taken to the United States Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. It's important for Americans and others across the world to understand the kind of people held at Guantanamo. These aren't common criminals, or bystanders accidentally swept up on the battlefield — we have in place a rigorous process to ensure those held at Guantanamo Bay belong at Guantanamo. Those held at Guantanamo include suspected bomb makers, terrorist trainers, recruiters and facilitators, and potential suicide bombers. They are in our custody so they cannot murder our people. One detainee held at Guantanamo told a questioner questioning him — he said this: "I'll never forget your face. I will

kill you, your brothers, your mother, and sisters.”

In addition to the terrorists held at Guantanamo, a small number of suspected terrorist leaders and operatives captured during the war have been held and questioned outside the United States, in a separate program operated by the Central Intelligence Agency. This group includes individuals believed to be the key architects of the September the 11th attacks, and attacks on the USS Cole, an operative involved in the bombings of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and individuals involved in other attacks that have taken the lives of innocent civilians across the world. These are dangerous men with unparalleled knowledge about terrorist networks and their plans for new attacks. The security of our nation and the lives of our citizens depend on our ability to learn what these terrorists know.

Many specifics of this program, including where these detainees have been held and the details of their confinement, cannot be divulged. Doing so would provide our enemies with information they could use to take retribution against our allies and harm our country. I can say that questioning the detainees in this program has given us information that has saved innocent lives by helping us stop new attacks — here in the United States and across the world. Today, I’m going to share with you some of the examples provided by our intelligence community of how this program has saved lives; why it remains vital to the security of the United States, and our friends and allies; and why it deserves the support of the United States Congress and the American people.

Within months of September the 11th, 2001, we captured a man known as Abu Zubaydah. We believe that Zubaydah was a senior terrorist leader and a trusted associate of Osama bin Laden. Our intelligence community believes he had run a terrorist camp in Afghanistan where some of the 9/11 hijackers trained, and that he helped smuggle al Qaeda leaders out of Afghanistan after coalition forces arrived to liberate that country. Zubaydah was severely wounded during the firefight that brought him into custody — and he survived only because of the medical care arranged by the CIA.

After he recovered, Zubaydah was defiant and evasive. He declared his hatred of America. During questioning, he at first disclosed what he thought was nominal information — and then stopped all cooperation. Well, in fact, the “nominal” information he gave us turned out to be quite important. For example, Zubaydah disclosed Khalid Sheikh Mohammed — or KSM — was the mastermind behind the 9/11 attacks, and used the alias “Muktar.” This was a vital piece of the puzzle that helped our intelligence community pursue KSM. Abu Zubaydah also provided information that helped stop a terrorist attack being planned for inside the United States — an attack about which we had no previous information. Zubaydah told us that al Qaeda operatives were planning to launch an attack in the U.S., and provided physical descriptions of the operatives and information on their general location. Based on the information he provided, the operatives were detained — one while traveling to the United States.

We knew that Zubaydah had more information that could save innocent lives, but he stopped talking. As his questioning proceeded, it became clear that he had received training on how to resist interrogation. And so the CIA used an alternative set of procedures. These procedures were designed to be safe, to comply with our laws, our Constitution, and our treaty obligations. The Department of Justice reviewed the authorized methods extensively and determined them to be lawful. I cannot describe the specific methods used — I think you understand why — if I did, it would help the terrorists learn how to resist questioning, and to keep information from us that we need to prevent new attacks on our country. But I can say the procedures were tough, and they were safe, and lawful, and necessary.

Zubaydah was questioned using these procedures, and soon he began to provide information on key al Qaeda operatives, including information that helped us find and capture more of those responsible for the attacks on September the 11th. For example, Zubaydah identified one of KSM’s accomplices in the 9/11 attacks — a terrorist named Ramzi bin al Shibh. The information

Zubaydah provided helped lead to the capture of bin al Shibh. And together these two terrorists provided information that helped in the planning and execution of the operation that captured Khalid Sheikh Mohammed.

Once in our custody, KSM was questioned by the CIA using these procedures, and he soon provided information that helped us stop another planned attack on the United States. During questioning, KSM told us about another al Qaeda operative he knew was in CIA custody — a terrorist named Majid Khan. KSM revealed that Khan had been told to deliver \$50,000 to individuals working for a suspected terrorist leader named Hambali, the leader of al Qaeda's Southeast Asian affiliate known as "J-I". CIA officers confronted Khan with this information. Khan confirmed that the money had been delivered to an operative named Zubair, and provided both a physical description and contact number for this operative.

Based on that information, Zubair was captured in June of 2003, and he soon provided information that helped lead to the capture of Hambali. After Hambali's arrest, KSM was questioned again. He identified Hambali's brother as the leader of a "J-I" cell, and Hambali's conduit for communications with al Qaeda. Hambali's brother was soon captured in Pakistan, and, in turn, led us to a cell of 17 Southeast Asian "J-I" operatives. When confronted with the news that his terror cell had been broken up, Hambali admitted that the operatives were being groomed at KSM's request for attacks inside the United States — probably [sic] using airplanes.

During questioning, KSM also provided many details of other plots to kill innocent Americans. For example, he described the design of planned attacks on buildings inside the United States, and how operatives were directed to carry them out. He told us the operatives had been instructed to ensure that the explosives went off at a point that was high enough to prevent the people trapped above from escaping out the windows.

KSM also provided vital information on al Qaeda's efforts to obtain biological weapons. During questioning, KSM admitted

that he had met three individuals involved in al Qaeda's efforts to produce anthrax, a deadly biological agent — and he identified one of the individuals as a terrorist named Yazid. KSM apparently believed we already had this information, because Yazid had been captured and taken into foreign custody before KSM's arrest. In fact, we did not know about Yazid's role in al Qaeda's anthrax program. Information from Yazid then helped lead to the capture of his two principal assistants in the anthrax program. Without the information provided by KSM and Yazid, we might not have uncovered this al Qaeda biological weapons program, or stopped this al Qaeda cell from developing anthrax for attacks against the United States.

These are some of the plots that have been stopped because of the information of this vital program. Terrorists held in CIA custody have also provided information that helped stop a planned strike on U.S. Marines at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti — they were going to use an explosive laden water tanker. They helped stop a planned attack on the U.S. consulate in Karachi using car bombs and motorcycle bombs, and they helped stop a plot to hijack passenger planes and fly them into Heathrow or the Canary Wharf in London.

We're getting vital information necessary to do our jobs, and that's to protect the American people and our allies.

Information from the terrorists in this program has helped us to identify individuals that al Qaeda deemed suitable for Western operations, many of whom we had never heard about before. They include terrorists who were set to case targets inside the United States, including financial buildings in major cities on the East Coast. Information from terrorists in CIA custody has played a role in the capture or questioning of nearly every senior al Qaeda member or associate detained by the U.S. and its allies since this program began. By providing everything from initial leads to photo identifications, to precise locations of where terrorists were hiding, this program has helped us to take potential mass murderers off the streets before they were able to kill.

This program has also played a critical role in helping us understand the enemy we face in this war. Terrorists in this program have painted a picture of al Qaeda's structure and financing, and communications and logistics. They identified al Qaeda's travel routes and safe havens, and explained how al Qaeda's senior leadership communicates with its operatives in places like Iraq. They provided information that allows us — that has allowed us to make sense of documents and computer records that we have seized in terrorist raids. They've identified voices in recordings of intercepted calls, and helped us understand the meaning of potentially critical terrorist communications.

The information we get from these detainees is corroborated by intelligence, and we've received — that we've received from other sources — and together this intelligence has helped us connect the dots and stop attacks before they occur. Information from the terrorists questioned in this program helped unravel plots and terrorist cells in Europe and in other places. It's helped our allies protect their people from deadly enemies. This program has been, and remains, one of the most vital tools in our war against the terrorists. It is invaluable to America and to our allies. Were it not for this program, our intelligence community believes that al Qaeda and its allies would have succeeded in launching another attack against the American homeland. By giving us information about terrorist plans we could not get anywhere else, this program has saved innocent lives.

This program has been subject to multiple legal reviews by the Department of Justice and CIA lawyers; they've determined it complied with our laws. This program has received strict oversight by the CIA's Inspector General. A small number of key leaders from both political parties on Capitol Hill were briefed about this program. All those involved in the questioning of the terrorists are carefully chosen and they're screened from a pool of experienced CIA officers. Those selected to conduct the most sensitive questioning had to complete more than 250 additional hours of specialized training before they are allowed to have contact with a

captured terrorist.

I want to be absolutely clear with our people, and the world: The United States does not torture. It's against our laws, and it's against our values. I have not authorized it — and I will not authorize it. Last year, my administration worked with Senator John McCain, and I signed into law the Detainee Treatment Act, which established the legal standard for treatment of detainees wherever they are held. I support this act. And as we implement this law, our government will continue to use every lawful method to obtain intelligence that can protect innocent people, and stop another attack like the one we experienced on September the 11th, 2001.

The CIA program has detained only a limited number of terrorists at any given time — and once we've determined that the terrorists held by the CIA have little or no additional intelligence value, many of them have been returned to their home countries for prosecution or detention by their governments. Others have been accused of terrible crimes against the American people, and we have a duty to bring those responsible for these crimes to justice. So we intend to prosecute these men, as appropriate, for their crimes.

Soon after the war on terror began, I authorized a system of military commissions to try foreign terrorists accused of war crimes. Military commissions have been used by Presidents from George Washington to Franklin Roosevelt to prosecute war criminals, because the rules for trying enemy combatants in a time of conflict must be different from those for trying common criminals or members of our own military. One of the first suspected terrorists to be put on trial by military commission was one of Osama bin Laden's bodyguards — a man named Hamdan. His lawyers challenged the legality of the military commission system. It took more than two years for this case to make its way through the courts. The Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit upheld the military commissions we had designed, but this past June, the Supreme Court overturned

that decision. The Supreme Court determined that military commissions are an appropriate venue for trying terrorists, but ruled that military commissions needed to be explicitly authorized by the United States Congress.

So today, I'm sending Congress legislation to specifically authorize the creation of military commissions to try terrorists for war crimes. My administration has been working with members of both parties in the House and Senate on this legislation. We put forward a bill that ensures these commissions are established in a way that protects our national security, and ensures a full and fair trial for those accused. The procedures in the bill I am sending to Congress today reflect the reality that we are a nation at war, and that it's essential for us to use all reliable evidence to bring these people to justice.

We're now approaching the five-year anniversary of the 9/11 attacks — and the families of those murdered that day have waited patiently for justice. Some of the families are with us today — they should have to wait no longer. So I'm announcing today that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, Abu Zubaydah, Ramzi bin al-Shibh, and 11 other terrorists in CIA custody have been transferred to the United States Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay. They are being held in the custody of the Department of Defense. As soon as Congress acts to authorize the military commissions I have proposed, the men our intelligence officials believe orchestrated the deaths of nearly 3,000 Americans on September the 11th, 2001, can face justice.

We'll also seek to prosecute those believed to be responsible for the attack on the USS Cole, and an operative believed to be involved in the bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. With these prosecutions, we will send a clear message to those who kill Americans: No longer — how long it takes, we will find you and we will bring you to justice.

These men will be held in a high-security facility at Guantanamo. The International Committee of the Red Cross is being advised of their detention, and will have the opportunity to

meet with them. Those charged with crimes will be given access to attorneys who will help them prepare their defense — and they will be presumed innocent. While at Guantanamo, they will have access to the same food, clothing, medical care, and opportunities for worship as other detainees. They will be questioned subject to the new U.S. Army Field Manual, which the Department of Defense is issuing today. And they will continue to be treated with the humanity that they denied others.

As we move forward with the prosecutions, we will continue to urge nations across the world to take back their nationals at Guantanamo who will not be prosecuted by our military commissions. America has no interest in being the world's jailer. But one of the reasons we have not been able to close Guantanamo is that many countries have refused to take back their nationals held at the facility. Other countries have not provided adequate assurances that their nationals will not be mistreated — or they will not return to the battlefield, as more than a dozen people released from Guantanamo already have. We will continue working to transfer individuals held at Guantanamo, and ask other countries to work with us in this process. And we will move toward the day when we can eventually close the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay.

I know Americans have heard conflicting information about Guantanamo. Let me give you some facts. Of the thousands of terrorists captured across the world, only about 770 have ever been sent to Guantanamo. Of these, about 315 have been returned to other countries so far — and about 455 remain in our custody. They are provided the same quality of medical care as the American service members who guard them. The International Committee of the Red Cross has the opportunity to meet privately with all who are held there. The facility has been visited by government officials from more than 30 countries, and delegations from international organizations, as well. After the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe came to visit, one of its delegation members called Guantanamo “a model prison” where people are treated

better than in prisons in his own country. Our troops can take great pride in the work they do at Guantanamo Bay — and so can the American people.

As we prosecute suspected terrorist leaders and operatives who have now been transferred to Guantanamo, we'll continue searching for those who have stepped forward to take their places. This nation is going to stay on the offense to protect the American people. We will continue to bring the world's most dangerous terrorists to justice — and we will continue working to collect the vital intelligence we need to protect our country. The current transfers mean that there are now no terrorists in the CIA program. But as more high-ranking terrorists are captured, the need to obtain intelligence from them will remain critical — and having a CIA program for questioning terrorists will continue to be crucial to getting life-saving information.

Some may ask: Why are you acknowledging this program now? There are two reasons why I'm making these limited disclosures today. First, we have largely completed our questioning of the men — and to start the process for bringing them to trial, we must bring them into the open. Second, the Supreme Court's recent decision has impaired our ability to prosecute terrorists through military commissions, and has put in question the future of the CIA program. In its ruling on military commissions, the Court determined that a provision of the Geneva Conventions known as "Common Article Three" applies to our war with al Qaeda. This article includes provisions that prohibit "outrages upon personal dignity" and "humiliating and degrading treatment." The problem is that these and other provisions of Common Article Three are vague and undefined, and each could be interpreted in different ways by American or foreign judges. And some believe our military and intelligence personnel involved in capturing and questioning terrorists could now be at risk of prosecution under the War Crimes Act — simply for doing their jobs in a thorough and professional way.

This is unacceptable. Our military and intelligence personnel go

face to face with the world's most dangerous men every day. They have risked their lives to capture some of the most brutal terrorists on Earth. And they have worked day and night to find out what the terrorists know so we can stop new attacks. America owes our brave men and women some things in return. We owe them their thanks for saving lives and keeping America safe. And we owe them clear rules, so they can continue to do their jobs and protect our people.

So today, I'm asking Congress to pass legislation that will clarify the rules for our personnel fighting the war on terror. First, I'm asking Congress to list the specific, recognizable offenses that would be considered crimes under the War Crimes Act — so our personnel can know clearly what is prohibited in the handling of terrorist enemies. Second, I'm asking that Congress make explicit that by following the standards of the Detainee Treatment Act our personnel are fulfilling America's obligations under Common Article Three of the Geneva Conventions. Third, I'm asking that Congress make it clear that captured terrorists cannot use the Geneva Conventions as a basis to sue our personnel in courts — in U.S. courts. The men and women who protect us should not have to fear lawsuits filed by terrorists because they're doing their jobs.

The need for this legislation is urgent. We need to ensure that those questioning terrorists can continue to do everything within the limits of the law to get information that can save American lives. My administration will continue to work with the Congress to get this legislation enacted — but time is of the essence. Congress is in session just for a few more weeks, and passing this legislation ought to be the top priority.

As we work with Congress to pass a good bill, we will also consult with congressional leaders on how to ensure that the CIA program goes forward in a way that follows the law, that meets the national security needs of our country, and protects the brave men and women we ask to obtain information that will save innocent lives. For the sake of our security, Congress needs to act, and update our laws to meet the threats of this new era. And I know

they will.

We're engaged in a global struggle — and the entire civilized world has a stake in its outcome. America is a nation of law. And as I work with Congress to strengthen and clarify our laws here at home, I will continue to work with members of the international community who have been our partners in this struggle. I've spoken with leaders of foreign governments, and worked with them to address their concerns about Guantanamo and our detention policies. I'll continue to work with the international community to construct a common foundation to defend our nations and protect our freedoms.

Free nations have faced new enemies and adjusted to new threats before — and we have prevailed. Like the struggles of the last century, today's war on terror is, above all, a struggle for freedom and liberty. The adversaries are different, but the stakes in this war are the same: We're fighting for our way of life, and our ability to live in freedom. We're fighting for the cause of humanity, against those who seek to impose the darkness of tyranny and terror upon the entire world. And we're fighting for a peaceful future for our children and our grandchildren.

May God bless you all.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

THE OVAL OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 11, 2006

Good evening. Five years ago, this date — September the 11th — was seared into America's memory. Nineteen men attacked us with a barbarity unequaled in our history. They murdered people of all colors, creeds, and nationalities — and made war upon the entire free world. Since that day, America and her allies have taken the offensive in a war unlike any we have fought before. Today, we are safer, but we are not yet safe. On this solemn night, I've asked for some of your time to discuss the nature of the threat still before us, what we are doing to protect our nation, and the building of a more hopeful Middle East that holds the key to peace for America and the world.

On 9/11, our nation saw the face of evil. Yet on that awful day, we also witnessed something distinctly American: ordinary citizens rising to the occasion, and responding with extraordinary acts of courage. We saw courage in office workers who were trapped on the high floors of burning skyscrapers — and called home so that their last words to their families would be of comfort and love. We saw courage in passengers aboard Flight 93, who recited the 23rd Psalm — and then charged the cockpit. And we saw courage in the Pentagon staff who made it out of the flames and smoke — and ran back in to answer cries for help. On this day, we remember the innocent who lost their lives — and we pay tribute to those who gave their lives so that others might live.

For many of our citizens, the wounds of that morning are still fresh. I've met firefighters and police officers who choke up at the memory of fallen comrades. I've stood with families gathered on a grassy field in Pennsylvania, who take bittersweet pride in loved ones who refused to be victims — and gave America our

first victory in the war on terror. I've sat beside young mothers with children who are now five years old — and still long for the daddies who will never cradle them in their arms. Out of this suffering, we resolve to honor every man and woman lost. And we seek their lasting memorial in a safer and more hopeful world.

Since the horror of 9/11, we've learned a great deal about the enemy. We have learned that they are evil and kill without mercy — but not without purpose. We have learned that they form a global network of extremists who are driven by a perverted vision of Islam — a totalitarian ideology that hates freedom, rejects tolerance, and despises all dissent. And we have learned that their goal is to build a radical Islamic empire where women are prisoners in their homes, men are beaten for missing prayer meetings, and terrorists have a safe haven to plan and launch attacks on America and other civilized nations. The war against this enemy is more than a military conflict. It is the decisive ideological struggle of the 21st century, and the calling of our generation.

Our nation is being tested in a way that we have not been since the start of the Cold War. We saw what a handful of our enemies can do with box-cutters and plane tickets. We hear their threats to launch even more terrible attacks on our people. And we know that if they were able to get their hands on weapons of mass destruction, they would use them against us. We face an enemy determined to bring death and suffering into our homes. America did not ask for this war, and every American wishes it were over. So do I. But the war is not over — and it will not be over until either we or the extremists emerge victorious. If we do not defeat these enemies now, we will leave our children to face a Middle East overrun by terrorist states and radical dictators armed with nuclear weapons. We are in a war that will set the course for this new century — and determine the destiny of millions across the world.

For America, 9/11 was more than a tragedy — it changed the way we look at the world. On September the 11th, we resolved

that we would go on the offense against our enemies, and we would not distinguish between the terrorists and those who harbor or support them. So we helped drive the Taliban from power in Afghanistan. We put al Qaeda on the run, and killed or captured most of those who planned the 9/11 attacks, including the man believed to be the mastermind, Khalid Sheik Mohammed. He and other suspected terrorists have been questioned by the Central Intelligence Agency, and they provided valuable information that has helped stop attacks in America and across the world. Now these men have been transferred to Guantanamo Bay, so they can be held to account for their actions. Osama bin Laden and other terrorists are still in hiding. Our message to them is clear: No matter how long it takes, America will find you, and we will bring you to justice.

On September the 11th, we learned that America must confront threats before they reach our shores, whether those threats come from terrorist networks or terrorist states. I'm often asked why we're in Iraq when Saddam Hussein was not responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The answer is that the regime of Saddam Hussein was a clear threat. My administration, the Congress, and the United Nations saw the threat — and after 9/11, Saddam's regime posed a risk that the world could not afford to take. The world is safer because Saddam Hussein is no longer in power. And now the challenge is to help the Iraqi people build a democracy that fulfills the dreams of the nearly 12 million Iraqis who came out to vote in free elections last December.

Al Qaeda and other extremists from across the world have come to Iraq to stop the rise of a free society in the heart of the Middle East. They have joined the remnants of Saddam's regime and other armed groups to foment sectarian violence and drive us out. Our enemies in Iraq are tough and they are committed — but so are Iraqi and coalition forces. We're adapting to stay ahead of the enemy, and we are carrying out a clear plan to ensure that a democratic Iraq succeeds.

We're training Iraqi troops so they can defend their nation.

We're helping Iraq's unity government grow in strength and serve its people. We will not leave until this work is done. Whatever mistakes have been made in Iraq, the worst mistake would be to think that if we pulled out, the terrorists would leave us alone. They will not leave us alone. They will follow us. The safety of America depends on the outcome of the battle in the streets of Baghdad. Osama bin Laden calls this fight "the Third World War" — and he says that victory for the terrorists in Iraq will mean America's "defeat and disgrace forever." If we yield Iraq to men like bin Laden, our enemies will be emboldened; they will gain a new safe haven; they will use Iraq's resources to fuel their extremist movement. We will not allow this to happen. America will stay in the fight. Iraq will be a free nation, and a strong ally in the war on terror.

We can be confident that our coalition will succeed because the Iraqi people have been steadfast in the face of unspeakable violence. And we can be confident in victory because of the skill and resolve of America's Armed Forces. Every one of our troops is a volunteer, and since the attacks of September the 11th, more than 1.6 million Americans have stepped forward to put on our nation's uniform. In Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts in the war on terror, the men and women of our military are making great sacrifices to keep us safe. Some have suffered terrible injuries — and nearly 3,000 have given their lives. America cherishes their memory. We pray for their families. And we will never back down from the work they have begun.

We also honor those who toil day and night to keep our homeland safe, and we are giving them the tools they need to protect our people. We've created the Department of Homeland Security. We have torn down the wall that kept law enforcement and intelligence from sharing information. We've tightened security at our airports and seaports and borders, and we've created new programs to monitor enemy bank records and phone calls. Thanks to the hard work of our law enforcement and intelligence professionals, we have broken up terrorist cells in our midst and

saved American lives.

Five years after 9/11, our enemies have not succeeded in launching another attack on our soil, but they've not been idle. Al Qaeda and those inspired by its hateful ideology have carried out terrorist attacks in more than two dozen nations. And just last month, they were foiled in a plot to blow up passenger planes headed for the United States. They remain determined to attack America and kill our citizens — and we are determined to stop them. We'll continue to give the men and women who protect us every resource and legal authority they need to do their jobs.

In the first days after the 9/11 attacks I promised to use every element of national power to fight the terrorists, wherever we find them. One of the strongest weapons in our arsenal is the power of freedom. The terrorists fear freedom as much as they do our firepower. They are thrown into panic at the sight of an old man pulling the election lever, girls enrolling in schools, or families worshipping God in their own traditions. They know that given a choice, people will choose freedom over their extremist ideology. So their answer is to deny people this choice by raging against the forces of freedom and moderation. This struggle has been called a clash of civilizations. In truth, it is a struggle for civilization. We are fighting to maintain the way of life enjoyed by free nations. And we're fighting for the possibility that good and decent people across the Middle East can raise up societies based on freedom and tolerance and personal dignity.

We are now in the early hours of this struggle between tyranny and freedom. Amid the violence, some question whether the people of the Middle East want their freedom, and whether the forces of moderation can prevail. For 60 years, these doubts guided our policies in the Middle East. And then, on a bright September morning, it became clear that the calm we saw in the Middle East was only a mirage. Years of pursuing stability to promote peace had left us with neither. So we changed our policies, and committed America's influence in the world to advancing freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism.

With our help, the people of the Middle East are now stepping forward to claim their freedom. From Kabul to Baghdad to Beirut, there are brave men and women risking their lives each day for the same freedoms that we enjoy. And they have one question for us: Do we have the confidence to do in the Middle East what our fathers and grandfathers accomplished in Europe and Asia? By standing with democratic leaders and reformers, by giving voice to the hopes of decent men and women, we're offering a path away from radicalism. And we are enlisting the most powerful force for peace and moderation in the Middle East: the desire of millions to be free.

Across the broader Middle East, the extremists are fighting to prevent such a future. Yet America has confronted evil before, and we have defeated it — sometimes at the cost of thousands of good men in a single battle. When Franklin Roosevelt vowed to defeat two enemies across two oceans, he could not have foreseen D-Day and Iwo Jima — but he would not have been surprised at the outcome. When Harry Truman promised American support for free peoples resisting Soviet aggression, he could not have foreseen the rise of the Berlin Wall — but he would not have been surprised to see it brought down. Throughout our history, America has seen liberty challenged, and every time, we have seen liberty triumph with sacrifice and determination.

At the start of this young century, America looks to the day when the people of the Middle East leave the desert of despotism for the fertile gardens of liberty, and resume their rightful place in a world of peace and prosperity. We look to the day when the nations of that region recognize their greatest resource is not the oil in the ground, but the talent and creativity of their people. We look to the day when moms and dads throughout the Middle East see a future of hope and opportunity for their children. And when that good day comes, the clouds of war will part, the appeal of radicalism will decline, and we will leave our children with a better and safer world.

On this solemn anniversary, we rededicate ourselves to this

cause. Our nation has endured trials, and we face a difficult road ahead. Winning this war will require the determined efforts of a unified country, and we must put aside our differences and work together to meet the test that history has given us. We will defeat our enemies. We will protect our people. And we will lead the 21st century into a shining age of human liberty.

Earlier this year, I traveled to the United States Military Academy. I was there to deliver the commencement address to the first class to arrive at West Point after the attacks of September the 11th. That day I met a proud mom named RoseEllen Dowdell. She was there to watch her son, Patrick, accept his commission in the finest Army the world has ever known. A few weeks earlier, RoseEllen had watched her other son, James, graduate from the Fire Academy in New York City. On both these days, her thoughts turned to someone who was not there to share the moment: her husband, Kevin Dowdell. Kevin was one of the 343 firefighters who rushed to the burning towers of the World Trade Center on September the 11th — and never came home. His sons lost their father that day, but not the passion for service he instilled in them. Here is what RoseEllen says about her boys: “As a mother, I cross my fingers and pray all the time for their safety — but as worried as I am, I’m also proud, and I know their dad would be, too.”

Our nation is blessed to have young Americans like these — and we will need them. Dangerous enemies have declared their intention to destroy our way of life. They’re not the first to try, and their fate will be the same as those who tried before. Nine-Eleven showed us why. The attacks were meant to bring us to our knees, and they did, but not in the way the terrorists intended. Americans united in prayer, came to the aid of neighbors in need, and resolved that our enemies would not have the last word. The spirit of our people is the source of America’s strength. And we go forward with trust in that spirit, confidence in our purpose, and faith in a loving God who made us to be free.

Thank you, and may God bless you.

ADDRESS TO THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY: A WORLD BEYOND TERROR

UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
SEPTEMBER 19, 2006

Mr. Secretary General, Madam President, distinguished delegates, and ladies and gentlemen: I want to thank you for the privilege of speaking to this General Assembly.

Last week, America and the world marked the fifth anniversary of the attacks that filled another September morning with death and suffering. On that terrible day, extremists killed nearly 3,000 innocent people, including citizens of dozens of nations represented right here in this chamber. Since then, the enemies of humanity have continued their campaign of murder. Al Qaeda and those inspired by its extremist ideology have attacked more than two dozen nations. And recently a different group of extremists deliberately provoked a terrible conflict in Lebanon. At the start of the 21st century, it is clear that the world is engaged in a great ideological struggle, between extremists who use terror as a weapon to create fear, and moderate people who work for peace.

Five years ago, I stood at this podium and called on the community of nations to defend civilization and build a more hopeful future. This is still the great challenge of our time; it is the calling of our generation. This morning, I want to speak about the more hopeful world that is within our reach, a world beyond terror, where ordinary men and women are free to determine their own destiny, where the voices of moderation are empowered, and where the extremists are marginalized by the peaceful majority. This world can be ours if we seek it and if we work together.

The principles of this world beyond terror can be found in the very first sentence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This document declares that the “equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom and

justice and peace in the world.” One of the authors of this document was a Lebanese diplomat named Charles Malik, who would go on to become President of this Assembly. Mr. Malik insisted that these principles apply equally to all people, of all regions, of all religions, including the men and women of the Arab world that was his home.

In the nearly six decades since that document was approved, we have seen the forces of freedom and moderation transform entire continents. Sixty years after a terrible war, Europe is now whole, free, and at peace — and Asia has seen freedom progress and hundreds of millions of people lifted out of desperate poverty. The words of the Universal Declaration are as true today as they were when they were written. As liberty flourishes, nations grow in tolerance and hope and peace. And we’re seeing that bright future begin to take root in the broader Middle East.

Some of the changes in the Middle East have been dramatic, and we see the results in this chamber. Five years ago, Afghanistan was ruled by the brutal Taliban regime, and its seat in this body was contested. Now this seat is held by the freely elected government of Afghanistan, which is represented today by President Karzai. Five years ago, Iraq’s seat in this body was held by a dictator who killed his citizens, invaded his neighbors, and showed his contempt for the world by defying more than a dozen U.N. Security Council resolutions. Now Iraq’s seat is held by a democratic government that embodies the aspirations of the Iraq people, who’s represented today by President Talabani. With these changes, more than 50 million people have been given a voice in this chamber for the first time in decades.

Some of the changes in the Middle East are happening gradually, but they are real. Algeria has held its first competitive presidential election, and the military remained neutral. The United Arab Emirates recently announced that half of the seats in its Federal National Council will be chosen by elections. Kuwait held elections in which women were allowed to vote and run for office for the first time. Citizens have voted in municipal elections in Saudi Arabia, in parliamentary elections in Jordan and Bahrain,

and in multiparty presidential elections in Yemen and Egypt. These are important steps, and the governments should continue to move forward with other reforms that show they trust their people. Every nation that travels the road to freedom moves at a different pace, and the democracies they build will reflect their own culture and traditions. But the destination is the same: A free society where people live at peace with each other and at peace with the world.

Some have argued that the democratic changes we're seeing in the Middle East are destabilizing the region. This argument rests on a false assumption, that the Middle East was stable to begin with. The reality is that the stability we thought we saw in the Middle East was a mirage. For decades, millions of men and women in the region have been trapped in oppression and hopelessness. And these conditions left a generation disillusioned, and made this region a breeding ground for extremism.

Imagine what it's like to be a young person living in a country that is not moving toward reform. You're 21 years old, and while your peers in other parts of the world are casting their ballots for the first time, you are powerless to change the course of your government. While your peers in other parts of the world have received educations that prepare them for the opportunities of a global economy, you have been fed propaganda and conspiracy theories that blame others for your country's shortcomings. And everywhere you turn, you hear extremists who tell you that you can escape your misery and regain your dignity through violence and terror and martyrdom. For many across the broader Middle East, this is the dismal choice presented every day.

Every civilized nation, including those in the Muslim world, must support those in the region who are offering a more hopeful alternative. We know that when people have a voice in their future, they are less likely to blow themselves up in suicide attacks. We know that when leaders are accountable to their people, they are more likely to seek national greatness in the achievements of their citizens, rather than in terror and conquest. So we must stand with democratic leaders and moderate reformers across the broader

Middle East. We must give them voice to the hopes of decent men and women who want for their children the same things we want for ours. We must seek stability through a free and just Middle East where the extremists are marginalized by millions of citizens in control of their own destinies.

Today, I'd like to speak directly to the people across the broader Middle East: My country desires peace. Extremists in your midst spread propaganda claiming that the West is engaged in a war against Islam. This propaganda is false, and its purpose is to confuse you and justify acts of terror. We respect Islam, but we will protect our people from those who pervert Islam to sow death and destruction. Our goal is to help you build a more tolerant and hopeful society that honors people of all faiths and promote the peace.

To the people of Iraq: Nearly 12 million of you braved the car bombers and assassins last December to vote in free elections. The world saw you hold up purple ink-stained fingers, and your courage filled us with admiration. You've stood firm in the face of horrendous acts of terror and sectarian violence — and we will not abandon you in your struggle to build a free nation. America and our coalition partners will continue to stand with the democratic government you elected. We will continue to help you secure the international assistance and investment you need to create jobs and opportunity, working with the United Nations and through the International Compact with Iraq endorsed here in New York yesterday. We will continue to train those of you who stepped forward to fight the enemies of freedom. We will not yield the future of your country to terrorists and extremists. In return, your leaders must rise to the challenges your country is facing, and make difficult choices to bring security and prosperity. Working together, we will help your democracy succeed, so it can become a beacon of hope for millions in the Muslim world.

To the people of Afghanistan: Together, we overthrew the Taliban regime that brought misery into your lives and harbored terrorists who brought death to the citizens of many nations. Since

then, we have watched you choose your leaders in free elections and build a democratic government. You can be proud of these achievements. We respect your courage, and your determination to live in peace and freedom. We will continue to stand with you to defend your democratic gains. Today forces from more than 40 countries, including members of the NATO Alliance, are bravely serving side-by-side with you against the extremists who want to bring down the free government you've established. We'll help you defeat these enemies and build a free Afghanistan that will never again oppress you, or be a safe haven for terrorists.

To the people of Lebanon: Last year, you inspired the world when you came out into the streets to demand your independence from Syrian dominance. You drove Syrian forces from your country and you reestablished democracy. Since then, you have been tested by the fighting that began with Hezbollah's unprovoked attacks on Israel. Many of you have seen your homes and communities caught in crossfire. We see your suffering, and the world is helping you to rebuild your country, and helping you deal with the armed extremists who are undermining your democracy by acting as a state within a state. The United Nations has passed a good resolution that has authorized an international force, led by France and Italy, to help you restore Lebanese sovereignty over Lebanese soil. For many years, Lebanon was a model of democracy and pluralism and openness in the region — and it will be again.

