

Remarks in a Discussion at Mesa Community College in Phoenix, Arizona  
January 21, 2004

*The President.* Well, I appreciate you having me here. You've got an interesting accent—[laughter]—thought for a minute you were from Texas. [Laughter] Then he told me he was from Australia. And we really appreciate our friends from Australia.

First, I want to thank you for letting me come by. This is going to be an interesting dialog to talk about how to make sure our community college systems—not only here in Arizona but around the country—meet the needs of the modern workforce. Let me put it another way—make sure that people get the skills necessary to find work. And that's what we're really here to talk about.

The reason why we're here at Mesa is because you're doing a great job. I'm sure we'll hear some of that soon. Before we do, though, I want to recognize Members of the United States Congress who are here. I appreciate so very much them coming. That would be J.D. Hayworth and Trent Franks and Jeff Flake. I don't know if you guys were there last night—this is the ultimate loyalty, when they hear a long speech last night, then they come and get to hear another speech, back to back. But thank you all for being here. I appreciate your service to our country and your State.

I know there's elected officials here. I know there are members of the community college board of trustees. I met the chairman, by the way, who did a fine job of lobbying on behalf of the funding for the community college system—[laughter]—in this vital part of our country.

Let me—just a couple of comments, and then we'll start the dialog. First, we're still at war. And we're going to win the war, because there's a lot of really brave, capable, courageous Americans who are willing to sacrifice for liberty and freedom.

I was so touched, when I went to Baghdad or when I met our troops around our

country, to realize there are people in our country who are serving something greater than themselves. I think that's such a wonderful part of our Nation and our culture. And you just got to know, our Government will do everything we can to keep us safe—keep us safe by staying on the offensive, by changing parts of the world that had embraced tyranny. We believe strongly in America that freedom is the Almighty God's gift to every person who lives in the world, every man and woman. And America will continue to have a forward strategy of freedom to make the world more peaceful.

And it's hard work. I know it is. But in my judgment, it's essential work. It's essential work so that our children can grow up in a peaceful and free society. It's essential work so others' children can grow up in a peaceful and free world as well.

At home, we got a lot of good people working in homeland security. I met the Governor at the airport today. It rained. [Laughter] I said, "Do you want to take credit for the rain, or do you want me to take credit for the rain?" [Laughter] But she's working hard, and the coordination between the Federal and State and local authorities is good. We're doing everything we can to protect us.

The other thing that's happening is, is that our economy is beginning to grow. And that's important. There's no need to talk about job training if we're not creating new jobs. And that's what we're here to discuss.

I just want to remind everybody right quick what we have been through, just to show you how strong America is and how great the American people are. We've been through a recession. We went—we were attacked, and make no mistake about it, the attack hurt. The attack hurt because it made it abundantly clear that this Nation

is no longer protected by oceans and that we've got to get on the offensive if we're interested in keeping us peace and safe. We had some corporate scandals. That hurt us. It hurt us when citizens who should know better didn't tell the truth to their employees and their shareholders. They're now being held to account, by the way, because of good laws we passed. Then we marched to war. When you're marching to war to make our country more secure and the world more free, it is not conducive to capital investment. That's a negative thought. When you turn on your TV screens for a lot of last year, it said "March To War." And that didn't instill a lot of confidence in the people, because there's a lot of uncertainty when "a march to war." We're now marching to peace, and we're changing the world in a better way.

And the economy is growing, and jobs are getting better. There will be honest disagreement about what I'm about to tell you, but I strongly believe that the tax relief we passed is helping this economy grow and that people have more money in their pocket. So there are jobs.

Now, I'm going to talk about—we'll talk about the new jobs of the 21st century. There are some old jobs, however, that are being filled by people from other countries. Let's be very frank about what I'm about to tell you. There are some jobs that employers are having trouble filling because Americans don't want to do them. And therefore, there are people from foreign countries coming to do the jobs.

There's a spirit of parenthood in everybody's heart, if you happen to be a mom or a dad. There's a deep desire for people to put food on the table to fulfill their obligations. And that's what's happening a lot when people come from countries like Mexico to work. They're coming to make a living, and they're filling jobs that, frankly, others won't do. It seems like to me that we ought to have a policy that's open and honest about this phenomena. It's a policy that, in my judgment, should say,

where there's a willing worker and a willing employer, those two ought to be matched up together in a legal way, so long as the employer can't find an American to do the job.