To the people of Iran: The United States respects you; we respect your country. We admire your rich history, your vibrant culture, and your many contributions to civilization. You deserve an opportunity to determine your own future, an economy that rewards your intelligence and your talents, and a society that allows you to fulfill your tremendous potential. The greatest obstacle to this future is that your rulers have chosen to deny you liberty and to use your nation's resources to fund terrorism, and fuel extremism, and pursue nuclear weapons. The United Nations has passed a clear resolution requiring that the regime in Tehran

meet its international obligations. Iran must abandon its nuclear weapons ambitions. Despite what the regime tells you, we have no objection to Iran's pursuit of a truly peaceful nuclear power program. We're working toward a diplomatic solution to this crisis. And as we do, we look to the day when you can live in freedom — and America and Iran can be good friends and close partners in the cause of peace.

To the people of Syria: Your land is home to a great people with a proud tradition of learning and commerce. Today your rulers have allowed your country to become a crossroad for terrorism. In your midst, Hamas and Hezbollah are working to destabilize the region, and your government is turning your country into a tool of Iran. This is increasing your country's isolation from the world. Your government must choose a better way forward by ending its support for terror, and living in peace with your neighbors, and opening the way to a better life for you and your families.

To the people of Darfur: You have suffered unspeakable violence, and my nation has called these atrocities what they are — genocide. For the last two years, America joined with the international community to provide emergency food aid and support for an African Union peacekeeping force. Yet your suffering continues. The world must step forward to provide additional humanitarian aid — and we must strengthen the African Union force that has done good work, but is not strong enough to protect you. The Security Council has approved a resolution that would transform the African Union force into a blue-helmeted force that is larger and more robust. To increase its strength and effectiveness, NATO nations should provide logistics and other support. The regime in Khartoum is stopping the deployment of this force. If the Sudanese government does not approve this peacekeeping force quickly, the United Nations must act. Your lives and the credibility of the United Nations is at stake. So today I'm announcing that I'm naming a Presidential Special Envoy — former USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios — to lead America's efforts to resolve the outstanding disputes and help

bring peace to your land.

The world must also stand up for peace in the Holy Land. I'm committed to two democratic states — Israel and Palestine — living side-by-side in peace and security. I'm committed to a Palestinian state that has territorial integrity and will live peacefully with the Jewish state of Israel. This is the vision set forth in the road map — and helping the parties reach this goal is one of the great objectives of my presidency. The Palestinian people have suffered from decades of corruption and violence and the daily humiliation of occupation. Israeli citizens have endured brutal acts of terrorism and constant fear of attack since the birth of their nation. Many brave men and women have made the commitment to peace. Yet extremists in the region are stirring up hatred and trying to prevent these moderate voices from prevailing.

This struggle is unfolding in the Palestinian territories. Earlier this year, the Palestinian people voted in a free election. The leaders of Hamas campaigned on a platform of ending corruption and improving the lives of the Palestinian people, and they prevailed. The world is waiting to see whether the Hamas government will follow through on its promises, or pursue an extremist agenda. And the world has sent a clear message to the leaders of Hamas: Serve the interests of the Palestinian people. Abandon terror, recognize Israel's right to exist, honor agreements, and work for peace.

President Abbas is committed to peace, and to his people's aspirations for a state of their own. Prime Minister Olmert is committed to peace, and has said he intends to meet with President Abbas to make real progress on the outstanding issues between them. I believe peace can be achieved, and that a democratic Palestinian state is possible. I hear from leaders in the region who want to help. I've directed Secretary of State Rice to lead a diplomatic effort to engage moderate leaders across the region, to help the Palestinians reform their security services, and support Israeli and Palestinian leaders in their efforts to come together to

resolve their differences. Prime Minister Blair has indicated that his country will work with partners in Europe to help strengthen the governing institutions of the Palestinian administration. We welcome his initiative. Countries like Saudi Arabia and Jordan and Egypt have made clear they're willing to contribute the diplomatic and financial assistance necessary to help these efforts succeed. I'm optimistic that by supporting the forces of democracy and moderation, we can help Israelis and Palestinians build a more hopeful future and achieve the peace in a Holy Land we all want.

Freedom, by its nature, cannot be imposed — it must be chosen. From Beirut to Baghdad, people are making the choice for freedom. And the nations gathered in this chamber must make a choice, as well: Will we support the moderates and reformers who are working for change across the Middle East — or will we yield the future to the terrorists and extremists? America has made its choice: We will stand with the moderates and reformers.

Recently a courageous group of Arab and Muslim intellectuals wrote me a letter. In it, they said this: "The shore of reform is the only one on which any lights appear, even though the journey demands courage and patience and perseverance." The United Nations was created to make that journey possible. Together we must support the dreams of good and decent people who are working to transform a troubled region — and by doing so, we will advance the high ideals on which this institution was founded.

Thank you for your time. God bless.

CHRISTENING CEREMONY OF THE GEORGE H. W. BUSH

NORTHROP GRUMMAN NEWPORT NEWS SHIPYARD

NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

OCTOBER 7, 2006

Mr. Secretary, thank you very much. Laura and I are honored to be here to honor our dad. We appreciate you coming. Mother, it's good to see you. Members of the Bush family, all of you, distinguished members of Congress, Governor, ex-governors, the men and women of the United States Navy, military veterans, the workers who helped build this great ship: I join you — I know you join me in saying to our father: President Bush, your ship has come in. In a few minutes, my sister Dorothy will christen the newest and most advanced aircraft carrier in the Navy — the George H. W. Bush. For the pilots of the World War II generation who are with us today, this carrier may seem a little more inviting than the ones you landed on. As you can see, our Navy has made a few upgrades. The George H. W. Bush is the latest in the Nimitz line of aircraft carriers. She is unrelenting, she is unshakable, she is unyielding, she is unstoppable. As a matter of fact, probably should have been named the Barbara Bush.

In accord with a long and honored tradition, we gather to christen this fine ship. We recall the service and sacrifice of earlier generations. And we pay tribute to a new generation of sailors and Marines who have stepped forward to serve in freedom's cause.

The George H. W. Bush is named for a man who exemplifies the great character of our country. On the day Pearl Harbor was attacked, George H. W. Bush was a teenager, he was a high school senior. Six months later, he was sworn into the Navy. A year later, he received his wings at a ceremony in Corpus Christi, Texas. Here is what he said. He said, "I had an ensign's stripe and an admiral's confidence." "I was a Navy pilot."

Our dad would become known as one of the Navy's youngest pilots. But that wasn't his only distinction. While training along the

Chesapeake Bay, the pilots in our dad's flight class learned about a beach across the way where young ladies liked to sunbathe. It became popular for the pilots to fly low over the beach. So one day he came in low to take a look. It just so happened to be the same day that a traveling circus had set up its tents. Dad's flyover upset an elephant, causing him to break loose and make a run throughout the town. He was called in for a reprimand from his commander. He puts it this way, "I was grounded for causing an elephant stampede" — probably the only Navy pilot in American history who can make that claim.

After training, he was assigned to a light carrier. He took part in the Great Turkey Shoot of the Marianas. He knew the horror of kamikaze attacks. He would complete 58 combat missions. These were tough days, but he had something that kept him going. And if you look closely at the photographs of the planes he flew, you will find what kept him going in the name he had painted under his cockpit: Barbara.

One of Dad's most important missions was a strike on a radio tower on an island called Chichi Jima. The Japanese were using that tower to intercept U.S. military radio transmissions and alert the enemy about impending American air strikes. On September 2, 1944, his squadron was given a simple assignment: to take it out. The pilots knew they would face heavy enemy fire, because the Japanese had fortified the island. But Dad and his fellow pilots did their duty without complaint or hesitation. During that raid, his plane was hit by anti-aircraft artillery and it caught on fire. Yet he kept his plane on course, he released his four bombs, and scored four direct hits on that tower. He headed out to sea, he ejected.

Japanese boats were sent out to capture him. And after more than two harrowing hours at sea alone in a rubber life raft, he was rescued by the crew of the USS Finback. For his action, he earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. Yet it is characteristic that from those moments aboard his life raft to this ceremony today, Dad's thoughts have always been of the two fine members of his crew who did not make it home: Radioman Second Class John Delaney

and Lieutenant JG Ted White. On that day over Chichi Jima, a young American became a war hero and learned an old lesson: With the defense of freedom comes loss and sacrifice.

The George H. W. Bush honors a generation that valued service above self. Like so many who served in World War II, duty came naturally to our father. In the four years of that war, 16 million Americans would put on the uniform. And the human costs were appalling: from the beaches of Normandy to the jungles of Southeast Asia, more than 400,000 Americans would give their lives.

From the beginning of that war, there were those who argued that freedom had seen its day, and that the future belonged to the hard men in Tokyo and Berlin. Yet the war machines of Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany would be brought down by American GIs who only months before had been students, and farmers, and bank clerks, and factory hands. The generation of World War II taught the world's tyrants a telling lesson: There is no power like the power of freedom — and no soldier as strong as a soldier who fights for a free future for his children.

The George H. W. Bush will serve as a new generation of Americans every bit as brave and selfless as those who have come before them. The 21st century — in the 21st century, freedom is again under attack, and young Americans are volunteering to answer the call. In the years since September the 11th, 2001, more than 1.6 million Americans have volunteered to wear the uniform of the United States. Today they serve in distant lands and on far seas — from the islands of Southeast Asia, to the Horn of Africa, to the mountains of Afghanistan and in Iraq. And once again, with perseverance, and courage, and confidence in the power of freedom, a new generation of Americans will leave a more hopeful and peaceful world for generations to come.

The men and women of the United States military represent the best of America. And they deserve the best America can give them. And the George H. W. Bush is the best America can give them.

During his time in the South Pacific, Ensign Bush served on a

light carrier called the USS San Jacinto. That ship was named for the 1836 battle of San Jacinto. And in that battle, the free Texas forces led by Sam Houston defeated a Mexican army that was much larger in size — and Sam Houston succeeded in capturing the Mexican general responsible for the slaughter of the Alamo just a few weeks before. Yet on the eve of the battle, the outcome was far from certain, and the Mexicans seemed to hold the advantage. So Sam Houston called his Texans together, and he reminded them what they were fighting for. He told them, “Be men, be free men, that your children may bless their father’s name.”

On this proud day, the children of George H. W. Bush bless their father’s name, the United States Navy honors his name, and the ship that bears his name sails into this young century as a symbol of American strength and freedom. May God watch over all those who sail this ship, all those who fly from her deck, and all those at home who pray for their safe return.

It is my honor to bring to you the 41st President, a great dad, George H. W. Bush.

COMMEMORATING GERALD R. FORD, THIRTY-EIGHTH
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 2, 2007

Mrs. Ford, the Ford family; distinguished guests, including our Presidents and First Ladies; and our fellow citizens:

We are here today to say goodbye to a great man. Gerald Ford was born and reared in the American heartland. He belonged to a generation that measured men by their honesty and their courage. He grew to manhood under the roof of a loving mother and father — and when times were tough, he took part-time jobs to help them out. In President Ford, the world saw the best of America — and America found a man whose character and leadership would bring calm and healing to one of the most divisive moments in our nation's history.

Long before he was known in Washington, Gerald Ford showed his character and his leadership. As a star football player for the University of Michigan, he came face to face with racial prejudice when Georgia Tech came to Ann Arbor for a football game. One of Michigan's best players was an African American student named Willis Ward. Georgia Tech said they would not take the field if a black man were allowed to play. Gerald Ford was furious at Georgia Tech for making the demand, and for the University of Michigan for caving in. He agreed to play only after Willis Ward personally asked him to. The stand Gerald Ford took that day was never forgotten by his friend. And Gerald Ford never forgot that day either — and three decades later, he proudly supported the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act in the United States Congress.

Gerald Ford showed his character in the devotion to his family. On the day he became President, he told the nation, "I am indebted to no man, and only to one woman — to my dear wife." By then

Betty Ford had a pretty good idea of what marriage to Gerald Ford involved. After all, their wedding had taken place less than three weeks before his first election to the United States Congress, and his idea of a “honeymoon” was driving to Ann Arbor with his bride so they could attend a brunch before the Michigan-Northwestern game the next day. And that was the beginning of a great marriage. The Fords would have four fine children. And Steve, Jack, Mike, and Susan know that, as proud as their Dad was of being President, Gerald Ford was even prouder of the other titles he held: father, and grandfather, and great-grandfather.

Gerald Ford showed his character in the uniform of our country. When Pearl Harbor was attacked in December 1941, Gerald Ford was an attorney fresh out of Yale Law School, but when his nation called he did not hesitate. In early 1942 he volunteered for the Navy and, after receiving his commission, worked hard to get assigned to a ship headed into combat. Eventually his wish was granted, and Lieutenant Ford was assigned to the aircraft carrier, USS Monterey, which saw action in some of the biggest battles of the Pacific.

Gerald Ford showed his character in public office. As a young congressman, he earned a reputation for an ability to get along with others without compromising his principles. He was greatly admired by his colleagues and they trusted him a lot. And so when President Nixon needed to replace a vice president who had resigned in scandal, he naturally turned to a man whose name was a synonym for integrity: Gerald R. Ford. And eight months later, when he was elevated to the presidency, it was because America needed him, not because he needed the office.

President Ford assumed office at a terrible time in our nation’s history. At home, America was divided by political turmoil and wracked by inflation. In Southeast Asia, Saigon fell just nine months into his presidency. Amid all the turmoil, Gerald Ford was a rock of stability. And when he put his hand on his family Bible to take the presidential oath of office, he brought grace to a moment of great doubt.

In a short time, the gentleman from Grand Rapids proved that

behind the affability was firm resolve. When a U.S. ship called the Mayaguez was seized by Cambodia, President Ford made the tough decision to send in the Marines — and all the crew members were rescued. He was criticized for signing the Helsinki Accords, yet history has shown that document helped bring down the Soviet Union, as courageous men and women behind the Iron Curtain used it to demand their God-given liberties. Twice assassins attempted to take the life of this good and decent man, yet he refused to curtail his public appearances. And when he thought that the nation needed to put Watergate behind us, he made the tough and decent decision to pardon President Nixon, even though that decision probably cost him the presidential election.

Gerald Ford assumed the presidency when the nation needed a leader of character and humility — and we found it in the man from Grand Rapids. President Ford's time in office was brief, but history will long remember the courage and common sense that helped restore trust in the workings of our democracy.

Laura and I had the honor of hosting the Ford family for Gerald Ford's 90th birthday. It's one of the highlights of our time in the White House. I will always cherish the memory of the last time I saw him, this past year in California. He was still smiling, still counting himself lucky to have Betty at his side, and still displaying the optimism and generosity that made him one of America's most beloved leaders.

And so, on behalf of a grateful nation, we bid farewell to our 38th President. We thank the Almighty for Gerald Ford's life, and we ask for God's blessings on Gerald Ford and his family.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON IRAQ

THE LIBRARY OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 10, 2007

Good evening. Tonight in Iraq, the Armed Forces of the United States are engaged in a struggle that will determine the direction of the global war on terror — and our safety here at home. The new strategy I outline tonight will change America’s course in Iraq, and help us succeed in the fight against terror.

When I addressed you just over a year ago, nearly 12 million Iraqis had cast their ballots for a unified and democratic nation. The elections of 2005 were a stunning achievement. We thought that these elections would bring the Iraqis together, and that as we trained Iraqi security forces we could accomplish our mission with fewer American troops.

But in 2006, the opposite happened. The violence in Iraq — particularly in Baghdad — overwhelmed the political gains the Iraqis had made. Al Qaeda terrorists and Sunni insurgents recognized the mortal danger that Iraq’s elections posed for their cause, and they responded with outrageous acts of murder aimed at innocent Iraqis. They blew up one of the holiest shrines in Shia Islam — the Golden Mosque of Samarra — in a calculated effort to provoke Iraq’s Shia population to retaliate. Their strategy worked. Radical Shia elements, some supported by Iran, formed death squads. And the result was a vicious cycle of sectarian violence that continues today.

The situation in Iraq is unacceptable to the American people — and it is unacceptable to me. Our troops in Iraq have fought bravely. They have done everything we have asked them to do. Where mistakes have been made, the responsibility rests with me.

It is clear that we need to change our strategy in Iraq. So my national security team, military commanders, and diplomats conducted a comprehensive review. We consulted

members of Congress from both parties, our allies abroad, and distinguished outside experts. We benefitted from the thoughtful recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan panel led by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. In our discussions, we all agreed that there is no magic formula for success in Iraq. And one message came through loud and clear: Failure in Iraq would be a disaster for the United States.

The consequences of failure are clear: Radical Islamic extremists would grow in strength and gain new recruits. They would be in a better position to topple moderate governments, create chaos in the region, and use oil revenues to fund their ambitions. Iran would be emboldened in its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Our enemies would have a safe haven from which to plan and launch attacks on the American people. On September the 11th, 2001, we saw what a refuge for extremists on the other side of the world could bring to the streets of our own cities. For the safety of our people, America must succeed in Iraq.

The most urgent priority for success in Iraq is security, especially in Baghdad. Eighty percent of Iraq's sectarian violence occurs within 30 miles of the capital. This violence is splitting Baghdad into sectarian enclaves, and shaking the confidence of all Iraqis. Only Iraqis can end the sectarian violence and secure their people. And their government has put forward an aggressive plan to do it.

Our past efforts to secure Baghdad failed for two principal reasons: There were not enough Iraqi and American troops to secure neighborhoods that had been cleared of terrorists and insurgents. And there were too many restrictions on the troops we did have. Our military commanders reviewed the new Iraqi plan to ensure that it addressed these mistakes. They report that it does. They also report that this plan can work.

Now let me explain the main elements of this effort: The Iraqi government will appoint a military commander and two deputy commanders for their capital. The Iraqi government will deploy

Iraqi Army and National Police brigades across Baghdad's nine districts. When these forces are fully deployed, there will be 18 Iraqi Army and National Police brigades committed to this effort, along with local police. These Iraqi forces will operate from local police stations — conducting patrols and setting up checkpoints, and going door-to-door to gain the trust of Baghdad residents.

This is a strong commitment. But for it to succeed, our commanders say the Iraqis will need our help. So America will change our strategy to help the Iraqis carry out their campaign to put down sectarian violence and bring security to the people of Baghdad. This will require increasing American force levels. So I've committed more than 20,000 additional American troops to Iraq. The vast majority of them — five brigades — will be deployed to Baghdad. These troops will work alongside Iraqi units and be embedded in their formations. Our troops will have a well-defined mission: to help Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods, to help them protect the local population, and to help ensure that the Iraqi forces left behind are capable of providing the security that Baghdad needs.

Many listening tonight will ask why this effort will succeed when previous operations to secure Baghdad did not. Well, here are the differences: In earlier operations, Iraqi and American forces cleared many neighborhoods of terrorists and insurgents, but when our forces moved on to other targets, the killers returned. This time, we'll have the force levels we need to hold the areas that have been cleared. In earlier operations, political and sectarian interference prevented Iraqi and American forces from going into neighborhoods that are home to those fueling the sectarian violence. This time, Iraqi and American forces will have a green light to enter those neighborhoods — and Prime Minister Maliki has pledged that political or sectarian interference will not be tolerated.

I've made it clear to the Prime Minister and Iraq's other leaders that America's commitment is not open-ended. If the Iraqi government does not follow through on its promises, it will lose

the support of the American people — and it will lose the support of the Iraqi people. Now is the time to act. The Prime Minister understands this. Here is what he told his people just last week: “The Baghdad security plan will not provide a safe haven for any outlaws, regardless of [their] sectarian or political affiliation.”

This new strategy will not yield an immediate end to suicide bombings, assassinations, or IED attacks. Our enemies in Iraq will make every effort to ensure that our television screens are filled with images of death and suffering. Yet over time, we can expect to see Iraqi troops chasing down murderers, fewer brazen acts of terror, and growing trust and cooperation from Baghdad’s residents. When this happens, daily life will improve, Iraqis will gain confidence in their leaders, and the government will have the breathing space it needs to make progress in other critical areas. Most of Iraq’s Sunni and Shia want to live together in peace — and reducing the violence in Baghdad will help make reconciliation possible.

A successful strategy for Iraq goes beyond military operations. Ordinary Iraqi citizens must see that military operations are accompanied by visible improvements in their neighborhoods and communities. So America will hold the Iraqi government to the benchmarks it has announced.

To establish its authority, the Iraqi government plans to take responsibility for security in all of Iraq’s provinces by November. To give every Iraqi citizen a stake in the country’s economy, Iraq will pass legislation to share oil revenues among all Iraqis. To show that it is committed to delivering a better life, the Iraqi government will spend \$10 billion of its own money on reconstruction and infrastructure projects that will create new jobs. To empower local leaders, Iraqis plan to hold provincial elections later this year. And to allow more Iraqis to re-enter their nation’s political life, the government will reform de-Baathification laws, and establish a fair process for considering amendments to Iraq’s constitution.

America will change our approach to help the Iraqi

government as it works to meet these benchmarks. In keeping with the recommendations of the Iraq Study Group, we will increase the embedding of American advisers in Iraqi Army units, and partner a coalition brigade with every Iraqi Army division. We will help the Iraqis build a larger and better-equipped army, and we will accelerate the training of Iraqi forces, which remains the essential U.S. security mission in Iraq. We will give our commanders and civilians greater flexibility to spend funds for economic assistance. We will double the number of provincial reconstruction teams. These teams bring together military and civilian experts to help local Iraqi communities pursue reconciliation, strengthen the moderates, and speed the transition to Iraqi self-reliance. And Secretary Rice will soon appoint a reconstruction coordinator in Baghdad to ensure better results for economic assistance being spent in Iraq.

As we make these changes, we will continue to pursue al Qaeda and foreign fighters. Al Qaeda is still active in Iraq. Its home base is Anbar Province. Al Qaeda has helped make Anbar the most violent area of Iraq outside the capital. A captured al Qaeda document describes the terrorists' plan to infiltrate and seize control of the province. This would bring al Qaeda closer to its goals of taking down Iraq's democracy, building a radical Islamic empire, and launching new attacks on the United States at home and abroad.

Our military forces in Anbar are killing and capturing al Qaeda leaders, and they are protecting the local population. Recently, local tribal leaders have begun to show their willingness to take on al Qaeda. And as a result, our commanders believe we have an opportunity to deal a serious blow to the terrorists. So I have given orders to increase American forces in Anbar Province by 4,000 troops. These troops will work with Iraqi and tribal forces to keep up the pressure on the terrorists. America's men and women in uniform took away al Qaeda's safe haven in Afghanistan — and we will not allow them to re-establish it in Iraq.

Succeeding in Iraq also requires defending its territorial

integrity and stabilizing the region in the face of extremist challenges. This begins with addressing Iran and Syria. These two regimes are allowing terrorists and insurgents to use their territory to move in and out of Iraq. Iran is providing material support for attacks on American troops. We will disrupt the attacks on our forces. We'll interrupt the flow of support from Iran and Syria. And we will seek out and destroy the networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies in Iraq.

We're also taking other steps to bolster the security of Iraq and protect American interests in the Middle East. I recently ordered the deployment of an additional carrier strike group to the region. We will expand intelligence-sharing and deploy Patriot air defense systems to reassure our friends and allies. We will work with the governments of Turkey and Iraq to help them resolve problems along their border. And we will work with others to prevent Iran from gaining nuclear weapons and dominating the region.

We will use America's full diplomatic resources to rally support for Iraq from nations throughout the Middle East. Countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and the Gulf States need to understand that an American defeat in Iraq would create a new sanctuary for extremists and a strategic threat to their survival. These nations have a stake in a successful Iraq that is at peace with its neighbors, and they must step up their support for Iraq's unity government. We endorse the Iraqi government's call to finalize an International Compact that will bring new economic assistance in exchange for greater economic reform. And on Friday, Secretary Rice will leave for the region, to build support for Iraq and continue the urgent diplomacy required to help bring peace to the Middle East.

The challenge playing out across the broader Middle East is more than a military conflict. It is the decisive ideological struggle of our time. On one side are those who believe in freedom and moderation. On the other side are extremists who kill the innocent, and have declared their intention to destroy our way of life. In the long run, the most realistic way to protect the American people

is to provide a hopeful alternative to the hateful ideology of the enemy, by advancing liberty across a troubled region. It is in the interests of the United States to stand with the brave men and women who are risking their lives to claim their freedom, and to help them as they work to raise up just and hopeful societies across the Middle East.

From Afghanistan to Lebanon to the Palestinian Territories, millions of ordinary people are sick of the violence, and want a future of peace and opportunity for their children. And they are looking at Iraq. They want to know: Will America withdraw and yield the future of that country to the extremists, or will we stand with the Iraqis who have made the choice for freedom?

The changes I have outlined tonight are aimed at ensuring the survival of a young democracy that is fighting for its life in a part of the world of enormous importance to American security. Let me be clear: The terrorists and insurgents in Iraq are without conscience, and they will make the year ahead bloody and violent. Even if our new strategy works exactly as planned, deadly acts of violence will continue — and we must expect more Iraqi and American casualties. The question is whether our new strategy will bring us closer to success. I believe that it will.

Victory will not look like the ones our fathers and grandfathers achieved. There will be no surrender ceremony on the deck of a battleship. But victory in Iraq will bring something new in the Arab world — a functioning democracy that polices its territory, upholds the rule of law, respects fundamental human liberties, and answers to its people. A democratic Iraq will not be perfect. But it will be a country that fights terrorists instead of harboring them — and it will help bring a future of peace and security for our children and our grandchildren.

This new approach comes after consultations with Congress about the different courses we could take in Iraq. Many are concerned that the Iraqis are becoming too dependent on the United States, and therefore, our policy should focus on protecting Iraq's borders and hunting down al Qaeda. Their solution is to

scale back America's efforts in Baghdad — or announce the phased withdrawal of our combat forces. We carefully considered these proposals. And we concluded that to step back now would force a collapse of the Iraqi government, tear the country apart, and result in mass killings on an unimaginable scale. Such a scenario would result in our troops being forced to stay in Iraq even longer, and confront an enemy that is even more lethal. If we increase our support at this crucial moment, and help the Iraqis break the current cycle of violence, we can hasten the day our troops begin coming home.

In the days ahead, my national security team will fully brief Congress on our new strategy. If members have improvements that can be made, we will make them. If circumstances change, we will adjust. Honorable people have different views, and they will voice their criticisms. It is fair to hold our views up to scrutiny. And all involved have a responsibility to explain how the path they propose would be more likely to succeed.

Acting on the good advice of Senator Joe Lieberman and other key members of Congress, we will form a new, bipartisan working group that will help us come together across party lines to win the war on terror. This group will meet regularly with me and my administration; it will help strengthen our relationship with Congress. We can begin by working together to increase the size of the active Army and Marine Corps, so that America has the Armed Forces we need for the 21st century. We also need to examine ways to mobilize talented American civilians to deploy overseas, where they can help build democratic institutions in communities and nations recovering from war and tyranny.

In these dangerous times, the United States is blessed to have extraordinary and selfless men and women willing to step forward and defend us. These young Americans understand that our cause in Iraq is noble and necessary — and that the advance of freedom is the calling of our time. They serve far from their families, who make the quiet sacrifices of lonely holidays and empty chairs at the dinner table. They have watched their comrades give their lives to

ensure our liberty. We mourn the loss of every fallen American — and we owe it to them to build a future worthy of their sacrifice.

Fellow citizens: The year ahead will demand more patience, sacrifice, and resolve. It can be tempting to think that America can put aside the burdens of freedom. Yet times of testing reveal the character of a nation. And throughout our history, Americans have always defied the pessimists and seen our faith in freedom redeemed. Now America is engaged in a new struggle that will set the course for a new century. We can, and we will, prevail.

We go forward with trust that the Author of Liberty will guide us through these trying hours. Thank you and good night.

MEDAL OF HONOR CEREMONY FOR JASON DUNHAM

THE EAST ROOM OF THE WHITE HOUSE

JANUARY 11, 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Welcome to the White House.

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor a President can bestow. The Medal is given for gallantry in the face of an enemy attack that is above and beyond the call of duty. The Medal is part of a cherished American tradition that began in this house with the signature of President Abraham Lincoln.

Since World War II, more than half of those who have been awarded the Medal of Honor have lost their lives in the action that earned it. Corporal Jason Dunham belongs to this select group. On a dusty road in western Iraq, Corporal Dunham gave his own life so that the men under his command might live. This morning it's my privilege to recognize Corporal Dunham's devotion to the Corps and country — and to present his family with the Medal of Honor.

I welcome the Vice President's presence, Secretary of Defense Bob Gates, Senator Ted Stevens, Senator John McCain, Senator Craig Thomas — I don't know if you say former Marine, or Marine. Marine. Congressman Bill Young and his wife, Beverly; Congressman Duncan Hunter; Congressman John Kline, Marine; Congressman Randy Kuhl, Corporal Dunham's family's United States Congressman is with us. Secretary Don Winter; General Pete Pace; General Jim Conway and Annette; Sergeant Major John Estrada, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps.

I appreciate the Medal of Honor recipients who have joined us: Barney Barnum, Bob Foley, Bob Howard, Gary Littrell, Al Rascon, Brian Thacker. Thanks for joining us.

I appreciate the Dunhams who have joined us, and will soon join me on this platform to receive the honor on behalf of their son: Dan and Deb Dunham; Justin Dunham and Kyle Dunham, brothers; Katie Dunham, sister; and a lot of other family members who have

joined us today.

I appreciate the Chaplain for the Navy — excuse me, for the Marine Corps. I didn't mean to insult you.

I thank Major Trent Gibson — he was Jason Dunham's commander — company commander; First Lieutenant Brian Robinson, who was his platoon commander. I welcome all the Marines from "Kilo-3-7" — thanks for coming, and thanks for serving.

Long before he earned our nation's highest Medal Jason Dunham made himself — made a name for himself among his friends and neighbors. He was born in a small town in upstate New York. He was a normal kind of fellow, he loved sports. He went to Scio Central School, and he starred on the Tiger basketball, soccer, and baseball teams. And by the way, he still holds the record for the highest batting average in a single season at .414. He was popular with his teammates, and that could be a problem for his mom. You see, she never quite knew how many people would be showing up for dinner, whether it be her family, or the entire basketball team.

He grew up with the riches far more important than money: He had a dad who loved to take his boys on a ride with him when he made his rounds on the dairy farm where he worked. His mom was a school teacher. She figured out the best way to improve her son's spelling was to combine his love for sports with her ability to educate. And so she taught him the words from his reading list when they played the basketball game of "horse." He had two brothers and a sister who adored him.

He had a natural gift for leadership, and a compassion that led him to take others under his wing. The Marine Corps took the best of this young man, and made it better. As a Marine, he was taught that honor, courage and commitment are not just words. They're core values for a way of life that elevates service above self. As a Marine, Jason was taught that leaders put the needs of their men before their own. He was taught that while America's founding truths are self-evident, they also need to be defended by good men

and women willing to stand up to determined enemies.

As a leader of a rifle squad in Iraq, Corporal Dunham lived by the values he had been taught. He was a guy everybody looked up to. He was a Marine's Marine who led by example. He was the kind of person who would stop patrols to play street soccer with the Iraqi schoolchildren. He was the guy who signed on for an extra two months in Iraq so he could stay with his squad. As he explained it, he wanted to "make sure that everyone makes it home alive." Corporal Dunham took that promise seriously and would give his own life to make it good.

In April 2004, during an attack near Iraq's Syrian border, Corporal Dunham was assaulted by an insurgent who jumped out of a vehicle that was about to be searched. As Corporal Dunham wrestled the man to the ground, the insurgent rolled out a grenade he had been hiding. Corporal Dunham did not hesitate. He jumped on the grenade, using his helmet and body to absorb the blast. Although he survived the initial explosion, he did not survive his wounds. But by his selflessness, Corporal Dunham saved the lives of two of his men, and showed the world what it means to be a Marine.

Deb Dunham calls the Marine Corps her son's second family and she means that literally. Deb describes her son's relationship to his men this way: "Jay was part guardian angel, part big brother, and all Marine." She remembers her son calling from the barracks, and then passing the phone to one of his Marines, saying, "I've got a guy here who just needs to talk to a mom." Now it's the Marines who comfort her. On special days, like Christmas or Mother's Day or her birthday, Deb has learned the day will not pass without one of Jason's fellow Marines calling to check on her.

With this Medal we pay tribute to the courage and leadership of a man who represents the best of young Americans. With this Medal we ask the God who commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves to wrap his arms around the family of Corporal Jason Dunham, a Marine who is not here today because he lived that commandment to the fullest. I now invite the Dunhams to join me

on the stage. And, Colonel, please read the citation.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 110TH CONGRESS

UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 23, 2007

Thank you very much. And tonight, I have a high privilege and distinct honor of my own — as the first President to begin the State of the Union message with these words: Madam Speaker.

In his day, the late Congressman Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr. from Baltimore, Maryland, saw Presidents Roosevelt and Truman at this rostrum. But nothing could compare with the sight of his only daughter, Nancy, presiding tonight as Speaker of the House of Representatives. Congratulations, Madam Speaker.

Two members of the House and Senate are not with us tonight, and we pray for the recovery and speedy return of Senator Tim Johnson and Congressman Charlie Norwood.

Madam Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens:

The rite of custom brings us together at a defining hour — when decisions are hard and courage is needed. We enter the year 2007 with large endeavors underway, and others that are ours to begin. In all of this, much is asked of us. We must have the will to face difficult challenges and determined enemies — and the wisdom to face them together.

Some in this chamber are new to the House and the Senate — and I congratulate the Democrat majority. Congress has changed, but not our responsibilities. Each of us is guided by our own convictions — and to these we must stay faithful. Yet we're all held to the same standards, and called to serve the same good purposes: To extend this nation's prosperity; to spend the people's money wisely; to solve problems, not leave them to future generations; to guard America against all evil; and to keep faith with those we have sent forth to defend us.

We're not the first to come here with a government divided and

uncertainty in the air. Like many before us, we can work through our differences, and achieve big things for the American people. Our citizens don't much care which side of the aisle we sit on — as long as we're willing to cross that aisle when there is work to be done. Our job is to make life better for our fellow Americans, and to help them to build a future of hope and opportunity — and this is the business before us tonight.

A future of hope and opportunity begins with a growing economy — and that is what we have. We're now in the 41st month of uninterrupted job growth, in a recovery that has created 7.2 million new jobs — so far. Unemployment is low, inflation is low, and wages are rising. This economy is on the move, and our job is to keep it that way, not with more government, but with more enterprise.

Next week, I'll deliver a full report on the state of our economy. Tonight, I want to discuss three economic reforms that deserve to be priorities for this Congress.

First, we must balance the federal budget. We can do so without raising taxes. What we need to do is impose spending discipline in Washington, D.C. We set a goal of cutting the deficit in half by 2009, and met that goal three years ahead of schedule. Now let us take the next step. In the coming weeks, I will submit a budget that eliminates the federal deficit within the next five years. I ask you to make the same commitment. Together, we can restrain the spending appetite of the federal government, and we can balance the federal budget.

Next, there is the matter of earmarks. These special interest items are often slipped into bills at the last hour — when not even C-SPAN is watching. In 2005 alone, the number of earmarks grew to over 13,000 and totaled nearly \$18 billion. Even worse, over 90 percent of earmarks never make it to the floor of the House and Senate — they are dropped into committee reports that are not even part of the bill that arrives on my desk. You didn't vote them into law. I didn't sign them into law. Yet, they're treated as if they have the force of law. The time has come to end this practice. So

let us work together to reform the budget process, expose every earmark to the light of day and to a vote in Congress, and cut the number and cost of earmarks at least in half by the end of this session.

And, finally, to keep this economy strong we must take on the challenge of entitlements. Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid are commitments of conscience, and so it is our duty to keep them permanently sound. Yet, we're failing in that duty. And this failure will one day leave our children with three bad options: huge tax increases, huge deficits, or huge and immediate cuts in benefits. Everyone in this chamber knows this to be true — yet somehow we have not found it in ourselves to act. So let us work together and do it now. With enough good sense and goodwill, you and I can fix Medicare and Medicaid — and save Social Security.

Spreading opportunity and hope in America also requires public schools that give children the knowledge and character they need in life. Five years ago, we rose above partisan differences to pass the No Child Left Behind Act, preserving local control, raising standards, and holding those schools accountable for results. And because we acted, students are performing better in reading and math, and minority students are closing the achievement gap.

Now the task is to build on the success, without watering down standards, without taking control from local communities, and without backsliding and calling it reform. We can lift student achievement even higher by giving local leaders flexibility to turn around failing schools, and by giving families with children stuck in failing schools the right to choose someplace better. We must increase funds for students who struggle — and make sure these children get the special help they need. And we can make sure our children are prepared for the jobs of the future and our country is more competitive by strengthening math and science skills. The No Child Left Behind Act has worked for America's children — and I ask Congress to reauthorize this good law.

A future of hope and opportunity requires that all our citizens

have affordable and available health care. When it comes to health care, government has an obligation to care for the elderly, the disabled, and poor children. And we will meet those responsibilities. For all other Americans, private health insurance is the best way to meet their needs. But many Americans cannot afford a health insurance policy.

And so tonight, I propose two new initiatives to help more Americans afford their own insurance. First, I propose a standard tax deduction for health insurance that will be like the standard tax deduction for dependents. Families with health insurance will pay no income on payroll tax — or payroll taxes on \$15,000 of their income. Single Americans with health insurance will pay no income or payroll taxes on \$7,500 of their income. With this reform, more than 100 million men, women, and children who are now covered by employer-provided insurance will benefit from lower tax bills. At the same time, this reform will level the playing field for those who do not get health insurance through their job. For Americans who now purchase health insurance on their own, this proposal would mean a substantial tax savings — \$4,500 for a family of four making \$60,000 a year. And for the millions of other Americans who have no health insurance at all, this deduction would help put a basic private health insurance plan within their reach. Changing the tax code is a vital and necessary step to making health care affordable for more Americans.

My second proposal is to help the states that are coming up with innovative ways to cover the uninsured. States that make basic private health insurance available to all their citizens should receive federal funds to help them provide this coverage to the poor and the sick. I have asked the Secretary of Health and Human Services to work with Congress to take existing federal funds and use them to create “Affordable Choices” grants. These grants would give our nation’s governors more money and more flexibility to get private health insurance to those most in need.

There are many other ways that Congress can help. We need to expand Health Savings Accounts. We need to help small businesses

through Association Health Plans. We need to reduce costs and medical errors with better information technology. We will encourage price transparency. And to protect good doctors from junk lawsuits, we passing medical liability reform. In all we do, we must remember that the best health care decisions are made not by government and insurance companies, but by patients and their doctors.

Extending hope and opportunity in our country requires an immigration system worthy of America — with laws that are fair and borders that are secure. When laws and borders are routinely violated, this harms the interests of our country. To secure our border, we're doubling the size of the Border Patrol, and funding new infrastructure and technology.

Yet even with all these steps, we cannot fully secure the border unless we take pressure off the border — and that requires a temporary worker program. We should establish a legal and orderly path for foreign workers to enter our country to work on a temporary basis. As a result, they won't have to try to sneak in, and that will leave Border Agents free to chase down drug smugglers and criminals and terrorists. We'll enforce our immigration laws at the work site and give employers the tools to verify the legal status of their workers, so there's no excuse left for violating the law.

We need to uphold the great tradition of the melting pot that welcomes and assimilates new arrivals. We need to resolve the status of the illegal immigrants who are already in our country without animosity and without amnesty. Convictions run deep in this Capitol when it comes to immigration. Let us have a serious, civil, and conclusive debate, so that you can pass, and I can sign, comprehensive immigration reform into law.

Extending hope and opportunity depends on a stable supply of energy that keeps America's economy running and America's environment clean. For too long our nation has been dependent on foreign oil. And this dependence leaves us more vulnerable to hostile regimes, and to terrorists — who could cause huge disruptions of oil shipments, and raise the price of oil, and do great

harm to our economy.

It's in our vital interest to diversify America's energy supply — the way forward is through technology. We must continue changing the way America generates electric power, by even greater use of clean coal technology, solar and wind energy, and clean, safe nuclear power. We need to press on with battery research for plug-in and hybrid vehicles, and expand the use of clean diesel vehicles and biodiesel fuel. We must continue investing in new methods of producing ethanol using everything from wood chips to grasses, to agricultural wastes.

We made a lot of progress, thanks to good policies here in Washington and the strong response of the market. And now even more dramatic advances are within reach. Tonight, I ask Congress to join me in pursuing a great goal. Let us build on the work we've done and reduce gasoline usage in the United States by 20 percent in the next 10 years. When we do that we will have cut our total imports by the equivalent of three-quarters of all the oil we now import from the Middle East.

To reach this goal, we must increase the supply of alternative fuels, by setting a mandatory fuels standard to require 35 billion gallons of renewable and alternative fuels in 2017 — and that is nearly five times the current target. At the same time, we need to reform and modernize fuel economy standards for cars the way we did for light trucks — and conserve up to 8.5 billion more gallons of gasoline by 2017.

Achieving these ambitious goals will dramatically reduce our dependence on foreign oil, but it's not going to eliminate it. And so as we continue to diversify our fuel supply, we must step up domestic oil production in environmentally sensitive ways. And to further protect America against severe disruptions to our oil supply, I ask Congress to double the current capacity of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve.

America is on the verge of technological breakthroughs that will enable us to live our lives less dependent on oil. And these technologies will help us be better stewards of the environment,

and they will help us to confront the serious challenge of global climate change.

A future of hope and opportunity requires a fair, impartial system of justice. The lives of our citizens across our nation are affected by the outcome of cases pending in our federal courts. We have a shared obligation to ensure that the federal courts have enough judges to hear those cases and deliver timely rulings. As President, I have a duty to nominate qualified men and women to vacancies on the federal bench. And the United States Senate has a duty, as well, to give those nominees a fair hearing, and a prompt up-or-down vote on the Senate floor.

For all of us in this room, there is no higher responsibility than to protect the people of this country from danger. Five years have come and gone since we saw the scenes and felt the sorrow that the terrorists can cause. We've had time to take stock of our situation. We've added many critical protections to guard the homeland. We know with certainty that the horrors of that September morning were just a glimpse of what the terrorists intend for us — unless we stop them.

With the distance of time, we find ourselves debating the causes of conflict and the course we have followed. Such debates are essential when a great democracy faces great questions. Yet one question has surely been settled: that to win the war on terror we must take the fight to the enemy.

From the start, America and our allies have protected our people by staying on the offense. The enemy knows that the days of comfortable sanctuary, easy movement, steady financing, and free flowing communications are long over. For the terrorists, life since 9/11 has never been the same.

Our success in this war is often measured by the things that did not happen. We cannot know the full extent of the attacks that we and our allies have prevented, but here is some of what we do know: We stopped an al Qaeda plot to fly a hijacked airplane into the tallest building on the West Coast. We broke up a Southeast Asian terror cell grooming operatives for attacks inside the United

States. We uncovered an al Qaeda cell developing anthrax to be used in attacks against America. And just last August, British authorities uncovered a plot to blow up passenger planes bound for America over the Atlantic Ocean. For each life saved, we owe a debt of gratitude to the brave public servants who devote their lives to finding the terrorists and stopping them.

Every success against the terrorists is a reminder of the shoreless ambitions of this enemy. The evil that inspired and rejoiced in 9/11 is still at work in the world. And so long as that's the case, America is still a nation at war.

In the mind of the terrorist, this war began well before September the 11th, and will not end until their radical vision is fulfilled. And these past five years have given us a much clearer view of the nature of this enemy. Al Qaeda and its followers are Sunni extremists, possessed by hatred and commanded by a harsh and narrow ideology. Take almost any principle of civilization, and their goal is the opposite. They preach with threats, instruct with bullets and bombs, and promise paradise for the murder of the innocent.

Our enemies are quite explicit about their intentions. They want to overthrow moderate governments, and establish safe havens from which to plan and carry out new attacks on our country. By killing and terrorizing Americans, they want to force our country to retreat from the world and abandon the cause of liberty. They would then be free to impose their will and spread their totalitarian ideology. Listen to this warning from the late terrorist Zarqawi: "We will sacrifice our blood and bodies to put an end to your dreams, and what is coming is even worse." Osama bin Laden declared: "Death is better than living on this Earth with the unbelievers among us."

These men are not given to idle words, and they are just one camp in the Islamist radical movement. In recent times, it has also become clear that we face an escalating danger from Shia extremists who are just as hostile to America, and are also determined to dominate the Middle East. Many are known to take direction from the regime in Iran, which is funding and arming terrorists like

Hezbollah — a group second only to al Qaeda in the American lives it has taken.

The Shia and Sunni extremists are different faces of the same totalitarian threat. Whatever slogans they chant, when they slaughter the innocent they have the same wicked purposes. They want to kill Americans, kill democracy in the Middle East, and gain the weapons to kill on an even more horrific scale.

In the sixth year since our nation was attacked, I wish I could report to you that the dangers had ended. They have not. And so it remains the policy of this government to use every lawful and proper tool of intelligence, diplomacy, law enforcement, and military action to do our duty, to find these enemies, and to protect the American people.

This war is more than a clash of arms — it is a decisive ideological struggle, and the security of our nation is in the balance. To prevail, we must remove the conditions that inspire blind hatred, and drove 19 men to get onto airplanes and to come and kill us. What every terrorist fears most is human freedom — societies where men and women make their own choices, answer to their own conscience, and live by their hopes instead of their resentments. Free people are not drawn to violent and malignant ideologies — and most will choose a better way when they're given a chance. So we advance our own security interests by helping moderates and reformers and brave voices for democracy. The great question of our day is whether America will help men and women in the Middle East to build free societies and share in the rights of all humanity. And I say, for the sake of our own security, we must.

In the last two years, we've seen the desire for liberty in the broader Middle East — and we have been sobered by the enemy's fierce reaction. In 2005, the world watched as the citizens of Lebanon raised the banner of the Cedar Revolution, they drove out the Syrian occupiers and chose new leaders in free elections. In 2005, the people of Afghanistan defied the terrorists and elected a democratic legislature. And in 2005, the Iraqi people held three

national elections, choosing a transitional government, adopting the most progressive, democratic constitution in the Arab world, and then electing a government under that constitution. Despite endless threats from the killers in their midst, nearly 12 million Iraqi citizens came out to vote in a show of hope and solidarity that we should never forget.

A thinking enemy watched all of these scenes, adjusted their tactics, and in 2006 they struck back. In Lebanon, assassins took the life of Pierre Gemayel, a prominent participant in the Cedar Revolution. Hezbollah terrorists, with support from Syria and Iran, sowed conflict in the region and are seeking to undermine Lebanon's legitimately elected government. In Afghanistan, Taliban and al Qaeda fighters tried to regain power by regrouping and engaging Afghan and NATO forces. In Iraq, al Qaeda and other Sunni extremists blew up one of the most sacred places in Shia Islam — the Golden Mosque of Samarra. This atrocity, directed at a Muslim house of prayer, was designed to provoke retaliation from Iraqi Shia — and it succeeded. Radical Shia elements, some of whom receive support from Iran, formed death squads. The result was a tragic escalation of sectarian rage and reprisal that continues to this day.

This is not the fight we entered in Iraq, but it is the fight we're in. Every one of us wishes this war were over and won. Yet it would not be like us to leave our promises unkept, our friends abandoned, and our own security at risk. Ladies and gentlemen: On this day, at this hour, it is still within our power to shape the outcome of this battle. Let us find our resolve, and turn events toward victory.

We're carrying out a new strategy in Iraq — a plan that demands more from Iraq's elected government, and gives our forces in Iraq the reinforcements they need to complete their mission. Our goal is a democratic Iraq that upholds the rule of law, respects the rights of its people, provides them security, and is an ally in the war on terror.

In order to make progress toward this goal, the Iraqi

government must stop the sectarian violence in its capital. But the Iraqis are not yet ready to do this on their own. So we're deploying reinforcements of more than 20,000 additional soldiers and Marines to Iraq. The vast majority will go to Baghdad, where they will help Iraqi forces to clear and secure neighborhoods, and serve as advisers embedded in Iraqi Army units. With Iraqis in the lead, our forces will help secure the city by chasing down the terrorists, insurgents, and the roaming death squads. And in Anbar Province, where al Qaeda terrorists have gathered and local forces have begun showing a willingness to fight them, we're sending an additional 4,000 United States Marines, with orders to find the terrorists and clear them out. We didn't drive al Qaeda out of their safe haven in Afghanistan only to let them set up a new safe haven in a free Iraq.

The people of Iraq want to live in peace, and now it's time for their government to act. Iraq's leaders know that our commitment is not open-ended. They have promised to deploy more of their own troops to secure Baghdad — and they must do so. They pledged that they will confront violent radicals of any faction or political party — and they need to follow through, and lift needless restrictions on Iraqi and coalition forces, so these troops can achieve their mission of bringing security to all of the people of Baghdad. Iraq's leaders have committed themselves to a series of benchmarks — to achieve reconciliation, to share oil revenues among all of Iraq's citizens, to put the wealth of Iraq into the rebuilding of Iraq, to allow more Iraqis to re-enter their nation's civic life, to hold local elections, and to take responsibility for security in every Iraqi province. But for all of this to happen, Baghdad must be secure. And our plan will help the Iraqi government take back its capital and make good on its commitments.

My fellow citizens, our military commanders and I have carefully weighed the options. We discussed every possible approach. In the end, I chose this course of action because it provides the best chance for success. Many in this chamber

understand that America must not fail in Iraq, because you understand that the consequences of failure would be grievous and far-reaching.

If American forces step back before Baghdad is secure, the Iraqi government would be overrun by extremists on all sides. We could expect an epic battle between Shia extremists backed by Iran, and Sunni extremists aided by al Qaeda and supporters of the old regime. A contagion of violence could spill out across the country — and in time, the entire region could be drawn into the conflict.

For America, this is a nightmare scenario. For the enemy, this is the objective. Chaos is the greatest ally — their greatest ally in this struggle. And out of chaos in Iraq would emerge an emboldened enemy with new safe havens, new recruits, new resources, and an even greater determination to harm America. To allow this to happen would be to ignore the lessons of September the 11th and invite tragedy. Ladies and gentlemen, nothing is more important at this moment in our history than for America to succeed in the Middle East, to succeed in Iraq and to spare the American people from this danger.

This is where matters stand tonight, in the here and now. I have spoken with many of you in person. I respect you and the arguments you've made. We went into this largely united, in our assumptions and in our convictions. And whatever you voted for, you did not vote for failure. Our country is pursuing a new strategy in Iraq, and I ask you to give it a chance to work. And I ask you to support our troops in the field, and those on their way.

The war on terror we fight today is a generational struggle that will continue long after you and I have turned our duties over to others. And that's why it's important to work together so our nation can see this great effort through. Both parties and both branches should work in close consultation. It's why I propose to establish a special advisory council on the war on terror, made up of leaders in Congress from both political parties. We will share ideas for how to position America to meet every challenge that confronts us.

We'll show our enemies abroad that we are united in the goal of victory.

And one of the first steps we can take together is to add to the ranks of our military so that the American Armed Forces are ready for all the challenges ahead. Tonight I ask the Congress to authorize an increase in the size of our active Army and Marine Corps by 92,000 in the next five years. A second task we can take on together is to design and establish a volunteer Civilian Reserve Corps. Such a corps would function much like our military reserve. It would ease the burden on the Armed Forces by allowing us to hire civilians with critical skills to serve on missions abroad when America needs them. It would give people across America who do not wear the uniform a chance to serve in the defining struggle of our time.

Americans can have confidence in the outcome of this struggle because we're not in this struggle alone. We have a diplomatic strategy that is rallying the world to join in the fight against extremism. In Iraq, multinational forces are operating under a mandate from the United Nations. We're working with Jordan and Saudi Arabia and Egypt and the Gulf States to increase support for Iraq's government.

The United Nations has imposed sanctions on Iran, and made it clear that the world will not allow the regime in Tehran to acquire nuclear weapons. With the other members of the Quartet — the U.N., the European Union, and Russia — we're pursuing diplomacy to help bring peace to the Holy Land, and pursuing the establishment of a democratic Palestinian state living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security. In Afghanistan, NATO has taken the lead in turning back the Taliban and al Qaeda offensive — the first time the Alliance has deployed forces outside the North Atlantic area. Together with our partners in China, Japan, Russia, and South Korea, we're pursuing intensive diplomacy to achieve a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

We will continue to speak out for the cause of freedom in places like Cuba, Belarus, and Burma — and continue to awaken

the conscience of the world to save the people of Darfur.

American foreign policy is more than a matter of war and diplomacy. Our work in the world is also based on a timeless truth: To whom much is given, much is required. We hear the call to take on the challenges of hunger and poverty and disease — and that is precisely what America is doing. We must continue to fight HIV/AIDS, especially on the continent of Africa. Because you funded our Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the number of people receiving life-saving drugs has grown from 50,000 to more than 800,000 in three short years. I ask you to continue funding our efforts to fight HIV/AIDS. I ask you to provide \$1.2 billion over five years so we can combat malaria in 15 African countries.

I ask that you fund the Millennium Challenge Account, so that American aid reaches the people who need it, in nations where democracy is on the rise and corruption is in retreat. And let us continue to support the expanded trade and debt relief that are the best hope for lifting lives and eliminating poverty.

When America serves others in this way, we show the strength and generosity of our country. These deeds reflect the character of our people. The greatest strength we have is the heroic kindness, courage, and self-sacrifice of the American people. You see this spirit often if you know where to look — and tonight we need only look above to the gallery.

Dikembe Mutombo grew up in Africa, amid great poverty and disease. He came to Georgetown University on a scholarship to study medicine — but Coach John Thompson got a look at Dikembe and had a different idea. Dikembe became a star in the NBA, and a citizen of the United States. But he never forgot the land of his birth, or the duty to share his blessings with others. He built a brand new hospital in his old hometown. A friend has said of this good-hearted man: “Mutombo believes that God has given him this opportunity to do great things.” And we are proud to call this son of the Congo a citizen of the United States of America.

After her daughter was born, Julie Aigner-Clark searched for ways to share her love of music and art with her child. So she

borrowed some equipment, and began filming children's videos in her basement. The Baby Einstein Company was born, and in just five years her business grew to more than \$20 million in sales. In November 2001, Julie sold Baby Einstein to the Walt Disney Company, and with her help Baby Einstein has grown into a \$200 million business. Julie represents the great enterprising spirit of America. And she is using her success to help others — producing child safety videos with John Walsh of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Julie says of her new project: "I believe it's the most important thing that I have ever done. I believe that children have the right to live in a world that is safe." And so tonight, we are pleased to welcome this talented business entrepreneur and generous social entrepreneur — Julie Aigner-Clark.

Three weeks ago, Wesley Autrey was waiting at a Harlem subway station with his two little girls, when he saw a man fall into the path of a train. With seconds to act, Wesley jumped onto the tracks, pulled the man into the space between the rails, and held him as the train passed right above their heads. He insists he's not a hero. He says: "We got guys and girls overseas dying for us to have our freedoms. We have got to show each other some love." There is something wonderful about a country that produces a brave and humble man like Wesley Autrey.

Tommy Rieman was a teenager pumping gas in Independence, Kentucky, when he enlisted in the United States Army. In December 2003, he was on a reconnaissance mission in Iraq when his team came under heavy enemy fire. From his Humvee, Sergeant Rieman returned fire; he used his body as a shield to protect his gunner. He was shot in the chest and arm, and received shrapnel wounds to his legs — yet he refused medical attention, and stayed in the fight. He helped to repel a second attack, firing grenades at the enemy's position. For his exceptional courage, Sergeant Rieman was awarded the Silver Star. And like so many other Americans who have volunteered to defend us, he has earned the respect and the gratitude of our entire country.

In such courage and compassion, ladies and gentlemen, we see the spirit and character of America — and these qualities are not in short supply. This is a decent and honorable country — and resilient, too. We've been through a lot together. We've met challenges and faced dangers, and we know that more lie ahead. Yet we can go forward with confidence — because the State of our Union is strong, our cause in the world is right, and tonight that cause goes on. God bless.

See you next year. Thank you for your prayers.

ADDRESS TO AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
DEMOCRACY AND SECURITY IN PRAGUE

CZERNIN PALACE
PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC
JUNE 5, 2007

President Ilves, Foreign Minister Schwarzenberg, distinguished guests: Laura and I are pleased to be back in Prague, and we appreciate the gracious welcome in this historic hall. Tomorrow I attend the G-8 Summit, where I will meet with the leaders of the world's most powerful economies. This afternoon, I stand with men and women who represent an even greater power — the power of human conscience.

In this room are dissidents and democratic activists from 17 countries on five continents. You follow different traditions, you practice different faiths, and you face different challenges. But you are united by an unwavering conviction: that freedom is the non-negotiable right of every man, woman, and child, and that the path to lasting peace in our world is liberty.

This conference was conceived by three of the great advocates for freedom in our time: Jose Maria Aznar, Vaclav Havel, and Natan Sharansky. I thank them for the invitation to address this inspiring assembly, and for showing the world that an individual with moral clarity and courage can change the course of history.

It is fitting that we meet in the Czech Republic — a nation at the heart of Europe, and of the struggle for freedom on this continent. Nine decades ago, Tomas Masaryk proclaimed Czechoslovakia's independence based on the "ideals of modern democracy." That democracy was interrupted, first by the Nazis and then by the communists, who seized power in a shameful coup that left the Foreign Minister dead in the courtyard of this palace.

Through the long darkness of Soviet occupation, the true face of this nation was never in doubt. The world saw it in the reforms of the Prague Spring and the principled demands of Charter 77.

Those efforts were met with tanks and truncheons and arrests by secret police. But the violent would not have the final word. In 1989, thousands gathered in Wenceslas Square to call for their freedom. Theaters like the Magic Lantern became headquarters for dissidents. Workers left their factories to support a strike. And within weeks, the regime crumbled. Vaclav Havel went from prisoner of state to head of state. And the people of Czechoslovakia brought down the Iron Curtain with a Velvet Revolution.

Across Europe, similar scenes were unfolding. In Poland, a movement that began in a single shipyard freed people across a nation. In Hungary, mourners gathered at Heroes Square to bury a slain reformer — and bury their communist regime, too. In East Germany, families came together for prayer meetings — and found the strength to tear down a wall. Soon, activists emerged from the attics and church basements to reclaim the streets of Bulgaria, and Romania, and Albania, and Latvia, and Lithuania, and Estonia. The Warsaw Pact was dissolved peacefully in this very room. And after seven decades of oppression, the Soviet Union ceased to exist.

Behind these astonishing achievements was the triumph of freedom in the battle of ideas. The communists had an imperial ideology that claimed to know the directions of history. But in the end, it was overpowered by ordinary people who wanted to live their lives, and worship their God, and speak the truth to their children. The communists had the harsh rule of Brezhnev, and Honecker, and Ceausescu. But in the end, it was no match for the vision of Walesa and Havel, the defiance of Sakharov and Sharansky, the resolve of Reagan and Thatcher, and fearless witness of John Paul. From this experience, a clear lesson has emerged: Freedom can be resisted, and freedom can be delayed, but freedom cannot be denied.

In the years since liberation, Central and Eastern European nations have navigated the difficult transition to democracy. Leaders made the tough reforms needed to enter NATO and the European Union. Citizens claimed their freedom in the Balkans and beyond. And now, after centuries of war and suffering, the

continent of Europe is at last in peace.

With this new era have come new threats to freedom. In dark and repressive corners of the world, whole generations grew up with no voice in their government and no hope in their future. This life of oppression bred deep resentment. And for many, resentment boiled over into radicalism and extremism and violence. The world saw the result on September the 11th, 2001, when terrorists based in Afghanistan sent 19 suicidal men to murder nearly 3,000 innocent people in the United States.

For some, this attack called for a narrow response. In truth, 9/11 was evidence of a much broader danger — an international movement of violent Islamic extremists that threatens free people everywhere. The extremists' ambition is to build a totalitarian empire that spans all current and former Muslim lands, including parts of Europe. Their strategy to achieve that goal is to frighten the world into surrender through a ruthless campaign of terrorist murder.

To confront this enemy, America and our allies have taken the offensive with the full range of our military, intelligence, and law enforcement capabilities. Yet this battle is more than a military conflict. Like the Cold War, it's an ideological struggle between two fundamentally different visions of humanity. On one side are the extremists, who promise paradise, but deliver a life of public beatings and repression of women and suicide bombings. On the other side are huge numbers of moderate men and women — including millions in the Muslim world — who believe that every human life has dignity and value that no power on Earth can take away.

The most powerful weapon in the struggle against extremism is not bullets or bombs — it is the universal appeal of freedom. Freedom is the design of our Maker, and the longing of every soul. Freedom is the best way to unleash the creativity and economic potential of a nation. Freedom is the only ordering of a society that leads to justice. And human freedom is the only way to achieve human rights.

Expanding freedom is more than a moral imperative — it is the only realistic way to protect our people in the long run. Years ago, Andrei Sakharov warned that a country that does not respect the rights of its own people will not respond to the rights of its neighbors. History proves him right. Governments accountable to their people do not attack each other. Democracies address problems through the political process, instead of blaming outside scapegoats. Young people who can disagree openly with their leaders are less likely to adopt violent ideologies. And nations that commit to freedom for their people will not support extremists — they will join in defeating them.

For all these reasons, the United States is committed to the advance of freedom and democracy as the great alternatives to repression and radicalism. And we have a historic objective in view. In my second inaugural address, I pledged America to the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world. Some have said that qualifies me as a “dissident president.” If standing for liberty in the world makes me a dissident, I wear that title with pride.

America pursues our freedom agenda in many ways — some vocal and visible, others quiet and hidden from view. Ending tyranny requires support for the forces of conscience that undermine repressive societies from within. The Soviet dissident Andrei Amalrik compared a tyrannical state to a soldier who constantly points a gun at his enemy — until his arms finally tire and the prisoner escapes. The role of the free world is to put pressure on the arms of the world’s tyrants — and strengthen the prisoners who are trying to speed their collapse.

So I meet personally with dissidents and democratic activists from some of the world’s worst dictatorships — including Belarus, and Burma, and Cuba, and North Korea, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. At this conference, I look forward to meeting other dissidents, including some from Iran and Syria. One of those dissidents is Mamoun Homsy. In 2001, this man was an independent member of the Syrian parliament who simply issued a declaration asking the government to begin respecting human rights. For this entirely

peaceful act, he was arrested and sent to jail, where he spent several years beside other innocent advocates for a free Syria.

Another dissident I will meet here is Rebiyah Kadeer of China, whose sons have been jailed in what we believe is an act of retaliation for her human rights activities. The talent of men and women like Rebiyah is the greatest resource of their nations, far more valuable than the weapons of their army or their oil under the ground. America calls on every nation that stifles dissent to end its repression, to trust its people, and to grant its citizens the freedom they deserve.

There are many dissidents who couldn't join us because they are being unjustly imprisoned or held under house arrest. I look forward to the day when a conference like this one include Alexander Kozulin of Belarus, Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma, Oscar Elias Biscet of Cuba, Father Nguyen Van Ly of Vietnam, Ayman Nour of Egypt. The daughter of one of these political prisoners is in this room. I would like to say to her, and all the families: I thank you for your courage. I pray for your comfort and strength. And I call for the immediate and unconditional release of your loved ones.

In the eyes of America, the democratic dissidents today are the democratic leaders of tomorrow. So we're taking new steps to strengthen our support. We recently created a Human Rights Defenders Fund, which provides grants for the legal defense and medical expenses of activists arrested or beaten by repressive governments. I strongly support the Prague Document that your conference plans to issue, which states that "the protection of human rights is critical to international peace and security." And in keeping with the goals of that declaration, I have asked Secretary Rice to send a directive to every U.S. ambassador in an un-free nation: Seek out and meet with activists for democracy. Seek out those who demand human rights.

People living in tyranny need to know they are not forgotten. North Koreans live in a closed society where dissent is brutally suppressed, and they are cut off from their brothers and sisters to

the south. The Iranians are a great people who deserve to chart their own future, but they are denied their liberty by a handful of extremists whose pursuit of nuclear weapons prevents their country from taking its rightful place amongst the thriving. The Cubans are desperate for freedom — and as that nation enters a period of transition, we must insist on free elections and free speech and free assembly. And in Sudan, freedom is denied and basic human rights are violated by a government that pursues genocide against its own citizens. My message to all those who suffer under tyranny is this: We will never excuse your oppressors. We will always stand for your freedom.

Freedom is also under assault in countries that have shown some progress. In Venezuela, elected leaders have resorted to shallow populism to dismantle democratic institutions and tighten their grip on power. The government of Uzbekistan continues to silence independent voices by jailing human rights activists. And Vietnam recently arrested and imprisoned a number of peaceful religious and political activists.

These developments are discouraging, but there are more reasons for optimism. At the start of the 1980s, there were only 45 democracies on Earth. There are now more than 120 democracies — more people now live in freedom than ever before. And it is the responsibility of those who enjoy the blessings of liberty to help those who are struggling to establish their free societies. So the United States has nearly doubled funding for democracy projects. We're working with our partners in the G-8 to promote the rise of a vibrant civil society in the Middle East through initiatives like the Forum for the Future. We're cooperating side-by-side with the new democracies in Ukraine and Georgia and Kyrgyzstan. We congratulate the people of Yemen on their landmark presidential election, and the people of Kuwait on elections in which women were able to vote and run for office for the first time. We stand firmly behind the people of Lebanon and Afghanistan and Iraq as they defend their democratic gains against extremist enemies. These people are making tremendous sacrifices for liberty. They

deserve the admiration of the free world, and they deserve our unwavering support.

The United States is also using our influence to urge valued partners like Egypt and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan to move toward freedom. These nations have taken brave stands and strong action to confront extremists, along with some steps to expand liberty and transparency. Yet they have a great distance still to travel. The United States will continue to press nations like these to open up their political systems, and give greater voice to their people. Inevitably, this creates tension. But our relationships with these countries are broad enough and deep enough to bear it. As our relationships with South Korea and Taiwan during the Cold War prove, America can maintain a friendship and push a nation toward democracy at the same time.

We're also applying that lesson to our relationships with Russia and China. The United States has strong working relationships with these countries. Our friendship with them is complex. In the areas where we share mutual interests, we work together. In other areas, we have strong disagreements. China's leaders believe that they can continue to open the nation's economy without opening its political system. We disagree. In Russia, reforms that were once promised to empower citizens have been derailed, with troubling implications for democratic development. Part of a good relationship is the ability to talk openly about our disagreements. So the United States will continue to build our relationships with these countries — and we will do it without abandoning our principles or our values.

We appreciate that free societies take shape at different speeds in different places. One virtue of democracy is that it reflects local history and traditions. Yet there are fundamental elements that all democracies share — freedom of speech, religion, press, and assembly; rule of law enforced by independent courts; private property rights; and political parties that compete in free and fair elections. These rights and institutions are the foundation of human dignity, and as countries find their own path to freedom,

they must find a loyal partner in the United States of America.

Extending the reach of freedom is a mission that unites democracies around the world. Some of the greatest contributions are coming from nations with the freshest memories of tyranny. I appreciate the Czech Republic's support for human rights projects in Belarus and Burma and Cuba. I thank Germany, and Poland, and the Czech Republic, and Hungary, and Slovenia, and Georgia, Lithuania, Estonia, Croatia for contributing to the new United Nations Democracy Fund. I'm grateful for the commitment many new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe are making to Afghanistan and Iraq. I appreciate that these countries are willing to do the hard work necessary to enable people who want to be free to live in a free society.

In all these ways, the freedom agenda is making a difference. The work has been difficult, and that is not going to change. There will be triumphs and failures, progress and setbacks. Ending tyranny cannot be achieved overnight. And of course, this objective has its critics.

Some say that ending tyranny means "imposing our values" on people who do not share them, or that people live in parts of the world where freedom cannot take hold. That is refuted by the fact that every time people are given a choice, they choose freedom. We saw that when the people of Latin America turned dictatorships into democracies, and the people of South Africa replaced apartheid with a free society, and the people of Indonesia ended their long authoritarian rule. We saw it when Ukrainians in orange scarves demanded that their ballots be counted. We saw it when millions of Afghans and Iraqis defied the terrorists to elect free governments. At a polling station in Baghdad, I was struck by the words of an Iraqi — he had one leg — and he told a reporter, "I would have crawled here if I had to." Was democracy — I ask the critics, was democracy imposed on that man? Was freedom a value he did not share? The truth is that the only ones who have to impose their values are the extremists and the radicals and the tyrants.

And that is why the communists crushed the Prague Spring, and threw an innocent playwright in jail, and trembled at the sight of a Polish Pope. History shows that ultimately, freedom conquers fear. And given a chance, freedom will conquer fear in every nation on Earth.

Another objection — objection is that ending tyranny will unleash chaos. Critics point to the violence in Afghanistan, or Iraq, or Lebanon as evidence that freedom leaves people less safe. But look who's causing the violence. It's the terrorists, it's the extremists. It is no coincidence that they are targeting young democracies in the Middle East. They know that the success of free societies there is a mortal threat to their ambitions — and to their very survival. The fact that our enemies are fighting back is not a reason to doubt democracy. It is evidence that they recognize democracy's power. It is evidence that we are at war. And it is evidence that free nations must do what it takes to prevail.