What I'm talking about is a temporary-worker program that recognizes the reality of our economy. It's a temporary-worker program that also says clearly, we're a land of rule of law, that having people in the shadows of our economy is not really the American way, is it? So what I want to do is to say, let's have it all legal, in this sense: You can come to our country for a period of time so long as there's a job available for you.

Now, that doesn't mean there's automatic citizenship, quite the contrary. I strongly oppose what they call "amnesty" because all amnesty would do is invite more illegal immigration. All amnesty would do would say to those who are waiting in line in a legal way to become a citizen that legality—being legal doesn't matter in America. It does matter. So what I wanted Congress to consider for certain kinds of jobs is to put out a temporary-worker card; to get rid of all this business about people forging documents that put employers at risk; that say, for the period of time you're here, you can go home and take money back without fear of being arrested. It's a humane way to approach citizens of the world. Imagine being a worker here, and you get abused, and you don't dare call the abuser to account because you might get sent home and you can't do your job of making money for your family. So that's what I call on Congress to do.

It also is going to help our Border Patrol. It's essential for the security of this country that we have a legal system so we don't have this terrible problem of "coyotes" smuggling these people across the hot Arizona or Texas deserts, making money off the system that has now developed in America. I think we ought to let the sunshine in, have a legal system, recognize realities.

At the same time in our country we have a debate over those kind of jobs, we've always got to remember to make sure that Americans can find work too, of course. One of the interesting phenomena is the technological changes that are charging through our economy. And this Government—[inaudible]—for us to understand that as technologies change, oftentimes people can be left behind. And we've got to address it straight on.

And one of the greatest places to address that phenomena is at the community college system. And the reason why it's the community college system, it's flexible in its curriculum. The old days of workforce training are now changing. It used to be they said, "Look, just go train people," so States would go out and train 1,000 beauticians for 50 jobs. And there would be 950 beauticians without work. But they'd say, "Oh, we punched our ticket. We actually trained people."

Now we've got a new attitude in America. We're going to train people for the jobs that actually exist, and therefore requires a system that is flexible, a system willing to take input from the employers, a system that is willing to change curriculum, if need be, to meet the demands of local—of the local workplace.

So last night in my speech, I talked about spending additional money to focus directly on these programs, these collaborative programs at the community college level, that takes the input from business, takes the desire of workers, matches them so people can find good work. And so Congress needs to pass \$250-million job training money to go specifically to community colleges to fund the kind of programs we're going to talk about here today.

I've been talking too much over the last 24 hours, so I want Martin to tell us how this collaborative effort got going. Now, one of the things that's interesting, I told our panelists, is that not only are you speaking to the folks here, but there's a lot of people listening. I hope community college systems

pay attention to what they're about to hear, pay attention to what they're—what's taking place here in Arizona. It's a interesting idea. And it's one, I might add, that the Department of Labor has helped fund to get started.

So Martin, why don't you educate the people?

[At this point, Martin Bean, chief operating officer, New Horizons Computer Learning Centers, and chair, CompTIA Policy Committee, made brief remarks.]

*The President.* Obviously, the IT industry is strong here in Arizona.

*Mr. Bean.* Absolutely.

*The President.* Well—and tell us how this got started.

*Mr. Bean.* How we got started?

*The President.* Yes. Did you call everybody in the room and said, "All right, let's get after it?" Somebody needs workers, obviously. And so you came up with an interesting idea.

*Mr. Bean.* It really got started because educators got frustrated that they had to reinvent the wheel in every community college, and employers got frustrated that there was no clear way for them to be able to mentor and coach employees. And as the industry's association, CompTIA said, "Fine, we'll work with the Department of Labor, and instead of building programs for where there aren't any jobs, we'll build a set of standards for people to educate to employers' needs to get work."

*The President.* A strategy.

*Mr. Bean.* There we go. And now we're executing.

*The President.* Now you're implementing.

*Mr. Bean.* Exactly.