Still, some argue that a safer goal would be stability, especially in the Middle East. The problem is that pursuing stability at the expense of liberty does not lead to peace — it leads to September the 11th, 2001. The policy of tolerating tyranny is a moral and strategic failure. It is a mistake the world must not repeat in the 21st century.

Others fear that democracy will bring dangerous forces to power, such as Hamas in the Palestinian Territories. Elections will not always turn out the way we hope. Yet democracy consists of more than a single trip to the ballot box. Democracy requires meaningful opposition parties, a vibrant civil society, a government that enforces the law and responds to the needs of its people. Elections can accelerate the creation of such institutions. In a democracy, people will not vote for a life of perpetual violence. To stay in power, elected officials must listen to their people and pursue their desires for peace — or, in democracies, the voters will replace them through free elections.

Finally, there's the contention that ending tyranny is unrealistic. Well, some argue that extending democracy around the world is

simply too difficult to achieve. That's nothing new. We've heard that criticism before throughout history. At every stage of the Cold War, there were those who argued that the Berlin Wall was permanent, and that people behind the Iron Curtain would never overcome their oppressors. History has sent a different message.

The lesson is that freedom will always have its skeptics. But that's not the whole story. There are also people like you, and the loved ones you represent — men and women with courage to risk everything for your ideals. In his first address as President, Vaclav Havel proclaimed, "People, your government has returned to you!" He was echoing the first speech of Tomas Masaryk — who was, in turn, quoting the 17th century Czech teacher Comenius. His message was that freedom is timeless. It does not belong to one government or one generation. Freedom is the dream and the right of every person in every nation in every age.

The United States of America believes deeply in that message. It was the inspiration for our founding, when we declared that "all men are created equal." It was the conviction that led us to help liberate this continent, and stand with the captive nations through their long struggle. It is the truth that guides our nation to oppose radicals and extremists and terror and tyranny in the world today. And it is the reason I have such great confidence in the men and women in this room.

I leave Prague with a certainty that the cause of freedom is not tired, and that its future is in the best of hands. With unbreakable faith in the power of liberty, you will inspire your people, you will lead your nations, and you will change the world.

Thanks for having me. And may God bless you.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON THE WAY FORWARD IN IRAQ

THE OVAL OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 13, 2007

Good evening. In the life of all free nations, there come moments that decide the direction of a country and reveal the character of its people. We are now at such a moment.

In Iraq, an ally of the United States is fighting for its survival. Terrorists and extremists who are at war with us around the world are seeking to topple Iraq's government, dominate the region, and attack us here at home. If Iraq's young democracy can turn back these enemies, it will mean a more hopeful Middle East and a more secure America. This ally has placed its trust in the United States. And tonight, our moral and strategic imperatives are one: We must help Iraq defeat those who threaten its future and also threaten ours.

Eight months ago, we adopted a new strategy to meet that objective, including a surge in U.S. forces that reached full strength in June. This week, General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker testified before Congress about how that strategy is progressing. In their testimony, these men made clear that our challenge in Iraq is formidable. Yet they concluded that conditions in Iraq are improving, that we are seizing the initiative from the enemy, and that the troop surge is working.

The premise of our strategy is that securing the Iraqi population is the foundation for all other progress. For Iraqis to bridge sectarian divides, they need to feel safe in their homes and neighborhoods. For lasting reconciliation to take root, Iraqis must feel confident that they do not need sectarian gangs for security. The goal of the surge is to provide that security and to help prepare Iraqi forces to maintain it. As I will explain tonight, our success in meeting these objectives now allows us to begin bringing some of our troops home.

Since the surge was announced in January, it has moved through several phases. First was the flow of additional troops into Iraq, especially Baghdad and Anbar province. Once these forces were in place, our commanders launched a series of offensive operations to drive terrorists and militias out of their strongholds. And finally, in areas that have been cleared, we are surging diplomatic and civilian resources to ensure that military progress is quickly followed up with real improvements in daily life.

Anbar province is a good example of how our strategy is working. Last year, an intelligence report concluded that Anbar had been lost to al Qaeda. Some cited this report as evidence that we had failed in Iraq and should cut our losses and pull out. Instead, we kept the pressure on the terrorists. The local people were suffering under the Taliban-like rule of al Qaeda, and they were sick of it. So they asked us for help.

To take advantage of this opportunity, I sent an additional 4,000 Marines to Anbar as part of the surge. Together, local sheiks, Iraqi forces, and coalition troops drove the terrorists from the capital of Ramadi and other population centers. Today, a city where al Qaeda once planted its flag is beginning to return to normal. Anbar citizens who once feared beheading for talking to an American or Iraqi soldier now come forward to tell us where the terrorists are hiding. Young Sunnis who once joined the insurgency are now joining the army and police. And with the help of our provincial reconstruction teams, new jobs are being created and local governments are meeting again.

These developments do not often make the headlines, but they do make a difference. During my visit to Anbar on Labor Day, local Sunni leaders thanked me for America's support. They pledged they would never allow al Qaeda to return. And they told me they now see a place for their people in a democratic Iraq. The Sunni governor of Anbar province put it this way: "Our tomorrow starts today."

The changes in Anbar show all Iraqis what becomes possible when extremists are driven out. They show al Qaeda that it cannot

count on popular support, even in a province its leaders once declared their home base. And they show the world that ordinary people in the Middle East want the same things for their children that we want for ours — a decent life and a peaceful future.

In Anbar, the enemy remains active and deadly. Earlier today, one of the brave tribal sheikhs who helped lead the revolt against al Qaeda was murdered. In response, a fellow Sunni leader declared: “We are determined to strike back and continue our work.” And as they do, they can count on the continued support of the United States.

Throughout Iraq, too many citizens are being killed by terrorists and death squads. And for most Iraqis, the quality of life is far from where it should be. Yet General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker report that the success in Anbar is beginning to be replicated in other parts of the country.

One year ago, much of Baghdad was under siege. Schools were closed, markets were shuttered, and sectarian violence was spiraling out of control. Today, most of Baghdad’s neighborhoods are being patrolled by coalition and Iraqi forces who live among the people they protect. Many schools and markets are reopening. Citizens are coming forward with vital intelligence. Sectarian killings are down. And ordinary life is beginning to return.

One year ago, much of Diyala province was a sanctuary for al Qaeda and other extremist groups, and its capital of Baqubah was emerging as an al Qaeda stronghold. Today, Baqubah is cleared. Diyala province is the site of a growing popular uprising against the extremists. And some local tribes are working alongside coalition and Iraqi forces to clear out the enemy and reclaim their communities.

One year ago, Shia extremists and Iranian-backed militants were gaining strength and targeting Sunnis for assassination. Today, these groups are being broken up, and many of their leaders are being captured or killed.

These gains are a tribute to our military, they are a tribute to the courage of the Iraqi security forces, and they are the tribute to an

Iraqi government that has decided to take on the extremists.

Now the Iraqi government must bring the same determination to achieving reconciliation. This is an enormous undertaking after more than three decades of tyranny and division. The government has not met its own legislative benchmarks — and in my meetings with Iraqi leaders, I have made it clear that they must.

Yet Iraq's national leaders are getting some things done. For example, they have passed a budget. They're sharing oil revenues with the provinces. They're allowing former Baathists to rejoin Iraq's military or receive government pensions. Local reconciliation is taking place. The key now is to link this progress in the provinces to progress in Baghdad. As local politics change, so will national politics.

Our troops in Iraq are performing brilliantly. Along with Iraqi forces, they have captured or killed an average of more than 1,500 enemy fighters per month since January. Yet ultimately, the way forward depends on the ability of Iraqis to maintain security gains. According to General Petraeus and a panel chaired by retired General Jim Jones, the Iraqi army is becoming more capable — although there is still a great deal of work to be done to improve the national police. Iraqi forces are receiving increased cooperation from local populations. And this is improving their ability to hold areas that have been cleared.

Because of this success, General Petraeus believes we have now reached the point where we can maintain our security gains with fewer American forces. He has recommended that we not replace about 2,200 Marines scheduled to leave Anbar province later this month. In addition, he says it will soon be possible to bring home an Army combat brigade, for a total force reduction of 5,700 troops by Christmas. And he expects that by July, we will be able to reduce our troop levels in Iraq from 20 combat brigades to 15.

General Petraeus also recommends that in December we begin transitioning to the next phase of our strategy in Iraq. As terrorists are defeated, civil society takes root, and the Iraqis assume more

control over their own security, our mission in Iraq will evolve. Over time, our troops will shift from leading operations, to partnering with Iraqi forces, and eventually to overwatching those forces. As this transition in our mission takes place, our troops will focus on a more limited set of tasks, including counterterrorism operations and training, equipping, and supporting Iraqi forces.

I have consulted with the Joint Chiefs of Staff, other members of my national security team, Iraqi officials, and leaders of both parties in Congress. I have benefited from their advice, and I have accepted General Petraeus's recommendations. I have directed General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker to update their joint campaign plan for Iraq, so we can adjust our military and civilian resources accordingly. I have also directed them to deliver another report to Congress in March. At that time, they will provide a fresh assessment of the situation in Iraq and of the troop levels and resources we need to meet our national security objectives.

The principle guiding my decisions on troop levels in Iraq is "return on success." The more successful we are, the more American troops can return home. And in all we do, I will ensure that our commanders on the ground have the troops and flexibility they need to defeat the enemy.

Americans want our country to be safe and our troops to begin coming home from Iraq. Yet those of us who believe success in Iraq is essential to our security, and those who believe we should begin bringing our troops home, have been at odds. Now, because of the measure of success we are seeing in Iraq, we can begin seeing troops come home. The way forward I have described tonight makes it possible, for the first time in years, for people who have been on opposite sides of this difficult debate to come together.

This vision for a reduced American presence also has the support of Iraqi leaders from all communities. At the same time, they understand that their success will require U.S. political, economic, and security engagement that extends beyond my presidency. These Iraqi leaders have asked for an enduring

relationship with America. And we are ready to begin building that relationship — in a way that protects our interests in the region and requires many fewer American troops.

The success of a free Iraq is critical to the security of the United States. A free Iraq will deny al Qaeda a safe haven. A free Iraq will counter the destructive ambitions of Iran. A free Iraq will marginalize extremists, unleash the talent of its people, and be an anchor of stability in the region. A free Iraq will set an example for people across the Middle East. A free Iraq will be our partner in the fight against terror — and that will make us safer here at home.

Realizing this vision will be difficult, but it is achievable. Our military commanders believe we can succeed. Our diplomats believe we can succeed. And for the safety of future generations of Americans, we must succeed.

If we were to be driven out of Iraq, extremists of all strains would be emboldened. Al Qaeda could gain new recruits and new sanctuaries. Iran would benefit from the chaos and would be encouraged in its efforts to gain nuclear weapons and dominate the region. Extremists could control a key part of the global energy supply. Iraq could face a humanitarian nightmare. Democracy movements would be violently reversed. We would leave our children to face a far more dangerous world. And as we saw on September the 11th, 2001, those dangers can reach our cities and kill our people.

Whatever political party you belong to, whatever your position on Iraq, we should be able to agree that America has a vital interest in preventing chaos and providing hope in the Middle East. We should be able to agree that we must defeat al Qaeda, counter Iran, help the Afghan government, work for peace in the Holy Land, and strengthen our military so we can prevail in the struggle against terrorists and extremists.

So tonight I want to speak to members of the United States Congress: Let us come together on a policy of strength in the Middle East. I thank you for providing crucial funds and resources for our military. And I ask you to join me in supporting the

recommendations General Petraeus has made and the troop levels he has asked for.

To the Iraqi people: You have voted for freedom, and now you are liberating your country from terrorists and death squads. You must demand that your leaders make the tough choices needed to achieve reconciliation. As you do, have confidence that America does not abandon our friends, and we will not abandon you.

To Iraq's neighbors who seek peace: The violent extremists who target Iraq are also targeting you. The best way to secure your interests and protect your own people is to stand with the people of Iraq. That means using your economic and diplomatic leverage to strengthen the government in Baghdad. And it means the efforts by Iran and Syria to undermine that government must end.

To the international community: The success of a free Iraq matters to every civilized nation. We thank the 36 nations who have troops on the ground in Iraq and the many others who are helping that young democracy. We encourage all nations to help, by implementing the International Compact to revitalize Iraq's economy, by participating in the Neighbors Conferences to boost cooperation and overcome differences in the region, and by supporting the new and expanded mission of the United Nations in Iraq.

To our military personnel, intelligence officers, diplomats, and civilians on the front lines in Iraq: You have done everything America has asked of you. And the progress I have reported tonight is in large part because of your courage and hard effort. You are serving far from home. Our nation is grateful for your sacrifices, and the sacrifices of your families.

Earlier this year, I received an email from the family of Army Specialist Brandon Stout of Michigan. Brandon volunteered for the National Guard and was killed while serving in Baghdad. His family has suffered greatly. Yet in their sorrow, they see larger purpose. His wife, Audrey, says that Brandon felt called to serve and knew what he was fighting for. And his parents, Tracy and Jeff, wrote me this: "We believe this is a war of good and evil and

we must win even if it cost the life of our own son. Freedom is not free.”

This country is blessed to have Americans like Brandon Stout, who make extraordinary sacrifices to keep us safe from harm. They are doing so in a fight that is just, and right, and necessary. And now it falls to us to finish the work they have begun.

Some say the gains we are making in Iraq come too late. They are mistaken. It is never too late to deal a blow to al Qaeda. It is never too late to advance freedom. And it is never too late to support our troops in a fight they can win.

Good night, and God bless America.

REMARKS ON ENERGY SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 28, 2007

Good morning. Thank you. Welcome to the State Department. I'm honored to address this historic meeting on energy security and climate change. And I appreciate you all being here.

Energy security and climate change are two of the great challenges of our time. The United States takes these challenges seriously. The world's response will help shape the future of the global economy and the condition of our environment for future generations. The nations in this room have special responsibilities. We represent the world's major economies, we are major users of energy, and we have the resources and knowledge base to develop clean energy technologies.

Our guiding principle is clear: We must lead the world to produce fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and we must do it in a way that does not undermine economic growth or prevent nations from delivering greater prosperity for their people. We know this can be done. Last year America grew our economy while also reducing greenhouse gases. Several other nations have made similar strides.

This progress points us in the right direction, but we've got to do more. So before this year's G8 summit, I announced that the United States will work with other nations to establish a new international approach to energy security and climate change. Today's meeting is an important step in this process. With the work we begin today, we can agree on a new approach that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen energy security, encourage economic growth and sustainable development, and advance negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

I thank the State Department for hosting this event. I

appreciate members of my Cabinet who have joined us today. I thank Jim Connaughton, who is the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, for being here. I appreciate you being the personal representative of this, and I hope you're doing — I hope you think he's doing a fine job.

I welcome Minister Rachmat, the Minister of Environment of Indonesia, who is the Chairman of the upcoming U.N. climate meeting in December. I welcome Mr. de Boer, who is the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. I welcome all the ministers and delegates who are here. We really appreciate you coming. I thank the ambassadors for joining this august group. I thank members of the Congress who have taken time to come by: Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts and Congressman Bart Gordon of Tennessee. I appreciate you taking time to come by and participate in these meetings.

Every day energy brings countless benefits to our people. Energy powers new hospitals and schools so we can live longer and more productive lives. Energy transforms the way we produce food, so we can feed our growing populations. Energy enables us to travel and communicate across great distances, so we can expand trade and prosperity. Energy sustains the world's most advanced economies, which makes it possible for us to devote resources to fighting hunger and disease and poverty around the globe.

In this new century, the need for energy will only grow. Much of this increased demand will come from the developing world, where nations will need more energy to build critical infrastructure and grow their economies, improve the lives of their people. Overall, the demand for energy is expected to rise by more than 50 percent by 2030.

This growing demand for energy is a sign of a vibrant, global economy. Yet it also possesses — poses serious challenges, and one of them, of course, is energy security. Right now much of the world's energy comes from oil, and much of the oil comes from

unstable regions and rogue states. This dependence leaves the global economy vulnerable to supply shocks and shortages and manipulation, and to extremists and terrorists who could cause great disruptions of oil shipments.

Another challenge is climate change. Our understanding of climate change has come a long way. A report issued earlier this year by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded both that global temperatures are rising and that this is caused largely by human activities. When we burn fossil fuels we release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and the concentration of greenhouse gases has increased substantially.

For many years those who worried about climate change and those who worried about energy security were on opposite ends of the debate. It was said that we faced a choice between protecting the environment and producing enough energy. Today we know better. These challenges share a common solution: technology. By developing new low-emission technologies, we can meet the growing demand for energy and at the same time reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. As a result, our nations have an opportunity to leave the debates of the past behind, and reach a consensus on the way forward. And that's our purpose today.

No one country has all the answers, including mine. The best way to tackle this problem is to think creatively and to learn from other's experiences and to come together on a way to achieve the objectives we share. Together, our nations will pave the way for a new international approach on greenhouse gas emissions.

This new approach must involve all the world's largest producers of greenhouse gas emissions, including developed and developing nations. We will set a long-term goal for reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. By setting this goal, we acknowledge there is a problem. And by setting this goal, we commit ourselves to doing something about it.

By next summer, we will convene a meeting of heads of state to finalize the goal and other elements of this approach, including

a strong and transparent system for measuring our progress toward meeting the goal we set. This will require concerted effort by all our nations. Only by doing the necessary work this year will it be possible to reach a global consensus at the U.N. in 2009.

Each nation will design its own separate strategies for making progress toward achieving this long-term goal. These strategies will reflect each country's different energy resources, different stages of development, and different economic needs.

There are many policy tools that nations can use, including a variety of market mechanisms, to create incentives for companies and consumers to invest in new low-emission energy sources. We will also form working groups with leaders of different sectors of our economies, which will discuss ways of sharing technology and best practices.

Each nation must decide for itself the right mix of tools and technologies to achieve results that are measurable and environmentally effective. While our strategies may be differentiated, we share a common responsibility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while keeping our economies growing.

The key to this effort will be the advance of clean energy technologies. Since I became President, the United States government has invested nearly \$18 billion to research, develop and promote clean and efficient energy technologies. The private sector here in our country has responded with significant investments, ranging from corporate research and development to venture capital. Our investments in research and technology are bringing the world closer to a remarkable breakthrough — an age of clean energy where we can power our growing economies and improve the lives of our people and be responsible stewards of the earth the Almighty trusted to our care.

The age of clean energy requires transforming the way we produce electricity. Electric power plants that burn coal are the world's leading cause of greenhouse gas emissions. The world's supply of coal is secure and abundant. And our challenge is take advantage of it while maintaining our commitment to the

environment. One promising solution is advanced clean coal technology. The future of this technology will allow us to trap and store carbon emissions and air pollutants produced by burning coal. Since 2001 the United States has invested more than \$2.5 billion to research and develop clean coal. And in partnership with other nations and the private sector we're moving closer to a historic achievement — producing energy from the world's first zero-emissions coal-fired plant.

We also need to take advantage of clean safe nuclear power. Nuclear power is the one existing source of energy that can generate massive amounts of electricity without causing any air pollution or greenhouse gas emissions. Without the world's 439 nuclear power plants, there would be nearly 2 billion additional tons of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere each year. And by expanding the use of nuclear power, we can reduce greenhouse gas emissions even more.

The United States is working to reduce barriers to new nuclear power plants in our country without compromising safety. Just last week, a company applied for approval to build the first new nuclear reactor in my country since the since the 1970s. As we build new reactors here in the United States, we're also working to bring the benefits of nuclear energy to other countries.

My administration established a new initiative called the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership. This partnership will work with nations with advanced civilian nuclear energy programs, such as France and Japan and China and Russia. Together we will help developing nations obtain secure, cost-effective and proliferation-resistant nuclear power, so they can have a reliable source of zero-emissions energy.

We'll also need to expand our use of two other promising sources of zero-emissions energy, and that's wind and solar power. Wind power is becoming cost-effective in many parts of America. We've increased wind energy production by more than 300 percent. We also launched the Solar America Initiative to lower the cost of solar power, so we can make — help make this technology

competitive, as well. Taken together, low-carbon technologies like wind and solar power have the potential to one day provide up to 20 percent of America's electricity.

The age of clean energy also requires transforming the way we fuel our cars and trucks. Almost all our vehicles run on gasoline or diesel fuel. This means we produce greenhouse gas emissions whenever we get behind the wheel. Transportation accounts for about 20 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions every year. To reduce these emissions we must reduce our dependence on oil. So America is investing in new, clean alternatives. We're investing millions of dollars to develop the next generation of sustainable biofuels like cellulosic ethanol, which means we'll use everything from wood chips to grasses to agricultural waste to make ethanol.

We're offering tax credits to encourage Americans to drive fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles. We're working to develop next-generation plug-in hybrids that will be able to travel nearly 40 miles without using a drop of gasoline. And your automobile doesn't have to look like a golf cart.

We're on track to meet our pledge of investing \$1.2 billion to develop advanced hydrogen-powered vehicles that emit pure water instead of exhaust fumes. We're also taking steps to make sure these technologies reach the market. We've asked Congress to set a new mandatory — I repeat, mandatory — fuel standard that requires 35 billion gallons of renewable and other alternative fuels in 2017, and to reform fuel economy standards for cars the same way we did for light trucks. Together these two steps will help us cut America's consumption of gasoline by 20 percent in 10 years. It's an initiative I've called 20-in-10. Ushering in the age of clean energy is an historic undertaking. We take it seriously here in the United States. Achieving this vision will require major investment in innovation by all our nations. Today the United States and Japan fund most of the research and development for clean energy technologies. Meeting the objectives we share and the goal we're going to set will require all the nations in this hall to increase their

clean energy research and development investments.

We must also work to make these technologies more widely available, especially in the developing world. So today I propose that we join together to create a new international clean technology fund. This fund will be supported by contributions from governments from around the world, and it will help finance clean energy projects in the developing world. I've asked Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson to coordinate this effort, and he plans to begin exploratory discussions with your countries over the next several months.

At the same time, we also must promote global free trade in energy technology. The most immediate and effective action we can take is to eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers on clean energy goods and services.

As we work to transform the way we produce energy, we must also address another major factor in climate change, which is deforestation. The world's forests help reduce the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere by storing carbon dioxide. But when our forests disappear, the concentration of greenhouse gas levels rise in the atmosphere. Scientists estimate that nearly 20 percent of the world's greenhouse gas admissions [sic] are attributable to deforestation.

We're partnering with other nations to promote forest conservation and management across the world. We welcome new commitments from Australia, Brazil, with China and Indonesia. The United States remains committed to initiatives such as the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and the Asian Forest Partnership. We will continue our efforts through the Tropical Forest Conservation Act, which helps developing nations redirect debt payments toward forest conservation programs. So far my administration has concluded 12 agreements, concluding [sic] up to 50 million acres of forest lands.

America's efforts also include an \$87-million initiative to help developing nations stop illegal logging. These efforts will help developing nations save their forests, and combat a major source of

greenhouse gas emissions.

The United States is also taking steps to protect forests in our own country. It's one thing to help others; we got to make sure we do a good job here at home — and we are. Since 2001, we've provided more than \$3 billion to restore our forests and protect them against catastrophic fires as part of a Healthy Forest Initiative. In partnership with our farmers and ranchers, we're providing tens of billions of dollars in incentives for conservation. We're promoting sustainable public and private land-management policies. By taking these steps, we've helped increase the amount of carbon storage in our forests, and we've helped safeguard a national treasure for generations to come.

What I'm telling you is, is that we've got a strategy; we've got a comprehensive approach. And we look forward to working with our Congress to make sure that comprehensive approach is effective. And we look forward to working with you as a part of this global effort to do our duty.

And we've done this kind of work before. And we have confidence in the success of our efforts. Twenty years ago nations finalized an agreement called the Montreal Protocol to phase-out substances that were depleting the ozone layer. Since then, we have made great strides to repair the damage. Just last week, developed and developing nations reached consensus on speeding up the recovery of the ozone layer by accelerating the phase-out of these harmful substances. This accelerated phase out will bring larger benefits because they'll dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We have seen what happens when we come together to work for a common cause, and we can do it again. And that's what I'm here to urge you. The United States will do our part. We take this issue seriously. And we look forward to bringing a spirit of cooperation and commitment to our efforts to confront the challenges of energy security and climate change. By working together, we will set wise and effective policies. That's what I'm interested in, effective policies. I want to get the job done. We've

identified a problem, let's go solve it together.

We will harness the power of technology. There is a way forward that will enable us to grow our economies and protect the environment, and that's called technology. We'll meet our energy needs. We'll be good stewards of this environment. Achieving these goals will require a sustained effort over many decades. This problem isn't going to be solved overnight. Yet years from now our children are going to look back at the choices we make today, at this deciding moment: It will be a moment when we choose to expand prosperity instead of accepting stagnation; it will be a moment when we turn the tide against greenhouse gas emissions instead of allowing the problem to grow; it will be a moment when we rejected the predictions of despair and set a course of a more hopeful future.

The moment is now, and I appreciate you attending this meeting. And we look forward to working with you. May God bless you all.

REMARKS ON CUBA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
OCTOBER 24, 2007

Thank you very much. Gracias. Buenos Dias. I am pleased to be back at the State Department. I appreciate the work that's done here. Every day the men and women of this department serve as America's emissaries to the world. Every day you help our country respond to aggressors and bring peace to troubled lands. Every day you advance our country's mission in support of basic human rights to the millions who are denied them. Secretary Rice constantly tells me about the good work being done here at the State Department, and on behalf of a grateful nation, I thank you for your hard work and I'm pleased to be with you.

Few issues have challenged this department — and our nation — longer than the situation in Cuba. Nearly half a century has passed since Cuba's regime ordered American diplomats to evacuate our embassy in Havana. This was the decisive break of our diplomatic relations with the island, a troubling signal for the future of the Cuban people, and the dawn of an unhappy era between our two countries. In this building, President John F. Kennedy spoke about the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba's dictatorship. And it was here where he announced the end of the missile crisis that almost plunged the world into nuclear war.

Today, another President comes with hope to discuss a new era for the United States and Cuba. The day is coming when the Cuban people will chart their own course for a better life. The day is coming when the Cuban people have the freedom they have awaited for so long.

Madam Secretary, thank you for your introduction. I'm pleased to be with you and Ambassador Negroponte and all who work here. Thanks for the hospitality. I'm pleased to be here with our Secretary of Commerce, Secretary Carlos Gutierrez — born

in Cuba. I appreciate other members of my administration who are here.

I particularly want to thank the members of Congress who have joined us: Senator Mel Martinez, born in Cuba; Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, born in Cuba; Lincoln Diaz-Balart, born in Cuba; su hermanito, Mario Diaz-Balart. I want to thank Chris Smith for joining us, Congressman from Jersey; Thaddeus McCotter, Michigan; Debbie Wasserman Schultz, from Florida; as well as Tim Mahone from Florida. Appreciate you being here.

I thank the members of the Diplomatic Corps who have joined us. I appreciate the Ambassadors to the Organization of American States who are with us. I particularly want to thank the Cuban families who have joined me on the stage.

One of the great success stories of the past century is the advance of economic and political freedom across Latin America. In this room are officials representing nations that are embracing the blessings of democratic government and free enterprise. And the United States is proud and active to work with you in your transformations.

One country in our region still isolates its people from the hope that freedom brings, and traps them in a system that has failed them. Forty-eight years ago, in the early moments of Cuba's revolution, its leaders offered a prediction. He said — and I quote — “The worst enemies which the Cuban revolution can face are the revolutionaries themselves.” One of history's great tragedies is that he made that dark prophecy come true.

Cuba's rulers promised individual liberty. Instead they denied their citizens basic rights that the free world takes for granted. In Cuba it is illegal to change jobs, to change houses, to travel abroad, and to read books or magazines without the express approval of the state. It is against the law for more than three Cubans to meet without permission. Neighborhood Watch programs do not look out for criminals. Instead, they monitor their fellow citizens — keeping track of neighbors' comings and goings, who visits them,

and what radio stations they listen to. The sense of community and the simple trust between human beings is gone.

Cuba's rulers promised an era of economic advancement. Instead they brought generations of economic misery. Many of the cars on the street pre-date the revolution — and some Cubans rely on horse carts for transportation. Housing for many ordinary Cubans is in very poor condition, while the ruling class lives in mansions. Clinics for ordinary Cubans suffer from chronic shortages in medicine and equipment. Many Cubans are forced to turn to the black market to feed their families. There are long lines for basic necessities — reminiscent of the Soviet bread lines of the last century. Meanwhile, the regime offers fully stocked food stores to foreign tourists, diplomats and businessmen in communism's version of apartheid.

Cuba's rulers promised freedom of the press. Instead they closed down private newspapers and radio and television stations. They've jailed and beaten journalists, raided their homes, and seized their paper, ink and fax machines. One Cuban journalist asked foreigners who visited him for one thing: a pen. Another uses shoe polish as ink as a typewriter ribbon.

Cuba's rulers promised, "absolute respect for human rights." Instead they offered Cubans rat-infested prisons and a police state. Hundreds are serving long prison sentences for political offenses such as the crime of "dangerousness" — as defined by the regime. Others have been jailed for the crime of "peaceful sedition" — which means whatever Cuban authorities decide it means.

Joining us here are family members of political prisoners in Cuba. I've asked them to come because I want our fellow citizens to see the faces of those who suffer as a result of the human rights abuses on the island some 90 miles from our shore. One of them is Olga Alonso. Her brother, Ricardo Gonzalez Alonso [sic], has been harassed by Cuban authorities since he was 11 years old, because he wrote things that the Cuban authorities did not like. In 2003, Ricardo was arrested for his writings and sentenced to 20 years in prison. The authorities seized illegal contraband they found in his

home. These included such things as a laptop computer, notebooks and a printer. Olga, we're glad you're here. Thank you for coming.

Marlenis Gonzalez and her daughter, Melissa, are here. They recently arrived from Cuba, but without Melissa's father. Jorge Luis Gonzalez Tanquero dared to defend the human rights of his countrymen. For that, he was arrested for crimes against the state. Now he languishes in poor health inside a Cuban prison. Bienvenidos.

Damaris Garcia y su tia, Mirta Pernet, are with us today. Damaris calls the Cuban government "a killing machine" — those are her words. They've seen relatives imprisoned for supporting liberty. One beloved family member, Omar Pernet Hernandez, was a poor man who sold candy on the streets of Havana. For advocating freedom, he is serving a sentence of 25 years. He's 62 years old, he's emaciated. Yet he remains a determined advocate for human rights for the Cuban people. Bienvenidos.

Also with us is Yamile Llanes Labrada. Yamile's husband, Jorge [sic] Luis Garcia Paneque, was a surgeon and journalist. He was sentenced to 24 years in prison for daring speak the truth about the regime. Yamile herself was accused of espionage and she feared for the safety of her four children. After Jos 's arrest, a mob organized by state authorities surrounded their house. The mob carried sticks and threatened to set fire to the house with the family inside. Earlier this year, Yamile and her children made it off the island. They do not know when they'll see their father again. Bienvenidos, Yamile.

I want to thank each of you [for] coming today. I thank you for allowing me to share your stories, and I thank you for your courage. I ask that God watch over you and your loved ones. Que Dios les bendiga a ustedes y a sus familias. And I join your prayers for a day when the light of liberty will shine on Cuba.

These are just a few of the examples of the terror and trauma that is Cuba today. The socialist paradise is a tropical gulag. The quest for justice that once inspired the Cuban people has now become a grab for power. And as with all totalitarian systems,

Cuba's regime no doubt has other horrors still unknown to the rest of the world. Once revealed, they will shock the conscience of humanity. And they will shame the regime's defenders and all those democracies that have been silent. One former Cuban political prisoner, Armando Valladares, puts it this way: It will be a time when "mankind will feel the revulsion it felt when the crimes of Stalin were brought to light." And that time is coming.

As we speak, calls for fundamental change are growing across the island. Peaceful demonstrations are spreading. Earlier this year leading Cuban dissidents came together for the first time to issue the Unity of Freedom — a declaration for democratic change. They hear the dying gasps of a failed regime. They know that even history's cruelest nightmares cannot last forever. A restive people who long to rejoin the world at last have hope. And they will bring to Cuba a real revolution — a revolution of freedom, democracy and justice.

Now is the time to support the democratic movements growing on the island. Now is the time to stand with the Cuban people as they stand up for their liberty. And now is the time for the world to put aside its differences and prepare for Cuba's transition to a future of freedom and progress and promise. The dissidents of today will be the nation's leaders tomorrow — and when freedom finally comes, they will surely remember who stood with them.

The Czech Republic and Hungary and Poland have been vital sources of support and encouragement to Cuba's brave democratic opposition. I ask other countries to follow suit. All nations can make tangible efforts to show public support for those who love freedom on the island. They can open up their embassies in Havana to pro-democracy leaders and invite them to different events. They can use their lobbies of the embassies to give Cubans access to the Internet and to books and to magazines. They can encourage their country's non-governmental organizations to reach out directly to Cuba's independent civil society.

Here at home we can do more, as well. The United States

Congress has recently voted for additional funding to support Cuban democracy efforts. I thank you all for your good work on this measure — and I urge you to get the bill to my desk as soon as we possibly can. I also urge our Congress to show our support and solidarity for fundamental change in Cuba by maintaining our embargo on the dictatorship until it changes.

Cuba's regime uses the U.S. embargo as a scapegoat for Cuba's miseries. Yet Presidents of both our political parties have long understood that the source of Cuba's suffering is not the embargo, but the communist system. They know that trade with the Cuban government would not help the Cuban people until there are major changes to Cuba's political and economic system. Instead, trade with Cuba would merely enrich the elites in power and strengthen their grip. As long as the regime maintains its monopoly over the political and economic life of the Cuban people, the United States will keep the embargo in place.

The United States knows how much the Cuban people are suffering — and we have not stood idle. Over the years, we've granted asylum to hundreds of thousands who have fled the repression and misery imposed by the regime. We've rallied nations to take up the banner of Cuban liberty. And we will continue to do so. We've authorized private citizens and organizations to provide food, and medicine, and other aid — amounting to more than \$270 million last year alone. The American people, the people of this generous land, are the largest providers of humanitarian aid to the Cuban people in the entire world.

The aid we provide goes directly into the hands of the Cuban people, rather than into the coffers of the Cuban leaders. And that's really the heart of our policy: to break the absolute control that the regime holds over the material resources that the Cuban people need to live and to prosper and to have hope.

To further that effort, the United States is prepared to take new measures right now to help the Cuban people directly — but only if the Cuban regime, the ruling class, gets out of the way.

For example — here’s an interesting idea to help the Cuban people — the United States government is prepared to license non-governmental organizations and faith-based groups to provide computers and Internet access to Cuban people — if Cuba’s rulers will end their restrictions on Internet access for all the people.

Or the United States is prepared to invite Cuban young people whose families suffer oppression into the Partnership for Latin American Youth scholarship programs, to help them have equal access to greater educational opportunities — if the Cuban rulers will allow them to freely participate.

We make these offers to the people of Cuba — and we hope their rulers will allow them to accept. You know, we’ve made similar offers before — but they’ve been rejected out of hand by the regime. It’s a sad lesson, and it should be a vivid lesson for all: For Cuba’s ruling class, its grip on power is more important than the welfare of its people.

Life will not improve for Cubans under their current system of government. It will not improve by exchanging one dictator for another. It will not improve if we seek accommodation with a new tyranny in the interests of “stability.” America will have no part in giving oxygen to a criminal regime victimizing its own people. We will not support the old way with new faces, the old system held together by new chains. The operative word in our future dealings with Cuba is not “stability.” The operative word is “freedom.”

In that spirit, today I also am announcing a new initiative to develop an international multi-billion dollar Freedom Fund for Cuba. This fund would help the Cuban people rebuild their economy and make the transition to democracy. I have asked two members of my Cabinet to lead the effort — Secretary Rice and Secretary Gutierrez. They will enlist foreign governments and international organizations to contribute to this initiative.

And here’s how the fund will work: The Cuban government must demonstrate that it has adopted, in word and deed, fundamental freedoms. These include the freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of press, freedom to form

political parties, and the freedom to change the government through periodic, multi-party elections. And once these freedoms are in place, the fund will be able to give Cubans — especially Cuban entrepreneurs — access to grants, and loans and debt relief to help rebuild their country.

The restoration of these basic freedoms is the foundation of fair, free and competitive elections. Without these fundamental protections in place, elections are only cynical exercises that give dictatorships a legitimacy they do not deserve.

We will know there is a new Cuba when opposition parties have the freedom to organize, assemble and speak with equal access to the airwaves. We will know there is a new Cuba when a free and independent press has the power to operate without censors. We will know there is a new Cuba when the Cuban government removes its stranglehold on private economic activity.

And above all, we will know there is a new Cuba when authorities go to the prisons, walk to the cells where people are being held for their beliefs and set them free. It will be a time when the families here are reunited with their loved ones, and when the names of free people — including dissidents such as Oscar Elias Biscet, Normando Hernandez Gonzales, and Omar Rodriguez Saludes are free. It will be a moment when Cubans of conscience are released from their shackles — not as a gesture or a tactic, but because the government no longer puts people in prison because of what they think, or what they say or what they believe.

Cuba's transition from a shattered society to a free country may be long and difficult. Things will not always go as hoped. There will be difficult adjustments to make. One of the curses of totalitarianism is that it affects everyone. Good people make moral compromises to feed their families, avoid the whispers of neighbors, and escape a visit from the secret police. If Cuba is to enter a new era, it must find a way to reconcile and forgive those who have been part of the system but who do not have blood on their hands. They're victims as well.

At this moment, my words are being transmitted into — live

into Cuba by media outlets in the free world — including Radio and TV Marti. To those Cubans who are listening — perhaps at great risk — I would like to speak to you directly.

Some of you are members of the Cuban military, or the police, or officials in the government. You may have once believed in the revolution. Now you can see its failure. When Cubans rise up to demand their liberty, they — they — the liberty they deserve, you've got to make a choice. Will you defend a disgraced and dying order by using force against your own people? Or will you embrace your people's desire for change? There is a place for you in the free Cuba. You can share the hope found in the song that has become a rallying cry for freedom-loving Cubans on and off the island: "Nuestro Dia Ya Viene Llegando." Our day is coming soon.

To the ordinary Cubans who are listening: You have the power to shape your own destiny. You can bring about a future where your leaders answer to you, where you can freely express your beliefs and where your children can grow up in peace. Many experts once said that that day could never come to Eastern Europe, or Spain or Chile. Those experts were wrong. When the Holy Father came to Cuba and offered God's blessings, he reminded you that you hold your country's future in your hands. And you can carry this refrain in your heart: Su dia ya viene llegando. Your day is coming soon.

To the schoolchildren of Cuba: You have a lot in common with young people in the United States. You both dream of hopeful futures, and you both have the optimism to make those dreams come true. Do not believe the tired lies you are told about America. We want nothing from you except to welcome you to the hope and joy of freedom. Do not fear the future. Su dia ya viene llegando. Your day is coming soon.

Until that day, you and your suffering are never far from our hearts and prayers. The American people care about you. And until we stand together as free men and women, I leave you with a hope, a dream, and a mission: Viva Cuba Libre.

ADDRESS TO THE ANNAPOLIS CONFERENCE

MEMORIAL HALL, UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND
NOVEMBER 27, 2007

Thank you for coming. Prime Minister Olmert, President Abbas, Secretary General Ban, former Prime Minister Blair, distinguished guests: Welcome to one of the finest institutes we have in America, the United States Naval Academy. We appreciate you joining us in what I believe is an historic opportunity to encourage the expansion of freedom and peace in the Holy Land.

We meet to lay the foundation for the establishment of a new nation — a democratic Palestinian state that will live side by side with Israel in peace and security. We meet to help bring an end to the violence that has been the true enemy of the aspirations of both the Israelis and Palestinians.

We're off to a strong start. I'm about to read a statement that was agreed upon by our distinguished guests:

The representatives of the government of the state of Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization, represented respectively by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and President Mahmoud Abbas in his capacity as Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and President of the Palestinian Authority, have convened in Annapolis, Maryland, under the auspices of President George W. Bush of the United States of America, and with the support of the participants of this international conference, having concluded the following joint understanding.

We express our determination to bring an end to bloodshed, suffering and decades of conflict between our peoples; to usher in a new era of peace, based on freedom, security, justice, dignity, respect and mutual recognition; to propagate a culture of peace and nonviolence; to confront terrorism and incitement, whether committed by Palestinians or Israelis. In furtherance of the goal of two states, Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace and

security, we agree to immediately launch good-faith bilateral negotiations in order to conclude a peace treaty, resolving all outstanding issues, including all core issues, without exception, as specified in previous agreements.

We agree to engage in vigorous, ongoing and continuous negotiations, and shall make every effort to conclude an agreement before the end of 2008. For this purpose, a steering committee, led jointly by the head of the delegation of each party, will meet continuously, as agreed. The steering committee will develop a joint work plan and establish and oversee the work of negotiations teams to address all issues, to be headed by one lead representative from each party. The first session of the steering committee will be held on 12 December 2007.

President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert will continue to meet on a bi-weekly basis to follow up the negotiations in order to offer all necessary assistance for their advancement.

The parties also commit to immediately implement their respective obligations under the performance-based road map to a permanent two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict, issued by the Quartet on 30 April 2003 — this is called the road map — and agree to form an American, Palestinian and Israeli mechanism, led by the United States, to follow up on the implementation of the road map.

The parties further commit to continue the implementation of the ongoing obligations of the road map until they reach a peace treaty. The United States will monitor and judge the fulfillment of the commitment of both sides of the road map. Unless otherwise agreed by the parties, implementation of the future peace treaty will be subject to the implementation of the road map, as judged by the United States.

Congratulations for your strong leadership.

The Palestinian people are blessed with many gifts and talents. They want the opportunity to use those gifts to better their own lives and build a better future for their children. They want the dignity that comes with sovereignty and independence. They want

justice and equality under the rule of law. They want freedom from violence and fear.

The people of Israel have just aspirations, as well. They want their children to be able to ride a bus or to go to school without fear of suicide bombers. They want an end to rocket attacks and constant threats of assault. They want their nation to be recognized and welcomed in the region where they live.

Today, Palestinians and Israelis each understand that helping the other to realize their aspirations is key to realizing their own aspirations — and both require an independent, democratic, viable Palestinian state. Such a state will provide Palestinians with the chance to lead lives of freedom and purpose and dignity. Such a state will help provide the Israelis with something they have been seeking for generations: to live in peace with their neighbors.

Achieving this goal is not going to be easy — if it were easy, it would have happened a long time ago. To achieve freedom and peace, both Israelis and Palestinians will have to make tough choices. Both sides are sober about the work ahead, but having spent time with their leaders, they are ready to take on the tough issues. As Prime Minister Olmert recently put it, “We will avoid none of [the historic questions], we will not run from discussing any of them.” As President Abbas has said: “I believe that there is an opportunity not only for us but for the Israelis, too. We have a historic and important opportunity that we must benefit from.” It is with that spirit that we concluded — that they concluded this statement I just read.

Our purpose here in Annapolis is not to conclude an agreement. Rather, it is to launch negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. For the rest of us, our job is to encourage the parties in this effort — and to give them the support they need to succeed.

In light of recent developments, some have suggested that now is not the right time to pursue peace. I disagree. I believe now is precisely the right time to begin these negotiations — for a number of reasons:

First, the time is right because Palestinians and Israelis have leaders who are determined to achieve peace. President Abbas seeks to fulfill his people's aspirations for statehood, dignity and security. President Abbas understands that a Palestinian state will not be born of terror, and that terrorism is the enemy standing in the way of a state. He and Prime Minister Fayyad have both declared, without hesitation, that they are opposed to terrorism and committed to peace. They're committed to turning these declarations into actions on the ground to combat terror.

The emergence of responsible Palestinian leaders has given Israeli leaders the confidence they need to reach out to the Palestinians in true partnership. Prime Minister Olmert has expressed his understanding of the suffering and indignities felt by the Palestinian people. He's made clear that the security of Israel will be enhanced by the establishment of a responsible, democratic Palestinian state. With leaders of courage and conviction on both sides, now is the time to come together and seek the peace that both sides desire.

Second, the time is right because a battle is underway for the future of the Middle East — and we must not cede victory to the extremists. With their violent actions and contempt for human life, the extremists are seeking to impose a dark vision on the Palestinian people — a vision that feeds on hopelessness and despair to sow chaos in the Holy Land. If this vision prevails, the future of the region will be endless terror, endless war, and endless suffering.

Standing against this dark vision are President Abbas and his government. They are offering the Palestinian people an alternative vision for the future — a vision of peace, a homeland of their own, and a better life. If responsible Palestinian leaders can deliver on this vision, they will deal the forces of extremism a devastating blow. And when liberty takes root in the rocky soil of the West Bank and Gaza, it will inspire millions across the Middle East who want their societies built on freedom and peace and hope.

By contrast, if Palestinian reformers cannot deliver on this hopeful vision, then the forces of extremism and terror will be strengthened, a generation of Palestinians could be lost to the extremists, and the Middle East will grow in despair. We cannot allow this to happen. Now is the time to show Palestinians that their dream of a free and independent state can be achieved at the table of peace — and that the terror and violence preached by Palestinian extremists is the greatest obstacle to a Palestinian state.

Third, the time is right because the world understands the urgency of supporting these negotiations. We appreciate that representatives from so many governments and international institutions have come to join us here in Annapolis — especially the Arab world. We're here because we recognize what is at stake. We are here because we each have a vital role to play in helping Palestinians forge the institutions of a free society. We're here because we understand that the success of these efforts to achieve peace between Israelis and Palestinians will have an impact far beyond the Holy Land.

These are the reasons we've gathered here in Annapolis. And now we begin the difficult work of freedom and peace. The United States is proud to host this meeting — and we reaffirm the path to peace set out in the road map. Yet in the end, the outcome of the negotiations they launch here depends on the Israelis and Palestinians themselves. America will do everything in our power to support their quest for peace, but we cannot achieve it for them. The success of these efforts will require that all parties show patience and flexibility — and meet their responsibilities.

For these negotiations to succeed, the Palestinians must do their part. They must show the world they understand that while the borders of a Palestinian state are important, the nature of a Palestinian state is just as important. They must demonstrate that a Palestinian state will create opportunity for all its citizens, and govern justly, and dismantle the infrastructure of terror. They must show that a Palestinian state will accept its responsibility, and have the capability to be a source of stability and peace — for its own

citizens, for the people of Israel, and for the whole region.

The Israelis must do their part. They must show the world that they are ready to begin — to bring an end to the occupation that began in 1967 through a negotiated settlement. This settlement will establish Palestine as a Palestinian homeland, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people. Israel must demonstrate its support for the creation of a prosperous and successful Palestinian state by removing unauthorized outposts, ending settlement expansion, and finding other ways for the Palestinian Authority to exercise its responsibilities without compromising Israel's security.

Arab states also have a vital role to play. Relaunching the Arab League initiative and the Arab League's support for today's conference are positive steps. All Arab states should show their strong support for the government of President Abbas — and provide needed assistance to the Palestinian Authority. Arab states should also reach out to Israel, work toward the normalization of relations, and demonstrate in both word and deed that they believe that Israel and its people have a permanent home in the Middle East. These are vital steps toward the comprehensive peace that we all seek.

Finally, the international community has important responsibilities. Prime Minister Fayyad is finalizing a plan to increase openness and transparency and accountability throughout Palestinian society — and he needs the resources and support from the international community. With strong backing from those gathered here, the Palestinian government can build the free institutions that will support a free Palestinian state.

The United States will help Palestinian leaders build these free institutions — and the United States will keep its commitment to the security of Israel as a Jewish state and homeland for the Jewish people.

The United States strongly feels that these efforts will yield the peace that we want — and that is why we will continue to support the Lebanese people. We believe democracy brings peace. And democracy in Lebanon is vital, as well, for the peace in the Middle

East. Lebanese people are in the process of electing a president. That decision is for the Lebanese people to make — and they must be able to do so free from outside interference and intimidation. As they embark on this process, the people of Lebanon can know that the American people stand with them — and we look forward to the day when the people of Lebanon can enjoy the blessings of liberty without fear of violence or coercion.

The task begun here at Annapolis will be difficult. This is the beginning of the process, not the end of it — and no doubt a lot of work remains to be done. Yet the parties can approach this work with confidence. The time is right. The cause is just. And with hard effort, I know they can succeed.

President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert, I pledge to devote my effort during my time as President to do all I can to help you achieve this ambitious goal. I give you my personal commitment to support your work with the resources and resolve of the American government. I believe a day is coming when freedom will yield the peace we desire. And the land that is holy to so many will see the light of peace.

The day is coming when Palestinians will enjoy the blessings that freedom brings — and all Israelis will enjoy the security they deserve. That day is coming. The day is coming when the terrorists and extremists who threaten the Israeli and Palestinian people will be marginalized and eventually defeated. And when that day comes, future generations will look to the work we began here at Annapolis. They will give thanks to the leaders who gathered on the banks of the Chesapeake for their vision, their wisdom and courage to choose a future of freedom and peace.

Thanks for coming. May God bless their work.

REMARKS AT A RECEPTION IN CELEBRATION OF HANUKKAH

THE STATE FLOOR OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
DECEMBER 10, 2007

Thank you. Good evening. Laura and I welcome you to the White House. Mr. Attorney General, thank you for being here. Secretary Chertoff, and family. Hanukkah is a time of joy and festivity in the Jewish religion. We're honored to gather with members of the Jewish community to celebrate this holiday.

During Hanukkah, we remember an ancient struggle for freedom. More than two thousand years ago, a cruel tyrant ruled Judea — and forbade the Israelites from practicing their religion. A band of brothers came together to fight this oppression. And against incredible odds, they liberated the capital city of Jerusalem. As they set about rededicating the holy temple, they witnessed a great miracle: That purified oil that was supposed to last for one day burned for eight.

Jewish families commemorate this miracle by lighting the menorah for the eight nights of Hanukkah. The Talmud instructs families to place the menorah in public view — so the entire world can see its light. The flames remind us that light triumphs over darkness, faith conquers despair, and the desire for freedom burns inside every man, woman and child.

As we light the Hanukkah candles this year, we pray for those who still live under the shadow of tyranny. This afternoon, I met with a group of Jewish immigrants to mark International Human Rights Day. Many of these men and women fled from religious oppression in countries like Iran and Syria and the Soviet Union. They came to America because our nation is a beacon of freedom. And they see a day of hope on the horizon when people all across the world will worship in freedom. The forces of intolerance can suppress the menorah — but they can never extinguish its light.

The menorah we light tonight has special meaning. It once belonged to Chayim Pearl — who was the great-grandfather of Wall Street Journal reporter, Daniel Pearl. While reporting in Pakistan in 2002, Daniel was kidnapped and murdered by terrorists. His only crime was being a Jewish American — something Daniel Pearl would never deny. In his final moments, Daniel told his captors about a street in Israel named for his great-grandfather. He looked into their camera and he said, “My father is Jewish, my mother is Jewish, and I’m Jewish.” These words have become a source of inspiration for Americans of all faiths. They show the courage of a man who refused to bow before terror — and the strength of a spirit that could not be broken.

Daniel’s memory remains close to our hearts. Those who knew him best remember a gifted writer who loved the violin, and made friends wherever he went. We’re honored that Daniel’s parents — Ruth and Judea — have joined us today. We thank them for their work on behalf of the Daniel Pearl Foundation. The foundation helps bring people from different cultures together through journalism and music. It’s a fitting tribute to Daniel’s lifelong pursuit of truth and tolerance. By honoring Daniel, we are given the opportunity to bring forth hope from the darkness of tragedy — and that is a miracle worth celebrating during the Festival of Lights.

Laura and I wish people of Jewish faith around the world a happy Hanukkah. May God bless you all. Tonight, we will hear a wonderful performance by the Zamir Chorale. But first I ask Ruth and Judea to light the Pearl family menorah, and lead the blessings.

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS TO THE 110TH CONGRESS,
SECOND SESSION

UNITED STATES CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JANUARY 28, 2008

Madam Speaker, Vice President Cheney, members of Congress, distinguished guests, and fellow citizens: Seven years have passed since I first stood before you at this rostrum. In that time, our country has been tested in ways none of us could have imagined. We faced hard decisions about peace and war, rising competition in the world economy, and the health and welfare of our citizens. These issues call for vigorous debate, and I think it's fair to say we've answered the call. Yet history will record that amid our differences, we acted with purpose. And together, we showed the world the power and resilience of American self-government.

All of us were sent to Washington to carry out the people's business. That is the purpose of this body. It is the meaning of our oath. It remains our charge to keep.

The actions of the 110th Congress will affect the security and prosperity of our nation long after this session has ended. In this election year, let us show our fellow Americans that we recognize our responsibilities and are determined to meet them. Let us show them that Republicans and Democrats can compete for votes and cooperate for results at the same time.

From expanding opportunity to protecting our country, we've made good progress. Yet we have unfinished business before us, and the American people expect us to get it done.

In the work ahead, we must be guided by the philosophy that made our nation great. As Americans, we believe in the power of individuals to determine their destiny and shape the course of history. We believe that the most reliable guide for our country is the collective wisdom of ordinary citizens. And so in all we do, we

must trust in the ability of free peoples to make wise decisions, and empower them to improve their lives for their futures.

To build a prosperous future, we must trust people with their own money and empower them to grow our economy. As we meet tonight, our economy is undergoing a period of uncertainty. America has added jobs for a record 52 straight months, but jobs are now growing at a slower pace. Wages are up, but so are prices for food and gas. Exports are rising, but the housing market has declined. At kitchen tables across our country, there is a concern about our economic future.

In the long run, Americans can be confident about our economic growth. But in the short run, we can all see that that growth is slowing. So last week, my administration reached agreement with Speaker Pelosi and Republican Leader Boehner on a robust growth package that includes tax relief for individuals and families and incentives for business investment. The temptation will be to load up the bill. That would delay it or derail it, and neither option is acceptable. This is a good agreement that will keep our economy growing and our people working. And this Congress must pass it as soon as possible.

We have other work to do on taxes. Unless Congress acts, most of the tax relief we've delivered over the past seven years will be taken away. Some in Washington argue that letting tax relief expire is not a tax increase. Try explaining that to 116 million American taxpayers who would see their taxes rise by an average of \$1,800. Others have said they would personally be happy to pay higher taxes. I welcome their enthusiasm. I'm pleased to report that the IRS accepts both checks and money orders.

Most Americans think their taxes are high enough. With all the other pressures on their finances, American families should not have to worry about their federal government taking a bigger bite out of their paychecks. There's only one way to eliminate this uncertainty: Make the tax relief permanent. And members of Congress should know: If any bill raises taxes reaches my desk, I will veto it.

Just as we trust Americans with their own money, we need to earn their trust by spending their tax dollars wisely. Next week, I'll send you a budget that terminates or substantially reduces 151 wasteful or bloated programs, totaling more than \$18 billion. The budget that I will submit will keep America on track for a surplus in 2012. American families have to balance their budgets; so should their government.

The people's trust in their government is undermined by congressional earmarks — special interest projects that are often snuck in at the last minute, without discussion or debate. Last year, I asked you to voluntarily cut the number and cost of earmarks in half. I also asked you to stop slipping earmarks into committee reports that never even come to a vote. Unfortunately, neither goal was met. So this time, if you send me an appropriations bill that does not cut the number and cost of earmarks in half, I'll send it back to you with my veto.

And tomorrow, I will issue an executive order that directs federal agencies to ignore any future earmark that is not voted on by Congress. If these items are truly worth funding, Congress should debate them in the open and hold a public vote.

Our shared responsibilities extend beyond matters of taxes and spending. On housing, we must trust Americans with the responsibility of homeownership and empower them to weather turbulent times in the housing market. My administration brought together the HOPE NOW alliance, which is helping many struggling homeowners avoid foreclosure. And Congress can help even more. Tonight I ask you to pass legislation to reform Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, modernize the Federal Housing Administration, and allow state housing agencies to issue tax-free bonds to help homeowners refinance their mortgages. These are difficult times for many American families, and by taking these steps, we can help more of them keep their homes.

To build a future of quality health care, we must trust patients and doctors to make medical decisions and empower them with better information and better options. We share a common

goal: making health care more affordable and accessible for all Americans. The best way to achieve that goal is by expanding consumer choice, not government control. So I have proposed ending the bias in the tax code against those who do not get their health insurance through their employer. This one reform would put private coverage within reach for millions, and I call on the Congress to pass it this year.

The Congress must also expand health savings accounts, create Association Health Plans for small businesses, promote health information technology, and confront the epidemic of junk medical lawsuits. With all these steps, we will help ensure that decisions about your medical care are made in the privacy of your doctor's office — not in the halls of Congress.

On education, we must trust students to learn if given the chance, and empower parents to demand results from our schools. In neighborhoods across our country, there are boys and girls with dreams — and a decent education is their only hope of achieving them.

Six years ago, we came together to pass the No Child Left Behind Act, and today no one can deny its results. Last year, fourth and eighth graders achieved the highest math scores on record. Reading scores are on the rise. African American and Hispanic students posted all-time highs. Now we must work together to increase accountability, add flexibility for states and districts, reduce the number of high school dropouts, provide extra help for struggling schools.

Members of Congress: The No Child Left Behind Act is a bipartisan achievement. It is succeeding. And we owe it to America's children, their parents, and their teachers to strengthen this good law.

We must also do more to help children when their schools do not measure up. Thanks to the D.C. Opportunity Scholarships you approved, more than 2,600 of the poorest children in our Nation's Capital have found new hope at a faith-based or other non-public school. Sadly, these schools are disappearing at an alarming rate in

many of America's inner cities. So I will convene a White House summit aimed at strengthening these lifelines of learning. And to open the doors of these schools to more children, I ask you to support a new \$300 million program called Pell Grants for Kids. We have seen how Pell Grants help low-income college students realize their full potential. Together, we've expanded the size and reach of these grants. Now let us apply that same spirit to help liberate poor children trapped in failing public schools.

On trade, we must trust American workers to compete with anyone in the world and empower them by opening up new markets overseas. Today, our economic growth increasingly depends on our ability to sell American goods and crops and services all over the world. So we're working to break down barriers to trade and investment wherever we can. We're working for a successful Doha Round of trade talks, and we must complete a good agreement this year. At the same time, we're pursuing opportunities to open up new markets by passing free trade agreements.

I thank the Congress for approving a good agreement with Peru. And now I ask you to approve agreements with Colombia and Panama and South Korea. Many products from these nations now enter America duty-free, yet many of our products face steep tariffs in their markets. These agreements will level the playing field. They will give us better access to nearly 100 million customers. They will support good jobs for the finest workers in the world: those whose products say "Made in the USA."

These agreements also promote America's strategic interests. The first agreement that will come before you is with Colombia, a friend of America that is confronting violence and terror, and fighting drug traffickers. If we fail to pass this agreement, we will embolden the purveyors of false populism in our hemisphere. So we must come together, pass this agreement, and show our neighbors in the region that democracy leads to a better life.

Trade brings better jobs and better choices and better prices. Yet for some Americans, trade can mean losing a job, and the federal government has a responsibility to help. I ask Congress to

reauthorize and reform trade adjustment assistance, so we can help these displaced workers learn new skills and find new jobs.

To build a future of energy security, we must trust in the creative genius of American researchers and entrepreneurs and empower them to pioneer a new generation of clean energy technology. Our security, our prosperity, and our environment all require reducing our dependence on oil. Last year, I asked you to pass legislation to reduce oil consumption over the next decade, and you responded. Together we should take the next steps: Let us fund new technologies that can generate coal power while capturing carbon emissions. Let us increase the use of renewable power and emissions-free nuclear power. Let us continue investing in advanced battery technology and renewable fuels to power the cars and trucks of the future. Let us create a new international clean technology fund, which will help developing nations like India and China make greater use of clean energy sources. And let us complete an international agreement that has the potential to slow, stop, and eventually reverse the growth of greenhouse gases.

This agreement will be effective only if it includes commitments by every major economy and gives none a free ride. The United States is committed to strengthening our energy security and confronting global climate change. And the best way to meet these goals is for America to continue leading the way toward the development of cleaner and more energy-efficient technology.

To keep America competitive into the future, we must trust in the skill of our scientists and engineers and empower them to pursue the breakthroughs of tomorrow. Last year, Congress passed legislation supporting the American Competitiveness Initiative, but never followed through with the funding. This funding is essential to keeping our scientific edge. So I ask Congress to double federal support for critical basic research in the physical sciences and ensure America remains the most dynamic nation on Earth.

On matters of life and science, we must trust in the innovative spirit of medical researchers and empower them to discover new treatments while respecting moral boundaries. In November, we witnessed a landmark achievement when scientists discovered a way to reprogram adult skin cells to act like embryonic stem cells. This breakthrough has the potential to move us beyond the divisive debates of the past by extending the frontiers of medicine without the destruction of human life.

So we're expanding funding for this type of ethical medical research. And as we explore promising avenues of research, we must also ensure that all life is treated with the dignity it deserves. And so I call on Congress to pass legislation that bans unethical practices such as the buying, selling, patenting, or cloning of human life.

On matters of justice, we must trust in the wisdom of our founders and empower judges who understand that the Constitution means what it says. I've submitted judicial nominees who will rule by the letter of the law, not the whim of the gavel. Many of these nominees are being unfairly delayed. They are worthy of confirmation, and the Senate should give each of them a prompt up-or-down vote.

In communities across our land, we must trust in the good heart of the American people and empower them to serve their neighbors in need. Over the past seven years, more of our fellow citizens have discovered that the pursuit of happiness leads to the path of service. Americans have volunteered in record numbers. Charitable donations are higher than ever. Faith-based groups are bringing hope to pockets of despair, with newfound support from the federal government. And to help guarantee equal treatment of faith-based organizations when they compete for federal funds, I ask you to permanently extend Charitable Choice.

Tonight the armies of compassion continue the march to a new day in the Gulf Coast. America honors the strength and resilience of the people of this region. We reaffirm our pledge to help them build stronger and better than before. And tonight I'm pleased

to announce that in April we will host this year's North American Summit of Canada, Mexico, and the United States in the great city of New Orleans.

There are two other pressing challenges that I've raised repeatedly before this body, and that this body has failed to address: entitlement spending and immigration. Every member in this chamber knows that spending on entitlement programs like Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid is growing faster than we can afford. We all know the painful choices ahead if America stays on this path: massive tax increases, sudden and drastic cuts in benefits, or crippling deficits. I've laid out proposals to reform these programs. Now I ask members of Congress to offer your proposals and come up with a bipartisan solution to save these vital programs for our children and our grandchildren.

The other pressing challenge is immigration. America needs to secure our borders — and with your help, my administration is taking steps to do so. We're increasing worksite enforcement, deploying fences and advanced technologies to stop illegal crossings. We've effectively ended the policy of "catch and release" at the border, and by the end of this year, we will have doubled the number of border patrol agents. Yet we also need to acknowledge that we will never fully secure our border until we create a lawful way for foreign workers to come here and support our economy. This will take pressure off the border and allow law enforcement to concentrate on those who mean us harm. We must also find a sensible and humane way to deal with people here illegally. Illegal immigration is complicated, but it can be resolved. And it must be resolved in a way that upholds both our laws and our highest ideals.

This is the business of our nation here at home. Yet building a prosperous future for our citizens also depends on confronting enemies abroad and advancing liberty in troubled regions of the world.

Our foreign policy is based on a clear premise: We trust that people, when given the chance, will choose a future of freedom and peace. In the last seven years, we have witnessed stirring moments

in the history of liberty. We've seen citizens in Georgia and Ukraine stand up for their right to free and fair elections. We've seen people in Lebanon take to the streets to demand their independence. We've seen Afghans emerge from the tyranny of the Taliban and choose a new president and a new parliament. We've seen jubilant Iraqis holding up ink-stained fingers and celebrating their freedom. These images of liberty have inspired us.

In the past seven years, we've also seen images that have sobered us. We've watched throngs of mourners in Lebanon and Pakistan carrying the caskets of beloved leaders taken by the assassin's hand. We've seen wedding guests in blood-soaked finery staggering from a hotel in Jordan, Afghans and Iraqis blown up in mosques and markets, and trains in London and Madrid ripped apart by bombs. On a clear September day, we saw thousands of our fellow citizens taken from us in an instant. These horrific images serve as a grim reminder: The advance of liberty is opposed by terrorists and extremists — evil men who despise freedom, despise America, and aim to subject millions to their violent rule.

Since 9/11, we have taken the fight to these terrorists and extremists. We will stay on the offense, we will keep up the pressure, and we will deliver justice to our enemies.

We are engaged in the defining ideological struggle of the 21st century. The terrorists oppose every principle of humanity and decency that we hold dear. Yet in this war on terror, there is one thing we and our enemies agree on: In the long run, men and women who are free to determine their own destinies will reject terror and refuse to live in tyranny. And that is why the terrorists are fighting to deny this choice to the people in Lebanon, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Palestinian Territories. And that is why, for the security of America and the peace of the world, we are spreading the hope of freedom.

In Afghanistan, America, our 25 NATO allies, and 15 partner nations are helping the Afghan people defend their freedom and rebuild their country. Thanks to the courage of these military and civilian personnel, a nation that was once a safe haven for al Qaeda

is now a young democracy where boys and girls are going to school, new roads and hospitals are being built, and people are looking to the future with new hope. These successes must continue, so we're adding 3,200 Marines to our forces in Afghanistan, where they will fight the terrorists and train the Afghan Army and police. Defeating the Taliban and al Qaeda is critical to our security, and I thank the Congress for supporting America's vital mission in Afghanistan.

In Iraq, the terrorists and extremists are fighting to deny a proud people their liberty, and fighting to establish safe havens for attacks across the world. One year ago, our enemies were succeeding in their efforts to plunge Iraq into chaos. So we reviewed our strategy and changed course. We launched a surge of American forces into Iraq. We gave our troops a new mission: Work with the Iraqi forces to protect the Iraqi people, pursue the enemy in its strongholds, and deny the terrorists sanctuary anywhere in the country.

The Iraqi people quickly realized that something dramatic had happened. Those who had worried that America was preparing to abandon them instead saw tens of thousands of American forces flowing into their country. They saw our forces moving into neighborhoods, clearing out the terrorists, and staying behind to ensure the enemy did not return. And they saw our troops, along with Provincial Reconstruction Teams that include Foreign Service officers and other skilled public servants, coming in to ensure that improved security was followed by improvements in daily life. Our military and civilians in Iraq are performing with courage and distinction, and they have the gratitude of our whole nation.

The Iraqis launched a surge of their own. In the fall of 2006, Sunni tribal leaders grew tired of al Qaeda's brutality and started a popular uprising called "The Anbar Awakening." Over the past year, similar movements have spread across the country. And today, the grassroots surge includes more than 80,000 Iraqi citizens who are fighting the terrorists. The government in Baghdad has stepped forward, as well — adding more than 100,000 new Iraqi soldiers and police during the past year.

While the enemy is still dangerous and more work remains, the

American and Iraqi surges have achieved results few of us could have imagined just one year ago. When we met last year, many said that containing the violence was impossible. A year later, high profile terrorist attacks are down, civilian deaths are down, sectarian killings are down.

When we met last year, militia extremists — some armed and trained by Iran — were wreaking havoc in large areas of Iraq. A year later, coalition and Iraqi forces have killed or captured hundreds of militia fighters. And Iraqis of all backgrounds increasingly realize that defeating these militia fighters is critical to the future of their country.

When we met last year, al Qaeda had sanctuaries in many areas of Iraq, and their leaders had just offered American forces safe passage out of the country. Today, it is al Qaeda that is searching for safe passage. They have been driven from many of the strongholds they once held, and over the past year, we've captured or killed thousands of extremists in Iraq, including hundreds of key al Qaeda leaders and operatives.

Last month, Osama bin Laden released a tape in which he railed against Iraqi tribal leaders who have turned on al Qaeda and admitted that coalition forces are growing stronger in Iraq. Ladies and gentlemen, some may deny the surge is working, but among the terrorists there is no doubt. Al Qaeda is on the run in Iraq, and this enemy will be defeated.

When we met last year, our troop levels in Iraq were on the rise. Today, because of the progress just described, we are implementing a policy of "return on success," and the surge forces we sent to Iraq are beginning to come home.

This progress is a credit to the valor of our troops and the brilliance of their commanders. This evening, I want to speak directly to our men and women on the front lines. Soldiers and sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen: In the past year, you have done everything we've asked of you, and more. Our nation is grateful for your courage. We are proud of your accomplishments. And tonight in this hallowed chamber, with the

American people as our witness, we make you a solemn pledge: In the fight ahead, you will have all you need to protect our nation. And I ask Congress to meet its responsibilities to these brave men and women by fully funding our troops.