*The President.* Well, why don't we hear—let's talk to some of the implementers. Larry is the president of Mesa Community College, Larry Christiansen. Thank you for your hospitality.

*Larry K. Christiansen.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*The President.* I appreciate your staff for putting up with this giant entourage of mine. [Laughter]

*Dr. Christiansen.* It's been a fun few days.

*The President.* I bet it has, yes. [Laughter]

[*Dr. Christiansen made brief remarks.*]

*The President.* Good. How many people come to this particular campus?

*Dr. Christiansen.* Just at our little place here, at Mesa Community College, we have 27,000 students.

*The President.* Right.

*Dr. Christiansen.* We have about 3,000 that participate in our Business and Industry Center.

*The President.* And the Business and Industry Center's sole purpose is to train people for jobs?

*Dr. Christiansen.* That's correct.

*The President.* And you've got 3,000 now?

*Dr. Christiansen.* Right. That is in addition to, as all of our colleges, we have other occupational programs that focus on job training as well. But much of what our Business and Industry Center does is partnering with industry.

*The President.* Right. Here we're talking about IT. I went to a community college in North Carolina. There we talked about health care. And the only reason I bring that up is that there are several fields where there's really fast-growing opportunities. It just requires a certain skill. You just can't walk into the job unless you're able to be educated into the ways of that particular industry. And in our country, it's—a changing economy provides interesting opportunities. And Mary is responsible for making sure it all works, aren't you?

*Mary I. Vanis.* We hope so.

*The President.* Yes. Tell us your job.

[*Dr. Vanis, director, Center for Workforce Development, Maricopa Community Colleges, made brief remarks.*]

*The President.* It's the ultimate community outreach.

*Dr. Vanis.* It's a great community outreach.

*The President.* It works because it's administered at the State and local level. It's really good public policy.

*Dr. Vanis.* It's a great policy.

*The President.* I presume some of our students—it's interesting to call you a student, isn't it? [Laughter] You never thought you would be a student, did you, at this stage of your life, which sets a classic example for others to understand that if times get tough and if you've got the desire, somebody will want to help you. And in Arizona, you get help right here. Good job.

You want to start? Stacey is with us, Stacey Leedom. She is a student. Stacey, why don't you tell us your story? I told Stacey and Bill and Bob that you just don't know, somebody might be watching our discussion here, wondering whether or not he or she can have a bright future. And to the extent that you can help shed light on where you've been and where you're going, it would awfully helpful.

[*Stacey Leedom made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

*Ms. Leedom.* I was lucky enough to get hired on by a company called Cable One, contracting first through a temporary service. But they are actually owned by the Washington Post. [Laughter]

*The President.* Can you change the editorial page? [Laughter]

*Ms. Leedom.* I'll ask. [Laughter]

*The President.* Good luck. I hope you rise quickly in the ranks. [Laughter]

*Ms. Leedom.* Sorry about that.

*The President.* Yes.

*Ms. Leedom.* Again, it helps me with a daughter. I want her to go to college. I don't want her to make mistakes I made of not going at a young age and having a full future and a full retirement plan and everything. I now have insurance for her. I have insurance for myself. It's a future.

And I'm right now, at an entry level, where I was after 15 years of being a graphic artist, on income. And that is—in the end, who has to pay the bills? Mom has to pay the bills.

*The President.* That's a really—first of all, being a single mom is the toughest job in America. Being a single mom who needs more education and has the desire to do so is doubly tough. And yours is a wonderful story. It is a story that others need to listen to. If you're worried about your skill set, you're never too old to learn. As a matter of fact, we all learn in different ways, don't we? You've been able to take your desire to do your duty as a responsible citizen and convert it to an employable skill.

What's really interesting about what she said—I want people to hear this—when you hear about productivity increases and the changing economy, she just said by taking time to develop new skills, she makes more in her new job, in the new world, than she did after 15 years in her old job.

The changing economy can leave people behind if we're not wise. But the changing economy also is good news. It creates higher paying, higher quality jobs. And that's what's happening here in America. And that's why it's essential that these kind of programs that we're talking about provide willing souls with the skills necessary to take advantage of it. Fifteen years of work, her pay now is higher in one year—how long have you been at Capital One?