Our enemies in Iraq have been hit hard. They are not yet defeated, and we can still expect tough fighting ahead. Our objective in the coming year is to sustain and build on the gains we made in 2007, while transitioning to the next phase of our strategy. American troops are shifting from leading operations, to partnering with Iraqi forces, and, eventually, to a protective overwatch mission. As part of this transition, one Army brigade combat team and one Marine Expeditionary Unit have already come home and will not be replaced. In the coming months, four additional brigades and two Marine battalions will follow suit. Taken together, this means more than 20,000 of our troops are coming home.

Any further drawdown of U.S. troops will be based on conditions in Iraq and the recommendations of our commanders. General Petraeus has warned that too fast a drawdown could result in the “disintegration of the Iraqi security forces, al Qaeda-Iraq regaining lost ground, [and] a marked increase in violence.” Members of Congress: Having come so far and achieved so much, we must not allow this to happen.

In the coming year, we will work with Iraqi leaders as they build on the progress they’re making toward political reconciliation. At the local level, Sunnis, Shia, and Kurds are beginning to come together to reclaim their communities and rebuild their lives. Progress in the provinces must be matched by progress in Baghdad. We’re seeing some encouraging signs. The national government is sharing oil revenues with the provinces. The parliament recently passed both a pension law and de-Baathification reform. They’re now debating a provincial powers law. The Iraqis still have a distance to travel. But after decades of dictatorship and the pain of sectarian violence, reconciliation is taking place — and the Iraqi people are taking control of their future.

The mission in Iraq has been difficult and trying for our nation.

But it is in the vital interest of the United States that we succeed. A free Iraq will deny al Qaeda a safe haven. A free Iraq will show millions across the Middle East that a future of liberty is possible. A free Iraq will be a friend of America, a partner in fighting terror, and a source of stability in a dangerous part of the world.

By contrast, a failed Iraq would embolden the extremists, strengthen Iran, and give terrorists a base from which to launch new attacks on our friends, our allies, and our homeland. The enemy has made its intentions clear. At a time when the momentum seemed to favor them, al Qaida's top commander in Iraq declared that they will not rest until they have attacked us here in Washington. My fellow Americans: We will not rest either. We will not rest until this enemy has been defeated. We must do the difficult work today, so that years from now people will look back and say that this generation rose to the moment, prevailed in a tough fight, and left behind a more hopeful region and a safer America.

We're also standing against the forces of extremism in the Holy Land, where we have new cause for hope. Palestinians have elected a president who recognizes that confronting terror is essential to achieving a state where his people can live in dignity and at peace with Israel. Israelis have leaders who recognize that a peaceful, democratic Palestinian state will be a source of lasting security. This month in Ramallah and Jerusalem, I assured leaders from both sides that America will do, and I will do, everything we can to help them achieve a peace agreement that defines a Palestinian state by the end of this year. The time has come for a Holy Land where a democratic Israel and a democratic Palestine live side-by-side in peace.

We're also standing against the forces of extremism embodied by the regime in Tehran. Iran's rulers oppress a good and talented people. And wherever freedom advances in the Middle East, it seems the Iranian regime is there to oppose it. Iran is funding and training militia groups in Iraq, supporting Hezbollah terrorists in Lebanon, and backing Hamas' efforts to undermine peace in the Holy Land. Tehran is also developing ballistic missiles of increasing range, and continues to develop its capability to enrich uranium,

which could be used to create a nuclear weapon.

Our message to the people of Iran is clear: We have no quarrel with you. We respect your traditions and your history. We look forward to the day when you have your freedom. Our message to the leaders of Iran is also clear: Verifiably suspend your nuclear enrichment, so negotiations can begin. And to rejoin the community of nations, come clean about your nuclear intentions and past actions, stop your oppression at home, cease your support for terror abroad. But above all, know this: America will confront those who threaten our troops. We will stand by our allies, and we will defend our vital interests in the Persian Gulf.

On the home front, we will continue to take every lawful and effective measure to protect our country. This is our most solemn duty. We are grateful that there has not been another attack on our soil since 9/11. This is not for the lack of desire or effort on the part of the enemy. In the past six years, we've stopped numerous attacks, including a plot to fly a plane into the tallest building in Los Angeles and another to blow up passenger jets bound for America over the Atlantic. Dedicated men and women in our government toil day and night to stop the terrorists from carrying out their plans. These good citizens are saving American lives, and everyone in this chamber owes them our thanks.

And we owe them something more: We owe them the tools they need to keep our people safe. And one of the most important tools we can give them is the ability to monitor terrorist communications. To protect America, we need to know who the terrorists are talking to, what they are saying, and what they're planning. Last year, Congress passed legislation to help us do that. Unfortunately, Congress set the legislation to expire on February the 1st. That means if you don't act by Friday, our ability to track terrorist threats would be weakened and our citizens will be in greater danger. Congress must ensure the flow of vital intelligence is not disrupted. Congress must pass liability protection for companies believed to have assisted in the efforts to defend America. We've had ample time for debate. The time to act is now.

Protecting our nation from the dangers of a new century requires more than good intelligence and a strong military. It also requires changing the conditions that breed resentment and allow extremists to prey on despair. So America is using its influence to build a freer, more hopeful, and more compassionate world. This is a reflection of our national interest; it is the calling of our conscience.

America opposes genocide in Sudan. We support freedom in countries from Cuba and Zimbabwe to Belarus and Burma.

America is leading the fight against global poverty, with strong education initiatives and humanitarian assistance. We've also changed the way we deliver aid by launching the Millennium Challenge Account. This program strengthens democracy, transparency, and the rule of law in developing nations, and I ask you to fully fund this important initiative.

America is leading the fight against global hunger. Today, more than half the world's food aid comes from the United States. And tonight, I ask Congress to support an innovative proposal to provide food assistance by purchasing crops directly from farmers in the developing world, so we can build up local agriculture and help break the cycle of famine.

America is leading the fight against disease. With your help, we're working to cut by half the number of malaria-related deaths in 15 African nations. And our Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief is treating 1.4 million people. We can bring healing and hope to many more. So I ask you to maintain the principles that have changed behavior and made this program a success. And I call on you to double our initial commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS by approving an additional \$30 billion over the next five years.

America is a force for hope in the world because we are a compassionate people, and some of the most compassionate Americans are those who have stepped forward to protect us. We must keep faith with all who have risked life and limb so that we might live in freedom and peace. Over the past seven years, we've increased funding for veterans by more than 95 percent. And as we

increase funding — And as increase funding we must also reform our veterans system to meet the needs of a new war and a new generation. I call on the Congress to enact the reforms recommended by Senator Bob Dole and Secretary Donna Shalala, so we can improve the system of care for our wounded warriors and help them build lives of hope and promise and dignity.

Our military families also sacrifice for America. They endure sleepless nights and the daily struggle of providing for children while a loved one is serving far from home. We have a responsibility to provide for them. So I ask you to join me in expanding their access to child care, creating new hiring preferences for military spouses across the federal government, and allowing our troops to transfer their unused education benefits to their spouses or children. Our military families serve our nation, they inspire our nation, and tonight our nation honors them.

The strength — the secret of our strength, the miracle of America, is that our greatness lies not in our government, but in the spirit and determination of our people. When the Federal Convention met in Philadelphia in 1787, our nation was bound by the Articles of Confederation, which began with the words, “We the undersigned delegates.” When Gouverneur Morris was asked to draft a preamble to our new Constitution, he offered an important revision and opened with words that changed the course of our nation and the history of the world: “We the people.”

By trusting the people, our Founders wagered that a great and noble nation could be built on the liberty that resides in the hearts of all men and women. By trusting the people, succeeding generations transformed our fragile young democracy into the most powerful nation on Earth and a beacon of hope for millions. And so long as we continue to trust the people, our nation will prosper, our liberty will be secure, and the state of our Union will remain strong.

So tonight, with confidence in freedom’s power, and trust in the people, let us set forth to do their business. God bless America.

REMARKS ON AFRICA

SMITHSONIAN NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN ART
WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 14, 2008

I've been looking forward to coming to the museum, and there's an added benefit, and that is, I get to be introduced by my wife on Valentine's Day. Happy Valentine's.

This morning Laura and I join all Americans in honoring the life of Congressman Tom Lantos. In his remarkable 80 years, Tom Lantos survived the Nazi camps of Hungary to reach the halls of Congress. As a representative from California, he was a fearless defender of democracy, a powerful advocate of human rights, and a strong supporter of the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Our prayers are with Annette and the Lantos family. We thank God for his service.

Five years ago, Laura and I made our first visit to Africa. Since then, as she mentioned, she's taken three more trips. And every time, she came back with fascinating stories, some of which she just shared with you. And tomorrow, as she mentioned, we're going back, and I'm really looking forward to it.

We're going to Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia. Each of these countries is blessed with natural beauty, vibrant culture, and an unmistakable spirit of energy and optimism. Africa in the 21st century is a continent of potential. That's how we view it. I hope that's how our fellow citizens view Africa. It's a place where democracy is advancing, where economies are growing, and leaders are meeting challenges with purpose and determination.

Our visit will give me a chance to meet with people who are making the transformation on the continent possible. I'm going to witness the generosity of the American people firsthand. It will give me a chance to remind our fellow citizens about what a compassionate people we are. And I will assure our partners in Africa that the United States is committed to them today, tomorrow,

and long into their continent's bright future.

And so I thank you for giving us a chance to come and visit with you. You could call this the send-off speech.

I really want to thank Mark Dybul. I love to support people who are making history. I can't think of any more noble history than to be leading the compassionate effort of the American people to help save lives. And Ambassador, you're doing a fabulous job.

I also want to welcome Admiral Tim Ziemer. Admiral, good to see you. He's in charge of making sure that we meet our goals in reducing the scourge of malaria. Thanks for coming. You and Dybul are results-oriented people. Let me say, I'm a results-oriented President, and so when I meet with you, I ask you, what are the results? And you'll hear in a minute they're very positive.

I appreciate very much Dr. Samper and his wife Adriana for welcoming us. Thank you for leading this important institute.

I also want to thank Sharon Patton, the Director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. Thanks for welcoming us. It's not so easy, like, to welcome the President. It turns out the entourages are probably bigger than the visitors to your museum, but thank you for coming. This is an important part of the Washington scene. I'd urge our fellow citizens to come to this important museum.

I want to thank the board members of the Smithsonian National Museum of Africa Art who have joined us today.

I welcome Jendayi Frazer, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Are you going on the trip? Yes. Better get home and pack. Thanks for coming. I'm proud to work with you.

Henrietta Fore, Administrator of USAID, is with us. Henrietta, thanks for coming.

I better be careful about how I say this for fear of having a huge burst of applause, but I'd like to introduce the Director of the Peace Corps, Ron Tschetter. Ron, thanks for coming; it's good to see you, sir. And I appreciate you bringing the five-person cheering section with you. There seems to be a groundswell here.

I welcome the members of the Diplomatic Corps. Thanks for

coming.

And finally I do also want to do what Mark did and thank Chuck Dages of Warner Brothers for this trailer. It's good. I appreciate your support.

The museum is a testament to America's long connection to Africa. At least that's how I view it. Africa is the birthplace of humanity, the home of great civilizations, and the source of enduring achievements in culture and art. Africa has also witnessed some of mankind's most shameful chapters — from the evils of the slave trade to the condescension of colonialism. Even the joy of independence — which arrived with such promise — was undermined by corruption, conflict, and disease. Just a decade ago, much of Africa seemed to be on the brink of collapse, and much of the world seemed content to let it collapse.

Today, that's changing. A new generation of African leaders is stepping forward, and turning their continent around. International organizations, and faith-based groups, and the private sector are more engaged than ever. And in one of the major priorities of my Presidency, the United States has fundamentally altered our policy toward Africa.

America's approach to Africa stems from both our ideals and our interests. We believe that every human life is precious. We believe that our brothers and sisters in Africa have dignity and value, because they bear the mark of our Creator. We believe our spirit is renewed when we help African children and families live and thrive.

Africa is also increasingly vital to our strategic interests. We have seen that conditions on the other side of the world can have a direct impact on our own security. We know that if Africa were to continue on the old path of decline, it would be more likely to produce failed states, foster ideologies of radicalism, and spread violence across borders. We also know that if Africa grows in freedom, and prosperity, and justice, its people will choose a better course. People who live in societies based on freedom and justice are more likely to reject the false promise of the extremist

ideology. Citizens who see a future of opportunity are more likely to build hopeful economies that benefit all the people. Nations that replace disease and despair with healing and hope will help Africa do more than just survive — it will help Africa succeed.

For all these reasons, America has dramatically increased our commitment to development in Africa. We have also revolutionized the way we approach development. Too many nations continue to follow either the paternalistic notion that treats African countries as charity cases, or a model of exploitation that seeks only to buy up their resources. America rejects both approaches. Instead, we are treating African leaders as equal partners, asking them to set clear goals, and expecting them to produce measurable results. For their part, more African leaders are willing to be held to high standards. And together, we're pioneering a new era in development.

The new era is rooted in a powerful truth: Africa's most valuable resource is not its oil, it's not its diamonds, it is the talent and creativity of its people. So we are partnering with African leaders to empower their people to lift up their nations and write a new chapter in their history.

First, we are working to empower Africans to overcome poverty by helping them grow their economies. After a long period of stagnation, many of Africa's economies are springing to life. As a whole, sub-Saharan Africa is projected to grow nearly 7 percent this year. The economies of Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Tanzania are among the fastest-growing in the world. And across Africa, poverty is beginning to decline. Don't get me wrong, it's still a poor place, but poverty is beginning to decline.

This resurgence shows the strength of the entrepreneurial spirit in Africa. America is working to help unleash that spirit across the continent. Along with our fellow G8 nations, we have relieved some \$34 billion in debt from African nations in the past 18 months. That is roughly the same level of debt that was cancelled in the previous 11 years combined. We have also made historic increases in foreign aid. In my first term, we more than doubled development assistance to Africa — part of the largest expansion of American development

assistance since the Marshall Plan. At the beginning of my second term, I promised to double our assistance again by 2010. And the budget I sent Congress last week will ensure that we meet this commitment.

And just as important, we're changing the way we deliver assistance. We created what's called the Millennium Challenge Account, which offers financial support to the world's most promising developing nations — nations that fight corruption, nations that govern justly, nations that open up their economies, and nations that invest in the health and education of their people.

America is serving as an investor, not a donor. We believe that countries can adopt the habits necessary to provide help for their people. That's what we believe. And we're willing to invest in leaders that are doing just that. So far, more than two-thirds of the MCA's \$5.5 billion is being invested in Africa. And on my trip next week, I will sign the largest project in the program's history — nearly \$700 million compact with Tanzania.

Other nations are seeing the benefits of these agreements. They are moving ahead with the tough economic, political, and social reforms necessary to compete for a compact of their own. In fact, there is now more competition for funds than there are funds available, which ought to say two things: One, that this is evidence that the American taxpayers are getting good value for their dollars. In other words, if nations are willing to fight corruption, work on rule of law, support their people and not themselves, then it makes sense to invest with them. And secondly, it is evidence that Congress needs to fully fund this important initiative.

The best way to generate economic growth in Africa is to expand trade and investment. When businesses in Africa can sell their products and services around the globe, they create a culture of self-reliance and opportunity. One of the most powerful incentives for trade is the African Growth and Opportunity Act. And I appreciate the fact that Congress has extended this good law. Since 2001, exports from sub-Saharan Africa to the United States have tripled. It's also important for our citizens to know that U.S. exports

to sub-Saharan Africa have more than doubled.

On my visit to Ghana, I will meet entrepreneurs who are benefiting from new access to U.S. markets. My message to them will be clear, just like it is to the Congress: For the benefit of Africans and for the benefit of Americans alike, we must maintain our commitment to free and fair trade.

Attracting foreign capital is another key to growth. In recent years, African nations have taken impressive steps to improve their investment climates. According to a World Bank report, 16 countries in sub-Saharan Africa recently adopted reforms to make it easier to start a business and to register property. That may sound simple to Americans, but these are important steps to be able to attract capital for investment purposes. When investors look for a promising market, they are increasingly turning to Africa. And in a hopeful sign, private capital flows to sub-Saharan Africa now exceed development assistance.

We've taken several steps to build on this progress. Last year, we launched the Africa Financial Sector Initiative. As part of this effort, our Overseas Private Investment Corporation mobilized \$750 million in investment capital for African businesses. Today, I'm announce that OPIC will support five new investment funds that will mobilize an additional \$875 million, for a total of more than \$1.6 billion in new capital.

And next week, I'm going to sign a bilateral investment treaty with Rwanda. This will be America's first such treaty in sub-Saharan Africa in nearly a decade. It reflects our shared commitment to systems of fair and open investment. It will bring more capital to Rwanda's dynamic and growing economy. Look, the idea of somehow being able to help people through just giving them money isn't working. That's why I appreciate the efforts of Rob Mosbacher and OPIC, recognizing that when you invest in capital — invest capital, you create jobs. Paternalism has got to be a thing of the past. Joint venturing with good, capable people is what the future is all about.

But in the long run, the best way to lift lives in Africa is to tear

down barriers to investment and trade around the world. And we have an opportunity to do that through the Doha Round of trade talks. Look, Doha is important to enhance trade, but if you're truly interested in eliminating poverty, we ought to be reducing tariffs and barriers all across the globe. The United States stands ready to cut farm subsidies, and agricultural tariffs, and other trade barriers that disadvantage developing countries. On the other hand, we expect the rest of the world — especially the most advanced developing countries — to do the same. And if we both make good-faith efforts, we can reach a successful Doha agreement this year.

Secondly, we're working to empower Africans to alleviate hunger, expand education, and fight disease. America is proud to be the world's largest provider of food assistance, including emergency food stocks that have saved lives in places like Ethiopia, or Sudan, and other African nations. It's a noble effort on our people's part. I don't know if — most Americans don't understand that we're the world's largest provider of food to feed the hungry, but we are.

Yet our ultimate objective is to do more than respond to the hungry — it is to help African countries feed their own people. So I have proposed that America purchase crops directly from farmers in Africa, instead of just shipping food assistance from the developed world. This initiative would build up local agriculture markets. It would help break the cycle of famine. And it deserves the full support of the United States Congress.

We're also focusing on education. I'm looking forward to seeing the President of Tanzania, he's a good guy. Here's what he said; he said "It's an indisputable fact that education is key to development." Across Africa, students are eager to learn, and often they lack quality teachers and just basic supplies. Things we take for granted in America are just lacking in parts of Africa. So in 2002, I launched the Africa Education Initiative, the goal of which is to distribute more than 15 million textbooks, train nearly a million teachers, and provide scholarships for 550,000 girls by 2010. And we're headed to achieving that goal. In other words, these just weren't empty words, these were concrete, solid goals,

being funded as a result of the generosity of the Congress and the American people.

Last year, I also announced a new International Education Initiative, which will help make basic education available to 4 million people in Ghana, Liberia, and other nations. Laura and I are looking forward to talking to the leaders of Ghana and Liberia about this important, transformative initiative. With both these steps, we are matching the enthusiasm of African educators with the generosity of our taxpayers — and we believe strongly that this will open up the door to opportunity for millions. The good news is, so do the leaders of the countries we're going to visit.

The greatest threat to Africa is disease. The greatest threat for a successful Africa is the scourge of HIV/AIDS and malaria. Two out of every three people afflicted with HIV/AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa. The disease is the leading cause of death in the region. Just a few years ago, there were fears that HIV/AIDS could wipe out much of the continent's population, with death rates that would rival the Black Plague of the Middle Ages.

We responded. We responded with the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. It's the largest international health initiative in history to fight a single disease. In 2002, we pledged \$15 billion over five years to support HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care. We set some clear principles on how that money would be spent. We put local partners in the lead, because they know their people and their needs. We opened the funding to faith-based groups — healers willing to deliver medicine to remote villages by bicycle or on foot. We stressed the importance of changing behavior, so that fewer people are infected in the first place.

And the results are striking. When I visited sub-Saharan Africa five years ago, or when we visited five years ago, 50,000 people were receiving medicine to treat HIV/AIDS. And when we return this week, there will be more than 1.3 million. One person who knows the benefits of the Emergency Plan is Tatu Msangi. She's a single mother from Tanzania. When she became pregnant, Tatu went to a clinic run by a Christian group. Souls showing up to love a neighbor

just like they'd like to be loved themselves. You know, it didn't take a federal law to say, go to Africa to provide love for Tatu, it took a higher calling. These goals responded.

She learned she was HIV-positive, and enrolled in a program designed to prevent mother-to-child transmission. She went on to deliver a healthy, HIV-free girl, named Faith. I will see Tatu next week in Tanzania, but it's not going to be the first time I met her. See, a few weeks ago, she and Faith endured a rather windy State of the Union address. She sat with Laura in the box, here in the capital of the nation that helped save their lives.

In all, the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief has benefited tens of millions in Africa. Some call this a remarkable success. I call it a good start. Last May, I proposed to double our nation's initial pledge, to \$30 billion over the next five years. The people on the continent of Africa have to know they're not alone. The G8 has shown leadership by agreeing to match our \$30 billion pledge. The private sector has made generous contributions as well. Think of what Warner Brothers has done, for example. And now the time has come for Congress to act. Members of both parties should reauthorize the Emergency Plan, maintain the principles that have made it a success, and double our commitment to this noble cause.

Malaria is another devastating killer. In some African countries, malaria takes as many lives as HIV/AIDS. And the vast majority of those taken by malaria are children under the age of five. Every one of these deaths is unnecessary, because the disease is entirely preventable and treatable. So in 2005, America launched a five-year, \$1.2 billion initiative to provide the insecticide-treated beds, indoor spraying, cutting-edge drugs that are necessary to defeat this disease. It's not a complicated strategy. It doesn't take a lot of medical research. We know how to solve the problem. That's why I put the Admiral there. He knows how to solve problems. He can get us from point A to point B in a straight line. Well, nearly straight line. And so we set a historic goal — if you have a treatable problem on hand, then

you're able to set measurable goals. And the goal is to cut the number of malaria-related deaths in 15 African nations by half. That's the goal.

Like the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the malaria initiative empowers leaders on the ground to design strategies that work best for their nations. For example, President Yayi of Benin has called the fight against malaria "a fight against misery." With the help of the malaria initiative, he's leading a campaign to deliver insecticide-treated bed nets to children under five in Benin. I'm looking forward to hearing how that's going when we meet him on Benin on our first stop. I can't wait to find out how well this initiative is doing.

Like the Emergency Plan, the malaria initiative has been matched by G8 nations, which have pledged to cut malaria deaths by half in an additional 15 countries. This initiative has also been greeted with generous support from the private sector, faith-based groups, and Americans who want to do something to save somebody's life. You can buy a \$10 bed net and ship it to Africa to save a life. It doesn't take much money, but it takes a big heart. One of the interesting gifts Laura and I got a couple of years ago for Christmas was bed nets in our name. It made us feel great.

Like the Emergency Plan, the malaria initiative is producing undeniable results. In just over two years, the initiative has reached more than 25 million people. According to new data, malaria rates are dropping dramatically in many parts of Africa. If we stay on this path, an extraordinary achievement is within reach — Africa can turn a disease that has taken its children for centuries into a thing of the past. And wouldn't that be fantastic? And so Laura and I are going to spend time with these leaders, saying, what a noble opportunity; what a great goal; what a great way to serve humankind.

Finally, we're working to empower Africans to end conflicts, strengthen democracy, and promote peace. When I took office, Africa was home to six major conflicts — in Angola, Burundi, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and southern Sudan. We concluded that the best way to broker peace was to support the efforts of African leaders on the ground, instead of dictating solutions from Washington, D.C.

And today, every one of them has made progress toward peace and stability.

For example, the United States worked closely with Nigeria to help end the Liberian civil war. When the international community called for Charles Taylor to step down in 2003, the President of Nigeria provided a plane to take him in exile. When U.S. Marines deployed to Liberia, Nigerian peacekeepers deployed at the same time. And today, Liberia's long war is over. And next week in Monrovia, Laura and I will meet with Africa's first democratically-elected woman President: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

Even without major conflict or civil war, security challenges remain in Africa, and we're working closely with local partners to address them. The Department of Defense has established a new African Command, which will work closely with African governments to crack down on human trafficking, piracy, and terrorism across the continent. We are employing diplomatic tools as well. In Eastern Congo, we worked with leaders on the ground to broker the recent agreements to demobilize all remaining armed groups. And we stand ready to help all sides to implement them. In Kenya, we are backing the efforts of former U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to end the crisis.

And when we're on the continent I've asked Condi Rice — that would be Secretary Rice — to travel to Kenya to support the work of the former Secretary General, and to deliver a message directly to Kenya's leaders and people: There must be an immediate halt to violence, there must be justice for the victims of abuse, and there must be a full return to democracy.

In Darfur, the United States will continue to call the killing what it is - genocide. We will continue to deliver humanitarian aid. We will continue to enforce sanctions, tough sanctions, against the Sudanese government officials, rebel leaders, and others responsible for violence. We expect other nations to join us in this effort to save lives from the genocide that is taking place. We will use all our diplomatic resources to urge full deployment

of an effective United Nations force. The decision was made to count on the United Nations to provide the force necessary to protect people, and so we're going to support their efforts. I must confess, I'm a little frustrated by how slow things are moving. And yet we will support their efforts to find forces necessary to make a robust contribution to save lives.

On this trip, I'm going to visit with brave peacekeepers from Rwanda, a nation that knows the pain of genocide and was the first country to send troops into Darfur. Other nations need to follow Rwanda's example. Other nations need to take this issue seriously, just like the United States does, and provide more manpower for this urgent mission. And when they do, I pledge America will provide the training and equipment necessary to deploy the peacekeepers to Darfur.

America also stands with all in Africa who live in the quiet pain of tyranny. We will confront tyranny. In Zimbabwe, a discredited dictator presides over food shortages, staggering inflation, and harsh repression. The decent and talented people of that country deserve much better. America will continue to support freedom in Zimbabwe. And I urge neighbors in the region, including South Africa, to do the same. We look forward to the hour when this nightmare is over, and the people of Zimbabwe regain their freedom.

These are great challenges, but there is even greater cause for hope. In the past four years alone, there have been more than 50 democratic elections in Africa. Thriving free societies have emerged in nations with Islamic majorities, Christian majorities, majorities of other beliefs — which is a powerful rebuke to the ideology of the extremists. In many nations, women have exercised the right to vote and run for office. Rwanda now has the highest percentage of female legislators in the world. Overall, more than two-thirds of the nations of sub-Saharan Africa are free. And for the rest, the direction of history is clear, so long as the United States does not lose its nerve, and retreat into isolationism and protectionism. The day will come when a region once dismissed as the “dark continent” enjoys the light of liberty.

The United States must remain fully committed to the new era of development that we have begun with our partners in Africa. It's in our national interest we do so. I'm going to work closely with the G8 nations to ensure they keep their promises as well. Congress must continue to show its commitment by fully funding the development programs I described today. You see, saving lives is a calling that crosses partisan lines. It remains equally worthy in both good economic times and times of economic uncertainty.

Across Africa, people have begun to speak of the "Lazarus effect," where communities once given up for dead are coming back to life. This work of healing and redemption is both a matter of conscience and a wise exercise of American influence. The work is not done. In the face of the needs that remain, it's important for the African people to believe the American people are not going to turn away. That's part of the purpose of our trip. The changes taking place in Africa don't always make the headlines. So don't be frustrated, Mark. That means the work is quiet, but it is not thankless.

Last November, I met a woman from Zambia named Bridget Chisenga. Bridget's husband died of AIDS, and she expected to meet the same fate. Then she went to a clinic operated by Catholic Relief Services, funded by the American people. Today, Bridget is healthy. She has a job at the clinic, where she helps provide AIDS medicine to others. I want our fellow citizens to hear what she said: "This face is alive and vibrant because of your initiative. I would like to thank you."

Americans have heard similar words of gratitude and hope in the past. They were said about the people who liberated the concentration camps, and saved the blockaded city of Berlin, and stood firm until the prisoners in the gulags were set free. This spirit of purpose and compassion has always defined America. And that is why the people of Africa can be certain they will always have a friend and partner in the United States of America.

God bless.

REMARKS ON THE VISIT OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI

SOUTH LAWN OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
APRIL 16, 2008

Holy Father, Laura and I are privileged to have you here at the White House. We welcome you with the ancient words commended by Saint Augustine: “Pax Tecum.” Peace be with you.

You’ve chosen to visit America on your birthday. Well, birthdays are traditionally spent with close friends, so our entire nation is moved and honored that you’ve decided to share this special day with us. We wish you much health and happiness — today and for many years to come.

This is your first trip to the United States since you ascended to the Chair of Saint Peter. You will visit two of our greatest cities and meet countless Americans, including many who have traveled from across the country to see with you and to share in the joy of this visit. Here in America you’ll find a nation of prayer. Each day millions of our citizens approach our Maker on bended knee, seeking His grace and giving thanks for the many blessings He bestows upon us. Millions of Americans have been praying for your visit, and millions look forward to praying with you this week.

Here in America you’ll find a nation of compassion. Americans believe that the measure of a free society is how we treat the weakest and most vulnerable among us. So each day citizens across America answer the universal call to feed the hungry and comfort the sick and care for the infirm. Each day across the world the United States is working to eradicate disease, alleviate poverty, promote peace and bring the light of hope to places still mired in the darkness of tyranny and despair.

Here in America you’ll find a nation that welcomes the role of faith in the public square. When our Founders declared our nation’s independence, they rested their case on an appeal to the “laws of

nature, and of nature's God." We believe in religious liberty. We also believe that a love for freedom and a common moral law are written into every human heart, and that these constitute the firm foundation on which any successful free society must be built.

Here in America, you'll find a nation that is fully modern, yet guided by ancient and eternal truths. The United States is the most innovative, creative and dynamic country on earth — it is also among the most religious. In our nation, faith and reason coexist in harmony. This is one of our country's greatest strengths, and one of the reasons that our land remains a beacon of hope and opportunity for millions across the world.

Most of all, Holy Father, you will find in America people whose hearts are open to your message of hope. And America and the world need this message. In a world where some invoke the name of God to justify acts of terror and murder and hate, we need your message that "God is love." And embracing this love is the surest way to save men from "falling prey to the teaching of fanaticism and terrorism."

In a world where some treat life as something to be debased and discarded, we need your message that all human life is sacred, and that "each of us is willed, each of us is loved, and each of us is necessary."

In a world where some no longer believe that we can distinguish between simple right and wrong, we need your message to reject this "dictatorship of relativism," and embrace a culture of justice and truth.

In a world where some see freedom as simply the right to do as they wish, we need your message that true liberty requires us to live our freedom not just for ourselves, but "in a spirit of mutual support."

Holy Father, thank you for making this journey to America. Our nation welcomes you. We appreciate the example you set for the world, and we ask that you always keep us in your prayers.

ADDRESS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE KNESSET

THE KNESSET
JERUSALEM, ISRAEL
MAY 15, 2008

President Peres and Mr. Prime Minister, Madam Speaker, thank very much for hosting this special session. President Beinish, Leader of the Opposition Netanyahu, Ministers, members of the Knesset, distinguished guests: Shalom. Laura and I are thrilled to be back in Israel. We have been deeply moved by the celebrations of the past two days. And this afternoon, I am honored to stand before one of the world's great democratic assemblies and convey the wishes of the American people with these words: Yom Ha'atzmaut Sameach.

It is a rare privilege for the American President to speak to the Knesset. Although the Prime Minister told me there is something even rarer — to have just one person in this chamber speaking at a time. My only regret is that one of Israel's greatest leaders is not here to share this moment. He is a warrior for the ages, a man of peace, a friend. The prayers of the American people are with Ariel Sharon.

We gather to mark a momentous occasion. Sixty years ago in Tel Aviv, David Ben-Gurion proclaimed Israel's independence, founded on the "natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate." What followed was more than the establishment of a new country. It was the redemption of an ancient promise given to Abraham and Moses and David — a homeland for the chosen people Eretz Yisrael.

Eleven minutes later, on the orders of President Harry Truman, the United States was proud to be the first nation to recognize Israel's independence. And on this landmark anniversary, America is proud to be Israel's closest ally and best friend in the world.

The alliance between our governments is unbreakable, yet the source of our friendship runs deeper than any treaty. It is grounded

in the shared spirit of our people, the bonds of the Book, the ties of the soul. When William Bradford stepped off the Mayflower in 1620, he quoted the words of Jeremiah: “Come let us declare in Zion the word of God.” The founders of my country saw a new promised land and bestowed upon their towns names like Bethlehem and New Canaan. And in time, many Americans became passionate advocates for a Jewish state.

Centuries of suffering and sacrifice would pass before the dream was fulfilled. The Jewish people endured the agony of the pogroms, the tragedy of the Great War, and the horror of the Holocaust — what Elie Wiesel called “the kingdom of the night.” Soulless men took away lives and broke apart families. Yet they could not take away the spirit of the Jewish people, and they could not break the promise of God. When news of Israel’s freedom finally arrived, Golda Meir, a fearless woman raised in Wisconsin, could summon only tears. She later said: “For two thousand years we have waited for our deliverance. Now that it is here it is so great and wonderful that it surpasses human words.”

The joy of independence was tempered by the outbreak of battle, a struggle that has continued for six decades. Yet in spite of the violence, in defiance of the threats, Israel has built a thriving democracy in the heart of the Holy Land. You have welcomed immigrants from the four corners of the Earth. You have forged a free and modern society based on the love of liberty, a passion for justice, and a respect for human dignity. You have worked tirelessly for peace. You have fought valiantly for freedom.

My country’s admiration for Israel does not end there. When Americans look at Israel, we see a pioneer spirit that worked an agricultural miracle and now leads a high-tech revolution. We see world-class universities and a global leader in business and innovation and the arts. We see a resource more valuable than oil or gold: the talent and determination of a free people who refuse to let any obstacle stand in the way of their destiny.

I have been fortunate to see the character of Israel up close. I have touched the Western Wall, seen the sun reflected in the Sea of

Galilee, I have prayed at Yad Vashem. And earlier today, I visited Masada, an inspiring monument to courage and sacrifice. At this historic site, Israeli soldiers swear an oath: “Masada shall never fall again.” Citizens of Israel: Masada shall never fall again, and America will be at your side.

This anniversary is a time to reflect on the past. It’s also an opportunity to look to the future. As we go forward, our alliance will be guided by clear principles — shared convictions rooted in moral clarity and unswayed by popularity polls or the shifting opinions of international elites.

We believe in the matchless value of every man, woman, and child. So we insist that the people of Israel have the right to a decent, normal, and peaceful life, just like the citizens of every other nation.

We believe that democracy is the only way to ensure human rights. So we consider it a source of shame that the United Nations routinely passes more human rights resolutions against the freest democracy in the Middle East than any other nation in the world.

We believe that religious liberty is fundamental to a civilized society. So we condemn anti-Semitism in all forms — whether by those who openly question Israel’s right to exist, or by others who quietly excuse them.

We believe that free people should strive and sacrifice for peace. So we applaud the courageous choices Israeli’s leaders have made. We also believe that nations have a right to defend themselves and that no nation should ever be forced to negotiate with killers pledged to its destruction.

We believe that targeting innocent lives to achieve political objectives is always and everywhere wrong. So we stand together against terror and extremism, and we will never let down our guard or lose our resolve.

The fight against terror and extremism is the defining challenge of our time. It is more than a clash of arms. It is a clash of visions, a great ideological struggle. On the one side are those who defend the ideals of justice and dignity with the power of reason and truth. On

the other side are those who pursue a narrow vision of cruelty and control by committing murder, inciting fear, and spreading lies.

This struggle is waged with the technology of the 21st century, but at its core it is an ancient battle between good and evil. The killers claim the mantle of Islam, but they are not religious men. No one who prays to the God of Abraham could strap a suicide vest to an innocent child, or blow up guiltless guests at a Passover Seder, or fly planes into office buildings filled with unsuspecting workers. In truth, the men who carry out these savage acts serve no higher goal than their own desire for power. They accept no God before themselves. And they reserve a special hatred for the most ardent defenders of liberty, including Americans and Israelis.

And that is why the founding charter of Hamas calls for the “elimination” of Israel. And that is why the followers of Hezbollah chant “Death to Israel, Death to America!” That is why Osama bin Laden teaches that “the killing of Jews and Americans is one of the biggest duties.” And that is why the President of Iran dreams of returning the Middle East to the Middle Ages and calls for Israel to be wiped off the map.

There are good and decent people who cannot fathom the darkness in these men and try to explain away their words. It’s natural, but it is deadly wrong. As witnesses to evil in the past, we carry a solemn responsibility to take these words seriously. Jews and Americans have seen the consequences of disregarding the words of leaders who espouse hatred. And that is a mistake the world must not repeat in the 21st century.

Some seem to believe that we should negotiate with the terrorists and radicals, as if some ingenious argument will persuade them they have been wrong all along. We have heard this foolish delusion before. As Nazi tanks crossed into Poland in 1939, an American senator declared: “Lord, if I could only have talked to Hitler, all this might have been avoided.” We have an obligation to call this what it is — the false comfort of appeasement, which has been repeatedly discredited by history.

Some people suggest if the United States would just break ties

with Israel, all our problems in the Middle East would go away. This is a tired argument that buys into the propaganda of the enemies of peace, and America utterly rejects it. Israel's population may be just over 7 million. But when you confront terror and evil, you are 307 million strong, because the United States of America stands with you.

America stands with you in breaking up terrorist networks and denying the extremists sanctuary. America stands with you in firmly opposing Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions. Permitting the world's leading sponsor of terror to possess the world's deadliest weapons would be an unforgivable betrayal for future generations. For the sake of peace, the world must not allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon.

Ultimately, to prevail in this struggle, we must offer an alternative to the ideology of the extremists by extending our vision of justice and tolerance and freedom and hope. These values are the self-evident right of all people, of all religions, in all the world because they are a gift from the Almighty God. Securing these rights is also the surest way to secure peace. Leaders who are accountable to their people will not pursue endless confrontation and bloodshed. Young people with a place in their society and a voice in their future are less likely to search for meaning in radicalism. Societies where citizens can express their conscience and worship their God will not export violence, they will be partners in peace.

The fundamental insight, that freedom yields peace, is the great lesson of the 20th century. Now our task is to apply it to the 21st. Nowhere is this work more urgent than here in the Middle East. We must stand with the reformers working to break the old patterns of tyranny and despair. We must give voice to millions of ordinary people who dream of a better life in a free society. We must confront the moral relativism that views all forms of government as equally acceptable and thereby consigns whole societies to slavery. Above all, we must have faith in our values and ourselves and confidently pursue the expansion of liberty as the path to a peaceful future.

That future will be a dramatic departure from the Middle East of today. So as we mark 60 years from Israel's founding, let us try to

envision the region 60 years from now. This vision is not going to arrive easily or overnight; it will encounter violent resistance. But if we and future Presidents and future Knessets maintain our resolve and have faith in our ideals, here is the Middle East that we can see:

Israel will be celebrating the 120th anniversary as one of the world's great democracies, a secure and flourishing homeland for the Jewish people. The Palestinian people will have the homeland they have long dreamed of and deserved — a democratic state that is governed by law, and respects human rights, and rejects terror. From Cairo to Riyadh to Baghdad and Beirut, people will live in free and independent societies, where a desire for peace is reinforced by ties of diplomacy and tourism and trade. Iran and Syria will be peaceful nations, with today's oppression a distant memory and where people are free to speak their minds and develop their God-given talents. Al Qaeda and Hezbollah and Hamas will be defeated, as Muslims across the region recognize the emptiness of the terrorists' vision and the injustice of their cause.

Overall, the Middle East will be characterized by a new period of tolerance and integration. And this doesn't mean that Israel and its neighbors will be best of friends. But when leaders across the region answer to their people, they will focus their energies on schools and jobs, not on rocket attacks and suicide bombings. With this change, Israel will open a new hopeful chapter in which its people can live a normal life, and the dream of Herzl and the founders of 1948 can be fully and finally realized.

This is a bold vision, and some will say it can never be achieved. But think about what we have witnessed in our own time. When Europe was destroying itself through total war and genocide, it was difficult to envision a continent that six decades later would be free and at peace. When Japanese pilots were flying suicide missions into American battleships, it seemed impossible that six decades later Japan would be a democracy, a lynchpin of security in Asia, and one of America's closest friends. And when waves of refugees arrived here in the desert with nothing, surrounded by hostile armies, it was almost unimaginable that Israel would grow into one of the freest

and most successful nations on the earth.

Yet each one of these transformations took place. And a future of transformation is possible in the Middle East, so long as a new generation of leaders has the courage to defeat the enemies of freedom, to make the hard choices necessary for peace, and stand firm on the solid rock of universal values.

Sixty years ago, on the eve of Israel's independence, the last British soldiers departing Jerusalem stopped at a building in the Jewish quarter of the Old City. An officer knocked on the door and met a senior rabbi. The officer presented him with a short iron bar — the key to the Zion Gate — and said it was the first time in 18 centuries that a key to the gates of Jerusalem had belonged to a Jew. His hands trembling, the rabbi offered a prayer of thanksgiving to God, "Who had granted us life and permitted us to reach this day." Then he turned to the officer, and uttered the words Jews had awaited for so long: "I accept this key in the name of my people."

Over the past six decades, the Jewish people have established a state that would make that humble rabbi proud. You have raised a modern society in the Promised Land, a light unto the nations that preserves the legacy of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And you have built a mighty democracy that will endure forever and can always count on the United States of America to be at your side. God bless.

REMARKS ON VOLUNTEERISM

THE SOUTH LAWN OF THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 8, 2008

Thank you, all. Please be seated. Welcome to the South Ground of the White House. It is a joy to be here with members of the armies of compassion. I'm really glad you're here and I appreciate your inspiration to our fellow citizens. I believe you are a constant reminder of the true source of our nation's strength, which is the good hearts and souls of the American people.

We have seen the good hearts of our people over the last week as caring volunteers have helped their fellow citizens through Hurricane Gustav and Tropical Storm Hanna. The Red Cross, which provides a vital role in helping the relief efforts and recovery efforts, has been spending millions of dollars to provide shelter and food for evacuees and to help with the clean-up efforts. Yet charitable contributions have not kept pace with their expenses, and I hope our fellow citizens will support the Red Cross, particularly as Hurricane Ike and other storms develop over the Gulf Coast. You can help by going to the Red Cross's website — redcross.org — and make a vital contribution to help our fellow citizens. I appreciate the fact that those here represent the hundreds of thousands of our citizens who answered the call to love a neighbor like we'd like to be loved ourselves.

I appreciate the fact that you and others lift up souls, one person at a time. You strengthen the foundation of our democracy, which is the engagement of our people. I want to thank you for what you do. God bless you and welcome.

I thank Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, Department of the Interior, and Patricia, who have joined us; Secretary of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez; Secretary of Transportation, Mary Peters; Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy, welcome Madame Congresswoman, thanks for coming. I appreciate Stephen

Goldsmith, the Chairman of the Corporation for National and Community Service; Jack Hawkins, Director of Volunteers for Prosperity; Ron Tschetter, who is the Director of the Peace Corps — I knew that was coming. Jean Case, the Chairman of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation and members of that council.

I appreciate my buddy, Michael W. Smith, who is going to play a couple of songs for us here. And his wife, Debbie. I want to thank student and school administrators and board members from the LEAGUE that are here today. These are students from schools all across the country. We are glad you are here.

With us is the 2007 Spirit of Hope Award Recipient. This is the military's way of honoring people who have given back to their communities. Giovanni Balingit — Giovanni, welcome; thank you, sir; congratulations to you. I want to thank all those who are here in the United States military. Thank you for wearing the uniform of the United States.

But most of all, thanks for coming. I really appreciate you taking time out to come by and let me say hello to you.

In my first inaugural address, I challenged all Americans to be "citizens, not spectators ... responsible citizens, building communities of service and a nation of character."

Eight months later Americans were tested by the worst attack on our nation. In the midst of chaos and sorrow, Americans responded with the — with characteristic courage and grace. It was a remarkable moment in our country. It really was, when you think about it. Rescue workers wrote their Social Security numbers on their arms and then rushed into buildings. Citizens became members of ambulance teams. And people from all across the country poured into New York City to help. The terrorists who attacked our country on September the 11th didn't understand our country at all. Evil may crush concrete and twist steel, but it can never break the spirit of the American people.

In the weeks and months after the attacks, inspiring acts continued to unfold all across the country. I'm sure you heard

the stories, just like I did. Men and women of our armed forces accepted dangerous new duties, and a lot of folks stepped forward to volunteer to protect our fellow citizens. But the desire to serve reached far beyond the military. Millions of Americans were — really wanted to help our country recover.

And so to tap into that spirit, I called on every American to spend at least 4,000 hours — or two years in the course of a lifetime — to serve our nation through acts of compassion. Some said that's acting — asking a lot for the country, and they were right — and they were right. Two years during a lifetime is a lot to give. But the truth of the matter is, citizens who do give realize that they become enriched just like those folks that they're helping.

To empower Americans looking to help, we launched what's called the USA Freedom Corps. The goal of the USA Freedom Corps was to connect Americans with opportunities to serve our country, to foster a culture of citizenship and responsibility and service. Over the last six years, USA Freedom Corps has met these goals.

One way we helped was to launch a web site called volunteer.gov, which is the largest clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities in America. In other words, we used high-tech innovations to be able to channel people's desire to serve in a constructive way.

And so this government website directs people to private charities, or local churches, or Habitat for Humanity drives, or Meals on Wheels — just opportunities to serve their neighbor. We can't put love in somebody's heart, but we certainly can help somebody channel their love. And that was the purpose of the website.

And you can search my hometown. They tell me that if you get on Crawford, Texas, you'll find that the local Humane Society seeks volunteer pet groomers — which makes Barney really nervous.

This is just one of 4 million volunteer opportunities on the USA Freedom Corps web site. Isn't that interesting? There are 4 million opportunities for somebody who wants to serve to say, here's how I can help. And so I urge our fellow citizens to go to the website and

find out if there's not something that'll interest you, something that'll give you a chance to serve something greater than yourself.

USA Freedom Corps fosters a culture of service by encouraging the private sector to step forward. We got what we call the pro bono challenge, which encourages corporate professionals to donate their services to charities and nonprofits. That makes a lot of sense, doesn't it, to encourage corporate America to not only serve their shareholders, but serve the communities in which they exist.

One really interesting, innovative idea came out of IBM this year. IBM employees will donate millions of dollars of service to charities in the U.S., as well as technology projects in developing nations. They tell me that this work would cost \$250 million if IBM's devoted employees were charging, and not providing for free. I want to thank the CEO of IBM, Sam Palmisano, who is with us today. Sam, thank you very much for coming. And I encourage corporate America to figure out ways that they can serve to make America a better place.

Another key component of USA Freedom Corps is our effort to keep track of Americans' service to others. I mean, it's one thing to talk about it, it's another thing to measure, to kind of see how we're doing. In 2002, this administration became the first to conduct a regular survey of volunteerism through the U.S. Census Bureau. Because we've begun to measure, we know that nearly 61 million Americans now give their time to help their neighbors. Isn't that interesting? Sixty-one million of our fellow citizens volunteer.

We've also launched new national programs and enhanced others to help our citizens answer the call to service. For example, we helped Americans answer the call by creating the Citizen Corps. Sounds like quite a few members have shown up. And we are glad you're here.

For those of you who don't know what the Citizen Corps is, it's a way for people to volunteer to help respond to disasters. This was set up right after September the 11th. Americans have formed community emergency response teams -- there you go -- fire corps, medical reserve corps, neighborhood watch groups. Today there are

nearly 1 million Citizen Corps volunteers nationwide.

And one of those volunteers is County Judge Ed Emmett from Harris County, Texas. So let me tell you about what the Citizen Corps of Harris County did. So Katrina hits, there's about 200,000 Gulf Coast residents headed into the Houston area. The Citizen Corps showed up. Volunteers came to process evacuees, to help treat the ill and injured, and to help settle storm victims in permanent housing.

Here's what Ed said -- I've known him for a long time, by the way -- the Judge said, "That's just what members of the Citizen Corps do -- they take care of their neighbors." And Judge, I want to thank you, and all of the members of the Citizen Corps nationwide for taking care of your neighbors.

We've helped Americans answer the call by creating a program called Volunteers for Prosperity. This initiative matched skilled American professionals with service opportunities -- a lot of them in the developing world. This year we mobilized more than 43,000 doctors, teachers, engineers and other skilled volunteers. That's a pretty good start for an important program, it seems like to me. These men and women save babies from malaria on the continent of Africa. They bring modern information technology to Afghanistan. They live out one of America's strongest beliefs -- that to whom much is given, much is required.

One of those people who is a member of this important team is Zach Harvey. He serves on the prosthetics staff at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. When he isn't — (applause) — let me finish with old Zach. When he isn't busy helping our wounded warriors, he's putting his skills to use in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic as a Volunteer for Prosperity. He works with pediatric cancer patients who've had a limb amputated as part of their treatment. He and his team of volunteers fit the children with new limbs and they pass on their skills to other care-givers.

He says the only payment he receives is the pride that comes with children — seeing children walk again. And Zach, we are proud to have you here and thank you for your service. (Applause.)

Zach doesn't want anybody to look at him, but you can't help it when you're that kind of kind man. Appreciate it.

By the way, both the Citizen Corps and Volunteers for Prosperity have been very effective programs. And I really believe Congress needs to make these good programs permanent.

We've also helped answer the call to service by strengthening AmeriCorps. This is a program that matches dedicated volunteers with hundreds of private charitable institutions. AmeriCorps members sign up for one-year commitments with the idea of strengthening their communities by teaching adults how to read or improving health care or helping the homeless put a roof over their heads. This is a good program that was started by my predecessor, President Clinton.

After 9/11, we tried to make this program more effective — in other words, to help the dollars allocated go further. Today, more than 74,000 people serve their fellow citizens through AmeriCorps. I have met AmeriCorps volunteers all over our country and they're very inspiring Americans.

One such volunteer is Emily Greene. After college, she enlisted in the program to serve with the Schools of Hope Literacy Project in Madison, Wisconsin. Through the Schools of Hope, Emily has recruited hundreds of volunteers to teach children how to read. What kind of — what a wonderful gift. When somebody says, "How can I help serve America," how about teaching a child to read as a lasting contribution to the future of our country?

Madison's public elementary schools are improving, the achievement gap is narrowing. And Emily, it must make you feel great to leave a lasting contribution, and we are glad you're here on behalf of AmeriCorps. Thanks for coming.

We've also helped others serve by expanding the Peace Corps. So, see, you don't know what I know — that every time I go to an embassy overseas and I mention anything about the Peace Corps, and there happens to be a Peace Corps contingent — they give that same kind of yell. Peace Corps volunteers are incredibly motivated people and it's a fabulous program.

The number of Peace Corps volunteers has increased. We've reopened 13 — reopened programs in 13 countries. This is a vital program. There are about 8,000 Peace Corps members that are fighting AIDS in Africa, training poor workers to start their own businesses in Latin America, they're teaching English to children in Asia. What they're doing is they're showing the rest of the world the compassionate heart of the American citizen. I mean, we are a compassionate nation and the Peace Corps does a fabulous job of advancing that compassion.

Praya Baruch is with us today. After college Praya spent two years in Ghana working with people who are HIV-positive, training religious leaders to provide community-based care, and educating young people about HIV preparation. She is now on the staff of the Peace Corps. She represents the 8,000 people who are on the front lines of helping people deal with some of the most difficult problems in the world. Praya, we are honored you're here and I want to thank the Peace Corps.

There are other ways to help Americans answer the call to service. We have got what we call the Faith Based and Community Initiative through which we've empowered Americans to volunteer through their churches and congregations.

You know, I believe that if a program is successful, government ought to support it. And I believe if it takes faith to help solve some of the most intractable problems, government ought not to fear the influence of faith in our society, we ought to welcome the influence of faith in our society.

Laura — who is not here, but sends her best wishes — has rallied thousands of volunteers to help at-risk children through Helping America's Youth Initiative. We've encouraged volunteerism by holding up examples of our volunteers. You know, to date, 1.1 million Americans have received the President's Volunteer Service Award. That may not seem like a big deal to some people, but when you get one and you show it to people you're working with, they say, how do I get one of those? What do I need to do? Well, what you need to do is serve your community by

volunteering and help make somebody's life better

Volunteerism is strong in the country. But the truth of the matter is, the farther we've gotten away from 9/11, that memory has begun to fade. And some are saying, well, maybe I don't need to volunteer now. Maybe the crisis has passed. The aftermath of 9/11 isn't nearly as intense as it was. And my call to people is, there's always a need. You should be volunteering not because of 9/11, but you should be volunteering because our country needs you on a regular basis.

We can use your help. There are citizens who say, I need love. Government can pass law, but it cannot put love into somebody's heart. Oftentimes that helps when somebody puts their arm around you and say, how can I help you, brother, or sister? What can I do to make your life better?

And so today I call upon our fellow citizens to devote 4,000 hours over your lifetime in service to your country. You'll become a better person for it, and our society will be more healthy as a result of it. You know, there's an old adage that says, you can bring hope to the lives of others, but the life you enrich the most will probably be your own.

I've witnessed the amazing phenomenon of volunteerism throughout my travels in this country. At nearly every stop, I make it a point to meet a local volunteer selected by the USA Freedom Corps at the steps of Air Force One. After they get over the initial shock of seeing me come off the plane — I love to ask them what they're doing, what are you doing to make your community a better place?

One such volunteer is a young woman I met in Pittsburgh named Kristen Holloway. She started a program called Operation Troop Appreciation. It started off as kind of a small program, just an idea, a desire to make a statement. Her group collects everything from DVDs and phone calls — cards to musical instruments and sports gear. So far, they have sent care packages to more than 40,000 men and women serving in the front lines in this war against the extremists.

Kristen, we're glad you're here. Thank you for — by the

way, you're representing a lot of people here in this audience and around the country who have had — I have the honor of meeting as volunteers at the foot of Air Force One.

I want to thank you all for showing up when I show up. Generally, the weather is nice. Sometimes it's not so nice. But nevertheless you're there with your smiling face. And you inspire me. You really do lift up my spirits to meet people who are so dedicated that they are willing to take time out of their lives to help somebody in need. And I hope by getting you on the front page of your newspapers, that you inspire others to show up and serve America by volunteering.

But I want to tell you what a soldier wrote to Kristen's group. A soldier wrote back after getting one of the packages and said, "My heart soars with pride to represent a country filled with such wonderful people as [you]." That was the thank you note that Kristen's group got.

Well, my heart soars with pride as well to be in the presence of those who are lifting up souls and helping mend hearts. I want to thank you for what you're doing. I am incredibly optimistic about the future of our country. And the reason I am is because I've seen firsthand the love and the compassion and the decency of our fellow citizens.

May God bless you. May God bless the armies of compassion.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

THE STATE FLOOR OF THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2008

Good evening. This is an extraordinary period for America's economy. Over the past few weeks, many Americans have felt anxiety about their finances and their future. I understand their worry and their frustration. We've seen triple-digit swings in the stock market. Major financial institutions have teetered on the edge of collapse, and some have failed. As uncertainty has grown, many banks have restricted lending. Credit markets have frozen. And families and businesses have found it harder to borrow money.

We're in the midst of a serious financial crisis, and the federal government is responding with decisive action. We've boosted confidence in money market mutual funds, and acted to prevent major investors from intentionally driving down stocks for their own personal gain.

Most importantly, my administration is working with Congress to address the root cause behind much of the instability in our markets. Financial assets related to home mortgages have lost value during the housing decline. And the banks holding these assets have restricted credit. As a result, our entire economy is in danger. So I've proposed that the federal government reduce the risk posed by these troubled assets, and supply urgently-needed money so banks and other financial institutions can avoid collapse and resume lending.

This rescue effort is not aimed at preserving any individual company or industry — it is aimed at preserving America's overall economy. It will help American consumers and businesses get credit to meet their daily needs and create jobs. And it will help send a signal to markets around the world that America's financial system is back on track.

I know many Americans have questions tonight: How did

we reach this point in our economy? How will the solution I've proposed work? And what does this mean for your financial future? These are good questions, and they deserve clear answers.

First, how did our economy reach this point?

Well, most economists agree that the problems we are witnessing today developed over a long period of time. For more than a decade, a massive amount of money flowed into the United States from investors abroad, because our country is an attractive and secure place to do business. This large influx of money to U.S. banks and financial institutions — along with low interest rates — made it easier for Americans to get credit. These developments allowed more families to borrow money for cars and homes and college tuition — some for the first time. They allowed more entrepreneurs to get loans to start new businesses and create jobs.

Unfortunately, there were also some serious negative consequences, particularly in the housing market. Easy credit — combined with the faulty assumption that home values would continue to rise — led to excesses and bad decisions. Many mortgage lenders approved loans for borrowers without carefully examining their ability to pay. Many borrowers took out loans larger than they could afford, assuming that they could sell or refinance their homes at a higher price later on.

Optimism about housing values also led to a boom in home construction. Eventually the number of new houses exceeded the number of people willing to buy them. And with supply exceeding demand, housing prices fell. And this created a problem: Borrowers with adjustable rate mortgages who had been planning to sell or refinance their homes at a higher price were stuck with homes worth less than expected — along with mortgage payments they could not afford. As a result, many mortgage holders began to default.

These widespread defaults had effects far beyond the housing market. See, in today's mortgage industry, home loans are often packaged together, and converted into financial products called "mortgage-backed securities." These securities were sold to investors around the world. Many investors assumed these securities

were trustworthy, and asked few questions about their actual value. Two of the leading purchasers of mortgage-backed securities were Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Because these companies were chartered by Congress, many believed they were guaranteed by the federal government. This allowed them to borrow enormous sums of money, fuel the market for questionable investments, and put our financial system at risk.

The decline in the housing market set off a domino effect across our economy. When home values declined, borrowers defaulted on their mortgages, and investors holding mortgage-backed securities began to incur serious losses. Before long, these securities became so unreliable that they were not being bought or sold. Investment banks such as Bear Stearns and Lehman Brothers found themselves saddled with large amounts of assets they could not sell. They ran out of the money needed to meet their immediate obligations. And they faced imminent collapse. Other banks found themselves in severe financial trouble. These banks began holding on to their money, and lending dried up, and the gears of the American financial system began grinding to a halt.

With the situation becoming more precarious by the day, I faced a choice: To step in with dramatic government action, or to stand back and allow the irresponsible actions of some to undermine the financial security of all.

I'm a strong believer in free enterprise. So my natural instinct is to oppose government intervention. I believe companies that make bad decisions should be allowed to go out of business. Under normal circumstances, I would have followed this course. But these are not normal circumstances. The market is not functioning properly. There's been a widespread loss of confidence. And major sectors of America's financial system are at risk of shutting down.

The government's top economic experts warn that without immediate action by Congress, America could slip into a financial panic, and a distressing scenario would unfold:

More banks could fail, including some in your community. The stock market would drop even more, which would reduce the value

of your retirement account. The value of your home could plummet. Foreclosures would rise dramatically. And if you own a business or a farm, you would find it harder and more expensive to get credit. More businesses would close their doors, and millions of Americans could lose their jobs. Even if you have good credit history, it would be more difficult for you to get the loans you need to buy a car or send your children to college. And ultimately, our country could experience a long and painful recession.

Fellow citizens: We must not let this happen. I appreciate the work of leaders from both parties in both houses of Congress to address this problem — and to make improvements to the proposal my administration sent to them. There is a spirit of cooperation between Democrats and Republicans, and between Congress and this administration. In that spirit, I've invited Senators McCain and Obama to join congressional leaders of both parties at the White House tomorrow to help speed our discussions toward a bipartisan bill.

I know that an economic rescue package will present a tough vote for many members of Congress. It is difficult to pass a bill that commits so much of the taxpayers' hard-earned money. I also understand the frustration of responsible Americans who pay their mortgages on time, file their tax returns every April 15th, and are reluctant to pay the cost of excesses on Wall Street. But given the situation we are facing, not passing a bill now would cost these Americans much more later.

Many Americans are asking: How would a rescue plan work?

After much discussion, there is now widespread agreement on the principles such a plan would include. It would remove the risk posed by the troubled assets — including mortgage-backed securities — now clogging the financial system. This would free banks to resume the flow of credit to American families and businesses. Any rescue plan should also be designed to ensure that taxpayers are protected. It should welcome the participation of financial institutions large and small. It should make certain that failed executives do not receive a windfall from your tax dollars.

It should establish a bipartisan board to oversee the plan's implementation. And it should be enacted as soon as possible.

In close consultation with Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke, and SEC Chairman Chris Cox, I announced a plan on Friday. First, the plan is big enough to solve a serious problem. Under our proposal, the federal government would put up to \$700 billion taxpayer dollars on the line to purchase troubled assets that are clogging the financial system. In the short term, this will free up banks to resume the flow of credit to American families and businesses. And this will help our economy grow.

Second, as markets have lost confidence in mortgage-backed securities, their prices have dropped sharply. Yet the value of many of these assets will likely be higher than their current price, because the vast majority of Americans will ultimately pay off their mortgages. The government is the one institution with the patience and resources to buy these assets at their current low prices and hold them until markets return to normal. And when that happens, money will flow back to the Treasury as these assets are sold. And we expect that much, if not all, of the tax dollars we invest will be paid back.

A final question is: What does this mean for your economic future?

The primary steps — purpose of the steps I have outlined tonight is to safeguard the financial security of American workers and families and small businesses. The federal government also continues to enforce laws and regulations protecting your money. The Treasury Department recently offered government insurance for money market mutual funds. And through the FDIC, every savings account, checking account, and certificate of deposit is insured by the federal government for up to \$100,000. The FDIC has been in existence for 75 years, and no one has ever lost a penny on an insured deposit — and this will not change.

Once this crisis is resolved, there will be time to update our financial regulatory structures. Our 21st century global economy

remains regulated largely by outdated 20th century laws. Recently, we've seen how one company can grow so large that its failure jeopardizes the entire financial system.

Earlier this year, Secretary Paulson proposed a blueprint that would modernize our financial regulations. For example, the Federal Reserve would be authorized to take a closer look at the operations of companies across the financial spectrum and ensure that their practices do not threaten overall financial stability. There are other good ideas, and members of Congress should consider them. As they do, they must ensure that efforts to regulate Wall Street do not end up hampering our economy's ability to grow.

In the long run, Americans have good reason to be confident in our economic strength. Despite corrections in the marketplace and instances of abuse, democratic capitalism is the best system ever devised. It has unleashed the talents and the productivity, and entrepreneurial spirit of our citizens. It has made this country the best place in the world to invest and do business. And it gives our economy the flexibility and resilience to absorb shocks, adjust, and bounce back.

Our economy is facing a moment of great challenge. But we've overcome tough challenges before — and we will overcome this one. I know that Americans sometimes get discouraged by the tone in Washington, and the seemingly endless partisan struggles. Yet history has shown that in times of real trial, elected officials rise to the occasion. And together, we will show the world once again what kind of country America is — a nation that tackles problems head on, where leaders come together to meet great tests, and where people of every background can work hard, develop their talents, and realize their dreams.

Thank you for listening. May God bless you.

REMARKS ON THE UNITED STATES OCEAN ACTION PLAN

SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

Thank you, all. Thank you, Secretary Clough, for the introduction. And congratulations on the opening of the Sant Ocean Hall — which, by the way, opens tomorrow morning at 11:00 a.m. The Secretary and I just had a fabulous tour. These exhibits in this hall will remind people that our oceans are vital for our planet — this is going to heighten awareness of how important our oceans are and that we have a solemn duty to protect them.

And so I've come not only to see the hall and to herald its opening, but to spend a little time talking about ocean conservation. There are a lot of people in this room who care about ocean conservation, and I appreciate you working with us to help preserve a vital natural resource.

First of all, I do want to recognize the Chancellor of the Smithsonian Institute's Board of Regents — I call him the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court — Justice Roberts, thank you for coming. I appreciate very much the Sant family — Roger and Vicki; Roger turns out to be the Chairman of the Institute's Board of Regents, and a big supporter, obviously, of the Smithsonian, otherwise they probably wouldn't have named the hall for him. But thank you for your generosity and your support.

Cristian Samper is the Director of the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History, and he gave us a tour today and he's a knowledgeable fellow, a biologist, and he will make sure that these exhibits remain relevant for the — you know, for the education of the American people. And I want to thank you, Cristian, for your service.

I'm proud to be here with a member of my Cabinet, Carlos Gutierrez, Department of Commerce, which oversees NOAA, which had something to do with this facility. I want to thank Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo — there she is, Madeleine,

good to see you, thank you for coming. She is from Guam. I appreciate the winners of the National Ocean Art Contest who are here today — that would be you all.

I'm about to talk about some policy we've been implementing, and I want to thank all those in the room for helping. There's a lot of folks around the country and here in Washington who care deeply about the oceans. And many of the organizations that have worked constructively with our administration are here, and I thank you for your efforts — because the truth of the matter is that we have got a good record working with you. And I want to share some thought about it.

First of all, you got to know I like oceans. I didn't grow up in the ocean — as a matter of fact — near the ocean — I grew up in the desert. Therefore, it was a pleasant contrast to see the ocean. And I particularly like it when I'm fishing. It turns out it's a — I'm not the first President likes to fish. It turns out the first President really liked to fish. George Washington — I was reading where he one time caught 100,000 herring in a single day. That's either a lot of fish or a lot of fishing. But unlike that George W., I have not had that kind of luck before.

America is a maritime nation. Obviously the — protecting the oceans are in our interest. It turns out that commercial and recreational fishing add more than \$76 billion to our economy every year. Seaport-related businesses add an estimated \$2 trillion in economic activity. And the oceans are important for our economic — you know, as an economic lifeline. They're important to our economy. Seas also offer limitless opportunities for recreation and transportation and education and research. It all adds up to the fact we got to be good stewards.

And so we developed what we call the Ocean Action Plan. I'm a guy who likes — when people walk into my office, I like to say, you know, what are the specific steps and how are we doing at achieving them? This particular plan started off with 88 different points of action, expectations — we've met 87 of them. When the Senate passes a treaty, we will have met 88 of them. And it's —

Many of you in this room helped develop the plan, many of you helped implement the plan. And I thank you. The goal is to make our oceans' coast and Great Lakes cleaner, healthier, and more productive. I want to spend a little time talking about some of the successes.

Under the Ocean Action Plan we've worked to stop over-fishing. Last year, I issued an executive order protecting two of our nation's most popular game fish — striped bass and red drum. I signed important legislation reauthorizing the Magnuson Stevenson [sic] Act, which sets a firm deadline to end over-fishing in America by 2011. Many in this hall helped pass that piece of legislation and I thank you. Thanks to these and other efforts, we are beginning to see progress toward ending over-fishing.

At the beginning of my administration, 44 fish stocks were listed as over-fished. Today, almost half of those stocks are no longer on the list. That's good news. Along the way, we've stepped up our efforts to identify additional fish stocks that are at risk — and we're going to take steps to protect them.

We're protecting and restoring vital wetland and marine habitats. In 2004, I set a goal of restoring, improving, and protecting 3 million acres of interior and coastal wetlands in five years; we have met that goal one year ahead of schedule. This effort includes our watershed restoration project in the Florida Everglades, which is the largest in the world. During my administration, we have put two-thirds of federal waters — about 2.3 million square nautical miles — off-limits to harmful bottom-trawling and dredging. We care what happens in the oceans.

We made a special effort to protect the tropical forests of the sea: coral reefs. Some of the most spectacular reefs are found in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument, which I created in June of 2006, thanks to the efforts of many in this hall. This monument is the world's largest fully protected marine conservation area, and it covers more than 7,000 marine species — a quarter of which are found nowhere else on Earth.

It's promoted a culture of cooperative conservation.

Through programs like the Coastal America Partnership, we joined with state and local governments, fishermen, and tribal leaders, and tens of thousands of volunteers to improve conservation from the Great Lakes to the Gulf Coast. One project which is dear to my heart is when folks from the private sector helped to restore 10,000 acres of tidal wetlands in my home state. For decades this area could be the equivalent of a dust bowl, just neglected. Today it's a thriving ecosystem, filled with shorebirds and abundant fish.

Cooperative conservation works. It makes sense. It's a strategy that's easy to implement when you find people willing to step up and do their part.

We're increasing international cooperation to protect the ocean environment that affects all nations. Through the Coral Triangle Initiative, we're working with nations like Indonesia, and Malaysia, and the Philippines, and Australia to identify and eliminate the threats to tropical reefs. President Yudhoyono of Indonesia gets a lot of credit for this initiative. He is bound and determined to protect coral reefs around his nation, and we are bound and determined to help him do so, by providing money, strategy, expertise and encouragement. At the United Nations, we succeeded in passing a resolution to help protect fish stocks and marine habitats from destructive fishing practices.

A lot of our citizens don't understand what's taking place in parts of the world, but people use dynamite to fish, or they poison the fish stocks in order to — in order to net them, or they use destructive bottom trawling. And we're using our influence to stop those kind of practices.