*Ms. Leedom.* I've actually not been there a year; I've been there about 6 months.

*The President.* I rest my case. I appreciate that. Good job.

*Ms. Leedom.* Thank you, sir.

*The President.* Bob Chapman.

[*Bob Chapman, a Mesa Community College student, made brief remarks, concluding as follows.*]

*Mr. Chapman.* And at the moment now, I plan on getting my degree this spring, and so I'm right now out looking for a

job. I was able to use some of the resources at the—

*The President.* Yes, one-stop center.

*Mr. Chapman.* One-stop center. [*Laughter*] That's the easiest way. I was trying to say the formal name for it—at the one-stop center.

*The President.* It happens to me all the time. [*Laughter*]

*Mr. Chapman.* Then I'm in good company. [*Laughter*]

*The President.* Well, thank you.

[*The discussion continued.*]

*The President.* I think it's important for people who wonder whether or not they can afford to go back to community college, there's pots of money that will help—Pell grants in this case, trade adjustment money in your case. And I assume the financial burden has been eased quite significantly.

[*The discussion continued.*]

*The President.* You mentioned a word that I want to spring off here for a second—mentoring. I just want everybody to know that the true strength of the country is not our military power or the fact that we're the wealthiest nation in the world. The true strength of the country is the fact that we've got people with really good hearts. That's the strength of America; it's the decency and honor of our people. Obviously, what you just said is part of what I'm talking about, mentoring to help people.

Hilary Juel is with us today. Hilary, I'm sorry to embarrass you. You shouldn't have come out to see me at Air Force One if you didn't want me to introduce you. [*Laughter*] She is a—she's with Make a Difference service group here in Phoenix. Their job is to match loving hearts with broken hearts, is the best way to describe it; is to help people who heard the call to love a neighbor to just do that; is to help save this community and ultimately our country, one soul at a time.

I want to thank you for being a soldier in the army of compassion. I want to urge people in this community to gather up the spirit of the Hilarys or what you've heard here today, to make a difference in somebody's lives. And it doesn't take much to do so, by the way. If you teach a child to read, you're helping America. If you go to a shut-in's house and just tell him you love him on a regular basis, you're making a difference. No, the strength of this country is the fact that we've got citizens willing to serve something greater than themselves.

I think the community college system of America is one of our great strengths. I hope that people who have listened here can see that in the living proof of three citizens who, because of their own will and their own desire, took advantage of the op-

portunity and are now working or soon-to-be working. [Laughter] Well, two working and one filling out a resume. [Laughter]

But I appreciate you all sharing your stories with us. It's important to know that—for people to know that as this economy changes, there's opportunity. You've just got to seize it, just like you three have done. I want to thank you for your—for the example you've set. I want to thank the folks here for providing a great service to our Nation.

And may God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:06 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Janet Napolitano of Arizona; and Bill Moses, student, Mesa Community College.

## Message to the Senate Transmitting the Additional Protocol to the Bulgaria-U.S. Investment Treaty *January 21, 2004*

*To the Senate of the United States:*

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Additional Protocol Between the United States of America and the Republic of Bulgaria amending the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Republic of Bulgaria Concerning the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investment of September 23, 1992, signed at Brussels on September 22, 2003. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to this Additional Protocol.

My Administration has already forwarded to the Senate a similar Additional Protocol for Romania and expects to forward to the Senate shortly Additional Protocols for the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and the Slovak Republic. Each of these Additional Protocols is the result of

an understanding the United States reached with the European Commission and six countries that will join the European Union (EU) on May 1, 2004 (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and the Slovak Republic), as well as with Bulgaria and Romania, which are expected to join the EU in 2007.

The understanding is designed to preserve U.S. bilateral investment treaties (BITs) with each of these countries after their accession to the EU by establishing a framework acceptable to the European Commission for avoiding or remedying present and possible future incompatibilities between their BIT obligations and their future obligations of EU membership. It expresses the U.S. intent to amend the U.S. BITs, including the BIT with Bulgaria, in order to eliminate incompatibilities between certain BIT obligations and EU law. It also establishes a framework