We're expanding ocean research. There is more left to learn about the oceans — there's probably more to learn about the oceans than we need to learn about the moon — or that we know about the moon. And so to help unlock these mysteries, we've launched a Ten-Year Ocean Research Priorities Plan. Research supported by the plan is helping to reduce shipping's impact on the environment, improve our understanding of important ocean conditions like red tides, teach us more about the oceans' role in climate change, and improve our

ability to protect Americans from natural disasters like hurricanes and tsunamis.

We're expanding education programs to teach citizens more about the oceans. The truth of the matter is there's a knowledge gap between what scientists and biologists understand about oceans and what our citizens understand about it. So we've ensured that teachers and students and the public have access to the most up-to-date marine science. Laura was particularly moved when she went out to the Hawaiian National Monument to learn about the effects of debris — you know, people just dropping stuff all over their boats and it gets in these currents and kills birds and clogs the ecosystem. She's been very active about educating the young and old about the importance of making sure we're wise about marine not — stopping marine debris. The Coastal Ecosystem Learning Center Network is a interesting, innovative idea where the public can learn hands on about sea life at more than 20 of America's top aquariums. So there will be kiosks in each aquarium that are connected to here, as well as around the nation and people can get information at their fingertips.

The great achievement, of course, is this new hall. It's built through a partnership between NOAA and the Smithsonian. It's going to introduce visitors to all kinds of interesting things — prehistoric predators, what life is like around a coral reef, an animated display of the oceans' impact on the global environment. It's worthwhile for our citizens to come here, I think you're going to learn a lot. As part of the exhibit's opening, a half-mile-long mural of ocean art by children from 110 countries will show visitors to the National Mall the beauty of sea life around the world. And of course, we thank those artists. My favorite exhibit was the 24-foot giant squid. The squid was brought all the way from Spain as a joint operation between the Navy and the Air Force, appropriately called "Operation Calamari." I do want to thank our military for bringing the deal here, it's worth looking at it. Admiral, I don't know if you had anything to do with it, but it's — if you did, it must have been a heck of an operation.

And then people are going to come here and they're going to be

amazed to see a 45-foot replica of a female Right Whale. There are fewer than 400 North Atlantic Right Whales left in the world. And the model in this hall is inspired by a whale that got tangled in fishing gear, but got herself free. She was given the appropriate name of “Phoenix” — and under the Ocean Action Plan, we’ve worked hard to protect whales like her. Part of the 88 different actions we’ve taken was to work on smart whale policy. And people in this room have helped. For example, we now require fishermen to use more whale-friendly gear. Based on a careful study of where Right Whales and ships are most likely to collide, we’ve rerouted the shipping lanes near Boston Harbor. The action reduced the danger to Right Whales like the Phoenix by nearly 60 percent.

And there are going to be new regulations that will be coming to be shortly that require ships to slow down as they approach seaports where these whales are likely to be.

In all these ways, the Ocean Action Plan is helping to protect our planet’s most essential natural resource. Yet we’re going to do more. And so I’ve asked — I told people I’m sprinting to the finish; I mean, four months, you can actually get a lot done. And so I’ve asked the Secretaries of the Interior, Commerce, and Defense, as well as the CEQ Chairman, to work to find additional areas in the Pacific that could be eligible for federal protection. We will improve our wetlands work by protecting, restoring, and improving an additional four million acres. It’s important to set clear goals. We have set clear goals in this administration, we have met those goals and, in this case, we’re setting a new goal. We will expand the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary to include the Davidson Seamount. This 585-square-nautical-mile addition will safeguard one of the largest known seamounts in U.S. waters, and it will protect an extraordinary array of ocean creatures.

All Americans have a responsibility and obligation to be good stewards of our environment. And one person who understands that is Pietro Parravano. I met Pietro today. He is a commercial

fisherman in Half Moon Bay, California. He was as excited to see this exhibit as I was. When a project to expand the nearby Port of Oakland threatened the bay's fishing grounds, Pietro helped broker an agreement that allowed the expansion of the port while protecting Half Moon Bay. Pietro has continued his cooperative conservation work at the local, state, and federal, and international levels. This fisherman has been honored by NOAA and the EPA. He says: "[Conservation] needs to be everyone's priority, because the oceans belong to all Americans."

I don't know where you are, Pietro, but — somewhere around here — wherever you are — there he is. Thanks, Pietro. Only in America. We're sure glad you're here and thanks for your work. Pietro shows that, you know, you can make a difference in your communities; it's just not all that hard. And part of the purpose of this fantastic facility is to encourage people to do that when it comes to the oceans.

I believe that the research that's going on and the actions that will be taken by this administration — hopefully future administrations — will say to our children and grandchildren, we saw our responsibility and we met it; that those of us who work here in Washington came here to be a constructive force, to see problems before they became acute, and we did something about it. And for those of you in this room who are doing something about it, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and so will future generations of Americans. God bless.

ADDRESS TO THE WHITE HOUSE SUMMIT ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

RONALD REAGAN BUILDING AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER
WASHINGTON, D.C.
OCTOBER 21, 2008

Thank you, all. Madam President. Madam President I could not think of anybody better to give me dancing lessons than you. We love you. I love your spirit. I love your leadership. I love the example you set for leaders all across the globe. And it's an honor to be here with you.

And it's an honor to be here with you all. I welcome you to the White House Summit on International Development. It's a summit to herald the outstanding work being done to lift up souls in need. I appreciate the fact that folks in this room represent thousands that are replacing disease with health, dependency with self-reliance, and despair with hope.

The people gathered here come from different countries — I see we represent different professions — but we're united by our commitment to charting a new era in development. Today I'm going to talk with you about this new philosophy, about the way it's transforming countries and saving lives, and about why it's essential to continue in the years ahead.

Before I do so, I want to recognize not only the President, but her son, Robert. I suspect your mother tells you what to do like my mother tells me what to do. As a matter of fact, your mother tells me what to do. Welcome.

Congressman Donald Payne, we're sure proud you're here; thank you, Mr. Chairman, for coming. Much of the success of the programs we've implemented are due to, one, the generosity of the American people, but also the fine group of people that are implementers: Henrietta Fore, the Administrator of USAID; Rob Mosbacher, President and CEO of OPIC; Ambassador John Danilovich, Millennium Challenge Corporation CEO; Ambassador

Mark Dybul, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator; Rear Admiral Tim Ziemer, U.S. Malaria Coordinator. Thank you all for being leaders.

The second choice to introduce me was Bob Geldof, musician. Of course, he'd have got up and said, I saw him try to sing while in Africa. I've come to really appreciate Bob Geldof. He is a genuine person who has used his fame to help others in need, and it is a — it's been a joy to work with you. You know, you and I might look differently, but I think we share the same compassion and the same hopes. And thank you for joining us today.

I want to thank the panelists who have participated in this conference. I do want to welcome members of the Diplomatic Corps; thank you all for coming by today.

You know, we meet today in the middle of a serious global financial crisis. Over the past few weeks, we have seen how the world's economies are more interconnected than ever before. The crisis is having a major impact on working people all over the world — including many in developing nations.

During times of economic crisis, some may be tempted to turn inward — focusing on our problems here at home, while ignoring our interests around the world. This would be a serious mistake. America is committed — and America must stay committed — to international development for reasons that remain true regardless of the ebb and flow of the markets. We believe that development is in America's security interests. We face an enemy that can't stand freedom. And the only way they can recruit to their hateful ideology is by exploiting despair — and the best way to respond is to spread hope.

We believe that we ought to remain committed to development because it's in our long-term economic interests. When America helps developing nations rise out of poverty, we create new markets for our goods and services, and better jobs for American workers. And we're committed to development because it's in our moral interests. I strongly believe in the timeless truth: To whom much is given, much is required. We are a blessed nation and I believe we have a duty to help those less fortunate around the world. We believe

that power to save lives comes with the obligation to use it. And I believe our nation is better when we help people fight hunger and disease and illiteracy.

For all of these reasons, this administration has made international development one of our biggest priorities. As the President mentioned, we've worked with partner nations — as well as the World Bank, and the IMF, and the African Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank — to relieve tens of billions of dollars in debt from some of the world's poorest nations. By relieving crushing debt burdens, it gives people hope. We've also worked with wealthier nations to provide aid in the form of grants instead of loans. For the past eight years, the United States has provided more foreign assistance than at any time in the past half century.

We're using this aid to foster sustainable economic growth, and promote good governance, and advance a model of true partnership that gives poor nations a real stake in their own development. We're encouraging volunteer organizations, local charities, and the faith community to take on an even greater role — because we strongly believe that they offer a compassion that no government can offer. Most of all, we're insisting on accountability in return for our assistance, so we can assure that our generosity leads to measurable results. You know, for too long, foreign aid was designed to make us feel good. Now, we're ensuring that our resources do good.

This new approach to development is embodied by a revolutionary initiative called the Millennium Challenge Account. See, this program says that the United States will help. But we expect countries that we help to fight corruption and to govern justly. There's nothing more pitiful than to have people's hopes robbed by corrupt government officials. We say to those we want to help support, open markets to trade and investment, and above all, invest in your people's health and education. You see, by tying our aid to these policies, we are encouraging developing nations to make tough economic and political and social reforms. We encourage leaders to respect their citizens, uphold human dignity, and work to earn the

trust of their people. This approach is based on a clear conviction: People in the developing world have the capacity to improve their own lives — and they will rise to meet high standards.

I refuse to accept the development model that says, oh, these people are doomed forever; let's just throw money at the problem. We believe that if you set high standards, good people will rise to meet those standards, regardless of where they live in the world. So the Millennium Challenge Account is a robust program that has invested \$6.7 billion in 35 countries around the world. From Albania, to Moldova, to Indonesia, to Mongolia, to Paraguay, to Peru, these partnerships are helping developing nations take charge of their future — and more importantly, unleash the talents of their people.

For example, this February President Kikwete of Tanzania and I signed a five-year, nearly \$700 million compact to improve the country's transportation, energy, and water supply. It's pretty basic needs, isn't it? Transportation, energy and water supply. The partnership will build roads that connect rural Tanzanians to markets and schools and health clinics. It's hard to have a modern society if you can't get your product from rural to urban — urban centers in your country. It's hard to get doctors to help people in the rural part of the country if you don't have roads to connect health care clinics to those in need. It's going to extend electricity to homes and businesses in some of the most remote areas of the country. It will increase access to clean drinking water, which will help reduce preventable diseases, especially in young children. Through these projects, the Millennium Challenge compact is helping Tanzania build a foundation for success in the 21st century — and showing the promise of a new era in development.

In the new era of development, America and our partners are helping to meet basic human needs like food and clean water. There's nothing more basic than food and clean water. Since 2002, the United States has provided more than \$16 billion in food assistance — helping to ensure that tens of millions of people around the world do not go hungry. In response to the current

global food crisis, we've committed \$5.5 billion to address global hunger over the next two years. And that's important. These are stopgap measures. The American people care when they hear people are going hungry around the world. And I want to thank the American people for their generosity.

But as we work to resolve the crisis in the long run, we have got to find better solutions for global hunger in the long-term. In the short run we're helping; in the long term, we're developing a strategy and working with partners to help them grow their own food. There's no other way to put it. The best long-term policy for the United States is to help nations develop their own agricultural industry, so we don't have to deal with global food crisis year in and year out.

And so we supply poor and rural farmers with fertilizer and water-management systems. We distribute better seeds that will boost yields, and invest in research that will make crops like rice and wheat more resistant to drought and pests. You know, one of the really important challenges that this administration has taken on, and future administrations must take on, is to say to other markets around the world: It is okay to import markets to crops grown with biotechnology. A lot of countries are resistant upon introducing these new technologically advanced crops because they fear they're not going to be able to sell their crops elsewhere. And yet these crops will help people realize a vibrant agricultural industry.

I believe that as the United States moves forward, we ought to purchase up to a quarter of our food from local farmers. In other words, of all the food aid we get we ought to take a quarter of that, Donald, and purchase the food directly from local farmers. If it's in our interest to help build a local agricultural industry, then instead of just giving food, we ought to purchase food from the farmers themselves, to help build a vibrant agricultural sector in parts of the world where food is desperately needed. And I support the World Bank's strategy to increase investment in agriculture.

What I'm telling you is there's a better way than just a kind of patchwork approach. It's an approach that basically says we can use our technological advancement and our expertise to help build vibrant

agricultural industries in nations where there ought to be crops today.

The United States works with partner nations to deal with the lack of clean water. Last year we dedicated nearly a billion dollars to improve sanitation and water supplies in developing nations. We're also wise enough to enlist the private sector to help, as well.

I want to share with you an interesting program — for two reasons, one, it's interesting, and two, my wife thought of it — (laughter) — or has actually been involved with it; she didn't think of it. But she thought of it for this speech. She has been involved with a public-private partnership called the PlayPumps Alliance. It brings together international foundations and corporations and the U.S. government. Now, catch this: PlayPumps are children's merry-go-rounds attached to a water pump and a storage tank. When the wheel turns, clean drinking water is produced. And as my good wife says, PlayPumps are fueled by a limitless energy source — children at play.

The United States is working with our partners to install 4,000 pumps in schools and communities across sub-Saharan Africa, which will provide clean drinking water to as many as 10 million people. It's not that hard to help people get clean drinking water. It takes focus, imagination, and effort. And I call upon all nations around the world to join us.

In the new era of development, America and our partners recognize that education is the gateway to prosperity and essential to any society's long-term success. It's pretty obvious, isn't it? If people are educated, they can read the instructions on a medicine bottle. They can keep receipts for a small business. They can learn about the rights and privileges they have under their country's constitutions. Yet too many people can't read. America and our partners are determined to extend the promise of good education to more people in the developing world.

In the Middle East, USAID has partnered with local officials to start kindergartens in Jordan, taught hundreds of thousands of children about information technology in Morocco, built 70 schools for girls in Egypt.

Through our Africa Education Initiative, as the President mentioned, the United States has trained more than 700,000 teachers. I think you said a million teachers? Yes, I'll go for a million then. Somewhere between 700,000 and a million. Distributed more than 10 million textbooks — somewhere between 10 million and 15 million — and provided hundreds of thousands of scholarships to help girls go to school.

Last year I announced a new initiative that will devote \$425 million to improve education in Ethiopia and Ghana and Honduras and Liberia and Mali and Yemen. Why? Why do we do that? Because the truth of the matter is, we want children to fulfill their God-given potential, is why we do that. And so we're helping to train the doctors and the lawyers and the engineers and entrepreneurs and the women Presidents who will be vital to the future of the developing world.

In the new era of development, America and our partners are helping to lift the burden of deadly disease. In Africa, the treatable and preventable disease of malaria kills one child every 30 seconds. So in 2005 I launched a five-year, \$1.2 billion initiative that cut the number of malaria-related deaths in 15 African nations by half.

Through the initiative, we joined with African governments — notice, “we joined with African governments” — to design malaria control strategies that will work with their nations. We expect results for the money we spend. And yet we're confident when we work with governments that they can develop the strategy necessary to achieve the objectives. And so we supply the money, and our partner nations work to distribute insecticide-treated bed nets, conduct indoor spraying campaigns, and provide cutting-edge drugs.

The interesting thing about this initiative is it's easy to measure whether or not we're being successful. In the new development agenda, results matter a lot. And therefore, when the United States works with countries, we expect there to be a well-defined strategy and the ability to measure whether or not our money is working. I don't think that's too much to ask, nor do the people who are trying to help think that's too much to ask.

So far, our efforts have reached 25 million people. In places like Zambia, and Ethiopia, and Rwanda, and Zanzibar, the numbers of people sick or dying from malaria have dropped dramatically. We have not only made progress around the edges, we've made dramatic progress in saving lives. I find that the work to defeat malaria is exciting work, and it is inspiring work. And frankly, it's not all that hard to design a strategy to get bed nets to people. And I want to thank my fellow citizens for caring deeply about this initiative. And I want to thank our partners for working hard to make sure that a mom won't have to worry about her child dying because of a mosquito bite.

The President talked about our fight against HIV/AIDS. And it's a noble battle and it's a necessary battle. In 2003, as she had mentioned, we launched PEPFAR. The program is the largest commitment by any nation to combat a single disease in human history. Ambassador Dybul and I believe that the program is effective because it is defined by a few key principles. You know, if you're going to have a new era of development, it's important to have clear definitions. It's one thing just to throw money at the problem, it's another thing to insist upon strategies that actually work. So the emergency plan demands specific measurable targets for progress. His job is to not only put the implementers in place and to find those souls who are on the front lines of saving lives and empower them; his job is to report back to the President and say, "Here is the progress we're making, Mr. President." That way it gives me a chance to say, "Well, if you're not making enough progress Mark, do something differently, please."

It employs a prevention strategy that works: ABC, which means abstinence, be faithful, and use condoms. This isn't guesswork; this is a program that is working. It puts local partners in the lead, because they know the needs of their people best. It enlists new partners from the international community, the private sector and the faith community.

I can't tell you how many people that I've met in the United States who say, "I'm part of PEPFAR, because my church has

adopted the program.” You know, there’s nothing better than having people who hear the universal call to love a brother like you’d like to be loved yourselves on the front line of helping to save lives.

And the United States government is smart enough to enlist the compassion and love and hard work of people in the faith community in the United States to help our brothers and sisters in need. So far, the results are striking. When we launched the initiative in 2003, only 50,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa were receiving anti-retroviral treatment.

Today we support treatment for nearly 1.7 million people in the region, and tens of thousands of more around the world, from Asia, to the Caribbean, to Eastern Europe. PEPFAR has supported care for nearly 7 million people, including millions of orphans and vulnerable children. PEPFAR has allowed nearly 200,000 children in Africa to be born HIV-free. PEPFAR is working. And I want to thank the United States Congress for coming together to re-authorize and dramatically expand this program.

I’m sure that many of you had the same experiences that Laura and I’ve had in meeting people whose lives have been touched by the initiatives we’re talking about today. I’ll never forget meeting Harriet Namutebi. She is — we met her in Africa on our trip five years ago. She lost her brother, her husband, and one of her children to AIDS. She was diagnosed, she locked herself in her room, she refused to eat, and she wanted to die.

But at a clinic supported by PEPFAR, Harriet was given a new lease on life. Counselors at the clinic showed Harriet how to live positively with HIV. A loving soul took this person who was in despair and said, here’s a chance for you.

Thanks to the antiretroviral treatments Harriet received, she is now in good health. She cares for four children. She is an enthusiastic member of the clinic’s drama group, which educates others about HIV. She is living proof of what people in Africa call the “Lazarus Effect” — communities once given up for dead are now being brought back to life. And it is a joy to be a part of PEPFAR.

In the new era of development, we are working with partners to

unleash the greatest engine of prosperity the world has ever known, and that is free trade. For developing nations, the value of trade is nearly 40 times the value of foreign aid. Let me repeat that: For developing nations, the value of trade is 40 times the value of foreign aid. Isn't that an interesting statistic? What should that tell you? It says if you're interested in helping the developing world, promote trade. That's what it ought to tell you.

According to the World Bank, the complete elimination of barriers to trading goods would boost annual income in developing countries by more than \$140 billion. I think that would go a long way, don't you, Madam President?

You know, trade opens growth, ignites growth, but it also produces other benefits. It helps increase transparency. It helps increase the rule of law. During my administration we have worked hard to reduce barriers to trade and investment. When I took office, we had free trade agreements in effect with three nations. Today, we have them with 14 nations; most of them are developing countries.

My predecessor, President Clinton, did a smart thing with the African Growth and Opportunity Act. My administration had the honor of extending that Act. In 2005, I worked with Congress to pass a free trade agreement with the Dominican Republic and nations in Central America — it's called CAFTA. And although it's still in its early stages, trade between participating countries with the U.S. is up 30 percent since its enactment. Do you know what that means? That means more jobs for workers in those countries. It means more food for families. It means more investment that developing countries need to grow and prosper. That's what that means.

Trade is essential to prosperity in both good economic times and bad. During periods of crisis, like the one we're in now, protectionism may seem like the best way to safeguard wealth. But when major economies try to wall themselves off, they deny themselves the growth that comes from exports and deepen poverty by depriving poor nations of vital markets for their goods. You see, in the midst of this crisis, I believe the world ought to send a clear signal that we remain committed to open markets by reducing

barriers to trade across the globe. The recent impasse in the Doha Round of trade talks is disappointing, but that doesn't have to be the final word. And so before I leave office, I'm going to press hard to make sure we have a successful Doha Round.

In this new era of development, countries that make the courageous choice to embrace democracy must realize the economic benefits that go with it. When young democracies do not deliver improvements in their people's daily lives, the people start to lose faith in free societies; that's a fact.

For example, let's talk about our own neighborhood. I believe it's in our interest that we have a good, sound neighborhood. It's in our interest our neighborhood prosper and get along. And we've seen hopeful advances for democracy and free enterprise in North and South America. There's no doubt about it. There's been some amazing advances. Yet there's also voices that challenge free markets and democratic values — quite loud voices. Some of them have gained a following, because amid the progress in our hemisphere, we also see terrible want. What the campesinos and trabajadores want is — what they don't need is false populism; what they do need is social justice. And the development aid of the United States has been focused on providing social justice in our neighborhood.

True social justice requires creating new opportunities for prosperity and upward mobility. So working in partnership with Latin American nations, we've helped more than 400,000 poor and disadvantaged children learn to read. We've increased economic opportunity by relieving debt and opening trade, as I mentioned. We've delivered aid that empowers the poor and the marginalized. Since I took office — with support from the Congress — the United States has provided nearly \$15 billion to the region with a special focus on helping the poor.

True social justice requires government institutions that are fair and effective and free from corruption. You can't have social justice if your government is stealing from you. Since 2001, the United States has doubled our worldwide commitment to programs that foster democracy and good government — including programs

in Latin America. We've entered into the Millennium Challenge Account agreements with six nations in Latin America and the Caribbean — and a number of other countries are pursuing compacts.

We've worked with countries like El Salvador to train law enforcement officers who can combat criminal gangs. Mexico, we're partnering with the government to stop smugglers who traffic in everything from guns to human beings. Colombia, we've worked closely with President Uribe to defeat the cocaine cartels and narcoterrorists. By the way, it is no coincidence last year that Colombia's economy saw its largest growth in nearly three decades, because that country has got a strong leader willing to take on the FARC.

True social justice requires compassion. And some of the greatest work of compassion in Latin America is being done by the United States military. I don't know if you ever heard of the Navy hospital ship called the Comfort, but it sailed to 12 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean last year. Doctors treated tens of thousands of poor patients, and conducted more than 26,000 surgeries. Dentists and hygienists filled cavities and cared for infections and treated young children. These men and women are showing that the nations of Latin America have a strong partner in the United States of America. They're a part of our efforts to show that the institutions of freedom and capitalism and democracy are not threats to be feared, but the surest path to social justice there is.

From fostering good governance and reform, to alleviating hunger and disease, to advancing education, prosperity and justice, our new approach to development has shown inspiring signs of success. Yet this success can be reversed, and the cost of abandoning our commitments would be far higher than the cost of fulfilling them. So I urge both parties in Congress to ensure that our development efforts remain an enduring priority of the United States.

I call on other members of the G8 and the United Nations, as well as our fellow contributors to the Global Fund, to follow through on their pledges. Corporations and foundations have shared their resources and expertise with the developing world, and I urge them

to continue their generosity. Faith-based groups have done amazing work to heal the sick and lift up the suffering, and I urge them to carry on their missions of mercy.

It's amazing what individual Americans have done to help with the new era of development. I got a Christmas gift from one of my little nephews, which was mosquito nets. Thousands of individuals and schoolchildren all across the country are donating \$10 to buy a mosquito net to help save a life. There are people who are raising money for HIV/AIDS initiative. There are people who are going on a service mission with their house of worship. These folks are making a huge contribution, and I urge them to continue their good work.

History shows what happens when America combines our great compassion with our steadfast determination. We are a compassionate people and we are a determined people. During a recent visit, a good friend of mine shared his vivid childhood memories of the Marshall Plan. We were standing on the South Lawn. He said he'll never forget the kindness America showed his nation in a time of need, and now that man is the Prime Minister of Italy. And last week, Silvio Berlusconi expressed his enduring loyalty and gratitude to the people of the United States.

It's not hard to imagine what fruits our compassion will yield 60 years from today. We can see it in the faces of Afghan girls going to school for the first time. We can see them in the proud eyes of Latin American workers providing for themselves and for their families. We see them in the joy of new African mothers whose babies are protected from malaria and HIV. We see them in the outpouring of thanks throughout the developing world. I'm just so sorry that not every American could have been with Laura and me to see what we saw in our trip to Africa last year. Schoolchildren sang songs about America's generosity. One shop-owner, I think who was in Liberia, Madam President, painted his stall in our nation's colors. Tens of thousands of people lined the roadsides during our visit, cheering and waving American flags in gratitude to the American people.

I'm honored to be the President of such a nation filled with people — filled with people of such generosity and goodness. I'm

proud to join with all of you in ushering in a new era of development. This is an historic commitment that we all can be proud of — one that will secure a bright future for our partners in the developing world, one that will make America a better place. God bless you.

REMARKS AT THE GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION SPECIAL AGENTS

FBI ACADEMY
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA
OCTOBER 30, 2008

Thank you. Mr. Director, thank you for your kind introduction and thank you for your leadership. Proud that you invited your wife, Ann, here to be with us. I thank the Attorney General for joining us today. Members of the FBI Academy staff, distinguished guests, family and friends, and most importantly, members of the graduating class: Thanks for having me.

I am so pleased to be back to the FBI Academy, and to share with you this special day. When you walk across the stage, you will receive your badge and your credentials. You'll become special agents of the FBI. You will take your place on the front lines on the war on terror. I thank you for stepping forward to serve your country during this important time. And on behalf of all Americans, I congratulate the Class of 08-14.

This academy has prepared you for the privileges and responsibilities of carrying the badge. Over the past 20 weeks, you have passed rigorous academic and physical requirements. You have spent hours practicing your aim on the firing range, combing the streets of Hogan's Alley, and navigating the Academy's "gerbil tubes." As part of your training, you were all forced to endure the sting of pepper spray — which you learned wasn't half as bad as the cafeteria food.

To reach this day of accomplishment, you have all depended on the wisdom and advice of your instructors. They took a diverse group that includes combat veterans, police officers, firefighters, lawyers, language experts, and computer specialists. And they turned you into an impressive class of FBI special agents. Your instructors are proud of your accomplishments — and I know you are grateful for their leadership.

To reach this day of accomplishment, you depended on the support of your loved ones. While you were away training for this academy, some of them were really sweating out the training for you. And Rick mentioned a lot of you were packing bags. I'm thankful you didn't mention Crawford, Texas. And so are you.

But the point is, America owes your families a great debt. And we thank you for standing by your side — thank them for standing by your side during this moment of training and the service you'll be rendering to our country. We welcome the families here today.

Members of this class join the FBI during a momentous time in our nation's history. Earlier this summer the FBI celebrated its 100th anniversary. Unfortunately I wasn't able to attend the official ceremony. So I asked the Attorney General to speak in my place. To be honest, I was somewhat concerned that he might not live up to my high standards of oratory. He told me I had nothing to worry about.

The Bureau has come a long way since its founding. Over the past century, the FBI has grown from a small team of 34 investigators to a powerful force of more than 30,000 agents and analysts and support professionals serving around the world. The FBI has pushed the boundaries of forensic science — from mastering the art of fingerprints to pioneering the use of DNA evidence. The FBI has inspired generations of children to dream of joining the force. Sounds like I inspired one or two myself.

In every era, the FBI has risen to meet new challenges. When mobsters brought crime and chaos to America's cities during the 1920s and '30s, the G-Men of the FBI brought them to justice. When America entered the Second World War, the FBI stopped Axis agents from carrying out attacks on our homeland. During the Cold War, the FBI worked long hours to protect America from Soviet spies. In all this work, the FBI has gained an incredible record of achievement and has earned the admiration of the entire world. America honors all the fine men and women who have served in the ranks before you.

As you go forth from this Academy, you're going to write a new chapter in the FBI's storied history. In the years ahead, your assignments will be as diverse as the FBI's mission — from

dismantling organized criminal networks, to pulling the plug on online predators, to making white-collar criminals pay for defrauding hardworking Americans. And just as your predecessors adapted to meet the challenges of the past century, there's no doubt in my mind you'll respond with courage to confront the emerging dangers of this new century.

Those dangers became clear on September the 11th, 2001. On that day, 19 terrorists brought death and destruction to our shores. We became a nation at war against violent extremists. And we must not rest until that war is won.

More than seven years have passed without another attack on our soil. And this is not an accident. Since 9/11, we have gone on the offense against the terrorists abroad — so we do not have to face them here at home. We stand with young democracies in Afghanistan and Iraq and beyond as they seek to replace the hateful ideology of the extremists with a hopeful alternative of liberty.

Here at home, we've transformed our national security institutions and have given our intelligence and law enforcement professionals the tools and the resources they need to do their job, and that is to protect the American people. We formed a new Department of Homeland Security. We created a new Director for National Intelligence. We established a program at the Central Intelligence Agency to interrogate key terrorist leaders captured in the war on terror. We worked with Congress to pass legislation that allows our intelligence professionals to quickly and effectively monitor terrorist communications while protecting the civil liberties of our citizens. If al Qaeda is making a phone call into the United States, we need to know why and to whom they're calling in order to protect the American citizens.

The FBI has played a vital role in doing the most important job that government has, and that is to secure the American people from harm. Since 9/11, the Bureau has worked with our partners around the world to disrupt planned terrorist attacks. Most Americans will never know the full stories of how these attacks were stopped and how many lives were saved. But we know this: The men and women

of the FBI are working tirelessly to keep our nation safe — and they have the thanks of the American people.

The FBI's leadership in the war on terror has required a dramatic change of mission. Before 9/11, terrorism was viewed primarily as a criminal matter. The FBI focused more on indicting terrorists after an attack than on stopping the attack in the first place. For example, after the terrorists targeted the World Trade Center in 1993, FBI agents succeeded in tracking down several of the killers. They obtained indictments against them and they put them behind bars. And that was good work. But eight years later al Qaeda returned to finish the job.

Immediately after 9/11, the FBI made preventing terrorism its top priority. The FBI you join today is focused on collecting and analyzing intelligence — so we can figure out what the terrorists are planning before it is too late. Over the past seven years, we have more than doubled the number of intelligence analysts and translators on the force. We've enacted the Patriot Act to ensure FBI analysts and investigators have the information they need to protect our nation. We created the FBI's new National Security Branch — bringing together divisions responsible for counterterrorism and intelligence and counterespionage.

The FBI you join today is working more closely with partners at all levels of government. At the local level, we've increased the number of FBI Joint Terrorism Task Forces from 35 to more than 100. These task forces bring together federal and local law enforcement agents. They have helped break up terror cells in places like Portland, Oregon; Buffalo, New York; and northern Virginia.

At the national level, we created the National Counterterrorism Center, where the FBI is working side by side with the CIA, the Homeland Security Department, and other federal agencies to track terrorist threats and prevent new attacks. We created the Terrorism Screening Center to consolidate watch lists from different agencies into one master list.

At the international level, we've deployed the FBI to foreign countries to help track down the terrorists. Since September the 11th,

the FBI has opened 16 new offices overseas. Two of them are in Kabul and Baghdad — where hundreds of FBI agents are serving alongside our brave men and women in uniform.

The FBI can be proud of all these accomplishments. These changes were difficult, and they were necessary. We've transformed an agency founded a century ago to meet the challenges of the 21st century. And thanks to the vision and determination of the FBI, America is safer today than we were on September the 11th, 2001.

In the midst of this rapid change, we can be confident that one thing will never change — and that is the character and courage of those who carry the badge. We see this character and courage in the story of an agent named Leonard Hatton. A bomb specialist for the FBI, Lenny had investigated terrorist attacks around the world. So when he saw smoke rising from the World Trade Center on September the 11th, 2001, he immediately understood the danger. With complete disregard for his own life, he ran to the scene to help others escape. And when the towers came crashing down, Lenny died beneath them. Earlier that same morning, Lenny had told his wife, "Just another regular day at work." Well, for a man like Lenny Hatton — who always put others before himself — it was another day at work. We must always honor the memory of this good and faithful servant — and we vow that those who have given their lives in the war on terror shall never have died in vain.

As new special agents, your charge to keep is to carry out this mission. I ask you to defend the values of fidelity, bravery, and integrity that you have learned here at this Academy. I ask you to carry out your duty to protect the lives and liberties of the American people. If you follow these principles, your careers will take you far, this agency will uphold its solemn responsibility, and America's security will be in good hands.

I want to thank you for sharing your graduation with me. I'm inspired by your examples of service. I wish you all the best in the future. May God bless you.

REMARKS ON THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

THE ROSE GARDEN OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
NOVEMBER 5, 2008

Good morning. Last night, I had a warm conversation with President-elect Barack Obama. I congratulated him and Senator Biden on their impressive victory. I told the President-elect he can count on complete cooperation from my administration as he makes the transition to the White House.

I also spoke to Senator John McCain. I congratulated him on a determined campaign that he and Governor Palin ran. The American people will always be grateful for the lifetime of service John McCain has devoted to this nation. And I know he'll continue to make tremendous contributions to our country.

No matter how they cast their ballots, all Americans can be proud of the history that was made yesterday. Across the country, citizens voted in large numbers. They showed a watching world the vitality of America's democracy, and the strides we have made toward a more perfect union. They chose a President whose journey represents a triumph of the American story — a testament to hard work, optimism, and faith in the enduring promise of our nation.

Many of our citizens thought they would never live to see that day. This moment is especially uplifting for a generation of Americans who witnessed the struggle for civil rights with their own eyes — and four decades later see a dream fulfilled.

A long campaign has now ended, and we move forward as one nation. We're embarking on a period of change in Washington, yet there are some things that will not change. The United States government will stay vigilant in meeting its most important responsibility — protecting the American people. And the world can be certain this commitment will remain steadfast under our next Commander-in-Chief.

There's important work to do in the months ahead, and I will

continue to conduct the people's business as long as this office remains in my trust. During this time of transition, I will keep the President-elect fully informed on important decisions. And when the time comes on January the 20th, Laura and I will return home to Texas with treasured memories of our time here — and with profound gratitude for the honor of serving this amazing country.

It will be a stirring sight to watch President Obama, his wife, Michelle, and their beautiful girls step through the doors of the White House. I know millions of Americans will be overcome with pride at this inspiring moment that so many have awaited so long. I know Senator Obama's beloved mother and grandparents would have been thrilled to watch the child they raised ascend the steps of the Capitol — and take his oath to uphold the Constitution of the greatest nation on the face of the earth.

Last night I extended an invitation to the President-elect and Mrs. Obama to come to the White House. And Laura and I are looking forward to welcoming them as soon as possible.

Thank you very much.